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Rhetorical situation analysis of United States-Syrian discourse: The hostage crisis

Hasan, Jaballa Mousa, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University, 1989
RHETORICAL SITUATION ANALYSIS OF
UNITED STATES-SYRIAN DISCOURSE:
THE HOSTAGE CRISIS

DISSERTATION

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

By

Jaballa M. Hasan, M.A.

* * * * *

The Ohio State University
1989

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FIELDS OF STUDY

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSES OF RESEARCH

The blaring headlines of October 23, 1983, "Terrorist Attack Against U.S. Forces in Beirut" brought into sharp focus the persistent issue of how to deal with terrorism in a global world community. Two political powers, the United States and the Arab world, particularly Syria, have been chief actors not only in such specific acts of terrorism, but also in the continuing long-term drama of how to free hostages taken and held by terrorists.

Clearly, improved communication between the United States and the Arab world is at the very heart of any solution to develop improved political relations and thereby to secure the release of hostages and stop further acts of terrorism such as the October 23, 1983, Beirut attack. In almost every instance, officials representing the U.S.A. and those speaking for an Arab nation such as Syria "talk past each other." Words are written and spoken, translations are made, but little genuine communication in the sense of a meaningful discourse takes place.

It is the thesis of this research effort that one basic factor in this lack of effective communication is
due to inadequate understanding of the nature of the rhetoric involved in the situations which call for meaningful discourse. While it is true that many studies have been conducted to find out what goes on in verbal exchanges between Western countries and the Arab world, it is also a fact that most of these fall short of giving an insightful account of the rhetorical interchange.

A survey of such studies reveals that they tend to focus on empirical, observational, and theoretical explanations of chronological sequences and episodes. The study of words, language, and rhetorical moves in speech are often disregarded elements. Also missing are in-depth studies of basic cultural differences.

In 1989, the rhetoric of the Middle East conflict remains unstudied in dissertations with the exception of Kieve's 1984 study of Sadat-Begin rhetoric. Also, there is the problem that many individuals who conduct such studies have no fluency with the Arabic language and no deep cultural knowledge of the Middle East.

**Purposes of the Study**

This study is proposed to fill the need for an effective approach to theoretical analysis of official communication between U.S.A. and the Arab nations. To limit the focus of the research, communication between U.S.A. and Syria regarding the hostage crisis is the proposed focus of the research effort.
Eight purposes guide the research:

1. To review and evaluate the current "state of the field" of rhetorical research on discourse between the U.S.A. and the Arab world.

2. To assess the character of American-Syrian dialogue in the hostage crisis.

3. To identify the rhetorical strategies employed by the American and Syrian rhetors in the hostage crisis.

4. To demonstrate an alternative mode of rhetorical analysis based on a reconceptualization of the rhetorical situation, one which may be used to illuminate international dialogue in periods of crisis.

5. To design and test an interpretation/extension of the Bitzer model in a prototypical rhetorical analysis and to provide thereby a new methodological tool for the field of rhetorical research.

6. To utilize this interpretation/extension, "the Bitzer grid," to analyze the American-Syrian discourse.

7. To generate fresh insights into the realities of U.S.A. and Syrian political relationships as these are evidenced in rhetorical discourse.

8. To interpret the implications of the research findings for such action and decision-making fields as political policy-making, media reporting, and leadership
training, as well as general education of the citizens of the United States and the Arab world.

Research Methods

In traditional terms, this is a descriptive study. This indicates that it does not involve experimentation in which data are controlled and manipulated. However, the study does involve empirical data and their interpretation. It also involves narrative historical research procedures and the careful analysis of such narrative. Chapter II details the research methodology and the metatheoretical basis for its use.

Organization of the Study

The study is reported in five chapters which reflect three phases of the research. These phases are: (1) introduction, background studies, and explication of research methodology, including investigator's extension of the Bitzer model for analysis of rhetorical situations; (2) the historical narrative of exigencies, responses, and constraints from 1947 to the present, serving as a context for the historical analysis; and (3) the application of what I call "the Bitzer grid" to selected rhetorical artifacts in the American-Syrian hostage crisis talk.
CHAPTER II
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This chapter explicates the research methodology of the study. To give adequate background for an understanding of the research procedures, an examination of the underlying metatheory is made. Bitzer's theoretical model is presented together with this investigator's extension of that model to develop a grid for analyzing specific rhetorical artifacts from the United States-Syrian discourse on the hostage crisis. Critical aspects of interpretative research procedures are delineated. Rhetorical studies found to be related to this research effort are discussed and evaluated. Steps undertaken in the research are identified.

The Metatheoretical Base

The metatheoretical base underlying this investigation is currently evolving in a basic redefinition, or reconceptualization, of what is viewed as "valid" social science research. It is well beyond the scope of this dissertation to report all of the complex issues involved in this movement and their resolution in many promising philosophical writings. However, some relevant details
must be sketched to warrant the claim that an alternative methodology to the dominant empirical approach is justified—the claim made by this investigator.

Basic to this background understanding is the Kuhnian thesis that a paradigm shift has taken place in the fields of science. A traditional paradigm, Kuhn demonstrates, can insulate the community from those socially important problems that are not reducible to the puzzle form, because they cannot be stated in terms of the conceptual and instrumental tools the paradigm supplies. (Kuhn, 1970, p. 37)

He then asserts that a paradigm that the community of scholars finds no longer valid as a basis for their research undergoes a "shift." In the new paradigm, different concepts are created to cope with problems that could not be solved with the former conceptual tools.

In this dissertation report, note should be made of a significant point that Kuhn makes. He asserts that early efforts in coping with research problems in a new paradigm are heuristic, or exploratory, and are often rather crude (Kuhn, 1970, p. 156). However, such efforts serve to encourage further work, and new knowledge results. The research effort reported in this dissertation is clearly heuristic.

Since the original edition of his work published in 1962, there has appeared a large body of criticism of
Kuhn's thesis--pro and con. It is clear, however, that recognized scholars in the field of the social sciences, and to a lesser degree the humanities, now accept the possibility that paradigm shifts do occur. They also recognize that these shifts demand the creation and experimentation with new language forms, concepts, and research procedures.

The Restructuring of Social Theory

Current metatheory in the social and political sciences is undergoing a basic restructuring. Many eminent scholars in philosophy, history, and linguistics are involved. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to report fully on this movement. However, certain of the basic implications of this restructuring for this investigator's research methodology require discussion. A brief overview of Richard J. Bernstein's effort serves this purpose. Bernstein is a prominent philosopher-scholar at Haverford College. He serves as an exemplar of neo-pragmatism largely through his extension of the philosophical concepts of John Dewey. Like Richard Rorty, he has written widely on this subject.

In his major book, in which he analyzes the restructuring of theory, Bernstein deals first with current work in empirical theory. In his conclusion to this part of his study, he reports that the empirical approach is the mainstream position shared by the dominant group of
professional social scientists (Bernstein, 1976, p. 51). But, he finds that this has led to "a growing sense of crisis, or protest, and a desperate need to re-examine the very foundation of the mainstream understanding of social and political inquiry" (Bernstein, 1976, p. 54).

Bernstein then examines new developments in language analysis and theory, and posits a generalization that there is a convergence of critiques of mainstream social science. This is reflected in his finding:

The new universe of discourse and sensibilities that is emerging requires that we become increasingly aware that human beings are self-interpreting creatures, and that these interpretations are constitutive of what we are as human beings. (Bernstein, 1976, p. 113)

From this critique, Bernstein presents the phenomenological alternative. To achieve an understanding of this alternative, he presents the work of Husserl and Alfred Schutz. Schutz is especially important in that he was one of the first to integrate themes from the pragmatic thinking of William James, George H. Mead, and John Dewey, with an emerging phenomenological theory. Schutz's concepts of phenomenological research are complex. However, one generalization Bernstein makes helps to summarize them:
If we are to understand the interpretative schemes by which an individual endows his lived experiences with meaning, we must understand not only how such schemes are intrinsically intersubjective, but also how they are affected by and oriented to the varied forms of social interaction. (Bernstein, 1976, p. 145)

This summary of Schutz's phenomenology clearly relates to Dewey's pragmatic concept that the society, or community, is the extension of the individual. This concept helps to establish the moral and ethical base for social standards. Something, or some social action, is "good" if the consequences are good for the individuals involved. The question becomes: What are the social consequences of an act? An individual, for Schutz and Dewey, has knowledge that is oriented toward interaction with the world by the ways in which he or she acts and is acted upon.

This generalization is echoed in the conclusion that yet another eminent scholar, Stephen Toulmin, draws when he writes:

We can no longer view the world as Descartes and Laplace would have us do, as "rational onlookers," from outside. Our place is within the same world we are studying, and whatever scientific understanding we achieve must be a kind of understanding that is available to participants within the process of
Finally, Bernstein examines Jurgen Habermas' contribution to an alternative theory for understanding social science and, in turn, communication theory, the focus of this research. Habermas is closely related to the use of an interpretative research approach.

Habermas uses the concept "communicative competence" to describe the "general structures which appear in every possible speech situation" (Bernstein, 1976, p. 208). His further use of this concept brings him to a distinction between action and discourse, which is a crucial distinction in the research undertaken here: "Communicative action requires a background consensus that is accepted or taken for granted, while discourse arises when this background is disturbed or called into question" (Bernstein, 1976, p. 210). We shall see that this view collaborates the theoretical position of Lloyd Bitzer regarding the nature of the rhetorical situation.

Bernstein concludes his analysis of the role and value of phenomenological research procedures by asserting that their value does not lie in their elaborate intellectual scaffolding (such as "bracketing," for example), but rather in their restructuring of theory in a way that
"forces us to examine the taken-for-grantedness of the social and political worlds" (Bernstein, 1976, p. 232).

After this comprehensive analyzing of all of these theoretical alternatives, Bernstein, the metatheoretician, comes to the warranted conclusion that is most relevant for this research. He asserts that a social science researcher (or one doing research in the field of communication) does not face the need to select only one theoretical approach and use it exclusively; i.e., empirical or interpretative, or critical theory. Rather, he holds, as does this investigator, that "an adequate social and political theory must be empirical, interpretative, and critical" (Bernstein, 1976, p. 235).

The theoretical base upon which this investigation rests meets the criterion generated by Bernstein. It is supported by a number of the foremost scholars in the field of social and political research, and by an increasing group in the communications field. But more significantly, it places Bitzer's theory within the arena of some of the most competent and forward-looking social scientist theoreticians.

There are several critical approaches to rhetorical criticism, each designed to highlight a single perspective of human experience; "these perspectives range from the historical, descriptive and analysis of times to the analysis of results" (Hillbruner, 1966, p. 1).
Intrinsic or extrinsic approaches to rhetorical criticism employ historical description and analysis of the speaker's thought, or explanation and evaluation of a given rhetorical message. Manifested from this pluralistic description is the critic's judgment regarding which method to select. Clearly, he has employed an already subjective practice. Criticism, although prosecuted in the name of objectivity, is a subjective process conditioned upon the critic's understanding of the cultural-historical dimension that manifests itself in the rhetorical messages he/she studies (Hillbruner, 1966, p. 79).

The methodology of this study draws on both history and rhetorical criticism. However, Scott and Brock have observed that though rhetoric and history are not irreconcilable, the study of rhetorical discourse is focused upon political, rather than historical, analysis. They then state: "Rhetorical criticism lies in the boundaries of politics (in the broadest sense) and literature; its atmosphere is that of the public life, its tools are those of literature" (Scott and Brock, 1972, p. 57).

**Bitzer: The Man and His Philosophy**

In order to understand a theory, it is useful to understand something of the background and experience of the individual who generated the theory. Also, insight
into his basic philosophical position is critical to a full understanding.

Lloyd F. Bitzer, Professor of Communication Arts, University of Wisconsin, received his Ph.D. from the State University of Iowa in 1962 with doctoral research into what he called the "lively idea," a study of David Hume's influence on George Campbell's Philosophy of Rhetoric. Campbell was a fellow Scotsman of Hume in the same generation. In his research, Bitzer establishes that the principle of "vivacity" is dominant in Campbell's work. This principle asserts the primacy of communication by "lively and glowing ideas." Bitzer, in describing this quality of discourse, writes:

The orator must communicate ideas which compel belief, ideas possessing vivacity, or liveliness because all the efforts of discourse depend chiefly upon belief in the actual or seeming reality of ideas presented. (Bitzer, 1962, p. 190)

Bitzer then explicates some of the conditions that generate liveliness as used by Campbell. Among these are "relation to persons concerned" and "interest in consequences." This dissertation is not a study of how Bitzer arrived at his theory of the rhetorical situation, but there is more than a suggestion that some of Campbell's concern for factors that influence "vitality" might have served as an undergirding base.
Clearly, however, Bitzer seems to have drawn on the pragmatic philosophical base generated by John Dewey. He stated his concern that, typically, theories of rhetoric focus on the orator's method or upon components of the discourse itself, rather than upon the situation which invites the orator's application of his method and the creation of discourse.

In describing the rhetorical situation, Bitzer claims that a rhetorical work is analogous to a moral action rather than, for example, a tree with roots in the soil (Bitzer, 1980, p. 18). This is a significant distinction, for some critics of Bitzer's position tend to misread him as being a philosophical Realist—with "reality" existing "out there" to be uncovered and attended to.

In several different essays, Bitzer cites John Dewey's philosophical pragmatism to support his thesis. He writes:

The exigencies to which political speakers respond are sometimes anchored in external reality, such as rampant inflation or unemployment, but at other times their location is in thought such as the presence in some people of a dangerous intention or belief. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 240)

Bitzer uses the term "functional interaction" in his analysis of the rhetorical situation. He recognizes the critical role of the person or persons who interact in the
rhetorical transaction: "The person must recognize the exigence and see the connection between the instrument or remedy and the exigence" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 23).

This statement, alone, places Bitzer clearly into Dewey's pragmatism. Reality, therefore, for Bitzer and for Dewey is not "out there" as a Realist would have it, but is in the process of interaction, a transaction between what is inside, or phenomenological, and what is external in the setting.

To guide his thinking about this critical relationship, this investigator has designed the following conceptual scheme, or construct (see Figure 1). It has served as a basic concept for his analysis of the rhetorical situations in the rhetorical artifacts to be examined below and in his extension of the Bitzer theory.

The individual, who in Dewey's view, and in turn, Bitzer's, is "jarred" by facing a problem, a defect, something he or she does not understand. They then seek a resolution and "reflect" on alternatives found in the situation—a situation of which they are a part. This is Dewey's concept of the complete act of "reflective thought," or as some call it, problem solving (Dewey, 1933).

Effort is made in this explication of Bitzer's theory to relate it to Dewey's concepts, for they demonstrate
Figure 1. The transaction process between the "inside" and "outside" phenomena.
"openness" to new experience as the transaction takes place between members of the discourse.

It should be noted that this research employs the broad definition of "discourse" rather than "speech" or "dialogue." Douglas Ehninger defines rhetoric as "the art of symbolic inducement." Bryant also is given credit for defining rhetoric as "the rationale of informative and suasion discourse" (Bryant, 1965, p. 7). Bryant called discourse a "web of words." Karl Wallace, likewise, viewed discourse in a broader sense. For him, it is a "unit of meaningful utterance" (Wallace, 1970, pp. 138-39). With this broad concept of discourse, Wallace posited a wide range of different kinds of units with quite varied meanings and often with overlap with other units. Bitzer's view of input into the transaction in a rhetorical situation supports this larger concept of the nature of discourse.

Criticism of Bitzer's Theory

Like any major theoretical development, Bitzer's views have undergone criticism. Richard Vatz's criticism may be taken as a typical example. Vatz contends that Bitzer's perspective on rhetoric requires a "realist" philosophy of meaning (Vatz, 1973, p. 154).

He asserts that Bitzer's view dictates that situations have a life of their own "out there." Further, he claims that Bitzer has a melioristic bias. In effect,
what Vatz is attributing to Bitzer (without his recognition of that fact) is the basic Deweyan philosophy upon which Bitzer bases his thesis—namely, an interaction of what is "out there" with the perceptions of the rhetor which are "inside" the rhetor and the audience. In other words, the interaction is a transaction, not a one-way description of reality for which the rhetor has no moral responsibilities.

To take this position demonstrates that the critic (in this case, Vatz) fails to understand the nature of pragmatism and its openness to a phenomenological interpretation of reality. The thinking of Richard Rorty, a contemporary scholar of neopragmatism, clearly demonstrates an extension of Dewey's thought. This extension is an extrapolation which makes room for phenomenological interpretation. Vatz, and other critics like him, fail to sense the more recent developments in pragmatic philosophical theory.

**Bitzer's Theory of the Rhetorical Situation**

The full dimensions of Bitzer's rhetorical situation theory will become increasingly clear as the report of this investigation unfolds in Chapter III, with the historical narrative identifying and analyzing the exigencies, the responses, and the constraints involved in understanding Bitzer's work. All of these concepts are basic to the overall conceptual framework underlying the
central concept of the "rhetorical situation." Bitzer defined the rhetorical situation as:

"... a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigency which can be completed or partially removed if discourse is introduced into the action as to bring about significant modification of the exigency."

(Bitzer, 1983, p. 20)

Bitzer further states "... the situation is the source and ground of rhetorical activity ..." (Bitzer, 1983, p. 20). However, the actual analysis of selected rhetorical artifacts in the discourse between the United States and Syria, represented by Assad, is based on this investigator's extension of Bitzer's theory, through the creation of a set of three constructs presented in diagram form.

The first of these, a Venn diagram, identifies and shows the overlapping relationships among three of the basic components that Bitzer posits as basic factors in the rhetorical situation: (1) the problem or defect; (2) the audience involved in action or solution; and (3) the set of constraints. Bitzer makes this point:

What constituents must be present in the situation as a condition of successful pragmatic communication? First, there must be an exigence—a problem or defect, something other than it should be. Second,
there must be an audience capable of being constrained in thought or action in order to effect positive modification of the exigence. Third, there must be a set of constraints capable of influencing the rhetor and an audience. (Bitzer, 1980, p. 23)

Figure 2 is this investigator's depiction of these three constituents and their relationship. This construct functions in the research reported in this dissertation.

In a second set of basic concepts central to his thesis, Bitzer identifies six multiple factors which impinge on responses to exigencies: degree of interest, modification capability, risk, obligation and expectation, familiarity and confidence, and immediacy (Bitzer, 1980, p. 33).

Bitzer asserts that when these factors are "strong," one can predict accurately that messages of a certain kind will occur. It is important to note that he points out that a rhetorical analysis involving these factors does not imply a deterministic relationship among them. He states: "There is no inherent contradiction between predictable communication behavior, on the one hand, and the presence of freedom and creativity on the other" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 34). This investigator developed a conceptual framework to demonstrate how these six factors involved in a response to an exigency might relate to each other and to the response. This construct became a kind
Figure 2. Constituents of a rhetorical situation (Bitzer's theoretical construct).
of grid for analyzing the specific rhetorical artifacts in Chapter IV. Figure 3 is the construct which served as the basis for the grid.

A rhetorical exigency must bring about positive alteration or modification of a situation. According to Bitzer, there is at least one dominating exigency that specifies the essential attention and the mediating audience.

A rhetorical exigency is composed of two components: the factual condition and the relation to interest. Bitzer defines these components as

... any set of things, events, relations, ideas, meanings ... anything physical or mental whose existence is (or is thought to be) independent of one's personal objectivity ... An interest ... is a desire, need, or aspiration which, when related to factual conditions accounts for the emergence of motive and purposes. (Bitzer, 1980, p. 28)

The conflict between factual conditions and related interest (agreement or disagreement) may be between communicator and audience or between competing communicators. This agreement or disagreement may take place through various means although there may be agreement on both the factual condition and the related interest.
Figure 3. Multiple factors impinging on responses to exigencies in a rhetorical situation (Bitzer's theoretical construct.)
With regard to Bitzer's concept of rhetorical situation, there may be agreement concerning the factual condition but disagreement concerning the related interest. Such disagreement may prevail in the factual conditions while at the same time there is agreement with the related interests. Bitzer discussed several attitudes toward circumstance and related interest. Different opinions toward each other's needs may result from different perceptions of factual conditions and interests. As the amount of possible factual conditions and interests increase in number and complexity, the amount of possible disagreements intensifies.

The second constituent of Bitzer's rhetorical situation is the audience. The audience to be addressed is specified by the dominating exigency. According to Bitzer, the audience is not merely a group of listeners, it must be rhetorical in nature. The rhetorical audience must be capable of being influenced and of producing change. After understanding an exigency, the communicators and audience respond to it in varying degrees. Such degrees of response rely on several factors. First, the degree of interest in an exigency will increase with the probability of the factual component and the extent to which the factual context is directly known and understood.
An exigency that is accessible, or within reach of the audience in space and time as well as in significance, will generate higher interest. An exigency that involves the communicators or audience personally also will generate more interest than one in which the same are not directly involved. The audience likely will be more responsive if it is established that responses can accomplish a change of exigencies.

However, there are certain elements that could also affect the amount of responses. The element of risk, for instance, can affect the responsiveness of the audience. A person who has much to lose and little to gain is not likely to respond. The second element, familiarity and confidence, suggests that if people are accustomed to taking action in similar situations, they are more likely to respond to the exigency.

A critical constituent in a rhetorical situation is a set of constraints. These constraints have the capability of promoting decision and action; hence of changing the nature of the exigency (Bitzer, 1983, p. 21).

Bitzer states:

. . . standard sources of constraint includes beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, motives, and the like; and when the orator (speaker, communicator) enters the situation, his discourse (talk,
thought, communication) not only harnesses constraints given by situation but provides additional important constraints. For example his personal character, his logical proofs, and his style. (Bitzer, 1983, p. 21)

According to Bitzer, there are two types of constraints: those originated by the communicator and those that are in the situation. Even though the exigency, the audience, and the constraints are the central elements in Bitzer's theory of rhetorical situation, additional constraints exist whenever the communicator addresses a receiver in response to a situation.

Exigencies invite the development of the rhetorical situation: "... a communication will be rhetorical when it is a response to the kind of situation which is rhetorical" (Bitzer, 1983, p. 21).

The situation requires not just any response but a response that "fits" the situation. The situation must somehow determine the suitable response. Situations evolve at just the time when rhetorical communication would be the most appropriate. If communication is established, then the situation continues, whereas if no communication occurs, then the situation deteriorates. Bitzer argued that "a message is excellent as rhetorical work to the extent that it functions as a fitting response to situation" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 36).
According to Bitzer, "there are two means by which rhetorical messages can improve communication. First, they can be created by the situation, thereby correcting or altering the exigency; and secondly, they also can be invited by situations as helpful for continued and successful situational activity" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 36).

Finally, a third diagram was created by this investigator to conceptualize Bitzer's thesis that there are stages in the evolution of rhetorical situations. He identified four such stages: Stage 1 - Origin and Development of Constituents; Stage 2 - Maturity; Stage 3 - Deterioration; Stage 4 - Disintegration. Of the life of the stages, Bitzer reports: "Many situations grow to maturity and are resolved; others disintegrate. A few situations persist because the exigencies are deeply embedded in the human condition" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 35).

The spiral seems, to this investigator, to best illustrate the life cycle of a rhetorical situation over the four stages that Bitzer posits. Figure 4 is his depiction of this possible evolution of stages.

All three of these constructs, made visual in the three figures, are critical in the analysis of the discourse which follows in the next chapters of this dissertation.

In the hostage situation the primary audience includes Syrian leaders and the U.S. government. The
Figure 4. Stages in evolution of a rhetorical situation (Bitzer's theoretical construct).
secondary audience includes the hostages' families and the Iranian-backed Hezbollah faction. These audience members' responses are rhetorical in nature, because they are influenced by what the two capitals (Washington and Damascus) have to say concerning the hostages' fate, either negative or positive.

**Methodology of the Research**

The methodological steps taken in the research as evidenced in the work reported in both Chapters III and IV were shaped by the following initial questions:

1. Does the continuing hostage crisis provide motives and constituents which invite discourse?

2. What are the principal characteristics of the mediating agencies that have most promise for solution of the hostage crisis?

3. What is the nature of the "audience" in the U.S.A.-Syrian discourse?

4. How have prior exigencies influenced the current stage of the rhetoric?

5. What does Bitzer's theory tell us about the nature of rhetorical responses to exigencies?

6. Can the role of social and political "constraints" be identified in an analysis of rhetorical discourse? If so, what role do they play?
7. Are there identifiable stages in the evolution of an international discourse?

Undergirding all of these questions was the basic research question of how effective Bitzer's rhetorical situation theory is as a base for creating research tools to analyze international and intercultural discourse.

The methodology that was generated to attend to these questions is expressed in the following steps:

1. Bitzer's rhetorical situation theory was examined to identify and understand its underlying philosophy and metatheory.

2. A grid was devised, based on Bitzer's concepts of the factors which impinge on responses to exigencies. This grid was employed to analyze selected rhetorical artifacts representative of the discourse between United States and Syria on the hostage crisis.

3. A narrative history was written to analyze the historical and political exigencies, the responses to these, and the constraints involved in the overall relationships between the United States and the Arab world.

4. A biographical portrait of Assad was written to describe one of the lesser-known rhetors.

5. The data derived from the analysis of the specific rhetorical artifacts and the data from an analysis of the narrative history were subjected to a historical
interpretation to arrive at warranted generalizations and answers to the above questions raised at the initiation of the research.

Related Research

No rhetorical research efforts were found that focused directly on the problem presented in this dissertation; i.e., a study of the hostage crisis involving the U.S.A. and Syria (Comprehensive Dissertation Index, Years 1979-1988). However, several were found to have indirect implications. Chief among these is the doctoral research of Amos Kiewe.

In his research on the Sadat-Begin peace negotiations, Kiewe analyzed, among other rhetors, the rhetorical practices of Reagan and Assad, representing respectively, United States and Syria. A cross-element analysis revealed a significant consistency in the rhetoric of both sides, with similar themes running through the discourse. Assad’s rhetorical thinking was perceived by Reagan as lacking in logical coherency. Both Assad and Reagan addressed the whole Arab world when they spoke.

Although the Burkeian method Kiewe employed is Aristotelian in nature, he found that it may be "used in rhetorical criticism without losing sight of the situational context . . . its uniqueness lies in its
dramatistic approach for the study of rhetorical criticism" (Kiewe, 1984, p. 226).

Equally significant for this investigation, Kiewe found that his research was able to "mediate between western and Middle Eastern languages and culture" (Kiewe, p. 227).

A second research study proved helpful in revealing how interpretative procedures were employed to study international conflict (Arnett, 1978).

Arnett made an historical interpretation of the rhetoric of 40 persons, involving their views regarding nonviolent peacemaking. In defending this research procedure, Arnett reports: "To be alive is to be continually in act of interpreting the ongoing happenings of life . . . the world does not come to one totally understandable; it must be made sense of, or interpreted" (Arnett, 1978, p. 11). To further explain the validity of his approach to the study of the rhetoric of international relations, Arnett reports:

One can never see all perspectives of a phenomenon, so what one cannot see is filled in or intended. The intentional nature of consciousness allows us to understand a phenomenon as a unity. A strict empirical look at phenomenon only reveals one perspective. (Arnett, 1978, p. 16)
Arnett's work describes the nonviolent peacemaker in a rhetorical discourse in this way: "The nonviolent peacemaker recognizes the sanctity of life while he works for a dialogical resolution between opponents. He is open to the other's view while he announces his own voice clearly and firmly" (Arnett, 1978, p. 256). In arriving at this generalization, Arnett demonstrates that he has "bracketed" his own understandings and those that may be attributed to history and culture. In effect, he "gets inside" of the phenomenon through this process.

In yet another related rhetorical study, Arneson analyzed the public discourse between President Reagan and David Ortega. She used the critical method of Kenneth Burke to carry out an analysis of the myth used in such discourse. She found that myths are the medium which transmit political power (Arneson, 1987, p. 5), and she was able to make a warranted generalization: "Rhetoricians are influenced by cultural myths which in turn enable them to interpret and shape 'facts' to guide a desired social perspective" (Arneson, 1987, p. 12). She viewed political discourse as a field of ambiguities, but found that her Burkeian analysis provided an approach for clarifying the ambiguities embedded in the rhetoric. As the research to be reported here will reveal, there were many ambiguities in the United States-Syrian discourse
over the hostage crisis. Myth was, indeed, also frequently involved.

Okabe made a rhetorical study of "distance reduction" in international and intercultural communication in his analysis of the discourse between Richard Nixon and Premier Kaknei Tanaka. In a review of 40 critical studies on international and intercultural communication, he found that they tended to rely on neo-Aristotelian rhetorical criticism. In his view, this approach failed to account for critical intercultural factors.

He also found that it is not an adequate alternative theoretical base for analyzing intercultural discourse other than the neo-Aristotelian (Okabe, 1974, p. 327). Okabe's own analysis rests on the theory that "reduction of distance" between the rhetors is the key to understanding their discourse. In this analysis, he identified two kinds of categories to describe distance: the personal and the official (Okabe, 1974, p. 331).

He defined the distance factor as involving both geographic and the psychological dimensions. From these perspectives, Okabe identified in the discourse of Nixon and Tanaka eight formal strategies. He concludes that these help any critic seeking to find the interrelatedness of various components of intercultural communication. In effect, he created a conceptual tool for analyzing the rhetoric of intercultural discourse. This goal to create
such a tool parallels the goal of this investigator to develop an extension of Bitzer's model.
CHAPTER III

AN HISTORICAL NARRATIVE: EXIGENCIES, AUDIENCE, CONSTRAINTS, FITTING RESPONSES, AND PORTRAIT OF THE SYRIAN RHETOR

Introduction

This chapter is in three parts. The first sketches, in narrative form, a series of exigencies in the continuing tension between the United States and the Mid-Eastern nations of the Arab world. It serves as a context and a basic source of additional rhetorical data to supplement the data derived from an application of the Bitzer rhetorical grid to the specific rhetorical artifacts, this analysis to be made in the next chapter, Chapter IV.

The historical narrative is divided into six sections, starting with a description of the exigencies that were generated at the end of World War II, when the breakdown of the old order in the Middle East occurred. The account then moves on to the current scene in 1988, as the discourse between the United States and Syria over the hostage crisis continues.

The second part delineates the responses to the exigencies, with a special focus on the hostage exigency,
and identifies the major political and social constraints that shape the rhetoric of both rhetors in the discourse. It gives a picture of the United States through the eyes of Syria, and a view of Syria as perceived by the United States.

The third part presents a portrait of Hafez Al-Assad, the rhetor whose official role represents Syria in the discourse with the United States on the hostage crisis.

The data embedded in this three-part "story" of what has taken place between the U.S.A. and the Arab world since 1947 makes possible an historic interpretation when it fuses with the more empirical findings generated from the application of the conceptual constructs derived from Bitzer's model. In effect, it permits a research effort which meets the criteria delineated by Berstein in Chapter II—namely, that adequate research must be both empirical and interpretative.

The term "exigency," as employed in this historical context, is the concept Bitzer employs to mean a problem or a "perplexity" that demands a solution. He states: Exigency is the necessary condition of a rhetorical situation. If there were no exigencies, there would be nothing to require or invite change in the audience or in the world . . . when so perceived, the exigence provides motive. (Bitzer, 1980, p. 26)
The Period 1947-1967

The end of the Second World War witnessed the breakdown of the old global order in the Middle East and led to a change in the relative positions of the great powers in the area. The influence of the British empire and other colonial powers has progressively declined since 1946 and this, in turn, led to a series of events that eventually brought about a rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union in the region.

Since the announcement of the Truman Doctrine in March 1947, the United States has proceeded on the assumption that the Middle East is an important area in the global balance and that it must be denied to the Soviet Union— that is to say, no part of the area should come under the dominant influence of the Soviet Union (Bose, 1972, p. 2). However, through the emergence of the Arab nationalist movements in the mid-nineteenth century, Syria, like the rest of the Arab states, began to undergo a nationalist consciousness; this era has been described as the "Arab awakening." An Arab nationalist consciousness developed to resist the colonial powers in the Middle East. The outcome of that colonialism was the insertion of American intellectual influence into the region, via the establishment of various American universities and other schools.
Remarkably, the expedition of American intellectual leaders and missionaries was partly responsible for the Arab awakening. This expedition started in 1847, according to Seelye, with the establishment of Beirut as a part of greater Syria (Seelye, 1985, p. 3). It became a thriving literary society under American auspices. American missionaries started to build schools in several parts of Syria. The American University of Beirut exemplified this intellectual movement; and the academic institutions gave Arabs a pride of place. After that, Beirut became known as "the lantern of freedom and thought" in the Middle East.

"The American missionaries," Palestinian author George Antonius wrote, "put their shoulders with vigor to the task of providing an adequate literature. In that they were the pioneers, and because of that, the intellectual effervescence which marked the first stirrings of the Arab revival owes much to their labors" (Seelye, 1985, p. 2).

Along with these intellectual movements and the academic institutions established by the American missionaries, there is also a geo-political dimension concerning the relationships between the United States and the Arab world. The United States tolerated the Arab nationalist aspirations. It sought agreement with the Arab states to
create a position of strength in the region in order to counter the Soviet influence.

These attempts were largely frustrated as a result of America's active role in the creation of Israel in 1947 which was regarded by the Arabs as an invasion of their land and a threat to their future existence. According to Tarun Bose, "American support for the establishment of Israel was largely responsible for alienating Arab sympathy for the United States" (Bose, 1972, p. 6).

Until the U.S. declaration of its advocacy for the 1947 partition decision for Palestine, followed by its recognition of Israel, the "attitude of most Syrians toward America was overwhelmingly positive . . . as Israel became a formidable military power, a second concern arose that Israel's armed forces constituted a grave threat to Syria's security . . . As a result, Damascus turned reluctantly to the Soviet Union for economic and military assistance and political support" (Seelye, 1985, p. 2-3). This development is a clear example of the "risk" factor Bitzer posits as a possible response to an exigency.

U.S. recognition of Israel has led to more political unrest in the region. Under President Eisenhower, the United States adopted a foreign policy agenda in the region stressing Soviet influence and its dangers. Eisenhower's policy of alignment in the region received a cold reception in the Middle East, where the Arab world
was divided into two camps. Iraq, Iran, and Turkey were among the countries supporting Eisenhower's policy; they later formed what was called the Baghdad Pact Nations.

As a result of Eisenhower's policy, a new Arab camp emerged; pro-Nasser and pro-Soviet elements within the Syrian army seized control of the government in Damascus. At the same time, Damascus began to receive Soviet economic and military support. As a consequence, Syria's neighbors became insecure. The threat of Syrian influence made them less willing to cooperate with the United States' attempts to bring about political and social stability. In February 1958, Egypt and Syria formed the United Arab Republic. Here is an example of Bitzer's concept of "modification capability." After the declaration of the union between Syria and Egypt, the U.S. hold on the Arab world progressively weakened—a result of pro-Nasser elements which appeared determined to topple the pro-western governments in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. Social and political problems became especially acute during the Lebanese crisis of May, 1958, when an armed uprising broke out in protest against the U.S. supported government of Camille Chamoun. Chamoun promptly accused Syria and Egypt of instigating the problems in his country and appealed to Washington for a solution. The United States responded by moving its sixth fleet to the area and giving military aid to Chamoun's regime. Following these
events, President Eisenhower, on July 15, 1958, ordered 1400 American marines to Lebanon to prevent Lebanese rebels from achieving a political takeover of a country vital to U.S. interests. This demonstrates the "risk" factor in response to an exigency. There were no military engagements, however, between the U.S. Marines and the rebels, because assurance had been given by the U.S. that its forces would pull out as soon as the United Nations imposed adequate security measures for the stability of Lebanon. By October 1958, the situation in Lebanon became generally stabilized and the U.S. Marines subsequently withdrew (Dowty, 1984, p. 40).

Exigencies: 1967-1973

The partition of Palestine in 1947 and the U.S. intervention in Lebanon in 1958 created a sentiment of mistrust between the United States and the Arab world. The six-day war of 1967 underscored the effects of some of the previous events, even as it introduced new ones. The blockade of the Gulf of Al-Agaba by Egyptian forces in the same year resulted in Israeli pressure on the U.S. government to open up the Gulf of Tiran, by force if necessary. Israel wanted the U.S. to intervene militarily in the event of an attack on Israel. Under these circumstances, the U.S. government mobilized and increased its military forces in the area.
In May 1967, President Johnson announced that "Egypt had no right to interfere with shipping of any nation in the Gulf of Al-Agaba." At the same time he assured Israel that the United States was "firmly committed to the support of the political independence and territorial integrity of all the nations in the Middle East" (Bose, 1972, p. 103).

The Johnson administration was concerned, however, that an Arab-Israel war might draw the world into the Third World War, and, as such, advised Israel to practice restraint and resolve the crisis by peaceful means. But the Israeli government, making it clear that it would not tolerate the closing of the Gulf of Al-Agaba, brought closer the potential for another Middle East crisis. A surprise strike by Israeli forces changed the course of events that has become known as the Six-Days War. Israeli forces managed to seize the Sinai peninsula, the West Bank, and the Golan Heights. American pressure on Israel to withdraw from the occupied territory was ignored in the name of Israeli security. Israel's security considerations eventually so intertwined with its foreign policy that U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger stated "The Israeli state did not have a foreign policy, only a domestic one, which is conditioned by excessive caution, lack of vision, too legalistic, and too talmudic" (Seth, 1982, p. 125).
The impact of the 1967 crisis on Arab-American relations was a dramatic one. The United States, rightly or wrongly, gave the impression it identified American interests with those of Israel. This identification embittered the Arabs and forced them to turn increasingly to the Soviet Union for economic and political support. Bitzer's concept of "obligation" as a response to an exigency was clearly involved here.

Exigencies: 1973-1976

The 1973 war of Ramadan stands apart from previous wars fought in the region. The incident was initiated by Egypt and Syria in order to regain territories which Israel had occupied in the 1967 war. In a well-organized surprise attack by Egypt on October 6, the Egyptians managed to cross the Suez Canal to the East Bank, weaken the Bar-leve lines and regain the East Bank of the Suez Canal. At the same time, Syria managed to occupy some territory that was seized in 1967. But due to Israeli counterattacks, the Ramadan war was ended with Israeli forces in place deep in southern Egypt and in the north 25 miles from Damascus, yet Israel could not claim a complete victory, in that they had sustained much heavier losses of men and equipment than in the previous wars.

Israeli losses in the first days of the war were a matter of concern to Israel as well as to the United
States. Responding to this concern, according to Henry Cattan,

The United States, under the influence of the powerful Israeli lobby, undertook on or about 10 October a massive airlift to Israel and delivered, by means of some 500 flights, over 22,000 tons of tanks, guns, missiles, and aircraft. Unlike the covert American participation in the war of 1967, this time U.S. military assistance was furnished quite overtly and was even formally announced by the State Department on October 15. (Cattan, 1988, p. 137)

Arabs responded to this action with an oil embargo, adopted on October 17 by members of the Arab oil producing countries. However, tension relaxed somewhat on October 25, but the oil embargo was still in place. United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger warned the Arabs that the U.S. would take tough action if the Arabs did not resume oil supplies to the United States. Saudi Arabia replied by announcing that if the U.S. took military action, they would set oil fields on fire. Although the oil boycott created some economic hardships, at the same time, the political dialogue between the United States and the Arab world improved. This change in relationships suggests what Bitzer called the "modification capability" of response to an exigency.
A new American approach to the Middle East dispute resulted from the aftermath of the Ramadan war. Kissinger brought together for the first time Egyptian and Israeli military officers to negotiate a military disengagement agreement on January 18, 1974. A similar agreement was reached with Syria on May 31, 1974 (Cattan, 1988, p. 140).

Subsequently, Kissinger’s negotiating efforts in the region—his well-known shuttle diplomacy—resulted in a partial peace between Israel and its neighbors. In the process, however, Kissinger convinced Damascus to prohibit Palestinian guerilla fighters from infiltrating into Israel from Syria (Seelye, 1985, p. 4).

To some Middle Eastern political observers, the U.S. position in the wake of the 1973 war was not all bleak. Indeed, Secretary of State Kissinger, through a talk with Syrian President Assad, initiated a new chapter in American-Syrian relations in which there was a considerable improvement of the perception that had existed between Washington and Damascus prior to 1973. By 1975, the improved Syrian-American relations facilitated not only an increase in diplomatic relations but paved the way for U.S. economic aid (Dawisha, 1980, p. 33).

The slow process of softening U.S.-Syrian relations included the resumption of diplomatic talks which had broken off following the six-day war. Damascus now began
searching for ways to minimize its ties with Moscow as well as to open the way for new, independent foreign policy options. Here we see "modification capability" as a factor in the exigency. Washington's assessment was that a diplomatic dialogue with Damascus might indeed lead Syria to alter its foreign policy to minimize the Moscow-Damascus relationship. This would help to mollify those concerned with Damascus' role in the Middle East conflict. Indeed, a successful shuttle diplomacy by Henry Kissinger led to a partial peace between Israel and Syria and the reestablishment of American-Syrian relations. This served to chill Damascus' relations with Moscow. (Freedman, Fall 1984, p. 24).

Since 1974, and Kissinger's role as intermediary between Israel and Syria, Damascus became more receptive to the United States' influence in the area. In this respect, Seelye wrote, "Assad would have preferred to cooperate and indeed to depend to a greater extent on the United States than on any other greater power" (Seelye, 1985, p. 23). President Assad himself stated, "Why should I boycott the United States when I can refuse anything that is not compatible with our interests?" (Dawisha, 1980, p. 75). Agreeing with this assessment, David Pryce-Jones stated, "Assad has cultivated no warmth, no real allegiance to the Soviets . . . [I]f he could expel
them in the Sadat style, he would do so" (Pryce-Jones, January 30, 1984, p. 25).

Some believed that utilizing Sadat's style might achieve some positive outcome. There seemed to be no essential reason, therefore, why Washington could not achieve the same results with Syria that it earlier achieved with Egypt, even though the process might be more protracted.


Changes in both the United States and in Syria began to have their effects on the course of politics in the Middle East. Because of Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy, Syria managed to regain a positive relationship with Washington. Positive political contact began to increase in 1976 when mutual interests in quelling the Lebanese civil war brought about close cooperation. It was precisely Syrian involvement in Lebanon that created a new dialogue between the two countries. In fact, Syrian intervention in the Lebanon civil war in 1976 was explicitly encouraged by the Ford administration, which sought to protect the Maronite minority Christian militia from being vanquished (Boyle, July 1985, p. 2).

Congressional luncheon, "was no longer a war between Christians and Muslims but one between right and left, and only the intervention of the Syrian army could prevent Lebanon from being overrun by leftists" (Petran, 1987, p. 195).

While still disclaiming an affirmation of Assad’s demands, the U.S. State Department praised Syria’s mediation and affirmed support for "moderate elements" in Lebanon as opposed to the efforts of radical groups. And on March 30, 1976, Dean Brown, President Ford’s newly appointed special envoy to Lebanon, left for Beirut, a trip that coincided with the U.S. decision to approve direct Syrian military intervention (Petran, 1987, p. 195).

Syrian intervention was acceptable to Washington, which weighed the action against the prospect of direct U.S. intervention and also against other risks which could have worsened the situation. At any rate Washington was pleased with Damascus’ move and the hoped-for outcome of such events, since it sustained an equilibrium in Lebanese society and prevented a leftist victory. In April, 1976, the White House announced publicly that "Syria has been playing a constructive role" (Seelye, 1985, p. 5). This clearly demonstrates "risk" taking in the concepts Bitzer projects as responses to an exigency.

Talcott Seelye has revealed that:
Although at times the United States has appeared to treat Syria as if it were a pariah, beneath the surface the two governments have been in contact ever since relations were resumed in 1975. These contacts have focused mainly on the subjects of Lebanon, starting with deployment of Syrian military forces into Lebanon in 1976. At that time, the two governments shared the view that the worsening situation in Lebanon required the introduction of an outside peace-keeping force for the purpose of preserving Lebanon's religious, equilibrium and to keep leftist elements from coming to power. (Seelye, Spring 1983, p. 41)

The outcome of mutual interests and close cooperation was manifested in Assad's meeting with former President Jimmy Carter in Geneva in May, 1977. Six months later, however, following Sadat's visit to Israel the relationship between the United States and Syria plummeted to its lowest point (Reed, Summer 1980, p. 180). Syria viewed Sadat's visit to Egypt, followed by the Sinai agreement between Israel and Egypt, as "a plot by the Americans to neutralize Egypt, thus maintaining the existing balance of power in the area--to the Syrians an action heavily in favor of Israel" (Dawisha, Spring 1984, p. 232).

Damascus suspected that the Israeli-Egyptian agreement was a step to depolarize Arab states, suggesting that
Syria could be left out of a future peace settlement in the region. Such suspicions were confirmed when Sadat went to Washington to sign the Camp David accord. This agreement, in Syria's view, was a step toward a bilateral treaty with no regard to the whole Middle East conflict. According to Seelye:

Sadat's move surprised the Carter administration, which had been organizing a peace conference in Geneva. Assad assumed that the U.S. was behind Sadat's initiative. Syria felt that the 1978 Camp David agreement confirmed their suspicion. The American-Syrian honeymoon inaugurated by Kissinger in 1974 was over (Seelye, 1985, p. 5).

Exigencies: 1981-1982

A new American approach to the Middle East conflict turned American-Syrian relations to a new phase. President Reagan took office with a determination to minimize Soviet influence in the Middle East. From its inception, the Reagan government adopted a strategy of anti-Soviet sentiment in the region. This constitutes a "risk" taking strategy in the view of Bitzer's vocabulary of rhetorical responses to exigencies. Indeed, the dispute with the Kremlin became the main organizing theme of American foreign policy toward the Middle East. Reagan's globalistic view, however, dichotomized American foreign policy into two different schools of
thought—(the "neo-realist" doctrine and the "regionalist" one) (Fry, 1985, p. 29).

The neo-realist view is concerned principally with the Soviet threat to the region and with the need to develop a regional balance of power. The neo-realist doctrine argues that Israel is the key player in the region, and that military and financial assistance to Israel will result in a balance of power that reflects U.S. policy, creates a reliable deterrence, and furnishes a firm political order of stability that can over time become institutionalized (Fry, 1985, p. 29).

The regionalist advocates, on the other hand, argue that, "rather than maintain a simple-minded faith in Israel, the United States and the Soviet Union must deal with the Middle Eastern issues in terms of their social and political context" (Fry, 1985, p. 30). This position is a demonstration of "modification capability" as a strategy. According to the regionalist philosophy, the United States policy toward the region, including its support of Israel, has made other Middle Eastern countries more antagonistic toward the United States. As the argument goes, all considerations linked to resistance to and reversing of Israeli occupation of Arab territories were evaded through the device of explaining everything as the diabolical work of Shiite terrorism or the work of a Soviet evil empire.
The Reagan administration assumed that the foreign policy of regional powers actually revolved around the notion of spheres of influence between the two superpowers. According to this perception, which, to some extent, underscored much of Reagan's political rhetoric, regional problems were only of secondary importance to the Middle East, while Soviet influence became Reagan's primary concern. This concept of regional power added to the growing discomfort between Damascus and Washington. In 1981, the situation was described by one American official as having reached its lowest point since the 1973 Arab-Israeli war (Posner, March 5, 1984, p. 34).

The new shift of American policy concerning Lebanon—which now called for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon, including Syria--created a chasm in relations between Washington and Damascus. Hence, the policy of cooperation and mutual trust of the 1970s was replaced by mutual suspicion.

The Reagan administration misperceived Syria's political and ideological influence in Lebanon. Damascus has regarded the very existence of Lebanon as an artificial entity, seeing Lebanon as an integral part of historic Syria. In Syrian eyes, Lebanon and Syria have a unique relationship. Assad has repeatedly expressed this view. For Assad, Lebanon and Syria are a
single people. "The feeling of kinship between Syria and Lebanon," says Assad, "seems deeper than it does between states in the United States" (Zamir, 1987, p. 50). There is a general consensus among Middle East historians that Lebanon and Syria historically are one nation sharing a common culture and values. Former Lebanese Prime Minister Shafik Al-Wazzan remembers writing "Beirut, Syria" in a text as a school boy (Posner, March 5, 1984, p. 33).

Syria viewed this change of U.S. policy in Lebanon as leading to a demand for the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon. As such, a new shift of American-Syrian relations took place. Bitzer's "obligation/expectation" concept of exigency/responses is demonstrated here.

This political shifting in the relations between the two nations has resulted in deterioration, thereby promoting dramatic and bloody wars in Lebanon. Since the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1976, American-Syrian relations have been constructed primarily within the global context. Soviet-American rivalry and the fostering of the Arab-Israeli conflict increased after the Israeli incursion in Lebanon in 1982. These events have been inseparably intertwined with the social and political turmoil in Lebanon.
Exigencies: 1982 To Present

The Israeli assault on the Lebanese capital in the summer of 1982 led to a new development in relations between the United States and Syria. For a while the chaotic situation in Lebanon seemed, ironically, to be establishing a new political discourse between Washington and Damascus (Seelye, 1985, p. 7). But, American-Syrian relations soured once again as Syria perceived the U.S. to be instigating the Israeli assault on Lebanon.

Subsequent to the Israeli invasion, Ambassador Phillip Habib was sent to the region to negotiate a ceasefire agreement between Israel and Syria. Damascus felt assured that agreement might lead to a withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon. Channels of communication were opened again with Syrian Foreign Minister Abdol-Halem-Khaddam’s visit to Washington on July 20, 1982. The evacuation of Palestinian fighters from Beirut was accomplished and the overall relationship between Damascus and Washington was improved. During his visit, the Syrian Foreign Minister promised Washington that Syria would pull its troops out of Lebanon if Israel would do likewise (Martin & Walcott, 1988, p. 111). But the U.S. official had already sponsored a separate Israeli-Lebanese accord without Syrian participation. Washington assumed that the
Lebanese-Israeli bilateral agreement signed on May 17, 1983 would leave Syria with no other choice but to accept the agreement. Hence, when Secretary of State George Shultz went to Syria to get Syrian endorsement, President Assad rejected the offer. Aruri postulated that Shultz's take-it or leave-it approach to Syria again revealed shortsightedness and a failure to study Kissinger's experience with Assad (Aruri, 1984, p. 64).

Syrian rejection of the Lebanese-Israeli bilateral agreement was based on the premise that the agreement violated Lebanese sovereignty. Also, the agreement would help the Israelis capitalize politically and economically on their invasion of Lebanon. Overall, this bilateral agreement was perceived by Damascus as an Israeli challenge to Syria's position in Lebanon and as enhancing the Israeli political and military position at Syria's expense.

Accordingly, Damascus persuaded its allies in Lebanon to repudiate the accord. Syrian military and financial support started to flow to the Druze militia which instigated serious fighting between themselves and the Maronite Christian faction in the Shouf mountains. The fighting also spread to Beirut where it evolved into Shiite-Druze resistance to the Amin Gemayel government held responsible for signing the May 17th agreement with Israel against the will of the Lebanese majority.
American-Syrian relations deteriorated again as Secretary Shultz accused the Syrians of bad faith and of playing a spoiler role, having sabotaged the May 17th accord. Hence, according to Seelye:

The National Security Council met and agreed on a tough policy of confronting Syria with a combination of U.S. and Israeli military power. Reagan administration officials concluded that this policy would require both a show of American force and a rapprochement with Israel so that Israeli power would again be taken seriously in Damascus. (Seelye, 1985, p. 10)

Assad exploited these events to his favor by equating the U.S. policy of neutrality and power broker in Lebanese affairs with a policy of taking sides in the Lebanese question (Devlin, 1986, p. 315). Damascus capitalized on these actions by rallying Arab support to defend Arab Lebanon from outside intervention. By doing so, Syria wanted to return to the Arab mainstream and be in position as a key player in the region. In the Bitzer theory, this could be construed as a "risk taking" response to an exigency.

On November 13, 1983, Washington retaliated by cutting off economic aid to Syria. In December, the Reagan administration signed a strategic cooperation agreement with Israel to attack Syrian sites in Lebanon.
Syrian forces shot down two U.S. planes, killing one pilot and taking one into custody. The Reverend Jessie Jackson went to Damascus and freed the captured pilot, Lieutenant Robert Goodman, on January 3, 1984; this, in turn, brought about a temporary improvement in Syrian-American relations.

Thereafter, the U.S. had to recognize the fact that Damascus could play a useful role in Lebanon for the purpose of reaching accommodation among warring factions. This recognition developed only gradually against the background of U.S. foreign policy in the region. Perhaps even more important than the American presence in Lebanon is the Syrian effort to release the remaining hostages held there. Therefore, since 1984, the U.S. has returned to its 1970s policy. Washington realizes that Syria could contribute more to stability and tranquility in the Lebanese political and social situation than could an American military presence; indeed one American official has suggested that Damascus' role could well be considered "helpful within the context of the hostages problem." Seelye comments:

Senior U.S. policy makers appear to realize that a political settlement in Lebanon is impossible without important concessions to factions backed by Syria. Washington has come to recognize, as it failed to do in the past, that Syrian cooperation is
indispensable to achieving a new power-sharing arrangement which will restore order to the Lebanese political system. (Seelye, 1985, p. 22)

Concurrent with these assessments, Zeec Schiff, commentator for the leading Israeli daily Haaretz, writes: "The massive injection of the Arab-Israeli conflict into Lebanese largely domestic convulsions has given Syria a veto power over American peace power efforts in the Middle East" (Schiff, Summer 1984, p. 96).

Syria has gradually enhanced its relations with the United States, thereby increasing the possibility of dialogue between the two countries. Both sides have perceived the need to maintain the channels of communication. Damascus has become more positively disposed toward the West than toward the Soviet Union and would be pleased if circumstances permitted Syria to have a more healthy working relationship with Washington. Many appreciate the political freedom and democratic values in the United States. Moreover, not a few have relatives and friends in the U.S.; thus they are positively linked to America through a kinship which transcends the current political differences (1983, p. 21). These sentiments of good will and trust have helped to maintain a Syrian-American channel of communication during even the worst of times (Seelye, 1985,
Although the United States and Syria are fighting each other, Assad once explained, "that does not stop us from meeting" (Mullin, July 8, 1985, p. 24).

It is clear that throughout this long history of exigencies, there have been, time and again, strategic moves that illustrate Bitzer's analysis that six distinct factors (immediacy, modification capability, obligation or expectation, familiarity or confidence, risk, and degree of interest) are involved in rhetorical situations that are generated by exigencies.

A Major Exigency: The Hostage Crisis

The aftermath of the Israeli incursion of Lebanon in the summer of 1982 has political and social ramifications in the region. These include violence and kidnapping. Hostage-taking has become a familiar phenomenon in Lebanon. Hardly does a month go by without some new abduction occurring. No one seems immune--Americans, French, British, Russians, Syrians, Italians, and Lebanese have all fallen victim in the streets of Beirut. Nearly 2,000 had disappeared during fourteen years of civil war (Martin & Walcott, 1988, p. 101).

Kidnapping is endemic in Lebanon. Criminal and political motives often overlap. In many cases the abductions seem to be reciprocal. Druz will kidnap
Christians and Christians will kidnap Druz in an attempt to gain their respective comrades' release. Iranians backing the Hezbollah faction, however, brought a new tactic to this phenomenon. When their people were abducted, they tended to reciprocate against the Americans (Dickey, Fall 1987, p. 67).

The psychology of terror on the streets of Beirut and fear of indiscriminate or random violence in Lebanon are the relevant elements here. Neither foreigners nor Lebanese can speak freely on Middle Eastern issues, without fear of being abducted by kidnappers. According to Stein, "the truth is in the wild west days of West Beirut where anyone could have you killed for $1.98 and 10 green stamps . . . It was an intimidating environment, and any high profile reporter had to think twice about some of the issues and/or people he wrote about." (Stein, April 26, 1986, p. 18).

As well-known Arab poet Kahlil Gibran put it, "pity the nation divided into fragments, each fragment feeling itself a nation." (Doerner, July 1, 1985, p. 24). It is essential to point out that although the civil war in Lebanon had been going on since 1976, the Lebanese did not target American personnel and interests until after the Israeli invasion of 1982 (Eqball, May-June 1986, p. 5).
According to Martin and Walcott, the first kidnapping of an American citizen occurred on July 19, 1982, in the midst of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. David Dodge, the acting President of the American University of Beirut, was abducted and taken to prison in Teheran and never allowed to communicate with his relatives in the U.S., who did not know until recently whether he was alive or dead (Martin & Walcott, 1988, p. 100).

The targeting of U.S. citizens was precipitated by the Israeli government's decision to take hundreds of Lebanese hostages to Israel, as future hostage "protection" against unforeseen guerilla attacks on the northern Israeli border (Wall, July 3, 1985, p. 35). Some believe that the Israeli government has successfully achieved something that no other American allies in the region have been able to achieve. Israel has succeeded in making its own foreign and internal affairs an American domestic political issue, to the extent that former United States Secretary of State Zbigniew Brezinski made the claim that "close cooperation with Israel would in the long run make American power essentially a tool of Israeli foreign policy" (Aruri, 1984, p. 72).

Agreeing with Brezinski's assessment, James Akins, former United States Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, mentioned that, "Secretary of State Shultz speaks of the
chaos of Lebanon and our involvement in it without referring to Israel's role in getting us into the mess" (Akins, September 15, 1984, p. 720).

The causes seemed multiple and the solution is more intricate than the actions. Terrorism is becoming a way of expressing long-felt collective grievances in Lebanon. Anger and helplessness produce compulsion toward retributive violence. "I have pounded a few walls myself when I am alone," Ronald Reagan said to a news conference on June 15, 1985, during the Lebanese hijacking of T.W.A. Flight 847. What President Reagan said at this news conference holds true for the Lebanese too, as Ahmed Eqball said: "It is frustrating, but ... you cannot just start shooting without having someone in your gunsight." (Eqball, May-June 1985, p. 5).

Regarding such international confrontations Bitzer remarks that it is a hard task to appropriately channel anger. For "anyone can get angry," but the problem is in directing anger "to the right person, to the right extent, at the right time, for the right reason, and in the right way." Bitzer further states, "A man whose life is guided by emotion will not listen to an argument that dissuades him, nor will he understand it ... ." (Bitzer, 1981, p. 238-242).
The chaotic situation in Lebanon is sufficient evidence that the general public, as well as government officials on all sides, are frustrated by the acts of violence. Syrian government officials, including Syrian Foreign Minister Khaddam, have been targeted for assassination. Car bombs have become common place in Lebanon as well as in Syria. In 1986, more people were killed in Syria by terrorist attacks against Assad’s government than the much-publicized attacks in Paris, at the Karachi airport, and the Istanbul Synagogues combined (Dickey, Fall 1987, p. 54). This chaos, occurring within the context of the historical events sketched above, comprises the historical exigencies and the rhetorical exigencies that determine political and rhetorical action.

Bitzer states:

"... From among the mass of details comprising the total environments something is recognized as other than it should be, that is, an exigence; and something else is recognized as a means of remedy or modification (Bitzer, 1980, p. 23).

The Syrian government recognized the situation and saw the connection between the instrument that could be used to modify the crisis and the crisis itself. In 1986, Syria dispatched about 300 plain clothes agents into West Beirut to help impose security. But they were
banned from entering the area where Hezbollah holds sway and where Hezbollah is believed to hold most of the hostages. Since then, relations have deteriorated.

In February, 1987, in a humiliating confrontation, Syrian soldiers, while patrolling the streets of Beirut, were abducted by the Hezbollah group. They were disarmed, beaten, and their heads shaved. The following day, Syrian troops entered the area where the Hezbollah fighters are believed to be headquartered and in which American and other western captives ostensibly are being held. After ferocious fighting Syria pulled out of the area empty handed leaving behind 23 members of Hezbollah dead (Rose et al., March 9, 1987, p. 32; Cooper & Dickey, March 9, 1987, p. 40).

Concerning such a dramatic situation, Bitzer says:

. . . [The] situation may be expected to change because of forces and tendencies in the environment, whether or not anyone apprehends or acts to alter them; unquestionably there have been many situations which came into existence and ultimately disintegrated, unrecognized as situations. Nor are situations isolated from one another; within a single frame of a time and place, they may overlap and implicate one another. Any attempt to resolve one may well generate another (Bitzer, 1980, p. 24-25).
Bitzer's perceptions of situation, space and time were manifested in the Syrian attempt to release the hostages in 1986 and 1987. This move, however, was followed by another crisis. On February 17, 1988, Marine Colonel William Higgins was abducted, bringing to nine the number of Americans held hostage in Lebanon. The perpetrators were a new group calling themselves "The Organization of the Oppressed on Earth." They used many of the same tactics as the Hezbollah. Hence, Syria's previous attempts to free the hostages generate another abduction. The new faction picked up a new victim, it seemed, whenever an old one was about to be released.

The Associated Press reported a statement issued by Hezbollah's spiritual leader, Sheikh Mohammed Hussein Fadlallah, that: "Syria's military build up is an act of intimidation." He said further, "All the suburbs will be destroyed if the Syrians attempt to enter by force." This indicates that Hezbollah, which has fielded around 3,000 fighters, may try to resist the Syrians (Boustany, May 16, 1988, p. A24). Interestingly, however, during the latest fighting between Hezbollah and the mainstream Shiite Amal movement in the southern suburb of Beirut, Hezbollah has gone through the area ripping down Lebanese flags from Lebanese government buildings, including police stations, burning them, and replacing
them with Iranian symbols. Such symbolic acts on the part of the Hezbollah Faction was part of a movement to form a new Islamic state in secular Lebanon corresponded to Ayatollah Islamic Republic in Teheran (Boustany, May 14, 1988, p. A21).

During the 1982 Israeli invasion, Iran sent several hundred revolutionary guards to Lebanon’s Bekaa valley to assist Hezbollah in preparing the ground in Lebanon for the creation of an Islamic Republic similar to Ayatollah Khomeini’s regime. Such plans were implemented by the Hezbollah spiritual leader, Mohammed Hussein Fadallah, when he told the Friday worshippers, "There is talk that there is an international and regional scheme to freeze, crush, and annihilate the Islamic movement in Lebanon for a certain price. The Islamic way of life is your responsibility" (Boustany, May 14, 1988, p. A 21). One Hezbollah fighter declared: "We have enough arms and ammunition stored here to last us for a whole year. We have proven what we can do to our foes" (Boustany, May 16, 1988, p. A 24). In the same vein, one of Hezbollah’s members described, "the suburbs (of Beirut) as Iran’s arsenal, reservoir of human resources and the main money center in Lebanon" (Boustany, May 14, 1988, p. A 21).

These events underscore the complexity to which the rhetorical situation has evolved in the region and to
what extent exigencies occur that are the product of forces outside of Syrian and American control. The rhetorical situation is real in the sense that both governments, possessing appropriate knowledge and interest, can see their parts and appreciate the dangers from a human perspective, that is the risk to human life and property. An Iranian-backed Hezbollah victory would foster for the fundamentalist Islamic movement a dangerous development to Assad’s secular-oriented government in Damascus (Sandler et al., July 1985, p. 53).

Diplomatic observers in Damascus have said,

If you look around Damascus, for example, you will almost never see a picture of the Ayatollah Khomeini: you will hardly ever see him on television news. The Syrians are very concerned about Islamic fundamentalism here, and they therefore have a keen interest in keeping the influence of Khomeini to a minimum. (Bernstein, July 1985, p. A4)

Syrian merchants have cogently expressed Syria’s sentiment toward the Iranian presence in Damascus. "They remind us (Iranian visitors to Syria) of Khomeini, who is exactly the kind of man we do not need in this country" (Bernstein, July 1985, p. A4).

The threat of Iranian zealots spreading their revolution in Lebanon, a country Assad regarded as a
part of his own, is more than a tactical problem, it is a factual exigence, a defect in the status quo—something other than it should be. The situation demands action. If the Hezbollah fundamentalist movement continues to gain strength in Lebanon, neither Washington nor Damascus could move against it with much success. Life and death are in the balance, and the outcome is uncertain. There are victims, weapons, and emotions involved and in many cases there is a message for the world. Kidnapping and violence provoke backlash and hardness of attitudes and such activities create the impression that the international community cannot provide full and sufficient security. Terrorism has seriously eroded the quality of life in the Middle East. The phenomenon of kidnapping has affected the life style and work habits of diplomats as well as of ordinary citizens.

For the United States, almost all interests in Lebanon now carry with them the risk of terrorism, especially where the domestic government in Beirut is politically dysfunctional and where American presence is both controversial and provocative. Diplomatic distance from Syria, however, is no longer a feasible foreign policy option. The United States and Syria have no alternative but to pursue a course of dialogue in an attempt to modify the crisis. Experiences have already
shown how the situation in Lebanon can affect American-Arab relations. This is what Bitzer called "interests," "needs," "desires" and "accounting for the emergency," all of which issue a strong invitation to modify the crisis. Those responsible for the kidnapping and violence in the area ought to be stopped. Factual condition plus related interests thus comprise the exigence by which Washington and Damascus should attempt to modify the situation. They are in a position to do so, because the total situation requires this sort of action. When the factual context and related interests are present and joined, then the motivation exists for the U.S. and Syria to institute political discussions, especially when the factual conditions related to the felt interests are perceived. Both nations are seeking ways to modify the crisis by means of dialogue, something that matters and about which they are not indifferent. Accordingly, the starting point of rhetoric is the Lebanese hostage situation. Bitzer states:

Once the dimensions of the situation becomes clear, the rhetoric of necessity is challenged to construct a timely and appropriate response which speaks to the problem of the exigencies and the constraints. (Bitzer, 1983, p. 16)
The Lebanese situation had become critical. When viewed as a rhetorical situation, it is clear that rhetoric, of necessity, is required to ameliorate it. The factual context related to the felt interest between the two countries to resolve the crisis was demonstrated by the U.S. Ambassador to Syria, when he stated that Syria moved its troops into Lebanon in 1976 with the U.S. approval.

Several times during Syria's occupation of Lebanon, the United States has gone on public record to characterize Syria's role in Lebanon as constructive. Talcott Seelye wrote:

During my tour in Damascus between 1978-1981, I frequently met with the Syrian Foreign Minister to compare notes on Lebanon . . . The United States has recognized that Lebanon's current chaotic situation necessitates the presence of the firm hand of an outside power - and that only Syria has the appropriate credentials and the will to act in this capacity." (Seelye, Summer 1987, p. 106-107).

Seelye's remarks are an adequate assessment considering the Lebanese situation in which both U.S. and Syria understand the factual conditions and the common interests of the parties involved. Whatever success Syria may be able to achieve in modifying the crisis will be of considerable benefit to U.S. interests. In
1988, Syria cooperated with Washington in devising a plan for constitutional reform in Lebanon. Washington and Damascus agreed on basic principles of unifying Lebanon with central government authority, the disarming of the various warring factions and the transfer of power to the Lebanese central government (Fischer, June 6, 1988, p. 46). The United States commended the move of Syrian troops into the Beirut suburbs in order to put an end to the fighting between two Shiite factions. State Department spokeswoman Phyllis Oakley told reporters in Washington, "We welcome an end to the suffering of the civilian residents of the southern suburbs. We hope the current arrangement . . . can be a first step toward restoring the (Lebanese) central government authority" (Boustany, May 1988, p. A16).

Concerning the American hostage situation in Lebanon, neither Washington nor Damascus knows the hostages' psychological or physical condition. It is ironic to note that most experts' knowledge to date deals with hostage-situations in which the site of the hostage is known. In the case of Lebanon, the site, or sites, is unknown. The hostages are probably scattered over several square kilometers in the southern suburb of Beirut. They are frequently moved about, and may be kept in tunnels dug earlier by Palestinians in what have come to be called "the war of the camps" between the
Palestinians and the Shiites Amal Militia. The operational strategy either by Syrian forces or by Americans to gain the release of the hostages will be met with numerous difficulties. While Syria has stressed restoration of law and order as its main goal in Lebanon, the issue of the hostages figures prominently in its move, since any military action against the wishes of Hezbollah of Iran could put the hostages' lives in danger. According to Christopher Dickey,

Syrians know that you don't get any kudos for dead hostages. There is the danger that all you have at the end of the day is a string of dead men. If Assad wants to try to clean up Beirut, the west will not argue. But that tolerance will disappear if Syria's intervention ends up costing hostages their lives. (Dickey, March 1987, p. 41)

At the time of this research there is concern for nine Americans still being held captive in Lebanon. These hostages were taken at various times during the last five years, and their circumstances are not known. Furthermore, there is no sign the hostages will be released from Lebanon.

It is clear that the Lebanese hostage crisis situation has developed around a set of exigencies ranging from Middle East conflicts and Israeli invasion of 1982 to the political and social constraints in the
region, which were meant to modify the hostage situation.

However, the Middle East crisis is typified by flux—it is an ever-changing process. New unanticipated exigencies arise, such as the Palestinian Intifada, the intense naval situation in the Persian Gulf, and other related events in the area over which Washington and Damascus have little or no control. These events are constraints and influences on the political dialogue which affect the solution of the crisis. Furthermore, the Iranian-backed Hezbollah faction's threats to execute their captives have become a parallel force to American military and otherwise moves in the region. Added to these intricate events, there is no sign so far indicating that either Washington or Damascus know what would happen to the hostages at the hands of their kidnappers, given various alternative scenarios of intervention.

Washington fears for the hostages' safety and does not want to see them mistreated or killed. And there are additional economic and political interests that the United States may lose some of its influence in the region if the crisis is not defused or, at least, stabilized. Opportunities of political dialogue are likely to arise in those areas where Damascus' objectives overlap those of Washington: the stabilization of
Lebanon, Middle East peace settlement, and containment of Khomeini's ideological influence. Thus, these conditions plus the related interests of the parties involved comprise a set of powerful rhetorical exigencies, which Washington and Damascus must try to modify and ameliorate.

Political dialogue, unlike literary and official discourse, is usually linked so closely to historical and political conditions that the participants in such dialogue must understand the details of the situation as pre-condition of understanding the meaning of the messages. Constituting public rhetoric, political talk, as Bitzer reminds us, occurs in specific historical situations and is primarily responsive to them. In the Middle East crisis, Americans find themselves in a situation presenting a dilemma which they must seek to modify by attempting to address their messages to the Syrians as a mediating audience, that is, to an audience which has sufficient power to modify the crisis.

Responses to Exigencies

A response to a major exigency such as the hostage crisis is clearly part of the whole historical pattern of responses to the many exigencies identified in this narrative. To place this specific set of responses in the larger political-social context, Bitzer's concept of a competent "audience" is relevant:
Reliable deliberations require a competent audience no less than a competent speaker, because each is a center of information, interest, and intelligence with the capacity to influence the other, and neither is assumed to be generally wiser than the other. The best audience will be the one possessing the most practical wisdom, skill, and knowledge relevant to the case at hand. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 244)

An acknowledgement of these convictions is required to modify a crisis situation and bring about negotiation. In effect, a "credible agent" must be found.

Since the hostages are believed to be held by a group and not a state, the American government has found it difficult, if not impossible, to have a dialogue with such groups in a way that would not violate American principles of engaging in negotiations with kidnappers. Furthermore, Lebanon is in a politically dysfunctional and socially paralyzed state of anarchy. It has become incapable of exerting influence to modify the crisis, and therefore, will not suffice as a rhetorical, or functional, audience. Syria, on the other hand, has become a legitimate rhetorical audience in that she alone is in a position at the moment to receive and act upon American appeals to modify the hostage situation. The question is: Who is a reliable "audience"?
The Middle East rhetorical exigencies and their social and political ramifications discussed in the foregoing part of this chapter seem undeniable: not only does the world invite change, but there is a succession of exigencies whose modifications demand, or invite, immediate assistance of dialogue with mediating agents. Such exigencies are clearly rhetorical. The rhetorical exigence obtained in the previous argument clearly demonstrates the relation between factual context and the common interest of the parties involved; the mediating influence of such parties can be the full, or partial, solution to the problems.

The United States and Syria became politically motivated to create a mediating dialogue when they perceived that factual conditions related to their interests. In other words, they seek to alter or solve the crisis by means of political discourse, something that matters, something about which they both agree. The factual condition of the Middle East conflict, the hostage crisis, plus other related political and economic interests, comprise the exigence that Damascus and Washington are trying to modify. Their objectives are: an end to the hostage crises, the stabilization of the Lebanese political situation, a Middle East peace settlement, and containment of Khomeini's ideological influence. These rhetorical exigencies have made the
United States and Syria more inclined to cooperate to solve, or minimize, their danger. Perceiving this, they respond by creating a political dialogue. The United States has become increasingly concerned, for instance, about the Shiite fundamentalist movement and its ideological threat in the Middle East from which American economic and political interests would be at risk.

Washington’s appeal to Damascus argues convincingly that the Lebanese situation threatens in a major way the social and political stability in the Middle East. The U.S. and Syria seem to agree that the factual political condition has to be stabilized before further talks concerning an overall peace settlement can be put on the negotiation table. In the case of Lebanon, both U.S. and Syria perceive the same, or roughly the same, factual conditions, experience, and interests; hence, positive communication concerning the crisis should be possible.

The Lebanon dilemma has generated proportionally more interest and concern than the Middle East political situation overall. Both the U.S. and Syria possess a great deal of information about Lebanon and its civic turmoil: hundreds of people have been murdered; car bombings and kidnapping of international figures and journalists have become commonplace in Lebanon. These
are facts that appreciably affect us. Knowing the events through live television coverage has a more powerful effect than do events that have occurred in the past or in speculation over the future. Common interests will be reinforced insofar as the factual context is received directly and sensibly, or through expressive representation (Bitzer, 1981, p. 32).

In this age of communication, television technology has portrayed changing national images more rapidly and more vividly than any other mode of modern communication. Timely visual reports from distant locations create a perception of shrinking distance in a manner that cannot be achieved by any other media. The world now learns, via television, about a crisis or other world event in a few hours. The undisputed role of television media is to present the world as a live global community. Proximity in place and time are implied in Bitzer's rhetorical situation:

An exigence near in time and place generates more interest than a distant one. People are more interested in exigence which are near their own places than in distant places, and more interested in those which are imminent than in those occurring ten years past or in the distant future. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 32)
The use of television exemplifies Bitzer's conception of time and place and also reiterates Marshall McLuhan's notion of the "global village." In this age of global community, the targets of the Hezbollah faction in Lebanon and the type of kidnapping activities involved have instilled fear and anxiety in the world at large and the region in particular. This brings an urgency to the crisis. Bitzer remarks, "The urgency of a particular exigence depends on the intrinsic quality of the specific interest involved; pain and fear, for example, are normally more powerful than curiosity and self-esteem" (Bitzer, 1981, p. 32-33).

Indeed, television has made the events more powerful in terms of fear and anxiety than is the case for curiosity and self-esteem. The message of hostage-takers is instantly disseminated to a far-removed audience via television. Hostage-takers successfully utilize the media to get their message "home" to the "village" where almost everyone can watch and experience the effects of terrorism. It is the kidnappers' intent to create a McLuhanistic "tribal village" where everyone shares the experience simply by viewing it. Bitzer's concept of the transmission of pain and fear is applied once more to the television viewers, in such a way that the acts may, in fact, saturate the viewer (Schmid de Graaf, March 1986, p. 11).
Mcluhan's related theme that the medium is the message also engenders implications for receivers of the hostage-takers' rhetoric. Nieburg has said that, The medium-is-the-message expresses the fact that the forms of communication themselves have a central and primary effect on the kinds of things that are communicated. The intrusion of television, especially documentaries, news, and live coverage, makes us suddenly and distressingly aware of realities for which we lack insulation and prescribed social images. (Nieburg, 1969, p. 28)

The receiver may become so distressed by the urgency of the exigence that he/she merely perceives such crises as a part of world reality. Kidnappers' actions operate strategically and interactively as a means both to attract television coverage and to involve the audience in the abductors' own "tribal village." Strategically, however, the non-verbal act is much more effective in this age of television than the traditional use of written communication. Television today brings the crisis home to living rooms, making the factual condition known directly and sensibly through vivid film and video representation.

Television has revealed itself as the medium with the message, as a real source of truth and power in today's world politics. Negotiators involved have even
hit upon the term "Television diplomacy," where in some cases, opposing sides at removed distances use such a medium to communicate their views. For example, during the hijacking of TWA Flight 847 to Beirut, David Hartman on "Good Morning America," closed an interview with the Shiite Amal Leader, Nabih Berri, by asking him whether he (Berri) had any last words for President Reagan (Broadcasting, August 5, 1985, p. 11).

Television bridges a sense of anticipation and participation between diplomats and world events. Politicians have become more and more inclined to use television as a source of first-hand knowledge of world events. Alexander Haig reported that in his experience in the U.S. government, his first order of business each day was to review what the TV medium said and what had been said in the days before (Haig, March 9, 1985, p. 5).

Television again exemplifies Bitzer's concept of time and space when it bridges over dialogue between or among government officials in separate areas. When this occurs, an important part of television's transitional character is apparent in the countries' foreign policy, political discourse. Television serves the dual-purpose of speaker and audience as it connects representatives from around the world and gives them the opportunity for instantaneous dialogue. Television as an indispensable
mechanism in world communication was epitomized by Alexander Haig when he stated: "It is no secret that the governments with which we deal all rely on American television for information" (Haig, March 9, 1985, p. 6). Not a few observers have noted that television has become an awesome power in shrinking time and space and also in reshaping political discourse, especially when accompanied by visual images and when such information is extended over a long period of time. "Rhetorical forms thus arise as natural response to situations, and their contents, structural features, and strategies are answered to demands imposed by recurring situations" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 36).

Critical in any understanding of the nature of responses to an exigency is a concept Bitzer calls "modification capability." He explains: "If a person believes his response could modify the exigence, then he is likely to respond. As modification capability increases, readiness to respond increases" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 33). As Assad has stated, "Syria more than once has helped to save a number of Americans from the danger of possible death" (Time, Tuesday, October 14, 1986).

Syria's major concern in its effort to gain the release of American hostages is with the successful projection of capability. Not only is the appearance of
capability (ethos) required to present the act as a credible one but, more importantly, Syria has to present itself as a regional influencing power. Hence, the strategy of establishing ethos is crucial. For Syria, it becomes a matter of image, especially after having been accused in several circles of participating in terrorist activities and in helping terrorist groups. Therefore, the soundness and determination of its approach to modify the Middle East crisis is one of Damascus' most urgent credibility objectives.

Against this background, a recognition of Syria's capability to influence the parties involved in the hostage situation is implicit in the American government's desire to select such an agent. For now, Syria seems content to allow the United States to take the road to Damascus. It was Henry Kissinger who said: "Without Egypt, there can be no war against Israel. Without Syria there can be no peace" (Posner, March 5, 1985), p. 33).

Syria positioned itself as the mediating agent because of its knowledge of the Lebanese factual condition--a necessary resource in the analysis of the situation and in the creation and presentation of a pragmatic message. In this regard, Assad states, "Syria will continue efforts to help free more of the foreign hostages held in Lebanon. We approach the subject of
the hostages as a human issue. We understand their suffering" (Washington Post, A28, Sunday, September 20, 1987).

The recalling of ethos and pathos (emotional appeal to the audience) in Assad’s statement is in the interest of projecting Syria’s capability. Further, credibility is implied when Syria responds to the United States’ demand to release Navy flier Lieutenant Robert O. Goodman Jr. from Syrian captivity on December 4, 1983. The decision to release Goodman enhanced Syrian rapprochement with the U.S. rather than exacerbate the differences. Reportedly, however, Assad was the only high official to support Goodman’s release (Posner, McLeans, January 16, 1984, p. 25). In his private meeting with Assad, Jesse Jackson said, "If I can only have one lawyer in Syria to argue my case, I’ll take you" (Posner, McLeans, January 16, 1984, p. 25).

Capability and pathos were implied once more when Assad described his optimistic and pragmatic character. As he said, "we are all human. We all have our impulsive reactions to things. But in leadership, we have to restrain ourselves and analyze" (Kissinger, 1982, p. 1067).

In claiming the responsibility for freeing Robert Goodman, Assad improved the Syrian image, crediting his country for its goodwill and understanding. In return,
President Reagan publicly expressed his gratitude, saying that "Goodman’s release provided an opportune moment to put all the issues on the table" (Posner, McLeans, January 16, 1984, p. 25).

Syria’s responsiveness to the Goodman situation pointed up the fact that Syria is a capable and cooperative agent in the resolution of a crisis.

Throughout this continuing discourse, the factors Bitzer identifies as familiarity and confidence played a major role. Bitzer describes them this way: "Responsiveness is facilitated by familiarity and confidence. The speaker and audience who are familiar and practiced in responding to certain situations will be more ready. . . ." (Bitzer, 1980, p. 33).

Syria’s response to the Lebanese situation and its cooperation in freeing Navy Flier Lieutenant Robert O. Goodman enhanced its confidence and the willingness for further negotiations that eventually led to the release of 39 Americans hijacked to Beirut in June 1985. While the TWA hostage dilemma ostensibly revolved around a conflict between the Lebanese and the Israeli government, it was played out against the larger factual political context in the Middle East region. Therefore, Syria’s confidence and familiarity with the situation and the dialogue that brought about the release of the TWA hostages was the projection of goodwill on the
various parties involved. For instance, President Assad, according to American administration officials, "informed us" what he could do and simply asked, "is this o.k.?" (The Columbus Dispatch, July 3, 1985, p. 7B).

American-Syrian talks, in an attempt to bring the TWA hostage crisis to a peaceful resolution, produced new changes in credibility in American-Syrian relations. In putting its prestige on the line by guaranteeing the release of 39 U.S. hostages from their captors, Syria convincingly demonstrated confidence in and familiarity with the drama of a seemingly chaotic Lebanon. Bitzer's concepts of obligation and expectation were acknowledged by President Reagan when he stated: "Syria has had a central responsibility in [the hostages'] release." There is no doubt about it, said a state department official of the event, "Syria's role was important and positive" (Doerner, Time, July 15, 1985, p. 20).

Again, Bitzer's concepts of obligation and familiarity with the situation were manifested in early 1985 when Syria managed to liberate American television correspondent Jeremy Levin after a year's captivity in the Bagga region in Lebanon. The United States obligingly thanked Damascus for its help in Levin's ordeal (Dickey, Fall 1987, p. 69). Further, responsibility and understanding of the crisis and its modification were projected when Assad commented on his personal
involvement, saying, "I would like nothing better than the release of an American hostage" (Chua-Eoan, *Time*, July 20, 1987, p. 46). In this regard, Bitzer remarks, "An exigence that involves speaker or audience personally will generate more interest than one in which they are not directly involved" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 32).

Notions of obligation, expectation, familiarity and immediacy were implied once more when Damascus radio denounced the kidnappers who abducted Charles Glass, a former ABC news correspondent, on June 1987, as "terrorists" who would be "reckoned" with (Sheler and Kaylor, *U.S. News and World Report*, July 13, 1987, p. 16).

In this history of responses, the factor of immediacy has clearly played a major role. Bitzer has this to say: "Speaker and audience are also more likely to respond if they believe their efforts must occur now or never--that there is no opportunity for postponement" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 32).

Bitzer's concept of immediacy is implied in Syria's military response within an hour of the Glass abduction, when Syrian security forces set up check points around the southern suburb of Beirut where Glass was believed to be held. There were also reports that Syrian troops closed off the main highway near the Lebanese-Syrian
Syria's response:

Syria responded immediately with a show of toughness. Its roadblocks confiscated all Hezbollah visas and arms permits, and even inspected Iranian diplomatic cars. Its Intelligence Chief, Brigadier Ghazi Kanaan, lobbied intensively, going himself to the home of Sheikh Fadlallah. (Mortimer, The Middle East, September 1987, p. 28)

Immediate response and tightening up their siege of the Shiite areas where the kidnappers were thought to have been hiding, Syria eventually facilitated the reporter's release. Syria, in the Charles Glass ordeal, believed its efforts must come now or never; there was no chance for lateness. Whatever the circumstances, the escape of a free-lance reporter after two months in captivity in Beirut was welcome news.

The U.S. government expressed its appreciation for Syrian efforts in the Glass release. Vernon Walters, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, telephoned America's official thanks to President Assad. And the U.S. State Department quickly passed a decision that Ambassador William L. Eagleton would return to Damascus in September. He was recalled in October, however, in response to alleged Syrian involvement in a terrorist incident in

By the end of 1985, five Americans had been taken hostage in Beirut. Despite the Reverend Benjamin Weir's release in September of 1986, Americans throughout the Middle East were regarded as being in serious danger. A State Department spokesman said, "The situation in Lebanon and notably Beirut is so chaotic that no American citizens can be made safe from terrorist attack" (Abu Fadil, March 1987, p. 21).

The outrage brought about by reports of hostage abductions and armed attacks, accompanied by prolonged agony and suspense from hijacking, was often heightened by interviews with anguished family members. Under these circumstances it was not surprising that there was a public belief, following these terrorist activities in Lebanon and elsewhere, that the life of almost any American visiting in the Middle East would be at risk.

In most all major terrorist activities, the strength of the prompt media messages, offered without perspective or explanation, produced powerful pressure on governments. The U.S. television audience, having little situational context or understanding of such events, was trying to understand why the Lebanese were killing or abducting innocent individuals. For the terrorist, action television provided sought-after publicity more than any medium.
For instance, during the first two days of the TWA hijacking, CBS News had more information than did the State Department. "A State Department official reacted with horrified disbelief when told by CBS News that the hijackers had separated and removed hostages with Jewish sounding names" (Larson, Autumn 1986, p. 114).

Most of the major networks aired interviews with relatives of the hostages, which played a decisive role in the dramatic events of the hostage-taking. This strong element of human drama, having been inserted at the very beginning of the story, was difficult to ignore later. The story of human aspiration was reinforced by the early release of some hostages who suffered from physiological fatigue. Upon their release, their reunions with relatives and friends emphasized television's capacity to convey emotion and intimacy.

Electronic media attention to the hostages' families and their relatives constituted a saturating coverage of the hostage situation. Such attention contributed a gripping story line. Television coverage of the hostages and their relatives helped to sustain viewers' interest in the crisis and, more importantly, created an impact on society and its relationship to government policies. The force of public opinion created an exigency to which the President and other policy makers had to respond by creating foreign policy (Terry, 1986, p. 1).
The increased importance of domestic political concern, especially given the predictable and lengthy media coverage of U.S. Presidential elections, had its impact on the foreign policy field. President Carter's re-election chances in 1980 were severely damaged by the continued holding of the hostages in the American embassy in Teheran. Carter had clearly made their freedom and physical well-being a top priority in response to powerful public opinion. President Reagan's response to the dilemma of the Lebanese hostage situation, made for a similar reason, was a major factor in motivating diplomatic contact with the Syrian government.

In the summer of 1986, the level of domestic pressure and of public sentiment rose concerning the American hostages held in Lebanon. The hostages' families became more openly active, visible, and critical of administration handling of the hostage problem in Beirut. The release of Father Martin Jenco, an event that was followed by new appeals for the release of the remaining hostages, brought on more public pressure. The kidnappers broke a long period of silence with the careful release of messages through Lebanese newspapers and videotapes from the hostages, some of which were evidently prepared under physical and psychological duress.

As early as October of 1986, families of Americans held as hostages in Lebanon turned up the heat on the
White House when the administration arranged the release of *U.S. News and World Report*'s journalist, Nicholas Daniloff, after his arrest in Moscow. There was a demand by members of the hostages' relatives for the same degree of attention toward releasing the hostages in Lebanon. There was a feeling of betrayal and outrage over President Reagan's refusal to negotiate with the Islamic radicals holding the Americans, as he had done with the Kremlin. A "double standard" is how Eric Jacobsen, son of Beirut hostage David Jacobsen, described Reagan's handling of the two situations (*U.S. News and World Report*, September 29, 1986, p. 12).

Washington had evidently hoped to modify the hostage exigency by dealing with any country that was capable of obtaining the hostages' release. And, the U.S. government was willing to engage in a dialogue with any government capable of bringing about their freedom. Secretary of State George Shultz had recently said, "the United States will talk to anyone, to any group, to any government about the well-being and release of the Americans still held hostage in Lebanon" (Boustany, Tuesday, May 17, 1988, p. A14).

To some, the agreement to sell arms to Iran was actually a clear manifestation of President Reagan's concern and personal commitment to the hostages and their families. The administration reached the point of seeking
any avenue to gain the release of the remaining hostages, believed to be detained in Lebanon's Beqaa region, an area ostensibly under Syrian control. However, some American officials hold the conviction that the revelation of the arms for hostages deal made it indispensable to seek other avenues to gain the release of the remaining hostages (Gerald, Friday, June 26, 1987, p. 2).

There were, indeed, some hopeful public signals from Syria's President, Assad. In an effort to appease Washington, he closed the Damascus office of the Abu-Nidal group, while denouncing the abduction of westerners in Beirut. What surprised some Middle East political observers concerning Washington's rush to communicate with Damascus was that Washington had no one to blame but itself for its diplomatic distance from the Syrians.

The dramatic change of Washington's stand toward Syria by early March 1986 was a new strategy in exposing Iranian-backed terrorist networks operating in the Middle East, as well as in the western democratic alliance (Dicky, March 9, p. 21). Assad frequently affirmed his intention to help release western hostages in Beirut and by March 1986 appeared to be taking the issue seriously. An obvious manifestation of Assad's willingness to cooperate with the United States was, as noted above, his decision to close the Abu-Nidal offices. In addition, tough policy measures were put into effect in the eastern
Bagaa Valley area to control the estimated two to three thousand Iranian revolutionary guards as well as to inhibit Lebanese Shiites and the radical Hezbollah. Damascus' control has been placed on the Iranians and their allies. The Iranians were no longer allowed to pass unchecked through Syrian military check points on the Syrian-Lebanese frontier. The flow of Iranian military supplies to the Hezbollah also has been banned (Smith & Jackson, March 1987, p. 46).

Gazi Kanaan, the chief of Syrian military intelligence in Lebanon, called for foreign journalists and diplomats to return to Beirut, saying that new Syrian security measures would assure their safety. Kanaan said, "All armed men, no matter what their party or movement, will be considered enemies of Beirut" (Smith & Jackson, March 9, 1987, p. 49).

Damascus' political and military move in Lebanon symbolized Syria's position as the Arab world's strongest leader. By directly intervening in Lebanon, Syria may be able to put an end to the hostages' ordeal, a move that would surely improve its standing in Washington. Damascus also needs to change its image since Syrian involvement in terrorist activities has been alleged by the media (Cooper & Dicky, March 9, 1987, p. 21).

The Reagan administration's decision to return its Ambassador to Damascus was enhanced by the Syrian decision
to close Abu-Nidal offices and by the tough action taken against the Iranians and their allies in Baalbak. While seeking assistance in gaining the release of the remaining hostages, the Syrian leader responded with what the White House called "a generally positive reply" (Neff, July 11, 1987, p. 6). President Reagan then sent Assad a conciliatory letter praising the Syrian military toughness on the Hezbollah faction, and on the closing of the Abu-Nidal office in Damascus.

The visit to Syria by President Reagan's special envoy, Vernon Walters, was meant to enhance the process of political discourse between the two nations, a process which suffered from U.S. government accusations of Syrian involvement in international terrorism. The terrorist incidents in 1986 in Rome and in Vienna and the American denunciation of Syrian alleged involvement of such incidents raised a new diplomatic crisis that continued through the spring of 1987. At that time, U.S. officials said they were convinced that Assad had moved decisively to prevent Syria from being used as a platform of terrorist operations.

The U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Vernon Walters, met twice with Assad in July of 1987. Later he said that the "Syrian president considers the pursuit of the hostages a 'question of honor'" (Mortimer, September 1987, p. 28). But in the same year, leaders in other western capitals
saw Assad as the "hostages' best friend" (The Economist, September 12, 1987, p. 45).

President Reagan's message was carried by Walters to Assad. One administration official familiar with the content of the letter said President Reagan had raised several areas of concern in which he felt Syria could be cooperative and constructive. In addition to the hostage problem, the letter also represented the administration's first attempt to improve diplomatic relations since the U.S. withdrew its ambassador and ordered other Americans to leave Syria as a result of Britain's claim of Syrian involvement in an unsuccessful effort to plant a bomb aboard an Israeli El Al plane at Heathrow Airport. Administration officials said that one factor in Reagan's decision to send Vernon Walters on a mission to Damascus was the decision by Assad to close down Abu-Nidal's Damascus operations. Washington had said that such a move would show that the Syrian leader's certified opposition to Abu-Nidal was genuine (Gerald, Friday, June 16, 1987, p. 2).

Damascus, as a western diplomat said, "would like nothing better than to release an American hostage" (Chua-Eoan, July 20, 1987, p. 46). Assad would like to develop the perception that he is doing the things that would allow economic and political pressure on his country to be lifted by Washington (Chua-Eoan, July 20, 1987, p. 46).
"The only way to release the remaining hostages in Lebanon," said Fadia Kirwan of the University of Saint Joseph in Beirut, "is for the west to have good relations with Syria's Hafez Assad and to encourage him to go into Beirut's southern suburb" (Mortimer, September 1987, p. 28).

Agreeing with these statements, President Assad, in an interview in The Washington Post, said he welcomed the opening of dialogue with Washington through the return of the U.S. Ambassador, William Eagleton. As one American diplomat put it: "What Assad is saying in effect, is we are ready for a political dialogue, but only if the U.S. ends its policy of confrontation" (Watson, Jan. 16, 1987, p. 22).

Despite countless political conflicts with Washington, Assad maintained a positive attitude toward the United States. He encouraged former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in 1973 during his Middle East peace mission and played host to both former Presidents Richard Nixon in 1974 and Jimmy Carter in 1983. Recognition of these events makes it clear that Syria became the mediating influence and offered leadership for the west in the Middle East region. It was widely believed that Damascus was, as of 1985, in the best position to act on the United States' goal to settle the hostage crisis and to promote an Arab-Israeli peace settlement. Understanding this, the
U.S. steadily narrowed the diplomatic and communication distance between Washington and Damascus.

Syria made some conciliatory moves when its state-run radio in 1985 charged that the abduction of westerners was stigmatizing the Lebanese and the Arabs. The radio asserted that the abductions must be stopped by all means possible. The United States government asked for Syrian help in winning the freedom of the Americans held hostage and Damascus complied by saying that they would like nothing better than to have the release of American hostages. In Bahrain, Vernon Walters said, "The Syrians have assured me they will do everything they can to help and preserve the life and health of the hostages (The Columbus Dispatch, May 29, 1988, p. 3A).

The aftermath of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in the summer of 1982 had its political and social ramifications on the region in which the hostage-taking phenomenon re-emerged. The wave of kidnapping activities directed at foreigners in Lebanon began as a direct result of the Israeli assault on the Lebanese capital. These kidnapping activities were intended to send an international symbolic message that rested on the explicit assumption that the world must learn about the true nature of Israel's iron-fist policy in Lebanon and about the U.S.'s "Israel-First" policy in the region.
Statistical argument tends to mask the psychological and political impact of the hostage-taking as a fear-provoking strategy involving the unfeeling detention of innocent individuals to obtain political or personal ends. The political and psychological dynamic of hostage-taking as a symbolic act of power is of the greatest importance. The object of hostage-taking by a certain Lebanese faction is to impose political pressure and psychological fear on the American government. Consequently, hostage-taking is one of the most disruptive potential threats to western industrialized democracy.

Not a few observers noted that it is important for Washington to be aware of the limitations and the key players in the region with whom they could cooperate. Dickey, for example, observed that,

Assad understood early on that Lebanon is more than a battleground, it is a weapon. Its corrosive hatreds and factionalism, its chaos and violence cannot be controlled, but they can be manipulated. Once Lebanon engaged Assad’s adversaries, whether Israel or the United States or France, the place worked on them like a chemical agent . . . (Dickey, Fall 1987, pp. 59-60)

An essential motivation of Damascus’ policies toward Lebanon has been a conviction that Lebanon and Syria are
inseparable. The dream of a greater Syria continues to penetrate the psyche not only of the Syrian Alawi sectarian elite, but also, and more widely, of the Syrian population. Syrians tend to maintain the belief that their boundary with neighboring Lebanon was a sham, fabricated by France to serve its colonial desires and interests. President Assad once declared that, "throughout history, Syria and Lebanon have been one country and one people" (Dawisha, Spring 1984, p. 220).

Assad’s perceptions have indeed translated into Syrian policy in Lebanon. Thus, throughout the relations between Syria and Lebanon, Syria has not kept an embassy in Lebanon and has never restricted movement between the two countries. Both countries gained their independence in 1946, and their cultural and social traditions still bind their people: the Moslems, the Christians, and the Druze. "We are one people," says a Syrian farmer living near the Lebanese border. "We go back and forth as if it were one nation" (Kelly, December 19, 1983, p. 27). Political traditions also dictate that any new Lebanese head of state’s first foreign visit has to be to Damascus. A Syrian official said, "Lebanon is the one issue on which any Syrian President would be prepared to take the greatest risk" (Kelly, December 19, 1983, p. 26). Concurring with these statements, Secretary of State George Shultz remarked that, "No one questions Syria’s
legitimate security concern with respect to Lebanon" (Schiff, Spring 1984, p. 109).

The complex Middle East crisis involving Lebanon may be analyzed as a basic diplomatic interpersonal discourse as well as a public rhetorical situation, inasmuch as American policymakers have become convinced that a peace settlement in Lebanon would be almost impossible without whole-hearted consent from Damascus. Washington's willingness to come to such terms is clear, even though it may mean jeopardizing its relations with Israel. The only remaining U.S. option seems to be that the reconciliation be reached through political dialogue and not as the result of an overt use of military action. Events in Lebanon have shown that U.S. military power cannot change the political reality there and could never produce a community of minds.

In sum, the Lebanese hostage crisis deflects attention from, and weakens the prospect of, political dialogue in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Social and Political Constraints

Responses to critical exigencies are always within the context of social and political constraints. Bitzer has this to say about the role such constraints play in any response:

Besides exigence and audience, every rhetorical situation contains a set of constraints made up of
persons, events, objects, relations, facts, laws, principles, arguments, feelings, values, emotions, attitudes, motives, images, rules, beliefs, documents, traditions, interests, conventions and the like which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence. (Bitzer, 1968, p. 21; 1980, p. 23; 1981, p. 239)

Besides the element of the mediating audience in the hostage problem, there is also a set of social and political constraints which have the power to influence decisions in the process of bringing about the hostages' release. These constraints are part of the rhetorical situation and include the mediating agents' values, attitudes, and character. Constraints are influential factors in inducing the mediating audience in a way that could affect the action and purpose of bringing about the freedom of the remaining hostages.

American-Syrian political discourse occurs at a broad level in the Middle East rhetorical exigencies and the hostile element is essentially responsive to it. Both the U.S. and Syria find themselves in situations that represent a rhetorical crisis which they seek to modify by engaging in political dialogue. Both, however, recognize that either a complete or partial modification of the crisis requires the assistance of talks to engage
constraints such as images, attitudes, events, relations and motives that are sufficient to induce the mediating agents to positively modify the crisis. According to Bitzer (1981),

In the absence of an exigence, there would be no motive to speak; in the absence of constraints, messages could not be effective; in the absence of a mediating audience messages would be futile. Exigence, constraints, and mediating audience thus are the essential constituents of political situations in which discourse is invited. (p. 239)

When the factual political condition, relations to interests, and social and political constraints are perceived and experienced as effective or crucial, the mediating agents will be more inclined to respond rhetorically to the crisis. The agents' rhetorical response to the situation contains many constraints such as the agents' perceptions, images, character, values, and the like in conjunction with other constraints operating in the situation. These constraints as part of the situation are responsible for influencing decisions and actions in which the crisis can be wholly or partially modified.

Some Syrians hold the belief that lack of firsthand knowledge and experience of the Middle East have made the United States rely on, and at times become receptive to, opinions of the other middle eastern players. Israel's
deep antipathy toward Damascus above all other Arab rivalries is a clear manifestation of misapprehension of Syria's role in the region (Kessler, 1987, p. 1). The U.S. ambassador to Syria from 1978-1981 revealed this misperception when he described Secretary of State Alexander Haig's unawareness of Syria's regional policy, stating that, "Haig had no hesitation during his visit to Israel in the spring of 1981 to attack publicly a Syrian action in the Bakaa on the basis of a one-sided and inaccurate Israeli version of events" (Seelye, spring 1983, p. 41).

In the case of Lebanon, Syria perceived that Washington's role was influenced by propaganda implemented by elements in the Lebanese society suggesting that if only Syria withdrew, the Lebanese central government working with the White House could restore the Lebanese political structure. For these reasons, some Middle East political observers claimed that the Reagan administration elected to support the unpopular government of Amin Jamyil and missed the opportunity to follow the more realistic objective of attaining a national reconciliation among the various Lebanese factions, in line and compatible with the prevailing situation in Lebanon (Devlin, 1986, p. 375).

These political and social constraints reside in a diversity of attitudes, images, and perceptions between the mediating agents and are revealed rhetorically.
Former President Jimmy Carter portrayed the U.S. Government's conception of the situation by saying,

... we must recognize that Syria, whether we like it or not, has genuine security interests in the region and will play a major role in any future agreement of peace ... It's obvious that the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and its aftermath have greatly enhanced the influence of President Assad and the Syrians in the entire Middle East. We ought to recognize that fact, communicate and negotiate freely and substantively with the Syrians, and try to bring about a resolution of the Lebanese crisis.

(Peterson, January 13, 1984, p. 13)

Recognition of these events, images, and perceptions are viewed as constraints for influencing dialogue and action needed to remove or alter the situation. They are tied to Syria's perception of itself as a regional power, not a global one. According to the Syrians, the globalistic perception of Syria is a result of the misperception of some of the Israel-First-Policy advocates in the Reagan administration. These advocates claimed Syria is a base for Soviet influence and a stumbling block to U.S. efforts to solve the Lebanese crisis and reach a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict.
This globalistic misconception of Syria was revealed by a senior Israeli lecturer of history at Ben-Gurion University when he stated,

The Americans tend to see Syrian policy in global rather than regional terms, suspecting that behind its stand lay a Soviet attempt to direct attention away from the USSR invasion of Afghanistan and to hinder their peace efforts. Moreover, the Americans mistakenly assumed that Syria, weakened by internal crisis and its defeat by Israel, would be obliged to accept U.S. terms, particularly if Saudi pressure could be mobilized. (Zamir, 1987, p. 57)

This global perspective notwithstanding, the U.S. sphere of influence and strategic interest at the same time served to minimize or overlook the defensive nature of many of Damascus' regional moves and their root causes. William Quandt has revealed the risk of this philosophy in American foreign policy in the Middle East:

The result of these misconceptions was a United States policy in subsequent years that was too narrowly focused on Israel . . . and the Soviet Union. The military balance was seen as the key to stability, if not to peace. Arms to Israel were of higher priority than new peace initiatives. Too little attention was paid to political development in the region, to mounting frustrations in Egypt and
Syria and among the Palestinians... In short, the global dimension of the conflict was virtually all that Nixon and Kissinger seemed to care about. By ignoring the trends, they misjudged the very forces that would lead... to a much more dangerous outbreak of war. (1977, p. 128)

Another related political constraint in American/Syrian dialogue is the Syrian perception of the U. S.'s incapability of playing an even-handed role in the Arab-Israeli conflict. For the Syrians, the special alliance between Israel and the United States became critical when it became apparent that Washington was seemingly unable to convince Israel to engage in any peace settlement whatsoever. This perception holds that Israel and its lobbyists in the United States Congress can easily manipulate Washington's perspective and action (Aruri, March 1984). Moreover, Syrians commonly perceive the Reagan administration policy as stemming from a deep Anti-Arab sentiment. In the Syrian view, American-Israeli relations are almost symbiotic (Seelye, 1985).

On October 29, 1983, important events entered the situation that not only highlight the previous constraints already identified, but also provide additional, influential constraints. After congressional debates, President Reagan signed National Security Decision Directive III. This directive renewed U. S.-Israeli cooperation in an
effort to attack Syria. Agreement with the directive was demonstrated when Israeli Prime Minister Shamir arrived in Washington to confirm the intent of the agreement. Shortly thereafter, U. S.-Israeli planes raided a Syrian position in the Bakaa region (Quandt, 1984).

The American-Israeli strategic agreement and their attack on Syria’s position in Lebanon added more political constraints and placed America’s Arab friends very much on the defensive. For example, King Hussein of Jordan commented that, "Israel had always tried to polarize the region by portraying itself as America’s only friend in the area" (Dawish, spring 1984, p. 232). President Assad, in an interview with news correspondent Christopher Dickey, gave his own perception of the events:

It is Israel which stands behind all this . . . there is no serious and direct reason which would have caused the deterioration in relations between [Syria and the United States]. Israel always has an interest in creating such divisions . . . It looks at the United States as a treasure and fears that any other side may compete to get this treasure. (Dickey, September 28, 1987, p. 32)

Reflection of the previous constraints given by the situation were manifested once more by the rhetorical discourse of the mediating audience. The Syrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, for example, during his visit to
Washington in November 1983, refused on one occasion to talk to radio and television reporters, telling them: "We do not conduct interviews with colonizers and aggressors... [an interview with you would be] tantamount to an appearance on Israeli television" (Dawish, spring 1984, p. 232).

Situations are not fixed or unchanging. Some elements, after all, are caught up in streams of political history, which are themselves part of the rhetorical situation. One such element is the image of Syria as a state sponsoring terrorism. World-wide perceptions were generated to portray Syria as participating in terrorist activities and helping terrorist groups to operate in the region as well as in Europe. Such images were generated in large part by the British media. Subsequent to this accusation, additional influential constraints were generated.

The U.S. Ambassador to Damascus withdrew from October 1986 to 1987. Assad obviously sensed a need to respond rhetorically by addressing what Chaim Perelman called "universal audience" (an audience composed of all rational adults) using certain historical and political documents and other constraints. In an extensive interview granted to *Time Magazine*, Assad gave his version of events:

Such accusations did not represent the truth... we believe that these accusations do not represent a
purely American political will. It rather embodies a Zionist Israeli will. Indeed, if the matter was purely American, accusations would not have been directed to Syria which more than once helped to save a number of Americans from the danger of a possible death. (*Syria Times*, October 14, 1986, p. 3)

In his speech at the Fifth Islamic Summit Conference in Kuwait on January 26-29, 1987, Assad said:

Frankly I tell you that an American told me personally that it was not a question of terrorism, it was rather that Syria should be penalized and this is the time for punishment. This American was not an official, but he was charged with conveying this message to me. This message is so clear that it leaves no need of deduction, speculation and estimation . . . Nevertheless, the United States talks now about terrorism and accuses us of terrorism. But when Israel strikes with tens of thousands of tons of bombs the villages and cities of Lebanon, and an Arab capital, namely Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, killing civilians, children, women and men, in this case the United States keeps silent . . . Instead America considers such Israeli strikes as security necessities.

Assad further added:
It was Israel which introduced terrorism into the Middle East and disseminated it in the world. It was Israel which started the hijacking of civilian aircraft. It hijacked a Syrian passenger plane in 1954 and forced it to land in Israel. (Perhaps, as far as I remember, this was the first act of hijacking in the Arab area and the Middle East.) It hijacked an Iraqi civilian plane which had on board a high level Syrian official delegation and forced it to land in Israel. It was Israel which shot down in 1973 a Libyan passenger plane, causing by this premeditated act the death of a hundred passengers of various nationalities. (January 26-29, 1987, p. 22-27)

American-Syrian political dialogue evolves around various social and political constraints, because only then can their talks be important and sufficient to modify the crisis at hand. The availability of these constraints is a necessary condition to communicate the problems and work to evoke change. Recognition of this conviction, however, stated by Bitzer, holds that "... any discourse which seeks to modify the exigence directly will be fruitless because either audience or constraints are lacking" (1980, p. 34). Hence, constraints become an important factor in the communication by which the mediating agents strive to achieve understanding of the
situation. Ehrnman Bruce, a career U. S. Foreign Service Officer for Syria in the Department of State, epitomized these social and political constraints made up of Syrian beliefs and attitudes, and of the U. S. image through Syrian eyes, by stating:

American policy in the region begins with Israel as its baseline, the Syrians believe. Indeed, they have accused the United States of pursuing an "Israeli Foreign Policy" in the region rather than an "American Policy." America not only acts against Arab interests in the region, it acts against its own interests. This is particularly galling since, at bottom, Syrians generally like Americans, and respect the principles for which America claims to stand in the world. If only they would act here on the basis of those principles . . . (Ehrnman, 1986, p. 19)

Official U. S. attitudes and images of Syria represent it as violently anti-American, a Soviet proxy, Middle East peace spoiler, and a religious partisan of the Ayatollah's Iran. These political and social constraints have dominated the U.S. perception of Syria and its regional strategies.

Syrian efforts to sabotage the May 17, 1983 U. S. sponsored Israeli-Lebanese peace agreement have been interpreted in this vain. However, as often occurs in the region, both countries erred in their perception of one
another's objectives and interests. What became an important constraint in Washington, however, was the image that Damascus stood firmly in stopping what the U. S. government perceived to be a positive development in Lebanon. Damascus' opposition to the May 17 incident changed Syria's image from a cooperative partner in restoring peace and tranquility in Lebanon into a spoiler. A Senior Israeli Official said:

What Assad is doing now is making sure that he is included, that nothing can go forward without him. But his ultimate aim is what it has always been. In effect, what he is saying is, don't you dare leave me out of whatever is coming, because if you leave me out, then I cannot be around to spoil it. (Kramer, March 14, 1988, p. 14)

In October 1983, important events entered the situation that not only enhanced the previous constraints already given but provided important new ones. The Shiites' attack on the Marine headquarters in Lebanon, in which 341 Marines were killed, further tarnished America's image of Damascus, particularly since the incident occurred when American diplomacy efforts were under way to modify the Lebanese trauma. According to Ehrnman "... It was unbelievable to the Americans that Syria did not have some role in or knowledge of the attack and several
senior American officials laid responsibility on Damascus" (Ehrnman, 1986, p. 15).

Since the October 1983 attack on the U. S. marines, Syria has been stigmatized as a state supporting terrorism. The current violence in Lebanon (which increasingly targets American interests in Lebanon as well as in Europe) has provoked an even more negative attitude toward Damascus. Syrian activities have been identified by the U.S. as "state-supported terrorism." This image probably will remain a major obstruction to better diplomatic relations with the United States, as far as Washington is concerned. These political and social constraints have an influence on both countries' political rapprochement. In May 1986, CIA Director William Casey stated:

... Syria and Iran use terrorism as an instrument of foreign policy. They hire and support established terrorist organizations. These countries make their officials, their embassies, their diplomatic pouches, their communication channels and their territory as safe havens for these criminals to plan, direct and execute bombing, assassination, kidnapping and other terrorist operations. (The Washington Post, May 22, 1986)

The late CIA Director William Casey's image of Syria was influenced by the perception of a Syria-Iran axis. Such an alliance provided additional, crucial constraints
that helped defame the image of Syria in the eyes of the U. S. government. This was particularly so when Americans were held hostages by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah faction whose financial and political support come from Iran. Further suspicion of Damascus' Iranian connection is exemplified by the absence of Syrian action against Hezbollah, which its military presence in Balbak, Lebanon could have enabled it to do. Syria's alliance with the Teheran government has had clear implications for both American and Syrian policy in Lebanon. Syrian rapprochement with Ayatollah Khomeini's regime has allowed the Iranians to have a strong voice in Lebanese social and political affairs. Such interference has been perceived as a major impediment to U.S. diplomatic efforts to restore the Lebanese political structure (Ehrnman, 1986).

Since 1979, Teheran has monitored Lebanon closely and consistently. For example, in September 1984 the Iranian Foreign Ministry condemned a veto by the United States of the United Nations Security Council's decision to seek a withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon. Subsequently, according to Ramazani, "The American veto led to the bombing of the U. S. embassy in Beirut" (1986, p. 184). Iranian intervention in Lebanon not only highlighted the present constraints given by the situation in Lebanon, but also contributed additional and essential ones.
Even before he came to power in Iran, Khomeini aimed to control the Shiite community in Lebanon. Khomeini envisioned an Islamic state in a secular Lebanon. This evoked more constraints which have the capability to influence the process and action of the mediating agents. The Lebanese Shiite community targeted by Khomeini's ideological zeal constitutes almost 40 percent of the Lebanese population. Interestingly, however, the majority of them opposed Syria's presence in Lebanon. To some extent, this limited Syria's influence to implement a comprehensive peace formula between Lebanon's warring factions (Hirschfeld, 1986).

The Syrian secular system is anathema to the Ayatollah's ideology. His efforts to export Islamic-fundamentalism have gained some success in Lebanon. This fundamentalism represents a long term threat to Assad's own government. Former President Jimmy Carter saw this. He stated his assessment of Khomeini's influence on the Lebanese Shiites: "... The Lebanese Shiites [have become] too infused with the Zeal of Khomeini's Shiites in Iran, a religious fervor that could eventually turn against Assad's government ..." (Carter, 1985, p. 88).

Khomeini's ideological enthusiasm represents more constraints, in conjunction with previous constraints in the situation, that influence the mediating audience's rhetorical dialogue. For instance, one Syrian official,
when asked about Iran's influence upon and agreement with Hezbollah activity in Lebanon, said "It is very well known that Hezbollah's support comes from Iran" (The Columbus Dispatch, Friday May 27, 1988, p. 1A). The Lebanese Newspaper AlNahar quoted the Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister as saying Iran would approve a Syrian military intervention in the southern slums only if the hostage situation was resolved "in a way that serves the objectives for which they were kidnapped" (The Columbus Dispatch, Tuesday March 24, 1988, p. A4).

Another facet of political constraints are economic constraints. Due to the shut-down of the Iraqi oil pipeline, and thereafter the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war, Syria increasingly became dependent on Iranian oil. Americans once more came to believe Iran-Syria economic cooperation signified a Syrian consent to Iranian policy in Lebanon. By not using its political and economic leverage to influence the Iranians (who support and influence Hezbollah) to bring about the hostages' release, the image of Syria in American eyes was further tarnished (Ehrnman, 1986, p. 18).

Syrian economic dependence came in April 1982, when Syria shut down the Iraqi pipeline. The line ran from Kirkuk to Banias in Syria and to Tripoli in Lebanon. It was part of the Irano-Syrian agreement that [among other things] compensated Syria for its oil-transit revenue
losses. These economic pressures provided additional important constraints for affecting the readiness and willingness to respond to the situation. According to Bitzer,

Speaker and audience may also ask what is the risk if I respond? What will my response cost in time and energy, and how many? And what will be my satisfaction, gain, or reward? Readiness to respond will vary according to the degree of risk: other things being equal, a person who stands to lose much and gain little is less inclined to respond than one who stands to gain much and lose little. (1980, p. 33)

After 1982, Syria became heavily dependent on Iranian oil. Indeed, according to Howard and Chu-Eoan, Syria owes Iran more than $1 billion, nearly a third of its outstanding non-military debt, for discounted oil. Iran has also supplied Syria with more than 26 million barrels of free crude since 1982 (Howard & Chua-Eoan, July 20, 1987, p. 46; Ehrnman, 1986, p. 18; Ramazani, 1986, p. 82).

The Syrian economy is chaotic. According to Christopher Dickey, the central bank has less than $20 million in foreign exchange reserves. There are widespread shortages, and Syria, which used to export wheat, may have to import a million tons in the coming years. Power outages are common; even in the presidential palace, the chandeliers often flicker (Dickey, September 1987).
The influence of these constraints on Damascus were revealed in a two-hour interview with President Assad, who said, "It is against the interest of the Arabs to break relations with Iran." He indicated that Syria will fight any move to break diplomatic relations with Iran by any Arab state. He noted that not even Iraq has broken diplomatic relations with Iran (Hoagland, Tyler & Dickey, Sunday, September 20, 1987).

In addition to the foregoing constraints which contributed a significant amount of influence on the mediating agents' readiness and action to evoke change, there has been a negative perception generated in large part by the Syrian media. The Syrian press tends to use misleading and distorted facts against the United States. A series of hostile statements by Syrian government officials coupled with Anti-American rhetoric on the part of the Syrian media have enhanced the negative image of Syria in American public opinion.

These negative images of Syria, according to Seelye, have stemmed from the failure of most Americans to differentiate between Syrian rhetoric and the reality of Syrian policy. The gap between the two is actually a Syrian phenomenon, quite foreign to Americans and one that is not easily comprehensible to westerners in general. President Assad's occasional indulgence in rhetoric
strongly attacking the U. S. has only served to emphasize this gap. (1985, p. 14)

Seelye optimized these social and political constraints in conjunction with other constraints operating in the situation. He stated:

It is difficult for some Americans to believe that Syria and the United States have much, if anything, in common. The conventional image of Syria portrays it as violently anti-America, a Soviet satellite, Qadafi-like in its rejection of Middle East peace, radical in its political ideology, saber-rattling toward Israel, and a religious partisan of Khomeini. This being the case, the question is asked, why should the United States bother with Syria? (Seelye, spring 1983, p. 40)

In summary, it is clear that the presence of previous social and political constraints are aspects of the political-social arena, and in turn, the rhetorical situation. Constraints are regarded as factors within which the mediating agents must work to evoke change and modify the crisis. Constraints work to "mould" or "shape" the rhetorical response. In this historical narrative, which is critical to an understanding of the history and culture in which the rhetorical situation is embedded, it is also necessary to portray in detail one of the major rhetors—namely, Hafez Al-Assad of Syria.
The Syrian Rhetor: Assad

Hafez Al-Assad, the President of Syria, was born in the small village of Zirdaha in Lathigia region in northwestern Syria on October 6, 1930. Assad, whose name means "protector of the lion," is the oldest child of a large, poor farming family. Assad grew up as a member of the Alawite sect, an offshoot of Shiite Islam. The Alawite comprise only 13 percent of the Syrian population (Kelly, March 1984, p. 100). They have a reputation for being rugged mountaineers and throughout much of history, have maintained a degree of regional autonomy (Faksh, April 1984, p. 134).

Assad attended Zirdaha primary school and then Lathigia High School. From an early age, Assad was a political activist who protested against the French who occupied Syria until 1946. In 1947, Assad joined the Baath Party ("resurrection party") and in 1952, he entered the military academy. He was the first Alawite ever to be admitted at Homs Military Academy for Aviation, as an officer in the air force (Jones, January 1984, p. 24). Assad graduated in 1955 as a pilot officer, with the rank of Lieutenant. In 1957-1958, he was sent to Russia for specialized instruction in night combat. In 1959, after being promoted to a squadron leader, he was transferred to Egypt. He became a squadron leader in the United Arab Republic (UAR) Air Force.
In 1958, Egypt's President, Gamal Abdel Nasser, merged his country with Syria to form the United Arab Republic (UAR), but the union lasted only three and one-half years (Devlin, February 1986, p. 67). While the Syrian officers were in Egypt, secret contacts evolved. Hafez Assad was one of the five founding members of a military committee affiliated with the resurrection party doctrine. By 1960, there were twelve members—all belonged to the Alawite sect. The new committee members had come to believe the founder of the Baath Party had deceived the party objectives, by complying to Nasser's demand to abolish the party. Therefore, the committee members attempted to take control over the resurrection party. By the time of Syria's secession, the committee became an important and powerful element within the body politics of Syria.

In 1961, Syria was excommunicated from the UAR. The secessionists generally came from an alliance of diverse military officers. Assad, who rejected the secession, was still in Cairo where he was jailed for fifty-five days. Upon returning to Damascus in late 1961, Assad, along with sixty-three other resurrectionist members, were discharged. Subsequently, he was appointed in the Department of Overseas Transportation.

Assad played a dominant role in a coup d'etat by the group of Baathist army officers on March 9, 1963, that
ousted the secessionists, and brought the Baathists to power (Faksh, April 1984, p. 141). Assad now was appointed Commander of Syria's Air Force, and then to the rank of General in the Air Force in December 1964, and in 1966, became Minister of Defense (Jimmy Carter, 1985, p. 67).

Initially after the coup d'état, Amin Hafiz and Salah Jdid were the ruling power bloc. On February 23, 1966, another military coup occurred, in which Salah Jdid seized power and toppled Amin Hafiz. Salah Jdid successfully consolidated his power with Hafez Al-Assad to overthrow Amin Hafiz (Ma'oz, 1986, p. 25). After the ouster of Amin Hafiz, Assad became a dominant figure in the armed forces, as well as in Syrian politics. Therefore, the army and air force were now under Assad's control. Thereafter, Assad came to represent the military wing of the Baath Party, while Salah Jdid represented the political wing in Syrian political structure.

From the beginning, Salah Jdid engaged in the nationalization of Syrian economy. Assad disagreed with Jdid's economic policy, and saw Arab socialism as prescribing public ownership of industry, but at the same time, appreciated the principles of private property and free enterprise economy. Therefore, Assad believed and encouraged the idea of forming links with Western economy (Firro, 1986, p. 44; Tarbush, December 1985, p. 27). The
1967 war, with humiliating defeat by the Israeli's superior armed forces, was a turning point in Syrian political history, which cost Syria almost two-thirds of its air defense and some part of its territory, resulting in political chasm between the political wing and military wing.

Since the Arabs could not match Israeli military technology, Salah Jdid urged fighting to be continued on the Algerian model of liberation war, regardless of how long and how much it cost, to regain the occupied territory in which approach the Algerians still favored regarding Arab-Israeli conflict. Such doctrine created political chasm and different views between Arab East and Arab West.

Assad, as an Arab East, rejected the idea. Assad gave priority to military build-up, along with his idea of conventional war. Assad advocated restraint, until such time as it was "ready," then once it was "ready," he could not afford to act (Ma'oz et al., 1986, p. 259). Meanwhile, he wanted to strengthen Syria's position vis-a-vis other Arab countries. He was in favor of reequipping the army before economic development, as well as an end to political interference in military affairs. The political wing, headed by Salah Jdid, regarded the military as incompetent and insufficient.
On February 25, 1969, Assad staged a bloodless coup. He seized the radio station and several newspapers, and released some political prisoners. Assad's military coup d'état turned out to be limited, partly because he was opposed to the Kremlin, who threatened to sever all military and economic support to Syria if Assad succeeded.

Assad worked out a compromise between him and Salah Jdid, which was ratified by the Regional Congress in March 1969. However, this conciliation was a temporary remedy in the struggle of power. The rivalry heated up following the 1970 Jordanian-Palestinian civil war. Syrian intervention on supporting the Palestinians led to conflict between Assad and Jdid. Assad saw it a risky miscalculation, not only because the army was weak, but it might draw Syria to confrontation with Israel, which Syria was not prepared for. Consequently, Assad did not give orders to the air force to execute the operation (Katnow, March 8, 1975, p. 14).

In November 1970, Salah Jdid issued orders to discharge Assad and his followers. But it was too late—Assad, as a head of the armed forces, replied by holding the army in readiness and proclaiming himself to the country as a temporary leader. On November 16, 1970, in a successful, bloodless coup, or as has been called "corrective movement" or "Haraka Tasshehiah," Assad described his move against his rival as a response to the Syrian
people's demands and aspirations. "The people," he said, "are the chief concern, the organ and the goal of the revolution. They have been registering the bright pages in the history of this homeland" (Ma'oz, 1986, p. 29). Jdid was exiled.

Currently Assad's power is essentially supreme. He has shied his country away from parasitic relationships. This is a tough task for Assad, since economically and militarily, Syria must depend on foreign support (Hinnebusch, 1984, p. 138). He has achieved this, both on a regional and international scale. In other words, Syria, under Assad's leadership, employs an interdependent relationship. Syria has gone from a country merely depend on the Soviet Union, to a country with an interdependent relationship with the Soviets and their satellites. "Under Syria's predecessor . . . Syria embarked on a socialist course that sought to curb ties to the West . . . A new state--dominated economy emerge, aimed at self-sufficiency and free enterprise (Hinnebusch, 1984, p. 286). Salah Jdid, Assad's predecessor, pursued a dependent relationship with the Kremlin, both militarily and economically. By 1969, Syria had heavily relied on the Communist Russia. When Assad, in February 1969, attempted to take control of the government, the Soviets were an important factor in being able to temporarily stop
him. Assad altered this dependent relationship with Russia.

Internationally, Assad perceived Syria as a non-aligned state (Hinnebusch, 1984, p. 291). Moreover, by the end of 1970s, the Syrian president was being called the "Tito of the Arab world," because he was able to sever the Russian's stronghold on Syrian economic trade that his predecessor had placed Syria in (Brelis, August 7, 1978, p. 40). Devlin explains by stating,

In 1979 Syrian trade with the communist countries amounted to only 17 percent of the total, it had been dropping steadily for years . . . with a reduction of . . . Arab money in 1981 and probably 1982, some rise in Syria's trade with comecon countries is to be expected. But Western Europe should continue to account for about half the total. (Devlin, 1984, p. 139)

Assad has continually cracked down hard on communist elements in Syria, and he is not hesitant to displease the Kremlin when it suits Syria's interest (Watson, November 21, 1983, p. 57). However, Assad has become the first Syrian leader to abandon talk of destroying Israel; the first who is prepared to negotiate a settlement. According to Reed, Assad is following a route similar to that taken by Egypt's President Anwar Sadat when he (Assad) concluded "that Israel is in the Middle East to stay, and
that a one-sided dependence on Russia is not really in the interest of the Arabs" (Reed, August 1976, p. 139).

"Nobody here likes the Russians, not even our rulers," explained one upper-class Syrian woman (Watson, February 13, 1984, p. 31).

These political sentiments toward the Soviet Union was manifested when Assad refused to attend the Soviet-co-sponsored Geneva Peace Conference in December of 1973 (Jimmy Carter, 1985, pp. 69-70; Freedman, 1986, p. 227). During the Lebanese civil war in 1976, Assad moved Syrian troops into Lebanon's Bagaa Valley, and kept them there, even though Brezhnev publicly denounced Syrian intervention against the PLO and the Lebanese Socialist Party, whom the Soviets were also supporting (Ismael, 1986, p. 190; Schiff, Spring 1984, p. 94).

Diplomatic analysts generally hold that Syria, with Assad, formed its own political conduct. A Damascus university professor said, "The Soviets know that the Syrian decisions on Middle Eastern affairs, especially where Lebanon and PLO are concerned, will always be independent" (Kelly, March 1984, p. 102).

Regarding Syria's foreign policy, Hinnebusch concludes that "The Kremlin has never been allowed to unduly influence Damascus' policy decision" (Hinnebusch, Summer 1982, p. 177). Joseph Sisco substantiated this assessment on relations between Damascus and Moscow, by stating:
Above all, President Assad is nationalistic and realistic. He is taking all the military assistance the Soviet Union will provide. He knows the Russians can help him make a war he does not want and cannot win on his own, but only the United States can help make the kind of peace that has something in it for him as well as for Israel. He is dependent on the Soviet Union, but he is unlikely to become a total hostage. (Sisco, Tuesday, July 9, 1985, p. A27)

Concurring with Sisco's assessment on relations between Syria and the Soviet Union, Syrian Defense Minister, Mustafa Tlas, recently said that Syria has to bargain "bullet for bullet, cannon for cannon" to get Soviet arms. Sophisticated Mig-29 jet fighters were delivered to Assad's rival, Iraq, before being sent to Syria. The Kremlin seemed uninterested to equip the Syrian army with intermediate-range missiles such as SS-23. The only SS-23 in Syria at the moment, according to diplomats, "is the little prototype on the Defense Minister's desk." "The Soviet Union has its strategy, and we have our strategy," said Defense Minister Tlas, "And they are not always the same" (Dickey, September 28, 1987, p. 33).

Militarily, Syria is entirely reliant on the Soviet Union--there are about 5,000 to 7,000 Soviet technicians in Syria. Syrians, with Soviet aid, spend an estimated $7
billion in strengthening their armed forces, and over 50 percent of their annual budget went to defense (Kelly, December 19, 1983, p. 30). The U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency has estimated the value of Syrian arms import from the Soviet Union to be $780 million in 1978, and $1.325 million in 1984 (Ma'oz, 1986, p. 74). Even though Syria needs Soviet military hardware, the Soviets need Syria. As one U.S. high official said, "The Soviets need him [Assad] more than he needs them. He is their entree to the Middle East now" (Gelb, July 14, 1985, p. 9).

Through military supply, the Soviets built up their link to the Middle East region. Syria has become the only open window and the main link in the region (Tarper, November 2, 1987, p. 161). "For the Soviets," one expert explains, "it is a question of credibility, not only with the Syrians, but throughout the Arab world. They simply cannot afford another debacle" (Watson, October 31, 1983, p. 32).

Assad, unlike his predecessors, is much more astute at recognizing the various options one can attempt in dealing with events. This is aptly epitomized in a statement by Assad himself. He said, "I don't mean that struggle is by force of arms only. Struggle for national causes throughout history has never been by armed forces alone, but has taken on various forms--military,
political, economic and otherwise" (Deborthgrave, January 16, 1978, p. 42).

With this pragmatic view, Assad's influence has become strong. Syria became the fulcrum of events in the Middle East. The change that has been made since Assad came to power and before, is succinctly stated by Reed: "Neither can it be denied that, although the world powers and the stronger of the regional governments often trifled with his predecessors, Assad has made Syria a force to be reckoned with" (Reed, February 19, 1984, p. 42). An Arab foreign policy expert supports this assessment by stating, "Assad significantly increased Syria's world diplomatic stature and forced the great powers to recognize Syria as a key to peace and war in the Middle East" (Hinnebusch, 1984, p. 289). Hirschfeld, a senior lecturer in Middle East history at the University of Haifa, Israel, substantiates this assessment of Syria's regional setting in the Middle East by stating,

The answer lies in an idea that has become a cornerstone of political thinking in Syria under Assad. Syria can play a leading role in the Arab world, and the Middle East as a whole . . . In the worlds of Syrian Baathist ideologist: Syria's historical task is to protect the strategic balance in the Middle East . . . and Syria is the only capable force willing to do so. (Hirschfeld, 1986, p. 119)
Syria's political importance in the region is manifested in various diplomatic actions in the region by the United States. Syria, as a regional power, had signified enough influences that brought about Nixon to visit Syria in 1974, the first American President to do so. During the Carter Administration, Assad reacted unlike President Sadat or any other third world leader, who promptly responded to an American request to visit Washington. In the spring of 1977, the Syrian president insisted on meeting President Jimmy Carter outside of the United States. "Assad was not prepared to crawl to Washington as others were doing" (Dawisha, Summer, 1978, p. 346). Carter, himself, later revealed that, "I had invited him [Assad] to visit me in Washington, but he sent word that he had never been to the United States and would be unable to come anytime in the foreseeable future" (Jimmy Carter, 1985, p. 67).

Under the Reagan Administration, a measure of Assad's power was the fact that he took on President Ronald Reagan in the battle for control of Lebanon, and forced the withdrawal of the Marine peacekeeping contingency. The withdrawal of United States marines in February 1984 ultimately increased Damascus' influence in Lebanese political affairs. Within days, President Amin Gemayel abrogated the U.S.-sponsored Lebanese-Israeli peace agreement of May 17, 1983, a peace treaty between the two
countries. The Lebanese cancellation of the accord was a major foreign policy victory for Syria, at Israel's expense, and also an indication that time was on Syria's side (Devlin, February 1986, p. 70; Dickey, Fall 1987, pp. 61-62).

Assad attempts to shape political trends in the Arab world. For instance, he has warned the Saudis that with Syria's special relationship with Lebanon, Damascus is the only one to be able to put an end to the violence in Lebanon (Odeh, 1985, p. 139). And as to the Saudi compliance with the Syrian demand of not interfering in Lebanese situations, one of George Shultz's Senior Aides complained, "There is no consistency to the Saudi position . . . they want to appear as peacemakers in Lebanon, but in reality they are amateurs and are doing what Syria wants" (Aruri, March 1984, pp. 71-72). Assad was the one who warned the factions fighting in Lebanon that they could never solve Lebanon's political and economic problems without Syrian participation (Rose, March 9, 1987, p. 33).

Assad's political power and sense of optimism for the world's better future goes hand in hand. Such hope and vision of a better world was exhibited in an interview with him. When he was asked if the hostages will be free from Lebanon he replied, "We approach the subject of the hostages as a human issue," Assad said, "we understand

Assad's hope for peace in the region as a whole was also evident when he told Time Magazine correspondent, Willton Wynn, in 1977, that he was ready to make peace with Israel if they would withdraw from the territory they had occupied in the 1967 war (Time, December 19, 1983, p. 33).

Pakradouni, a Lebanese politician and former confidant of the Lebanese President, Elias Sarkis, who has some insight of President Assad's character, said that, "Assad is a pragmatist, not an opportunistic Machiavellian who sees an evil world" (Pakradouni, December 11, 1983, p. 14). Regarding Assad's negotiation approach, an American official observed that, whoever negotiates with Assad should be prepared for a long session. Assad haggles endlessly and can sit for hours sipping tea, coffee, and juice (Kissinger, 1982, p. 1017). Henry Kissinger, in his memoirs, substantiates this assessment of Assad's patience and ability in negotiating issues by stating that,

Some statesman will go to the edge of a precipice, and a few will even "put one foot over the edge" . . . Assad was the only one who would actually jump off the precipices hoping that on his way down he
could break his fall by grabbing a tree he knew to be there. (Watson, Colton, 1983, p. 57)

Concurring with these assessments Joseph Sisco mentions that,

Assad is intelligent, engaging and softspoken . . . He is a very tough bargainer, and his first concern is survival . . . He mistrusts Israel, but he has a healthy respect for its power and American strength behind it. (Sisco, The New York Times, Tuesday, July 9, 1985, p. A27)

Assad views himself as an optimist, and believes that destiny is in man’s hands. This positive perception was demonstrated through numerous comments by negotiators and world heads of states. Jimmy Carter, who met with Assad twice in 1977 and again in 1983, stated that, "He professed not to speak for other Arabs, but seemed confident that his influence would be felt in seeking any permanent resolution of differences . . ." Carter added, "He seemed to speak like a modern Salah ad-din, feeling that was his dual obligation to rid the region of all foreign presence while preserving Damascus as the focal point for Arab unity" (Jimmy Carter, 1985, p. 81). Salah al-din Al-Ayowbi was famous as a victor against the invaders of the First Crusade in 1137 A.D..

Assad’s sense of optimism and trust were manifested through his own statements. His determination, along with
his perception of history, is indicated as he stated, "You should not forget that Syria is the cradle of Arab nationalism. We have never capitulated, from the days of the crusaders to modern Zionist expansionism" (Snare, 1985, p. 99). "Two powers are unconquerable--the power of God and the power of the people. We hope to achieve our national goals by dependence on these two powers," remarked Assad (Snare, 1985, p. 99).

Assad believes that man is a maker of his own future existence. Crises for him are not beyond man's control, and problems are solvable. Such an attitude was always revealed in his views of the super powers' role in the region, as he said, "no reasonable man can ignore the role of these two super powers" (Grunwald, April 2, 1984, p. 28; Jimmy Carter, 1984, p. 22).

Against this background, and recognition of Assad's capacity of influencing the parties involved in the hostage-situation, it is clear that a wise approach for the American government is to select a reasonable and pragmatic "audience." Only by means of Assad's mediating influence, is it likely that the hostage problem can be solved. For now, Assad seems content to let the United States take the road to Damascus.
CHAPTER IV

APPLICATION OF BITZER GRID AND ANALYSIS OF CRITICAL RHETORICAL SITUATION ARTIFACTS

This chapter is a direct focus on selected critical rhetorical artifacts generated in the official discourse between U.S.A. and Syria in the hostage crisis. The grid, created in Chapter II by this investigator's extension of Bitzer's rhetorical situation theory is applied here to identify and evaluate empirical data. When these are taken together with the data derived from the narrative history and the identification of exigencies and constraints made in Chapter III, a holistic interpretation can be made to throw light on the nature of the larger discourse between United States and Syria in the hostage crisis.

Figure 3 in Chapter II identified six factors that Bitzer hypothesized are critical in any analysis of responses to an exigency in a rhetorical situation. To simplify the reporting of the analysis undertaken here, arbitrary symbols are assigned to the six factors as follows:
In each instance in the analysis where a symbol is employed, direct reference may be made to the rhetorical situation represented in the artifact reproduced in its entirety in Appendices A and B of this dissertation. In both the analysis of the U.S.A.'s responses and those of Syria, through the official statements of Assad, these symbols will be used. When used, the symbols will be underlined in the text to permit easy recognition. At the end of the chapter, a frequency tabulation will record the instances in which the investigator judged each of the factors as critical in the rhetorical situation under analysis. Such a recording of frequencies does not, however, constitute causality by itself, nor does it constitute a base for warranted generalizations. Such data as these must be fused with the historical interpretations to achieve validity.

United States' Rhetorical Responses Analysis

Three distinct, yet overlapping, episodes have been selected to demonstrate the evolution of a critical
rhetorical situation in the continuing hostage crisis between the United States and Syria. It is postulated that these represent an authentic sample of the three major constituents serving as data sources for Bitzer’s rhetorical situation: a problem or defect; a set of constraints; and an audience involved in action or solution.

These specific elements of the critical discourse in this case are: (1) Ambassador Walter’s Statement to the Security Council of the United Nations, December 18, 1985; (2) President Reagan’s responses to the hostage crisis; and (3) Secretary of State Schultz’s statements concerning the crisis.

Ambassador Vernon Walters’ statement to the United Nations Security Council on December 18, 1985 (see Appendix A for complete text) is the official effort to place the position of the United States before the world community. It serves, therefore, as a context for other elements in the continuing discourse of the rhetorical situation. It is, in Bitzer’s terms, a "response to an exigency."

We are pleased that the Security Council has unanimously gone on record as condemning all acts of hostage-taking. This is a historic step, almost without precedent in the entire 40 years of the United Nations. This resolution reflects posi-
tively on the U.N. organization. By condemning unequivocally all acts of hostage-taking, the Security Council has clearly stated the world community's abhorrence of such criminal acts.

This is a clear statement of "degree of interest" underscoring the widespread support in the world community that the United States hopes to influence. It also strongly suggests the "immediacy" aspect of the exigency response by noting that this critical action is without precedent. It also strongly draws on the moral values involved in both immediacy and obligation.

We can only hope that all states, all parties, that have any influence over groups now holding hostages will take to heart today's clear and unanimous message and work for the immediate and safe release of all hostages, wherever and by whomever held.

Here, the rhetoric clearly falls into the "obligation/expectation" category of multiple factors impinging on the exigency response. It is, in effect, a plea to (without designating the specific country) fulfill its moral and leadership obligations in the world community.

We also hope that his Security Council resolution bodes well for improved cooperation between and among states, an essential condition for combating terrorism. It is clear that no "cause" no "excuses,"
can justify such threats to human rights and human lives. Ri

The moral obligation and consequent expectation is pressed further here by suggesting the "risk" that failure to fulfill the obligation would bring. A nation that did not cooperate with its fellow members in the world community risks a strong threat of isolation from the "good things" that characterize international cooperation when it is pursued. As Vernon Walters stated:

My government fully supports the call for all states to consider, Ob promptly and favorably, becoming parties to the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages. In

Again, the "immediacy" dimension of the rhetorical situation is stressed, underscoring also the "obligation/expectation" dimension.

While we do not expect the lunatic fringe to desist from such acts, we do expect all law-abiding states to take all practical measures to prevent terrorism and to prosecute and punish all terrorists. Ri

Here, the ambassador is willing to take "risk" by permitting the nations involved in terrorism, either directly or indirectly, to disassociate themselves from what he terms "the lunatic fringe." This is a well-established diplomatic strategy based on the proponents' assessment that the respondents have, or can, develop what
Bitzer terms "modification capability;" i.e., it gives them an acceptable "out."

The United States is proud of its leadership role in today's action by the Security Council. It could not have been done without the broad support of all Security Council members which represent every section of the globe.

In this recognition of one of the multiple factors of the rhetorical situation, Walters is attempting to nurture a sense of "confidence" in the situation by making the proposal for action more than, broader than, a unilateral move between the United States and the offending supporter of terrorism. In this sense, it affords alternative action based on his belief that there is in the situation "modification capability."

President Reagan's initial statement regarding the hostage crisis serves as a critical artifact for a further analysis of the continuing rhetorical discourse. In April 1987, following the kidnappings of American citizens in Lebanon, he said:

All Americans, I know, share my outrage at the latest kidnappings of our citizens in Lebanon. Not only Americans but more than 20 citizens from nine countries are now being held by terrorist groups there. Today my sympathy goes out to the friends and relatives of all those hostages.
The terrorists appear to believe that by trafficking in human lives they can force sovereign governments to give in to their demands. But our government will not make concessions to terrorist groups despite their threats. For to give in to terrorist blackmail would only encourage more terrorism; to yield to their demands now would only endanger the lives of many others later.

I would like to add a special word to Americans in Lebanon. Where U.S. citizens are unjustly deprived of their God-given rights, the U.S. Government has an obligation to try to restore those rights. But there is a limit to what our government can do for Americans in a chaotic situation such as that in Lebanon today. In particular, the situation in west Beirut has deteriorated to total anarchy, with armed criminal groups taking the law into their own hands. For the past 12 years our government has regularly warned American citizens against travel to Lebanon. As recently as last Tuesday we reiterated our assessment that the situation there is "extremely dangerous." The events of the past week provide striking confirmation of that assessment. Americans who ignored this warning clearly did so at their own risk and on their own responsibility. This weekend the U.S.
Ambassador to Lebanon again was in contact with remaining Americans and advised them to leave. Ob

Those who hold hostages, regardless of nationality, should release them immediately and unconditionally. Mo Their acts of terror constitute a declaration of war on civilized society. Ri I again join with civilized countries in condemnation of terrorist outrages.

In conclusion, let me stress again that our government remains unrelenting and alert in its search for opportunities to secure the release of our citizens no matter how long that may take. Ob

(Department of State Bulletin, April 1987, p. 51.)

A strategic orientation toward the rhetorical situation was signified in President Reagan's statement. Reagan opened his statement with a sense of identification and sympathy with friends and relatives of all hostages, regardless of their nationality. When facing a problem situation, an individual plots the means to meet and overcome the constraints. The general plan of any rhetorical situation is a strategy and is directed by considerations which may, for example, emphasize fear, sympathy, or some other means by which unification of the speaker and the audience involved may be established.

In the crisis situation, strategies and tactics are used to modify the exigency. To operationalize a
strategy, the speakers must use rhetorical means by which symbolic behavior is given rational form and instrumental goal. Reagan said, "not only Americans but more than 20 citizens from nine countries are now being held by terrorist groups there. Today my sympathy goes out to the friends and relatives of all those hostages." The tension and fears of the kidnappers' blackmail was apparent in this rhetorical situation. Meanwhile, Reagan emphasized the segregated treatment of the American hostages, who were unjustly deprived of their basic human rights. Bitzer's work can illuminate this feature of Reagan's discourse:

The quality of the specific interest is a factor. The urgency of a particular exigence depends on the intrinsic quality of the specific interest involved; pain and fear, for example, are normally more powerful than curiosity and self-esteem. (Bitzer, 1980, pp. 32-33)

This is a good example of Bitzer's factors "degree of interest" and "immediacy."

Another characteristic reflecting Reagan's statement was his hope to achieve identification by establishing a desirable image of himself with other countries, whose citizens also were taken hostage. He said, "Not only Americans but more than 20 citizens from nine countries are now being held by terrorist groups there." This
image, which may be identified with by the 20 countries, must be achieved without the luxury of getting to know well or be known well by each country.

Identification, as used by the former President in this rhetorical situation, can be understood by reference to Kenneth Burke's work. Burke wrote that a means by which persuasion could be facilitated was by identifying one person with the interest of the other. Once the identification occurred, Reagan presumably could then persuade the other parties to follow his desire to modify the exigence. Reagan wanted support for his appeal to release the hostages. Before the persuasion could be effected, the people had to believe that the hostage-crisis was a human and world concern which could be modified by collective effort--common interest be joined.

This striving to identify Reagan with the feelings, sympathy, concepts, images, constraints, ideas, and attitudes similar to other countries, would generate what Burke termed "consubstantiality," the effort to place audience and speaker on common rhetorical ground (Burke, 1972, p. 326). In this rhetorical situation, Reagan once again hoped to achieve identification by portraying the hostage-crisis as a world concern. "... I again join with civilized countries in condemnation of terrorist outrages." The best chance for building such rhetorical crisis is to repetitively use a simple, clear, and
succinct message, stressing universal human values which
the world community approved of and stress the dangers
they themselves were all in common subjected to. "... we reiterated our assessment that the situation there is 'extremely dangerous'."

Reagan stressed in his statement his determination to modify the exigence. As he stated:

Those who hold hostages, regardless of nationality, should release them immediately and unconditionally... let me stress again that our government remains unrelenting and alert in its search for opportunities to secure the release of our citizens no matter how long that may take.\textsuperscript{ob}

Such responsibility and determination to modify the crisis, regardless of the hostages' nationalities, can be interpreted as an attempt to build an ethics with which the world community could identify. The strategy was directed at building enough identification and consubstantiality for the world to reason that the Reagan Administration would remain determined and alert in its search for opportunities to modify the problem. Here is Bitzer's "obligation/ expectation" construct at work. One of his earlier statements illustrated the application of the determination and identification premises:

I have today signed into law H.R. 6311, the 1984 Act to Combat International Terrorism.\textsuperscript{ob} This
act will provide resources and authorities essential in countering the insidious threat terrorism poses to those who cherish freedom and democracy. International terrorism is a growing problem for all of us in the Western world—not just the United States. While we in the Western democracies are most often the targets, terrorist attacks are becoming increasingly violent and indiscriminate. Since the of September, there have been 41 separate terrorist attacks by no fewer than 14 terrorist groups against individual citizens, and 18 of these were bombings or attempted bombings in which innocent parties were victimized.

This nation bears global responsibilities that demand that we maintain a worldwide presence and not succumb in these cowardly attempts at intimidation. The act complements other actions now under review and separate measures taken with our allies aimed at significantly improving our ability to thwart this menace to mankind. (Reagan statement, October 19, 1984)

In this statement, Reagan once more hoped to identify his concern with other nations by characterizing the problem as not existing just for the United States. He tried to demonstrate his government commitment and responsibilities for a secure world, a concern the world
community could identify with. Reagan revealed himself as an individual bound by international law, as a man of goodwill who would work to combat the crisis with and for a safer and secure world. Reagan sold himself as a man with whom the world community could relate. He portrayed his government’s concern with the same interest and concern as the rest of the world; consequently, he would work for ends, which would be mutually valued. "While we in the Western democracies are most often the targets, terrorist attacks are becoming increasingly violent and indiscriminate." If the identification strategy worked in the Reagan campaign to modify the crisis, the world community felt the necessity to cooperate with the U.S. The presentation of statistical information of how many incidents occurred against civilians and property, enhancing the sense of identification, was used to combat worldwide crisis. "This nation bears global responsibilities that demand that we maintain a worldwide presence and not succumb in these cowardly attempts at intimidation." Clearly, this falls into the "obligation/expectation" construct.

This job of developing the strategy of identification and global responsibilities was undertaken with care, and step-by-step, carefully-outlined the U.S. plan against terrorism. Likewise, the Reagan Cabinet worked to appear interested and involved in the crisis. Throughout this
phase of the discourse we see also a demonstration of the "risk" factor at work.

I am grateful that the Congress has responded swiftly to my request for these authorities and resources. This act is an important step in our multiyear effort to counter the pervasive threat international terrorism poses to our diplomatic personnel and facilities overseas.

The documents of such tactics specifically established how this would be done. According to Reagan:

In several important ways, this act will enable us to improve our ability to protect those who serve our country overseas.

. It authorizes payment of rewards for information concerning terrorist acts.

. It provides for the authorization of $356 million of urgently-needed security enhancements for the U.S. missions abroad.

Since 1979, opportunities to gain worldwide support, as well as identification of Reagan as a reasonable responsive reflection of this international exigence, was one of his main rhetorical goals. Reagan was very consistent in his rhetorical responses to this crisis throughout his presidency..

For Reagan, handling rhetoric intelligently was to view himself not only as a great communicator, but also as
the man who communicated "great ideas." For example, in 1983, Reagan stated:

This problem is not unique to Lebanon. We have seen the ugly manifestation in Kuwait, the terrorist bombing in Rangoon, the senseless murder of Turkish diplomats, the attack on the Pope, the bombing of our own capital, and on the streets of London.

In the days ahead, we need to systematically redevelop our approach to this problem, recognizing that the worst outcome of all is one in which terrorists succeed in transforming an open democracy into a closed fortress. One fact, though, is already obvious: The problem of terrorism will not disappear if we run from it. This is not to say that we are not working as urgently as possible to create political conditions in Lebanon that will make it possible for us to remove our forces. But we must not delude ourselves into believing that terrorism will vanish on the happy day that our forces come home.

For terrorists to be curbed, civilized countries must begin a new effort to work together, to share intelligence, to improve our training and security and our forces, to deny havens or legal
Reagan's messages were used to create an impression of his involved visibility and the common interest of the world community, contextualized within the magnitude of the terrorist threat. Here we have a clear case of building on the "immediacy" factor toward "obligation/expectation." Understanding that a given rhetorical situation clearly invites a particular response is crucially important. As Bitzer explains, "a message is excellent as a rhetorical work to the extent that it functions as a fitting response to its situation." In this context, Kenneth Burke notes:

A work may be said to fit a situation in two ways. It may fit as a corrective to the situation—or it may be said to fit simply because the situation enables it to be well received. The two ways are not necessarily opposed, but often opposed. Rhetorical situation invites responses which fit in both ways, but of the two, the "corrective" is essential.

(Bitzer, 1980, pp. 36-37)

Reagan's rhetorical responses were used to build the feeling of world common interest that can be bridged through identification that arises in the universal rhetorical situation. As Reagan stated on June 28, 1985:
I want to say a few words about a subject that I know is on all our minds: the outrage of international terrorism. In

When terrorism strikes, civilization itself is under attack; no nation is immune. There's no safety in silence or neutrality. If we permit terrorism to succeed anywhere, it will spread like a cancer, eating away at civilized societies and sowing fear and chaos everywhere. This barbarism is abhorrent, and all of those who support it, encourage it and profit from it are abhorrent. They are barbarians. De

In a different age, the civilized world faced the bloody scourge of privacy. It was a long fight against a great but diffuse evil. Ob But it was won in the end because civilized nations refused to succumb and missed no opportunity to stamp it out. The United States can be proud of the role that it played in that struggle, a role our Marines still sing about in the Marine anthem. Fa

In our time, it's terrorism that must be overcome. Ob We cannot accept these repeated and vicious attacks against our nation and its citizens. Terrorists, and those who support them, must and will be held to account. Mo (Reagan, June 28, 1985)

Bitzer stated:
our existence and well being depend upon skillful and ongoing adjustments to, or modifications of, our environment. We cannot live at all, let alone well, in a totally inhospitable world. Our somewhat harmonious relation to the environment is achieved through striving: human societies and individuals do not merely rest, like rocks, upon the earth; they are actively engaged in adjusting, responding, overcoming, planning, laboring, making, and acting. These comments are meant not to overstate or falsely dramatize, but to make clear that human interaction with the physical environment, marked by striving, is a fundamental and pervasive condition of life. (Bitzer, 1980, p. 22)

Reagan's statement did respond to a powerful world exigency. This speech given by former President Reagan was his analysis of the factual condition in the world. He sought in this statement to explain to the international audience his views of the world situation. A "risk" factor was involved in this strategy, but the overall goal was toward developing a feeling of "obligation" with accompanying "expectation" for action.

Tactic: Admitting Error

Admitting error demonstrates a willingness to acknowledge a mistake or change of view. This allows for identification and mutual respect in two ways, and this in
turn implies an appreciation of and sensitivity to the rhetorical situation. Such tactics indicate a willingness to rely on the understanding and goodwill of another without fearing weakness or taking unfair advantage. If the world saw Reagan as capable of error, his possible aura of unapproachability was removed. However, the most useful product of admitting error is to demonstrate the person as honest and free enough to say "I was wrong." The reasoning follows that if he could reevaluate once and find himself mistaken, possibly that might be the case again. Under these circumstances, the world community, as well as the American public, felt they might approach him for talks and he might change his view, that is, he might provide a fitting response to the situation. Admitting a mistake also allowed potential for more talks, which allowed for more opportunity of identification. Reagan publicly admitted error and changed his view of the U.S. force deployment on Lebanese soil. On December 27, 1983, he said:

I received the report of the Long Commission [retired Adm. Robert L. J. Long] last Friday and have reviewed it thoroughly. The report draws a conclusion that the United States and its military institutions are, by tradition and training, inadequately equipped to deal with the fundamentally new phenomenon of
state-supported terrorism. I wholeheartedly agree.\textit{Ri} (Reagan, December 27, 1983)

Within a year, Reagan drew a plan for new redeployment of the U.S. Marines stationed in Beirut when he said:

\begin{quote}
I have asked Secretary of Defense Weinberger to present to me a plan for redeployment of the Marines from Beirut airport to their ships offshore.\textit{In} This redeployment will begin shortly and will proceed in stages.\textit{Ob} (Reagan, February 6, 1984)
\end{quote}

Such change in tactics was carefully undertaken with relation to the situation's factual conditions. Reagan took the initiative and acknowledged his error when he felt he erred. He identified himself in this manner as human and fallible, but willing to be honest without hope of gain at the expense of human suffering.

I do not believe, therefore, that the local commanders on the ground—men who have already suffered quite enough—should be punished for not fully comprehending the nature of today's terrorist threat. If there is to be balance, it properly rests here in this office and with this president.\textit{Mo} And I accept responsibility for the bad as well as the good.\textit{Mo} (Reagan, December 1983)

The process of evaluating the rhetorical situation focuses on what brought forth a particular statement to a
particular audience under particular situational pressures. His decision on redeployment seemed to be a wise one. Reagan spoke on the situation, which was of significant national concern. By such a response, Reagan tried to put the hostage crisis in a framework with which the audience could both emotionally and ethically identify. The apparent sincerity and honesty of admitting error contributes to keeping open the channels of communication between the parties involved. The attitude of being honest and admitting mistakes helped foster a dialogic exchange, because a dialogic attitude served to illustrate that Reagan was earnestly involved with the situation.

This type of response not only showed Reagan's honesty, but also that Reagan was willing to commit his views and himself to communication. Reagan seemed to place himself in the open for others to view and evaluate. Reagan, in all the statements examined, seemed to demonstrate his sincere involvement by the means of presenting messages which were specific, well thought out, and carefully articulated. This involvement seemed to demonstrate Reagan as willing to extend the effort to explore the factual context and significant concerns of the audience. This attitude furthered the chance of the parties involved to approach him with the same honesty and enthusiasm that made the discourse more possible. Any time this occurs, the chances for dialogue concerning the
exigence is heightened. When a chance for discourse is heightened, identification with the exigence, as well as among the parties involved, is heightened. In Bitzer's terms, both "risk" and "modification capability" factors are involved leading to "obligation and expectation."

**Tactic: Taking Responsibility**

Taking responsibility for communication demonstrates that a person will state his views for all to know, that he will explain those views, and that he will defend his views in the face of opposition. Taking responsibility identifies the man, at the very least, as forceful. The facts of interest here are whether he took the controversial stands openly and did not back away from the consequences of those stands.

... let me say that I have soberly considered the commission's word about accountability and responsibility of authority up and down the chain of command. And everywhere more should be done to anticipate and prepare for dramatic terrorist assaults. Oh We have to come to grips with the fact that today's terrorists are better armed and financed, they are more sophisticated, they are possessed by a fanatical intensity that individuals of a democratic society can only barely comprehend. Ri (Reagan, December 27, 1983)
Two years later, Reagan maintained his views toward the exigence when he stated, "let me say we must not yield to the terrorist demands that invite more terrorism. We cannot reward their grisly deeds. We will not cave in" (Reagan, June 19, 1985). The responsibility tactic was, to some extent, a dominant theme of Reagan's theoretical discourse. Responsibility and determination were manifested in his response to the Achillo Lauro hijacking in October of 1985, when he stated:

Most of all, I am proud to be the Commander-in-Chief of the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who deployed, supported, and played the crucial role in the delivery of these terrorists to Italian authorities. They and the men and women of our foreign service and intelligence community performed flawlessly in this most difficult and delicate operation. They have my gratitude and, I'm sure, the gratitude of all of their countrymen. These young Americans sent a message to terrorists everywhere. The message: You can run, but you can't hide. (Reagan, October 11, 1985)

One may identify with this quality, even if not with the stand. If the stand is agreed to by the world community, identification is easily achieved. Reagan is viewed as taking the "right" course of action, despite the "risk" involved. But if he had not taken the supposed
right course of action, he may still have been respected for answering to his true conviction. Both "confidence" and "obligation" are involved here. Bitzer stated that:

A speaker who persuades such an audience may have to use premises drawn from its field of beliefs and commitments even though these grounds of assent would be rejected by a more competent audience. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 245)

In many ways, however, Reagan Administration officials followed Reagan's rhetorical lead in most of their responses to the situation. The overriding exigency was the hostage-taking problem, in which a sense of consensus among the Reagan Cabinet members was manifested throughout their public rhetoric. The political stands taken by Reagan were followed through by his top aids such as Secretary of State, George Shultz, and the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Vernon Walters. They have been equally responsible about sharing the same conviction held by Reagan. This study will attempt to represent how George Shultz and Vernon Walters took the same course of action in their rhetorical responses to the situation. The following statement by Secretary of State, George Shultz, is an example of the Administration’s consensus on the crisis:

The U.S. government will not rest until our citizens have been safely reunited with their
families. Ambassador [Reginald] Bartholomew in Beirut remains in contact with Nabih Berri as well as with President [Amin] Gemajal and other key Lebanese leaders. We are working closely with other governments who can bring their influence to bear on this matter.

Algeria, of course, has been cooperating closely with us since the very beginning. A number of other countries in the region have made, in one way or another, statement on this subject, including before it started, President Hafez al-Assad of Syria in expressing himself about hijacking, here in Washington the government of Tunisia, Iraq has issued a condemnation, as has Egypt through its newspapers.

The President has just received a letter from Jordan’s King Hussein which strongly condemns this, as he says, "dastardly crime." And I’d like to put that letter in the record. It will be made public in a couple of hours. (Shultz, June 19, 1985)

We understand from Shultz’s statement that the world is afflicted by imperfections. Immense exigencies face many countries in the region. Recognition of such exigencies was manifested in Shultz’s rhetorical responses. His response included Bitzer’s factor of "immediacy" leading to "modification capability" as a strategy based on "obligation and expectation." That gave
rise to a fundamental reaction grounded in individual and collective condemnation that the factual context invites some sort of reaction. That is to say, not a few countries recognize the factual conditions existing in the region. In turn, the countries in the region became motivated to create messages when they perceived factual conditions relating to their interests. They sought to create change by means of discourse, something which matters, something about which they are not indifferent. Shultz’s statement reflects common ground concerning the factual conditions related to interest. For example, Shultz points out that "the U.S. government will not rest until our citizens have been safely reunited with their families . . . we are working closely with other governments who can bring their influence to bear on this matter." This is the factual condition related to the common interest. Shultz, appealing to conceptions of well-being held by the countries in the region, argues convincingly that the kidnapping of innocent civilians is an issue of common concern, which both the U.S. and the Arab states can identify with and seek a means to modify. Shultz’s statement could be interpreted as the U.S. and the Arab states perceiving the same or roughly the same factual conditions. Such identification with the factual conditions was demonstrated in the form of wide condemnation from these countries’ leaders and the media. This is
a clear case of the rhetorical situation factors of "degree of interest" and "obligation/expectation" factors at work. Shultz feels indignation and sympathy as he describes the factual condition under which the innocent civilians had been abducted:

Hijacking and other forms of terrorism are unacceptable in any civilized society. We call upon those holding hostages to treat them properly and to release them immediately. The U.S. government is heavily engaged in efforts to bring about their safe return to their families. In pursuing these efforts, as is well known, we will not make deals with terrorists and will not encourage others to do so.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the hostages and their families, as we all work and wait for their safe release. (Shultz, June 17, 1985)

Schultz identifies his nation's concern with that of other nations that terrorism is unacceptable in a civilized society. This effort to identify Shultz with the feelings, thoughts, images, ideas, and attitudes similar to other countries in the region would achieve the Burkian concept of identification. Shultz was striving to build the feeling of consubstantiality and the degree of interest surrounding the factual condition. The following
statement illustrated the application of the identification premise:

A number of other countries in the region have made in one way or another statement on this subject, including before it started, Hafez al-Assad, of Syria in expressing himself about hijacking, here in Washington the government of Tunisia, Iraq, has issued a condemnation, as has Egypt through its newspapers. De and No (Shultz, June 19, 1985)

Syrian Rhetorical Responses Analysis

In contrast to the specific rhetorical artifacts representing the official position of the United States regarding the hostage crisis, relatively little discourse representing Syria is available. In the rhetorical situation of the United States, President Reagan, Secretary of State Schultz, and United Nations Ambassador Walters all took the role of official spokespersons. For Syria, only Assad had the power to speak out officially. This, of course, reflects a sharp difference between a democratic political organization and an autocratic, centralized form of government. However, it is held that what Assad did say in response to the situation is a valid representation of his critical role in the continuing discourse. Therefore, it will be used as an artifact for analysis.
Overall, Assad's rhetorical role in the situation demonstrated his efforts to show both goodwill and a determination to modify the exigency. Assad's speech in Kuwait and three interviews are analyzed in the context of the rhetorical situation in which each was given. It will be recalled that the primary exigency of Syrian concern, which is felt by Damascus, is the Middle East conflict in general, and the Lebanese crisis, in particular. In view of the Lebanese hostage crisis and the Syrian regional role, Assad's responses to the rhetorical situation may be expected to typically respond to the Lebanese crisis and the aftermath of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, along with the factual context surrounding the Middle Eastern dispute.

Assad's speech to the fifth Islamic summit spelled out these concerns when he said:

The importance of the Arab-Israeli conflict does not stem from the length of its past history so much as from the dangerous attendant upon it. In the Unlimited Zionist ambitions regarding our land, wealth, and destinies now constitute a danger to Arab existence, to Arab land, to Arab rights, to Arab will, the Arab present and future, and consequently, a great danger to the Islamic world and to world peace and security. (Assad, January 29, 1987)
The audiences for the Kuwait speech were comprised of the heads of Arab and Islamic states. Assad knew how to capitalize on the audiences, as well as on the occasion, in which he intentionally emphasized certain psychological concepts such as dangers, rights, existence, will, peace, security, and above all, Islamic holy places. Such strategies can easily establish a sense of identification to which the audience can relate and identify. The audiences had the interest, power, and pressure to face the constraints of the situation. In establishing identification strategy, Assad further stated:

I have no intention to do harm to anyone when I speak about a common enemy and a common danger. I only wish to call attention to the common sanctions which quite willingly we adopted to confront the Israeli danger referring thereby to two decisions which are only two links in a chain of decisions taken in the same direction. (I repeat that I respect all people, Arabs and Muslims, I mean Arab Muslims and non-Arab Muslims, and of course people of the world in general. But here we talk sometimes within an Arab framework, and otherwise within an Islamic framework, and I have to point out some examples. So, how can one of us be head of the Jerusalem committee at the same time receive in his own country the Israeli prime minister and deal at a press conference that
there is no Arab decision prohibiting contacts with the Israeli enemy? . . . we must be all together in one position. As we fought together, we make peace together, when prospects of just peace are available. No (Assad, January, 29, 1987)

The Arab-Israel conflict and the danger to Islamic holy places, constraints of risk, rights, and existence were the significant themes of Assad's rhetoric of fear in building a sense of identification with his audiences.

Assad tended to mobilize the audience to plan action and to rally around the Syrian position toward the situation. He responded to a real threat to the region's social and political stability. Assad's speech was a response to the rhetorical situation; he responded to pressing exigencies; he adapted to the concern of the audiences. The three interviews granted to him by Time Magazine and the Washington Post occurred at a time when nearly the same political pressures were continuing to function in the region.

The Islamic summit speech indicated that due to the "danger to Arab existence, to Arabs rights . . . to the Arab present and future, and consequently a great danger to the Islamic world," action was needed to save and protect the holy places and to gain a sense of identification, especially with these particular audiences. The
interview dealt with similar political exigencies. In this context, Bitzer explained:

"... when these factors are "strong," an observer can often predict accurately that messages of a certain kind will occur. For example, if news reporters witness a tragic event—[war] causing destruction of the highest magnitude—they will respond to a situation whose exigence and constraints are so powerful that we can predict with practical certainty the central themes and topics of their news reports. Is it possible for the reporters to ignore the situation, dismiss the exigence, free themselves from situational constraints? Of course it is. But should they do so, we would think they suffered some mental lapse or failed their responsibilities. (Bitzer, 1980, p. 34)

Assad not only kept the universal audience informed on relevant attitudes, he also generated media attention. Assad's consistent media presence aided the flow of communication between him and the West. The use of the media by Assad seemed to gain greater recognition of him as a rhetor with a functional audience capable of modifying the exigence. Thus, the extensive use of the media offered greater potential for issues of agreement to arise between Assad and the U.S. The greater the chance for common agreement, the greater the chance of building
identification. Therefore, identification remained a functional strategy as Assad dealt with exigencies of the crisis.

Comments by Assad add clarification to Bitzer's conception of media responsibility and its role in responding to the rhetorical situations whose exigencies and constraints are powerful. They demonstrate how the media can enhance the understanding of the factual conditions operating in the region. Assad recognized this fact when he stated:

The media can play a role in making the American taxpayer learn the facts, and of course, *Time* plays a role in this regard.

To make the American taxpayer know who is the aggressor, and who needs security, it is enough for *Time* to publish the maps of Palestine in 1940, 1948, 1956, 1967, and now, then the American taxpayer will see how Israel expanded. Time after another, and will conclude that the Arabs and not Israel need weapons and money to defend themselves. In spite of this, we will not ask the United States to give us weapons and money but will ask her to give neither to us nor to others. *No*

In this particular statement, the target audience is mainly American. Assad's aim is to provide Americans with what he saw as valuable information that could effect and
enhance their understanding of the factual conditions operating in the region. In so doing, he recognized the media's role in a democratic society as informative, as well as a critical transactional element between the public and the government. Bitzer explains how media messages—especially news and documentaries—function:

In pure instances of informative discourse, information is generated and conveyed not because it serves the ends of goodness, justice, or nobility, but simply because it is truth the audience should know or would want to know—it relates to their interests. News reporters and analysts in their reports and explanations do not seek primarily to improve the well-being of their audience or to uphold the just or noble, although sometimes their discourse has these effects; they seek to provide news, interpretations, and conclusions which are true and of interest to the public. It seems self-evident that a competent public must receive a steady supply of information that is reliable and relevant to its real or perceived interests, and that "news" in the broad sense should answer that need. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 244)

Bitzer further explained how the mass media could fulfill its role:
Their message-making [media apparatus] is voluminous; they have easy access to the most available and effective channels of public communication channels already linked to audiences prepared to read and hear them; they win our trust more easily and securely than do politicians; and perhaps the journalists, rather than the preachers and politicians, have become the dominant speakers in our political life. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 244)

In the earlier excerpt from Assad's role in the discourse, we are aware of the part the audience plays in the interchange. The audience, comprised largely of English-speaking individuals, were probably concerned about their governmental policy. This Syrian perspective centered on their concern about any information which would help them, both nationally and internationally. Assad tried to give them useful information concerning the situation. For example, Assad said:

... Certainly there is a role for the U.S. to play in the area. There is also one for the Soviet Union. No reasonable man can ignore the roles of these two superpowers. All that we wish is to see the U.S. play its role in a fair, unbiased and responsible way in accordance with its responsibilities as a superpower. We say this because we always perceive a continued and complete bias by the
U.S. toward Israel. This bias, from our point of view, contradicts the interests of American citizens and does not serve the cause of peace. Ri

Needless to say, there are tens, even hundreds of examples to prove this. It is enough to say that the U.S. gives Israel about $3 billion a year. This means that each Israeli gets $1,000 a year from the pockets of American citizens. Now you should know that in 90 percent of third world countries, per capita income is much less than this figure. Moreover, we have to take into consideration that a big part of this money is in the form of sophisticated weapons which in turn are used to kill our citizens and to occupy our land. Im (Assad, April 2, 1984)

What Assad sought to accomplish in this statement was to explain how indirectly Israeli policy with American support stimulates the growth of the Lebanese hostage situation, and Israel's role as cause and effect in this rhetorical situation. Since American taxpayers seemed to help the Israeli military arsenal, Assad wanted to create a sense of awareness among the Americans to know about and to support his appeal for Americans to engage or employ an even-handed policy in the region. Assad further added more constraints by laying out some significant questions to the American public concerning the U.S. role in the
region which could be played within the framework of the political and historical context of the Middle East, when he stated:

... why are we asked to give everything? Why not stop the flow of billions of dollars to Israel? Why not stop shipments of American weapons to Israel? Why is it not required to tell the American Jew that he should only be an American Jew, in the same way as an American Christian is only that, an American Muslim only that? Our view is that the American, whether he is Jewish, Christian, or Muslim, should be an American. Only then will the U.S. have an objective view [of the Middle East] and work for genuine peace.\textsuperscript{ob}

Peace is not mere words. Peace is not wishful thinking. It has a tangible foundation. Had the U.S. really wanted to bring about peace, it would not have given such tremendous aid to Israel, because this has tipped the balance in the area. Do you believe that peace can be achieved while Israel continues to behave like a big power in the region? Any such belief is lacking in logic and objectivity.\textsuperscript{ob} (Assad, April 14, 1984)

Assad, feeling this appeal to the universal audience, was detrimental to the American audience, as well as to the Arabs. Therefore, he took this occasion to explain
the situation to the participants in his 1987 speech in Kuwait. He tried to demonstrate for them that the exigency was a real immediate concern when he stated:

The United States is committed to what it calls Israel's security and existence. It even declares its commitment to ensure Israeli superiority over all Arabs. It delays this insolently and with total disregard of the feeling of Arab and Islamic countries, although some of those countries are careful to maintain good relations with the United States, sometimes referred to as relations of friendship with the United States. (Assad, January 29, 1987)

The exigency was relevant to the audience; consequently, Assad's appeal to the audience for support of his stand. However, the speech served to respond to the rhetorical situation. The last of the two interviews with Assad, which dealt with the same problems in the region, responded to nearly the same pressure as did those throughout most of Assad's previous rhetorical discourse. In the time which had passed since the last interviews, the factual conditions in the area, and in Lebanon in particular, continued to change. "... situations are not fixed or unchanging. Some of their elements, after all, are physical objects and events caught up in streams of history" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 24).
New exigencies arise, such as the Palestinian Intifada, increasing the intensity of violence among the Lebanese factions, religious controversy over Salman Rushdie's book, *Satanic Verses*, accompanied with Hezbollah's threat to execute the hostages. These developments increase uncertainty of releasing the remaining hostages in Beirut which the Iranian-backed Hezbollah is believed to hold. "An anonymous caller to a Western news agency in Beirut . . . said the Furor and the West's angry reaction to Khomeini's death sentence will delay release of the hostages" (*The Columbus Dispatch*, Monday, February 27, 1989, p. 1A).

Clearly, turmoil in Lebanon, religious and political constraints, the audience and the relations affecting it—will continue to be changed by the historical events and causal networks. Some of these elements are psycho-ideological entities operative in the situation that may be altered by various factors such as changes in perspectives, altering interest, and recognition of new discourse or principles. In this context, Bitzer explains:

. . . The situations may be expected to change because of forces and tendencies in the environment, whether or not anyone apprehends or acts to alter them; unquestionably there have been many situations which came into existence and ultimately
disintegrated, unrecognized as situations. Nor are situations isolated from one another; within a single frame of time and place, they may overlap and implicate one another. Any attempt to resolve one may well generate another. These observations underscore the extent to which situations are located in the environment and governed by forces outside our control. (Bitzer, 1980, pp. 24-25)

Thus, it is clear that Assad’s political messages occur in specific historical situations and are essentially responsive to them. Assad finds himself in situations that present crisis, constraints, and other kinds of exigencies which he strives to resolve by conveying messages to the parties involved in these historical events. But always, he tends to address a larger set of issues than the hostage crisis itself.

To establish the situation, Assad took time to state the factual conditions in Lebanon when he indicated that:

The Iranian inspired presence is only one part of the problem. It is difficult to ascribe responsibility for all the violence to Hezbollah. The responsibility of Hezbollah in internal violence is less than the others. We are seeking to spread security in Lebanon through reconciliation . . . we are trying to have the civil war not return to the hot stage it was. No (Assad, September 1987).
Assad's statement suggests that the violence in Lebanon which would exist for some time was a powerful exigency for him and the others. The chaotic situation in Lebanon may have previously been unrecognized, but once recognized, the difficulty is a powerful one for generating a sort of reconciliation or peaceful resolution among the warring factions. Attesting to these factual conditions galvanized with powerful exigencies, Bitzer explained, "we live and act as sentient beings in a universe stocked with mental as well as physical entities, and our interaction with the environment often involves striving with respect to mental entities" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 22).

Assad seeks to resolve a sectarian conflict between the Lebanese factions. It is one in which present desires compete with a long-term interest, such as what type of government the Lebanese would have in the future, secular or religious. Components of current competency ideologies are contradictory in the present turmoil of Lebanon; one idea calls into question another. In this context, Bitzer explained,

... human motives and activities are often mixed in such a way that it is difficult to find the line between essentially political rhetoric and religious, aesthetic, or social rhetoric. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 231)
The psychological environment in Beirut, acquired from religious beliefs, sub-culture, affiliation of ideology, and the whole of experiences, is often discomforting, sometimes dangerous. This situation challenges Assad's determination to resolve it by various political and social adjustments. Something is widely recognized as other than it should be—that is a civil war; and something else is recognized as a means of resolution or reconciliation. These two constituents—civil war and resolution—are important, for they frame two principal competing exigencies in the Lebanese crisis. The presence of Assad, who interacts with neighboring Lebanon, introduces other important factors in the interaction. The proximity in space and time force Assad to recognize the traumatic situation in Lebanon and see the connection between the instrument, or solution, and the trauma.

Part of that solution, as we have seen, is Syria as an audience that can mediate change. The presence of Syria as a functional audience is necessary, because only by means of its mediating influence can the Lebanese civil war be resolved. Jimmy Carter, who met with Assad twice in 1977 and again in 1983, stated that, "He professed not to speak for other Arabs, but seemed confident that his influence would be felt in seeking any permanent resolution of differences" (Jimmy Carter, 1985, p. 81). A Syrian official said, "Lebanon is the one issue on which
any Syrian president would be prepared to take the greatest risk" (Kelly, December 19, 1983, p. 26). Concurring with these statements, former Secretary of State, George Shultz, remarked that, "No one questions Syria's legitimate security concern with respect to Lebanon" (Schiff, Spring 1984, p. 109). Talcott Seelye, also confirmed that when he said,

The United States has recognized that Lebanon's current chaotic situation necessitates the presence of the firm hand of an outside power--and that only Syria has the appropriate credentials and will to act in this capacity. (Seelye, Summer 1987, p. 107)

Facing these conditions and given the perception of his power, Assad has been invested with the political and social legitimacy to engage in the reconciliation process to unify the Lebanese fragments of society. He recognizes this:

Lebanese reconciliation is the only way. This has remained true despite continued fighting for many years and despite Israel's invasion. We emphasized this in 1976. We re-emphasize it now and are endeavoring to bring it about. (Assad, April 14, 1984)

From this interpretative analysis it is clear that Assad's rhetorical discourse was shaped by the larger context of the Middle East historical and political
conditions. That is obviously different from the American rhetorical discourse, of which the primary focus is the hostage-crisis and the phenomena of international terrorism. However, concern about the Lebanese situation and the kidnapping activity in Beirut has accelerated to become a topic of genuine national and regional concern in Damascus. Media attention and publicity given to the hostage situation gave relatively higher exposure in Syrian perception than the Middle East political settlement, itself. This made the Syrians more concerned with modifying the crisis in which their views took all the spotlight and diverted the world's attention from the acute problem in the region as a whole to the hostage problem that occurred in a country considered to be in the heart of their sphere of influence. Assad demonstrates this concern and proposes how to deal with it:

... These kidnappers are individuals and they do not care about things which a state may care about. They are not affected when you describe them as terrorists or give them similar descriptions. Therefore, a proper way other than this method should be found out.

Indeed, more than once we reached points which call for optimism, then there was a retreat. For example, prior to the hijacking of the T.W.A. plane we reached such a point--point of optimism--then the
hijacking happened and it took all the spotlight. De The American administration contacted Syria to do what it can, and we achieved results which led to the release of the hostages of the plane. No But once the plane and its hostages took off after their release, the attack against the kidnappers was resumed and our talks with them became no more useful. (Assad, October 14, 1986)

We understand from Assad’s statement that the abduction of civilians in Lebanon was a well-organized exigency in Syrian perception. Also gaining concern at this time regarding Damascus’ image was the Syrian relation with the outside world. Their perspectives on the kidnapping crisis and allegations by the U.S. of Syrian state-supported terrorism combined to formulate an exigency for the Syrian government regarding its image in the world, to which Assad spoke:

Kidnapping is a crime in every country and not only in the United States. The important thing now is to discuss how to save the hostages. In If we talk to the kidnappers about law, will this help in freeing the hostages? If we tell them that what they are doing is a crime, and that they are criminals, what would this lead to? . . . discussion of this kind may be understood by state officials, I mean officials in Syria and in Lebanon too, that is the
Lebanese government and Lebanese ministers with whom you can cooperate on the basis of this logic, but it is quite different with the kidnappers.

It is difficult for me to tell the American administration what to do, but in the light of experience I say that the method followed so far has not given any result, and therefore another method should be found out. No (Assad, October 14, 1986)

The rhetorical situation is genuine, in the sense that the situational constituents (exigence, audience, and constraints) are taking place in the historical environment and are thus available for investigation by the parties involved who are prepared to see them. In this context, Bitzer explained:

".. . political messages, unlike literary and theoretical discourse, link so closely to historical situations that we must understand details of the situation as a condition of understanding the meaning of the message. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 229)

The rhetorical situation is real and objective, in the sense that Assad, possessing appropriate knowledge and concern, can see its parts and appreciate its force. "... Kidnapping is a crime in every country and not only in the United States. The important thing now is to discuss how to save the hostages" (Assad, October 14, 1986).
The primary audience for Assad's statements have clearly been the American government. Yet Assad says, "... It is difficult for me to tell the American administration what to do." With that understanding, he did not endeavor to explain the problem, but rather, he focused on a different understanding, with suggestion of a different approach in which the exigency could be overcome or modified. Bitzer stated:

Values and interests will exert such force that persons contending in the same context and about the same subject will disagree in what they perceive and say, a political speaker will be inconsistent from one situation to another, and the perceived truth of political discourse will vary markedly across contexts. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 233)

For Assad and the U.S. government, the perceptions of the constraints and the situation operating in the region are varied. Factionalism and internal chaos in Lebanon, in Syria's view, could be a stumbling block for implementing stable and centralized authority in Beirut, which, in turn, could affect decision and action to release the remaining hostages. Assad had realized this, and seemed willing to face the situation in Lebanon as an integral part of the regional problems in which discourse was invited. Thus civil war, and the abduction of civilians in Lebanon, seemed to be the thrust that Assad used to
communicate the Middle East conflict to the outside world. The Lebanese situation was perceived as most powerful in Assad's appeal to the audience. As he stated:

   The internal complications in Lebanon are difficult and outside interventions increase the complexity of the situation . . . on our part, we will continue to be on the side of Lebanon no matter how long the time will be. (Assad, October 14, 1986)

Assad always attempted to place his rhetoric in the larger political-social setting of the region, whether he was addressing a largely Muslim audience or an American audience through the media. For example, in the first interview by Time Magazine on April 2, 1984, Assad relied on demonstrating this larger view of the "American-Israeli first" philosophy and the logical reasoning of the superpowers' role in the area. From this perspective, he said:

   No reasonable man can ignore the roles of these two superpowers. All that we wish is to see the U.S. play its role in fair, unbiased and responsible way in accordance with its responsibilities as superpower. (Assad, April 2, 1984)

In this particular context, Assad himself continued to add more constraints to the situation when he further stated:

   After the war in Lebanon, I received a delegation from the American Congress, and in discussing aid
with them I said, "You offer us only talk about peace, and while you talk to us about peace you will be debating in Congress a few days from now [proposal for] military and economic aid to Israel estimated at billions of dollars. Don’t you see that your talk is unbalanced, if on the one hand you offer us nice words about peace but on the other hand you offer Israelis tanks, artillery, aircraft and dollars? Where is the logic in all this?" (Assad, April 2, 1984)

In this statement, Assad relied largely on allowing his audience to identify with his perception of the Middle East political and social realities. In the Islamic summit, his sincerity and concern within the framework of Islamic concern has been shifted toward interpretation of the Middle East factual conditions.

It is clear that Assad’s value system is different from that of the participants, but the participants are led to feel that they receive understanding, respect, and acceptance from the speaker. This feeling is possible, since Assad has avoided purposeful hiding, disguising, inventing, and manipulation in describing regional events.

The historical components in Assad’s speech accurately reflected the factual conditions as he viewed Middle East history. Assad used in his political discourse a serious discussion of issues and values. He established
the issues and verified why he took the stand on the exigencies he chose to expose. From this evidence, Assad seemed to fully meet the issues, and to support the basic values underpinning these issues.

Disagreement is perhaps the most common factor in the context of the Middle Eastern political history. Disagreement may be approached in several ways. Disagreement may be ignored, resisted, or calmly accepted as natural. With the last approach, an opportunity exists for the working out of a modification of exigencies. As long as communication continues, agreement and identification are possible—without them, communication is fruitless.

Assad's government expended much effort staying in contact with the United States. This did not preclude differences between the two governments. Many disagreements and differences came and went throughout their diplomatic relations. Agreement emerged over the quelling of the leftist movement in Lebanon in 1976, to create political equilibrium in Lebanon; such agreement also came about in 1988, when both governments cooperated to stabilize Lebanon and create a centralized authority in Beirut. Meanwhile, some diplomatic disagreement occurred such as on May 17, 1983, when the U.S. sponsored the Lebanese-Israeli agreement without consulting Damascus. Assad's regional views and his stand on the Middle East dispute rankles the relationship, and these ideological
differences must be acknowledged as causing antitheoretical perceptions between the U.S. and Syria concerning the factual context in the region. Inevitably, this leads to diplomatic friction. Bitzer provides an explanation for this phenomenon and its relationship to the rhetorical situation:

Because a rhetorical exigence consists of a factual condition and a related interest, agreement or disagreement between speaker and audience or between speaker and critic or between competing speakers may occur. . . When the same factual condition and the same interest are perceived by speaker and audience, both will experience the same exigence. Speakers and audiences, however, often disagree on factual conditions, interests, or both, and such disagreements produce radical divisions among persons, groups, and cultures. When such disagreements occur, different exigencies are actually experienced by persons involved. (Bitzer, 1980, p. 29)

Difficulties caused by differing perceptions emerged afresh in 1986, after terrorists attempted the bombing of Al-All Airline at Hethrow airport, and the U.S. accusation of Syrian involvement in that incident. One month after the incident, Assad was questioned by Time Magazine concerning Syrian involvement in international terrorism. His response to the accusation did not go unnoticed. The
following comments from Assad indicated the root of the difference in U.S.-Syrian perceptions and serve as a specific rhetorical artifact for analysis with Bitzer grid symbols:

... These accusations do not worry us because they do not represent the truth. Ri It may be useful to mention here that certain persons and circles in the United States lead this campaign, the campaign of directing accusations to Syria. Fa

We believe that these accusations do not represent a purely American political will. Mo It rather embodies a Zionist-Israeli will. Indeed, if the matter was purely American, accusations would not have been directed to Syria which more than once, has helped to save a number of Americans from the danger of a possible death. Mo

If the matter was purely and freely American, the accusation of terrorism would not have been directed to Syria, Mo while Israel has for many years been occupying Syrian and Arab land, before the very eyes of the entire world. De

Moreover, if the matter was purely and freely American, the accusation of terrorism would not have been directed to Syria which has been the target of several acts of terror. And the United States is
fully aware of the acts of terror committed against Syria.Ob

If the accusation, or let us say the decision to make it was taken by American circles, an accusation against Israel, at least once in her long history of terrorism, would have been made. Israel, in fact committed the first hijacking operation in 1954 when it seized a Syrian civil plane and led it to Israel, where it was detained for several days and its passengers interrogated, abused and subjected to various acts of humiliation.De

Israel, moreover, shot down a Libyan civil plane of the type Boeing 737 in 1973 causing the death of more than one hundred civilian passengers from various countries, including the Libyan Foreign Minister at the time Saleh Bwaiseer, as well as members of the crew who were all French.Ob

In 1973, Israel hijacked an Iraqi civil plane after it had left the Beirut International Airport. This plane was taken to Israel, where its passengers were interrogated on the pretext that the aim of the act was to search for Palestinians.Ri

In February 1986 Israel hijacked a Libyan plane on board of which were members of a Syrian political delegation. The plane was taken to Israel. The passengers were subjected to interrogation and acts
of humiliation. This included members of the Syrian political delegation.  

In 1968, Israel used its military power to destroy thirteen civil planes on the ground at Beirut airport.  

In 1973 Israel sent some of its military units to the streets of Beirut and assassinated three Palestinian leaders, including a well-known Palestinian Poet, namely Kamal Nasser. . . . (Assad, October 14, 1986)  

When dealing with differences in U.S.-Syrian perceptions, Assad repeatedly has used a similar mode of discourse. First, he entered the rhetorical situation in a positive and prepared manner. "... indeed, if the matter was purely American, accusations would not have been directed to Syria which more than once has helped to save a number of Americans from the danger of a possible death" (Assad, October 14, 1986). Appreciation, need, and interest are factors related to the factual conditions and they exist regardless of perceptual disagreement. These common factors account for the emergence of motives and purposes toward consensus by both nations. Against this background, both the U.S. and Syria are agreed on the factual conditions and the related interests of both nations concerning the hostage situation.
The U.S. argues convincingly that the kidnappers pose a threat to the hostages' physical well-being—both Syria and the United States governments agree the hostages must be freed, unharmed. In this regard, the U.S. and Syria perceive the same, or roughly the same, factual conditions, and both have the same, or roughly the same, interest. Such agreement was manifested by the Syrian action of releasing some of the American hostages held earlier. Such a humanitarian gesture by Damascus presumes such agreement. "... when the same factual condition and the same interest are perceived by speaker and audience, both will experience the same exigence" (Bitzer, 1980, p. 29).

Innocent people held hostage in Lebanon induced Assad to take an action, regardless of ideological differences or disparities in the political and social environment, as he stated:

Regardless of any consideration, **In** we approach the subject of the hostages as a human issue. **No** Therefore we exerted big efforts in order to help and we have succeeded more than once ... we achieved this success despite the fact that the general political climate was not helpful **ob** ... The difficulty was caused not only by the kidnappers but also by the political circumstances. As in the past, we will continue to make every possible effort to help these
hostages, and we understand their suffering *No* . . .
When we talk about efforts made, we are talking about hope. *Fa* If there is no hope, then there is no reason to make the effort. (Assad, September 1987)

Since he shared, through public rhetoric, his views of the situation, so both governments understood each other. When discussion was forthcoming and the disagreements made visible, some sense of mutual agreement was sought, if possible. When no agreement was possible, Assad would possibly support his original course of action, if that remained in his perception the most reasonable alternative available.

Seeing an issue differently rarely enhances identification between two parties involved, but differences do not wipe out all chance for identification. An open dialogue and channels of communication through the media also allow for controversy to be dealt with. Without communication, no opportunity for a state of consubstantiality exists. For this reason, Assad followed the tactic of accepting and dealing with differences. Although the United States and Syria "are fighting each other," Assad once explained, "that doesn’t stop us from meeting" (U.S. News and World Report, July 8, 1985, p. 24).

One way to understand the U.S.-Syrian rhetorical discourse within the scheme of social and political
conditions operating in the region is to recognize the components of the competing views and ideas of the parties involved across context. As Kenneth Burke stated,

If men were not apart from one another, there would be no need for the rhetorician to proclaim their unity. If men were wholly and truly of one substance, absolute communication would be of man's very essence." (Bitzer, 1981 on Burke, p. 234)

But individuals are at odds with one another; and so also are groups, cultures, and generations. The human condition is shot through with divisiveness, separation, and competition. This condition explains why the key concept in Bitzer's theory of rhetoric is identification, which

is affirmed with earnestness precisely because there is division . . . human agents with competing motives, interests, meanings, and truths find themselves at odds, sometimes radically so; but at the same time they share those same elements in some degree as a condition of their common understanding and humanity. There is, then, a constant condition of both division and community, our efforts to bridge gaps, even when successful, sometimes create others; and some of our most exhausting labor toward cooperation only anticipates division, as when we take great pains to rally ourselves for war. Rhetoric's function is essentially pragmatic—to find common
meaning, unifying symbols, and ways of acting together, thus promoting cooperation. (Bitzer, 1981, p. 234)

**Frequency of Rhetorical Situation Factors**

From this (1) interpretation and (2) empirical analysis using the Bitzer grid, we now have a basis for judging the rhetorical situation as it was responded to by the second rhetor—namely, Assad, spokesperson for Syria. Data from these two sources permit a display of the frequencies of rhetorical situation factors which operated in the discourse centered on the hostage crisis (see Table 1).

From this table, we are able to contrast how the various factors influenced the rhetorical position of the United States and how they influenced Assad's role as rhetor for Syria.

No effort is made to deduce *causality* from the frequency data shown in Table 1. Rather, it demonstrates that Bitzer's factors do seem to explain strategic moves in rhetorical discourse. It is interesting to note that both rhetors—U.S.A. and Syria—have rhetorical moves that cluster around the "modification capability" and the "obligation/expectation" factors. Clearly, these two factors were basic to any kind of continuing discourse.
Table 1

Frequency of Rhetorical Situation Factors in U.S.A.-Syrian Discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>U.S.A. Rhetors</th>
<th>Syrian Rhetor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediacy (Im)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification Capability (Mo)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation/Expectation (Ob)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity/Confidence (Fa)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk (Ri)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of Interest (De)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Warranted generalizations about the overall discourse and its implications follow in the next chapter, Chapter V.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS
OF THE RESEARCH

This final chapter serves to summarize what has traditionally been termed the "findings" of the research. Warranted generalizations are formulated, and their implications for theory and practice in several related fields are explored. Possible directions for further research in rhetorical analysis are identified.

The Research Effort

This research has been reported in five chapters which reflect phases of the research effort beyond the introduction, itself: (1) discussion of the underlying metatheoretical base for the research and an explication of the methodology, including the investigator's extension of the Bitzer model to create a grid for the analysis of specific rhetorical artifacts from the hostage crisis discourse; (2) the historical narrative of Western-Arab exigencies, responses, and constraints from 1947 to present, serving as a context for the interpretation of the hostage crisis rhetorical situation; (3) the application of the investigator's extension of the Bitzer grid to selected specific artifacts in rhetorical situations in
the hostage crisis discourse; (4) the analysis of data through empirical and historical interpretations to generate fresh insights into the realities of U.S.A. and Syrian political relationships as these are evidenced in rhetorical discourse over the hostage crisis; (5) an interpretation of the implications of the research findings for such action and decision-making fields as policymaking, media reporting, and leadership training, as well as general education of citizens.

Research Findings

As reported in Chapter II, a number of initial questions guided the search for an appropriate research methodology. These were: Does the continuing hostage crisis provide motives and constituents which invite rhetorical discourse? What are the principal characteristics of the mediating agencies that have most promise for solution of the hostage crisis? What is the nature of the "audience" in the U.S.A.-Syrian discourse? How have prior exigencies influenced the current stage of the rhetoric? What does Bitzer's theory tell us about the nature of rhetorical responses to exigencies? Can the role of social and political "constraints" be identified in an analysis of crisis rhetorical discourse and if so, what role do they play? Are there identifiable stages in the evolution of an international crisis discourse?
Analysis of the data provided answers to these questions and permitted warranted generalizations. In effect, the purposes of the study were fulfilled. The generalizations, themselves, for an effective reporting here, are organized into two categories: generalizations about the role of Bitzer's rhetorical situation theory in rhetorical analysis; and generalizations about the content of the analysis, itself, for the nature of the U.S.A.-Syrian discourse on the hostage crisis.

Three basic generalizations in the first category follow:

(1) Bitzer's model serves as an effective theoretical construct for unpacking new insights into the complex relationships of rhetorical discourse.

These insights help to generate cross-cultural understandings to bridge the gap between official Western discourse and that of representatives of the Arab world, in this case, Syria.

The data support the fact that the multiple factors Bitzer identifies as impinging on rhetorical responses to exigencies--risk, degree of interest, immediacy, modification capability, obligation/expectation, familiarity/confidence--all "hold up" and are valuable sources of data not otherwise available in an analysis of discourse in a rhetorical situation.
For example, the analysis of a sample of rhetorical artifacts identified a number of specific instances in each of these categories. The tabulation of these instances in the rhetorical situations permitted a comparison and significant contrast between the rhetorical styles and strategies of the United States spokesmen and those of Assad. Moreover, parallels were found between these findings and those of the interpretations generated from the unfolding of the historical/cultural narrative. In effect, each manipulation of data derived from the multiple factor grid supported the other.

As a case in point, the frequency of the modification capability as derived from the analysis of the rhetorical artifacts reported in Chapter IV clearly demonstrates, both the American rhetors and the Syrian rhetor, despite their different rhetorical styles and strategies, were open to continuing the dialogue (U.S.A. rhetors scored 11 in modification capability; Assad scored 13). This is a critical feature of any ongoing discourse. Further, the frequency of such a factor as obligation/expectation, although greater for the United States rhetor, was also in evidence in the transaction of the Syrian rhetor to a lesser degree. This differential may well be due to the fact that the United States is a large, powerful nation which is seen as a major world power. Syria clearly has no such world image. However, the fact that both rhetors evidence some rhetorical loading on this factor is
critical in the projection of possibilities for continuing the discourse.

In yet another one of the Bitzer situation factors, familiarity/confidence, it is clear that these also serve to help understand the critical operations involved in the discourse. For example, the United States rhetors had a comparatively high frequency in this factor (6) in contrast to a rather low loading of the Syrian rhetor (2). This might well be due to the historical fact that since the early days of the nation, the United States had repeatedly made "deals" to free hostages. As early as President George Washington's term in office, ransom had been paid to pirates for the release of 100 American merchant sailors. Theodore Roosevelt, Richard Nixon, President Carter preceding President Reagan's presidency had all dealt with terrorists in an effort to release hostages during their terms in office. In effect, U.S.A. had a history, and one might say, a tradition of such transactions and the rhetoric that accompanies them. Syria did not.

To clarify the function of yet another of the rhetorical situation factors findings, the degree of interest, it is significant that the frequency of the U.S.A. rhetors was higher than Syria (7 U.S. and respectively). This is, without a doubt, due to the fact that U.S.A. has a large economic and political interest in the Middle East region,
whereas Syria has relatively little. In other words, U.S.A. has much more "to lose."

Given data from these sources, the policymaker, the media specialist, the educator, and increasingly, the official speech writer are all better able to sense the reality of a situation. This is because they are able to view a complex entity in terms of its component parts. They, therefore, are in a position to project more effective solutions, to foster alternative strategies, and to project more successful programs for political and social action.

(2) Analysis of a rhetorical situation using Bitzer's model permits the effective use of a wide range of research methodologies in the identification and treatment of data.

Using the model with this investigator's extension of it makes possible the identification, collection, and analysis of rhetorical data that commonly might be viewed as phenomenological in nature and beyond the scope of the traditional empirical research procedures. The procedures employed in this study enlarged the techniques of inquiry beyond the empirical to include data gathering and interpretation that characterize interpretative and critical theory procedures as well. The extensive interpretations of cultural-historical data made throughout Chapter III serve to demonstrate this larger data gathering base and supports the thesis of a number of contemporary
metatheoretical positions in philosophy, political science, and sociology.

To cite but one example among many from the field of philosophy, the extensive current writings of Richard Rorty suffice. He extends the pragmatism of John Dewey and the research methodology that philosophical position supports. The effect can be seen as a shift involving historical narratives in which the idea of "truth" as correspondence to reality is gradually replaced by the idea of truth as what comes to be believed in the course of free and open encounters. This position clearly has profound implications for rhetorical research. Rorty's work gives additional support to Thomas Kuhn's concept of a paradigm shift and the consequent need for alternative research methodologies.

Others in the field of social theory and sociology take similar positions. As early as 1970, Alvin Gouldner, the Max Weber Research Professor of Social Theory at Washington University, called for a transformation of the social science field and its research methodologies. His proposals are based on a metatheory that meets, as does the rhetorical research reported in this dissertation, Bernstein's criterion that sound research must be empirical, interpretative, and critical. Bitzer's model makes this possible.

(3) The analysis of the rhetorical situation identified practical "take hold" points for
generating more effective discourse at both the international and national levels between American and Arab rhetors.

It is possible to see and understand more clearly the relationship between "risk" and "modification capability" in an exigency, as in the case of Assad's call for "logic" on part of United States' supplying arms to Israel (p. 186). This was the rhetorical strategy in dealing with a rhetor who was in a far more favorable position to take "risk" because of his superior position of power (U.S.A. rhetors scored a 9 for risk; Assad scored a 5). The rhetor can enter into a discourse with a clear intent to make use of this knowledge in his or her rhetorical strategy. The same is true with insight into what is taking place at any one time with respect to the other factors in the rhetorical situation. Crucial also is insight into the interrelationship among these factors. The difference in perception between an American and an Arab imposes further cultural and historical overtones that must be brought to the level of consciousness on the part of the rhetors. Both Chapters III and IV identify many varied instances of such levels of heightened consciousness.

This process of bringing take-hold points to the level of consciousness gives practical "leads" on how to proceed not only with rhetoric, but also with the planning
of political strategies and the projection of social programs.

Basic generalizations in the second category generated from an analysis and interpretation of the content of the discourse follow:

(1) **The hostage crisis and its U.S.A.-Syrian discourse is the critical center of a much larger complex of dispute and conflict in U.S.A.-Mid-East relations.**

The rhetorical situation generated by the hostage crisis serves as a prototype for other continuing conflicts between the United States and the Arab world. If the crisis situation could move toward a solution and effective strategies were to evolve for coping with it, new relationships may emerge that would help to arrive at more effective responses to other exigencies.

For example, a current pressing exigency in the Middle East is Lebanon's war entering its fifteenth year. Massive daily bombardments are pounding residential areas of Beirut. Syria's "peacekeeping" forces, with the help of the Lebanese Druze militia, are fighting the Christian Lebanese Army. The existence of competing Cabinets in Beirut echoes the de facto partition of the country.

A second critical exigency calling for resolution is the current Palestinian uprising, in which television daily pictures Israeli soldiers shooting at Palestinian
citizens, often children, in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israeli soldiers and citizens are also victims of the violence. In theory, there could emerge a Palestinian state that would require a partnership with Israel and the support of surrounding Arab nations. These are but some of the realities that constitute the exigency. The Bitzer grid could provide a sound basis for the rhetorical analysis of discourse surrounding these larger conflicts.

(2) Neither President Reagan and his spokesmen nor Assad qualify as "nonviolent peacemakers" in Martin Buber's sense of that term namely, an "I-Thou" relationship.

This is to assert that the data show that these individuals have been unable to "put themselves into the others' shoes" to engage in a genuine dialogue in the Buberian definition of an ideal, empathetic dialogue.

One might speculate that the lower sense of obligation that Assad's rhetoric reveals (7 for Assad vs. 17 for U.S.A. rhetors) is a critical factor in this outcome. Too, the familiarity/confidence finding from the grid analysis (a very low 2 for Assad) is a contributing factor.

In effect, neither of these two leaders seems able to bridge the distance in order to seek a transcending impact upon the other. Martin Buber, in his many writings, would term this as basically an I-It relationship. In his concept of an I-Thou relationship, the intent is through a
dialectic to achieve a higher synergy. This is a process that seeks to reconcile what at the outset seems like apparent opposites. The lowest form of synergy may be viewed as a compromise in which each party gains partial agreement. Leadership in the best sense, whether peace or some other large purpose such as an end to terrorism, involves a higher level of synergy that is more than the sum of its parts.

(3) The current, 1989, hostage crisis discourse between the United States and Syria is at the "deterioration stage" in Bitzer's four stages of evolution of a rhetorical situation.

How well the discourse proceeds in the future depends in large measure on how effectively the respective U.S.A. and Syrian rhetors make use of strategies based on insight into factors that impinge on the rhetorical situation.

As Bitzer theorized, many situations grow to maturity and are resolved. Others, he asserts, disintegrate. The construct of a spiral moving in stages from origin of the rhetorical situation down through disintegration is clearly a possibility. At the time of this research, a deterioration stage assessment seems valid. It is deterioration in the sense that little attention in the way of public official discourse is evident from day to day and week to week. Other exigencies more pressing than the hostage crisis are given wide coverage in the media. In a colloquial sense, the hostage crisis may be said to have
been moved "to the back burner." In terms of resolution, this lack of direct concern in public rhetoric is judged to be deterioration in the stages of evolution, rather than a stable state moving toward maturity.

The factor of immediacy is clearly involved in this move into a deterioration stage. It was found to be moderately low overall (7 for U.S.A. rhetors; 6 for Assad) and became progressively lower as the discourse continued.

(4) Both rhetors in the rhetorical situation have a demonstrable "strategic style" in coping with exigencies and shaping responses.

President Reagan and his associates tended to resort to appeals to obligation and expectation factors (17) that set a high moral tone. They also assert their extensive modification capability (11). They perceive Assad's rhetoric as lacking in any logical coherency. Assad tends in a rhetorical situation to emphasize immediacy (7), degree of interest (7), and risk-taking factors (9). His rhetoric tends to focus primarily on a variety of strategic elements instead of a more limited range of factors, as in the case of U.S.A. rhetors. He views himself as speaking for the entire Arab world. Both Chapters III and IV have many examples of the contrasting rhetorical styles of these two rhetors.

Clearly, the rhetoric these two leaders engage in is different, as an analysis of the data demonstrates. However, if one studies the tabulation of frequencies in
which rhetorical situation factors were found to function, it is apparent that although there are marked differences, the commonalities they share are also a part of the situation. In fact, it is these that permit more than a hope for success if the stage of the discourse moves toward maturity rather than disintegration. For example, there is a significant clustering around the modification capability factor (U.S.A. rhetors 11; Assad 13), which could be the key to a higher quality of discourse that could foreshadow a successful resolution. Also, although the United States rhetors show, as one would expect of a recognized world power, great reliance on the obligation/expectation factors (17), Assad's rhetoric also involved this factor in not insignificant degree (7).

Limitations of the Study

As is the case in any research, there are certain limitations. In this effort, two are recognized: (1) the interpretation and analysis of specific rhetorical artifacts was made by a single investigator with no cross-checking of data by others; However, interpretation is a human centered activity—the data are available for anyone; (2) the rhetorical data were derived from printed materials without the visual/aural content, which may have contributed other significant nonverbal data integral to the rhetorical situation. However, it should be noted that the interpretations of the Arab world responses were
made by the investigator whose native language and culture are Arabic. Frequently, rhetorical analyses are made by individuals who do not know a foreign language and culture. This knowledge factor is especially critical in an interpretation of data.

Implications of the Study

The many implications of the above findings have already been foreshadowed. The following are a series of warranted extrapolations:

1. Political scientists should be trained to use more widely the tools of rhetorical situation analyses. This training would, in turn, affect the preparation of individuals who plan to pursue public careers and would affect the writing and scholarship of political scientists and other social scientists who make knowledge in those fields available to scholars and the general public. To understand historical events and responses to them requires an understanding of rhetoric.

2. Politicians and other makers of public policy at local, national, and international levels should be made aware of how their rhetoric fares when exposed to rhetorical situation analysis. Such information could improve their discourse and the justity of their decisions.
3. Individuals responsible for reporting political and social events in the media should be made aware of the value of a fuller understanding of the rhetorical situation. Citizens would then be in a position to have more complete information on which to make rational choices.

4. Members of the general public should be knowledgeable about the nature of rhetorical situations in order to interpret intelligently what they see, read, and hear directly and through the various media. This level of development would approach Dewey’s concept of a truly "reflective" citizen. Achieving this end has direct implications for all levels of public education.

Future Directions

This research has been, by its nature, largely heuristic within the limits of a doctoral dissertation. However, the findings warrant a number of directions for further research efforts on a larger scale, assuming sufficient resources are available:

1. Rhetorical situation analyses should be undertaken with a complete and comprehensive collection of rhetorical artifacts in the American-Syrian hostage crisis.

2. Other American-Arab crises should be subjected to the Bitzer rhetorical situation analysis to find if there are significant commonalities among these exigencies and the rhetorical responses of political actors.
3. Dissemination of the findings of this research and those proposed in 1 and 2 above should be undertaken to encourage other investigators to collect and analyze data from differing rhetorical situations. This would be a significant further testing of the findings of this research and would increase the validity of the generalizations.

4. Seminars and/or colloquia should be planned to study further, and perhaps refine, the research methodologies employed in this investigator's work, generating thereby new knowledge for the field of rhetoric.

5. Insofar as possible, the "grid" should be studied by quantitative-oriented scholars with the possibility in mind of applying content analysis or other quantitative methods to the data. Such inquiry, however, should be undertaken with the clear understanding that such analyses must always be coupled with interpretive analysis, for such is the nature of rhetorical discourse.

6. An effort should be made to determine the predictive value of the Bitzer grid. Can we, for example, assume that, baring major developments or change in the historical situation, U.S.A. rhetors will maintain high levels of obligation/expectation while Assad can be expected to offer discourse with little loading on familiarity/confidence?
APPENDIX A

AMERICAN SPEECHES AND STATEMENTS
"Security of U.S. Marines in Lebanon"

President Reagan's remarks and his question-and-answer session with reporters of December 27, 1983

I received the report of the Long commission [retired Adm. Robert L. J. Long] last Friday and have reviewed it thoroughly. The report draws a conclusion that the United States and its military institutions are, by tradition and training, inadequately equipped to deal with the fundamentally new phenomenon of state-supported terrorism. I wholeheartedly agree.

The thrust of the history of this country is that we've recognized a clear distinction between being at peace with other states and being at war. We have never before faced a situation in which others routinely sponsor and facilitate acts of violence against us while hiding behind proxies and surrogates which they claim they do not fully control.

This problem is not unique to Lebanon. We've seen the ugly manifestation in Kuwait, the terrorist bombing in Rangoon, the senseless murder of Turkish diplomats, the attack on the Pope, the bombing of our own Capitol, and on the streets of London.

In the days ahead, we need to systematically redevelop our approach to this problem, recognizing that the worst outcome of all is one in which terrorists succeed in transforming an open democracy into a closed fortress. One fact, though, is already obvious: The problem of terrorism will not disappear if we run from it. This is not to say that we're not working as urgently as possible to create political conditions in Lebanon that will make it possible for us to remove our forces. But we must not delude ourselves into believing that terrorism will vanish on the happy day that our forces come home.

For terrorists to be curbed, civilized countries must begin a new effort to work together, to share intelligence, to improve our training and security and our forces, to deny havens or legal protection for terrorist
groups, and, most important of all, to hold increasingly accountable those countries which sponsor terrorism and terrorist activity around the world.

The United States intends to be in the forefront of this effort. For the near term, corrective action is being urgently taken to ensure the maximum possible security of our forces. Nearly all the measures that were identified by the distinguished members of the commission have already been implemented, and those that have not will be very quickly.

The commission report also notes that the mission of the Marines is extremely difficult, and with this, too, there can be no dispute. We recognized the fact at the beginning, and we're painfully mindful of it today. But the point is that our forces have already contributed to achievements that lay the foundation for a future peace, the restoration of a central government, and the establishment of an effective national Lebanese army. We do not expect Utopia, but I believe that we're on the verge of new progress toward national reconciliation and the withdrawal of foreign forces.

And let me finally say that I have soberly considered the commission's word about accountability and responsibility of authorities up and down the chain of command. And everywhere more should be done to anticipate and prepare for dramatic terrorist assaults. We have to come to grips with the fact that today's terrorists are better armed and financed, they are more sophisticated, they are possessed by a fanatical intensity that individuals of a democratic society can only barely comprehend.

I do not believe, therefore, that the local commanders on the ground—men who have already suffered quite enough—should be punished for not fully comprehending the nature of today's terrorist threat. If there is to be blame, it properly rests here in this office and with this President. And I accept responsibility for the bad as well as the good . . .


"Lebanon"

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT, JAN. 3, 1984

This morning the National Security Council examined the Lebanon situation in some detail and how best to achieve our goals. This evening Ambassador [Donald Rumsfeld, the
President's special representative to the Middle East] Rumsfeld is returning to the Middle East to continue U.S. diplomatic initiatives in Lebanon and the Middle East. I have today written to President Assad regarding the release of Lt. [Robert O.] Goodman. I expressed my appreciation for this action and suggested that this is an opportune moment to put all the issues on the table and work with the United States to bring greater stability to Lebanon and withdrawals of foreign troops.

Our support for Lebanon remains firm. Progress has been made toward achieving their twin goals of national reconciliation and troop withdrawals. We are continuing our support for these efforts. The work ahead is difficult, but with determined international effort and the good will of all the parties, we believe that continued progress will be made.


"Developments in Lebanon"

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT, FEB. 6, 1984

Once more the news from Lebanon is filled with scenes of indiscriminate killing and suffering. I know that men and women of good will throughout the world share my deep concern over the renewed violence. They join me in deploring the continued shelling of innocent civilians and the actions of those who would destroy the legitimate Government of Lebanon.

I call on the Government of Syria, which occupies Lebanese territory from which much of the shelling of civilian centers originates and which facilitates and supplies instruments for terrorist attacks on the people of Lebanon, to cease this activity.

President Gemayel is now hard at work trying to form a new government. I welcome his efforts to stop the fighting and to resume the talks in Geneva aimed at achieving national reconciliation. He has set forth a specific agenda of reforms and reconciliation and demonstrated again his openness to a dialogue on all the issues. He has demonstrated a strong desire to bring all factions together to develop equitable and durable political and economic arrangements for his country.

All responsible Lebanese political leaders should take this opportunity to bring into being the more broadly representative government they say they want and which we
have continually supported. I urge all parties to answer President Gemayel's call. It is time for all Lebanese to rise above their confessional or factional affiliation and join together as citizens of one nation, united and sovereign.

The commitment of the United States to the unity, independence, and sovereignty of Lebanon remains firm and unwavering. We will continue to support the Government and the people of Lebanon in their efforts to achieve these goals. With good will and hard work, the dream of a rebuilt and reunited Lebanon can still be made a reality. We remain committed to help in that task.

PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT, FEB. 7, 1984

The bloodshed we have witnessed in Lebanon over the last several days only demonstrates once again the length to which the forces of violence and intimidation are prepared to go to prevent a peaceful reconciliation process from taking place. If a moderate government is overthrown because it had the courage to turn in the direction of peace, what hope can there be that other moderates in the region will risk committing themselves to a similar course? Yielding to violence and terrorism today may seem to provide temporary relief, but such a course is sure to lead to a more dangerous and less manageable future crisis.

Even before the latest outbreak of violence, we had been considering ways of reconcentrating our forces and the nature of our support in order to take the initiative away from the terrorists. Far from deterring us from this course, recent events only confirm the importance of the decisive new steps I want to outline for you now. Thus after consultation with our MNF [multinational forces] partners and President Gemayel and at his request, we are prepared to do the following.

First, to enhance the safety of Americans and other MNF personnel in Lebanon, I have authorized U.S. naval forces, under the existing mandate of the MNF, to provide naval gunfire and air support against any units firing into greater Beirut from parts of Lebanon controlled by Syria, as well as against any units directly attacking American or MNF personnel and facilities. Those who conduct these attacks will no longer have sanctuary from which to bombard Beirut at will. We will stand firm to deter those who seek to influence Lebanon's future by intimidation.
Second, when the Government of Lebanon is able to reconstitute itself into a broadly based, representative government, we will vigorously accelerate the training, equipping, and support of the Lebanese Armed Forces, on whom the primary responsibility rests for maintaining stability in Lebanon. We will speed up delivery of equipment; we will improve the flow of information to help counter hostile bombardments; and we will intensify training in counterterrorism to help the Lebanese confront the terrorist threat that poses such a danger to Lebanon, to Americans in Lebanon, and, indeed, to peace in the Middle East.

Third, in conjunction with these steps, I have asked Secretary of Defense Weinberger to present to me a plan for redeployment of the Marines from Beirut Airport to their ships offshore. This redeployment will begin shortly and will proceed in stages. U.S. military personnel will remain on the ground in Lebanon for training and equipping the Lebanese Army and protecting the remaining personnel. These are conditional functions that U.S. personnel perform in many friendly countries. Our naval and Marine forces offshore will stand ready, as before, to provide support for the protection of American and other MNF personnel in Lebanon and thereby help ensure security in the Beirut areas as I have described.

These measures, I believe, will strengthen our ability to do the job we set out to do and to sustain our efforts over the long term. They are consistent with the compromise joint resolution worked out last October with the Congress with respect to our participation in the multinational force.


"1984 Act to Combat International Terrorism"

PRESIDENT’S STATEMENT, OCT. 19, 1984

I have today signed into law H.R. 6311, the 1984 Act to Combat International Terrorism. This act will provide resources and authorities essential in countering the insidious threat terrorism poses to those who cherish freedom and democracy. International terrorism is a growing problem for all of us in the Western world—not just the United States. While we in the Western democracies are most often the targets, terrorist attacks are becoming increasingly violent and indiscriminate. Since the first of September, there have been 41 separate
terrorist attacks by no fewer than 14 terrorist groups against the citizens and property of 21 nations. Sixteen of these were attacks against individual citizens and 18 of these were bombings or attempted bombings in which innocent third parties were victimized.

This nation bears global responsibilities that demand that we maintain a worldwide presence and not succumb in these cowardly attempts at intimidation. In several important ways, this act will enable us to improve our ability to protect those who serve our country overseas.

--It authorizes payment of rewards for information concerning terrorist acts.

--It provides for the authorization of $356 million of urgently needed security enhancements for U.S. missions abroad.

I am grateful that the Congress has responded swiftly to my request for these authorities and resources. This act is an important step in our multiyear effort to counter the pervasive threat international terrorism poses to our diplomatic personnel and facilities overseas. The act complements other actions now under review and separate measures taken with our allies aimed at significantly improving our ability to thwart this menace to mankind. While none of these steps guarantee that terrorism acts will not occur again, we can be certain that the measures made possible by this act will make such attacks more difficult in the future.


"U.S. Airliner Hijacked; Passengers Held Hostage"

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS (EXCERPT), JAYCEES CONVENTION, INDIANAPOLIS, JUNE 19, 1985

... But before I go on with my remarks for today, let me speak to a concern that I know is on all your minds—our American prisoners in Beirut. We're continuing to do everything that we can to bring all credible influence to bear, to get our people freed and returned home safe and sound. But let me say we must not yield to the terrorist demands that invite more terrorism. We cannot reward their grisly deeds. We will not cave in ...}

"Terrorists Seize Cruise Ship in Mediterranean"

PRESIDENT’S REMARKS (EXCERPTS), OCT. 11, 1985

Events of the past 24 hours reinforce the determination of all of those who share the privileges of freedom and liberty to join together in countering the scourge of international terrorism. All civilized people welcome the apprehension of the terrorists responsible for the seizure of Achille Lauro and the brutal murder of Leon Klinghoffer. The pursuit of justice is well served by this cooperative effort to ensure that these terrorists are prosecuted and punished for their crimes.

I want to point out the crucial role played by the Italian Government in bringing this operation to a successful and peaceful conclusion. Throughout, Prime Minister Craxi has been courageous in his insistence that those apprehended shall be subject to full due process of law.

I also want to note my gratitude that the Government of Egypt was able to end the crisis without additional loss of life, although I disagreed with their disposition of the terrorists.

And, additionally, I wish to praise President Bourguiba’s forthright decision to refuse the entry of the fugitives.

Most of all, I am proud to be the Commander in Chief of the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who deployed, supported, and played the crucial role in the delivery of these terrorists to Italian authorities. They and the men and women of our Foreign Service and intelligence community performed flawlessly in this most difficult and delicate operation. They have my gratitude and, I’m sure, the gratitude of all of their countrymen. These young Americans sent a message to terrorists everywhere. The message: You can run, but you can’t hide.

Source: Department of State Bulletin, December 1985, pp. 74-75.

"Kidnappings in Lebanon"

PRESIDENT’S STATEMENT, JAN. 26, 1987

All Americans, I know, share my outrage at the latest kidnappings of our citizens in Lebanon. Not only
Americans but more than 20 citizens from nine countries are now being held by terrorist groups there. Today my sympathy goes out to the friends and relatives of all those hostages.

The terrorists appear to believe that by trafficking in human lives they can force sovereign governments to give in to their demands. But our government will not make concessions to terrorist groups despite their threats. For to give in to terrorist blackmail would only encourage more terrorism; to yield to their demands now would only endanger the lives of many others later.

I would like to add a special word to Americans in Lebanon. Where U.S. citizens are unjustly deprived of their God-given rights, the U.S. Government has an obligation to try to restore those rights. But there is a limit to what our government can do for Americans in a chaotic situation such as that in Lebanon today. In particular, the situation in west Beirut has deteriorated to total anarchy, with armed criminal groups taking the law into their own hands. For the past 12 years our government has regularly warned American citizens against travel to Lebanon. As recently as last Tuesday we reiterated our assessment that the situation there is "extremely dangerous." The events of the past week provide striking confirmation of that assessment. Americans who ignored this warning clearly did so at their own risk and on their own responsibility. This weekend the U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon again was in contact with remaining Americans and advised them to leave.

Those who hold hostages, regardless of nationality, should release them immediately and unconditionally. Their acts of terror constitute a declaration of war on civilized society. I again join with civilized countries in condemnation of terrorist outrages.

In conclusion, let me stress again that our government remains unrelenting and alert in its search for opportunities to secure the release of our citizens no matter how long that may take.

"U.S. Airliner Hijacked; Passengers Held Hostage"

SECRETARY'S STATEMENT, JUNE 17, 1985

Hijacking and other forms of terrorism are unacceptable in any civilized society.

We call upon those holding hostages to treat them properly and to release them immediately. The U.S. Government is heavily engaged in efforts to bring about their safe return to their families. In pursuing these efforts, as is well known, we will not make deals with terrorists and will not encourage others to do so.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the hostages and their families, as we all work and wait for their safe release.

SECRETARY'S STATEMENT, SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, JUNE 19, 1985

You invited me to start with a statement about the hijacking situation, and I welcome that opportunity.

The U.S. position toward the hijacking is clear. We will not make concessions to terrorists nor will we pressure other states to do so. Conceding in such circumstances is tantamount to succumbing to blackmail. Worse, it encourages terrorists elsewhere in the world to think that such tactics can succeed.

We must protect our citizens now and in the future from such heinous acts. We cannot afford a policy of concession to terror.

Amal leader and Minister of Justice Nabih Berri has assumed responsibility for dealing with the hijackers. He assured us the passengers are safe and well. We have told him we consider him responsible for the safe return of our people and the prompt resolution of this affair. We have made our position clear to him and to the Lebanese Government: the hijacking is morally indefensible and cannot be justified on any grounds.

Berri, as a prominent Shia leader, should be aware that the hijacking is not only a matter of the safety of our American citizens but also involves his longer term interests and those of Lebanon as well. Participation in
the international community is based on reputation and on a willingness to abide by and to uphold the principles of law and order upon which that community rests. Those who fail to assume their obligations must bear the consequence as outcasts. Continuation of the hijacking will bring irreparable damage to Lebanon's reputation and will set back hopes of its communities for social and political justice.

Israel has stated that its policy is to release the prisoners who were transferred from Ansar to Israel as the security situation permits. In effect, the hijacking of the TWA aircraft is impeding implementation of a process which was already underway. The hijackers must be made to understand that their efforts to trade the TWA passengers for the Ansar prisoners is without moral justification and that it will not succeed. Indeed, it is counterproductive.

The U.S. Government will not rest until our citizens have been safely reunited with their families. Ambassador [Reginald] Bartholomew in Beirut remains in contact with Nabih Berri as well as with President [Amin] Gemayel and other key Lebanese leaders. We are working closely with other governments who can bring their influence to bear on this matter.

Algeria, of course, has been cooperating closely with us since the very beginning. A number of other countries in the region have made, in one way or another, statements on this subject, including, before it started, [President Hafiz al-] Assad of Syria in expressing himself about hijacking; here in Washington the Government of Tunisia; Iraq has issued a condemnation, as has Egypt through its newspaper.

The President has just received a letter from [Jordan's] King Hussein which strongly condemns this, as he says, "dastardly crime." And I'd like to put that letter in the record. It will be made public in a couple of hours.

Source: Department of State Bulletin, August 1985, p. 77.
"UN Security Council Adopts Resolution on Hostage-Taking"

AMBASSADOR WALTERS' STATEMENT, SECURITY COUNCIL, DEC. 18, 1985

We are extremely pleased that the Security Council has unanimously gone on record in condemning all acts of hostage-taking. This is a historic step, almost without precedent in the entire 40 years of the United Nations. This resolution reflects positively on the UN organization; it is an act in which all member states can take pride. It is a fitting climax to this important 40th anniversary year of the United Nations.

By condemning unequivocally all acts of hostage-taking, the Security Council has clearly stated the world community's abhorrence of such criminal acts. We can only hope that all states, all parties, that have any influence over groups now holding hostages will take to heart today's clear and unanimous message and work for the immediate and safe release of all hostages, wherever and by whomever held.

We also hope that this Security Council resolution bodes well for improved cooperation between and among states, an essential condition for combatting terrorism. Only by concerted worldwide action can we hope to put an end to the repugnant practice of hostage-taking. It is clear from the resolution that no "cause," no "excuses," can justify such threats to human rights and human lives.

My government fully supports the Security Council's call for all states to consider, promptly and favorably, becoming parties to the International Convention Against the Taking of Hostages and other related international conventions. The United States will continue its efforts to have the world community adopt additional effective measures to protect the innocent lives of all people. As recent history has so sadly proven international terrorism knows no boundaries.

Today's resolution reinforces the October 9 Security Council statement on terrorism and the December 9 General Assembly resolution condemning all acts of terrorism. Together, these texts place the entire United Nations firmly on record against all terrorist crimes. While we cannot expect the lunatic fringe to desist from such acts, we do expect all law-abiding states to take all practicable measures to prevent terrorism and to prosecute and
punish all terrorists, wherever they are, in the spirit of these clear statements by the United Nations.

The United States is proud of its leadership role in today's action by the Security Council. It could not have been done without the broad support of all Security Council members which represent every sector of the globe. I thank my colleagues on the Council for the essential role they played with us in accomplishing this historic act. And let me pay special tribute to Congressman Dante Fascell, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and Congressman Daniel Mica, Chairman of the Subcommittee on International Operations and member of the U.S. delegation to the 40th General Assembly, for their strong initiatives in the U.S. Congress and in meetings here at UN headquarters toward this end. We look forward to concrete actions by all states to put into effect the resolution adopted today.
APPENDIX B

SYRIAN SPEECHES AND STATEMENTS
"An Interview with President Assad"

Q. Mr. President, is there a role for the U.S. to play in the Middle East? If so, what should that role be?

A. Certainly there is a role for the U.S. to play in the area. There is also one for the Soviet Union. No reasonable man can ignore the roles of these two superpowers. All that we wish is to see the U.S. play its role in a fair, unbiased and responsible way in accordance with its responsibilities as a superpower. We say that because we always perceive a continued and complete bias by the U.S. toward Israel. This bias, from our point of view, contradicts the interests of American citizens and does not serve the cause of peace.

Needless to say, there are tens, even hundreds of examples to prove this. It is enough to say that the U.S. gives Israel about $3 billion a year. This means that each Israeli gets $1,000 a year from the pockets of American citizens. Now you should know that in 90% of Third World countries, per capita income is much less than this figure. Moreover, we have to take into consideration that a big part of this money is in the form of sophisticated weapons which in turn are used to kill our citizens and to occupy our land . . .

. . . A. Why are we asked to give everything? Why not stop the flow of billions of dollars to Israel? Why not stop shipments of American weapons to Israel? Why is it not required to tell the American Jew that he should only be an American Jew, in the same way as an American Christian is only that, an American Muslim only that? Our view is that the American, whether he is Jewish, Christian, or Muslim, should be an American. Only then will the U.S. have an objective view [of the Middle East] and work for genuine peace.

Peace is not mere words. Peace is not wishful thinking. It has a tangible foundation. Had the U.S. really wanted to bring about peace, it would not have given such tremendous aid to Israel, because this has tipped the balance in the area. Do you believe that peace
can be achieved while Israel continues to behave like a big power in the region? Any such belief is lacking in logic and objectivity.

Let us look at what happened following the Camp David accords. Egypt represented at least half the Arab force facing Israel. The U.S. always claimed that it supplied Israel with weapons and money in order to strike a balance between Israel and the Arab forces. After the departure of Egypt from the Arab ranks following the Camp David accords, the U.S. was supposed to cut its aid to Israel, and Israeli military forces were supposed to be cut down as well. Instead, the opposite happened. We Arabs lost at least half of our force, and yet American aid to Israel even increased. So, how can we say that this served the purpose of peace?

After the war in Lebanon, I received a delegation from the American Congress, and in discussing aid with them I said, "You offer us only talk about peace, and while you talk to us about peace you will be debating in Congress a few days from now [proposals for] military and economic aid to Israel estimated at billions of dollars. Don't you see that your talk is unbalanced, if on the one hand you offer us nice words about peace but on the other hand you offer the Israelis tanks, artillery, aircraft and dollars? Where is the logic in all this?"

.... A. We have always sought to achieve peace in the area. We agreed in 1973 to United Nations Security Council Resolution 338 [which asks that negotiations begin in order to establish a "just and durable" peace in the region] and to arrangements adopted by the U.N. that called for an International Peace Conference. However, we found that all this was in conflict with Israel's ambitions.

In the light of our experience, Israel has not sought peace based on justice and the aspirations of those who have been wronged in the area. Israel is greedy for the lands of others. Israel wants to act as a big power in an area under its hegemony. The tremendous help given by the U.S. to Israel enhances this spirit and greed.

Without this help, Israel would not have been able to expand in Arab territories. Without it, the experience of these long years would have motivated the Israelis themselves to put an end to their illegitimate ambitions.

We want a peace that will restore our rights and put an end to Israeli expansionism. In this context we have supported appeals and proposals calling for an
international conference under the auspices of the U.N. We are sorry to say that American attempts made from time to time under the title of "Search for Peace" have not, in most cases, been those of a superpower with special responsibilities in our world. They have, rather, been attempts that in fact were Israeli proposals. We pointed this out frankly to the American officials who conveyed these proposals to us . . .

... A. Lebanese reconciliation is the only way. This has remained true despite continued fighting for many years and despite Israel's invasion. We emphasized this in 1976. We re-emphasize it now and are endeavoring to bring it about. Our attitude recently in Lausanne is quite clear. It is true that the Lausanne conference did not succeed to the extent that we or the Lebanese parties hoped, but there was maximum cooperation on our part. We cooperated fully with the Lebanese President, and the Syrian representative made hectic efforts at the bilateral and trilateral level. We will continue to work for reconciliation, especially as the Lebanese parties are now convinced that there is no alternative.

Our position with regard to a government of national unity is one of full support. When such a government is formed, we will respond to its requests because it will be representative of the Lebanese people. Such a government will stand side by side with Syria to expel Israel from Lebanon unconditionally.

The Syrians and the Lebanese are one people, their past is one and the same, their history is one and their future is one and the same. At the same time we are two independent states. What is there in common between Israel and Lebanon? Israel is an invading force in Lebanon, while we defended Lebanon against Israel. So where is the logic in any attempt to link the Syrian presence to the Israeli presence or to link Syrian withdrawal to Israeli withdrawal? That is why we say our position is clear. We will never accept any linkage between Syrian and Israeli withdrawal. But when a government of national unity is formed as a result of the desire of the Lebanese government, we will meet its request to withdraw unreluctantly, and this could be within a month or within days or months . . .

... A. [He laughs.] I wish he did learn. We are facing a very serious situation. Israel wants our land, wants Jordan and wants Saudi Arabia. Facing such a situation we are bound to learn, and that guarantees that King Hussein as well as others will also learn.

"President Assad Grants Interview to 'Time' Magazine"

... These accusations do not worry us because they do not represent the truth. It may be useful to mention here that certain persons and circles in the United States lead this campaign, the campaign of directing accusations to Syria.

We believe that these accusations do not represent a purely American political will. It rather embodies a Zionist-Israeli will. Indeed, if the matter was purely American, accusations would not have been directed to Syria which more than once, has helped to save a number of Americans from the danger of a possible death.

If the matter was purely and freely American, the accusation of terrorism would not have been directed to Syria, while Israel has for many years been occupying Syrian and Arab land, before the very eyes of the entire world.

Moreover, if the matter was purely and freely American, the accusation of terrorism would not have been directed to Syria which has been the target of several acts of terror. And the United States is fully aware of the acts of terror committed against Syria.

If the accusation, or let us say the decision to make it was taken by American circles, an accusation against Israel, at least once in her long history of terrorism, would have been made. Israel, in fact committed the first hijacking operation in 1954 when it seized a Syrian civil plane and led it to Israel, where it was detained for several days and its passengers interrogated, abused and subjected to various acts of humiliation.

Israel, moreover, shot down a Libyan civil plane of the type Boeing 737 in 1973 causing the death of more than one hundred civilian passengers from various countries, including the Libyan Foreign Minister at the time Saleh Bwaiseer, as well as members of the crew who were all French.

In 1973, Israel hijacked an Iraqi civil plane after it had left the Beirut International Airport. This plane was taken to Israel, where its passengers were interrogated on the pretext that the aim of the act was to search for Palestinians.

In February 1986 Israel hijacked a Libyan plane on board of which were members of a Syrian political delegation. The plane was taken to Israel. The passengers were
subjected to interrogation and acts of humiliation. This included members of the Syrian political delegation.

In 1968 Israel used its military power to destroy thirteen civil planes on the ground at Beirut airport.

In 1973 Israel sent some of its military units to the streets of Beirut and assassinated three Palestinian leaders, including a well-known Palestinian Poet, namely Kamal Nasser.


**Address by President Hafez Al-Assad to the Fifth Islamic Summit Conference**

Our conference, being held in most complicated regional and international circumstances characterized by tension and worry, which gives it special importance attracts the attention of our countries and the world. The conference, moreover, has great responsibilities proportionate to the regional and international weight of our countries considered collectively and to the great effect which its resolutions are likely to have on the march of development in our region and the world at large, if we back them with all our human potentials and our material and moral possibilities.

This makes it incumbent upon us that we should use all the wisdom and logic we have in whatever we propose, discuss, deliberate about or deal with.

Foremost among the issues we must deal with, is the Arab-Israeli conflict which has always been regarded as a leading Arab and Islamic issue, was always given first place among the problems, which were dealt with in the past and which are still being dealt with by the United Nations, other international organizations and world-conferences. This issue which is most important for us is among the most important contemporary international issues, for others.

The importance of the Arab-Israeli conflict does not stem from the length of its past history so much as from the dangers attendant upon it.

The unlimited Zionist ambitions regarding our land, wealth and destinies now constitute a danger to Arab existence, to Arab land, to Arab rights, to Arab will, the Arab present and future and consequently a great danger to the Islamic world and to Islamic holy places and to world peace and security.
In the past we talked about Zionist ambitions. We will continue to talk about them and to warn the Arabs, the Muslims and the world against their dangers which continually threaten us through the practical moves of the Zionists, their solid attachment to the principles of Zionism, which is growing every day and their continued efforts exerted to impose their hegemony on our region as well as on our Arab and Islamic countries.

The dangers and ambitions of the Zionists aimed to have hegemony by making use of the influence they have in the U.S. in particular, and in the countries of the West in general, are increasing. This requires a corresponding growth of our fears regarding our lands, our rights and the future of our nation. We should therefore discuss the Zionist dangers facing us and which are prominent to the world community more than any other event in the present age.

What makes the dangers of Zionism the most deep and complex of current world problems are the philosophical ideology, the philosophic basis and religious considerations on which it depends.

The dangers of Zionism, as we all know stem from a religious conviction, which its adherents consider to be in no way subject to argument.

They claim that their Lord, as stated in their Torah, promised that their land should extend from the Nile to the Euphrates, gave them this land and made it legal for them to expel the people which inhabited, or might inhabit this land. By referring to their Torah we would discover the great number of peoples whom they had to enslave and whose wealth they exploited.

God Almighty is an absolute force of justice and could not have promised a group of people to own a land which is not theirs and which is owned by others. Nor could He have ordered that group to make others homeless and to encroach upon their land and properties as well as their human and political rights.

If we examine the land which the "Torah" claims that God promised the Jews that it would be theirs, we find that it does not include land in the Arab homeland only, but it also includes land that belongs to other Islamic peoples represented in this conference.

If the issue were purely religious, we would not have taken the liberty to discuss it.
We are believers. We respect other religions and the freedom of adopting one's faith. But when a group of people attempts to convert religion into a tool of racial discrimination and a means of enslaving peoples, plundering their wealth, confiscating their rights and expelling them from their homelands; when this group uses injustice, suppression, aggression and regional expansion as a religious creed, in no way subject to debate.

When this group, backed by the material and moral support of imperialism, does all this, we feel it to be our duty to oppose it and to fight it and to expose to the public its racial and aggressive principles and its political ends.

The bases of the Zionist creed existed in books for many centuries. But it was changed and acquired political material and aggressive-expansionist connotation in our region since the advent of imperialism with which it coincided and joined forces and the principals of which is used as a means of dominating our countries and exploiting their wealth.

Moreover, racial and political Zionism helped imperialism to use Zionist principles as a means of committing aggressions against our peoples and a confrontation force in its continuous war against liberation movements and the national revival of peoples subjected to persecution and colonialism. In this way the original religious content of Zionism was lost and Zionism acquired a political and imperialist content which is opposed to peoples and which constitutes a real danger to world peace and security.

We are not racist. We respect all people. Our religion calls for establishing equality and love among people. It involves no discrimination on the basis of colour, race or geographical belonging. It rejects injustice, aggression, enslavement and discrimination among people.

Zionist Jews are constantly attacking Nazis and using Nazi acts as a justification of their own acts. But where does the supposed difference between Zionism and Nazism lie?

The Nazis used to claim racial superiority, while the Zionists claim they are the chosen people to whom every nation in the world must be subject.

The Nazis justified their territorial expansionism by seeking to set up the Reich; the Zionists justify
territorial expansionism by efforts to occupy "the land of Israel" which they claim their God gave them as a gift.

The Nazis justified their occupation of other peoples' lands and enslaving people by claiming that they needed a "living space," similarly, the Zionists expand into other peoples' lands under the pretext of ensuring a security "space" for the state which they unjustly and without legal right established on the land of other people.

The Nazis suppressed other peoples and rendered them homeless, and the Zionists are doing the same to the Arab people, and possibly in the future to other Muslim peoples, or other peoples, if no action is taken to put an end to their crimes or their violations of international laws, norms and conventions.

The Zionists continue to blackmail the German people for the crimes committed by the Nazis; they continue to intimidate and blackmail German governments. Not long ago, we all read and heard how Menachem Begin, the former Israeli Premier, was disrespectful towards former Federal German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt addressing the entire German people saying "We will not forgive you."

The Zionists for approximately two thousand years, have been endeavouring to get the Pope and all Christians to consider them not guilty of having shed the blood of Christ. Those same Zionists do not forgive the German people regarding the crimes committed by the Nazis! They do not want to acquit the innocent regarding crimes they did not commit, nor had a hand in them . . .

. . . The United States of America, where the Zionist influence is dominant, has placed its Middle East policy in the hands of Israel's Zionist rulers. In the Middle East, there is no American policy, but an Israeli policy carried out by the United States. Within this context, the United States considers the enemies of Israel as its own enemies.

The United States considers us its own enemies because Israel deems so, it accepts what Israel dictates and rejects what Israel denies. Evidence is daily demonstrated that the United States has no friends in this region but Israel.

Even the concept of terrorism, which the United States talks about and leads a campaign to fight is not an American but an Israeli concept.
The United States has adopted a stand as regards the Arab-Israeli conflict which is completely of full prejudice in favour of Israel and radically hostile to the Arabs. It extends to Israel political, military, economic and financial aid which was never known in the history of inter-state cooperation. Without American support, Israel would never have been able to launch aggression and occupy the land of others in blatant defiance of the international community.

The United States is committed to what it calls Israel's security and existence. It, even, declares its commitment to ensure Israeli superiority over all the Arabs. It declares this insolently and with total disregard of the feelings of Arab and Islamic countries, though some of those countries are careful to maintain good relations with the United States, sometimes referred to as relations of friendship with the United States.

The United States fully adopts Israel's concept of terrorism which ultimately means prohibiting every act of resistance against Israel and subsequently prohibiting every form of struggle against colonialism, colonialist acts or acts of occupation committed or may be committed by any racist or imperialist force.

(Years ago we in Syria were subjected to a massive chain of terrorist acts which were planned, inspired and materially backed by the United States of America. There were direct contacts between us and the American Administration. They tried to make us exonerate them of this accusation, but we offered them our evidence. They then tried to obtain from us an acquittal anyway, regardless of the evidence. Naturally we disagreed.

We have documents of investigations and detained people who are still alive. These people made confessions on the role of the USA in the many terrorist acts which took place in Syria, in which hundreds of people were assassinated. Those people belonged to all parts of the Society such as labourers, peasants, lawyers, doctors, men of the clergy etc.

Nevertheless, the United States talks now about terrorism and accuses us of terrorism. But when Israel strikes with tens of thousands tons of bombs the villages and cities of Lebanon, and an Arab capital, namely Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, killing civilians, children, women and men, in this case the United States keeps silent, and it is joined by a number of western states in this silence avoiding talking about terrorism. Instead, these countries consider such Israeli strikes as security
necessities, and exactly as the Nazis used to say that their strikes were necessitated by the need for a living space, the Zionists now say that they have need for a security space, at the expense of others.)

What Israel says about terrorism is a manifest distortion of facts. It wants to level charges of terrorism against its enemies and acquit itself of organized terrorism, individual or collective, which it officially conducted and continues to conduct. It uses its talk about terrorism to assert a special connotation thereof to be used as a weapon against its own enemies, and not out of an Israeli conviction that is embodied in practice and behavior.

This Israeli concept of terrorism, which is used as a weapon against its own enemies, has become an American concept, too.

Israel has spared no effort in its attempt to drive the states of the world in this direction, a clear example of this is the British conspiracy against Syria, which was intended to level charges of terrorism against all the Arabs. The British intelligence knows well enough that what took place in London was an Israeli act carried out with direct participation by certain Britishers.

(Frankly I tell you that an American told me personally that it was not a question of terrorism, it was rather that Syria should be penalized and this is the time for punishment. This American was not an official, but he was charged with conveying this message to me. This message is so clear that it leaves no need of deduction, speculation and estimation. I, of course gave him the appropriate answer.) . . .

Moreover, noting that the United States created a big fuss spreading much agitation in the world in its talk about combating terrorism, moved its fleets and armies and made threats of aggression against others under the false pretext of combating terrorism, we ask: What attitude did the United States adopt towards the Israeli terrorism throughout the past years?

To be sure, the United States supported Israel in UN General Assembly and Security Council against the rest of the international community, used the veto to prevent condemnation of Israeli terrorist acts and lawlessness.

It was Israel which introduced terrorism into the Middle East and disseminated it in the world.
It was Israel which started the hijacking of civilian aircraft. It hijacked a Syrian passenger plane in 1954 and forced it to land in Israel. (Perhaps, as far as I remember, this was the first act of hijacking in the Arab area and the Middle East.) It hijacked an Iraqi civilian plane in 1973 and forced it to land in Israel, and in 1968 it hijacked a Libyan civilian plane which had on board a high-level Syrian official delegation and forced it to land in Israel.

It was Israel which shot down in 1973 a Libyan passenger plane, causing by this premeditated act the death of a hundred passengers of various nationalities.

(All these were only a few of many examples of Israeli terrorism regarding aviation and civilian planes.)

It was Israel which committed massacres against unarmed villagers in Qibya, Kafr Qassem Deir Yassin and other Palestinian and Arab villages.

It was Israel which expelled hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and other Arabs from their homes and imposed collective punishments on the people in the Israeli occupied territories.

It was Israel which destroyed villages and cities in Lebanon killing and displacing hundreds of thousands of Lebanese, Palestinians, Syrians and other Arabs residing in Lebanon, using modern American warplanes and weapons.

It was Israel which assassinated the UN mediator Count Bernadotte, and Yitzhak Shamir the present Prime Minister of Israel was one of the leaders of the terrorists who gave the order to kill him.

It was Israel which carried out acts of assassination of Arab individuals in Beirut, Rome, Paris, London, the United States, Norway and Cyprus.

What attitude did the United States adopt regarding this chain of Israeli criminal and bloody terrorism?

Indeed, it stood in solidarity with Israeli terrorism and provided it with its political and moral umbrella and its material backing, thus demonstrating disinterest in taking a just and fair stand commensurate with its responsibilities as a big power, and also confirming its responsibility for Israeli terrorism, which is an affirmation of its responsibility for Israeli aggression against the Arabs.
They claim to fight terrorism while in fact it was they who created, used and disseminated terrorism.

Their intention is to keep the sword of terrorism threatening the heads of those peoples who struggle to liberate their occupied lands. Their intention is to smear the fight of peoples for freedom, to intimidate them and to mislead and arouse world public opinion against such peoples. There is a very big difference between terrorism and fighting for freedom.

(We should never allow the obliteration of this difference. We should never allow the obliteration of the line that makes the distinction between terrorism which we reject, on one side, and what they want to describe as terrorism though in fact it is a legitimate liberation struggle and a duty to be carried out to expel the occupiers, the usurpers and the oppressors from every land in which they practiced occupation, usurpation, oppression and racial discrimination, on the other side.)

We have proposed the formation of an international commission under the auspices of the United Nations to define terrorism and the acts which come under the category of the rejected terrorism. However, the champions of the alleged fight against terrorism have not announced their agreement to our proposal and have not uttered a single word in comment, simply because they are themselves terrorists in words and deeds. For this reason they want to avert a definition of the substance of terrorism which may thwart their terrorist practices and expose it more to the whole world.

(This appears to be of great importance to us in this Conference, because the subject of terrorism is on our agenda.

I hope that our resolution on this subject will not contain anything of what may realize little or much of the things which Israel, the USA and the imperialist and racist forces in general look for.

Of course, I am drawing attention to this matter lest something might be passed by oversight. For, none in this conference is against liberation or against the struggle of peoples for their independence and freedom and their struggle against racial discrimination. I repeat that my intention is that we should be careful lest we might pass by oversight anything in our resolutions which may reflect what they look for.)
We in Syria were victims of hundreds of terrorist acts which were planned and instigated by the United States and other Western states.

The USA and those who move in its orbit reject our proposal because they want us to accept condemnation of the world "terrorism" in its generality, thus placing freedom fighting, struggle for liberation and resistance of occupation under the category of terrorism.

We will never be deceived by this trick, otherwise we become enemies of all those who struggle for the freedom, integrity and independence of their countries and against imperialist and colonialist forces, in consequence placing ourselves at the service of these forces. We firmly and absolutely refuse to do so. On the contrary, we support the struggle against occupation, servitude and suppression.

We have always backed and staunchly supported the struggle of the Arab and Muslim peoples for liberation, and we continue to do so.

We stand without any hesitation in solidarity with the national liberation movements in the world, extend to them what we can of moral and material support and will continue to exert every possible effort to help them achieve victory against their enemies. This includes our readiness to fight on their side.

We condemn the crimes of the apartheid regime of South Africa and the destructive role it plays in the African continent. We consider it together with its ally, the racist Zionist regime in Palestine inseparable from imperialism, which is based on aggression and opposed to the right of peoples to self-determination. It is, moreover, an enemy of those peoples.

We are supporters of national liberation movements and of every people who resist the occupiers and fight to regain their rights. This is our duty under the logic of justice, humanity and our Islamic belonging as well as our place in the world national liberation movement.

We are in disagreement with them over the concept of terrorism, the terrorism they condemn and the terrorism we condemn, for they mean one thing and we mean another.

The terrorism which we condemn is that which implies crime. If that is their concept of terrorism, then let us agree on a definition of terrorism which should be made clear to the whole of humanity. Certainly, this will expose more the real terrorists and will remove any ambiguity.
I have no intention to do harm to anyone when I speak about a common enemy and a common danger. I only wish to call attention to the common sanctions which quite willingly we adopted to confront the Israeli danger referring thereby to two decisions which are only two links in a chain of decisions taken in the same direction. (I repeat that I respect all people, Arabs and Muslims, I mean Arab Muslims and non-Arab Muslims, and of course peoples of the world in general. But here we talk sometimes within an Arab framework, and I have to point out some examples.) So, how can one of us be head of the Jerusalem Committee and at the same time receive in his own country the Israeli prime minister and declare at a press conference that there is no Arab decision prohibiting contacts with the Israeli enemy?

Source. Address by President Hafez Al-Assad, President of the Syrian Arab Republic, to the Fifth Islamic Summit Conference, January 29, 1987, pp. 2-12, 18-24, 25-35, 40-41.

"Syria Welcomes End of U.S. Sanctions"

... Syria will continue efforts to help free more of the foreign hostages held in Lebanon. "We approach the subject of the hostages as a human issue," he said. "We understand their suffering." ...

... A. Regardless of any consideration, we approach the subject of the hostages as a human issue. Therefore we exerted big efforts in order to help and we have succeeded more than once ... We achieved this success despite the fact that the general political climate was not helpful ... The difficulty was caused not only by the kidnappers but also by political circumstances. As in the past, we will continue to make every possible effort to help these hostages, and we understand their suffering ...

... A. When we talk about efforts made, we are talking about hope. If there is no hope, then there is no reason to make the effort.

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