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ABSTRACT

WISHFUL THINKING IN FOREIGN POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE CARTER
ADMINISTRATION AND THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION

by Matthew H. Wahlert

 The purpose of this study is to explore the premise that the concept of wishful thinking, an element of motivational bias, can provide explanations for foreign policy decision-making. I engage the notion of wishful thinking in the form of a case study in order to explore foreign policy decisions made by the Carter Administration toward the Shah and Iran from 1977 through early 1979.

International relations scholars typically view foreign policy decision-making in the context of three distinct levels of analysis – the international system, domestic politics, and individual level inputs. Compelling and useful theories attempting to explain foreign policy behavior have come from each of the three levels of analysis and even more recent literature has argued an interactive relationship among them. The individual level of analysis has led to the study of political psychology. Within the literature of political psychology, a preponderance of research concentrates on investigating notions of unbiased motivational errors, theories of cognitive dissonance, and rational actor models. However, the literature devoted to biased motivational errors – those involving hot cognition – is quite sporadic. I contend that the complexity involved in individual decision making calls for an examination of explanations beyond cold cognitive errors. Through the Carter case study - employing qualitative empirical evidence gleaned through a method of process tracing using government documents, primary sources, and memoirs of key actors – I explore whether wishful thinking, as a biased error, impacted Carter policy toward the Shah of Iran in the critical years of 1977, 1978, and the early days of 1979.

WISHFUL THINKING IN FOREIGN POLICY: A CASE STUDY OF THE CARTER
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Part I

THE ARGUMENT

Chapter One

The Psyche of Man: Motivated Bias in the Decision Making Process

Why does the decision-maker select one option over all the others? The answer to that query is certainly complex. Shafir and Tversky suggest that, given the variable of uncertainty, the decision maker assesses "potential consequences and their perceived likelihood."[1] Ultimately, the decision product, then, is the result of what the decision maker deems as "potential" and what the actor "perceives." In other words, one must understand the process of decision making in order to fully analyze the decision product.

One of the explanations for the decision making process is the concept of "wishful thinking." The presence of uncertainty offers opportunity for the decision maker to perceive a narrative, or incoming data, in a manner that is consistent with desires and wishes. To be sure, wishful thinking appears as an explanation for decisions made in diverse fields that include finance, politics, sports, health, and romance. In literature and music, the protagonist often makes decisions based upon the notion of wishful thinking. Wishful thinking appears also throughout academia. Academic Search Complete yielded 953 and Lexis-Nexis 998 subject results under the term.[2] Indeed, the ubiquitous nature of wishful thinking suggests that we, as humans, at least partially allow a place for wishful thinking in the explanation of why a specific decisional option is chosen over others. Wishful thinking, however, is part of a larger study of motivated biases. The operational definition of motivated bias suggests the human process has some innate bias that causes a product of decision making to be influenced by those biases. Research into motivated bias has generally been categorized as hot cognition as opposed to questions of perceptions and beliefs which are typically seen as cold cognition. The purpose of this paper is to theoretically explore the plausibility that human decision making - at the level of agent, process, and product - is influenced by the so-called hot cognitive factors of motivated bias in the form of preferences held by the decision maker. Consequently, explanations into decisions must acknowledge the potential role of hot cognitive factors. Thus, instead of a cold model of cognition, or even strictly hot model, I suggest that a tepid model of decision making that allows for a role by both cold and hot cognitive factors in decision making. Furthermore, I will also explore whether such a model applies to those who make foreign policy decisions. In order to examine these questions I will first examine the general behavioral literature concerning motivated biases, discuss the state of knowledge in foreign policy analysis and the necessity to

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[1] Eldar Shafir and Amos Tversky, "Thinking through Uncertainty: Nonconsequential Reasoning and Choice," *Cognitive Psychology* 24 (1992): 449-474.
[2] Search completed 11:15 AM on 6/02/2011.

involve variables of motivated bias in decision making models, and offer an examination of efforts within foreign policy analysis to account for motivated bias. Overall, these three sections will provide theoretical support of the argument that motivated bias matters in the foreign policy decision making process. Next, I will provide a context for the plausibility of motivated bias influencing the policy choices made by the Carter Administration toward the Shah at the time of the Iranian Revolution. This context will include a methodological analysis, a review of historical U.S. policy choices with regard to Iran, and a characterization of the Carter decision making process. Then, I will discuss the case itself and implications and findings.

Any form of motivated bias as a variable in the product of the decision-making process presupposes that emotion factors into such a progression. Indeed, research does indicate that emotion plays a role in predictions and preferences in the outcome of the decision making process. Conceptually early theories identified emotion as the organizing mechanism used by humans in the decision making process and the source of attitudes held by individuals.[3] The manner in which subjects perceive data and even personalities of people they meet can be influenced by emotion.[4] Not only does emotion generally impact people's perceptions about the world around them but also impact an individual's political preferences.[5] More succinctly, Conover and Feldman discovered that affect exhibited by subjects on the economy influenced individual evaluations of the Reagan administration.[6] Hot cognitive variables such as feelings toward ambiguity, openness to experience, tolerance of uncertainty, need for structure, self esteem, and fear of loss can help predict the likelihood a subject tends to favor liberal or conservative ideology.[7]

Hot cognitive factors certainly matter at least in some cases of decision making and may influence choices made.[8] In fact, Neblo believes that "emotions play the decisive role in what we are accustomed to calling practical reason" and that the individual does not glean meaning from explanation but explanation from meaning.[9] Neblo's philosophical and rhetorical model places the emphasis on emotion as a causal agent in determining meaning and perception. Along the same lines, Cassino and Lodge submit "the judgment process in which information is integrated into an individual's existing knowledge about an object, then, seems to come after the affective process, in which the individual forms his or her dislikes about an object."[10] It is the emotional response to data, Cassino and Lodge contends, that alters "the processing strategy of the

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[3] Robert W. Leeper, "A Motivational Theory of Emotion to Replace 'Emotion as Disorganized Response'," *Psychological Review* 55.1 (1948): 5-21; William A. Scott, "Rationality and Non-Rationality of International Attitudes," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 2.1, Studies on Attitudes and Communication (1958): 8-16.

[4] Gordon H. Bower, "Mood and Memory," *American Psychologist* 36.2 (1981): 129-48.

[5] Robert P. Abelson, et al., "Affective and Semantic Components in Political Person Perception," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 42.4 (1982): 619-30.

[6] Pamela Johnston Conover and Stanley Feldman, "Emotional Reactions to the Economy: I'm Mad as Hell and I'm not Going to Take it Anymore," *American Journal of Political Science* 30.1 (1986): 50-78.

[7] John T. Jost, et al., "Political Conservatism as Motivated Social Cognition," *Psychological Bulletin* 129.3 (2003): 339-75.

[8] The term "hot cognitive" comes from Levy's review of cognition in Jack S. Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology,* Eds. David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 253-284.

[9] Michael Neblo, "Philosophical Psychology with Political Intent," *The Affect Effect*, Eds. W. R. Neuman, et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007): 42.

[10] Daniel Cassino and Milton Lodge, "The Primacy of Affect in Political Evaluations," *The Affect Effect*,. Eds. W. R. Neuman, et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007): 101.

individual to ensure a certain outcome" and that humans utilize hot cognition in order to organize data.[11] Such processing, of course, leads to bias in the processing of data.

Alfred Mele placed motivated bias into several useful categories. Mele classified motivated bias as either unintentional, intentional, or the result of intentional activities. Hence, the motivated bias is at the level of the agent – in an intentional or unintentional manner – or is the result of intentionality in the process. Motivated biases, furthermore, include an agency view – where all motivated bias is created intentionally – and anti-agency – where the motivated bias is not intentional.[12] So, the source of motivated bias is not merely limited to the actor but also is part of the process. Ultimately, desires influence beliefs and the human mind may use one of four strategies to link desires and beliefs – negative misinterpretation of data, positive misinterpretation of data, selective focus, and selective evidence gathering.[13] Desires, according to Mele, matter in the construction of beliefs in that "desires have effects on the vividness and availability of data, which in turn have effects on belief acquisition, even though the believer does not try to produce any of these effects."[14]

In order to survey the plausibility of behavior choices based on decision making involving variables of motivated bias, it is first appropriate to discuss elements of the role of emotion in the decision making process. Emotion, in the form of the mood of the decision-maker, further demonstrates how the decision process may involve factors considered "hot." Empirical evidence confirms that subjects in positive moods show a deficit in processing data that is counter-attitudinal.[15] Mood also shapes information selected in the processing of data, strategies employed in order to process that data, and the ability to recall specific information.[16] In other instances, humans have exhibited a tendency to attempt to match mood and thoughts.[17] In one case, mood shaped the manner in which subjects evoke fundamental attribution bias – a positive mood increased the fundamental attribution error while a negative mood reduced it.[18] In a very general sense, hot cognitive variables influence the process of cold cognition. Moreover, preferences with affective and hot cognitive variables appear to be related to decision making. For example, individuals not only make predictions in a manner consistent with wishes but also retrieve data in a manner that provides consistency to wishes.[19] In order to advance the plausibility that preferences impact the process and product of the decision making process and to explore whether hot cognitive factors shape those preferences, it is necessary to identify these factors as they appear in the social world. Thus, I have offered a general categorization of motivated biases, as it has appeared in the literature, in three general categories – (1) self-serving bias, (2) motivated processing, and (3) wishful thinking. To be sure, many of the categories overlap and share similar characteristics. However, the larger purpose of such an analysis is to

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[11] Cassino and Lodge, "The Primacy of Affect," p. 105.

[12] Alfred R. Mele. *Self-Deception Unmasked.* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001): 13-18.

[13] Mele, *Self Deception Unmasked*, p. 26-27.

[14] Mele, *Self Deception Unmasked*, p. 43.

[15] Diane M. Mackie and Leila T. Worth, "Processing Deficits and the Mediation of Positive Affect in Persuasion," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 57.1 (1989): 27-40.

[16] Joseph P. Forgas, "Affective Influences on Partner Choice," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 61.5 (1991): 708-20.

[17] John D. Mayer, et al., "Mood-Congruent Judgment Is a General Effect," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 63.1 (1992): 119-32.

[18] Joseph P. Forgas, "On Being Happy and Mistaken," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 75.2 (1998): 318-31.

[19] Ruthanna Gordon, Nancy Franklin, and Jennifer Beck, "Wishful Thinking and Source Monitoring," *Memory and Cognition* 33.3 (2005): 418-29.

provide evidence of the plausibility of motivated bias inherent in individuals, how individuals process information, and how bias informs the end product of the decision process. As we will see, a great deal of literature supports the concept that the human decision-maker utilizes bias. The result offers a level of analysis – individual, inputs, and policy output – applied to the question of motivated biases. It is also instructive to view the three categories as interactive variables with fungible boundaries. Hence, wishes or preferences lead to hot cognitive, motivated, functions of information processing. I hope to show the relevance of preference in the decision-making process and the plausibility of employing a model not of hot or cold cognition but one of tepid cognition by illustrating motivated processing of incoming data.

Agent → *Self-Serving Bias = Plausibility of Hot Cognitive factors influencing decision*
Process → *Motivated Bias = Plausibility of Hot Cognitive factors influencing decision*
Product → *Wishful Thinking = Plausibility of Hot Cognitive factors influencing decision*

Figure 1.1 – Graphical Representation of Sources of Bias

The Agent: Individuals and Self-serving Bias

One form of motivated bias is the self-serving bias. Individuals tend to believe that their personality characteristics and traits are more positive than of other individuals and that normatively positive events are more likely to occur to themselves and more negative events are more likely to occur to others. The psychological literature regarding self-serving bias portrays a decision-maker who claims a preference in the product of decision making and is motivated to process data and fashion perspectives in a manner more consistent with outcomes aligned to their wishes – typically positive in nature.

Much of the early research in the field of self-serving motivated biases was in the arena of health care and concerned perceptions regarding sickness and accidents. The general hypotheses went something like this – others are more likely to have an accident or a disease than me. Even in predictions of future life events, respondents tended to exhibit more optimistic views of their future than of others.[20] Weinstein compiled a bibliography of 260 specific research efforts into the subject of self-serving biases in one's perception of health, safety, and future life events.[21] Self-serving bias is manifested in many distinct situations. For example, subjects tend to underestimate their chances of becoming ill while overestimating those of others, individuals tend to demonstrate an optimistic bias in cancer risks, subjects reveal a tendency of unrealistic optimism with regard to mental health, social and regular drinkers exhibit a belief of immunity to the problems of drinking alcohol, and young adults tend to minimize the risks associated with sun tanning behavior.[22] To further illustrate, undergraduate females see themselves less likely

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[20] Neil D. Weinstein, "Unrealistic Optimism about Future Life Events," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 39.5 (1980): 806-20.
[21] Neil D. Weinstein, *References on Optimistic Biases about Risks, Unrealistic Optimism, and Perceived Invulnerability* (Rutgers University, 1998).
[22] John P. Kirscht, et al., "A National Study of Health Beliefs," *Journal of Health and Human Behavior* 7.4 (1966): 248-54; K. R. Fontaine and S. Smith, "Optimistic Bias in Cancer Risk Perception," *Psychological Reports*.77 (1995): 143-6; J. Mahatane and M. Johnston, "Unrealistic Optimism toward Mental Health," *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*.28 (1989): 181-2; William B. Hansen, Anne E. Raynor, and Bonnie H. Wolkenstein, "Perceived Personal Immunity to the Consequences of Drinking Alcohol: The relationship between Behavior and Perception,"

than peers in having an unwanted pregnancy, regular drivers perceive their likelihood of being in a traffic accident at lower rates than do passengers, and subjects who have not been victims of crime see themselves as less than a target than others.[23] Even the somewhat obscure risk of radon was subject to optimism bias.[24] More or less, the main point of self-serving bias research is that subjects overestimate the likelihood of positive events occurring and underestimate the likelihood of negative events in their own life.

The self-serving bias boasts a lengthy pedigree within the literature in psychological and medical research. The overoptimistic perceptions - self-serving bias - come from a need of self-enhancement.[25] Moreover, the need for self-enhancement leads to a biased processing of data – processing with a motive. To illustrate, active smokers are less likely to believe that smoking causes disease than those who have quit.[26] Law students applying for marriage licenses, who are individuals that presumably understand the statistics when it comes to divorces in the United States, showed unrealistic optimism in predicting whether their own marriage would end in a divorce.[27] Significantly, the self-serving bias also applies to specific tasks including an inappropriately high level of confidence levels in games of chance and in optimistic judgments of time needed to complete specific tasks compared to peers.[28] Similarly, management students and executives perceived their future in overly-optimistic terms which led to the development of future strategic plans that displayed the same self-serving motivational bias.[29] Ultimately, psychologists discovered that as personality traits were perceived as more desirable, subjects tended to increase self-appraisals of those traits.[30] The motivated processing of data in a manner that is congruent with the self-serving bias in order to enhance perceptions of self is an emotional – hot – cognitive process. Yet, that same hot cognitive process clearly plays a role in judgment and prediction.

Research into the notion of the self-serving bias soon began to examine the questions of optimistic bias in predictions about the future and the decision-making process. The next logical

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Journal of Behavioral Medicine 14.3 (1991): 205-24; Valerie A. Clarke, Tracy Williams, and Stephen Arthey, "Skin Type and Optimistic Bias in Relation to the Sun Protection and Suntanning Behaviors of Young Adults," *Journal of Behavioral Medicine* 20.2 (1997): 207-22.

[23] Jerry M. Burger and Linda Burns, "The Illusion of Unique Invulnerability and the Use of Effective Contraception," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 14.2 (1988): 264-70; Frank P. McKenna, "It won't happen to me: Unrealistic Optimism or Illusion of Control?" *British Journal of Psychology* 84.1 (1993): 39; Linda S. Perloff and Barbara K. Fetzer, "Self-Other Judgments and Perceived Vulnerability to Victimization," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 50.3 (1986): 502-10.

[24] Neil D. Weinstein, Mary Lou Klotz, and Peter M. Sandman, "Optimistic Biases in Public Perceptions of the Risk from Radon," *American Journal of Public Health* 78.7 (1988): 796-800.

[25] Thomas M. Brinthaupt, Richard L. Moreland, and John M. Levine, "Sources of Optimism among Prospective Group Members," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 17.1 (1991): 36-43; Pamela C. Regan, Mark Snyder, and Saul M. Kassin, "Unrealistic Optimism: Self-Enhancement or Person Positivity?" *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 21.10 (1995): 1073-82.

[26] Simon Chapman, Leng Wong Wai, and Wayne Smith, "Self-Exempting Beliefs about Smoking and Health: Differences between Smokers and Ex-Smokers," *American Journal of Public Health* 83.2 (1993): 215-9.

[27] Lynn A. Baker and Robert E. Emery, "When Every Relationship is above Average," *Law and Human Behavior* 17.4 (1993): 439-50.

[28] Ellen J. Langer, "The Illusion of Control," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 32.2 (1975): 311-28; Roger Buehler, Dale Griffin, and Michael Ross, "Exploring the "Planning Fallacy," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 67.3 (1994): 366-81.

[29] Laurie Larwood and William Whittaker, "Managerial Myopia: Self-Serving Biases in Organizational Planning," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 62.2 (1977): 194-8.

[30] Mark D. Alicke, "Global Self-Evaluation as Determined by the Desirability and Controllability of Trait Adjectives," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 49.6 (1985): 1621-30.

step, assuming the concept of an optimistic self-serving bias, was to see how stable predictions based upon the motivated self-serving bias were in the face of dissonant data. The direction of research into stability of self-serving influenced predictions suggested those predictions were, in fact, quite stable.[31] As a result, the nature of predictions informed through a motivated self-serving bias illustrates how change of prediction is difficult due, in part, to the manner in which the self organizes information. Specifically, the act of organizing incoming data is done by the ego – which allows motivated bias. Consequently, individuals maintain a self-serving bias as the result of three ego functions that manage incoming information under conditions of duress in order to confirm to previous judgments: (1) self bias – as the focus of knowledge, (2) bias in the responsibility of outcomes, and (3) bias in the form of resistance to cognitive change.[32] Empirical evidence confirmed the implied suggestion that individuals are more likely to hold beliefs consistent with optimistic predictions and, in addition, self-serving bias included the practice of judging personal character attributes as more predictive of desirable future outcomes than of undesirable.[33] More generally, the observed data painted a picture of individuals reinforcing the prediction "good things are more likely to happen to me" by perceiving one's personal characteristics as normatively "better" and, logically, the reason for more optimism. Furthermore, when incoming data challenges the optimistic perceptions, the individual approaches that data skeptically. The motivated bias, in the form of skepticism, allows for processing of preference-consistent data under less rigorous examination than preference-inconsistent data.[34] Indeed, the notion of a self-serving bias in predicting future events so characterizes the human condition that even individuals who suffer from clinical depression are just as likely to be overconfident in predicting future events as those who were not.[35]

Despite the seemingly ever-present self-serving bias, the literature from psychology has worked to set limits and boundaries. For example, in the judgment of ambiguous personality traits (traits that could not instantly be judged normatively "good" or "bad") self-serving bias is manifested through high self-appraisals even with the requirement of evidence and criteria for the assessment. However, when subjects used tools to evaluate that were developed by others, self-appraisals tended to be lower.[36] In addition, evidence suggests that the self-serving bias is culturally relative. Canadians rated the likelihood of positive future life events at a statistically significant higher rate than did Japanese subjects. Japanese subjects showed almost a complete lack of unrealistic optimism.[37] Much of the research into the boundaries of the self-serving bias, however, is in its infancy. Yet, a significant point with regard to the self-serving bias is that it does have limitations.

Self-serving bias is only a part of the larger picture in examining how preferences influence predictions and, ultimately, the decision making process. The discussion surrounding

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[31] Anthony G. Greenwald, "The Totalitarian Ego: Fabrication and Revision of Personal History," *American Psychologist* 35.7 (1980): 603-18; Ziva Kunda, "Motivated Inference," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 53.4 (1987): 636-47.
[32] Greenwald, "The Totalitarian Ego."
[33] Kunda, "Motivated Inference."
[34] Peter H. Ditto and David F. Lopez, "Motivated Skepticism," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 63.4 (1992): 568-84.
[35] David Dunning and Amber L. Story, "Depression, Realism, and the Overconfidence Effect," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 61.4 (1991): 521-32.
[36] David Dunning, Judith A. Meyerowitz, and Amy D. Holzberg, "Ambiguity and Self-Evaluation," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 57.6 (1989): 1082-90.
[37] Steven J. Heine and Darrin R. Lehman, "Cultural Variation in Unrealistic Optimism," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 68.4 (1995): 595-607.

self-serving bias illustrates how an individual – charged with making decisions based upon judgments and predictions about the future – can allow hot cognition in the form of a self-serving bias shape those judgments. But, at the same time, self-serving bias is bounded. Consequently, in dissecting a specific decision it would be quite difficult to label a decision entirely a result of hot cognition – or cold cognition. In other words, self-serving bias provides the first of three research streams designed to encourage the use of a different model – one that is tepid and based upon both hot and cold cognitive factors.

The Process: Motivated Processing

The second level of motivated bias comes with the processing of data. We have already seen how the individual can make predictions based upon a self-serving bias – a predilection suggesting optimistic tendencies. With the processing of data it will also become evident that the act of examining, interpreting, and processing data is subject to motivated bias. One may interpret stimuli in a non-neutral manner. Predictions based upon the self-serving biases just discussed do not emerge from a vacuum nor are they unstable – they are the result of processing of stimuli in a manner with a motive. The "motivation" in the motivationally biased processing of information can be classified into two general categories – (1) motivation based upon preferences and (2) motivation based upon perceptions and beliefs.

A brief discussion concerning the qualities of motivated bias will help provide foundation for the concept with the larger argument that preferences impact the process and product in the decision-making process. One of the clearest elucidations of the importance of motivated bias does not come from psychological research but from the philosophy of Robert Pirsig. Author of *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* and its follow-up *Lila: An Inquiry into Morals*, Pirsig can best be described as a rhetorician in search of language's role in scientific explanation. Pirsig develops the label "static filter" in order to describe motivated bias:

> Your static value system filters out the undesirable opinions and preserves the desirable ones. But it isn't just opinions that get filtered out. It's also data. When you buy a certain model of car you may be amazed at how the highways fill up with other people driving the same model. Because you now value the model more, you see more of it.[38]

Pirsig claims "seeing is not believing" but that "believing is seeing."[39] Furthermore, the static filter is ubiquitous – "We build up whole cultural intellectual patterns based on past 'facts' which are extremely selective. When a new fact comes in that does not fit the pattern we don't throw out the pattern. We throw out the fact."[40] The act of processing data tends to support and reinforce predictions and conclusions that, at least at some level, originate with a self-serving bias. Specific to foreign policy analysis, what the decision makers "see is, to a substantial extent,

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[38] Robert M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance: An Inquiry into Values* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1974); quote found in Pirsig, *Lila*, p. 385.
[39] Pirsig, *Lila*, p. 386.
[40] Pirsig, *Lila*, p. 386.

filtered through the multiple, though inconsistent, lenses of their own psychologies and beliefs, subject as well to cognitive limitations."[41]

In deference to Pirsig, the study of rhetoric has long placed primacy on perception and how it fulfills an epistemic – or knowledge creating role. Sir Francis Bacon, in *Novum Organum*, argues from a theoretical basis that the human mind and the perceptions the mind generates are the basis for knowledge. Human understanding, furthermore, "is like a false mirror, which receives rays irregularly, distorts and discolours the nature of things by mingling its own nature with it." For Bacon, reality is a construct of the human mind, and like those who study human cognition, the mind receives data but the data is subject to the nature and interpretation of the mind. Thus, if a mind reflects any bias then data is subject to that bias – a processing error.[42]

An alternate – more concrete – explanation for the epistemic nature of processing employed by humankind reserves a role for motivated bias in the decision making process. The single process model submits that processing of data is not a pluralistic action but a single epistemic process.[43] Individuals link an "if-then" relationship to premise and belief. That epistemic process that leads to predictions and judgments, at some point, "brakes" or "freezes" so that the processor of information can find closure in the decision making process. In order to change a belief, attitude, or perception, that same processor of data must "unfreeze" the epistemic process in order to appropriately deal with new data. The problem with the process is that individuals are motivated to keep the epistemic process frozen in deference to structure, fear of being wrong, and preferences in outcome. In a case study analysis of international conflict Dominic Johnson offered a like-minded theory for why humans resort to motivational processing– "it is the motivational bias that protects individuals emotionally from conflicting, unfamiliar or unpleasant information" and "lead[s] us to interpret new information to fit preconceived notions or to rationalize an already preferred course of action."[44] Motivated bias, similar to self-serving bias, comes with the caveat that the bias does not explain all decision making but only plays a role in how preferences, perceptions and beliefs influence decisions. Kunda's admonitions serve instructive to this point:

> People do not seem at liberty to conclude whatever they want to conclude merely because they want to. Rather, I propose that people motivated to arrive at a particular conclusion attempt to be rational and to construct a justification of their desired conclusion that would persuade a dispassionate observer.[45]

As a result, one cannot look at a decision-making process and entirely suggest that the hot cognitive process of motivated bias can explain a decision (nor can one point exclusively to cold cognitive factors).

Leon Festinger provided an influential examination of motives and inconsistent data in his 1957 study on cognitive dissonance. Festinger concluded that inconsistency motivated subjects to utilize mechanisms in order to reduce dissonance and reduce psychological

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[41] Jonathon Renshon and Stanley Renshon, "The Theory and Practice of Foreign Policy Decision Making," Political Psychology, 29.4 (2008), 509.

[42] Francis Bacon and F. H. Anderson, *The New Organon and Related Writings* (New York: Macmillan, 1985).

[43] Arie W. Kruglanski and Icek Ajzen, "Bias and Error in Human Judgment," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 13.1 (1983): 1-44.

[44] Dominic D. P. Johnson, *Overconfidence and War: the Havoc and Glory of Positive Illusions* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 8.

[45] Ziva Kunda, "The Case for Motivated Reasoning," *Psychological Bulletin* 108.3 (1990): 482.

discomfort.[46] The pressure to reduce cognitive dissonance can result in the use of psychological mechanisms in order to align data with what one perceives as reality in conceding that both "motivations and desired consequences may also be factors in determining whether or not two elements are dissident." For example, Festinger relates the narrative of one playing cards with a professional gambler. The individual loses but continues to play. Such a relationship is dissonant because the individual desires to win but continues to play against the professional gambler.[47] Dissonance, in the Festinger model, characterizes the post-decision process and the quantity of dissonance relates to the magnitude of the decision. The decision-maker addresses dissonance through a number of strategies which include the alteration of views with regard to alternative decisions. For instance, subjects will likely overemphasize the positive aspects of a completed decision, find new advantages for a decision already made, engage in a search for new data in support of the decision, or get others to agree with the decision.[48] Festinger suggests "dissonance itself can, of course, be considered a motivating factor" but motivational issues are "distinct from which the problems with which the theory of dissonance does deal."[49] What Festinger does tell us, however, is that motivation and bias in the processing of data occurs in post-decisional environments which logically leads to the suggestion that bias in the processing of data may also occur in pre-decisional processing. For example, Deborah Welch Larson details how the biased processing of data by policy principals resulted in increasing the rift between the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.[50]

One of the most common examples of motivated processing of data occurs in the effort to confirm preferences. One wants or wishes something, so data is viewed through the lens of those wants and wishes. As Otto Klineberg observed, preferences motivate individuals to process data in order to achieve a desired output and errors in information processing are the result of attempting to fulfill wishes.[51] Even the so-called neutral and scientific observer within laboratory settings may fall prey to motivated bias. For example, if the experimenter in a research study holds a specific orientation toward the research question, then that individual must be cautious not to allow their theory influence the data obtained.[52] The phenomenon of motivated processing explains why individuals recall personal traits of a positive nature more frequently than those of a negative nature and the expectancy of those same individuals correlated with a higher recall rate than did experience.[53] In a practical application of the motivated processing theory, subjects who found they scored higher on a Social Sensitivity Test tended to more favorably rate the validity of the test than those who scored lower.[54]

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[46] Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Stanford University Press, 1957), p. 3.

[47] Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, p. 11-13.

[48] Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, p. 42-45.

[49] Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*, p. 276-277

[50] Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment: a Psychological Explanation* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985).

[51] Otto Klineberg, *The Human Dimension in International Relations* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964).

[52] Robert Rosenthal, "Experimenter Outcome-Orientation and the Results of the Psychological Experiment," *Psychological Bulletin* 61.6 (1964): 405-12.

[53] Walter Mischel, Ebbe B. Ebbesen, and Antonette Raskoff Zeiss, "Selective Attention to the Self: Situational and Dispositional Determinants," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 27.1 (1973): 129-42.

[54] Tom Pyszczynski, Jeff Greenberg, and Kathleen Holt, "Maintaining Consistency between Self-Serving Beliefs and Available Data: A Bias in Information Evaluation," *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 11.2 (1985): 179-90.

Motivated processing is quite often found in instances of individuals attempting to justify evidence as it exists in the natural world with the preferences they hold concerning reality. Motivated processing allows for a manipulation of past behavior in order to align attitudes with personal histories.[55] And, subjects who believe they possess a given personality trait will search for evidence of that trait in order to justify their self-view.[56] Biased motivation also results in goal-directed memory searches.[57] To be sure, informational searches, generally, show a bias towards supporting rather than conflicting information.[58] Furthermore, incongruent data results in longer times to process incoming data in order for subjects to search for new sources of information in order to counteract the undesired information.[59] Individuals with some sort of an emotional attachment to a specific outcome tend to develop an allegiance bias in accessing the probability of that outcome.[60] The allegiance bias can be so meaningful that individuals tend to increase their support for political candidates with the discovery of new negative information.[61]

In addition to preferences resulting in a motivated processing of data, another significant source is of beliefs and perceptions. For example, stereotypes – a form of prior beliefs – results in biased testing which can provide incorrect confirmation of the stereotypes.[62] Prior beliefs with regard to political and social issues have also been shown to influence conclusions in the form of invalid disconfirmation or confirmations. The study of attitudes regarding gun control and affirmative action illustrated how subjects accept arguments that conform to previous opinions and reject those that do not.[63] Images also play a significant role in how one perceives – and then acts. Subjects who perceived relationships as hostile tended to adopt hostile behavior. In addition, it took only very small quantities of dubious information in order to convince the subject that they had made objective arguments in support of their hostile policy choices.[64]

Kahneman and Tversky's study of decision making reveals another bias – the certainty effect. Briefly, the certainty effect suggests that individuals systematically, in attempts to rationally weigh the utility of decisions, tend to overweight outcomes that perceptually appear more certain as compared to alternatives. The perceived certainty results in the tendency of subjects to judge outcomes out of proportion to their actual probability. Kahneman and Tversky's findings are notable in that they place perception at an epistemic level in the decision making process but do so at the level of cold cognitive errors. In other words, the perceptual errors are motivational only in that subjects desired to opt for the highest utility decision payoff.

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[55] Michael Ross, Cathy McFarland, and Garth J. Fletcher, "The Effect of Attitude on the Recall of Personal Histories," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 40.4 (1981): 627-34.

[56] Rasyid Sanitioso, Ziva Kunda, and Geoffrey T. Fong, "Motivated Recruitment of Autobiographical Memories." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 59.2 (1990): 229-41.

[57] Kunda, "The Case for Motivated Reasoning."

[58] Stefan Schulz-Hardt, et al., "Biased Information Search in Group Decision Making," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 78.4 (2000): 655-69; Matthew J. Lebo and Daniel Cassino, "The Aggregated Consequences of Motivated Reasoning and the Dynamics of Partisan Presidential Approval," *Political Psychology* 28.6 (2007): 719-46.

[59] David P. Redlawsk, "Hot Cognition or Cool Consideration? Testing the Effects of Motivated Reasoning on Political Decision Making," *The Journal of Politics* 64.4 (2002): 1021-44.

[60] Keith D. Markman and Edward R. Hirt, "Social Prediction and the 'Allegiance Bias'," *Social Cognition* 20.1 (2002): 58-86.

[61] Redlawsk, "Hot Cognition or Cool Consideration?"

[62] John M. Darley and Paget H. Gross, "A Hypothesis-Confirming Bias in Labeling Effects," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 44.1 (1983): 20-33.

[63] Charles S. Taber and Milton Lodge, "Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs," *American Journal of Political Science* 50.3 (2006): 755-69.

[64] Mark Schafer, "Images and Policy Preferences," *Political Psychology* 18.4 (1997): 813-29.

In short, subjects tend to choose alternatives that are perceived to be more certain – obviously leading to a decision making process that values outcome but that also illustrative of how perceptual bias shapes the process. The data compiled by Kahneman and Tversky, however, supplies unintended results that apply as consequentially (or maybe more so) to the study of motivated bias in the decision making process. Specifically, in order to bolster the certainty hypothesis and demonstrate that hypothesis as falsifiable, Kahneman and Tversky, in multiple research questions, normalize for certainty and create an outcome that is more ambiguous, less certain. What each set of results demonstrates is that once the decisional outcomes are all ambiguous, subjects – at the statistically significant .01 level – opt for the more optimistic decision alternative in the form of the highest payoff. Like with the certainty effect, subjects in instances when certainty is removed, opt for the more optimistic outcomes even though they have lower probabilities of occurring.[65]

Closer examination of the results from Kahneman and Tversky's studies also allude to another potential explanation for human behavior. Motivated bias in the processing of information, or even in a desired outcome, can result in individuals choosing, even against probabilities, based upon the highest payoff - or, individuals allowing preferences to impact predictions. Again, this literature is consistent with the supposition that in the decision making process subjects who hold a wish or a preference for a specific outcome or policy option are more likely to make decisions as well as perceive and process data in a context that is congruent to preferences. Moreover, the motivated bias depicted in Kahneman and Tversky's subjects selecting the optimistic outcome at statistically significant levels brings us to the third research stream of the theoretical basis for using a tepid cognitive model over more limiting hot and cold cognitive models – the product, outcome, as motivated bias in the form of wishful thinking. Now, three levels of analysis in the decision making process – the individual, incoming data, and the product all suggest the applicability of hot cognitive variables within a tepid model of decision making.

The Product: Wishful Thinking

In order to illustrate how wishes and preferences impact decisions and perceptions and processes of the decision making process, I have outlined three general levels from which to analyze the role of motivated bias in an effort to suggest the plausibility of employing hot cognitive variables in order to more fully explain the variables associated with the decision making process.[66] First, I discussed self-bias, or the personal level – the tendency to overestimate positive outcomes, personally. Next, at the information processing level I suggested that the individual calls into service a motivated bias in the processing of information based upon predictions and beliefs and perspectives. The third, and final, level of analysis is at the decision output level. Using findings from Kahneman and Tversky, I have suggested that in situations of perceived ambiguity individuals tend to choose the outcome or decision with the highest payoff – normatively seen as

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[65] Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, "Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision under Risk," *Econometrica* 47.2 (1979): 263-91.

[66] The idea of foreign policy literature as descriptive but not explanative is found in Herrman, Voss, Schooler, and Ciarrochi, "Images in International Relations," p. 404. The comments made by Herrmann, et al referred to research regarding images – which can be characterized as cold cognition. However, my use of the notion is in comparing the use of cold cognitive models without accounting for hot cognitive variables.

the "best" choice. Broadly, I define the product of allowing preferences an active role in the decision-making process as wishful thinking. As a result, the third assertion supporting the plausibility of motivated bias is that wishful thinking is best viewed as the product of motivational and/or self-serving bias.

The most obvious question centers around the definition of "Wishful Thinking": what is it and how do we know when we see it? For the purposes of this study, I am using an intentionally broad conceptualization of wishful thinking – when preferences impact the product of a decision by way of predicted outcomes. Just like the Kahneman and Tversky findings subjects tend to, despite the presence of lower probabilities, choose the outcomes that are most optimistic and offer the highest payoff. Why does the decision-maker not perform like a computer and calculate the most probable outcome? The process of arriving at a decision does involve beliefs, perceptions, and the processing of information. Nevertheless, as we have seen from the psychological literature hot cognitive factors like emotion and motivated processing of stimuli also matter. Hence, the broad and general operational definition for wishful thinking accounts for the influence of a number of hot cognitive variables.

In addition to the conceptual reasoning for employing a relatively broad operational definition for wishful thinking, another justification is that the literature dealing with the concept significantly varies on what, exactly, wishful thinking is. Be that as it may, the idea of preferences impacting predictions is familiar to some of the literature.[67] In related definitions, authors have defined wishful thinking as what the subject desires reality to be, the correlation between one's beliefs and desires, a preferred and motivated belief, worldview that coheres with what one desires and feels, and the correlation between wish and expectation.[68]

A brief survey of examples of wishful thinking within the literature will assist in an operational context. The use of wishful thinking as a concept to explain human behavior dates at least to the Enlightenment Era. Adam Smith's economic treatise, *Wealth of Nations*, discusses individual economic choices.[69] Smith argues that every tradesman will earn a living wage but only one in twenty lawyers will earn a steady source of income related to their studies – hence, the lawyer's wages should be about twenty times that of the tradesman. Yet, the wages clearly did not meet such a threshold. So, the key question was why would so many pursue a law career when the market does not adequately compensate such a decision? The rational and risk and reward world of the capitalist economic system could not account for these decisions. First, students studying law may be more interested in prestige associated with such a career choice. More likely, according to Smith, was the notion that each of the law students, despite data to the contrary, believed they would be that one in twenty who earned a living wage. Smith's discussion alluded to the concept of self-bias in contending that "the natural confidence which

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[67] Elisha Babad, "Wishful Thinking and Objectivity among Sports Fans," *Social Behaviour* 2 (1987): 231-40. Elisha Babad and Eitan Yacobos, "Wish and Reality in Voters' Predictions of Election Outcomes," *Political Psychology* 14.1 (1993): 37-54; Donald Granberg and Edward Brent, "When Prophecy Bends: The Preference-Expectation Link in U.S. Presidential Elections, 1952-1980," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 45.3 (1983): 477-91.

[68] Dolan and Holbrook, "Knowing Versus Caring,"; F. H. Lund, "The Psychology of Belief," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 20.1 (1925): 63-81; Szabados; Cian Dorr, "Non-cognitivism and Wishful Thinking," *Nôus* 36.1 (2002): 97-103; Donald Granberg and Sören Holmberg, *The Political System Matters: Social Psychology and Voting Behavior in Sweden and the United States* (Cambridge Cambridgeshire ; New York; Paris: Cambridge University Press; Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1988).

[69] Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Great Minds Series Vol. (Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books, 1991), p. 112-115.

every man has more or less not only in his own abilities but in his own good fortune."[70] Smith's argument in the dilemma of tradesman versus law student advances two very key points – (1) individuals tend to process data according to a self-serving bias and (2) the self-serving bias often influences the decision-making process through motivational bias. Smith's discussion reveals the individual as one who may overestimate his own chances of gain while underestimating chances of loss. The decision made to pursue law over a general trade can be seen as wishful. Smith does not limit the motivated bias to the tradesman versus the lawyer but supports his contention in noting the tendency of man to choose the optimistic outcome in a wide variety of unrelated events from playing the lottery to the optimistic outlook of recruits at the beginning of a war.

Other key Enlightenment figures continued to build upon Adam Smith's broad observations. John Locke (1690) in his "Essay Concerning Human Understanding" suggests that the human mind operates in two distinct ways - the human mind perceives but it also prefers.[71] Hume's *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* developed a model of the mind consisting of four faculties – understanding, imagination, passion, and will. Three of the four faculties – imagination, passion, and will – are of the hot cognitive variety.[72] Accordingly, it would logically follow that affect or hot cognition plays a part in the outputs of the human mind. James Madison made a similar observation in *The Federalist Papers* in noting that emotion influences political discourse. One of the key tenants Madison developed underlying the philosophy of the United States Constitution was that premise that "as long as the connection exists between his [man's] reason and his self-love, his opinions will have a reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach themselves."[73]

Explicit research concerning wishful thinking emerged from issues concerning how the mind comes to believe. Psychological studies of note concerning belief date back as far as 1898. Sumner observed beliefs as "more or less graded on a scale of certainty."[74] But at the same time, early 20th century scientists had difficulty in rating beliefs – the only measure of which had been conduct. Sumner became frustrated at the inability to "lay hold of the elusive belief itself" and noted "one is strongly tempted to go back to the data upon which it is based and to deal with them rationally."[75] Despite his frustrations Sumner discovered a significant *a priori* point with regard to belief – "a fraction of our beliefs arise in the first instance through reason or, having arisen, are maintained by it."[76]

Formal inquiry into the inputs in human belief emerged in the consumer era of the 1920s as a way to discover what inputs motivate the human mind to believe in order to sell more goods to consumers.[77] Marketers and advertisers saw logic as not the source of individual belief but, instead, the vehicle used by the human mind in order to justify already held beliefs. Poffenberger summarized the school of thought surrounding belief in observing "that we tend to believe what

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[70] Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, p. 115.
[71] John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 1995; 1910).
[72] David Hume and Stephen Buckle, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding and Other Writings* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
[73] Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, "No. 10: The Same Subject Continued (Madison)," *The Federalist Papers.* Ed. Clinton Rossiter (New York: Penguin Putnam, 1961), p. 46.
[74] Francis Bertody Sumner, "A Statistical Study of Belief," *Psychological Review* 5.6 (1898): 616.
[75] Sumner, "A Statistical Survey of Belief," p. 618.
[76] Sumner, "A Statistical Survey of Belief," p. 618.
[77] A. T. Poffenberger, "The Conditions of Belief in Advertising," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 7.1 (1923): 1-9.

arouses our desires, our fears, and our emotions generally."[78] The effort to sell goods confirmed the notion that hot cognitive factors matter in the formation of beliefs – what one prefers matters.

The question of empirically testing emotional factors - which include belief, certainty, and desire – materialized in the work of Frederick Hansen Lund. Examining the link between belief and desire Lund found the correlation twelve points higher than between belief and knowledge. Lund concluded "the high coefficients obtained from the number of groups represented assures us that some very definite relation exists between belief and desire. Of this there can be no doubt."[79] Still, the question of direction needed addressed. An examination of the relationship between belief with knowledge and evidence were found to have a low correlation and analysis indicated a zero correlation between desire and knowledge and evidence. Ultimately, findings of a correlation of .88 between belief and desire left "little doubt as to the molding influence of emotional factors."[80] In the final analysis Lund posited that "emotional factors are significant determinants of belief" and "beliefs, once formed, are not willingly relinquished."[81]

Psychologists began to study the impact of preferences on the development of judgments and predicted outcomes in the late 1930s.[82] In discovering that wishful thinking provided a source for judgments concerning political questions and current events McGregor concluded that, in contradiction to intuitive assumptions, those identified as "experts" with regard to specific judgments tended to utilize wishful thinking in the formation of judgments more often than did the layman. Of particular importance according to McGregor was also the level of ambiguity – when a judgment is considered important, the predictor tended to search for any ambiguity so that preferences would have the necessary space in which to operate.[83]

Hadley Cantril followed McGregor with what "although not definitely planned as such, may be profitably regarded as an elaboration of McGregor's questions, findings, and interpretations."[84] Preference held an important position in the shaping of predictions for Cantril just as it had for McGregor. Preference in the form of pre-existing attitudes tended to shape predictions on very significant domestic issues that included the future of trade unions, whether key industries would be taken over by the government, and the outcome of the 1940 presidential election as well as important international issues that included how long the Soviet experiment in government would last and which side would be victorious in the Spanish Civil War. Cantril, not unlike McGregor, concluded that preferences shape predictions and reserved a significant position for the element of ambiguity. In other words, the human mind allows an opening for wishful thinking with the presence of ambiguity. McGregor and Cantril laid early groundwork in order to determine links between desire and prediction. In fact, McGuire studied forty-eight propositions and found a .40 correlation between desire and prediction which was significant at the .01 level.[85] In a more recent study, Eiser and Eiser measured likelihood versus desirability in terms of environmental change and found a positive correlation in thirty-eight of thirty-nine

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[78] Poffenberger, "The Conditions of Belief in Society," p. 9.
[79] Lund, "The Psychology of Belief," p. 73-75.
[80] Lund, "The Psychology of Belief," p. 174.
[81] Lund, "The Psychology of Belief," p. 195.
[82] D. McGregor, "The Major Determinants of the Prediction of Social Events," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 33.2 (1938): 179-204.
[83] McGregor, "The Major Determinants of the Prediction of Social Events," p. 192.
[84] H. Cantril, "The Prediction of Social Events," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 33.3 (1938): 364-89.
[85] W. J. McGuire, "Cognitive Consistency and Attitude Change," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 60.3 (1960): 345-53.

propositions. Twenty four of the correlations were significant at the .05 level and seventeen at the .01 level.[86]

Early attempts to illustrate wishful thinking and motivated bias in judgment and prediction, although simple in research design, also included experimental analysis of subjects judging probability in games of chance. In one case, college students were asked to guess whether a particular playing card was marked or not with the objective to choose the one marked as desirable.[87] Subjects reflected both increased confidence and increased expectations – signaling a desirability impact on the subjects' predictions – as to whether a marked playing card would be drawn. The design of predicting playing cards was expanded to include monetary rewards for correct forecasting.[88] Positive reinforcement of the subject, prior to prediction, led to statistically significant (at the .01 level) increases in affirmative expectancies despite the presence of monetary awards for accurate predictions. Ultimately, the study concluded that the subjects gave responses that could best be termed "wishful."

Beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s political scientists and sociologists commenced research into the role of motivated biases with individual predictions. The question of Quebec's separation from Canada emerged as a critical issue to many Canadians and became fertile study for the influence of preferences on predictions. Myron Rothbart's research regarding attitudes and future predictions of English versus French Canadians concerning the future of Quebec contended that self-serving biases account for the minimal responses (or lack of response), historically, to burgeoning social movements including the American Revolution, the Bolsheviks and the Russian Revolution, and the growth of Nazism and Hitler. Using that general theory as a starting point, Rothbart engaged the question of perceptions of Quebec separatism and confirmed that the desires of the subjects accounted for differences in predictive attitudes between the two cohorts. In both the English and French groups the more each subject opposed separatism, the less likely that subject judged the likelihood of separatism as an outcome. And, likewise, subjects who perceived separation as adverse to their personal interests tended to be more likely to indicate opposition to separation.[89]

Some of the most significant research in wishful thinking has actually been completed at the national level in the examination of voter preferences in elections. Election data and surveys from New Zealand confirmed a link between preference and expectation – wishful thinking – in that more favorable predictions tended to correlate with the preferred party.[90] Additionally, wishful thinking products increased as levels of support grew. A survey of preferences in the 1988 Israeli election provided evidence that preference influenced electoral predictions and that once a voter forms a preference then wishful thinking influences "the presumably objective and rational process of subjective prediction."[91] An analysis of U.S. presidential elections from 1952 to 1980 demonstrated preferences impacted prediction and concluded that 80% of each

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[86] J. R. Eiser and Christine Eiser, "Prediction of Environmental Change: Wish-fulfillment Revisited," *European Journal of Social Psychology* 5.3 (1975): 315-22.

[87] Francis W. Irwin, "Stated Expectations as Functions of Probability and Desirability of Outcomes," *Journal of Personality* 21.3 (1953): 329.

[88] Vaughn J. Crandall, Dan Solomon, and Richard Kellaway, "Expectancy Statements and Decision Times as Functions of Objective Probabilities and Reinforcement Values," *Journal of Personality* 24.2 (1955): 192.

[89] Myron Rothbart, "Assessing the Likelihood of a Threatening Event: English Canadians' Evaluation of the Quebec Separatist Movement," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 15.2 (1970): 109-17.

[90] Elisha Babad, Michael Hills, and Michael O'Driscoll, "Factors Influencing Wishful Thinking and Predictions of Election Outcomes," *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* 13.4 (1992): 461-76.

[91] Babad and Yacobos, "Wish and Reality in Voters' Predictions," p. 38.

candidate's supporters believed that their preferred candidate would win the election.[92] Swedish election data told much the same narrative and illustrated how wishful thinking increased by levels of involvement and decreased by knowledge - again alluding to a theoretical role for uncertainty and ambiguity.[93] The active and epistemic role of wishful thinking is also evidenced in more current studies – using the U.S. presidential elections of 1984, 1988, 1992, and 1996 – with the warning that political knowledge acts to attenuate wishful thinking.[94]

Another productive stream of research into wishful thinking comes from the disciplines of business and management. In an analysis of corporate takeovers data showed that the stock price of the target company increased while the price of the purchasing company held study.[95] Basically, the price increase reflects the belief by the part of the new managers that they can make the company more profitable than could the previous management. Prices of initial public offerings (IPO's) have been found to increase very quickly due to investor over-optimism with regard to the future success of the new firm.[96] In addition, credit card rates - which from 1983 to 1988 alone were five times the ordinary rate of return - do not reflect market conditions but an instance of wishful thinking on behalf of the consumer.[97] It is not the forces of the free market at work with such artificially high rates but the motivated belief by the consumer that the interest rate matters little because the debt will be paid before interest accrues.

Wishful thinking has also been a subject of study in the world of investment banking. Robert Olsen argued that desirability bias, wishful thinking, and outcome bias all are labels explaining the same behavior – the over prediction of desired outcomes and under prediction of outcomes not favored.[98] An examination of perceived probability and desirability of outcome in a study of financial analysts in both the United States and Taiwan confirmed the theory of desirability shaping prediction.[99] Functioning and efficiency of capital markets and capitalization practices by investment bankers also appear susceptible to over-optimism leading to faulty perceptions.[100] In the raising of capital business owners tend to see their own enterprise as more likely to succeed than other start-ups - "Commercial banks frequently encounter optimistic entrepreneurs whose perceptions are biased by wishful thinking."[101] Yet, ironically, investment bankers must measure levels of wishful thinking by entrepreneurs while, at the same time, those

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[92] Granberg and Brent; Carole Jean Uhlaner and Bernard Grofman, "The Race May be Close but my Horse is going to Win: Wish Fulfillment in the 1980 Presidential Election," *Political Behavior* 8.2 (1986): 101-29.Granberg and Brent's analysis covered the elections form 1952 to 1980. Uhlaner and Grofman (1986) concentrated solely on the 1980 U.S. presidential election and also concluded that voters behave in a manner consistent with wishful thinking.
[93] Granberg and Holmberg, *The Political System Matters*.
[94] Dolan and Holbrook, "Knowing Versus Caring."
[95] Richard Roll, "The Hubris Hypothesis of Corporate Takeovers," *The Journal of Business* 59.2, Part 1 (1986): 197-216.
[96] Jay R. Ritter, "The Long-Run Performance of Initial Public Offerings," *The Journal of Finance* 46.1 (1991): 3-27.
[97] Lawrence M. Ausubel, "The Failure of Competition in the Credit Card Market," *American Economic Review* 81.1 (1991): 50.
[98] Robert A. Olsen, "Desirability Bias among Professional Investment Managers: Some Evidence from Experts," *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making* 10.1 (1997): 65-72.
[99] See Olsen, "Desirability Bias," with regard to financial advisors from the United States, 71% of the correlations and twelve of fourteen issues gave evidence of a correlation between predicted probability and desirability that was significant at the .01 level. Most of the Taiwanese correlations proved statistically significant at the .05 level or better.
[100] Michael Manove and A. Jorge Padilla, "Banking (Conservatively) with Optimists," *The Rand Journal of Economics* 30.2 (1999): 324-50.
[101] Manove and Padilla, "Banking (Conservatively) with Optimists," p. 324.

same bankers engage in motivated bias – one only need examine the lending patterns of multinational financials with respect to Latin American and Asia in the early 1990s. The use of motivated bias in investment options is not limited to institutional investors, either. Over 10,000 participants in a Swedish premium pension scheme often made investment decisions under the bias of wishful thinking.[102]

Electoral predictions and the business world are not the only walks in life in which motivated bias in the form of wishful thinking interferes with the decision making process and the creation of predictions. Fans of sporting events have a long history of predicting their preferred team to win despite evidence to the contrary. In fact, fans predict that their "favorite" team will win even when the team is behind at halftime. Moreover, when researchers introduced monetary incentives for the correct choice subjects still tended to make wishful predictions.[103] Wishful thinking even became part and parcel of the trial of the 20th century – the murder trial of O.J. Simpson.[104] A game theory analysis of the O.J. trial offers a possible explanation of the "not guilty" verdict as wishful thinking – the emotional bias towards O.J. and members of the jury not wanting to find him guilty of the horrendous crimes with which he was charged. Christopher Way analyzed motivated bias in the form of wishful thinking as it interacts with prospect theory and incentives for politicians to advocate market reforms. Basically, Way contends the decision maker acting in a zone of loss may apply wishful thinking to the examination of domestic market reforms in an effort to return to the status quo.[105] Finally, evidence suggests that religious beliefs also tend to lead to instances of motivated bias.[106] Study of the 2000 U.S. presidential election confirmed that subjects high in doctrinal orthodoxy and religious salience showed greater instances of wishful thinking.

My purpose with Chapter One has been to briefly discuss relevant research and literature dealing with motivational bias by the individual, as well as within the process and product of decision making. That said, the research discussed is not limited to foreign policy analysis but, instead, meant to show the usefulness of the concept of motivated bias in explaining human behavior in much more general terms. What is most remarkable about the literature of the so-called "hot cognition" is not only the lack of a single unified theory but also differences of opinion regarding definitions relating to motivated bias. What I have tried to accomplish is study motivated bias from a three tiered perspective – bias towards self in the manner of self-serving bias, bias in the creation of judgments and perceptions in the form of motivated bias in processing data, and motivated bias as it relates to the decisions made in the model of wishful thinking. Indeed, motivated bias presents an interesting riddle – even with advances in science of the brain, one cannot dissect the thoughts and motives of an individual. Yet, if individuals may be biased, the processing of data may be biased, and the ultimate decision may be biased, then

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[102] Ted Martin Hedesström, Henrik Svedsäter, and Tommy Gärlin, "Identifying Heuristic Choice Rules in the Swedish Premium Pension Scheme," *Journal of Behavioral Finance* 5.1 (2004): 32-42.

[103] Babad, "Wishful Thinking and Objectivity among Sports Fans"; Babad and Yacobos, "Wish and Reality in Voters' Predictions."

[104] Paul Thagard, "Why wasn't O.J. Convicted? Emotional Coherence in Legal Inference," *Cognition and Emotion* 17.3 (2003): 361.

[105] Christopher R. Way, *"Fear Factor: How Political Insecurity Shapes the Diffusion of Financial Market Deregulation,"* Berkley Center for the Study of Law and Society, April 25-26, University of California, Berkley, 2003.

[106] Barry Hollander. "People Think like Me: Religion and Wishful Thinking in the 2000 U.S. Presidential Election." *Journal of Media and Religion* 3.4 (2004): 187-97.

the student of foreign policy faces an obligation to analyze motivated bias in the essential world of international politics.

The research question I plan to explore is what does all of this mean for those who make decisions and process incoming data under the rubric of foreign policy? I will deal with that question by exploring the plausibility of self-serving bias and motivated bias yielding a wishful foreign policy product. I will focus on this plausibility utilizing the products of Jimmy Carter's decision making process with regard to policy choices toward the Shah during the Iranian Revolution as well as secondary accounts of Carter patterns of decision making in other contexts. The significant issue is not whether the process used to make a decision utilizes hot or cold cognitive processes but, instead, assumes the interactive presence of both and strives to explain to what extent the hot category of preferences shape the ultimate decision. Central to the plausibility of motivated bias, however, are two key assumptions – (1) emotions and hot cognition matters within the context of how the decision-maker orders preferences and (2) a motivated bias can be part of the process of evaluating incoming data. In order to theoretically establish the validity of these two key assumptions Chapter One has offered basic evidence of emotion generally as a variable in decision making and more specific manifestations of hot cognition in the form of self-serving bias, motivated processing of data, and wishful thinking. Ultimately, in order to justify the study of motivated bias, evidence must plausibly exist that such bias contributes to making decisions and in constructing beliefs, assumptions, and perceptions that apply to that decision.

Next, Chapters Two and Three return to the specific field of foreign policy analysis. Chapter Two offers a brief examination of approximately fifty years of research on foreign policy analysis. The discussion concentrates on the evolution of the questions analysts ask, the variables explored and the options for the future study of the field of foreign policy inquiry. Chapter Three moves from the theoretical to the specific and relates cases of motivated bias and wishful thinking in the literature applied to decisions in foreign policy and probe hot cognitive variables as plausible sources of explanation for those decisions. Meanwhile, the second general section of my research – "The Context"- establishes the appropriate setting for the use of a specific case to explore the plausibility of hot cognitive variables. Chapter Four offers a methodological discussion of the case selection and Chapter Five offers the historical context of United States – Iranian relations. Chapter Six completes the discussion of context with a brief examination of the Carter decision making style.

Once the context for the case of policy toward the Shah is set, part three examines the case itself. An effort is made to view the unfolding of the Iranian Revolution from the United States perspective in Tehran as well as Washington and through the eyes of the White House, the CIA, and the State Department. Chapter Seven deals with decisions made during Carter's first year in office, Chapter Eight discusses the details of 1978 – the year of activation for broad revolutionary forces and the responses by the United States, and Chapter Nine delves into the last days of the Shah. Finally, I use Chapter Ten in order to draw conclusions and discuss implications for use of hot cognitive explanations for the Carter/Iran case.

Chapter Two

Motivated Bias, the Individual Level of Analysis, and the Linking of Process, Structure, and Outcome in Foreign Policy Analysis

Stephen Walt, in an effort to discover "where do bad ideas come from and why don't they go away" questioned basic assumptions of decision making. Specifically, he challenged the supposition that, somehow, decision makers learn from the experience of normatively poor policy choices and develop "smart, new ones."[107] Indeed the mystery of the source of normatively bad choices dates to classical social theorists. Adam Smith's general theory of rationality, assumed by many social scientists to apply to the *marketplace of ideas* inherent to democracies, presupposes a decision making model that is systemic and ordered. But also, the model evokes the presence of a "hidden hand" encouraging efficient and productive decisions over sub-optimal options. Instead, Walt argues that "international relations can just as easily be read as the maddening persistence of dubious thinking" and adds that "the theories that seek to explain what causes what are relatively crude."[108]

The purpose of this dissertation is to suggest an evolution of decision making models within foreign policy analysis in order to move past those based solely on cognitive variables and develop models that operationalize hot cognitive variables. Such models are a commitment to utilize a more sophisticated explanation that employs a multi-plane approach within the individual level of analysis in order to link the decision making process to product in a manner that more accurately reflects behavior in the natural world.

In the Beginning

Many attempts have been made in order to organize and provide meaning for foreign policy decision making.[109] Waltz suggested that foreign policy decisions can best be understood by studying three distinct images – the international system, the state, and the individual level of decision making. With this, Waltz, although insistent that he is not a foreign policy scholar, provided the broad basis from which to build future theories. Researchers within the first generation of foreign policy experts approached their studies based upon which level of analysis offered the "best" or "most complete" explanation. Armed with the first generation of scholarship as a starting point, Rosenau suggested that foreign policy decisions come from a variety of sources – personal level issues, the role of the decision-maker, institutional boundaries, societal norms, and even systemic variables.[110] As a result, with Rosenau the research took a different turn and the idea of a nested approach began to evolve. Following Rosenau, a second

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[107] Stephen Walt, "Where do bad ideas come from and why don't they go away," Foreign Policy, January/February (2011): 48-53.
[108] Walt, "Where do bad ideas come from?"
[109] Please see Kenneth Neal Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001; 1959).
[110] James N. Rosenau, "Pre-theories and Theories of Foreign Policy," *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics.* Ed. R. B. Farrell (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1966), pp. 27-93.

generation of foreign policy analysts argued convincingly for more fungibility between the three levels of analysis in order to provide more complete pictures of foreign policy puzzles. Hence, studies that followed were built with empirical analysis exploring the system, state, and individual level in greater detail and interaction between and within the three levels of analysis. Researchers understood that the interaction of personal, state, and system levels provided a richer explanation in international relations than simply isolating variables based upon the level of analysis. The study of foreign policy evolved from the general trend, in the first generation, of studying the levels of analysis largely confined and removed from other levels to a second generation examining the interaction of all three levels as an explanation for foreign policy behavior.[111] The result of this evolution is the concept of foreign policy decision making as its own perspective of international politics.[112]

Levels of Analysis to a Nested Approach and Beyond

As the foreign policy research agenda advanced to the second generation, many accepted that the individual level does have merit when explaining foreign policy preferences. A strong parallel can be drawn with the development of the field of foreign policy as a whole and the study at the individual level of analysis. Researchers utilize the individual level of analysis to offer why decision-makers opt for a specific policy outcome. The scientific inquiry at the individual level reflects the second generation foreign policy analysis suggestion that interactions are more complex than single level explanations can provide while recognizing that a limitation to one level of analysis is that it did not offer the richer explanations of behavior in international politics. But, the research focusing on the individual as a central (but not the only) important level of analysis follows the same simple and direct pattern. Specifically, individual explanations for foreign-policy behavior follow the general field of cold cognition – beliefs, perceptions and the related processing of information – and little accounts for hot cognition which includes emotion and other affective variables.[113]

The study of cold cognition suggests that foreign policy decisions at the individual level can be best explained in an analysis of beliefs, perceptions, and how the mind, in an unmotivated manner, processes data. Theories examining cold cognition suggest bias is characterized by the use of mental shortcuts individuals employ in order to make the world easier to understand.[114] Reflective of the importance of beliefs, Alexander George's "Operational Code" theory contends "that the way in which the leaders of nation-states view each other and the nature of the world political conflict is of fundamental importance in determining what happens in the relations among states."[115] The operational code – the beliefs about history and politics –gives political actors their own specific view of the world and molds their own context. For example, perception of the individual can be viewed in Brian Ripley's model - the perception of the elites

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[111] For discussion regarding first and second generation foreign policy analyses please see Laura Neack, Jeanne Hey, and Patrick J. Haney, "Generation Change in Foreign Policy Analysis." *Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation,* Eds. Laura Neack, Jeanne A. K. Hey, and Patrick Haney (Edgewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995), pp. 1-15.
[112] Brian Ripley, "Psychology, Foreign Policy, and International Relations Theory," *Political Psychology* 14.3 (1993): 403-16.
[113] See Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," pp. 253-284.
[114] See Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy."
[115] Alexander L. George, "The "Operational Code": A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making," *International Studies Quarterly* 13.2 (1969): 191.

provides an explanation for foreign policy preferences.[116] The theory of human information processing can be summed up well by the interaction of two influential streams of foreign policy analysis – one by Jervis and the other by Tetlock and McGuire. Jervis outlines thirteen different hypotheses in order to explain how actors "develop an image of others and their intentions."[117] In understanding the hypotheses, the student of foreign policy can then understand the place from where decision-makers stand. Part of the process of understanding the context, according to Tetlock and McGuire, is that humans only have a limited capability to process information.[118] As a result, the researcher of foreign policy must take into account the bounded nature of data processing inherent to the decision making unit. This is made more significant when coupled with the fact that humans tend to simplify data in order to more fully gain a perspective.

The majority of cognitive decision making literature deals mostly with errors or biases that are unmotivated and systemic. To wit, decision-makers simply make errors in foreign policy judgments because of issues in "coding" or interpreting data. On the other hand, psychologists, generally, recognize this unbiased cognition but also explain decision making in terms of biased motivational errors such as wishful thinking. For a variety of reasons, many cognitive psychologists note that "rather than being firmly in touch with reality, the normal human mind distorts incoming information in a positive direction."[119] The literature within psychology offers a great number of examples of motivated bias found in general social interactions. In fact, Taylor argues that "a substantial amount of knowledge now testifies to the prevalence of bias and illusion in normal human thought."[120] Models of motivated bias focus on individual psychological needs such as fears, guilt, and desires or, more broadly, the defense of ego.[121] Hot cognitive variables provide yet another level of variables from which to view the decision making process at the individual level of analysis.

Within the individual level of analysis in the study of foreign policy, many view the most significant shortcoming as the inability to account for hot cognitive factors in explanations for foreign policy choices. One criticism is that much of the research "is as descriptive as it is theoretical … describing in idiographic detail the world views of specific elites." Helpful in determining a leader's world view after one has made a decision, the theories offer minimal guidance in "the way of explanation."[122] The lack of explanation, I suggest, may come from the inability to account for key hot cognitive variables. Just as analyses of international politics in the first generation provided a helpful starting point for the foreign policy analyst, so does the current research of cold cognitive factors. What compels one to act – or not to act – should not be limited to one model or one set of variables but include the full gamut of the human experience. To illustrate, a pressing issue in the study of cognitive variables is that most of the "cognitive models that predict foreign policy choice have only partially integrated emotion and affect"[123]

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[116] Ripley, "Psychology, Foreign Policy, and International Relations Theory."

[117] Jervis, "Hypotheses on Misperception," *World Politics* 20.3 (1968): 454-479.

[118] Philip E. Tetlock. and Charles B. McGuire, Jr., "Cognitive Perspectives on Foreign Policy," *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays,* Ed. G. J. Ikenberry. 5th ed. (New York: Pearson Education, 2005), pp. 484-501.

[119] Shelley E. Taylor, *Positive Illusions: Creative Self-Deception and the Healthy Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1989), p. xi.

[120] Taylor, *Positive Illusions*, p. 6.

[121] Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," p. 264; Chaim D. Kaufman, "Out of the Lab and into the Archives: A Method for Testing Psychological Explanations of Political Decision Making," *International Studies Quarterly* 38.4 (1994): 557-86.

[122] Richard K. Herrmann, et al., "Images in International Relations: An Experimental Test of Cognitive Schemata," *International Studies Quarterly* 41.3 (1997): 404.

[123] Herrmann, et al., "Images in International Relations," p. 405.

Rosati added, furthermore, that for cognitive efforts to be of value in understanding foreign policy, analysts must remain aware of the role of government, domestic, global, and other psychological characteristics "associated with emotion, motivation, and *personality* within a cognitive approach to better understand human behavior and interactions."[124] Martha Cottam agreed and reminded the students of foreign policy analysis that "attitudes include both cognition and affect."[125]

Essential to the understanding of the role of motivated bias in foreign policy decision making is the supposition that examination of international politics at the individual level of analysis helps provide explanative power and that the perceptions of individuals leads to the engineering of multiple possible outcomes. Quincy Wright's work was among the earliest of efforts to place psychology and the individual in a prominent position in foreign policy analysis. Wright argued that in order to understand international politics we must understand those making the crucial decisions.[126] Sprout and Sprout added the notion that perceptions at the individual level place important boundaries on options available to the decision-maker and help in the framing and defining of problems.[127] Emphasis on the individual level of analysis and how individuals perceive events and data ultimately led to the theory of foreign policy decision making (FPDM) advanced by Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin. FPDM confirmed the relevance of the individual and perceptions of the individual in a model that answers the questions of how and under which conditions decisions are made.[128] In his seminal work on pre-theories, Rosenau theorized how individual variables play a role in decision making at the individual level.[129]

As the theoretical work continued, the United States and Soviet Union presented to foreign policy analysts a usable study for research with the Cuban Missile Crisis. While much of the academic community studied the incredible wealth of information available for American decision making after the missiles were discovered, Klaus Knorr asked the important question of why United States intelligence failed to predict such a move by the Soviet Union. Basically, Knorr determined the U.S. intelligence officials discounted much of the data supplied by Cuban refugees and, instead, based predictions on their own preconception that the Soviet Union would simply not position missiles in Cuba. Furthermore, data that conflicted with that opinion would be subject to heavy discounting.[130] With Knorr's examination of what he termed an intelligence failure in terms of Soviet missiles in Cuba, one could appreciate the importance of perception applied to the individual level of analysis.

In the early 1970s, several key research efforts expanded on the individual role in decision making and began to offer clearer theoretical explanations for the role of context in the way in which reality is perceived and the impact of those perceptions on the decision - making process. Irving Janis's landmark study of groupthink offered a glimpse into the importance of

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[124] Jerel A. Rosati, "A Cognitive Approach to the Study of Foreign Policy." *Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation,* Eds. Laura Neack, Jeanne A. K. Hey, and Patrick Haney (Edgewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995), p. 66.

[125] Martha L. Cottam, *Foreign Policy Decision Making: The Influence of Cognition* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), p. 7.

[126] Quincy Wright, *The Study of International Relations* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1955).

[127] Harold Hance Sprout and Margaret Tuttle Sprout, *Man-Milieu Relationship Hypotheses in the Context of International Politics* (Princeton: Center of International Studies, Princeton University, 1956).

[128] Richard C. Snyder, *Foreign Policy Decision-Making; an Approach to the Study of International Politics* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962), p. 76.

[129] Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories."

[130] Klaus Knorr, "Failures in National Intelligence Estimates: The Case of the Cuban Missiles," *World Politics* 16.3 (1964): 457.

motivated bias in contending that in a group decision making setting individuals are motivated to agree with the consensus in order to maintain group order and, as a result, engage in a limited search of information and a false sense of optimism.[131] Steinbruner suggested decisions are made within a construct that includes individual beliefs.[132] The hypotheses of the individual level of analysis, individual beliefs, and how individuals perceive reality were the hallmarks of one of the most significant works in international politics – *Perceptions and Misperceptions in International Politics* by Robert Jervis. Jervis's challenge to the idea that principals attempt to make decisions based upon rationality very much changed the terms of the debate to a more constructivist perspective by asking the question of what is rational.[133] In 1979, Heradstveit tackled the issue of an elusive peace in the Middle East citing that the negative bias of Arabs and Jews toward each other explain the lack of behavioral change.[134] As the varied psychological and individual level of research streams advanced, Tetlock and McGuire introduced a cognitive perspective that explained foreign policy choices based not upon the external world but the individual's perceptions of the external world – rationally, but in the context of how the individual defines reality.[135] In developing such a model, Tetlock and McGuire differentiated between the declarative, what decision-makers think, and the procedural, how the decision-maker thinks about the issues.[136]

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, a great deal of research in international politics focused on the individual level of analysis and psychological explanations for behavior based on the perceptions of the decision-makers. Holsti called for greater cooperation between the political scientist and the diplomatic historian in order to increase emphasis on the foreign policy decision-making process which, he argued, is essential in explaining the "dynamics of international relations" as well as "important aspects of a nation's external behavior"[137] The focus on the foreign-policy decision making process coincided with an emphasis on psychological explanations. Explanations within the literature of psychology observed that foreign policy decisions became dominated by cognitive explanations. For example, Irving Janis argued that cognitive limits constrain attempts for decision-makers to undergo a process of vigilant problem solving.[138] Brian Ripley's revisiting of the foreign policy decision making (FPDM) template stressed the individual as acting on behalf of states. Furthermore, Ripley argues the source of foreign policy typically includes a process of problem solving influenced by perceptions and constrained by the individual, by cognitive variables, and by the state, through institutional and organizational factors.[139] Rosati emphasized the notion that decision-makers strive for cognitive consistency. That is, individuals have a set or sets of beliefs that guide them

[131] Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1972).

[132] John D. Steinbruner, *The Cybernetic Theory of Decision: New Dimensions of Political Analysis* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974).

[133] Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), pp. 356-358.

[134] Daniel Heradstveit, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict: Psychological Obstacles to Peace*, Vol. 28 (Oslo; New York: Universitetsforlaget, distributed by Columbia University Press, 1979).

[135] Tetlock and McGuire, Jr., "Cognitive Perspectives on Foreign Policy," p. 485.

[136] Tetlock and McGuire, Jr., "Cognitive Perspectives on Foreign Policy," p. 486.

[137] Ole R. Holsti, "Models of International Relations and Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 13.1 (1989): 32.

[138] Irving L. Janis, *Crucial Decisions: Leadership in Policymaking and Crisis Management* (New York; London: Free Press; Collier MacMillan, 1989).

[139] Ripley, "Psychology, Foreign Policy, and International Relations Theory."

in their perception and make order of the world around them.[140] At the same time, foreign policy literature continued to emphasize the importance of the perceptions of significant actors while continuing to discover how perceptions and the individual ultimately link to the broader arena of international politics. One stream of research that linked perceptions to the larger picture was the concentration on institutional factors. The linkage of structure with the individual and the importance of their perceptions brought an added dimension to foreign policy theory by making research descriptive AND explanative. Haney, in advancing structural explanations, noted the "highly personal" and perception-based nature of crisis decision making while focusing on the lessons that can be learned in the dissection of the relationship between the structure and decision-making process during crises.[141] Hermann and Hagan connected the perceptions of individual leaders with how those leaders position the state within the international system.[142] A critical element of both the structural and cognitive explanation is the admonition by Holsti that political science and diplomatic history be seen as complementary and not competitive. Indeed, as Holsti observes, the paper trail of decision-makers provides for outstanding data in exploring the plausibility of various decision making models.[143] Again, the fundamental point is to connect the process and structure in such a way as to both describe and explain foreign policy decisions.

In many ways, the linkage of processes with structure, similar to Haney and Hermann and Hagan, parallel the earlier discussion of cognitive research. In both schools of thought, the individual level of analysis and perceptions by the individual are very key components of a theory of foreign policy decision making. The policy output, however, is bounded in both cases; that is, the structuralists suggest the boundaries are within (but not necessarily limited to) structure that is both organizational and institutional while the cognitivists argue that boundaries to policy outputs start (and may not necessarily end) with the way in which individuals believe, perceive, and process data. Each independent stream of research links two levels of analysis. Specifically, Haney links the individual level to the state and bureaucracy, Hermann and Hagan link the individual level to the international system, and the cognitive perspective links the individual as a decision-maker to the individual as a human being and subject to the boundaries of human thought and perception. While this may be true, what remains elusive in the cognitive model is a place for emotional or hot cognitive factors. Explanations that link the individual decision maker as a human being subject to the boundaries of human information processing cannot rise to the level of explanation until the hot cognitive factors are somehow accounted for.

In order to analyze the role of hot cognitive factors in the foreign policy decision-making process, one possible model is following the research template of Haney, Hermann, Hagan, and others in studying the process as well as the product. Or, as suggested by Anderson, research into foreign policy needs to examine what it is that the decision makers do when making a decision.[144] Certainly, Anderson continues, process is the key and perhaps "… an understanding of the underlying process will provide the basis for theories of biases and errors in the foreign

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[140]   Rosati, "A Cognitive Approach to the Study of Foreign Policy."

[141]   Patrick J. Haney, "Structure and Process in the Analysis of Foreign Policy Crises," *Foreign Policy Analysis: Continuity and Change in Its Second Generation*, Eds. Laura Neack, Jeanne A. K. Hey, and Patrick Haney (Edgewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995), p. 102.

[142]   Margaret G. Hermann and Joe D. Hagan, "International Decision Making: Leadership Matters," *Foreign Policy* 110 (1998): p. 124.

[143]   Holsti, "Models of International Relations," p. 34.

[144] Paul A. Anderson, "What do Decision Makers do when they make a Foreign Policy Decision? The Implications for the Comparative Study of Foreign Policy," *New Directions in the Study of Foreign Policy* eds. Charles F. Hermann, Charles W. Keegley Jr. and James Rosenau (Winchester, Mass.: Unwin Hyman, 1987): p. 287.

policy behavior of governments."[145] In a study of judgment and decision making, Stanley Renshon argues that the focus on decision-making should include process in addition to the role of the decision-maker. Much of the previous literature in the study of decision making, moreover, focuses on the process without entirely studying the role played by the individual making the decision.[146] In order to link the decision and the decision-maker in the examination of what qualifies as normatively "good judgment" Renshon contends that both solution and means need examined and that such an endeavor is both cognitive and emotional.[147] Likewise, Herrmann and Hagan called for a more balanced psychological theory that includes the intellectual room for hot cognition to influence the cognitive processes.[148] The requests for process and product mirror similar pleas in the general study of the decision-making process. In a study of rationality, Nozick surmised that the measure of rationality must occur at both the level of the product and the process.[149]

Emphasizing hot cognitive factors – including motivated bias – as an integral part of a foreign policy decision making model, even if not common within the literature, is necessary in order to provide the richest level of explanation. Levy explains that motivated biases "are most likely to manifest themselves in decisions involving high stakes and consequential actions."[150] Similarly, Kaufman argues models utilizing motivated bias tend to "operate only when individuals are confronted with consequential choices."[151] In contrast, most of the cognitive level analyses of foreign policy perspectives offer only general comments with regard to motivated bias. The purpose of this research, through use of a case study of Carter policy towards the Shah of Iran, is to suggest the plausibility of employing a model of decision making that incorporates hot cognitive variables of motivated bias. Specifically, wishful thinking, optimism, and positive illusions are all terms within the literature, primarily of psychology, that attempt to explain the propensity of humans to view situations over-emphasizing the likelihood of positive outcomes over negative and the motivated bias caused by allowing preferences a role in predictions. Just as the second generation of foreign policy analysts suggested that explanations are not as simple as level of analysis and that complex interactions of variables offer a more thorough and useful explanation – in light of merely a description – of foreign policy, I believe the dichotomous tendency to view cognitive explanations within a cold or hot model, exclusively, does not adequately explain the role of the individual's mind in the decision-making process. In order to provide a deeper and wider explanation, a model utilizing both hot and cold cognitive variables is necessary.

Few efforts have been made within foreign policy literature to offer explanations of foreign policy decisions based on motivated bias. In much of the literature, the model of the decision-maker is one that elevates the individual as a neutral processor of data engaged in weighing the pros and cons of empirical evidence in order to achieve an optimal decision – a rational actor. That is, the decision maker is seen as biased only to the extent that he or she will ultimately construct the "best" or "most beneficial" policy. Cold cognitive studies explain variations in the rational model through the use of unmotivated bias in the decision-making

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[145] Anderson, "What do Decision Makers do," p. 307.
[146] Stanley A. Renshon, "The Psychology of Good Judgment: A Preliminary Model with Some Applications to the Gulf War," *Political Psychology* 13.3 (1992): 483.
[147] Renshon, "The Psychology of Good Judgment," p. 486.
[148] Hermann and Hagan, "International Decision Making."
[149] Robert Nozick, *The Nature of Rationality* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 65-71.
[150] Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy," p. 264.
[151] Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab."

process. Yet, few relevant studies call into question the role of motivated bias. But, at least one of the most significant names in the study of foreign policy, Robert Jervis, has issued an appeal for study of these hot cognitive factors. In a 2004 interview, Jervis recalled that *Perception and Misperception* "completely put aside emotions" and "one chapter denies the importance of wishful thinking." More recently, Jervis concedes that his dismissal of the affective factors of foreign policy preferences was a "major blunder" and he "came to see the importance of emotions and what psychologists call 'motivated bias.'"[152] Despite Jervis's call for research on the subject, little has been offered in the discussion of motivated biases in the form of hot cognition as it applies to foreign policy preferences. Foreign policy analysis at the individual cognitive level tends to view cognition from a zero-sum perspective in offering either (1) a cold cognitive model of decision making explanation examining variables of beliefs, perceptions, and information processing or (2) a hot cognitive model testing variables of personality, mood, and motivated bias. I suggest that a more explanative model is one that can best be termed a tepid model and that accounts for both hot and cold cognition in an interactive manner.

Political Science and the Dichotomy of Motivational and Cognitive Perspectives

The study of decision making, from the perspective of the political scientist, has generally fallen into two broad categories – rational modeling and psychological studies.[153] Or, similarly, Robert Mandel suggests human distortion of the world generally is due to either cognitive or affective variables.[154] Furthermore, in political science, the language adopted concerning the psychology behind decision making is of cold versus hot cognition. The idea of "cold cognition" is used by the political scientist to label beliefs, perceptions, and how information is processed whereas emotion and motivated psychology are in the arena of personality and "hot cognition."[155] Similar categorizations appear throughout foreign policy literature under slightly different labels. For example, George divided modes of thinking in the decision-making process into (1) analytical process and (2) defensive processing of data.[156] Lebow organized the process into (1) defensive avoidance and decisional conflicts and (2) cognitive consistency.[157] Kaufman uses the labels of (1) motivated bias and (2) cognitive bias.[158] The literature devoted to psychological models often aligns motivated and non-motivated variables as contradictory variables in the decision-making process. For example, Rosati argues that the political scientist often distinguishes between the processing of information as non-motivated cognition versus motivated cognition.[159] Walker notes that the literature on the cognitive process has developed independent of that of motivational psychology and Herrmann, et al. concedes that cognitive models lack a full and

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[152] Thierry Balzacq and Robert Jervis, "Logics of mind and international system: a journey with Robert Jervis," *Review of International Studies* 30.4 (2004): 564-565.

[153] Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab."

[154] Robert Mandel, "Psychological Approaches to International Relations," *Political Psychology,* Ed. Margaret G. Herrmann (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1986), p. 43.

[155] Levy, "Political Psychology and Foreign Policy,"

[156] Alexander L. George, *Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy: The Effective use of Information and Advice* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1980), p. 29.

[157] Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis (*Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), pp. 101-119.

[158] Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab."

[159] Jerel A. Rosati, "The Power of Human Cognition in the Study of World Politics," *International Studies Review* 2.3 (2000): 45-75.

complete integration of emotional and affective variables in foreign policy prediction.[160] Marcus concurred in observing the tradition of political science was one in which models were either affective or cognitive.[161] Hence, two disparate models of decision making dominate research efforts – one emphasizes cold cognitive variables and the other hot cognitive variables.

As a dichotomous relationship grew between motivated and cognitive processing of data, researchers duplicated the model in the similar study of hot and cold motivation. In terms of the hot versus cold dichotomy, motivated bias falls under the auspices of hot cognition while unmotivated bias fits the model of cold cognition.[162] In other words, political science models for decision making draw a distinction between hot and cold or motivated and unmotivated bias yet, at the same time, both categories suffer from the issue that neither "is fully specified in the sense of containing an integrated, consistent, and exclusive set of falsifiable propositions."[163] For example, Khong admits the role of hot cognition is not "unimportant for understanding analogical reasoning during the Vietnam War" but was omitted because of two central reasons: (1) "the role of affect or emotion in information-processing approaches is only beginning to be systematically explored by psychologists" and (2) "insofar as 'cold' factors are sufficient to explain most of our inferential failures and successes."[164] Interestingly enough, Stephen Walker's re-examination of the operational code spoke of the need to lift the curtain between motivated and cognitive traits of policy elites. Walker suggests that operational code analysis places motivational factors in a very prominent position. For instance, research by Leites concerning the Bolsheviks was based on motivational theories. Only later did research abandon motivational factors for cognitive traits. Hence, Walker concludes, the "relationship between the motivations and political beliefs of elites was ignored."[165] Instead, Warner and Walker note, decisions are typically made under "structural constraints" and "the cognitive, motivational, and affective capacity of these agents would be the 'efficient causes' that produce decisions occurring under these environmental constraints"[166] Using that typology, they suggest that religious beliefs can play a significant role in policy when "embedded in a leader's code."[167] Be that as it may, the larger implication is that Warnert and Walker's religious discussion further opens the door for the use of motivational and cognitive constraints. And, by inference, cognitive factors are not limited to cold but include those of the hot cognitive variety.

Wishful thinking, to the extent that it is used in order to offer explanations for empirical observations, fits within the family of hot cognition. In common usage, if one is said to engage in wishful thinking then it is believed one manipulates the perceptions of realities in such a way to reflect one's wishes. Ultimately, the problem in studying both motivated and unmotivated bias is

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[160] Stephen G. Walker, "The Evolution of Operational Code Analysis," *Political Psychology* 11.2 (1990): 403-18; Herrmann, et al., "Images in International Relations," p. 405.

[161] G. E. Marcus, "Emotions in Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 3.1 (2000): 231.

[162] See Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab."

[163] Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab." p. 559.

[164] Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992), p. 225.

[165] Stephen G. Walker, "The Motivational Foundations of Political Belief Systems: A Re-Analysis of the Operational Code Construct," *International Studies Quarterly* 27.2 (1983): 179-180.

[166] Carolyn M. Warner and Stephen G. Walker, "Thinking about the Role of Religion in Foreign Policy: A Framework for Analysis," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7 (2011): 116.

[167] Warner and Walker, "Thinking about the Role of Religion," p. 126.

that evidence suggests decisions may be distorted by perceptual biases.[168] However, research into the subject has yielded little in terms of when bias impacts the decision-making process and leaves little direction on how to measure the strength of the bias.[169] In order to begin a dialogue on many of these issues it is necessary to compare the general approach used by the foreign policy analyst with the one by the behavioral scientist.

In contrast to much of the current foreign policy analysis, one research trend in the behavioral literature utilizing a psychological perspective is the blending of hot and cold or motivated and unmotivated cognition into a single category.[170] In other words, it is quite possible to make decisions that reflect an individual's beliefs and perceptions while still utilizing emotion, personality, and motivated biases. Zajonc was among the first to speak of the reasoning behind consolidating the cold and hot cognition – "There are probably few perceptions in everyday life that do not have a significant affective component, that aren't hot or in the very least tepid."[171] Intuitively, one would predict the processes of hot and cold cognition would interact and the model of decision making employed by Zajonc reinforces the concept that, although hot and cold cognitive processes are very different, they do not operate in isolation from one another. Coulter, supporting the social role in the creation of the mind, complains that many social scientists treat emotion as "a sort of appendage to social relations" and place emotion in "a permanently residual status" when; in fact, one cannot label emotions "as mere eruptions independent of appraisals and judgments, beliefs and conceptualizations."[172] Paul Thomas Young goes one step further and claims behavior influences perception and motivation remains significant in "determining the organization and course of perceiving" and concludes "human beliefs are determined to some degree by wishes and desires."[173]

Even with the apparent research dichotomy in hot cognitive versus cold cognitive factors within international relations theory, some of the research within the field has attempted to bridge the hot/cold gap. Indeed, Janis and Mann agreed in observing one "seldom can approximate a state of detached affectlessness when making decisions."[174] In such a model, wishful thinking is not limited to a hot cognitive variable. Instead, wishful thinking may explain the source of cold cognitive factors that include beliefs, perceptions, and processing of incoming information. Similarly, Marcus contends the research argument should not be one of hot versus cold cognitive factors but, as Marcus states, research should concentrate on "affective-only and

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[168]   Richard E. Nisbett and Lee Ross, *Human Inference: Strategies and Shortcomings of Social Judgment* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1980); Daniel Kahneman, Paul Slovic, and Amos Tversky, *Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

[169]   Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab."

[170] However, the movement toward integrating the emotional (hot) and cognitive (cold) is not universally accepted and that even some current research into information processing still distinguishes the two as dichotomous. For further discussion see Michael L. Spezio and Ralph Adolphs, "Emotional Processing and Political Judgment; Toward Integrating Political Psychology and Decision Neuroscience," *The Affect Effect,* Eds. W. R. Neuman, et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 71-95.

[171] R. B. Zajonc, "Feeling and Thinking: Preferences Need No Inferences," *American Psychologist* 35.2 (1980): 153.

[172]   Jeff Coulter, *The Social Construction of Mind: Studies in Ethnomethodology and Linguistic Philosophy* (Totowa, N.J.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1979), pp. 125-131.

[173]   Paul Thomas Young, *Motivation and Emotion; A Survey of the Determinants of Human and Animal Activity* (New York: Wiley, 1961), pp. 301-302; 330.

[174]   Irving L. Janis and Leon Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment*, 1 Free Press Paperback ed. (New York: Free Press, 1979), p. 45.

cognitive-plus-affective evaluations" and "that it is highly unlikely that any target of consideration is devoid of emotional content or influence."[175]

One of the strongest arguments for use of hot cognitive variables is found in Crawford's *The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships*. Crawford believes a "systematic analysis of emotion may have important implications for IR theory and the practices of diplomacy, negotiation, and postconflict peacebuilding."[176] In addition, Crawford notes, emotion is already part of international relations theory – for example, he calls fear the "engine of the security dilemma" – but emotion is typically "implicit and undertheorized" and the focus in international relations remains on the cold cognitive variables because of measurement issues.[177] Overall, Crawford's analysis of emotion concludes that the hot cognitive variables "influence recall, the use of analogy, the evaluation of past choices, and the consideration of counterfactuals" while "preexisting emotions influence receptivity to arguments."[178] Tetlock agrees with the value of hot cognitive factors in world politics and argues that "decision making, perhaps especially in crises, may be more driven by wishful thinking, self-justification, and the ebb and flow of human emotions than it is by dispassionate calculations of power."[179]

The obvious question, to be sure, is why does the political scientist see hot and cold while psychological branches of the behavioral sciences see tepid and warm? Perhaps the most useful explanation is to trace the evolution of Robert Jervis's beliefs regarding hot cognition as they apply to the study of international politics. In the 1976 work *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, Jervis allows that motivated bias is a significant debate within the psychological community but burdensome to apply to the study of international politics because of the difficulty confirming experimental results. Experimental designs, in Jervis's opinion, attempting to account for wishful thinking offer no incentive to the subject for accurate perceptions and no cost for inaccurate perceptions. Furthermore, Jervis contends that the presence of what he labels as affect, hot cognitive variables, does not automatically assume wishful thinking.[180] To illustrate, for Jervis, wishful thinking is often misidentified in cases that can be explained by expectations accounting for misperceptions – and misperceptions may originate in many sources, including perceptions and influences more consistent with cold cognitive errors.[181]

As evidence mounts in the psychological literature of motivated bias as a plausible variable in the decision-making process and as Robert Jervis calls for more research on the issue of motivated bias, the obvious question is why, then, the lack of discussion on the part of students of foreign policy decision making? If motivated bias helps explain the decision-making process for foreign policy options, then it is incumbent upon the student of foreign policy to account for motivated bias as a variable and not to abandon it because it does not comfortably fit within pre-existing models of explanation. In other words, if such an explanation is plausible and that plausibility is supported by empirical evidence, then it must be utilized. With that in mind, two general schools of thought may resolve why motivated bias has not found a prominent place

[175] Marcus, "Emotions in Politics," p. 232.
[176] Neta C. Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics," *International Security* 24.4 (2000): 116.
[177] Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics," pp. 118-119.
[178] Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics," p. 139 and p. 144.
[179] Philip E. Tetlock, "Social Psychology and World Politics," *Handbook of Social Psychology,* Eds. Daniel Gilbert, Susan Fisk, and Gardner Lindzey. 4th ed. 2 Vol. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1998), p. 883.
[180] Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*.
[181] Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, p. 361.

in the discussion of foreign policy. First, clearly, the psychologists suggesting integrated hot and cold decision making, and Jervis for that matter, could be wrong. Maybe the 1976 Jervis got it right when he minimized the role of motivated bias and it is such an infrequent factor in the making of decisions that it is not worth the effort. The difficulty in replicating motivated bias in experimental settings may simply not be helpful in the journey to define why certain foreign policy options are chosen over others. After all, the number of system, state, and individual variables used to explain behavior in international politics is quite large and what use would another variable, one that it is problematic to confirm at that, be to the field of study. Furthermore, political scientists, short of ordering MRI's at the time of a decision, cannot cross-section the brain and observe the variables at work in the making of that decision. Another issue may be, in fact, the manner in which researchers themselves define the emotional – hot cognitive variables. Spezio and Adolphs note that "emotion has been typically characterized as automatic (as opposed to deliberative), maladaptive (as opposed to useful), innate (as opposed to learned), and so on, making it appear threatening to any systematic account of reasoned deliberative thought."[182] As a result, the lack of literature surrounding motivational bias may simply represent an expression of its lack of usefulness in the field of inquiry.

For those not prepared to dismiss motivated bias as a potential variable in decision making, another explanation may lie in the inability to justify the use of hot cognition over cold cognition in the epistemic development of policy choices. Those within the foreign policy field that examine notions of hot cognitive factors, motivated bias, wishful thinking (or any other label used) take a holistic view – does empirical evidence support, primarily, a process characterized by the use of cold cognition or one, primarily, of hot cognition? The mere act of policy principals discussing the wisdom of a specific policy naturally limit the decision to one involving cold cognition – it may be a normatively poor decision based on inappropriate beliefs and perceptions but the decision was one featuring the processing of data as the decision-maker perceived it. Such a decision, no matter its normative value, is categorized as one using cold cognition. Toward this end, Khong argues that cold cognitive "factors are sufficient to explain most of our inferential failures and successes."[183] On the other hand, the psychology literature is not limited to a dichotomous labeling of the process as hot versus cold but also accepts a warm or tepid process. The difference of opinion over how to categorize motivated bias creates the gap that exists between the psychology and the political science, especially foreign policy, literature. Redlawsk, Civettini, and Emmerson agree that decision making models should include motivated processing in a manner - congruent with classical political thought – that delineates between reason and emotion.[184]

The gap between the political science use of cognition and the more general behavioral view offers a conceptual predicament due to the operationalization of terms. Simply put, forced to hypothesize decision making in issues of foreign policy in terms of either/or when it comes to hot versus cold cognition limits the explanative power of the model because, surely in most cases, a preponderance of observed data would lead one to hypothesize cold cognitive explanations over hot. If, instead, the political scientist allows for interaction between hot and cold cognition, then it is less burdensome to hypothesize the role of hot cognition while still maintaining cold cognitive explanations. Indeed, the dilemma resulting from the dichotomous
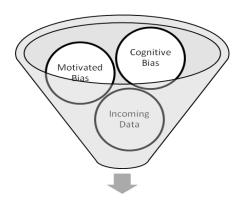
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[182] Spezio and Adolphs, "Emotional Processing and Political Judgment," p. 74.
[183] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 225.
[184] David P. Redlawsk, Andrew J.W. Civettini, and Karen M. Emmerson, "The Affective Tipping Point: Do Motivated Reasoners Ever 'Get It'?" *Political Psychology* 31.4 (2010): 564.

operative definitions, as developed by the political scientist, is a foundation of the independent variable within this dissertation regarding decision making and the processing of information. Yes, beliefs, perceptions, and a non-motivated processing of information play a role in the decision-making process. And, in point of fact, the non-motivated cognitive components – cold cognition – certainly play a role in how decision makers arrive at policy and these explanations have been studied in-depth as such by foreign policy analysts. However, in order to truly appreciate the variables involved in decision making, one must also evaluate hot cognition as a plausible explanation for decision preferences from the perspective of an interactive variable. The model that results from the interaction of both forms of cognition offers a richer explanation of how decisions are made because such a narrative potentially illustrates how a policy choice is the result of hot and cold cognitive processes. And, with such a model, processing errors may potentially claim as their genesis motivated and/or unmotivated biases. Indeed, ultimately the study of hot cognitive factors as part of a larger explanative model "offers political psychology new handles on human behavior and mentation with which to investigate political judgment and decision making."[185]

Rosati and Miller's 2010 review of the state of literature in foreign policy analysis suggests the field of study has not expanded beyond the second generation of scholarship. Instead, research, especially since 2000, has been relegated to a "fine tuning" of what scholars have known since the cognitive revolution of the 1970s. Moreover, the second generation of research has almost exclusively concentrated on cold cognitive variables.[186] Rosati and Miller believe the discipline requires a mechanism to move beyond the second generation of scholarship. Thus, the future agenda of foreign policy research is "to seriously examine and integrate a psychological and cognitive perspective … to have theories be realistically grounded in the realities of the nature of human beings and the regularized habits of the mind."[187] A new generation of scholarship would "integrate affect and motivation within the study of cognition."[188] As a result, the decision making model would be more of a "tepid" one:

Perception of Situation

Figure 2.1   Tepid Decision Making Model

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[185] Spezio and Adolphs, "Emotional Processing and Political Judgment," p. 71.

[186] Jerel Rosati and Colleen E. Miller, "Political Psychology, Cognition, and Foreign Policy Analysis," *The International Studies Encyclopedia: International Studies Compendium Project*, February 15, 2010.

[187] Rosati and Miller, "Political Psychology, Cognition, and Foreign Policy Analysis," p. 12.

[188] Rosati and Miller, "Political Psychology, Cognition, and Foreign Policy Analysis," p. 7.

Indeed, the use of a decision model employing both hot and cold cognitive factors offers the opportunity for a richer explanation of the products of the decision process. With that in mind, next chapter will survey foreign policy decision making literature in the context of the Tepid Model through instances and used of motivated bias as well as such biases used as an explanation of choices in more traditional case studies.

Chapter Three
Motivated Biases in Foreign Policy Decisions: A Review of Relevant Cases

Yuen Foong Khong begins the study *Analogies at War* referencing Werner Herzog's film *Aguirre, the Wrath of God.* Khong recalls the debate among Spanish conquistadors over whether the Europeans should continue to El Dorado, the supposed city made of gold, or turn back – as ordered. Aguirre argues the explorers should press on and in support of his position offers the analogy of how Cortez discovered Mexico City after he too had been ordered to return. Khong's point is that analogies can offer a poor roadmap for the decision-maker. Individual circumstances may differ that call the certainty and utility of analogies into question. Ultimately, the reader is reminded that El Dorado was an invention of the Peruvians designed to ambush the Spanish.[189] Yet, the lesson of Aguirre – like analogies themselves – can be seen from a broader perspective. Specifically, the use of analogy led to a decision by Aguirre that history judged as poor – the wrong decision. In fact, the decision was so wrong that the search for El Dorado, in contemporary popular culture, has become synonymous with folly – akin to Ahab's white whale or Don Quixote's windmills. But, is the lesson for the student of foreign policy and the decision-maker in the use of analogy or is it more general? Does Aguirre's folly speak directly to the analogy or remind us that decision-makers should challenge perceptions and beliefs? In other words, were Aguirre's errors in decision making due to poor analogies or were they because of poor beliefs and assumptions, concluded by processing data in a manner consistent with preferences, which informed the analogies selected?

Perhaps, the lesson from Aguirre is that preferences play a role in perceptions which, in turn, influence either or both the decision-making process and product. Indeed, as Khong concedes, the analogy Aguirre employs did not exactly parallel the reality and facts of the situation at hand. Yet, the idea of finding a city of gold, marching a small contingent of men hundreds of miles, and then, should this grand city of gold exist, using the same weary band to defeat those protecting the city does, in fact, have the appearance of folly. So, did Aguirre's obsession with wealth play a role in how he perceived data which, in turn, impacted his decision-making process? The use of the Cortez analogy, assumptions regarding El Dorado, and of his own men – were these perceptions and beliefs biased by Aguirre's own desires and preferences?

The story of Aguirre and El Dorado and Khong's discussion provide a number of interesting questions regarding the decision-making process for questions of policy. The issues that emerge from Khong's analysis become even more prescient when juxtaposed with the work of Eldar Shafir. Shafir, in a political analysis of prospect theory, suggests a linkage between motivated bias and the products of political decision-makers.[190] In short, Shafir argues the decision-maker, once a policy has been chosen, often "may be motivated to boost his likelihood estimates for the success of a risky solution, or may come to feel more knowledgeable about the domain, thus gaining a greater sense of confidence."[191] In other words, the principal – after making a decision – processes information in such a way to support the road already taken. As a point of reference, Shafir analyzes the ill-fated 1979 attempt to rescue American hostages from Iran. Shafir illustrates that Carter's first option was always one to diplomatically gain the release

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[189] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p.4.
[190] Eldar Shafir, "Prospect Theory and Political Analysis: A Psychological Perspective," *Political Psychology* 13.2, Special Issue: Prospect Theory and Political Psychology (1992): 310-322.
[191] Shafir, "Prospect Theory and Political Analysis," p. 318.

of the hostages. However, once a diplomatic resolution appeared unlikely Carter resorted to a bold and audacious rescue attempt. Carter, in fact, continued with the rescue attempt "despite the low estimates of success offered by the Joint Chiefs of Staff" and, correspondingly, Carter's "confidence in the success of the rescue mission increased, and peaked after the decision to proceed was made."[192] With Carter and the hostage rescue mission, preferences played a key role in the examination of data after a decision to attempt a military rescue had already been made. The broader question for the foreign policy analyst is not one of metaphors, like Khong, or of prospect theory, like Shafir, but, instead the role of motivated bias in the decision-making process.

Indeed, we know of some examples of motivated bias playing a role in foreign policy. Rose McDermott suggested the belief that Cubans would rise up against Castro during the Bay of Pigs invasion "little more than wishful thinking."[193] McDermott notes the life of the average Cuban had actually improved under Castro yet "the Kennedy administration assumed the people would revolt simply because that is what the administration wanted."[194] Ellsburg's review of the Vietnam War indicated that each time the United States escalated militarily one could see "an accompanying alteration of mood from pessimism to great optimism" in arguing the presence of bureaucratic optimism in light of decisions to expand militarily in Southeast Asia.[195]

The purpose of Chapter Three is to examine some of the questions posed above and to investigate hot cognitive factors as plausible variables in foreign policy decision making. In order to examine the explanative usefulness of hot cognitive factors, I will discuss elements within foreign policy literature through the lenses of those factors and investigate the explanative role for hot cognitive variables within literature pertaining to international politics.

Decision making, in a variety of contexts, often results in an output, a decision, based upon a principal or principals reflecting upon inputs, typically through observation and reported observations, and, then, using said data in order to predict the likely results of specific responses (or non-responses) to the stimuli. What we have seen, in general terms (Chapter One) is the tendency of the decision-maker to allow preferences to influence predicted outcomes. Scholars label the activity of allowing preferences to impact predictions in a number of ways – which include motivated bias, illusion, unrealistic optimism, and wishful thinking. All share the characteristic of preference influencing decisions through the product of the processing and perception of data. Simply put, some have argued that statesmen, like all people, often see only what they want to see.[196] In contending that reality is perceived and a human construct, the implication is that predicted outcomes are a product of those perceptions. For example, once predictions have been informed through a process of motivated bias then the decision itself is perceived in the context of the prediction – based on motivated bias. The decision-maker utilizes biased predictions in order to judge the appropriateness of a variety of decision options before arriving at a conclusion.

The result of the so-called motivated bias on policy selections may often bring disastrous consequences – and at the top of the list is the intelligence failure. Often, the intelligence failure comes from ignoring incoming data that does not support the preconceived ideas of top officials

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[192] Shafir, "Prospect Theory and Political Analysis," p. 318; a similar argument can be found in Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*.
[193] Rose McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), p. 171.
[194] McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations*, p. 171.
[195] Daniel Ellsberg, "The Quagmire Myth and the Stalemate Machine," *Public Policy* 19.2 (1971): 221, 226.
[196] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 222.

or may simply be the result of a lack of effort in completely processing data that challenges the status quo.[197] As a result, policy choices inferring intelligence failures and poor planning may not be the result of the quality and quantity of incoming data and stimuli but due to what de Rivera labels as a "conceptual failure" – a failure to perceive the context of the incoming data.[198] The conceptual failures of which de Rivera speaks often can be traced to the process of evaluating options and incoming data. Hence, it is my argument that in the foreign policy decision-making process, subjects who hold a wish or a preference for a specific policy option or outcome are more likely to make policy decisions and perceive and process data in a context that is congruent to those preferences – the resulting product of such a process is often one of wishful thinking. The Policy decision is the dependent variable and policy preference and outcome preference is the independent variable while motivated processing of data serves as an intermediate variable – in a decision making model I have labeled as the Tepid Model. Hence, preferences impact both the process and product of the ultimate policy choice.

How plausible, then, is the use of hot cognitive factors or the Tepid Model of decision making when applied to the high politics of security and international affairs? In order to establish the relevance of the hot cognitive factors through the Tepid Model of decision making, I move from Aguirre and the world of film to the more pressing arena of international security cases – specifically the study of the Bay of Pigs Invasion. Well chronicled, the Bay of Pigs operation of April 17, 1961 featured some 1400 Cuban exiles trained by the CIA in order to foment a counterrevolution to Fidel Castro's regime. The abysmal failure of the operation – the exiles were quickly defeated and forced to retreat into nearby jungles – has made the case a frequent study for researchers. One such effort, by Lucien Vandenbroucke, examines the decision making failure using the perspective of four models (established by Allison) – (1) the rational decision model, (2) bureaucratic politics model, (3) government politics model and (4) a cognitive theory model.[199] In short, the rational decision model is consequential in that the decision to use Cuban exiles to overthrow Castro and maintain plausible deniability was never rational. In fact, Vandenbroucke argues that "no matter how elaborate the deceit" the United States would never be able to successfully deny its involvement in the invasion.[200] The bureaucratic politics model follows the general belief that the bureaucratic organizations make the consequential policy decisions. As a result, the CIA developed a strategy to deal with Castro in the interests of the United States but involving the CIA as a "fresh occasion to prove its effectiveness and consolidate its position."[201] The third model of explanation, the government politics model, theorizes that the product of the decision-making process emerged from the bargaining and political gamesmanship within the government. In general, the Bay of Pigs invasion, seen through the government politics model, suggests the inability of individual actors to face "unpleasant facts."[202] Finally, in the fourth model, Vandenbroucke tests evidence of cognitive dissonance, perceptions, and beliefs. Yet, cognitive factors are seen as lacking an explanative value. Ultimately, almost apologetically, Vandenbroucke, in explaining the cognitive

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[197] Joseph De Rivera, *The Psychological Dimension of Foreign Policy* (Columbus, Ohio: C. E. Merrill Pub. Co, 1968), pp. 58-61.

[198] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 66.

[199] Lucien S. Vandenbroucke, "Anatomy of a Failure: The Decision to Land at the Bay of Pigs," *Political Science Quarterly* 99.3 (1984): 471-91; for original source of categories please see Allison, *Essence of Decision*.

[200] Vandenbroucke, "Anatomy of Failure," p. 473.

[201] Vandenbroucke, "Anatomy of Failure," p. 474.

[202] Vandenbroucke, "Anatomy of Failure," p. 480-487.

model's explanation, notes "this may have been an instance of wishful thinking in which emotions color perception and result in mistaking one's wishes for reality."[203]

What is missed in the end analysis is that wishful thinking provides more of an explanation than description. Yet, the models used by Vandenbroucke (and in use today) of decision making in foreign policy do not account for a wishful thinking product due to the dichotomous manner in which hot and cold cognition have been traditionally operationalized. Furthermore, one must also pose the question of whether all four models are really valid – do the models explain what they are supposed to explain? In the case of the Bay of Pigs, we are interested in why such a suboptimal decision was made. In other words, what were the decision makers thinking? Yet, the models suggested offer more description than explanation. Each of the four models describes who made decisions and how such a process was completed – a descriptive function. The struggle to describe who and the how are antecedents to why the policy was chosen over all other options. The effort to hypothesize based on the *why* fits more under the rubric of explanation than description. For example, using Vandenbroucke's research findings and explanations given for the Bay of Pigs decisions we find that each model Vandenbroucke tests examines *who* made the decision to invade at the Bay of Pigs and *how* such an option was chosen (I have provided Vandenbroucke's data in below in a graphic format).

Model	Decision Making Unit	How Decision Made
Rational Decision	Stakeholders – often the President	A process of comparing costs and benefits of various available options
Bureaucratic	Bureaucrats	In a manner that promotes the bureaucratic unit.
Government-Politics	Stakeholders – often the President key decision making unit.	Bargaining – engagement of principals all with political agendas.
Cognitive	Executive	Congruence of beliefs – need to align basic beliefs and overcome dissonance

Table 3.1 Decision Making Models of the Bay of Pigs Invasion

Each decision making unit, then, arrives at a policy output based upon how the decision was made – the rational model uses a cost/benefit analysis, the bureaucratic model features loyalty to the bureaucracy, the government-politics model strives to satisfy numerous political agendas, and use of the cognitive model resolves dissonance and aligns beliefs. Yet, what still is fundamentally lacking is the explanation as to *why* such a decision was made. Using the theories tested by Vandenbroucke added to the narrative as to why such policies were chosen yields a more explanative that contains why a decision was made (I have included Vandenbroucke's findings in the graphic below).

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[203] Vandenbroucke, "Anatomy of Failure," p. 488.

Model	Decision Making Unit	How Decision Made	Why Policy Chosen
Rational Decision	Stakeholders – often the President	A process of comparing costs and benefits of various available options	**Belief** that benefits of option outweigh costs
Bureaucratic	Bureaucrats	In a manner that promotes the bureaucratic unit.	**Belief** that policy option promotes bureaucratic unit
Government-Politics	Stakeholders – often the President key decision making unit.	Bargaining – engagement of principals all with political agendas.	**Belief** that policy option acceptable to principals based upon predicted outcome of policy
Cognitive	Executive	Congruence of beliefs – need to align basic beliefs and overcome dissonance	**Belief** that policy option will reduce dissonance and further align basic beliefs

Table 3.2 Expanded Decision Making Models of the Bay of Pigs Invasion

Now, we can not only arrive at descriptions of the decision-making process as it exists under four different models but we can also hypothesize why – using the same four models – a decision or policy option was exercised. Obvious in all four models in explaining why a decision was made is the aspect of belief. As discussed in Chapter Two, political science traditionally accounts for beliefs through the use of either a cold or a hot cognitive model as the preferred way of explaining said beliefs and perceptions. That said, in the real world of decision making the human is not a neutral processor of inputs and decisions. In fact, Uhlaner and Grofman noted that "wish fulfillment and other forms of misperception are quite common" and that rational choice models have "by and large sought to 'wish away' such seeming blemishes on human rationality."[204] Certainly, the models analyzed by Vandenbroucke offer a descriptive narrative on *who* made the decision and *how* the decision was made to invade Cuba with CIA trained exiles. However, what is lacking in each is an explanation as to *why* decision makers arrived at conclusions regarding certain policy choices. The more powerful narrative tells why the principal estimates benefits to be more than costs, why bureaucratic actors judge one policy option more beneficial in advancing the bureaucracy than others, why political actors calculate one choice as politically expedient over others, and why a decision maker may perceive a certain policy choice as dissonance reducing over a myriad of alternatives.

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[204] Uhlaner and Grofman, "The Race may be Close," p.101.

The most complete research effort, albeit dated, in establishing a causal role for hot cognitive factors in the decision making process in foreign policy is *Decision-Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment* by Janis and Mann. Generally, the argument accepts "limitations on the rationality of a person's decisions" as a result of the stress caused by the process.[205] Overall, that stress may result in the decision making unit delaying a final product in order to cope with the process itself. Furthermore, each decision-maker possesses a "proclivity to procrastinate" or "invent rationalizations for ignoring the worrisome doubts that make for decisional conflict."[206] Hence, the reluctant decision-maker, eager to avoid decisional stress and especially at times when alternative options may also be flawed, can resort to strategies that include the lack of a complete search for alternative policies, a selective inattention to the issue at hand, a distortion of possible warning messages, or a construction of wishful rationalizations in order to appear to minimize likely negative consequences.[207]

The reluctant decision-maker may cope with the decisional conflict through defensive avoidance – dodging "clues that stimulate anxiety" – through strategies like evasion, buck passing, or bolstering.[208] Basically, defense avoidance occurs when the decision-maker is engaged in a process of receiving challenging feedback in a situation of serious risks if a policy route is change (or the status quo) while it also may appear unrealistic to find a better solution. Hence, the principal may procrastinate – given that no risks are perceived in the postponing of a solution or shift responsibility to another. The procrastinator is characterized by a "lack of interest in the issue with no search, appraisal, or contingency planning" while the shifting of responsibility involves a "commitment to someone else's choice with no search, appraisal, or contingency planning." In the event responsibility cannot be shifted then the stressed decision-maker turns to bolstering which is a "commitment to least objectionable alternative with biased search, appraisal, and contingency planning."[209] Thus, the narrative that includes a lack of policy action is one where "we see a pattern of defensive inaction despite exposure to powerful challenges that evoked decisional conflict" and the responsible decision-makers can then "mobilize the members of his advisory group … to look for loopholes and exceptions that will enable him to reject the warnings."[210]

Added to the Janis-Mann theory, a number of specific case studies point to the significance of hot cognitive factors in the decision-making process in foreign policy. Vandenbroucke, interestingly enough, followed his Bay of Pigs work a decade later with a study of motivated bias and wishful thinking applied to the decision-making process in strategic operations. *Perilous Options* includes an examination of Carter's attempt to rescue the hostages in Iran and a return to the Bay of Pigs in which Vandenbroucke observes strategic decision making may result in a product "in which hopes distort perception and wishes are mistaken for reality."[211] Three forms of wishful thinking may result from the process of deciding strategic use of special operations – (1) assumptions based on limited proof will be accepted because decision-makers desire a successful operation, (2) those charged with a decision may reject information

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[205] Janis and Mann, *Decision-Making*, p. 3

[206] Janis and Mann, *Decision-Making*, p. 6

[207] Janis and Mann, *Decision-Making*, p. 50.

[208] Janis and Mann, *Decision-Making*, p. 58.

[209] Janis and Mann, *Decision-Making*, p. 86.

[210] Janis and Mann, *Decision-Making*, pp. 125-126.

[211] Lucien S. Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options: Special Operations as an Instrument of U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 7.

that does not align with a prediction of success, and (3) the decision-maker may simply by overcome by "the blind desire to see a proposed operation go ahead."[212]

It has been the point of this effort to suggest that one plausible alternative in answering the why of a foreign policy decision is the role of hot cognitive factors – preferences, personality, and wishes – in a general model of decision making that includes the cold cognitive factors. I have argued, in addition, that a Tepid Model of decision making offers researchers wider and deeper explanative power for policy decisions in accounting for both hot and cold cognitive factors in the decision-making process. In order to illustrate, I return to Khong and the use of analogies. Traditionally seen as a cold cognitive explanation, an examination of the use of analogies alludes to the hot cognitive factors of preferences, personalities, and wishes. Desires and wishes certainly influence the determination of which analogy to employ. Yes, the analogy works as a shortcut in the decision-making process yet the argument of motivated bias in decision making does not at all stand in contrast but enhances the Khong analogy template. To clarify, before arriving at a useful analogy the decision-maker perceives the foreign policy problem in a particular manner. Once the problem is bounded perceptually the decision-maker employs an analogy modeling how the principals perceive the issue. Then, the subject may process information in a manner consistent with the analogy employed.[213] Inconsistency in data observed must be managed. As a result, the processor of data attempts to simplify observations in a manner favoring positive and discrediting contrary evidence and sources while also viewing ambiguous data as supportive of the policy choice.[214] When, then, does defining the nature and context of the problem begin? Does the definition process commence with the analogy – or in the decision-making process? Or, perhaps, a more inclusive and powerful explanation can be found in the examination of the assumptions and perceptions that lead to the analogy employed.

Perceptions can operate at any level of the decision-making process – from perceptions of stimuli to perceived expectations. Literature suggesting that policy-makers do, in fact, see and perceive stimuli in the context they want to see them was a suggestion by de Rivera. For example, de Rivera cites the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the North Korean invasion of South Korea as specific instances in which policy-makers possessed the necessary information to make accurate predictions but became subject to biased predictions due to principals interpreting stimuli consistent with their wishes.[215] For instance, when a broken Japanese diplomatic code revealed that Japanese intelligence asked very specific questions regarding ships stationed at Pearl Harbor, the United States interpreted it as evidence of Japan as merely being thorough.[216] Once again, the notable variable is the perception of reality. Then, as more information becomes available, the key variable in how we perceive the stimuli are our beliefs – "when potentially incompatible alternatives occur, we perceive the one that preserves our beliefs."[217] Or, as summarized by Philip Tetlock, the decision-maker utilizes the "high-intensity search light of skepticism only for dissonant results" and insulates themselves from "disconfirming evidence by a protective belt of defensive maneuvers" and "an understandable disinclination to attribute

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[212] Vandenbroucke, *Perilous Options*, p. 165.
[213] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 38.
[214] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 38; George C. Edwards III and Stephen J. Wayne, *Presidential Leadership: Politics and Policy-Making* Third ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), pp. 246-247.
[215] De Rivera *Psychological Dimension*,.
[216] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 21.
[217] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 41.

confirming evidence to either methodological sloppiness or partisan bias."[218] Ultimately, once beliefs are formed, they are somewhat stable and decision-makers proceed to process new information with a motivational bias in order to maintain that stability.[219]

Another issue concerned with beliefs and perceptions is that once expectations and preferences become known, then subordinates may resort to reporting or perceiving stimuli in accordance with those beliefs.[220] Recent criticisms of the intelligence community are founded on the premise that errors in intelligence often do not come from the inability to predict future events but the pattern of staying anchored to expectations and assumptions.[221] The best way to sever those ties is in rational learning. Yet, one of the most significant obstacles in rational learning is motivated reasoning. Often, the sources of motivated reasoning include "material interests and deeply felt identities" and decision making mechanisms such as schemata scripts, and analogies which are stored in the mind in a manner reflective of emotional processing of data and are easy to access and utilize.[222] Overall, expectations "operate as internal factors which influence evaluations, behavior, and the course of events."[223] A study of perceptions with regard to the Vietnam War, determined that those who saw war as inevitable viewed the U.S. participation in Vietnam as "rational" and "justified."[224] As a result, expectations played a role in evaluation.

Logic follows that as perceptions impact predictions which determine the policy chosen then it is not the analogy that leads to ill-informed decision making but the activation of the *wrong* analogy. Arriving at a specific analogy is a part of the process while the analogy chosen reflects the product. Hence, while the Bundys, McNamara and Rusk adopted a product in the form of an analogy comparing Vietnam to Korea, George Ball insisted Vietnam was more closely analogous to the French experience in Indo-China. Ball, for his part, employed an analogy and established a decisional product that more appropriately fit the context and realities on the ground in Southeast Asia. Johnson remained cautious but ultimately sided with the McNamara wing.[225] More telling, however, may be the type of analogies employed. As Khong observes – "With the exception of the President and George Ball, administration officials in the 1960s, in private and especially in public, used almost exclusively analogies suggesting the probability of victory" while "analogies with the slightest hint of defeat were scrupulously avoided."[226] Once again, from an intuitive point-of-view if the only analogies utilized were of a positive nature, then, at some level, preferences interacted with predictions and both were variables in the analogy employed. In the case of escalation by the United States in Vietnam, one particularly cogent explanation suggests the policy created was wishful. The pressure caused by inconsistent data to decision-makers resulted in a tendency to deemphasize empirical evidence inconsistent with policy preferences, give more credence to optimistic evidence and either re-

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[218] Philip E. Tetlock, "Theory-Driven Reasoning about Plausible Pasts and Probable Futures in World Politics: Are We Prisoners of Our Preconceptions?" *American Journal of Political Science* 43.2 (1999): 335-66.

[219] George, *Presidential Decision Making*, p. 57.

[220] Janice Gross Stein, "Building Politics into Psychology: The Misperception of Threat." *Political Psychology* 9.2 (1988): p. 262.

[221] Richard K. Herrmann and Jong Kun Choi, "From Prediction to Learning: Opening Experts' Minds to Unfolding History," *International Security* 31.4 (2007): 132-61.

[222] Herrmann and Choi, "From Prediction to Learning."

[223] Donald Granberg, "War Expectancy and the Evaluation of a Specific War," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 13.4 (1969): p. 546.

[224] Granberg, "War Expectancy," p. 546.

[225] Khong, *Analogies at War*, pp. 120-137.

[226] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 134.

frame ambiguous data in support of preferred policy options or minimize said observations as to not contribute to inconsistency.[227] One of the more strident of opponents to the wishful thinking explanation for the Vietnam War, Leslie Gelb, even concedes that motivational bias impacted the beliefs of at least some of the decision-makers during the period of the Vietnam War.[228] Despite his belief that most U.S. officials realized the extent of the Vietnam quagmire, Gelb notes that some also were "genuine optimists" and often-times the optimists confused improving conditions with winning the war and "short term breathing spells" with "long-term trends."[229] Similarly, Khong's analysis of the use of analogies alludes to the notion of preferences impacting predictions which led to analogies and, as a result, indirectly added to the process of policy determination:

> Given the two conflicting recommendations about the possible courses
> of action in Vietnam, it also stands to reason that those who took the Korean analogy
> seriously would be likely to favor intervention because, among other things, the analogy
> was optimistic about the chances of success. In contrast, those
> who took the Dien Bien Phu analogy seriously would be likely to be more pessimistic
> and therefore prone to the withdraw option.[230]

The Vietnam dilemma ultimately illustrates the overall problem in foreign policy creation. Often, data is ambiguous or policy-makers lack sufficient knowledge about a specific issue. And, it is under conditions of ambiguity that decision-makers resort to cognitive heuristics – like analogies – in order to resolve ambiguities. Those that displayed genuine hope in the case of the Vietnam War were often the most ill-informed about either Vietnam or politics, generally.[231] Thus, since incoming data includes information that includes both ambiguous and inaccurate observations, how can the student of foreign policy confirm the direction of the relationship between the heuristic, like an analogy, and empirical observations? For example, those that Gelb classified as the "genuine optimists" were optimistic and then began to see developments in an optimistic light and insist that short-term "breathing spells" were more of a long-term trend and perceive better short-term conditions as a winning of the war. In these cases, beliefs provided the prism from which observations were analyzed. Beliefs, to be sure, may lead to inaccurate interpretations.[232]

In order to illustrate belief as an antecedent to perception of reality we return to the use of analogy in Vietnam and proceed to process-tracing. Admittedly, Khong's use of process-tracing reveals the manner in which data is interpreted after an analogy is activated. For example, the Dien Bien Phu analogy informed George Ball's beliefs regarding the war in Vietnam. The analogy "affected his [Ball's] processing of incoming information in a determinate way."[233] Yet,

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[227] Edwards and Wayne, *Presidential Leadership*, pp. 246-247.

[228] Gelb's alternative explanation is of a more bureaucratic and institutional nature. Certainly, Gelb concedes that the Vietnam War was a quagmire. But, he argues *most* U.S. leaders knew of the quagmire and were not deluded into thinking or even ever expected a military victory in Vietnam (emphasis mine). Instead, policy-makers calculated the political cost of abandoning the war to be more than continuing.

[229] Leslie H. Gelb and Richard K. Betts, *The Irony of Vietnam: the System Worked.* (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1979), pp. 153-154.

[230] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 167.

[231] Gelb and Betts, *The Irony of Vietnam*, p. 154; Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 165.

[232] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 23.

[233] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 164.

Ball did make a series of assumptions – or at least parallels based upon his perceptions in arguing the Dien Bien Phu analogy – citing similarities between the United States and France that included difficulties acquiring intelligence, overestimating the benefits of technological advantages, and similar historical roles in Vietnam.[234] In addition, Ball suggested that the optimistic tendency toward victory of the French and the United States coupled with the deceptive nature of incoming data also played a role in his use of the Dien Bien Phu analogy.[235] Ball, ultimately cautioned that the United States may not be able to defeat the Viet Cong within acceptable levels of cost.[236] So, evidence in the case of George Ball suggests that perceptions of the war – e.g. intelligence, technology, and historical roles - led to the employment of an analogy that resulted in the processing of data to support that analogy.

The processing of data, to be sure, may reflect bias based on the perceptions and perceptions link with prediction which influences policy. Whether using an analogy or simply weighing costs and benefits, the processor of data must make predictions on specific courses of action and the resultant outcome. The foundation of predicted outcomes is perceptions and the perceived context of data observed – some of which are valid and some biased. Hence, the student of foreign policy must examine said perceptions in order to account for biased processing of incoming data. Like with Khong's use of analogical reasoning, it has been the point of this effort to illustrate the existence of motivational bias by principals in the foreign policy decision-making process. Biased motivational errors occur when the processing of incoming data is bounded by the perceptions, beliefs, and assumptions of those processing the data. The seminal study of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, *At Dawn We Slept*, pointed to the assumption made by U.S. officials that Japan would not attempt an air attack on Pearl Harbor. In the study of the attack, Prange noted the assumptions made by the U.S. military were critical variables causing the dismissal of a number of warning signs regarding Japan's plans.[237] In another cogent example, during World War I and with the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, the United States framed the goal of the war as one to make the world safe for democracy. Woodrow Wilson lauded what he perceived as a movement toward democracy in Russia while providing loans and advisors. Yet, as historian Max Boot notes, the policy was one of an "idealistic president" whose claim was "based more on wishful thinking than anything else."[238] With the Bolshevik Revolution and the cessation of hostilities between Germany and Russia the allies continued to conceptualize the war as a two-front war and even "refused to think of alternative strategies for fighting Germany" as they pressured Japan to maintain the second front.[239] The two-front belief illustrates a motivated bias in the perception of reality.

Rose McDermott suggests wishful thinking can also serve as a protective function. For example, the United States underestimated the quick and total collapse of the German and Japanese militaries after World War II and estimates of Soviet power during the Cold War were overestimated as a protective mechanism. In other words, officials within the United States were motivated to not underestimate the enemy because the results would not be favorable.[240]

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[234] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 152.
[235] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 158.
[236] Khong, *Analogies at War*, p. 153.
[237] Gordon W. Prange, Donald M. Goldstein, and Katherine V. Dillon, *At Dawn We Slept: The Untold Story of Pearl Harbor* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981).
[238] Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power.* (New York; Plymouth: Basic Books; Plymbridge, 2003; 2002), p. 206.
[239] McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations,* p. 172.
[240] McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations,* pp. 171-172.

Neustadt and May's analysis of the CIA sponsored Bay of Pigs invasion, similar to McDermott, categorizes the plan as one that exemplifies the "classic case of presumptions unexamined."[241] In short, a cursory history of contemporary Cuba should have indicated that the basic presumptions in the plan were untenable; specifically, Cubans had been historically very slow to revolt, Fidel Castro did, in fact, have some popular support, and the belief that Cubans felt oppressed by communism simply did not reflect the facts on the ground.[242] Finally, the head of CIA covert operations indicated that the assumption that the United States could maintain deniability of the invasion was wishful thinking.[243]

A more recent example of wishful thinking was Carter's attempted rescue of hostages in Iran. Carter moved forward despite warnings that the mission had a low likelihood of success without significant casualties. In fact, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance disapproved so vehemently of the rescue attempt he resigned his position. McDermott argues that despite the number of very real warning signs, Carter ordered the rescue attempt "expecting it to work because he wanted it to work" and that he "was hoping for the best while the worst occurred."[244] Shortly after the failed rescue attempt, the Reagan administration attempted to gain the release of another set of hostages in the ill-fated Iran-Contra plan. Reagan officials conspired to covertly sell weapons to Iran and use the profits to fund the Contras in Nicaragua. Charles-Philippe David argued the plan was like watching a horror film as characters continued to walk down the dark hallway even though those before them had disappeared. That is, the Reagan arms for hostage policy continued while "ignoring all of the warnings and chances to reevaluate the situation and change course."[245] Why did those in the Reagan administration continue the policy despite the obvious warnings? David believes the answer to the policy choice can be explained partly through defensive avoidance and wishful thinking.[246] The role of wishful thinking in the Reagan example was manifested through the tendency to fill gaps of knowledge with not what the evidence would lead one to surmise but, instead, to draw conclusions based upon desires. The U.S. policy was immediately hampered by the lack of intelligence assets on the ground in Iran. Consequently, the U.S. relied on intelligence from other states – most notably Israel- and "individuals in the decision making circle filled in the gaps based upon what they wanted to believe."[247] For example, the very concept that moderates still existed in the Iranian government that could be dealt with through negotiation was itself wishful thinking.[248]

Recent case studies of domestic decision making also support the plausibility of wishful thinking as an explanation for policy choices. Wishful thinking in domestic policy decisions looks muck like it does in foreign policy and is manifested by the focus on one preferred option with an inability of decision makers to explore alternate policy options. One such example was the swine flu scare of 1976. Ford and his group of scientific experts did not examine their assumptions in constructing a plan to handle a predicted outbreak and, as Neustadt and May

[241] Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: the Uses of History for Decision-Makers* (New York; London: Free Press; Collier Macmillan, 1986), p. 140.
[242] Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, p. 148.
[243] Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, p. 378.
[244] McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations*, p. 172.
[245] Charles Philippe David, Nancy Ann Carrol, and Zachary A. Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House: Reappraising the fall of the Shah and the Iran-Contra Affair* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1993), p.114.
[246] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, pp. 130-136.
[247] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 134.
[248] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 135.

discuss, many of those presumptions turned out to be wrong.[249] Hence, Ford and his advisors "remained loyal to the end to the conclusions with which they began and changed or acknowledged nothing that the facts did not force upon them."[250] Taylor cites Gary Hart's failed 1988 run for Democratic nomination for President of the United States. Hart's biased motivational error was his optimism and "overconfidence in the ability to manage sexual and political desires simultaneously" once the story of Gary Hart's extramarital affair became news.[251] Errors and bias in judgment and the processing of data has, in fact, "raised doubts about the capacity of even highly motivated professionals to perform the types of information-processing tasks that rational-actor models regularly posit people routinely perform."[252]

A cogent and central emerging question is what we actually know about the role of motivated bias as it relates to the decision-making process in selection of policy – especially foreign policy. In response to that question I have suggested throughout this dissertation that the literature and research dealing with the importance of the hot cognitive variables has been sporadic and lacking in a systematic structure. Thus, the remainder of this chapter will attempt to organize in a useful manner what we know and what major influential research tells us about the role of the hot cognitive variable in policy selection. First, I will examine elements of hot cognition as they appear in the literature dealing with policy formation and the decision-making process. Then, in order to illustrate the applicability of the hot cognitive variable to real-world decisions I will discuss cases where motivated bias played a significant role in the ultimate policy chosen. Again, the purpose of this two-fold strategy is not to suggest that hot and cold factors are dichotomous or that one set of variables are normatively "better" or more useful than others in explanation versus description of the decision-making process. Instead, my motivation is to suggest that hot cognitive variables can often provide a plausible explanation for foreign policy behavior and, moreover, a model that accounts for such variables is generally useful in providing explanation of *why* policies are chosen and should necessarily be linked with the familiar descriptive models that focus on who makes a decision and how that decision is made.

Serious study of motivated bias in foreign policy decision making supposes a link between perceptions and policy decisions. In order to arrive at a policy decision those charged with making the decision undergo a process of attentively selecting stimuli and, then, perceive stimuli using both the incoming data itself and the perceptions of the decision maker.[253] If we view both steps – selection of stimuli and the process of perception – from an epistemic and knowledge creating point of view then we can recognize that realities are a both a construct and an important factor in the decision-making process. Perception, as de Rivera notes, often does impact reality. For example, Eisenhower's Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, refused to negotiate arms control with the Soviet Union because he perceived the Soviets as hostile and, earlier, the U.S. took action against China in 1950 because it perceived the existence of a strong Sino-Soviet relationship. In both cases, de Rivera argues policy choices led to a self-fulfilling prophecy. Policy choices created what was perceived.[254] Once a policy preference is activated then the communication system favors the policy chosen – the status quo. Subordinates learn and adopt the policy bias while often diluting data that is in opposition to the policy choice.[255]

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[249] Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, pp. 52-55.
[250] Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, p. 135.
[251] Taylor, *Positive Illusions*, p. 237.
[252] Tetlock, "Theory-Driven Reasoning," p. 335.
[253] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 45.
[254] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 40.
[255] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 57.

Furthermore, the biases in policy formulation may not be due to systemic or political constraints but because of conceptual errors – failures in beliefs and perceptions.[256]

Researchers in the foreign policy and decision-making literature have advanced a number of theories to account for the conceptual error. For his part de Rivera maintains the conceptual error resulted from a lack of creative insight. This lack of insight, furthermore, is caused by six variables: (1) climate of opinion, (2) selective biases, (3) seeing with the eyes of the other, (4) pretending, (5) organizational loss of insight and (6) forced consensus.[257] The significant characteristic of each of de Rivera's variables is that the lack of insight is based on perception and could plausibly be caused be either motivated or unmotivated errors in the processing of data. To wit, a conceptual error caused by the climate of opinion is caused by a perception of the climate of opinion and that perception may be accurate or may be a reflection of the preferred climate of opinion. Indeed, everyone has heard politicians and political analysts comment that poll data does not really tell a complete story as they claim actual figures are really higher or lower.

In search of an answer to the riddle of how to account for errors in the decision-making process, Alexander George explores uncertainty as the independent variable and also eventually provides evidence of motivated bias at work in foreign policy decision making.[258] Principals deal with that uncertainty in three different ways – resolve, accept, or avoid.[259] Avoidance may take the shape of various forms of procrastination. Avoidance, as a motivated bias, generally originates in one (or a combination of) four categories – (1) decision maker's conception of the national interest, (2) related class, institutional, party, and factional interests, (3) decision maker's personal political interests and (4) the emotional needs of the decision maker.[260]

Conversely, efforts to deal with uncertainty often lead to a bolstering effect.[261] The process of bolstering is one in which decision makers increase the attractiveness of the policy alternative preferred or chosen and do the opposite for the rejected alternatives. In bolstering, expected gains increase while expected costs are reduced. Generally, the process of bolstering is accompanied by rationalizations and psychological devices. Key methods of bolstering include the use of measures that overemphasize the policy choice, one's ability to direct outcomes, and the general belief of wishful thinking.[262]

Research has demonstrated evidence of bias in decision making even during critical times of international crisis.[263] An analysis of 20th century international crises found that 79% of the cases studied showed evidence of a failure to reconsider alternatives that had previously been rejected. Or, if reconsidered, the alternatives are subject to a motivated bias resulting in less credibility assigned to data that frames rejected alternatives in a positive light and more credibility for data that frames the rejected alternatives in a negative manner. Almost half, 47%, of the crises revealed that decision makers had failed to establish detailed strategies to implement, monitor, or alter the chosen policy. Real-world examples illustrate the notion that situations and contexts are often not static but fluid. While this may be true, in nearly half the

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[256] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 66.
[257] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 70.
[258] George, *Presidential Decision Making*.
[259] George, *Presidential Decision Making*, p.29.
[260] Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab." p. 563.
[261] George, *Presidential Decision Making*, p. 38.
[262] George, *Presidential Decision Making*, p. 39.
[263] Herek, Janis, and Huth, "Decision Making during International Crises: Is Quality of Process Related to the Outcome?" *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 31.2(1987): 203-26.

cases of decision making during a period of international crisis it appears that once a policy is chosen decision makers are content to "let the chips fall as they may." Is it plausible that such behavior is related with the motivated beliefs and perception that the policy course chosen is superior to the others? Does this explain why, for example, contrary to all evidence that the plan was ill-conceived, the U.S. followed through with the Bay of Pigs invasion? The lack of appropriate follow-up in the form of implementation, monitoring, and contingency planning is made even more applicable with the finding that 37% of the crisis examples featured a general lack of discussion regarding alternatives defined as the limiting of debate to solely the policy option preferred or, in some cases, the preferred plus one alternative. Furthermore, in the processing of information and the analysis of the costs and benefits of the preferred policy 32% of the crisis cases showed a tendency for the decision makers to accept and even overvalue data supporting the preferred policy while minimizing, or not accounting for at all, potential costs and risks associated with the policy choice. [264]

Motivated Bias and War

Philosopher Steven Pinker suggested that, generally, people believe illusions even when confronted with they believe is accurate lie detection.[265] At the heart of the dilemma is the stress created between desire and reason. Once desire and reason do not align with opinion and knowledge then the subsequent violation of natural laws results in "assessing a situation in terms of preconceived fixed notions while ignoring or rejecting any contrary signs" and the behavior that emerges "is acting in accordance to wish while not allowing oneself to be deflected by the facts."[266] A number of studies of specific uses of war as a foreign policy tool attest to the role played by the motivated bias.

Intuitively, a state's motivation to go to war will seldom be in order to lose that war. In some cases states engage in war because policy-makers became overconfident and war results. Similarly, the principals in the decision-making process adopt positive illusions because those illusions are often rewarded.[267] In a study of wars since 1740, Stephen van Evera acknowledges that most wars in the so-called modern era have been marked by a false sense of optimism regarding relative levels of power. Van Evera's cognitive explanation for armed conflicts between states hypothesizes that false optimism creates a perception by states that war will be an easier task.[268] Hence, states fight each other because they cannot and do not agree on the outcome of war. At the root of each state's belief system prior to wars typically is a systematic bias of exaggerated and optimistic views of offensive opportunities and the potential effectiveness of those offensive opportunities. Taken one step further, the optimism of a state's leaders at the time of war is a crucial clue in the understanding of the general causes of war.[269] Blaney offers a poignant observation in searching for the origin of wars – "the high hopes on the eve of wars suggest a sad conclusion. Wars occurred only when both rivals believed they could

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[264] Herek, Janis, and Huth, "Decision Making During International Crises."
[265] Steven Pinker, *The Blank Slate: the Modern Denial of Human Nature.* (New York: Viking, 2002), p. 265.
[266] Barbara Wertheim Tuchman, *The March of Folly: From Troy to Vietnam* 1st ed. (New York: Knopf: Distributed by Random House, 1984).
[267] Johnson, *Overconfidence and War*.
[268] Stephen Van Evera, Causes *of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict.* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), p. 11.
[269] Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War.* 3, 1 American ed. (New York: Free Press, 1988), p. 35.

achieve more through war than peace."[270] In her seminal examination of World War I and its origins Barbara Tuchman makes a similar finding and observes that whether it is 1914, or any era, what combatants generally share is the tendency "not to prepare for the harder alternative, not to act upon what they suspect to be true."[271] Decision-makers instead take available data and process it in such a way that it often conforms to previously perceived predictions of behavior and outcomes.

In a much earlier era, the story of the battle between Athens and Melos during the Peloponnesian War offers a glimpse of the role preferences play in constructing a motivated bias in the decision-making process. In short, *The Melian Dialogue* recounts the attempts on the part of Athens to force an alliance with Melos against the Spartans. The Athenians call on Melos to surrender in order to save the island from a sure defeat. Melos recognizes that Athens is more powerful and likely to defeat the island but hope that "fortune" will make the playing field more even or that Sparta would soon come to the aid of the small island – a point to which the Athenians argued was based purely on hopes. Of course, neither fortune nor Sparta intervened on behalf of Melos. In less than one year Athens laid siege and forced an unconditional surrender of Melos and all Melians of military age were executed while the women and children were sold into slavery.[272]

Lebow suggests the lessons from Thucydides involve the application of motivated bias in international politics and attributes the cause of the Peloponnesian War to the failure of reason to constrain impulses of desire.[273] Attempts to compel or deter an adversary often fail in a fashion similar to the cases in Thucydides. Specifically, actors believe their use of threat will somehow change the behavior of an adversary and targets of deterrence and attempts to compel "downplay risks and costs when it is contrary to their desires or needs."[274]

Another example of desires influencing matters of international security is the dispute between Germany and Great Britain over Morocco. An analysis of the 1905-1906 Moroccan Crisis suggests that German behavior can be plausibly explained by motivated bias. Although the crisis does not strictly fit the definition of an interstate war, the crisis certainly illustrates the potential for motivated bias to lead to actual shooting wars. In fact, as the crisis loomed, France, at one point, cancelled all military leave, Germany called up reserves, and French troops relocated to the German border. Kaufman studied the role of motivated bias in an examination of the behaviors of principal German actors during the diplomatic conflict and found that "the motivated bias hypothesis fits almost perfectly with the outcomes" and even suggested that had German leaders "corrected their overoptimistic assessments earlier, it is virtually certain that they would have moved to end the crisis."[275]

While on the subject of France on Germany, historians often point to the preparations in advance and beginning of World War I as an example of policy makers arriving at a conclusion and then processing information in such a way that is supportive of that conclusion. World War I certainly is the subject of a number of studies, besides Tuchman, pointing towards motivated bias as the reason for the outbreak of hostilities. Specifically, Snyder notes that the unquestioned belief in offensive warfare reflected a wishful thinking in how the next war would be fought,

[270] Blainey, *The Causes of War*, p. 127.

[271] Barbara Wertheim Tuchman, *The Guns of August*. Anniversary ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1988; 1962), p.22.

[272] Thucydides and Richard Crawley, *The Complete Writings of Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War*. New York: Modern Library, 1951).

[273] Richard Ned Lebow, "Thucydides and Deterrence," *Security Studies* 16.2 (2007): 163-88.

[274] Lebow, "Thucydides and Deterrence," p. 170.

[275] Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab." pp. 574-576.

how long that war would be, and what type of warfare would dominate.[276] Van Evera includes the theory of the cult of the offensive in his study of World War I but also notes a number of other misperceptions including optimistic assessments regarding the contribution of empire, the reduced estimates of the costs of war in order to justify war as a means to solve domestic political issues, and the tendency to generally glorify war by underestimating costs.[277] European powers exaggerated the threats of potential adversaries in order to rationalize military needs, favored expansive strategies based on an overoptimistic view of empire, overestimated the potential of offensive warfare, and glorified war and lowered the estimates of the cost of war once they realized that domestic political problems could be minimized with an inter-state war.[278]

From a military and strategic perspective an analysis of Germany's military plans on the eve of World War I support the plausibility of motivated bias by decision makers resulting in a wishful policy product. In particular, the Schlieffen Plan called for German forces to bypass French fortifications simply by violating Belgian territory and maneuvering around the French defenses. The authors of the Schlieffen Plan predicted that any adherence to the plan would undoubtedly result in a short war with France. On the contrary, German military planners warned as early as 1890 that any such war would be quite lengthy and could run from seven to thirty years. Officials repeated the warning to the Kaiser in 1906 in the hopes of editing war plans. Despite these warnings, however, German military officials continued to plan for a short war and to stress the Schlieffen Plan. When World War I began Germany believed that France could be taken in four weeks while Great Britain believed she would win in a very short war.[279] To illustrate, Blainey characterizes the general atmosphere in Europe during the summer of 1914 as one of "false optimism" and "aggressive day-dreaming" and the optimistic reality of Europe was "part of the atmosphere which caused the war."[280]

Sumit Ganguly contends in relations between Pakistan and India that Pakistan has engaged in a systematic optimistic bias that led to wars in 1947, 1965, and 1999. Furthermore, Pakistan's evaluation of the level of quality inherent in India's armed forces and what Pakistan perceived as the most likely responses to Pakistani behavior could both be characterized as wishful. The causes of optimism can directly be linked to the "structure, organization, and ideology" of the Pakistani state.[281] In an analysis of the 1947-1948 war, Ganguly characterized the Pakistani quest for Kashmir as a policy decision founded on tenants of unrealistic optimism, the exaggeration of support from allies, and the result of a self-image encouraged by "dubious and flawed inferences."[282] Two key assumptions in the build-up to the second war over Kashmir – the belief that indigenous Kashmiri supported Pakistan and that China would come to the aid of Pakistan – shaped aggressive and wishful Pakistani policy which contributed to the start of war.[283] Moreover, in the 1972 Bangladesh War Pakistan once again was victim to a motivated bias in their perception of reality in believing the Awami League of East Pakistan lacked popular

[276] Jack L. Snyder, *The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914.* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984).
[277] Stephen van Evera, "Why Cooperation Failed in 1914," *World Politics* 38.1 (1985): pp. 82, 98, 107.
[278] Evera, "Why Cooperation Failed in 1914," pp. 87-107.
[279] Blainey, *The Causes of War*, pp. 36-37.
[280] Blainey, *The Causes of War*, p. 39.
[281] Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions Since 1947.* (New York; Washington, D.C.: Columbia University Press; Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2001), p. 7.
[282] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 27.
[283] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 42.

support – it would win 160 of 162 East Pakistani seats in Parliament.[284] A similar pattern of motivated bias in the process of decision making led to wishful thinking in the 1999 Kargil crisis. Pakistan erroneously concluded they would not be blamed for breaching the Kashmir Line of Control and the United States would refuse support of the Indian position. Again, Ganguly argues Pakistan based its policy decisions on a "number of unwarranted assumptions about the likely response of the global community" and the aforementioned assumptions emerged from "Pakistani false optimism."[285]

In the same general geographic region of East Asia the genesis of the Sino-Indian War has also been studied through the lens of motivated bias in decision making.[286] In 1961, India began a somewhat aggressive "forward policy" in dealing with China and the disputed territories. The forward policy consisted of deeper and more frequent Indian patrols and the construction of forward posts. India, under the leadership of Nehru, believed the more aggressive policy would limit Chinese options and result in a strategy of avoidance by China. China, however, issued a number of warnings before it forcibly expelled India in October of 1962 – behind a force that boasted a five to one margin in troops. Until the Chinese attacked, Nehru continued to believe that the forward policy would not result in war with China but never offered an explanation for his confidence – "he simply reiterated his belief to this effect time and time again, the way one would invoke a magical incantation in the hope that if repeated often enough it would succeed in warding off evil."[287]

False optimism, delusion, or motivated bias – however one wants to label the idea of desires impacting how data is seen by the policymaker, one of the most recent cases studied for just such a phenomenon is the U.S. invasion and occupation of Iraq. One particularly cogent analysis was by Bob Woodward.[288] The occupation of Iraq, according to Woodward, suffered from what can best be labeled denial – a motivated bias. Woodward suggests that President George W. Bush and his team of advisors were in denial of the growth of the Iraqi insurgence and opposition. Data that did not confirm the White House and Department of Defense publicly-held line of minimizing the insurgency was not welcomed. In addition, bureaucratic infighting over the composition and strength of Iraqi opposition originated in Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's unrealistic assessment of three key issues – (1) disbanding the Iraqi army, (2) dismissing the roughly 50,000 Baathist government officials, and eliminating the interim Iraqi Governing Council.[289]

David Patrick Houghton outlined a number of motivational biases by the Bush administration in its decision to go to war against Iraq.[290] Specifically, Iraqi ex-patriot and Bush confidant Ahmed Chalabi often utilized comparisons to de-Nazification in Germany after World War II as rationalization for de-Baathification.[291] Chalabi's analogy won over both Wolfowitz and Feith and the decision was made – supported by Bremer – to rid the Iraqi government of

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[284] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, pp. 56-57.

[285] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 115.

[286] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, pp. 187-191.

[287] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 190.

[288] Some have challenged Woodward's methodology as relying too much on background and "off record" conversations. For a more complete discussion please see Michael J. Boyl, "America in Denial." *International Affairs* 83.1 (2007): 147-59.

[289] Bob Woodward, *State of Denial* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006).

[290] David Patrick Houghton. "Invading and Occupying Iraq: Some Insights from Political Psychology." *Peace and Conflict*.14 (2008): 172.

[291] Houghton, "Invading and Occupying Iraq," p. 180.

Baath party members. For now, the short-term judgment of history has been critical of de-Baathification contending that it created more enemies for occupation forces.[292] In addition, in planning for the post-war occupation of Iraq, U.S. strategists analogized the effort to the 1990-1991 Gulf War and prepared to deal with oil well fires, large numbers of refugees, and provide humanitarian assistance.[293] Bush administration beliefs that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction and was involved in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks were exactly what they wanted to believe and fit the general view of Saddam as diabolical. The Bush administration ultimately shaped intelligence – not to deceive others "but out of a mistaken belief that proved resistant to the facts."[294] One specific example was the analysis of civil unrest in Iraq upon the defeat of Saddam's forces. Rumsfeld categorized the looting and rioting not as anger and crime but as an example of freedom being "messy." Houghton describes such a characterization as wishful thinking.[295]

Motivated Bias and Strategic Surprise

While a great deal of the literature on motivated biases and their impact on foreign policy decision making concentrates on the relative assumption of states with regard to military strength another valuable source of potential motivated bias research concerns strategic surprise. The general narrative goes something like this - the intelligence information should have suggested that decision makers consider a certain alternative but the nature of the decision makers to freeze previous images precludes the consideration of such alternatives.

Richard Betts examined the idea of why, generally, the tactic of surprise is successful despite states often holding evidence of an adversary's plan for a surprise attack. In short, Betts looks toward errors in the processing of information caused by a motivated bias – (1) decision-makers look more positively toward data that is reassuring and supports the status quo beliefs while exhibiting more skepticism of negative information, (2) when negative data is examined, the decision maker often more thoroughly questions the source, (3) can accept intelligence warnings but insist on confirming evidence through fact finding missions, and (4) the decision maker may rationalize and place wishes ahead of evidence in order to explain away negative data.[296] In summary, Betts argues that the false optimism and confidence of states facing intelligence that an adversary is planning a surprise attack is the result of rigidity and wishfulness.[297] Individuals within the policy making community of states process data that may lead to warnings in a way that confirms previously held beliefs as well as what the individuals want to believe. To illustrate, the case of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 suggests that "motivational forces can radically distort information processing and judgment."[298] Parker and Stern find the source of motivated bias in both the elements of hot and cold cognitive variables and argue that the United States psychological processes with regard to evaluating policies was one of "denial and distraction" and "psychological factors contributed to the overvaluation, overconfidence, insensitivity to criticism, and wishful thinking" that characterized thinking

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[292] Houghton, "Invading and Occupying Iraq," pp. 172-180.
[293] Houghton, "Invading and Occupying Iraq," p. 181.
[294] Houghton, "Invading and Occupying Iraq," pp. 183, 188-189.
[295] Houghton, "Invading and Occupying Iraq," p. 184.
[296] Richard K. Betts, *Surprise Attack: Lessons for Defense Planning* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1982), pp. 123-124.
[297] Betts, *Surprise Attack*, p. 126.
[298] Charles F. Parker and Eric K. Stern, "Blindsided? September 11 and the Origins of Strategic Surprise," *Political Psychology* 23.3 (2002): 605.

before the attacks of September 11, 2001.[299] The garden variety manifestation of motivated biases, moreover, can be placed in one of three general categories – (1) the tendency to over evaluate past successes, (2) overconfidence regarding current policy, and (3) insensitivity to warnings that appear critical to the current policy choices.[300]

Historical cases of intelligence warnings being interpreted wishfully and through the rigidity of status quo belief systems can be found littered throughout history. Wesley Wark followed the evolution of British intelligence and its impact on policy in the years prior to World War II. Wark found, initially, inter-service rivalry created a situation where the British intelligence estimates were pessimistic and based upon each service's worst case scenario. British policymakers attempted to fit intelligence into preconceived notions. For example, British intelligence overestimated German weapons superiority because such a notion fit the general belief that totalitarian regimes would be able to produce weapons more quickly. Finally, Wark illustrated how British intelligence was manipulated in such a way to confirm foreign policy. With the late 1930s British policy of appeasement the intelligence community estimated the German threat and capability in very high terms; however, once war between Germany and England appeared likely, the British intelligence community dropped all of the worst-case scenarios and adopted a more optimistic assessment.[301]

Betts argued that the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June of 1941 illustrates the notion that rigidity and wishfulness often lead to self-deception even for those planning the surprise attack. That is, Germany invaded the Soviet Union despite warnings from a number of German embassy officials in Moscow – including the military attaché. The German reports of Soviet industrial capacity were assumed away by concluding that the industrial regions would quickly fall to the Germans and would not change the nature of Soviet defenses. In addition, estimates for German supply, ammunition, and weapons estimates were revised downward and "doubts were cast aside as estimates were brought into conformity with the amounts German forces could carry rather than what they would need."[302] Meanwhile, from the perspective of the Soviet Union, Gorodetsky argues that Germany's attack caught Stalin by surprise because of the motivated bias exhibited by Stalin. As Gorodetsky recounts, Stalin feared a war with Germany so, as a result, placed all of the Soviet Union's hopes on his own version of appeasement. Significant intelligence warnings created by the Soviet Union's own sources along with warnings from the United States and Great Britain coupled with a build-up of German troops in Eastern Europe all was modified to fit Stalin's hope and wish that Germany would not choose to attack.[303]

World War II, according to Betts, offers another historical example of rigidity and wishfulness leading to self-deception in the analysis of the Japanese decision to attack Pearl Harbor in December of 1941. Betts observed that Tokyo hoped the quick and devastating blow at Pearl Harbor would lead Washington to pursue a limited war and allow a Japanese Pacific perimeter. This miscalculation, Betts argues, was the result of "the illusions of the Japanese

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[299] Parker and Stern, "Blindsided? September 11," p. 621.

[300] Parker and Stern, "Blindsided? September 11," p. 606.

[301] Wesley K. Wark, *The Ultimate Enemy: British Intelligence and Nazi Germany, 1933-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

[302] Betts, "Surprise Attack."

[303] Gabriel Gorodetsky, *Grand Delusion: Stalin and the German Invasion of Russia* (New Haven Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999).

about American decadence and effeteness and their failure to appreciate the nation's self-confidence and absolutist view of war rooted in the liberal tradition."[304]

Former United States State Department and White House official James Thomson made very similar observations with regard to the United States in the Vietnam War.[305] Thomson argued that the domestic political debate of the 1950s over who lost China to communism played a major role in White House decision making. That is, Democratic politicians in the Kennedy and Johnson White Houses did not want to face similar rhetorical attacks. With the specter of China overhead, Thomson contends that a possible explanation for the deepening Vietnam morass was the role of wishful thinking. Specifically, in 1963 Thomson qualified as wishful the belief by the United States that they could use political and economic leverage in order to somewhat control Diem's behavior. Thomson notes that by 1964 the belief by the United States that a six week bombing campaign would effectively win the war could also be explained by wishful thinking. Finally, Thomson added that the insistence from 1965 to 1966 that continued bombing would bring the enemy to the negotiating table was based on a wish more than evidence.[306]

Historical cases are not limited to overconfidence on the part of the offensive state, either. In fact, the more likely scenario is in states thinking rigidly and wishfully when adversaries send signals of possible attacks. For example, a number of studies have also examined the role of motivated bias with regard to predictions concerning Chinese behavior during the Korean War. When Douglas MacArthur crossed into North Korea on September 27, 1950 few thought the broadening of the war would bring in China. Yet, remarkably, China provided warnings to the U.S. to that effect. Why then was the U.S. surprised at the arrival of the Chinese? One supposition is the U.S. engaged in wishful thinking. Indeed, intelligence from the CIA indicated Chinese involvement was likely. However, from Secretary of State Dean Acheson to the Joint Chiefs the interpretation of intelligence was done by the U.S. policy community in a manner that the likelihood of Chinese involvement was minimized. The U.S. took the position that China would likely not intervene in the Korean War and then key foreign policy figures adopted self-defense mechanisms in the form of selective attention and distortion of information in order to reduce levels of decisional stress. Once China did introduce troops into the Korean theatre the tendency to process information in a biased manner continued with the adoption of the general belief the Chinese was defensive in nature and motivated out of the need to protect their own border.

Meanwhile, by November 9, 1950, many in the U.S. military command structure, including Generals Bradley and Marshall, started to question the nature of the Chinese deployment. As a result, a schism occurred between MacArthur – who wanted to reunite Korea along the more northern Yalu River – and others – who felt that to move further north would lead to a larger and more aggressive Chinese intervention. Forced into the difficult position of making the policy call was Secretary of State Acheson. Acheson sided with MacArthur and pursued the Yalu River unification strategy but did so at the very time China was warning the U.S. and repositioning troops. Lebow characterizes Acheson's decision as one of wishful thinking and observed that "Acheson convinced himself that this could be done."[307] Even as late as November 21, 1950, Bradley and Marshall still warned that the U.S. Yalu strategy would result in China

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[304] Betts, "Surprise Attack," pp. 130-132.
[305] James Thomson, "How Could Vietnam Happen?" <u>Atlantic Monthly</u> April 1968: 47-53.
[306] Thomson, "How could Vietnam Happen?" pp. 50-51.
[307] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 182.

springing a trap on U.N. forces. American policy-makers defaulted to MacArthur's Yalu River plan – in large part due to the fact the responsibility for decision or failure would not be theirs but would rest squarely on the shoulders of MacArthur. In pursuing such a decision making model, U.S. policy analysts could reduce their own psychological stress as it related to the decision and engage in systematic defensive avoidance. Despite intelligence warnings the planners of foreign policy "relied instead on the assurances of their advisors that all would turn out as planned."[308] In summary of the war with Korea, Lebow places the failure of decision-makers to appropriately predict Chinese behavior as an example of self-deception and wishful thinking.[309] Seemingly, when unraveled, the U.S. policy in Korea was one in which Truman deferred to MacArthur because MacArthur told him what he wanted to hear. And, once policy was initiated Truman and other U.S. policy-makers perceived reality in way that was consistent to their political goals which allowed them to stay the course on policy "even when confronted with evidence that indicated the unrealistic nature of their policies."[310]

Motivated bias in the collection and interpretation of data leading to a wishful prediction offers at least a plausible explanation for what has been typically been termed as an intelligence failure in the case of the strategic surprise that accompanied the Chinese entrance into the Korean War. For example, U.S. officials attributed evidence of increased North Korean troop presence on the border as posturing by the ambassador in order to receive more funding and failed to take the necessary steps to either fully warn North Korea or, at least minimally, attempt to provide some form of deterrent.[311] During September and early October of 1950, the United States adopted a less defensive strategy and the mission in Korea expanded to seizing the North and forcing unification with the South. As warnings abounded that the strategy of unification would lead to Chinese intervention, those warnings were ignored and wishful thinking on the part of the Truman administration resulted in errors in the processing of incoming information.[312] In fact, de Weerd noted that "the warnings showered down upon us in connection with Korea in 1950 seem strident and compelling."[313] The list of intelligence warnings to Chinese possible intervention appears quite vast – (1) Joint Intelligence Reports of the Far East Command provided warning, (2) In late September China communicated through India that China would intervene if the United Nations forces crossed the 38th parallel, (3) On October 3, 1950, the Chinese Foreign Minister repeated China's threat to the Indian ambassador in Peking, (4) one week later, Radio Peking repeated the warning, (5) by October 20 the United States was taking its first Chinese prisoners, (6) on October 26 the United States reported its first engagement with Chinese troops, (7) on November 4 the United States identified the presence, in the Korean theatre, of seven Chinese army divisions.[314] Once the participation of Chinese troops was finally accepted the next failure in intelligence was in justifying the presence of Chinese troops while still supporting the evolved goal of reuniting the Korean Peninsula. So, as MacArthur finally conceded Chinese involvement on November 5, the "new narrative" became one of China not as offensive but as a small contingent aimed at stalling the U.S. advance. Consequently, MacArthur

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[308] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 169.
[309] Lebow argues that one can see similar behavior by India on the eve of the Sino-Indian War of 1962. In this example, Lebow contends Nehru based policy decisions solely on his belief that China would not respond to provocative Indian military policy in disputed territories. See Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 169.
[310] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 222.
[311] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 19.
[312] George, *Presidential Decision Making*, p. 75.
[313] Harvey de Weerd, "Strategic Surprise and the Korean War," *Orbis* 6.Fall (1962): p. 436.
[314] De Weerd, "Strategic Surprise and the Korean War," p. 446-448.

launched a major offensive on November 24. By November 28, the United States was in full retreat.[315]

With the presence of so many warnings about Chinese intentions, the question many scholars have asked is why the warnings did not have an impact on U.S. military strategy? Why was the United States caught by surprise in Korea? It would be fair to say that the United States was actually surprised twice in Korea – the initial invasion by the North and the involvement of China. With this in mind, de Weerd argues that the strategic surprise was not the result of intelligence failure but the "unwillingness to draw unpleasant conclusions … we refused to believe what our intelligence told us was in fact happening because it was at variance with the prevailing climate of opinion in Washington and Tokyo."[316] In addition, the general sense that North Korea was all but defeated contributed to the errors in processing. For example, intelligence estimates – conceived at a time when it was assumed China would not intervene because North Korea was seen as defeated - placed the numbers of Chinese troops in the region at between 60,000 and 70,000 when the actual numbers neared 300,000.[317] McArthur believed in his own mind that China would never intervene so pushed forward and walked into a 300,000 man Chinese trap.[318]

The Korea narrative illustrates the dilemmas outlined by Amy Zegart in the politics of making foreign policy choices. Zegart's model suggests that the design of foreign policy and national security institutional mechanisms is not linked to the interests of the state.[319] In addition, the universe of possible decision products and policy choices are ultimately constrained by the process among and within different agencies.[320] Moreover, congressional oversight in the domain of foreign policy decisions is problematic and difficult to activate. First, the notions of secrecy and the commitment to the president as a unitary foreign policy actor limit the opportunities for oversight.[321] Second, elected legislators simply "lack the electoral incentives to make oversight of national security a national priority."[322] Finally, Zegart notes the modern evolutionary tract, since at least John Kennedy, with regard to foreign policy issues has been for the White House to assume and absorb more power from cabinet positions.[323]

The narrative of how China "surprised" the U.S. with its entrance into the Korean War is not one of an intelligence failure but of a failure to appropriately utilize available intelligence. At work were a number of interrelated variables that include domestic politics fused with a motivated bias in the processing of incoming data all serving as pressure points on the White House decision process. Truman's commitment to South Korea came at a cost and any backsliding of that commitment would be seen as a sign of weakness causing the Truman administration to lose credibility. For this reason, Truman perceived incoming data in accordance with the policy option preferred and the result was a case of wishful thinking and of preferences influencing the process and product of the decision-making process.[324]

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[315] De Weerd, "Strategic Surprise and the Korean War," p. 448.
[316] De Weerd, "Strategic Surprise and the Korean War," p. 451.
[317] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 55.
[318] De Rivera, *Psychological Dimension*, p. 179.
[319] Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1999): 13.
[320] Zegart, *Flawed by Design*, pp. 20-21.
[321] Zegart, *Flawed by Design*, pp. 27-33.
[322] Zegart, *Flawed by Design*, p. 36.
[323] Zegart, *Flawed by Design*, p. 87.
[324] Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, pp. 172-184.

Richard Ned Lebow's analysis of the war between Argentina and Great Britain over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) contains a similar pattern of facts to the U.S. narrative in Korea. Lebow argues the war between Argentina and Great Britain was the result of illusions in London that Argentina would not invade and in Buenos Aires that Britain would not militarily respond to such an invasion.[325] In short, the beliefs of the British elites made them unresponsive to warnings of an upcoming invasion while British silence to the warnings encouraged Argentina. Lebow notes that, despite the fact that Argentina had previously bluffed invasions, evidence suggested an invasion was forthcoming. In fact, Argentina clearly publicized their military buildup in March of 1982 even noting that Argentine marines had been given supplies for an invasion and contacting Uruguay to ascertain whether any British citizens wanted to be removed from the Falklands before the invasion. Yet, according to Lebow, London waited for the indisputable evidence of an Argentine invasion. The ruling junta in Argentina also utilized forms of motivated bias and drew wishful conclusions in deciding to invade the Falklands. In fact, Lebow contends that Argentine officials never even considered any of the many compelling reasons why Great Britain would not let the invasion stand.[326]

Naturally, if the outcome should have been obvious to both London and Buenos Aires the immediate question is what happened? In order to understand British behavior one must go back to the negotiations between Argentina and Great Britain. Lebow suggests the Thatcher regime recognized a negotiated settlement with Argentina would not be possible so London adopted a policy of stalling in order to keep negotiations alive which was a strategy "probably motivated in part by the illusory hope that some future development would facilitate a settlement."[327] Great Britain, in addition, feared that any type of military preparation would provoke hostile actions and end the protracted negotiations; as a result, Great Britain was motivated to believe that Argentina was merely bluffing.[328] In the case of Argentina, the domestic economic and political problems associated with the ruling junta have been well-documented. Argentine behavior in the commencement of war over the Falklands, to be sure, has been long-cited as the archetype of diversionary war theory. Consequently, once Galtieri and the ruling junta concluded that Argentina would invade the decision-makers "sought to insulate themselves from information that suggested their policy would lead to war" while "they played up any circumstance … that might indicate a successful outcome."[329]

Another informal examination of motivated bias as a plausible explanation for strategic surprise is the case of Egypt in the 1973 war with Israel. Once again, primary sources reveal that intelligence accurately predicted the behavior of a state – in this case Egypt – with the end result being a misperception on behalf of the policy community. On the other hand, Israel faced elections on the eve of the Egyptian-Syrian invasion of 1973. Principal to the platform of the governing coalition was the argument that the leadership had improved the security situation and brought calm to the borders.[330] In response to mounting intelligence of provocative Egyptian and

[325] Richard Ned Lebow, "Miscalculation in the South Atlantic: The Origins of the Falklands War," *Psychology and Deterrence*. Eds. Robert Jervis, Richard N. Lebow, and Janice G. Stein (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 89.

[326] Lebow, "Miscalculation in the South Atlantic."

[327] Lebow, "Miscalculation in the South Atlantic," p. 105.

[328] Lebow, "Miscalculation in the South Atlantic," p. 103.

[329] Lebow, "Miscalculation in the South Atlantic," p. 119.

[330] Janice Gross Stein, "Calculation, Miscalculation, and Conventional Deterrence II: The View from Jerusalem," *Psychology and Deterrence*. Eds. Robert Jervis, Richard N. Lebow, and Janice G. Stein (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), p. 379 and also Janice Gross Stein, "Building Politics into Psychology: The Misperception

Syrian military preparations the Israeli government overemphasized deterrence in the processing of intelligence data. The exclusive reliance on deterrence exhibited signs of wishful thinking and motivated denial.[331] Israel's refusal to mobilize troops in response to the Egyptian and Syrian military preparations was motivated by the domestic political exigencies of the ruling Israeli coalition proving "the benefits of its stewardship of foreign and defense policy" and "the efficacy of Israel's deterrent strategy."[332]

A similar explanation for Israel's behavior is the "cognitive closure" argument. Basically, Bar-Joseph and Kruglanski suggested individuals within Israeli intelligence had a psychological need for cognitive closure, a confident prediction on the issue of a possible attack on Israel, and this need led to the freezing on conventional wisdom that an attack on Israel was unlikely.[333] What followed was a practice by key Israeli intelligence figures of being closed to all other alternatives and the "tendency to avoid or suppress information at odds with their own assessment."[334] Furthermore, the same intelligence figures passed "as hard evidence what were only speculative assessments in defense of their preconception."[335] Even as the Soviet Union quickly evacuated personnel from Egypt and Syria on October 5, 1973, Golda Meir was told that the Soviets withdrew because they did not understand the Arab world and wrongly assumed a surprise attack would not come from Egypt and Syria on Israel.[336] As late as the morning of Yom Kippur, Mossad received credible intelligence that an attack would occur at sunset that day. However, the same Israeli intelligence officials that maintained an attack was unlikely continued to refuse that war was imminent.[337] Clearly, a very plausible explanation in the failure of Israel to respond to Egyptian and Syrian provocations on the eve of the 1973 war was motivated bias and the processing of data in a way that supported preferences.

Robert Hybel employs the same template of motivated bias as a precursor to strategic surprise in a study of Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. George Bush and his administration subscribed to the idea Saddam would never attack Kuwait because it would be too costly in terms of blood and treasure. The assumption that Saddam would not invade "was so ingrained in the minds of the Bush administration's foreign policy makers that they were unable to asses rationally the information which could have challenged their preconception."[338] Hybel recreates an extraordinary timeline of events in order to support his claim. Warning bells first rang on July 16 when a senior intelligence analyst at the Pentagon noted photographic evidence that Republic Guard tanks were positioning at the border. Three additional tank divisions and 35,000 troops moved within 10-30 miles of the border only three days later. Eight divisions and 100,000 troops moved toward the border on July 27. At this point, Hybel argues intelligence analysts began to

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of Threat," *Political Psychology - Classic and Contemporary Readings.* Ed. Neil J. Kressel (New York: Pentagon House Publishers, 1993), 367-392.

[331] Stein, *Building Politics into Psychology*, p. 379.

[332] Stein, "Calculation, Miscalculation, and Conventional Deterrence II," p. 82.

[333] Uri Bar-Joseph and Arie W. Kruglanski, "Intelligence Failure and Need for Cognitive Closure: On the Psychology of the Yom Kippur Surprise." *Political Psychology* 24.1 (2003): 75.

[334] Bar-Joseph and Kruglanski indicate the key figures that maintained a bias in favor of the status quo over an Egyptian surprise attack were the Director of Military Intelligence, Major-General Eli Zeira, and a highly placed Egypt analyst, Lieutenant Colonel Yona Bandman. See Bar-Joseph and Kruglanski, "Intelligence Failure and the Need for Cognitive Closure," p. 85.

[335] Bar-Joseph and Kruglanski, "Intelligence Failure and the Need for Cognitive Closure," p. 87.

[336] Bar-Joseph and Kruglanski, "Intelligence Failure and the Need for Cognitive Closure," p. 88.

[337] Bar-Joseph and Kruglanski, "Intelligence Failure and the Need for Cognitive Closure," p. 88.

[338] Alex Roberto Hybel, *Power over Rationality: The Bush Administration and the Gulf Crisis* (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1993), p. 55.

take the threat from Saddam more seriously but Bush and Powell still maintained Saddam would not invade. Finally, Saddam positioned three armored divisions within three miles of Kuwait – two near the main highway – on August 1. The CIA concluded an invasion was forthcoming yet Powell and Cheney were not convinced until one occurred later that day.[339]

All in all, the literature of international politics has some place for motivated bias as a means to explain foreign policy behavior. Citing the successful model of ExComm and the decision making model of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Neustadt and May call for decision makers to examine presumptions.[340] By examining the basis of presumptions, decision-makers can call into question basic beliefs and assumptions whose source may be a motivated bias. Furthermore, it is the presumption that allows certain options to be favored while others are excluded.[341] Presumptions frame the definition of a problem, the concerns of the problem, and the selection of policy options but, at the same time, are based upon perceptions which can often be incorrect.[342]

What we have seen is that historical examples are plentiful of wishful policies concluded from a motivated bias in the processing of incoming data. The hot cognitive variables are as vital to models explaining policy formation as the traditional cold cognitive ones. As a result, it is essential for foreign policy literature the significant position of motivated bias in foreign policy decision making. The dilemma in dealing with the hot cognitive variable, however, is still present – how can social scientists measure and account for hot factors like motivated bias? Next, I will deal with the methodological and design issues.

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[339] Hybel, *Power over Rationality*, p. 29-32.
[340] Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, p. 9.
[341] Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, p. 135.
[342] Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, p. 136.

Chapter Four

Observation and Measurement: Methodological Techniques in the Inquiry into Process, Structure, and Outcome

       The previous three chapters dealt with how hot cognitive variables in the form of self-serving and motivated bias result in decisional products that are characterized as wishful thinking. I have also dealt with instances within foreign policy literature where hot cognitive variables have played at least some factor in arriving at a motivated policy conclusion. The next step in support of such plausibility is the deductive use of a specific instance of hypothesized motivated bias resulting in a wishful policy product. Toward that end, I have selected Carter White House policy towards the Shah of Iran during the time of the Iranian Revolution.

Selection of Carter and the Shah

The choice of Carter and the Shah fits a general strategy advanced by Dina Zinnes. Zinnes observed in her 1980 International Studies Association presidential address that as a political scientist she makes observations and if they do not fit her notion of a pattern then she constructs a narrative in order to explain what she has observed. In order to solve such a puzzle one must study process and not product.[343] In other words, one must delve deeply into the workings of the *how* in order to understand the *why* of a constructed narrative and explain rather than describe. Or, as Zinnes suggests, it is the way we ask questions that matters.[344] The instance of Carter policy towards the Shah at the time of the Iranian Revolution stands as a remarkable example of a puzzle requiring a process-based explanation. Why did Carter opt for the policy direction taken? For that, I hope to construct a narrative helpful in explaining my observations paying primary attention to the role of Carter in policy formation. That said, however, it is important to note that the decisions were not Carter's alone. A number of advisors and groups around Carter also were important actors and the blame for the normatively failed policy is owned by them, as well.

       Another relevant reason for selecting the Carter/Shah case for study is that it is popularly seen as a failed policy. One of the difficulties in attempting to study policy failures is how and why a policy is defined as a failure. In fact, no specific set of standards exist in order to label a specific policy as a success or failure. A natural first query is to ask whether or not a negative event occurred.[345] The fall of the Shah certainly fits the definition of a negative event. At the end of the day, the United States lost a key ally in a very important geopolitical region. The specter of the loss of the Iranian ally haunts the United States even over thirty years later. Indeed, Iran and the Shah were quite significant to U.S. foreign policy interests. In fact, Herman Nickel claimed Iran was much more important than Vietnam ever was to national security.[346]

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[343] Dina A. Zinnes, "Three Puzzles in Search of a Researcher: Presidential Address," *International Studies Quarterly* 24.3 (1980): 316-318.

[344] Zinnes, "Three Puzzles," p. 316.

[345] M. Bovens and P. t'Hart, *Understanding Policy Fiascos* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1992), p.4.

[346] Herman Nickel, "The U.S. Failure in Iran," *Fortune* March 12 (1979): 95.

The Carter case also provides rich detail helpful in exploring the policy failure dilemma of human versus organizational factors. Once an event is determined to be negative the next question is whether a link exists between human or organizational factors and the negative event.[347] To be sure, the historical record suggests the fall of the Shah was not owned by Carter alone. Indeed, decisions made over decades contributed to what David Schoenbaum described as "a bad policy, whose hazards were really not in doubt."[348] However, ultimately Carter presided over the fall of the Shah and "despite past lessons the Carter administration failed to perceive the internal threat to the Shah's rule."[349] More or less, as Iran and the Shah stood in chaos "the President's rationale left the vital interests of the U.S. and its allies in the hands of a politically bankrupt ruler who had lost his grip and seemed desperate for the U.S. to exercise leadership."[350]

I plan to make use of a case study design in order to investigate the plausibility that motivated biases can explain the Carter administration's seemingly wishful policy towards Iran and the Shah from 1977 to early 1979. The use of a plausibility probe concedes that the link between motivated bias and foreign policy decision making is not commonly studied in political science. Hence, my adoption of the Eckstein plausibility model will "simply attempt to establish that a theoretical construct is worth considering at all."[351] The strategy also fits the Ragin notion that theory should be applied in order to interpret an event.[352] The independent variable of policy preferences – wishes or desires – tends to influence the intervening variables of perception, beliefs, and processing of data which, in turn, tend to impact the dependent variable of policy choice in a positive direction. The case study method will be in the tradition of the discipline-configurative model.[353] In applying a general theory – the concept of motivated bias as an element of the human psyche – I plan to explore whether motivated bias is a plausible explanation for foreign policy decisions in the case of Carter and the Shah. Furthermore, the case choice of Carter and Iran is useful in that the outcome is one of historical significance.[354] At the general theoretical level, I have already discussed the psychological literature in order to consider the place of self-serving and motivated bias. Then, I considered motivated bias applied to foreign policy decisions that could plausibly considered wishful. The Carter case will offer a deductive analysis of motivated bias as a plausible explanation within a real world setting. I hypothesize that a plausible explanation for Carter's support of the Shah of Iran well into the unfolding drama of the Iranian Revolution is one in which policy was shaped by a motivated bias that impacted beliefs, perceptions, and the processing of incoming data in a manner consistent with Carter's preferences and desires which resulted in a wishful policy.

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[347] Bovens and t'Hart, *Understanding Policy Fiascos*, p. 12.

[348] David Schoenbaum, "Passing the Buck(s)," *Foreign Policy* 34 (1979): 16.

[349] Richard Falk, "Iran and American Geopolitics in the Gulf," *Race and Class* 21.1 (1979): 48.

[350] Nickel, "The U.S. Failure in Iran," p. 102.

[351] Harry Eckstein, *Regarding Politics: Essays on Political Theory, Stability, and Change* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 148.

[352] Charles C. Ragin, *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), p. 11.

[353] Sidney Verba, "Review: Some Dilemmas in Comparative Research; Political Oppositions in Western Democracies; Politics in West Africa," *World Politics* 20.1 (1967): 111-27.

[354] Ragin, *The Comparative Method*, p. 11.

Most and Starr contend the method used to examine research questions can best be viewed as a tool and that one must determine if the tool chosen is useful for the task.[355] In order to understand case study as the most suitable for method of investigation for this question, a brief discussion of the applicable features and characteristics of the case study and how it applies is warranted. First, the theoretical notion of a case study involves "an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units." The unit is a "spatially bounded phenomenon" and is "observed at a single point in time or over some delimited period of time."[356] As Gerring illustrates, a study of the French Revolution is not a case study. More specifically, the French Revolution is one unit – as it is a study that may involve, for example, France before, during, and after the French Revolution. Multiple cases come from one unit and "these patterns of covariation offer the empirical clues one needs to reach conclusions about causation."[357] As a result, a case is not a "single data point … but rather … a pattern of relationships or a 'stream of behavior' through time."[358] On the other hand, a single-n case study would consist of one unit at one point in time.[359] The case of Carter's policy choices involving the Shah and Iran presents a similar distribution of units within a case. The policy decisions are not static and stuck in time but reflect real-time responses to developments on the ground in Iran whether the reporting of such details originated with the U.S. intelligence community or were the result of journalistic discovery. Primary sources and declassified data make it possible to follow policy choices and beliefs as naturally occurring events are introduced in the form of behavior by Carter. The case study approach then allows for a larger number of cases within the unit of foreign policy toward Iran and the Shah. Furthermore, a process tracing model is an appropriate tool in order to "uncover general mechanisms and processes that *might* recur and that might contribute to the development of more encompassing theory."[360] In this example, I contend that bias and resulting wishful decisions are not unique to Carter but may also offer plausible explanations in other contexts.

In addition to a case study consisting of a unit which consists of a number of bounded cases, the case study approach also allows for the study of both formal and informal units. The formal case offers the depth of analysis using primary sources or "allow one to peer into the box of causality to the immediate causes."[361] In addition, the formal cases offer the depth necessary to establish what Sartori has called "an ideal - perhaps the best - soil for conceiving of generalizations."[362] Informal units provide further breadth of analysis but, as the detail of informal units increases the study takes more and more of a cross-unit style of analysis.[363] A case study research design dealing with Carter and the Shah actually allows for informal cases from

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[355] Benjamin A. Most and Harvey Starr, *Inquiry, Logic, and International Politics* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), pp. 11-12.

[356] John Gerring, "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?" *The American Political Science Review* 98.2 (2004): 342. Similar argument made in James W. Davis, *Terms of Inquiry on the Theory and Practice of Political Science* (Baltimore, MD.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 177.

[357] Gerring, "What is a Case Study," p. 343.

[358] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, p. 177.

[359] Gerring, "What is a Case Study," p. 349.

[360] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, p. 178

[361] Gerring, "What is a Case Study," p. 348.

[362] Giovanni Sartori, "Comparing and Miscomparing," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 3.3 (1991): 251-252.

[363] Gerring, "What is a Case Study," p. 344.

multiple perspectives. Two general types of informal cases are used within this design – (1) general examples of motivated bias influencing foreign – as well as selected domestic - policy choices and beliefs and (2) discussions concerning Carter's decision-making processes and products at other points in his political career.

The capability to generalize is also a significant consideration in the research design framework. Results from the plausibility probe of Carter and his policy decisions, in order to be useful to the study of foreign policy decision making, should also be general enough to be utilized in other units and contexts. Giovanni Sartori summarized many of the frustrations of researchers in international politics when he observed that "in the last forty years or so, we have enjoyed moving from one 'revolution' to another … But revolutions (in science) just leave us with a new beginning – they have to be followed up and made to bear fruits."[364] For Sartori, knowledge is placed on a "ladder of abstraction" where movement up is aggregate and movement down is more specific. For a concept to be more general the researcher must reduce its properties and, conversely, increase properties to make the idea more specific.[365] The ultimate goal for a research design using Sartori's formula is one that yields knowledge that falls on the appropriate rung of the "ladder of abstraction" while following up on previous research. The disciplined-configurative models permits the use of general social science theories applied to specific cases.[366] Ultimately, disciplined-configurative applied to Carter and his decision-making process also connects product with process and subject with object.

The next methodological question concerns the data collection strategy. Process tracing presents the most accommodating method to collect data in order to apply general theory to a specific case, use numerous cases within a unit, and provide the intensive depth of analysis required of a formal case study. The most germane methodology for an analysis that involves an historical effort is the process tracing model from Alexander George.[367] In citing Hall, George and Bennett point out that the process tracing model and the depth of such a study allows for discovering multiple interactive effects.[368] Accepting the proposition that the foreign policy process is a nested game – with inputs from many levels of analysis and sources – process tracing makes the most intuitive sense. Furthermore, with the creation of a "nested" model of decision making in foreign policy – a model that explores a number of psychological variables – process tracing provides observational evidence of complex interaction of variables and not only simple description. Process tracing is helpful in identifying the causal process – the *why* of an outcome.[369]

Process tracing, in addition to providing causal explanation, is an active and epistemic process. In other words, the use of process tracing helps the social scientist create knowledge while observing behavior and, concurrently, explain why an outcome or behavior is different than what an unbiased processor of incoming data would predict. I have argued that the behavior by the Carter administration in supporting the Shah after evidence suggested the Shah's day was done deviates from the outcome of an unbiased processing of data. To be sure, one may expect the decision-maker to have been more engaged and active in the process of seeking additional data about the situation on the ground in Iran, offering assistance to the Shah, finding alternatives

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[364] Sartori, "Comparing and Miscomparing," p. 255.
[365] Sartori, "Comparing and Miscomparing," p. 254.
[366] Verba, "Some Dilemmas in Comparative Research."
[367] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005).
[368] George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, p. 206.
[369] George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, p. 207.

to the Shah, exploring new policies, or any and all of the above. Process tracing provides for more than a mere historical perspective as it also "implies or asserts a causal sequence into an analytical explanation couched in theoretical variables that have been identified in the research design."[370]

A final argument in support of process tracing evolves from the very nature of the problem. Carter's policy choices are certainly linked to the policy product. As a result, the researcher must answer the question of why – or what rationale led to Carter's behavior.[371] It is at this point that "we need somehow to move into the metaphorical 'black box' of policymaking and look at the ways in which decisions are made and actions planned and executed."[372] Furthermore, an examination into the infamous "black box" requires the "reconstructing of temporal sequences" and the researcher to move back in time.[373] My examination into Carter's policy looks backward all the way to the first links between the United States and Persia and moves forward to the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini's government. The detailed journey makes clear the policy towards the Shah from Lyndon Johnson forward was ill-conceived. In fact, one could just as easily study motivated bias in terms of Johnson, Nixon or Ford and policy regarding Iran. However, it is during the Carter era that the Shah fled in exile and it is in the Carter era that the most overt and frequent expressions of opposition took place. I have suggested that decisions made by the Carter administration during the fall of the Shah could have been plausibly caused by motivated bias in the form of leading to a wishful policy – broadly seen as the process of allowing preferences influence predictions. In the case of Iran, the United States perceived it needed Iran and the Shah. Furthermore, the United States believed it had no alternative to the Shah. It was these beliefs and perceptions that resulted in what can best be described as a lack of engagement and coherent policy towards the unrest as it evolved in Iran.

In addition to the theoretical explanation for process tracing, it may be instructive to discuss two specific historical cases that have added to my thinking with regard to research design and, I believe, provide helpful templates from which to study the Carter administration's policy toward the Shah and Iran. The first, Theda Skocpol's *States and Social Revolutions*, clearly belongs in the genre of comparative politics.[374] Notwithstanding, the model used by Skocpol illustrates the usefulness of historical case studies. Skocpol, in many ways, was forced to confront many of the same demons as George. In response to the criticism that the case study simply does not have a big enough "n" from which to generalize, Skocpol asserts that attempts to make a design too theoretical and avoid the tag of being too historical often "can end up providing little more than pointers toward various factors that case analysts might want to take into account, with no valid way to favor certain explanations over others."[375]

A second case study that has proven helpful in my facilitation of a research design and case study is Deborah Larson's *Origins of Containment*.[376] Larson, in short, explores the genesis of the cold war from a psychological perspective. Although Larson's model is one that could best be categorized as an example of cold cognition, the method of a specific case study – origins of Cold War beliefs – provide a useful example of multiple cases within single units as they apply

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[370] George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development*, pp. 224-225.

[371] Bovens and t'Hart, *Understanding Policy Fiascos*, p.54.

[372] Bovens and t'Hart, *Understanding Policy Fiascos*, p. 54.

[373] Bovens and t'Hart, *Understanding Policy Fiascos*, p. 54-67.

[374] Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

[375] Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, p. 34.

[376] Larson, *Origins of Containment*.

to psychological explanations for behavior at the individual level of analysis in international politics. Moreover, Larson, as a researcher, attempts to show that "a given event could have been predicted with a high degree of probability by applying certain general laws to specified antecedent conditions."[377] Ultimately, Larson makes use of a number of historical documents and primary sources in order to determine the information to which decision-makers were exposed, how that information was interpreted, and the impact of that information. The use of primary sources juxtaposed with public pronouncements and policy changes allowed Larson to infer the changes of opinion at specific times and with specific incidents. In the case study that follows regarding the Carter Administration's policy toward the shah, I utilize similar methods seen by many as under the general rubric of the art of the historian – including the analysis of historical documents and primary sources – much of which has only recently been declassified and is readily available at the National Security Archives and the Jimmy Carter Library.

Another value of the case study is in the knowledge making value of the design. That is, the use of a case study design allows for both an examination in a real-life setting while supporting the belief that process is as significant as product.[378] Indeed, one of the most striking arguments by the critical theorists is the charge that the study of international politics assumes an ontological distinction between subject and object.[379] A significant question within this framework is how object and subject are connected. Robert Pirsig suggests the connection can be termed "values."[380] As a result, in the decision-making process value connects the object, the policy decision, with the subject, the decision-maker. The critical observation from Pirsig, moreover, is that data is not filtered through the subject but through the subject's values. Once the subject is tied to a particular set of values, the subject often views incoming data in a manner consistent with those values.[381] Thus, to return to the original question of research design, an appropriate research design must account for both product and process.

In order to prevent such an exercise from merely being the selection of cases based upon the dependent variable and outcomes, research must qualitatively examine evidence by the decision-makers *at the time* of the policy decision. Only then can one pose the question as to why a U.S. president continues along strategies that analysts openly question? Or, perhaps more succinctly put, what variables account for individual level decisions? Do the models of motivated bias offer explanation in policy decisions? What role do hot cognitive factors play in the foreign policy decision-making process? And, significantly, how can a somewhat mixed bag of psychological factors be helpful, in a general way, to those who study and those who make decisions? Another formidable issue in utilizing explanation of motivated bias is the dilemma of the tautology – how can the model be disproved? In such a model, the method used to falsify specifically belongs to the category of policy decisions in conflict with preferences and wishes.[382] For example, Kaufmann's study of Germany and the Moroccan Crisis outlines a research design with rational choice as the null hypothesis. Kaufmann argues that "the advantage of this method is that it sidesteps the hurdle that has stymied previous testing efforts, which

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[377] Larson, *Origins of Containment*, p. 59.

[378] Juliet Kaarbo and Ryan K. Beasley, "A Practical Guide to the Comparative Case Study Method in Political Psychology," *Political Psychology* 20.2 (1999): 388.

[379] Richard K. Ashley, "Political Realism and Human Interests," *International Studies Quarterly* 25.2, Symposium in Honor of Hans J. Morgenthau (1981): 204-36.

[380] Pirsig, *Lila*, p. 76.

[381] Pirsig, *Lila*, pp. 385-386.

[382] Details on what makes a good theory are found in Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science (*Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 17-21.

depends on evaluating rationality of the responses of particular individuals to particular pieces of information."[383] A study of this kind, however, presents very definite issues with regard to falsifying and what is typically seen as the "normal" research design. The ability to falsify in this case is abstract, based upon the counterfactual, and difficult to fit into the standard dichotomous model of falsification. Indeed, James Davis argues the notion of falsification "excludes the undecided middle" but that the "action" in social construction "is taking place at the boundaries of our concepts rather than at our cores."[384] Davis, in fact, rejects the belief that "good conceptual categories are characterized by clear boundaries."[385] Instead, a concept is at its most undeveloped and most raw at the outset of a research program. As the universe of knowledge develops, so does the quality of data.[386]

Unfortunately, Davis's discussion places the field of social science in a gray region and one that is too constructivist for many scholars. Clearly, if the entire world is a social construct then of what general use is any field of inquiry? Again, we can return to Davis and, this time, his discussion regarding international regimes and norms. Regimes, like motivated bias, are difficult to "fit" into the dichotomous world of falsification and can be "woolly" and "imprecision is inherent to their nature."[387] Yet, intuitively and theoretically we know that norms sometimes do influence social behavior. As a result, investigation into the causal role of norms must go beyond agent choices and examine discourse – process.[388] Ultimately, conceptualization "is the mental process of discovering patterns and commonalities in the world."[389] In other words, Dina Zinnes is conceptualizing when constructing a narrative in order to explain observations. Central to such an effort is "a certain degree of plasticity … to guard against prematurely abandoning a line of inquiry."[390] Indeed, the "undecided middle" or the "woolly" and "imprecision" are acceptable when exploring process in order to establish causal relationships. As Davis observes – often "hypothesized relationships involve theoretical entities – for example gravitational force – which are unobservable in principal."[391]

Ultimately, the value of the Carter cases depends on the quality and quantity of archival materials available in order to undergo a process-tracing of the decision making process in Washington at the time of the fall of the Shah of Iran. In this respect, the available material is impressive. The National Security Archives housed at George Washington University offers over 14,000 pages of documents pertaining to the Shah and the rise of Ayatollah Khomeini. Although this information is available through an online database, I was able to visit Washington and received their helpful guidance in navigating the voluminous amount of information. In addition, the Jimmy Carter Library in Atlanta, Georgia holds a great deal of primary source material with respect to the Carter Administration and the fall of the Shah. As in the case of the National Security Archives, I found a physical visit to the library most effective and gained a great deal of information in "hunting" through the archives. Both the White House Central Files and National Security Adviser – Staff Office Files provided the bulk of my primary sources from the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library. Finally, the number of biographies from key figures offers a

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[383] Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab."
[384] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, pp. 7 and 70.
[385] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, p. 131.
[386] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, p. 117.
[387] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, p. 144.
[388] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, p. 150.
[389] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, p. 12.
[390] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, p. 89.
[391] Davis, *Terms of Inquiry*, p. 109.

multitude of perspectives on behavior by the United States during the fall of the Shah. Specifically, biographies from Jimmy Carter, Cyrus Vance, Zbigniew Brzezinski, General Huyser, Ambassador Sullivan, and Gary Sick all offered the opportunity to explore the Carter White House during the fall of the Shah.

Part II

THE CONTEXT

Chapter Five

Toward Shahdulation: A Brief Survey of Relations between the United States and Iran, 1851-1977

One can view U.S. interaction with Iran (Persia) in two general historical periods – the relationship until World War II and the relationship after. Generally, most interaction until the end of World War II was of a positive nature while the relationship that followed became more paternalistic. What follows is a general outline of U.S. policy towards Iran until the inauguration of Jimmy Carter in 1977.

The first interaction between the United States and Persia occurred in the mid-19th century. Two Presbyterian missionaries, Harrison Gray Otis Dwight and Eli Smith, traveled to Persian Azerbaijan as part of a humanitarian effort in December of 1830. Increased trade between the United States and Persia by the middle of the nineteenth century resulted in efforts to reach a commercial trade treaty. Yet, an initial agreement in October 1851 between the Persian Empire and the United States was not approved by the Persian Court. Negotiations, however, between the two principals were reopened in the fall of 1854. Ultimately, the leader of the Persian Empire – the Shah – requested U.S. assistance in the construction of war vessels, supplying of seaman, and military protection. Finally, a commercial treaty was signed by the U.S. and the Persian Empire on December 13, 1856, ratified by the U.S. Senate on March 12, 1857, and effected on August 18, 1857.[392]

The missionary effort started by Dwight and Smith spread to the cities of Tabriz, Tehran, and Hamadan by the 1870s. These early missionaries exposed Iranians in Azerbaijan to Western ideas and concepts and eventually provided a basis for the Azerbaijani Movement for a Constitution. The first U.S. man of war, *Ticonderoga*, entered the Persian Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz in December 1879. Shortly after, June 1883, the first U.S. minister visited Tehran and established relations with the Persian Empire. By the late 1800s, Persians, along with Arabs and Turks, searched for a power to replace the regional influence of the British – who had established their first Persian Gulf trading post in Bushehr in 1763. At the same time, Persia faced the threat of Russia to the north that had defeated the empire in three wars – 1804-1813, 1818, and 1826-1828. Persia lost all of its territory in the Caucasus and all naval bases on the Caspian while suing for peace in 1813. In 1826, Persia launched an offensive to regain the lost Caucuses territory only to be defeated again by Russia in 1828. The 1828 Treaty of Turkmanchai forced the Shah and Persia to give economic concessions to Russia, pay war reparations, and gave Russian citizens in Iran extraordinary privileges. As a result of European imperialism and a generally benign attitude by the United States, as the 19th century drew to a close, the United States was on the whole viewed favorably by Persia.

Drama within the Persian Empire, however, accelerated in the last decade of the 1800s. The Iranian government nearly went bankrupt in 1891. Many of the funds from development loans and trade concessions were mismanaged and the financial difficulties of 1891 forced the Shah to give Great Britain a fifty year monopoly on tobacco – which resulted in protests. The Shah was assassinated in 1896 and xenophobic patterns emerged that included the banning of

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[392] Early history found in Michael A. Palmer, *Guardians of the Gulf*: *A History of America's Expanding Role in the Persian Gulf, 1833-1992* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

books and anything seen as western. The turn of the century also brought to Persia Dr. Samuel Martin Jordan an American who Marvin Zonis called "perhaps the most revered American to serve in Iran."[393] Dr. Jordan served as principal of the only secondary school in Iran to feature a western curriculum – Alborz College.

The legacy of the Shah's mismanagement brought with it protests from both merchants and clerics and led to the adoption of a new Iranian constitution in 1906. The Constitution limited the power of the Shah through a number of institutional mechanisms including the establishment of a legislative body – the Majles. Constitutionalists briefly lost power in 1907 which allowed Russia and Great Britain to formally divide Iran into spheres of influence through treaty. The Constitutionalists regained power in 1908 and committed to the goal of terminating the overwhelming influence by Russia and Great Britain. As a result, Iran looked toward Sweden in order to train its newly created Gendarmerie. By 1909, the Shah faced a burgeoning constitutional movement in Tabriz and dispatched troops in order to resolve the political crisis. A teacher at the American Mission School, Howard Baskerville, organized and trained students into a militia and his death made him a martyr for the constitutional movement. Baskerville was buried in Tabriz and his contributions widely seen as a point of growing friendship between the U.S. and Iran. A significant impetuous for unrest, along with the Shah's mismanagement of funds, was the place of Persia in the imperial rivalry between Russia and Great Britain. As we have seen, the 1907 Anglo-Russian Convention basically split Persia into Russian and British spheres.[394] Persia would become even more significant to Great Britain with the discovery of oil in 1908 and Britain's movement from coal to oil fuel in 1913.[395]

Persia assumed a neutral position in World War I that was, for all intents and purposes, ignored by many European governments. British, Russia, and Turkey all fought on Persian territory and, after the end of hostilities, British and Russian troops remained until the early 1920's. Basically, the period of 1918 to 1921 was one in which Iran "was on the verge of political disintegration."[396] American Elgin Groseclose would gain fame as a relief worker in the Caucuses after World War I, and return after World War II in order to tackle both inflation and a faltering Iranian economy. Reza Shah seized power from the Constitutionalists in a 1921 coup, established the Pahlavi Dynasty, and, by 1925, Iran marked the end of the Qajar Dynasty. Meanwhile, the benevolent relationship between Persia and the United States continued with another American, A.C. Millspaugh, who became financial advisor for the Shah during the coup period and would hold that post until 1927. The Millspaugh mission, similar to the Shuster one of a decade earlier, can best be described as the Persian attempt to counter Russian and British influence on domestic affairs.[397] Reza Shah launched a program of modernization and reform that both diluted and made enemies of the Shi'ite clergy. The end result was one of internal stability but Iran remained a weak state based on traditional mores.[398] Ultimately, the interests of Reza Shah and Millspaugh diverged and Millspaugh left Iran in 1927 due to the increasingly nationalistic and authoritarian bent of the Shah and steadily increasing military spending.[399]

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[393] Marvin Zonis, *Majestic Failure: The fall of the Shah* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 190-91.
[394] Richard M. Preece, *U.S. Policy toward Iran, 1942-1979: Report prepared for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence* (Washington, D.C: Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 1981), p. 3.
[395] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 3.
[396] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 3.
[397] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 4.
[398] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 8.
[399] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 5.

World War II would mark the end of Reza Khan's regime. Iranian officials held considerable pro-Axis sentiment at the beginning of World War II despite the fact that Iran officially declared neutrality.[400] For instance, Reza Shah allowed German advisors into Tehran in summer of 1941 as he looked upon Germany as a possible counter to the influence of Great Britain and the Soviet Union.[401] Great Britain responded to Iran's flirtations with Nazi Germany on August 18, 1941 with an invasion from the south while Russia invaded from the north. Allied forces removed Reza Shah from power and installed his son Muhammad Shah Pahlavi as Shah. During the war, Allied forces used Iran for transit of Lend Lease supplies which were guaranteed through the presence of Allied occupation forces. Iranian infrastructure benefits from lend-lease included the Iranian State Railway which became a significant project even before the U.S. officially entered the war.[402] Military advisors from the United States stationed in Iran during World War II also served several other key functions like the maintenance of internal security, the training of Iranian forces, and assurance that the young Shah would remain in power after the departure of the British and Soviet forces.[403] In addition, the United States created an advisory mission to the Iranian gendarmerie and an advisory mission to the Iranian army by 1943. Meanwhile, Millspaugh returned to Iran in 1943 in order to administer Iranian finances and budgets With the U.S. advisory units in place.

Iran's usefulness to the United States was not strictly limited to lend-lease. In fact, the United States had longer term plans which included a goal of making Iran strong enough to stand on its own.[404] Franklin D. Roosevelt credited the sacrifice made by Iran in the war and promised a full withdraw of U.S. forces once the war was over in both the Tehran Declaration and the Tripartite Pact.[405] In fact, FDR and aide Harry Hopkins envisioned Iran as an example of an unselfish American policy of encouraging and promoting self-governance based upon the principles outlined in the Atlantic Charter.[406] Iran, for its part, continued the historical pattern of third-party balancing in allowing the presence of the United States to serve as a counter to British and Soviet influence.[407] Overall, the American Persian Gulf Command reached approximately 30,000 troops with the vast majority stationed in Iran.[408] Yet, true to the promise made to Iran, the last U.S. soldier left on January 1, 1946; however, the U.S. commitments made during World War II would result in long-term ties between the U.S. and Iran.

Iran emerged as a key front in the Cold War at the end of World War II. The communist Tudeh party moved from a position of non-alignment to one of support for Soviet political positions in Iran. These included oil concessions for the Soviets and adherence to the Soviet belief that the U.S. and Great Britain were imperialist vehicles to seize Iranian natural resources.[409] The Soviet Union helped organize the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan while a key

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[400] Palmer, *Guardians of the Gulf*, p. 20; Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 6.
[401] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 9.
[402] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 7.
[403] Palmer, *Guardians of the Gulf*, p. 24.
[404] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 13.
[405] Kenneth M. Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America* (Random House trade paperback ed. New York: Random House, 2005), p. 42.
[406] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 15.
[407] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 10.
[408] Palmer, *Guardians of the Gulf*, p. 25.
[409] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 19.

leader of the movement, Jafar Pishevari, issued ultimatums to the Shah while in exile in the Soviet Union.[410]

The Kurds, another ethnic minority, announced the independent Kurdish Republic of Mahabad. The United States suspected the hand of Moscow and became even more alarmed in March of 1946 when the American Vice-Consul Robert Russow, Jr. reported that Soviet troops were advancing into Tabriz and headed south – presumably toward Tehran.[411] The combined responses of Great Britain, Iran, and the United States resulted in Soviet withdraw in total by May of 1946. Cold War fears and the Soviet scare in Azerbaijan added to a Joint Chiefs of Staff assessment that the Soviet Union could easily overrun Iran, Iraq and even the Suez Canal and move virtually unopposed toward European Turkey. Indeed, Iran was not able to restore full Iranian sovereignty in the northern separatist provinces until December 1946 and only with assistance from U.S. Advisory Mission to the Iranian Gendarme.[412] A number of U.S. officials – including U.S. Ambassador to Iran, George V. Allen and Acting Secretary of State, Dean Acheson – concluded that the experience in northern Iran revealed that certain northern Iranian provinces were susceptible to becoming a Soviet puppet and that the Iranian forces would be unable to restore sovereignty.[413] Hence, two basic themes dominated the U.S. policy towards Iran in the era immediately following World War II – (1) the geographic location on the Persian Gulf and its 1,250 mile border with the Soviet Union and (2) its own oil resources.[414]

The international rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union resulted in President Truman issuing the Truman Doctrine in March of 1947. The Doctrine was specifically aimed at stopping the spread of communism in Greece and Turkey through U.S. financial and political support but it also applied to Iran. The U.S. offered to support Iran against Soviet intervention as the Iranian Majles debated a potential treaty between Iran and the Soviet Union. Iran's parliament defeated the treaty by a vote of 102-2.[415] Later that year, the United States agreed to provide a military mission to Iran in order to improve the efficiency of the Iranian armed forces. Basically, Iran saw the Truman Doctrine and subsequent offer to assist against possible Soviet intervention as a guarantee of Iranian sovereignty.[416]

The late 1940s brought increased U.S. concern over the Near East Region. The U.S. Navy established stations in Asmara, Ethiopia and Dahrain, Saudi Arabia in 1948. NSC 47/2 of late September and early October 1949 singled out the Eastern Mediterranean and Near East as important to U.S. security and the subject of attempts to improve ties in order to make sure regional disputes did not lead to increased Soviet influence in the region. At the same time, the State Department warned of building up large scale Iranian military forces despite U.S. concerns over the future of Iran and the Persian Gulf region. State argued in opposition to a large Iranian military that Iranian politics was too unstable; the technological knowledge of the Iranians was so low that too many Americans would be needed for training, and strong Iranian armed forces

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[410] Preece writes that Tudeh in Azerbaijan was merely renamed Democratic Party of Azerbaijan (Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, 19).
[411] Palmer, *Guardians of the Gulf*, p. 31.
[412] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 21.
[413] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 21.
[414] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 1; helpful in framing motives for U.S. policy include Richard W. Cottam, *Iran and the United States: A Cold War Case Study* (Pittsburgh, PA.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988) ; also see James A. Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion: The Tragedy of American- Iranian Relations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988).
[415] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 22-23.
[416] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 23.

may become a vehicle for the Shah (or others) to become dictatorial.[417] The Shah continued to push for arms and training despite obvious reticence on the part of the U.S. to supply too much military hardware. In fact, a six week trip by the Shah in late 1949 to the U.S. included lobbying efforts aimed at securing military assistance and an increase in forces.[418] Ultimately, the Truman administration offered some military assistance but emphasized the need for economic development within Iran.[419]

Both global politics and domestic Iranian politics played a significant role in U.S. relations to Iran in 1950. Within Iran, the depressed Iranian economy added to the political instability in the country.[420] In addition, an assassination attempt on the Shah in 1949 by the Tudeh helped create a general feeling by pro-Western Iranians that they had been left alone to fight the communists.[421] But, the U.S. and Iran agreed to a defense pact on the eve of the Korean War which would begin to supply Iran with military hardware. Domestically, a coalition of opposition that included the nationalists from both the left and the right committed to reducing foreign influence in Iran and led by Muhammad Mossadeq challenged the Iranian political status quo in early 1951. The National Front led a push in the Majles to nationalize Iranian oil. Meanwhile, Iran's Prime Minister, widely seen as a surrogate of the United States, was assassinated in March of 1951 by the Fedeyin-e-Islam (Fighters for Islam) – a force opposing foreign influence in Iran – merely four days after concluding that nationalization of Iranian oil would not be practical. The New Iranian Prime Minister, Mohammad Mossadeq, presented to the Majles a plan to nationalize foreign oil interests which passed in March of 1951 (to be enforced at the end of April) and Great Britain began preparations for invasion, blockaded Iranian oil, and froze Iranian assets. Mossadeq's nationalization of Anglo-Iranian Oil Assets amounted to a value of an estimated half billion dollars.[422] From Washington, Truman and the United States pushed its British ally for further negotiations and officially characterized its position as interested but neutral.[423] Iran, however, continued to hold out against British pressure based on the belief that the U.S. would assist in its effort rather than see Iran resort to aid from Moscow.[424] The Majles granted Mossadeq dictatorial powers in August of 1952 and extended the powers for another year in January of 1953. Iran broke diplomatic relations with Great Britain on October 22, 1952 and demanded $1 billion before even opening talks with the British over the oil nationalization question.[425]

The U.S. position began to undergo subtle changes as the oil nationalization dispute continued between Iran and Great Britain. NSC 107/2 issued in June of 1951 linked the Shah to Iran and labeled the Shah as a source of stability and leadership in the region. The NSC contended Iran was "of critical importance to the United States" and the political situation was one in which "the loss of Iran to the free world is a distinct possibility through an internal communist uprising, possibly growing out of the present indigenous fanaticism …" Furthermore, the Shah was "the only present source of continuity of leadership" and the U.S. should "expand

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[417] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 24-25.
[418] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 25.
[419] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 27.
[420] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 28.
[421] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 28.
[422] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 31.
[423] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 32.
[424] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 34.
[425] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 35.

military, economic, and technical assistance."[426] In short, the goal of U.S. policy was to make the Shah's regime stronger. Mossadeq visited New York late that same year in order to take the oil dispute to the United Nations and simultaneously seek U.S. assistance in breaking the blockade. Churchill made clear Great Britain's position on the matter to Truman; Great Britain's support of the United States in the Korean War was subject to the United States support of Great Britain in Iran.

Mossadeq, not finding the support he wanted from the United States, made his own situation more perilous when he threatened to turn to the Soviet Union for assistance against Great Britain. Previously, the Shah attempted to name a new Prime Minister to replace Mossadeq in summer of 1952. The end result was four days of riots. The National Security Council issued NSC 136/1 on November 20, 1952 which called the situation in Iran a potential source of instability. The finding suggested that pressure for economic and social reforms in Iran may threaten the regime which would seriously impact U.S. national security. NSC 136/1 along with NSC 107/2 suggested that the United States would simply not allow a loss of Iran and should diplomatic attempts fail, the U.S. would not hesitate to use political or military options. As the United States domestic political terrain began to change with the election of Dwight D. Eisenhower, Great Britain approached the United States about replacing the Mossadeq government. London quickly found allies for the plan in the persons of Deputy Director of Central Intelligence Allan Dulles, Deputy Director for Plans Frank Wisner, and Chief of the Near East Kermit Roosevelt. However, the U.S. supporters of the British plan preferred to wait until after the Eisenhower inauguration.

President Eisenhower informed Mossadeq in late June 1953 that unilateral U.S. support in Iran's dispute with Great Britain was not forthcoming.[427] At the same time, economic problems within Iran began to create a rift between Mossadeq and the Shah and Mossadeq and some elements of the National Front. As a result, Mossadeq began to rely more heavily on Tudeh for support.[428] The United States and Great Britain ultimately launched a coup – Operation Ajax – on August 15, 1953.[429] Both the U.S. and Great Britain appear to have been concerned that the nationalist tone and rhetoric of Mossadeq would ultimately lead to a communist Iran. Ironically, the coup was first seen as a failure and the Shah fled Iran only to triumphantly return.

Many students of Iranian-U.S. relations consider the U.S. participation in Operation Ajax as a seminal moment in the relationship between the two governments. Palmer contended that the U.S. participation in the coup "caused deep resentment on the part of those who opposed the Shah in 1953 and would come to oppose him in the following decades."[430] Pollack added that the U.S. participation helped in the construction of the Mossadeq Myth "and of the Utopia that he would have created had he survived in power."[431] In fact, many Iranians had viewed Mossadeq as their "savior against domestic corruption and exploitation."[432] Vice President Richard Nixon,

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[426] United States National Security Council, Top Secret, "The Position of the United States with Respect to Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, June 27, 1951).

[427] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 36.

[428] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 37.

[429] A primary account of the 1953 coup can be found in Kermit Roosevelt, *Countercoup, the Struggle for Control of Iran* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979); also see Stephen Kinzer, *All the Shah's Men*: *An American Coup and the Roots of Middle Eastern Terror* (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley and Sons, 2003).

[430] Palmer, *Guardians of the Gulf*, p. 71.

[431] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 68.

[432] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 34.

in order to provide an air of legitimacy to the Shah's regime, visited the Shah in Iran in late 1953 and he quickly emerged as one of the Shah's biggest advocates.[433] The period after Operation Ajax marked a significant increase in U.S. aid to Iran. Specifically, U.S. aid to Iran was approximately $35.8 million from 1946 to 1950.[434] In contrast, U.S. economic aid from the time of the coup until the end of the decade was $611 million and military aid $500 million.[435] Besides, U.S. Persian Gulf interests often paralleled the interests of the Shah; as a result, the U.S. policy toward Iran was not flexible in that it was limited to support of the Shah and "failed adequately to consider underlying social, economic, and religious trends and the actual extent of opposition within the country" that was largely caused by the Shah's authoritarian leadership.[436]

In the post-World War II era, Great Britain began to draw down its influence and power throughout the world. One of the key geographic areas impacted by the British policy was the Middle East. As Britain began to draw down its international profile, the United States accepted a larger geo-political role. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles toured the Middle East in 1953 and concluded that the level of anti-Western sentiment called for regional accommodations to ensure security and that the most likely countries for such a design were Turkey, Iraq, Iran, and Pakistan.[437] Iran, however, first needed to solidify the Shah as leader. So, the power of the Majles was reduced, crackdowns on political opposition increased, and the Shah centralized military control by removing 600 officers sympathetic to Tudeh.[438] The Iranian government – in August of 1953 – would request more military aid from the U.S.[439]

Iran also increased its role as a stalwart against communism in the Persian Gulf region by signing the Baghdad Pact (later named CENTO) in 1955. Iran became the largest U.S. military aid mission in the world by 1956.[440] U.S. Army Colonel Stephen J. Meade, a year later, helped reorganize the Iranian intelligence service into the National Intelligence and Security Organization – or SAVAK. Yet, even as early as 1958, the Central Intelligence Agency warned the Shah's regime would be overthrown unless reforms were made. CIA findings regarding the status of the Shah's regime were quite pessimistic:

> There is basic and widespread dissatisfaction with his regime, both in the army and in the urban population generally. If he were to take dramatic and effective steps to reform the corrupt system he might be able to maintain his position for some time to come … But if in the reasonably near future there are no substantial reforms of the Iranian political, economic, and social structure, we think that the overthrow of the monarchy is likely …[441]

Remarkably, some twenty years before the "unthinkable" fall of the Shah, the CIA was predicting his demise. In addition, many of the observations made by the CIA could have been very easily applied to the context of 1978 Iran. The 1958 CIA reporting observed economic and

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[433] Sick, *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran* 1st ed. (New York: Random House, 1985), pp. 8-9.
[434] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 49.
[435] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 76.
[436] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 2.
[437] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 42.
[438] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 44.
[439] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 45.
[440] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 77.
[441] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Secret, "Special National Intelligence Estimate," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, August 25, 1958).

political discontent, growing expectations from the urban masses for an increased standard of living, and the notion that the population had "little faith in the regime."[442] Consequently, the CIA estimated that the survival of the Shah would rest with the ability of the armed forces to respond to any threat to his regime. And, even given the correct estimation that oil revenue would certainly increase over time, the CIA surmised more wealth would not "improve the Shah's capability for remaining in power, if current social conditions remain unchanged."[443]

Despite the bleak predictions of the CIA, the Eisenhower Era ended with the Shah accomplishing two very significant goals – (1) the enlargement of the military and (2) a U.S. guarantee with regard to external threats.[444] The growth of the Iranian-American partnership occurred, in large measure, within the larger context of the Cold War. Concerned over the potential of communist influence in the Middle East, Eisenhower introduced the Eisenhower Doctrine in 1957 – committing the U.S. to economically or militarily aid countries requesting assistance – as a counter to purported Soviet designs in the region. Meanwhile, a 1958 coup in Iraq led to much closer relations between the Soviet Union and Iraq. In fact, reports by early 1959 indicated that in only six months Soviet arms shipments had already doubled the size of the Iraqi military. Washington quickly signed additional agreements of cooperation with Iran, Turkey, and Pakistan.[445] The end result of politics on the international front is that domestic opposition to the Shah began to identify the Shah and the actions of the regime with the United States because of economic and military assistance and the support for Iran in CENTO.[446]

Economic turmoil in Iran during 1960 and 1961 laid the foundation for political conflict in Iran. Discontent in urban areas due to unemployment and falling growth rates mixed with popular dissatisfaction over the results of 1960 Iranian elections.[447] At the same time, the relationship between the United States and Iran changed with the election of John F. Kennedy as president. Generally, Kennedy's approach to national security included the strategy of social and political reform as well as constructing economies capable of stalling the spread of communism and this combination did not sit well with the Shah.[448] Protests in May of 1961 of some 50,000 teachers in Iran resulted in the Shah replacing Prime Minister Ja'afar Sharif-Imami with Dr. Ali Amini and the dissolution of the Majles. The internal political landscape of 1961 Iran led Soviet Premier Khrushchev to predict that Iran was on the brink of falling. As a result, Assistant Secretary of Near Eastern Affairs Phillips Talbot led a State Department Task Force that concluded more aid should be sent to Iran and the United States should also nurture moderate opposition to the Shah.[449] The American presence in Iran would include 10,000 military personnel and economic aid for the year would reach $600 billion by the end of 1961.[450]

In 1962, the Shah faced significant domestic political opposition and pressure from the U.S. for political reform. The Shah used the unrest as an opportunity to eliminate opposition. The Land Reform Act of 1962 brought limited reform to the distribution of land but in doing so

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[442] United States Central Intelligence Agency, "Special National Intelligence Estimate."
[443] United States Central Intelligence Agency, "Special National Intelligence Estimate."
[444] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 58.
[445] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, pp. 78-79.
[446] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 60.
[447] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 63.
[448] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle* p. 80-81.
[449] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle* p. 81.
[450] Gregory F. Trverton and James Klocke, *The Fall of the Shah of Iran* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for the Study of Diplomacy, School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, 1994), p. 4.

reduced the power of the landholding class.[451] Furthermore, the Local Councils Law of 1962 gave more power to local governments, allowed women the right to vote, permitted religious minorities, and allowed the religious minorities to vote for their choice in elections as part of a larger strategy to reduce the power of the religious.[452] The turmoil in Iran, however, did not escape notice of Washington and Kennedy pressured the Shah to reduce the Iranian military from 240,000 to 150,000 men. At the same time, the CIA began to distance itself from SAVAK, and military aid to Iran fell from $85 billion in 1960 to $58.6 billion in 1961 then $44.7 billion in 1962.[453] In addition to a reduction in aid, Kennedy also began to attach conditions and informed the Shah during an April 1962 visit that the purpose and type of U.S. aid would become more devoted to Iranian development over military procurement.[454]

The Shah began a process of attempting to modernize Iran in 1963, formally dubbed the "White Revolution." Both the landed class and religious opposed the Shah's new program because it was designed not as a top down reform but as a vehicle to break opposition to the Shah.[455] The opposition frequently took the form of riots. In fact, riots were seen in Tehran and then Qum, Mashad, Isfahan, and Shiraz from June 4 to June 6, 1963.[456] The State Department INR warned that the unrest was serious and a threat to the Shah in June of 1963.[457]

The untimely death of JFK and the ascension of Lyndon Johnson to the presidency bought the Shah more breathing room and freedom in internal politics. LBJ saw himself as a good friend of the Shah and the Shah as an important bulwark against communism who should rule with a firm hand.[458] The U.S. granted Iran a $200 million credit for purchases of military weapons in order to protect Iran from external threats in July of 1964.[459] At the same time, the Shah's suspicion of the United States grew during the Johnson years. It was during this era that SAVAK began to watch American citizens and U.S. intelligence assets were limited in the collection of information on internal Iranian affairs. Instead, intelligence focused on communism.[460] Religious opposition, already unhappy with the White Revolution, grew more emboldened and overt once again with the 1964 Status of Forces Agreement between the United States and Iran. Ayatollah Khomeini's public opposition brought him to the forefront of the anti-Shah movement and activated the frame of the Shah as acquiescing to foreign domination at the hands of the United States. Khomeini's protests ultimately led to his exile in Iraq, the attack on his theological college by the pro-Shah forces, and deaths that numbered in the thousands. Religious students followed Khomeini's forced exile with the January 1965 assassination of Prime Minister Hassan Mansur. Religious militants formerly of the National Front joined to found the Mujahideen-e Khalq - which would eventually devolve and split into an Islamist and a Marxist branch. LBJ terminated U.S. AID in 1966 and proclaimed Iran a developed nation but, at

[451] Homa Katouzian, "The Pahlavi Regime in Iran," *Sultanistic Regimes* Eds. H. E. Chahabi and Juan J. Linz (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1998), p. 188; Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 82.
[452] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 84.
[453] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 84.
[454] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 68.
[455] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 108; Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, pp. 87-88.
[456] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 70.
[457] United States Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Report, Secret, *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 29, 1980).
[458] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 93.
[459] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 73.
[460] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 95.

the same time, the State Department continued to warn, through the INR, that the Shah would either face falling from power or have to extend political participation in Iran.[461]

Iran moved to a foreign policy more independent of the United States in the years of 1965 to 1969. The Soviet Union and Iran reached a number of trade agreements and Iran even agreed to purchase weapons from the Soviet Union in February 1967.[462] At the same time, the Shah, during a visit to the U.S. in June 1968, requested military purchases that amounted to $600 million over a six year period. The Shah's total take was $100 million for 1969 with the balance subjected to annual review.[463] James Goode's history of U.S. relations with Iran after Mossadegh characterized the Johnson era as one when the U.S. became "reluctant to criticize or challenge the Shah's policies" because the United States convinced themselves Iran needed the tough leadership of the Shah in order to ensure stability.[464] Illustrative of the policy shift toward unconditional support of the Shah was the attempt by State to complete the 1969 annual review of Iran. In short, Saunders notified Kissinger of the need to complete an annual review of Iran as per policy for weapons sales. Kissinger did not allow the review and, as Saunders notes, by 1972 the Shah enjoyed a blank check in purchasing whatever weapons he wanted short of nuclear even with the absence of required annual reviews.[465]

While Iran seized the upper hand in the bi-lateral relationship with the United States during the Johnson years, Pollack goes a step farther in labeling the Nixon era as one of "utter neglect" toward Iran and the Shah.[466] Nixon and Kissinger believed the Shah and Iran could be used as a proxy to solve several important foreign policy dilemmas. First, Iran was seen as a capable surrogate for U.S. interests after Great Britain announced its withdraw from the Persian Gulf region.[467] Also, Nixon announced the Nixon Doctrine in January of 1970 and concluded Iran and Saudi Arabia would fill the role of regional powers in the creation of the "twin pillars" of U.S. influence in the Persian Gulf.[468] The United States would allow the Shah free reign in the purchase of all military hardware short of nuclear weapons in return.[469] Nixon, and later Ford, also viewed Iran as a source of investment opportunities for U.S. business interests at a time when the domestic economy had slowed.[470] Ultimately, according to Goode, Nixon and Ford both "staked American interests in the region on his [the Shah] continuing success and paid scant attention at the highest levels to any other domestic forces in Iran."[471]

Political opponents, however, began to seize upon the manner in which the Shah spent the billions in oil revenue as a source of discontent. One of the most ostentatious displays of the Shah's wealth took place in 1971 during the 2500 year celebration of the monarchy held in

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[461] United States Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Report, Secret, *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 29, 1980).
[462] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 75.
[463] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 79.
[464] James F. Goode, *The United States and Iran: In the Shadow of Musaddiq* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), p. 182-183.
[465] Harold Saunders, "Iran: A View from the State Department," *World Affairs* 149.4 (1987): 220.
[466] Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, pp. 95, 100.
[467] David Harris, *The Crisis: The President, the Prophet and the Shah - 1979 and the Coming of Militant Islam* (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 2004), pp. 46-47.
[468] Richard Falk, "Iran and American Geopolitics," p. 44-45; Pollack, *The Persian Puzzle*, p. 103; Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 83; Palmer, *Guardians of the Gulf*, pp. 87-88.
[469] Alexander Moens, "President Carter's Advisers and the fall of the Shah," *Political Science Quarterly* 106.2 (1991): 214; Falk, "Iran and American Geopolitics," p. 46.
[470] Goode, *The United States and Iran*, p. 185.
[471] Goode, *The United States and Iran*, p. 186.

Persepolis. The event cost Iran some $200 million and the excessive cost was made worse by the fact that much of Iran was excluded from the invitation list. Government employees were all forced to give up one day's pay in order to finance the party. Be that as it may, a memorandum prepared by the Office of National Estimates with assistance from the CIA prepared to coincide with Persepolis gave an overall judgment of the Shah as "a popular and respected king."[472] In addition, the closed political system created few problems because Iranians were busily focused on economic opportunities. But, the report conceded that the Shah remained distanced from the people and would, should unrest occur, be very likely to misjudge the source and solution of such a protest movement.[473]

Attacks against the Shah and his regime sometimes were violent in nature with the specter of the Persepolis celebration looming large. For example, a band of armed men attacked a police post in Siakal near the Caspian Sea in February 1972. The attack was unsuccessful but "what became known as the Siakal incident led to a sustained period of terrorist activity against the Pahlavi monarchy, and this activity certainly contributed to the revolution of 1978-1979."[474] The middle class "began to attack the regime with great vigor and regularity" while opposition to the Shah increased among the youth of Iran. [475] A June 1972 analysis by the INR argued that the growing number of disaffected youths may bring serious long-term stability concerns to Iran and "are sufficiently alienated from their government to accept the hardships of longterm clandestinity and personal danger in pursuit of radical change" but were not yet seen as an immediate threat.[476] Jesse James Leaf later confessed in a *Washington Post* article that in 1972 he prepared a report on the Shah for the CIA in which he argued the Shah's lack of attention to social justice and "egalitarian economic development, was 'sowing the seed for popular dissidence.'"[477] Leaf added that the Shah's modernization plans would have a negative impact on the regime's stability unless accompanied by political and social reforms and warned of the potential response from the religious leaders to a secularization strategy. These warnings from Leaf, evidently, were not part of the final CIA report because they did not reflect U.S. policy towards Iran.[478] Iranians in 1973 assassinated a prominent American, Lt. Colonel Hawkins, who was charged with training Iranian forces. The Shah responded with attacks focused on the most radical elements of opposition.[479] In the face of growing political unrest, National Security Advisor Kissinger issued a policy guideline in July 1972 that Iranian arms purchases would be left up to Iran.[480] Ultimately, Iran would purchase military hardware worth $20.5 billion from

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[472] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Office of National Estimates, Confidential, Memorandum, "Nothing Succeeds Like a Successful Shah," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, October 8, 1971).

[473] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Office of National Estimates, Confidential, Memorandum.

[474] Jerrold D. Green, "Terrorism and Politics in Iran," *Terrorism in Context* Ed. Martha Crenshaw. (University Park: Penn State Press, 2001), p. 569; Also see Ervand Abrahamian., "Iran between Two Revolutions" (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 480.

[475] Green, "Terrorism and Politics in Iran," p. 572.

[476] United States Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Secret, Memorandum, "Iran: Internal Dissidence - A Note of Warning," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, June 12, 1972).

[477] Jesse James Leaf, "Iran: A Blind Spot in U.S. Intelligence," Washington Post January 18 1979, sec. A: 15.

[478] Leaf, "Iran: A Blind Spot."

[479] Green, "Terrorism and Politics in Iran," p572.

[480] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 86.

1969 to 1978.[481] The Shah's modernization plans and military spending, however, began to take its toll on the Iranian economy.

The Iranian populace started, by 1975, to show overt signs of resentment of the Shah's military expansion and view the growing number of foreign expatriates as a source of support for the Shah.[482] Violence aimed at foreigners and the Shah's regime resulted in repression. Little knowledge was gained of domestic conditions in Iran despite the very close ties and the increased military sales between the U.S. and Iran. The Ambassador to Iran, Richard Helms, was distracted due to the Watergate Scandal and was forced to make thirteen separate trips back to the United States between 1973 and 1976. In addition, the belief within U.S. policy circles was that the Shah was too powerful to fall. Very few Persian speakers existed at the U.S. embassy in Iran and, incredibly, most U.S. intelligence regarding the domestic situation in Iran came from the SAVAK.[483] Yet, a number of reports did emerge in order to question assumptions regarding the future of Iran. A State Department Review in October 1974 questioned the wisdom of the U.S. placing all of its Iranian policy cards in the hands of one man – the Shah – while an INR report in 1975 suggested that the Shah lacked necessary political mechanisms to respond to the opposition and the disaffected.[484]

The Shah endeared himself to American political leadership even more as he became a larger and larger consumer of American goods – especially military goods. Some, albeit a small minority of the foreign policy establishment, continued to wonder aloud about the policy choices with regard to Iran. Iran passed West Germany as the largest buyer of U.S. weaponry in 1975.[485] In fact, the Shah spent $3.91 billion on U.S. weaponry in 1974, $2.6 billion in 1975, and $1.3 billion in 1976. Overall, Iran imported more arms in 1975 than Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Kuwait – combined.[486] The *Christian Science Monitor* reported on March 6, 1975 concerning an economic agreement binding Iran to purchase $15 billion in U.S. goods over a five year period. The same article also openly questioned whether such close ties between the U.S. and a ruler who does not allow for any dissension would not one day pose a serious policy dilemma for the U.S. Clearly, Iran had become a valued customer of Uncle Sam and President Ford needed Iran to provide international investment opportunities for U.S. firms in the face of a slowing American economy.[487] Many of the first voices of dissent with regard to U.S. policy toward the Shah actually came from those who saw a too militarily powerful Shah as a destabilizing factor in the region or feared sensitive U.S. weapons would somehow fail into the hands of the Soviet Union.[488]

Overt opposition to the Shah continued to build in Iran during 1975. The 1975 passage of the Family Protection Act offered more rights for Iranian women but was seen by Shi'ite religious figures as an intrusion.[489] Landowners grew restless with the passage of the Anti-Land

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[481] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 88.

[482] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 93.

[483] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 229.

[484] United States Department of State Office of the Inspector General, Report, Secret, *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, October, 1974); United States Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Report, Secret, *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 29, 1980).

[485] Falk, "Iran and American Geopolitics," p. 46.

[486] Leslie M. Pryor, "Arms and the Shah," *Foreign Policy* 31 (1978): p. 57.

[487] Goode, *The United States and Iran*, p. 185.

[488] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 214.

[489] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 73.

Speculation Bill. The bill determined that urban land could only be sold once. Many saw the bill as an attempt by the Shah to monopolize profits made on the land market.[490]Then, the Shah decreed in 1975 that Iran would be a one party state. Iranians were no longer regulated to a passive obedience of the Shah and the state but forced to take active roles utilizing the three points of the Rastakhiz party - imperial order, constitutional monarchy, and the White Revolution. Compulsory membership designed to build the legitimacy of the Shah's regime actually alienated many in Iran.[491] Iranians viewed the movement to a one party state as further evidence of the Shah completely turning his back on constitutional rule and fully embracing authoritarianism.[492] Finally, the Shah announced a plan for public ownership of industries and mines in April 1975. Basically, 90 percent of all state industries and mines would be publicly owned and 49 percent of all private industrial and mining companies publicly held within three years. The net impact of the program was that no-one was satisfied. Industry owners saw the plan as an effort to redistribute assets and workers believed that their standard of living would be further postponed because they would be forced to buy assets of the public firms.[493]

       Iranian guerillas continued to target Americans and two U.S. Air Force officers were killed in May of 1975. The United States agreed in June to build listening posts in Iran and increase surveillance of the Soviet Union even with the growing restlessness and episodic examples of resentment towards Americans. In return, the Shah continued to push a modernization agenda with increased links to the United States.[494] The Shah, in summer of 1975, attempted to tackle ongoing inflation problems with the Anti-Profiteering Campaign.[495] Rastakhiz created a number of anti-profiteering brigades to enforce price limits. Ultimately, everyone "from shoe polishers to Mercedes Benz dealers – found their businesses invaded" and "the vigor with which the campaign was pursued and the vehemence of the student brigades reminded some of the excesses of China's Cultural Revolution."[496] It was obvious to most by that autumn that the Anti-Profiteering Campaign was not only a disaster but it also managed to mobilize the youth in Iran to oppose the Shah.[497]

       On August 21, 1975, the *Christian Science Monitor* reported that the financial problems in Iran presented "signs of uncertainty" and that high rates of inflation combined with unfettered spending threatened the social cohesiveness of Iran. The economic conditions mixed with a population of which 50 percent were under age 21 coupled with a literacy rate of less than 25% offered the dynamics for potential social strains. One analyst remarked that "no one can safely predict whether we will be able to keep the lid on during the coming decade of tumultuous change." Furthermore, the analyst predicted that in order to achieve the Shah's goal of the fifth highest gross national product in the world by 2000, Iran would be forced to import approximately 700,000 jobs.[498]

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[490] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 74.
[491] Katouzian, "The Pahlavi Regime in Iran," p. 193.
[492] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 75.
[493] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, pp. 75-76.
[494] Harry B. Ellis, "Behind 'Listening Post' Deal Closer U.S. - Iran Relations," Christian Science Monitor June 5 1975, 3.
[495] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, pp. 76-77; Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 497-498; for how campaign renewed opposition from merchant class see Said Amir Arjomand, "The Turban for the Crown: The Islamic Revolution in Iran" (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1988), p. 107.
[496] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 77.
[497] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 78.
[498] Richard Burt, "Iran Battles Economic Problems," Christian Science Monitor August 21 1975, 6.

The first half of 1976 brought continued challenges and violent opposition to the Shah's regime. In a somewhat cryptic conversation, John Stempel met with Soviet political officer Guennady Kazankin on April 28. Kazankin asked Stempel how the United States would respond should the Shah be removed from power and whether the United States felt Farah Diba Pahlavi could rule. Kazankin also inquired whether the United States was preparing for an Iran after the Shah.[499] Concurrently, reported fighting between the Shah's forces and guerillas on May 18 and then again on May 21 provided evidence of organized violence against the regime.[500] The U.S. Embassy analyzed the political fallout from the Shah's modernization program in a report forwarded to State on July 1 and suggested the Shah was the unitary figure in Iranian politics but that "existent and emerging groups will have to be successfully engaged in the political process if Iran is to continue developing in relative stability." Also, the composition of the elite class is seen as fluid and current elites "which basically support the regime … might find their positions seriously challenged." The analysis continued that a key variable would be the economy. The Shah would not face significant challenges from dissidents should the economy remain in good shape.[501] A July 8 report by Ambassador Richard Helms of the United States Embassy noted, but did not specifically warn of, increased dissatisfaction of specific groups. That is, religious groups began to criticize the Shah's modernization program as a danger to true Islam and student protests against the Shah in France, India, the United States, and the United Kingdom are said to confuse the Shah because he does not understand why they would be ungrateful for what he has done for Iran.[502] Helms relayed in a July 22 report to State that one problem dogging the Shah's regime is the lack of disagreement with the Shah among his own advisors which resulted in a decision-making process not suited for complicated issues.[503] The United States and Iran continued to negotiate trade agreements as challenges mounted against the Shah's legitimacy and authority. Kissinger visited Iran that August and agreed to allow Iran to purchase another $10 billion in U.S. weapons and $24 billion in U.S. goods; Iran agreed to sell the United States $14 billion in oil. The agreement, however, faced opposition in the United States by Senator Hubert Humphrey. Humphrey warned that such an economic agreement would ultimately lead to 50-60,000 U.S. advisors and would create a Vietnam style commitment to the Shah.[504]

A theme that began to develop within the U.S. intelligence community was the need to find more information and more sources of intelligence in Iran. The Office of National Intelligence for the Middle East argued that SAVAK was the primary source of intelligence and that it discouraged U.S. contacts with the political opposition. The report recommended that the United States acquire better data on the public opinion in Iran regarding economic

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[499] United States Embassy, Iran. Secret, Memorandum of Conversation Tehran, "Exchange of Views on Political Subjects," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, April 28, 1976).

[500] Christian Science Monitor Staff, "Terrorist Outburst Kills 15 in Iran," Christian Science Monitor May 18, 1976, 5; Christian Science Monitor Staff, "Iran Violence Grows as Extremists Raided," Christian Science Monitor May 21 1976, 4.

[501] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran, "Iran's Modernizing Monarchy: A Political Assessment," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, July 1, 1976).

[502] Richard Helms, "Iran's Modernizing Monarchy: A Political Assessment," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, July 8, 1976).

[503] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable, "Decision-Making in Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, July 22, 1976).

[504] *Christian Science Monitor*, 8/17/76.

development.[505] The Director of Central Intelligence concurred in observing the need for CIA to obtain and utilize alternative means of evaluating the Shah from United States citizens in Iran as teachers, students, missionaries and from the United States.[506] It was at some point in 1976, furthermore, that Iranian military leaders became concerned over the influence of Islam and reacted by closing prayer rooms on military bases.[507]

As we prepare to enter the Carter years, it is helpful to ask what we have learned, so far, with regard to the United States and their view of the Shah of Iran. As early as the 1950s, Truman cautioned the Shah regarding the need for economic development. The NSC linked the Shah with stability, beginning in 1951, and called for increased economic, military, and technical aid so the Shah could solidify his position. Yet, by November of 1952, the NSC believed the situation in Iran to have the potential for instability. Mossadeq had clearly become a threat to the leadership of the Shah. So, the United States and Great Britain launched a coup to restore the Shah. After the 1953 coup, Iran received large increases in military and economic aid – again, in order to strengthen the regime. Yet, popular support of the Shah still appeared elusive. Five years and millions of dollars in U.S. aid later, the Shah, according to a 1958 report by the CIA, faced "widespread dissatisfaction" and the CIA claimed without dramatic reforms "the overthrow of the monarchy is likely." Under the presidency of John Kennedy, the United States began to push for reforms in 1960 and 1961. The riots of 1963 in opposition to the Shah's "White Revolution" led the State Department INR to warn that the Shah faced a serious threat. Again, in 1966, the INR warned the Shah would either have to extend political participation or risk falling from power. The INR would follow with a 1972 warning of long-term stability of the Shah while a 1975 analysis predicted the Shah did not possess the appropriate tools to deal with political opposition. In fact, the INR thinking was parallel with a 1971 Office of National Estimates prediction that in the event of unrest the Shah would incorrectly judge the source and solution to the problems. Jesse Leaf, a CIA analyst, later noted that his 1972 efforts to warn the U.S. government that the Shah's policies would lead to unrest were summarily rejected and not included in the CIA report. A State Department Review of 1974 questioned the feasibility of betting everything on the Shah. Even the *Christian Science Monitor*, in August of 1975, openly questioned the future of Iran and suggested that the Shah would have trouble "keeping the lid on" dissent. Finally, a Soviet political officer asked U.S. representatives about Washington's view of a post-Shah Iran in an April 1976 discussion.

Clearly, there was some level of concern regarding the future of the Shah as Carter prepared to take office. Just as compelling were the U.S. policy responses to the continued questions concerning the Shah. How did the United States adjust policy to these pessimistic predictions? To be sure, the United States had already established a troubling pattern of policy towards the Shah by the time Carter took office. Indeed, FDR and Harry Hopkins's visions of a self-governing Iran based upon the Atlantic Charter eventually fell victim to Cold War Politics. Truman's approach to Iran deviated slightly from FDR but he still approached Iran with a cautious attitude by offering some military assistance but also encouraging development.

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[505] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Office of National Intelligence for the Middle East, Secret, Memorandum, "Part I Reporting Assessment - Focus Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 4, 1976).

[506] United States Director of Central Intelligence, Committee on Human Resources, Subcommittee on Assessments, Secret, Report, "Focus Iran - Part II: Action Review," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 27, 1976).

[507] Charles Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2005; 2004), p. 114.

President Eisenhower – pressured by domestic politics and British economic concerns – moved past the idea of Iranian self-determination by participating in the ousting of Mosssadeq and establishing Iran as the largest U.S. military mission in the world. Briefly, the President Kennedy would again return to the notion of reform but that experiment fell to an assassin's bullet in Dallas, Texas on November 22, 1963. Faced with the growing issues of the war in Vietnam, LBJ again returned to the pattern of providing military aid to Iran. Goode believes the official U.S. stance at the time of Lyndon Johnson became one of not being critical of the Shah in order to avoid offending him. Marvin Zonis contends the U.S. began to take the word of SAVAK when it came to Iranian domestic politics for just that reason. Indeed, both the Office of National Intelligence for the Middle East and the Director of Central Intelligence complained of the lack of Persian speakers on the ground in Iran and the tendency to use intelligence provided by SAVAK. Falk and Pryor argue the relationship became about the sales of arms to Iran so much so that Iran passed West Germany as the leading consumer of U.S. armaments in 1975. Certainly, Saunders agreed and was not permitted, in 1969, to do a weapons review for Iran. Instead, Saunders claimed the Shah had a "blank check" for weapons by 1972. Moens also illustrates how the Shah had free reign on weapons purchases, especially after Iran became a U.S. surrogate in the Persian Gulf in 1970, and adds that Nixon and Ford both saw the Shah as a key source of markets for U.S. goods. Meanwhile, Pollack labels the Nixon years as a period of "utter neglect" towards Iran. Perhaps fittingly, as the hour of revolution grew near, the U.S. Ambassador to Tehran and former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Richard Helms, traveled from Tehran to Washington thirteen times from 1973 to 1976 in order to testify in the Watergate Hearings.

In many ways, Carter inherited a path dependent policy towards Iran and the Shah. By early 1977 United States policy was uncritically supportive of the Shah. The few voices within the bureaucracy that questioned the wisdom of such a policy were simply ignored. The United States needed Iran – for markets for U.S. goods, as a source of stability in the global oil markets, and as a security surrogate for the U.S. in the Persian Gulf. It appears the United States believed no alternative existed to a strong Shah as an ally and were unwilling to question the strategy of placing all bets on the Shah. This was the general policy environment that Carter entered in early 1977 – a policy environment in which information and the processing of data favored the Shah. In other words, the deck was clearly stacked in favor of and represented a motivated bias with regard to the Shah.

Chapter Six

Perspectives on the Carter Decision-Making Process

Introduction

It would first be beneficial to informally discuss cases and attributes of Carter's decision making and personality style before moving into the details regarding policy towards the Shah during the Iranian Revolution. What follows is a discussion from both primary and secondary sources briefly exploring the substance of Carter the decision-maker and reflecting on the method and manner in which he processed data and drew conclusions.

The biographies, memoirs, and historical analyses of Carter and his advisors reveal several cogent trends and patterns in the way Carter viewed his position as president and made decisions. Students of the Carter personality suggest he was an optimist and attempted to use politics in a positive manner. However, the Carter method also placed a considerable emphasis on his role and personality. Carter believed his involvement would settle the most complex issues. As a result, he studied those issues and became engaged in many of the policy details that are often left to advisors in a manner consistent with his view that a president should be extremely active in the creation of policy.

Carter's abundant self-confidence led him to often tackle very significant and complex problems. At the same time, his unrelenting focus on various concerns worked to form the agenda in such a way that he often neglected other policy issues. Frequently, Carter hoped that the issue would somehow resolve itself, or he managed to vacillate from position to position in the hopes that he could somehow delay the inevitable tipping point that called for a decision. With this in mind, Carter's self-confident bias influenced his belief that the presidency was an office destined for a great leader and that he could fill that role. What follows is a discussion of the dual nature of Carter as an unrelenting optimist aggressively attacking some policy domains and also falling victim to motivated bias and defensive avoidance regarding separate and unrelated policy realms.

Carter as a Self-Confident Optimist

One theme appearing quite often in the work done by historians and in the memoirs of Carter colleagues is the depiction of Carter as self-confident and an optimist. Betty Glad maintained that Carter could best be described as expansionistic and narcissistic.[508] Hence, Carter's inflated self-image led to high levels of self-confidence. For example, George Ball recollects his first meeting of Carter as one in which "I found the Governor eager to talk but not much interested in listening. He seemed totally enthralled by his campaign planning, describing in great detail the precise steps by which he intended to become President."[509] Ball was taken aback by Carter's self-confidence and "could scarcely believe he felt as self-assured as he seemed, for he appeared

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[508] Betty Glad, *Jimmy Carter, in Search of the Great White House* (New York: Norton, 1980).
[509] George W. Ball, *The Past has another Pattern: Memoirs* (New York: Norton, 1982), p. 451.

to have no doubt whatever that he would succeed in his quest."[510] Vincent Davis was even more critical than Ball in observing Carter:

> At the same time, he has a sublime kind of self-assurance in his knowledge and abilities, which he perceives to be far greater than almost anybody else will ever again perceive them to be this terrifying sense of being right is not much mitigated by an inclination to think that he may in fact be wrong from time to time. If and when Mr. Carter thinks he has been wrong it will because some perceived inner voice – not the voices of others – will have told him so.[511]

Carter was so fixed on his opinion and decisions that even Rosalynn concedes that she could "seldom sway him when his mind was made up."[512]

Carter's positive self-view commenced in his childhood when he made the decision, while in grammar school, that he would attend the Naval Academy. He ordered a school catalog and planned his future studies and reading choices in order to fit Annapolis requirements.[513] Carter as a student in the seventh grade developed a list of healthy mental habits. The first two of his healthy mental habits were the importance of expectations and optimism and the belief that one can accomplish expected goals.[514] In order to completely understand Carter, Mazlish and Diamond contend one must also understand the Georgian's self confidence as a function of his "heritage, religion, and mind cure-philosophy" and recognize that his self-confidence sometimes "lapses into exaggerated claims and illusions."[515] Glad added that such an individual often finds difficulty in adapting to situations or in facing the reality that they may be wrong.[516]

The rigid manner by which Carter held to previous decisions is connected to his self-confidence. Once Carter unequivocally states a positive opinion it was hard for him to revisit his analysis because it would serve to negatively impact future positive thoughts.[517] Greenstein spoke of Carter's intelligence and ability to master complex issues but also added that Carter was "fixed in his ideas and unwilling to brook disagreement."[518] For example, Jimmy Carter the presidential candidate proposed that United States troops be withdrawn from South Korea. Carter's belief was so rooted that he refused a CIA briefing paper upon his election, minimized concerns expressed by South Korea, and disagreed with his own national security team on the issue.[519] Similarly, George Ball spoke of Carter holding an "inflexible morality" that "diminished Carter's effectiveness, since he could not reconcile it with the political process."[520]

Mazlish and Diamond suggested the source of Carter's self-confidence can be found in the myth of good versus evil and that Carter tended to view himself in the position of David

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[510] Ball, *The Past has another Pattern*, p. 451.

[511] Vincent Davis, "Carter Tries on the World for Size," *The Post-Imperial Presidency* ed. Vincent Davis (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1980), p. 186.

[512] Rosalyn Carter, *First Lady from Plains* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984), p. 165.

[513] Bruce Mazlish and Edwin Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1979), p. 90.

[514] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, p. 159.

[515] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, p. 255.

[516] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, pp. 493-494.

[517] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, p. 255.

[518] Fred E. Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference*: *Leadership Style from FDR to George W. Bush* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 143.

[519] Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference*, p. 143.

[520] Ball, *The Past has another Pattern*, p. 453.

attempting to slay the Biblical Goliath. The energy that comes from the confrontation "emotionally sustains Jimmy Carter … It creates a self-confidence that allows him to walk with righteousness and run with certainty."[521] Glad suggested Carter's idealization of self could lead to the underestimation of others and the tendency to overrate one's self.[522] That elevated view of self even led to occasions in the 1976 presidential campaign when "the line between fact and wish had become blurred in his mind."[523] An example of Carter's tendency to elevate his own standing was his tendency to refer to himself as a nuclear scientist. In point of fact, Carter's sum total of all nuclear training was a one-semester noncredit course at Union College.[524] Carter's self confidence also led to him to take a number of risks. Glad characterized the Carter campaign team as "high rollers" that would spend funds early in the campaign with the belief that later wins would bring in the necessary funds to continue.[525] At the same time, the Carter mantra was one oozing of self-confidence because he could not face losing as an option.[526]

Self-confidence and optimism shaped the Carter worldview, as well. Rosati's study of Carter reveals an administration interested in promoting peace through a cooperative global community. Carter talked optimistically about the future and concentrated his pursuit on positive rather than negative goals. Carter's May 1977 Note Dame Commencement Speech, which laid out much of his foreign policy agenda, advanced an optimistic view of the world as he claimed "we are now free of that inordinate fear of communism" and he spoke of a "new foreign policy" based upon "optimism in historical vision" and "designed to serve mankind."[527] Even with regard to the Soviet Union, Rosati observed that the Carter administration viewed the Cold War opponent as "generally positive" in its intentions 71.4 percent of the time.[528] In addition, the general positive nature of the Carter administration belief system can be seen in the specific issues that it tackled early in the administration. Carter reserved significant positions in his initial agenda for issues such as the promotion of human rights, normalization of relations with China, SALT II, arms control, the Panama Canal, and attempts to settle the longstanding Middle East crisis. In short, Rosati argues that Carter's general faith in human nature and religious beliefs, at least initially, played a key role in the development of Carter's worldview, and his general belief in human nature "led him to harbor optimistic impressions of many of the world's actors."[529] Robert Tucker, *New Republic* columnist, suggested Carter's view of the world was so positive that his corresponding policies have "not responded to the often harsh realities of the world" and Carter "assumed harmonies where none have existed."[530] Carter would often cite the work of Niebuhr in holding hope for the future and government as the necessary vehicle to bring about justice in the world.[531] Erwin Hargrove added that the Carter template with difficult issues was to aim for comprehensive solutions and, if necessary, revise and pull back. Such a strategy also

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[521] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, p. 143.

[522] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, pp. 493-494.

[523] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 493.

[524] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 64.

[525] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 265.

[526] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, p. 15.

[527] Jimmy Carter, "University of Notre Dame – Address at Commencement Exercises at the University," May 22, 1977.

[528] Jerel A. Rosati, *The Carter Administration's Quest for Global Community: Beliefs and Their Impact on Behavior* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), pp. 39-53.

[529] Rosati, *The Carter Administration's Quest for Global Community*, p. 105.

[530] Robert W. Tucker, "Reagan without Tears," *The New Republic* May 17, 1980.

[531] Rosati, *The Carter Administration's Quest for Global Community*, p. 154.

included the theme of optimism in the ability to reach a solution.[532] For example, Carter introduced a new energy policy in April of 1977. Despite the pronouncement of a new policy the institutional and bureaucratic questions were not resolved and "competing interests often tried to win his support by offering advice they thought he wanted to hear rather than recommendations worked out after careful deliberation."[533]

The Carter Presidential Image

Carter's presidential image may have been influenced by self-serving bias and optimism. A key characteristic in Carter decisions was the extent to which he became personally involved in the process. The nucleus of the Carter administration was the man from Plains and he held control of many of the policy apparatuses.

The notion of Carter serving as the epicenter of significant decisions but surrounded by a host of advisors could even be seen in his days as Governor of the state of Georgia when he attempted to reform the state government. Carter, in order to streamline reforms, appointed more than 100 individuals to various teams and constructed a screening process whereby all recommendations went through a seven member executive committee – that included Carter. Four of the other six members were, in one way or another, politically indebted to Carter. The institutional structure allowed Carter "to keep his finger on the whole planning process – to help frame the recommendations that came to him."[534] He exercised control even while in the Georgia State Senate over paperwork by attempting to read every line of every bill representing a trait that would continue in his presidency.[535]

The story surrounding the need for control was not much different around Carter as president. Cyrus Vance recalled that "in the Carter foreign policy apparatus, the personal dimension would be unusually important."[536] Hargrove noted that "Carter dominated the process of decision making, imposing his priorities and acting as the integrating force among advisors."[537] Ultimately, he needed to remain in control of the policy process. As a result, Carter constructed a large White House Staff and opted to work without a Chief of Staff for the first thirty months of his administration. The utilization of the White House tennis courts along with the initial demand that they be scheduled directly through Carter illustrated his need for control over the most minute of details.[538] In other words, Carter espoused his view of the presidency as one of the "great man" ideal and argued that only one individual can lead and call for Americans to follow.[539] Moreover, that great man would reign central in all decisions.

More or less, Carter deviated from the pattern established by his predecessors in that he did not leave details to his subordinates.[540] In fact, many began to accuse of the president of

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[532] Erwin C. Hargrove, *Jimmy Carter as President: Leadership and the Politics of the Public Good* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), p. 142.

[533] Burton Ira Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.*, (Lawrence, Kan.: University Press of Kansas, 1993), p. 34.

[534] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, pp. 161-163.

[535] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, pp. 117-118.

[536] Cyrus R. Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), p. 35.

[537] Hargrove, *Jimmy Carter as President*, p. 169.

[538] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, p. 242.

[539] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 347.

[540] Robert A. Strong, *Working in the World: Jimmy Carter and the Making of American Foreign Policy* (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2000), pp. 205-206.

micromanaging minute details and not allowing Cabinet members to do their jobs. In an April 1977 meeting at Camp David with advisors, Carter was forced to address the level of public dissent that appeared after policy decisions. In the meeting complaints against Carter included the lack of a coherent direction and "… it was clear from external events that Carter failed to consult with Cabinet members on items that were within their professional domain."[541] The extent of the Carter personal hold over policy was evident in a July meeting of national leaders at Camp David, as well. Carter, on the eve of an important policy speech regarding the U.S. dependence on foreign oil, abruptly cancelled the speech and called on both aides and important national figures to report to Camp David in order to discuss the state of the country and administration. Meg Greenfield, a *Newsweek* columnist who attended, described the role played by Carter as unusual in that he leads by abandoning government institutions and dealing directly with others at the individual level. Greenfield suggested that the process was akin to a monarchy and that Carter was "somehow the benevolent Shakespearean duke, the ruler figure in whom all authority reposes, along with all capacity to bring peace and blessing to the duchy."[542]

Foreign policy provides evidence of Carter working as the "great man" in determining questions of high politics. Normalization of relations with China led to a Carter address to the people of the United States concerning the breakthrough and its significance. When Carter believed the microphone was off he followed his speech with the line " 'Massive applause … throughout the nation.'"[543] As president, generally, in the conduct of foreign affairs Carter pushed the ideas of cooperation but emphasized his own ability to solve problems or personally negotiate.[544] During the Camp David negotiations between Egypt and Israel when all seemed lost and Sadat had sent a message that he intended to return home – Carter used his force of personality and one on one appeals to Sadat to convince him to stay.[545] When subsequent peace talks concerning the Middle East were near collapse, in early 1979, Carter announced in March of that year that he would travel to the Middle East in order to attempt to conclude the stalled negotiations.[546]

Another example of Carter's insistence on being the center of policy and personally attacking all issues was the short campaign controversy that developed over abortion rights. Carter, specifically told by his advisors to avoid the issue, arranged a face to face meeting with Catholic Bishops in Washington, D.C. for late August of 1976 showing "an almost feckless faith in his own ability to charm and persuade."[547] The Carter-central nature of the presidency was the Carter vision and leadership style. In fact, Carter speechwriter James Fallows commented that "Carter has not given us an idea to follow. The central idea of the Carter Administration is Carter himself ... The only thing that finally gives coherence to the items of his creed is that he happens to believe them all."[548]

Case studies support the episodic observations and biographical recollections of a Carter White House focused strictly around Carter. For example, Rosati concurred that the collective image of the Carter administration "was heavily dependent on the image held by President

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[541] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 441.
[542] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 445.
[543] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 434.
[544] Hargrove, *Jimmy Carter as President*, p. 168.
[545] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 432.
[546] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, pp. 435-436.
[547] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 308.
[548] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 485.

Carter."[549] Weintraub's analysis of Carter press conferences added to the idea that Carter's personality was the engine that drove his administration. For example, Carter used "I" a high number of times in explaining decisions and problems. Weintraub concluded that "it is likely that he saw his presidency as a 'Jimmy Carter' administration rather than himself as leader of the party in power."[550] In those same press conferences, Carter would attempt to overwhelm reporters with his knowledge of the facts and react "defensively when his competence was questioned."[551]

Hargrove observed that the Carter decision making model was one that stressed collegiality but placed Carter firmly in the center of the disparate streams of advice.[552] Glad added that the Carter Foreign Policy and Defense Task Force reflected the collegiality model. Specifically, the choices of Brzezinski, Vance, Sorenson, Warnke, Yost, Lake, Holbrooke, Gardener, and Nitze covered a wide spectrum of opinions – "It included defenders and critics of the Vietnam War, both hard and soft liners on weapon's developments, both hawks and doves on the United States's relationship with Russia."[553] The ultimate goal of such a diverse group of advisors, according to Glad, was so Carter could "emerge as a person concerned with research and the facts, without paying the price of being closely identified with one specific policy orientation."[554]

Often, the idea of Carter being the center of the policy making universe brought successes. For example, the Camp David negotiations featured Carter "bold and fully in command of his own agenda and own administration."[555] In fact, Barber observed, the negotiations at Camp David were noted for Carter's intense involvement. That is, Carter studied every aspect of the negotiations and talked with leaders as well as ambassadors and aides. At times, Carter would stay up negotiating until two or three in the morning only to rise at six or seven to continue. In fact, Carter led in the preparation of "twenty-three successive drafts of an agreement, many in his own hand."[556]

During the 1976 presidential campaign Jody Powell compared the advisory process of a future Carter presidency as similar to spokes in a wheel. Advisors would serve in a capacity that would direct information to Carter who could then make a decision.[557] Indeed, during the 1976 campaign Carter often spoke of his opposition to the centralized decision-making process that characterized the Nixon White House.[558] And, in that same campaign rhetoric, Carter spoke eloquently of Harry Truman's management style as president – one in which the president took full responsibility for decision making. [559]

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[549] Rosati, *The Carter Administration's Quest for Global Community*, p. 159.

[550] Walter Weintraub, "Personality Profiles of American Presidents as Revealed in Their Public Statements: The Presidential News Conferences of Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan," *Political Psychology* 7.2 (1986), p.293.

[551] Weintraub, "Personality Profiles of American Presidents," p. 292.

[552] Hargrove, *Jimmy Carter as President*, p. 114.

[553] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 269.

[554] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 269.

[555] Strong, *Working in the World*, p. 207.

[556] Barber, *The Presidential Character*, p. 442.

[557] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 411.

[558] Hargrove, *Jimmy Carter as President*, p. 113.

[559] Timothy P. Maga, *The World of Jimmy Carter: U.S. Foreign Policy, 1977-1981* (West Haven, Conn.: University of New Haven Press, 1994), p. 43.

The need to win, the need to be right, self-serving bias, and optimism can all precede motivated bias in the processing of incoming data. The key question is whether or not the personality traits and behavior discussed above impacted the Carter decision-making process. We return to an informal analysis utilizing biographies and memoirs from the Carter period.

One prescient example is of attempted welfare reform. Carter wanted a major overhaul of the welfare system but often set unrealistic deadlines and "failed to make the hard choices."[560] Carter's farm policy suffered similarly in that he established the farm policy but did not provide even the Secretary of Agriculture the necessary authority to coordinate that policy.[561] The President continued support of embattled aide Bert Lance "well beyond the bounds of political prudence."[562] Each of these examples again revisits the notion that a motivated bias may plausibly explain Carter's decisions. Attempts at welfare reform stalled because Carter could not face difficult choices, agricultural policy authority remained under the control of Carter, and the attitude adopted during the Lance affair was that the ship would pass and that the decision would stand.

Carter's optimism and self-serving bias led him to the conclusion that hard work and determination would be enough to reach a consensus and solve any issue regardless of how complex. He demonstrated motivated bias in the belief that he could solve any problem and he often attacked difficult policy problems despite warnings from his advisors. Indeed, he desired to be a problem solver steeped in the Wilsonian tradition of hope for both peace and human rights.[563] Carter "called for diversity of advice within a collegial setting emphasizing homework and knowledge. More than anything else he searched for hard problems to solve because he was good at problem solving and his world view required it."[564] Gary Sick, a member of the National Security Council, agreed in suggesting that Carter was activist and held "a deep commitment to specific goals."[565]

Carter was, in fact, good at problem solving because – as his advisors and students of his administration suggest – Carter's processing of information was based on study and homework. Barber noted that since childhood Carter had been an avid reader even to the point of taking a speed reading course so that he could read three books a week.[566] Strong echoed the image of Carter as the fervent reader and maintained that Carter remained open to many foreign policy ideas that more traditional politicians avoided.[567] Sick added that Carter "absorbed large quantities of material quickly and made decisions without long, agonizing delays" and when "faced with a difficult problem, he [Carter] dealt with it on its own merits, disassembled it into its component parts the better to understand and solve it."[568] Barber emphasized that Carter's strength was in his effort to do homework and be prepared – "Carter was a rabid empiricist, a data-hound, an information freak in the White House" and compared Carter to a "student trying

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[560] Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.*, p. 54.
[561] Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.*, p. 57.
[562] Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.*, p. 160.
[563] Hargrove, *Jimmy Carter as President*, pp. 121-122.
[564] Hargrove, *Jimmy Carter as President*, p. 164.
[565] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 38.
[566] James David Barber, *The Presidential Character: Predicting Performance in the White House* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1992), p. 399.
[567] Strong, *Working in the World*, p. 204.
[568] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 38.

to take every course at once."[569] The need to prepare, however, also serves as one of the criticisms of Carter in that he became "swamped by his own diligence."[570]

A number of examples point to the Carter template of systematically attacking issues. For example, while campaigning for Governor of Georgia, Carter kept a small notebook and in it listed each campaign promise. Then, Carter checked off each promise as they were fulfilled. While running for president and reviewing issue stances with advisors during the presidential campaign Carter did not address them by level of importance but reviewed each one by one – alphabetically.[571] An identical pattern emerged with Carter as the president. Carter met with his advisors and congressional leaders before his inauguration in order to set out his activist foreign policy agenda: a Panama Canal Treaty, relations with China, a stronger footprint in Africa, and Middle East peace.[572] Burton Kaufman categorized Carter as a modern progressive because Carter championed good government and strove for efficiency and a government based on rational policies.[573] Yet, the systematic and efficient approach of the mind of the engineer also is seen, by some analysts, as underlying an overall approach of pushing for comprehensive policy problems that frequently are "too ambitious and baffling in practice."[574] The end result of such an approach is one of Carter "reaching for the stars yet grasping little" through "idealistic pronouncements on the basis of general principles rather than of local realities in the affected countries."[575]

Rosati submitted that although Carter lacked foreign policy experience, he was "highly motivated."[576] In fact, according to Strong, Carter maintained an active daily routine with regard to world events – Carter would read a number of daily newspapers, clippings and summaries prepared by the White House Press office of national papers, wire service stories, and news broadcasts as well as the daily intelligence summaries of developments in capitals across the world.[577] Barber wrote that a typical day for Carter would involve waking up at five in order to report to his office by seven and then work twelve hours until dinner. After dinner, Carter would often put in another two or three hours of work.[578] Adelman believes it was Carter's lack of foreign policy experience that explains some of the problems that developed during his administration including instances when "the president was often startled by seemingly predictable diplomatic events, mostly of his own making."[579]

Glad points out that once president, Carter, quickly took the initiative in controversial issues. The day after Carter was inaugurated he issued an executive order pardoning Vietnam draft evaders.[580] Yet, on other controversial issues, Carter would have difficulty suggesting policy and exhibited a "deep-seated reluctance to draw lines."[581] Serfaty described the Carter

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[569] Barber, *The Presidential Character*, p. 444.
[570] M. Charlton, "The President's Men at the NSC: The Struggle under Carter," *The National Interest* Fall (1990), p. 103.
[571] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 483.
[572] Carter, *First Lady from Plains*, p. 186.
[573] Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.*, p. 28.
[574] Kenneth L. Adelman, "The Runner Stumbles: Carter's Foreign Policy in the Year One," *Policy Review*, 3 (Winter 1978), p. 106.
[575] Adelman, "The Runner Stumbles," p. 109.
[576] Rosati, *The Carter Administration's Quest for Global Community*, p. 104.
[577] Strong, *Working in the World*, p. 85.
[578] Barber, *The Presidential Character*, p. 446.
[579] Adelman, "The Runner Stumbles," p. 90.
[580] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 412.
[581] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, p. 238.

White House as one that operated under the equivalent of a zero-base budget model when it came to foreign policy issues. That is, a problem or conflict should not exist if it need not exist.[582] Thus, many of the early policy objectives reflected a predilection for the desirable over the feasible."[583]

Carter and Defensive Avoidance

A frequent criticism of the Carter Presidency was his tendency to avoid significant issues. McGeehan, of *World Today*, opined that "the Administration's crisis-response was becoming habitually passive" and Carter "had gained a reputation for vacillation and indecisiveness."[584] Tucker observed that when Carter faced difficult foreign policy issues he "responded by refusing to take them seriously" while exhibiting a "persisting failure to confront the great problems of American foreign policy."[585] Domestically, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. claimed a similar pattern – "with his compulsion to dodge responsibility, Carter has tried to distance himself from inflation, high interest rates, looming recession, giving the impression that he … is the victim of forces beyond human control."[586] Indeed, Carter tackled many difficult issues but also had a tendency to avoid and send conflicting signals regarding other issues. What Carter could not solve through the sheer force of personality or address with his systemic engineer-like propensity to problem solve could end up either ignored or subject to vacillation. Carter's life before the presidency and during his term in office provides a number of relevant examples of indecision and the inability to make a permanent decision.

One prescient example was the issue of school integration in Georgia. Carter avoided the issue despite the fact that he was intimately familiar with educational issues.[587] Carter, a member of his local school board, claimed months after the landmark *Brown* v. *Board* decision that he did not know white children were bused to school while blacks walked. Nevertheless, Carter then pushed for equal facilities while suggesting the institutions could also remain separate. Mazlish and Diamond referenced Carter's habit of avoiding uncomfortable judgments through revisionist recollections - "Just as he had suppressed his memory of his family's role in the tenancy system, so too had he managed to overlook the realities of school integration."[588] Furthermore, often when "caught between strong competing forces," Glad suggests that "Carter showed a tendency to duck."[589] A number of explicit situations illustrate the Glad analysis. Carter, while Georgia's governor, avoided making any decision concerning the completion of Interstates 485 and 75. He, instead, relied on pollsters for the I-485 decision and the Secretary of Transportation with I-75. Carter's position on the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) further demonstrated his pattern of equivocation on issues. Specifically, he would cite his support for the ERA but, in the same sentence, manage to add qualifications or note that many did not agree with his position.[590] His

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[582] Simon Serfaty, "Play it Again, Zbig," Foreign Policy, No. 32 (autumn, 1978), p. 12.
[583] Serfaty, "Play it Again, Zbig," p. 13.
[584] Robert McGeehan, "Carter's Crises: Iran, Afghanistan and Presidential Politics," *World Today* 36:5 (May) 163-171.
[585] Tucker, "Regan without Tears," p. 23.
[586] Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., "The Great Carter Mystery," *The New Republic* April 12, 1980: p. 201.
[587] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 95.
[588] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, p. 129.
[589] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 181.
[590] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 184.

position on abortion was similarly qualified in that he argued he was against abortions but would not back a constitutional prohibition.[591] By in large, the Carter template of politics that began to emerge as early as the late 1950s as a strategy to "integrate contradictions and to avoid confrontations."[592]

Carter's pattern of avoiding or qualifying definitive stances on particularly troublesome issues continued throughout the 1976 primary, general election, and presidency. Jerry Brown attempted to carve out a speaker's slot at the Democratic National Convention in an effort to gain support for the vice-presidential position by means of openly confronting Carter. The strategy the Carter team developed was to simply ignore Brown.[593] Carter also activated a similar defensive avoidant response in the controversy surrounding the nomination of Paul Warnke as the Director of Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and chief negotiator for SALT. Carter biographer Robert Strong described the Carter strategy to the Warnke opposition as simply one to "weather the storm."[594] The tendency of Carter to "wait out" controversy and stall in the decision-making process was evident, as well, in foreign policy. One prescient example was the diplomatic row that developed over the Federated States of Micronesia. The CBS news program *60 Minutes* challenged U.S. foreign policy in Micronesia and Guam in a December 1979 broadcast. The program alleged the U.S., including Carter, purposely created a welfare state of Micronesia in the several decades after the defeat of Japan. Carter's response to the story was quite familiar and "as in the case of Iran and Afghanistan, Carter hoped the bad press would simply go away" and one biographer noted that Carter's strategic response to the news report was a case of "wishful thinking."[595]

Carter also skillfully invoked a strategy of nonalignment in addition to the pattern of avoiding highly contestable political topics. Glad confirmed the Carter template of equivocation in observing "mostly Carter skillfully fudged on the controversial issues. He did this by sending out complex messages that various listeners could interpret according to their own dispositions."[596] One noteworthy instance occurred during a Carter interview with Bill Moyers. Carter pledged to Moyers in the interview that he would never get involved in internal military matters relating to other countries. Moyers pressed the issue regarding South Korea which led Carter to hedge his pronouncement by defining South Korea as a previous commitment and not subject to his statement.[597] The vacillation in interviews and public pronouncements also tended to be evident in important policy decisions which were characterized by "vacillation and self-contradiction" in an effort to "account for both righteousness and political pragmatism."[598]

Policy issues with South Africa and Namibian independence also illustrate the Carter tendency to "kick the can down the road" and how such decisional avoidance impacted policy stances. Basically, Carter entered office in January of 1977 committed to regaining lost prestige in Africa. As such, Carter hoped to achieve black majority rule in Rhodesia, ultimately end apartheid in South Africa, and oversee Namibian independence form South Africa. For its part, South Africa avoided United Nations resolutions calling for free elections as it continued

[591] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 308.

[592] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, p. 138.

[593] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 275.

[594] Strong, *Working in the World*, pp. 32-33.

[595] Maga, *The World of Jimmy Carter*, pp. 80-81.

[596] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 306.

[597] Glad, *Jimmy Carter, In Search of the Great White House*, p. 307.

[598] Osgood, "Carter Policy in Perspective," *SAIS Review*, (winter, 1981), p. 21.

negotiations with interested world actors.[599] South Africa was only willing to hold elections if they were convinced that the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) would not win. That moment never came. Instead, South Africa believed SWAPO would sweep elections so did whatever was necessary to lengthen negotiations while still giving the appearance of cooperation with the world community. As talk increased in the United Nations to implement a sanctions regime, Carter avoided pressuring South Africa – "he did not reject the possibility of sanctions outright – he simply deferred decision."[600] Meanwhile, Vance engaged in shuttle diplomacy in order to resolve the standoff but "without having the sanctions arrow in his quiver" held very little leverage over the recalcitrant Pretoria regime. In the end, the South African foreign ministry believed their strategy led to the conditions necessary for the Western Five negotiators to deceive themselves.[601]

The presidency centered around Carter; but, at the same time, as the central figure, Carter, often avoided issues. Such a model of behavior, to be sure, fits with the story of the 1978 United Mine Workers strike. United Mine Workers numbering some 165,000 plus went on strike on December 6, 1978. Initially Carter "did not take much official notice of the strike."[602] However, Carter used the office of president as a bully-pulpit to force a resolution once arbitration between the companies and union began.[603] In another example, Carter's lack of a consistent message regarding the gasoline shortage in early 1979 demonstrates of Carter's hedging on burdensome issues. Carter, in spring of 1979, cited a gasoline supply shortage of some 5% to 20%. Later, when meeting with California Governor Jerry Brown Carter suggested that government assistance was not needed in order to provide a solution to the gasoline shortage. Carter then announced during an Iowa speech he would not veto a bill that extended gasoline controls.[604]

Carter as a decision maker who hedges, equivocates, or avoids selected policy issues was evident in three basic foreign and defense policy domains: the African question, policy in Nicaragua, and the debate over Enhanced Radiation Weapons. Cyrus Vance recalled Carter's hesitation with policy choices in Africa. Vance believed the U.S. position regarding Somali and Ethiopian disagreement over Ogaden was lacking in that "we needed to be more consistent in explaining the purposes of our policies or we would end in creating public uncertainty and confusion."[605] In fact, throughout the Carter administration policy toward Africa, Vance notes, the internal divisions over whether to link Africa to the larger U.S. – Soviet rivalry "was undercutting our ability to conduct a consistent and coherent foreign policy."[606] Another question pertaining to African policy was the presence of Cuban troops on Angola. Vance maintained that the policy conclusions were mixed and conflicting – "Carter was of two minds about Angola."[607] Carter wanted cooperation with Angola in order to address the security issues that resulted in Cuban troop deployment but did not want, at the same time, to appear too soft in dealing with

[599] Piero Gleijeses, "A Test of Wills: Jimmy Carter, South Africa, and the Independence of Namibia," *Diplomatic History* 34.5 (2010); 853-891.
[600] Gleijeses, "A Test of Wills," p. 886.
[601] Gleijeses, "A Test of Wills."
[602] Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr*., p. 78.
[603] Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr*., p. 79.
[604] Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr*., p. 141.
[605] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 88.
[606] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 91.
[607] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 275.

Cuba. Vance believes that "in retrospect, it is clear that we should have acted quickly to normalize relations. Such a move would have enhanced our ability to negotiate with Luanda."[608]

Nicaragua also provides an interesting glimpse into the workings of Carter foreign policy formulation. The revolutionary Sandinistas prepared to take over from the brutal Somoza regime. Maga contends that it was too late to make any difference in the Nicaraguan political landscape by the time Carter prepared an initiative to protect U.S. interests in the Central American nation.[609] Kaufman argues the Carter policy toward Nicaragua followed the pattern of equivocation. At one point, the U.S. terminated all military and most economic aid to Nicaragua. Shortly after, a *Washington Post* article implied Carter was reconsidering his position. Kaufman observed that although the U.S. policy did not change "it seemed to demonstrate that Carter was incapable of a resolute response to a deteriorating situation even in the United States' own backyard."[610] Furthermore, Maga labeled the Carter policy towards Nicaragua as "confused" and contended that "in effect, there was no working Nicaraguan policy."[611] Carter perceived the Nicaraguan Revolution as inspiring for the people of Nicaragua and believed the experience would lead to more democratic opportunities for the Nicaraguan people – an analysis Maga calls a "bizarre conclusion."[612] The suggestion that communism and democracy would somehow merge to create democratic opportunities, Maga argues, was not evident from the evidence at hand – "There was no evidence of this marriage, no evidence of an approaching democratic agenda, no evidence of a relationship with the new Nicaragua that would be 'uplifting' for American interests or the Carter administration's political fortunes."[613] Furthermore, Carter hoped that "generous rhetoric and a $100 million aid plan would influence" Sandinista Nicaragua to move toward democratic reforms and not be swayed by communist influence despite the long record of U.S. support for the brutal Somoza regime. In other words, Carter's policy choice was based on hope.[614] Both Carter and Vance made positive conclusions with regard to Nicaragua based upon the confusion of American policy. Specifically, the two believed uncertain U.S. policy would result in less communist agitation – because communist states were not sure how the U.S. may react.[615]

Another Carter policy discussion oft-cited is the international controversy that developed over Enhanced Radiation Weapons (ERWs – also known as the neutron bomb). Scientists designed the neutron bomb to kill but to not destroy property. Ostensibly, the purpose of ERWs was to destroy Soviet tanks as they advanced through Central Europe while keeping cities intact. Many questioned the morality of such a weapon design. Discussions were held between the U.S. and its European allies as early as 1977 regarding the deployment of ERWs and Carter pushed for European allies to officially request the weapon while the allies, due to internal politics, were unwilling to make such a public demand. These negotiations went on for over six months. Vance recalls that Carter signed off on all the progress reports and was fully updated during the negotiations. The U.S. and its European allies finally reached a compromise that in a March 1978 meeting the North Atlantic Council would make a general and ambiguous statement of support for the deployment of ERWs instead of the public request for deployment. Carter's aides

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[608] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 275.
[609] Maga, *The World of Jimmy Carter*, p. 134.
[610] Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.*, p. 131.
[611] Maga, *The World of Jimmy Carter*, p. 133.
[612] Maga, *The World of Jimmy Carter*, p. 133.
[613] Maga, *The World of Jimmy Carter*, p. 133.
[614] Maga, *The World of Jimmy Carter*, p. 134.
[615] Maga, *The World of Jimmy Carter*, p. 135.

unanimously favored the compromise. But, Carter ordered Vance to call of the North Atlantic meeting on the eve of the summit because Carter remained adamant that the Europeans must request the ERWs. Vance concluded the incident damaged U.S. credibility in the eyes of many European allies.[616] Later, Brzezinski – in his memoirs – would suggest Carter did not want to deal with the ERW issue. Brzezinski recalls Carter "was clearly very displeased by the fact that the decision-making process has been moving forward and that we were about to make a key decision."[617] Indeed, one logical explanation for Carter's behavior is that he procrastinated and avoided a decision – in the hopes, the wishful thinking, that the issue would somehow become resolved without a major decision on his part. Strong, however, argues the ERW controversy was not an example, as popularly perceived, of Carter's failure to make a decision. Instead, Strong contends, Carter merely was a victim of failing to make his own position on the issue clear to allies, the public, and even his own staff until very late in the debate.[618] Ultimately, however, whether it was a failure to make a decision or the failure to communicate a decision, the end result is much the same. That is, the policy from Washington appeared indecisive and equivocating. In fact, Maga categorized Carter foreign policy as generally a "burden" to the administration and contended decisions on policy "were made and reversed on a day-to-day basis."[619]

Many of the cases and examples cited heretofore do not provide overwhelming evidence of motivated bias by the Carter regime nor can one claim empirical rigor. The holistic weight of evidence, however, points to the plausibility that motivated bias may have influenced Carter's decision-making process. Indeed, a perfunctory examination of Carter the person juxtaposed with Carter the decision-maker yields several germane conclusions. Although the final word on the Carter Presidency remains undecided and a source of disagreement among historians, what is quite clear is the perspective Carter brought to the process of policy decisions. Carter's self-image is of a positive an optimistic nature. The personal choices Carter made in life as well the policy options Carter the politician made both reflect his positive view of himself. As a result, Carter saw himself as a bit of a crusader destined to make the world a better place and constructed a presidency in his own self-image. Yet, at the same time, Carter tended to avoid difficult issues largely because they threatened his own self-view. Positive thinking in the realm of politics, at the same time, may produce a "dangerous illusion" and critics of Carter point to his self-confidence as a gateway to self-deception.[620]

Carter's personality, however, is only part of the larger picture of motivated bias with regard to policy toward Iran and the Shah. We have already seen that the idea of the Shah as unchallenged was a policy that evolved from LBJ to Ford. The policy leaders in the United States perceived the Shah as a significant linchpin to security in the Persian Gulf, assistance in containing the Soviet Union, and an ally in the world petroleum markets. Loss of the Shah, to many policy-makers years before Carter took office, was a potential disaster they were unwilling to face. What makes the Carter policy choices important is not what he ultimately decided but what he failed to decide. His lack of response to the Islamic Revolution may be plausibly explained by his self-confidence, image, and use of motivated bias. Yet, it is also important to note that the path dependent nature of previous policies towards Iran, the bureaucratic in-fighting

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[616] Vance, *Hard Choices*, pp. 94-96.
[617] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 304.
[618] Strong, *Working in the World*, p. 146.
[619] Maga, *The World of Jimmy Carter*, p. 118.
[620] Mazlish and Diamond, *Jimmy Carter: A Character Portrait*, pp. 254-255.

between State and the National Security Staff, and even the spokes of the wheel decision model also contributed to Carter's policy product.

Part III

THE CASES

Chapter Seven
Island of Stability: The United States and the Shah, 1977

Many of the after the fact analyses of the failure of United States policy to either predict the revolutionary potential or react to events as they unfolded in Iran mark 1977 as the year of initial missed opportunities. Cottam believes that "by 1977 there was a predisposition for revolution" and the only group capable of influencing the masses, the religious, began to become more openly critical of the Shah and his policies.[621] Two key advisors within the United States policy establishment – Huntington and Odom – called for a reexamination of the stability of the Shah's regime. The call went unanswered.[622] A postmortem done by the Georgetown University Working Group came to similar conclusions in suggesting the U.S. policy community began minimizing warnings about the future of the Shah as early as 1977. Moreover, intelligence data questioning the belief of the Shah as unassailable and unchallenged raised few eyebrows in Washington because the United States feared offending the Shah.[623]

In spite of the increasing volume of intelligence data questioning the stability of the Shah, optimism appeared to be the line of thinking as Carter prepared to take the reigns of government from Ford. Sick alluded to a path dependent policy in that Carter had no real new policy toward Iran and expected to follow that of previous administrations.[624] Nickel agreed and added that he saw "no evidence that the Carter administration made any serious effort to take a fresh look" at assumptions regarding the political circumstances of the Shah.[625] A transition briefing paper from the Department of State gave no reason to alter course and highlighted two clear facts regarding Iranian politics – (1) the Shah was the individual in charge and made all decisions and (2) Iran was a politically stable state. In fact, State added, the Shah's popularity extended over a broad spectrum of society and included strong support in rural regions and with the military. Opposition, to the level any existed, not only was minor but also limited to small terrorist cells.[626] The Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) completed "The Future of Iran: Implications for the US" that month and advanced the prediction that "Iran is likely to remain stable under the Shah's leadership over the next several years" and "the prospects are good that Iran will have relatively clear sailing until at least the mid-1980s."[627] However, the INR couched their prediction with several caveats. First, the INR suggested economic and political difficulties may threaten the loyalty of the armed forces and, in addition, many of the more junior officers tended to be nationalistic and resentful of the foreign influence in Iran. Opposition to the Shah, moreover, extended beyond the small terrorist cells and also included segments of the intelligentsia, the middle class, and religious conservatives. The future of the Shah could best be

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[621] Cottam, *Iran and the United States: A Cold War Study*, p. 10.
[622] Hargrove, *Jimmy Carter as President*, p. 154.
[623] Trverton and Klocke, *The Fall of the Shah*, p. 12.
[624] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 24.
[625] Nickel, "The U.S. Failure in Iran."
[626] United States Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Secret, Briefing Paper, "Iran [Paper on U.S. Policy toward Iran Prepared for the Carter Transition Team]," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 3, 1977).
[627] United States Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Secret, Report, "The Future of Iran: Implications for the U.S.," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 28, 1977).

measured in economic prosperity according to the INR analysis. That is, stability and the continued governance of the Shah were strongly linked to the improving standard of living. Furthermore, the report concluded that a number of serious economic issues will need addressed by the Shah including - the growing gap between urban and rural incomes, the lack of agricultural production, educational issues that resulted in a 66 percent illiteracy rate and the training of merely 1000 teachers per year for a population of 34,000,000, and the corruption endemic to the Shah's regime. The INR noted the modern economic development program under the Shah would bring political problems and he could not afford any slowing of economic growth because the expectations of the elite already may be difficult to meet. Finally, the Shah also faced increased student unrest as more receive higher education because "the newer generation of aspiring elite is not likely to accept permanent exclusion from the decisionmaking process."[628]

Clearly, policy toward Iran and the Shah during the Carter administration would remain, more or less, the same as Nixon and Ford. Complications, however, would arise due to Carter campaign promises of encouraging allies to develop human rights and also the rhetoric that arms sales should be limited.[629] The Shah did provide some liberalization but the overall legacy of the Carter human rights agenda remains somewhat murky with regard to its impact on Iran. Marvin Zonis argued the Carter inauguration emboldened enemies of the Shah because they perceived U.S. support for him was faltering while, at the same time, weakening the resolve of the Shah because he felt the U.S. would abandon him.[630] Stempel agrees and suggested that the human rights doctrine was to have very little impact on dealings with the Shah. But, a consequence of Carter's campaign rhetoric was that the Shah lost confidence in himself and the modernization program.[631] The response to liberalization was the increase of and opening of opposition to the Shah's regime.[632] On the other hand, David Harris argued "whatever criticisms Carter might have had of Iran over its record on human rights, he and his secretary of state went out of their way to publicly declare their support for His Imperial Majesty."[633]

Indeed, the Shah was concerned over the Carter campaign rhetoric on human rights. Zonis notes both the Shah and those opposing the Shah saw Carter as a threat to the Pahlavi system and the close relationship with Washington that the Shah enjoyed.[634] As a result, the Shah released political prisoners and invited human rights organizations to visit Iran. Liberalization attempts of 1977 were seen by many Iranians as only token gestures while not part of an attempt to completely remake the Pahlavi system but served to "open the floodgates to total insurrection."[635] Several within the U.S. government began to sound warnings about the political future of Iran couched in reports that still remained positive overall as the Shah attempted to at least appear reformist. A February analysis from the political and military section of the U.S. Embassy in Iran contended the government of Iran was stable and the Shah boasted "almost unchallenged domination of the political scene" and the "absolute loyalty of the military." In addition, any organized opposition the Shah faces "has either been coopted, dropped out, or been

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[628] United States Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Secret, Report.

[629] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, pp. 95-96.

[630] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 233-234; For issue of impact of liberalization please also see Abrahamian, 496-500.

[631] John D. Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1981), p. 78.

[632] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 97; A similar argument is made in Katouzian, "The Pahlavi Regime in Iran," p. 188.

[633] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 62.

[634] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 231.

[635] Katouzian, "The Pahlavi Regime in Iran," p. 204.

reduced to virtual impotence." On the other hand, the report did offer warning that appears quit prophetic in hindsight. The report noted a "fanatical Muslim clergy constitutes a latent opposition force" and any "unforeseen developments" may "lead other segments of the population to challenge the government" and that same latent Muslim clergy "could undoubtedly drum up a modest, perhaps (depending on the issue) substantial following in the streets." Finally, should a revival of "religious nationalism" occur, both the xenophobic nature of the clergy and the perceived closeness of the United States to the Shah would result in American interests facing a "severe political attack."[636]

The INR Office of External Research called in outside experts in May 1977 in order to conclude the Shah needed to make contacts with opposition forces or face instability.[637] The month of May also showcased Iranian professional classes in open dissent when fifty four lawyers signed a written protest in opposition to changes in the government system that would elevate the executive over the judiciary.[638] Also in May, an Iranian historian, Ibrahim Khajanouri, sent an open letter to Restakhiz critical of its lack of success linking those governed with the government and a month later former National Front members called on the Shah to end his authoritarian rule and follow the constitution.[639]

Carter appointed William Sullivan ambassador to Iran in June. Sullivan immediately sought more information regarding the Shah's modernization plans concerned that industrialization would likely bring economic and social problems.[640] James Bill called for more analysis of Iran in summer of 1977. Bill opined that studies of Iranian politics were mostly superficial and did not reflect the status the state had gained globally. In addition, Bill argued Iranian politics were deep seeded and "the real structure and processes of power in Iran are embedded in the deepest recesses of society where their configuration exists in a constant state of flux."[641] Bill also railed against the press coverage of Iran noting it lacked both quality and quantity. For example, Bill compiled a total of 195 references to Iranian domestic happenings in the *New York Times* from 1965 to 1975 while the paper referenced 1114 in Israel and even 263 in Ethiopia in the same time period.[642]

Sullivan began to question the economic and social implications of the large Iranian arms buildup.[643] Yet, policy toward Iran remained largely unexamined and Carter gave formal notice to Congress in July that he planned to sell Iran seven Advanced Warning and Control System airplanes (AWACS). Open dissent to the Shah continued in Iran during July while Congress debated AWACS. A group of forty writers called on the Shah to end censorship, three academics sent a letter to the Shah asking he end authoritarian rule, and sixty four lawyers protested the growing power of the executive over the judiciary all that same month.[644]

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[636] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Report., "Iranian Embassy Political and Military Section Reports on the Situation in Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, February 28, 1977).
[637] United States Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Report, Secret, *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 29, 1980).
[638] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 98.
[639] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 98.
[640] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 201.
[641] Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion*, p. 166.
[642] Bill, *The Eagle and the Lion*, p. 184.
[643] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 317.
[644] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 98.

A July 25 secret air gram written by Stempel and sent to the State Department examined the sources of growing unrest in Iran. Stempel observed the Military Court Reform Bill and international pressure against torture in Iran "have led some formerly apathetic individuals and groups to return ever so tentatively to the political arena." Opposition to the Shah in the religious sector, Stempel noted, mainly came in ancillary forms such as the increased wearing of the chador by college-educated women, pressure for the Shah to drop women's rights efforts, and "the spread of unflattering jokes about the Shah."[645] Organized opposition groups provided very little visible agitation until August of 1977.[646] Yet, the *Christian Science Monitor* noted that in the summer of 1977 the "lid has been slightly raised off the pot of public expression, after a clampdown that has lasted virtually unbroken since 1963."[647]

The CIA prepared a report, *Iran in the 1980s*, that August in which the Agency determined the Shah "will be an active participant in Iranian life well into the 1980s" and "there will be no future radical change in Iranian political behavior in the near future." At the same time, the CIA report also observed that the growing number of better educated Iranians would lead to more critical views of the Iranian government and any difficulties in the economy may have a wide impact on opposition. Furthermore, the CIA recognized many of the same educated class – students, professional, and scholars – "are turning back to Islam as a solution to the alienation they feel." The CIA report addressed the persistent rumors of the Shah having a terminal disease "to be unfounded and are probably the result more of wishful thinking than of medical fact. Nevertheless, for many years the Shah has been under a great psychological and mental strain." Finally, *Iran in the 1980s* concluded that only a major economic or political crisis would threaten the Shah's position as leader of Iran and, short of the Shah becoming incapable of making decisions, he is not likely to face an overt challenge to his power.[648]

Late August brought the first significant expressions of violence against the Shah when government forces attempted to clear squatters in Tehran in a showdown that would last several days. Government forces killed five squatters the first day; demonstrators fought police the second, and on day three thousands of Iranians attacked local police posts. Ultimately, the army was needed to restore order but "the rapidity with which the demonstrations grew and the participation in them by organized left-wing groups chilled the government."[649] One of the initial acknowledgements of the possibility of a significant political problem in Iran came in the form of a National Security Council Evening Report of August 31, 1977. The report indicated that the Shah faced "a number of internal political problems."

Students at Tehran University smashed windows and burned buses while demanding that, according to Islamic law, women be segregated on campus on October 9.[650] Student protests in Tehran in early October also demanded the return of the Ayatollah Khomeini which led the Shah to label the efforts as treason.[651] Indeed, the issue of campus protests was ubiquitous in October

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[645] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential Airgram, "Straws in the Winds: Intellectual and Religious Opposition in Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, July 25, 1977).

[646] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 82.

[647] Helena Cobban, "Shah Strives to Revitalize Iran Politics," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> September 20 1977, 26.

[648] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence, Secret, Report, "Iran in the 1980s," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, August 1977).

[649] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 111.

[650] James A. Bill, "Iran Is the Shah pushing it too fast," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> November 9 1977, 16.

[651] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 99.

as universities were the site of "chronic disturbances."[652] One of the most significantly symbolic demonstrations, however, occurred on October 21 with the death of Ayatollah Khomeini's son – Mostafa. The memorial service for Mostafa was advertised heavily in *Kayhan* and, contrary to government policy, *Kayhan* referred to the Ayatollah in positive terms. Mourners prayed for the return of Ayatollah Khomeini during Mostafa's service and the SAVAK response was notable in its absence. The failure of SAVAK to respond never was explained but most felt it was because of the Shah's desire to gain favor with Carter. Whatever the case, Harris argues that the failure of SAVAK to respond "opened a window of opportunity that was immediately and spontaneously filled."[653]

The *Christian Science Monitor* provided a status report on political conditions in Iran as seen by one Iranian analyst, James A. Bill, in advance of a widely publicized mid-November visit by the Shah to the United States. Bill concluded that Iran "appears to be a dynamic, progressive oasis of stability" but that all was not as it seemed. In fact, Bill suggested that opposition to the Shah manifested itself in the form of a return to Islam. And, "the government was unable to control dedicated urban guerilla forces who engaged in anti-regime terrorism."[654] Robert Mantel, an official in the State Department, met with Iranian dissident Sadegh Ghotbzadeh in the United States in advance of the Shah's stateside visit.[655] Ghotbzadeh informed Mantel "the Shah was universally hated within Iran, and that pressures were building throughout Iranian society against the Shah and his repressive form of government" and his contacts with even the military and SAVAK indicated "the Shah was increasingly unpopular and that a revolution was brewing." Ghotbzadeh added that the top military leaders were loyal to the Shah but lower ranking officers "were increasingly resentful of the corruption and repression" and "if crunch came, the bulk of the military would support the Iranian people rather than their corrupt leaders." Mantel debriefed Charles Naas, the Country Director for Iran, after the meeting.[656]

Carter observed that cracks did appear in the Shah's regime and noted that the middle class, students, and the religious "carried the seeds of dissension within Iran" and with the Shah's visit "felt it advisable to speak to the Shah alone about the potential problems he faced."[657] Carter suggested the Shah consult more closely with dissidents and "ease off on some of the strict police policies."[658] The mid-November visit by the Shah to the United States would become infamous. The *Christian Science Monitor* estimated that 8,000 pro and anti-Shah forces demonstrated in what was the "biggest clash near the White House since Vietnam" and over 100 police and protestors were injured.[659] Protests were so large at the official welcoming ceremony that police utilized tear gas in order to break up disturbances while, in Iran, protests were planned

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[652] Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown*, p. 109.

[653] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 86.

[654] Bill, "Iran is the Shah Pushing too Fast?"

[655] A memorandum from Mantel to Precht on State Department letterhead dated January 17, 1979 recalling said incident lists Mantel as a member of the Office of Security Assistance Special Projects (PM/SSP).

[656] United States Department of State, Confidential Memorandum State, "Contact with Sadegh Ghotbzadeh in November 1977," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 17, 1979).

[657] Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (Toronto; New York: Bantam Books, 1982), p. 436.

[658] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 436.

[659] Christian Science Monitor Staff, "The President and the Shah," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> November 17, 1977, 40. Rubin's account offers slightly different numbers – 6500 total protestors with 4000 anti-Shah and 1500 pro-Shah. Rubin, see *Paved with Good Intentions*, also argues that many of the pro-Shah demonstrators were paid by the Iranian embassy and that a total of 128 people were injured.

for the same day in order to illustrate the resolve of the opposition.[660] Demonstrations in Iran turned into violent clashes at Aryamehr Technical University and, on November 16, an estimated 500 students "pillaged buildings at Tehran University" while students and police scuffled in various confrontations from November 21 to 25.[661] Abrahamian recalls one of the most important protests was on November 19, 1977. Police targeted a poetry reading of the Writer's Association in the Iranian-German Cultural Society and attempted to break up the meeting of some 10,000 students. A violent clash with police resulted and that month "the opposition overflowed into the streets. This marked the start of a new stage in the revolutionary process."[662]

November of 1977 appeared to be yet another missed opportunity to reexamine policy in lieu of intelligence calling into question the Shah's position in Iranian politics. Charles-Phillipe David believes data of November of 1977 gave indications of the Shah's regime was weak while the opposition had grown strong. David claims that information alone should have led the Carter administration to question assumptions regarding the durability of the Shah's regime.[663] Gary Sick of the National Security Council took notice of the political situation in Iran in late November and prepared a memo on Iran that included opinions by notable Iran specialists in which he surmised that the Shah's opposition was more than superficial. In fact, James Bill predicted the Shah would last no more than two years.[664] Sick's analysis met with a great deal of opposition in government circles and he lamented that "so deeply engrained was the conviction that the Shah was master in his own house … that even a year later when the revolution was almost raging out of control, issues relating to internal dissension in Iran continued to receive little attention."[665] Political opposition to the Shah began to institutionalize in December of 1977. Former National Front members formed the Iranian Committee for the Defense of Liberty and Human Rights on December 7 and a coalition including the Iranian Nationalist Party, the Iran Party, and the Society of Iranian Socialists formed the Union of National Front Forces in order to oppose the Shah's dictatorship.[666]

Increased unrest within Iran alarmed Sullivan to the extent he met with Prime Minister Jamshid Amouzegar on December 8 in order to discuss what the government of Iran planned to do to in reaction to the protests. Amouzegar related the police option would be suspended in dealing with university closures and the government of Iran would mobilize the silent majority – who were in opposition to those protesting against the Shah.[667] Yet, the Iranian government appeared to drop the strategy of a silent majority involved in counter-demonstrations by December 13. A memorandum of that day prepared by the NEA on behalf of State for Carter, in advance of Carter's visit to Tehran, spoke of "Iranian security forces, enlisting the assistance of local toughs, have cracked down hard on the student demonstrators and have broken up gatherings of opposition elements."[668] Later, a confidential memorandum of discussion between

[660] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 100.
[661] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 100.
[662] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 505.
[663] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 64-65.
[664] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 35.
[665] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 35.
[666] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 101.
[667] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential Cable Tehran, "Student Unrest," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 8, 1977).
[668] United States Department of State, Secret, Memorandum, State, "Your Visit to Tehran, December 31-January 1," *Iran: Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 13, 1977).

Soviet diplomat Guennady Kazankin and John Stempel related details of a conversation in a Tehran steak house on December 14. First, Stempel relayed his opinion that recent unrest on Iranian campuses had caught the Soviet Union by surprise. But, also, Kazankin discussed with Stempel a rumor of a plot involving twenty five officers to overthrow the Shah's regime. The rumor appeared to take Stempel by surprise but gained credibility when, on the next day, Persian news sources reported the arrest and the trial of General Mogharrebi who had been accused of spying for what was termed a "foreign power."[669]

Warnings were evident in 1977. What is even more interesting is that the warnings appeared to increase as time went by and were, ultimately, quite accurate. When the INR reported in early 1977 on the Shah, the focus appeared to concentrate on the supposition that the Shah would remain in power for several more years. But, the INR warnings that the future of the Shah was tied to economic prosperity, warning the Shah could not afford the economy to slow down, questions of the loyalty of the armed forces, and observations the Shah's opposition was spreading to the middle class, religious conservatives, and the educated classes all seem to have been ignored. No response was evident with the February embassy warning that the Muslim clergy was a potential threat to the Shah. Embassy official John Stempel's July notice that unrest in Iran was increasing, the August CIA observation that warned of the consequences to the Shah of any economic troubles, and the NSC Evening Report of late August basically were ignored by the Carter White House. Indeed, warning bells were sounding in late 1977 – students in Tehran launched a number of violent protests, the October funeral of Mostafa Khomeini brought calls for the return of the Ayatollah, and one prominent political dissident warned the U.S. State Department of a revolution. Warnings came from American academic James Bill – who warned of the return to Islam movement and predicted the Shah would last no more than two years as leader of Iran. Violent demonstrations throughout Iran at the time of the Shah's visit to the United States, led to National Security Advisor Gary Sick's warning that the opposition to the Shah was credible. Obviously, the narrative on the future of the Shah – even within sources – is mixed and uncertain. However, at the very least, one would expect some discussion on the future of the Shah and Iran by Carter or those close to him.

Instead of asking pointed questions about the Shah Carter concentrated on the positive aspects of the 1977 narrative of the Shah. In fact, New Year's Eve of 1977 brought with it one of the most infamous toasts in modern world history. President Carter, visiting the Shah in Iran, referred to Iran as an "island of stability" while the Shah pushed for an additional $10 billion in military purchases. At the time, Secretary of State Vance wanted to continue to question the necessity for such a large purchase but observed those in both the National Security Council and Department of State "were strongly opposed to questioning the Shah's military equipment requests" and that the United States was "almost entirely dependent on the Shah's unilateral judgments about his force requirements."[670] Yet, Carter would admit in his own memoirs that he "saw no visible evidence of the currents of dissatisfaction which, though underestimated by the Shah, I knew to be there."[671] It was that very New Years Eve visit, according to David Harris,

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[669] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Memorandum of Conversation Tehran, "Middle East, Horn of Africa, President Carter and Congressional Visits, Dissident Development, Plots, and Miscellaneous," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 14, 1977).

[670] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 323.

[671] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 437.

that served to "embolden the shah" and led him to launch "the anti-Khomeini strategy his advisors recommended."[672]

So, while warnings were sounded regarding the future of the Shah, Carter "saw no visible evidence" of dissatisfaction. Evidence found in the INR report, evidence in an Embassy wire, evidence from academia, and evidence being discussed by the Iranian specialist, Gary Sick, assigned to the National Security Council. As a result, given the two streams, or narratives, of data regarding the Shah, it is very plausible that Carter and his advisors ignored negative data, bolstered positive information, and, like the three presidents before him, assumed the Shah was unchallenged.

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[672] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 83.

Chapter Eight
As Tehran Burns: The United States and the Shah, 1978

The United States continued to view Iran as a significant and strong global ally as 1978 began. Rubin suggests that "information to the contrary was ignored" while Zonis observes that "by 1978, it seems, no one was 'minding the store.'"[673] Vance's reading of the situation in Iran was that protests began to become more frequent and could be traced to the economy, repressive policies of the Shah, or corruption but that the ultimate "magnet that drew the dissidents was the religious opposition to the Shah."[674] The flow of information that began in 1977 would continue throughout 1978. In fact, Zachary Karabell – using U.S. Embassy files shredded then reconstructed by Iranian students during the hostage crisis – observed "what these documents reveal is that at least one stream of information flowing to Washington in 1978 provided significant evidence that the shah's regime was in severe trouble" and "there was sufficient information to alert policy-makers in Washington that the shah might not survive the crisis."[675] Ultimately, Karabell suggests it would have been nearly impossible to predict the outright end of the Shah's regime with information from the first six months of 1978; however, very little of the intelligence provided, either before or after the first six months of 1978, was ever utilized by the policy community because the data was ambiguous enough to be viewed through the lenses of the preferred interpretation and "political considerations … dictated an interpretation of Iranian politics favorable to the continued viability of the shah's regime."[676] National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski admitted that "the longer-range strategic and political implications of the Iranian crisis came to be appreciated in Washington only gradually" despite the political upheaval. [677] Still, a January 31, 1978 memorandum from Brzezinski to Carter noted an increase in violence in Iran and characterized it as the "most serious of their kind in a decade." Brzezinski continued that "traditionalist Islamic opponents" were in "their strongest position since 1963." Remarkably, Brzezinski opined that the Shah was "uncertain how to face the challenge" and the greatest potential danger was that the political unrest featured new groups of dissidents and that religious traditionalists may, in fact, pose the greatest threat to the Shah.[678]

Whether emboldened, as Harris suggests, by Carter's visit or motivated by some unforeseen reason, the Shah effectively lit the fuse to the Iranian revolution on January 7, 1978. The newspaper *Etela'at* published an anonymous letter that day, widely believed to have been written by the Shah or at his request, attacking Ayatollah Khomeini as both an agent of Great Britain and a pornographer.[679] A crowd of approximately 5000 Khomeini followers, on January 8, met at a religious shrine in Qom upon the publication of the article. The Shah's troops began

[673] Barry M. Rubin, *Paved with Good Intention: The American Experience and Iran* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 201; Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 90.

[674] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 324.

[675] Zachary Karabell, "Inside the U.S. Espionage Den: The U.S. Embassy and the fall of the Shah." *Intelligence and National Security* 8.1 (1993): 44-45.

[676] Karabell, *Inside the U.S. Espionage Den*, p. 51.

[677] Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Advisor, 1977-1981* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983), p. 357.

[678] Evening Report, National Security Council, 8/30/77, NLC – 10-4-7-12-6, Jimmy Carter Library.

[679] Green, "Terrorism and Politics in Iran,"; Washington Post 10/26/80 differs on details of attack on Khomeini suggesting it accused him of leading the 1963 protests on the part of landlords and communists.

firing and killed approximately twenty as the crowd emerged from the shrine.[680] Shiites in Qom responded on January 9 to the attacks on Khomeini as well as to policies of land reform and women's rights with riots which led to the deaths of two mullahs.[681] Reports from the U.S. Embassy on the unrest in Qom indicated that five demonstrators died when a crowd attempted to seize a police station in Qom. Demonstrations also resulted in "a mob of protestors armed with stones, iron bars, and wooden staves" breaking shop windows and attacking the Restakhiz Party headquarters. Crowds ignored warning shots fired by police and the police resorted to firing into the mob. American embassy opinion was that the leniency shown on the previous demonstrations of January 8 "encouraged more violent demonstration which necessitated violent repression."[682] To be sure, the protests of January 7 were simply not limited to Qom but included participation from women wearing the chador in Isfahan, Mashad, Qom, and Tehran.[683] A leading Iranian religious figure, Ayatollah Shari'atmadari, condemned the government response and called for the return of Ayatollah Khomeini to Iran.[684] The slain mullahs grew to be viewed as martyrs and rallies spread to other cities. Significantly, the deaths of the mullahs began a forty day cycle of demonstrations that would continue throughout 1978.[685] Vance later characterized the protests and overreaction by police forces as the source of numerous martyrs and "thus began a series of events that gathered force until they became a tidal wave sweeping away the monarchy."[686] The fallout from the Qom riots was immense. Stempel suggested Qom symbolized the end of the myth that the Shah's regime could not be destroyed and "that the dissident movement was now well enough organized and strong enough to effectively challenge the government" for the urban middle-class. [687] Zonis labels the riots in Qom as the point in which State and the Security Council's view of Iran policy diverged. That is, State wanted the Shah to liberalize more and accommodate regime opponents while the NSC pushed for support of the Shah in order to send a sign to Saudi Arabia that the United States would be a loyal ally in the aftermath of Qom.[688] Meanwhile, Great Britain's ambassador to Iran, Anthony Parsons, viewed Qom as a defining moment and "decided that I could no longer afford to maintain my self-denying ordinance about discussing internal affairs with the Shah."[689]

  Gary Sick also spoke of the political turmoil in Iran by challenging the government assumptions that the unrest was related to communist agitation and, instead, warned of the role of Islamic extremists in arguing that the religious represented the greatest threat to the Shah and

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[680] Scott Armstrong, "Failing to Heed the Warnings of Revolution in Iran; Failing to Heed the Warning Signs of Iran's Revolution; Misreading the Future of Iran," <u>Washington Post</u> October 26, 1980

[681] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 104; Green, "Terrorism and Politics in Iran," p. 573; Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 505.

[682] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential Cable, Tehran, "Serious Religious Dissidence in Qom," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 11, 1978).

[683] United States Embassy, Tehran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Dissidence: Qom Aftermath and Other Events," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 16, 1978).

[684] Nicholas M. Nikazmerad, "A Chronological Survey of the Iranian Revolution," *Iranian Studies* 13.1/4, Iranian Revolution in Perspective (1980): 327.

[685] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 54.

[686] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 324.

[687] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 92.

[688] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 244-245.

[689] Anthony Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall: Iran 1974-1979* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1984), p. 63.

were reacting against Iran's modernization program.[690] The INR first noted in its daily Morning Summary the political unrest regarding Iran in the January 14 report. [691] The most damning portion of the Summary, however, was the analysis of the source of the unrest. State admitted the source of Iranian unrest were the economic problems that one State Department analyst warned of the previous fall – and was rejected by the State Department hierarchy.[692]

Shops in Isfahan closed on January 14-15 in solidarity with the demonstrators in Qom. Similarly, demonstrators sympathetic to Qom also marched, on January 15, at Tehran University which "degenerated into riot in which univ authorities nearly lost control." Incidents in support of Qom also led to the closure of Aryameh University undergraduate classes.[693] The morning summary provided by Department of State on January 29 concurred with Sick in suggesting Islamic opponents to the Shah were in "their strongest position since 1963.[694] Later, a report in the *Washington Post* observed the warning "passed virtually unnoticed."[695] Internal National Security Council notes of February 1978 illustrate an ongoing concern with issues in Iran. An analysis of riots in Tabriz spoke of the minimal role of communist rebels and maintained the religious right was behind the unrest and "may be the true threat to the Shah's regime." Furthermore, the threat from the religious was described as "a serious problem and one that is difficult to control" and their "organization and power … must be troubling indeed for the Shah." In fact, a follow-up entry on February 28 theorized "that religious and social forces have been unleashed that will not be easily placated."

Pointed concerns regarding the future of the Shah appeared in the mainstream media in early March. An analysis from *The Economist* noted the political turmoil of early 1978 was "Iran's most testing time since the unrest of the early 1960s" and pointed to the coming five years as "rough waters" in which "the Shah will need all his strength … to reach the other side unscathed. The odds are not good."[696]

By April 21, the National Security internal notes indicated the Shah faced "a very widespread conservative groundswell of opposition" and the "cracks in the façade of Iranian social stability are becoming difficult to ignore."[697] The government of Iran began to view the religious as potentially the biggest threat to the Shah as unrest began to evolve.[698] Furthermore, the U.S. Embassy began to take note of the Shiite movement under the direction Ayatollah Khomeini as much better organized than previously estimated and, notably, the Islamic movement "heads the Iranian Revolution" and is very much embedded in Iranian society. In addition, the Islamic movement has gained momentum from literacy programs in Iran and maintains the ideological support and financial support of the Bazaar merchants.[699] Indeed, one very notable aspect of the Embassy calculations is the labeling of the Iranian unrest as a

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[690] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 40-41.
[691] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 108.
[692] Armstrong, "Failing to Heed Warnings of Revolution in Iran."
[693] United States Embassy, Tehran, Confidential, Cable Tehran.
[694] United States Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Report, Secret, *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 29, 1980).
[695] Armstrong, "Failing to Heed Warnings of Revolution in Iran."
[696] Economist Staff, "Time and Oil Run Against the Shah," *The Economist*, March 4, 1978, pp. 59-61.
[697] Memorandum, Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 1/31/78, NLC-1-5-2-55-3, Jimmy Carter Library.
[698] United States Embassy, Tehran, Secret Airgram Tehran, "The Iranian Opposition," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, February 1, 1978).
[699] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential Cable Tehran, "Iran: Understanding the Shiite Islamic Movement," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, February 3, 1978).

"revolution" in early February of 1978. Stempel met with one Iranian intellectual dissident on February 12 who made the further troubling observation that many Iranians already had began escape plans from Iran – typically in the form of a U.S. Green Card.[700]

The next significant Iranian unrest of 1978 came on February 18 and 19 as a forty day commemoration of those killed at Qom. Although ceremonies in fifteen Iranian cities were, more or less, peaceful, those in Tabriz escalated into violence. Stempel relates the eyewitness account of Michael Metrinko, the U.S. counsel in Tabriz, who "reported that hotel bars were attacked with vigor, and liquor dumped" and "private clubs and recreation centers for civil servants and teachers were vandalized as well, and then gutted on the grounds that such organizations were 'immoral.'"[701] In addition, Stempel suggested that the most troubling aspect of the riots was "the complete breakdown of law and order" and noted that army troops did not leave Tabriz until February 23.[702] Unrest in Tabriz resulted in the arrests of 650 and 60 others faced indictments.[703] Once again, the Shah's troops fired into the crowd and, this time, killed over 100 people.[704] Cottam's analysis of Tabriz argued the demonstrations "served to damage the image of SAVAK and the coercive instrument" and "the vulnerability of the regime was beginning to appear to be fatal."[705] Cottam also suggested that Tabriz and the lack of an effective response by Iranian security forces began "a mass migration to the banner of Khomeini."[706] The *Christian Science Monitor* added that "sparse news reports from Iran indicate … [the] violence in Tabriz was the worst rioting in Iran for two decades" and that "some eyewitnesses described the Tabriz disturbances as amounting to a general uprising … quelled by military forces with tanks."[707] Reports from the American Consul in Tabriz noted the extensive property damage – seventy banks damaged and ten completely gutted; government buildings including, but not limited to, the Education Department, the City Court, the Tax Office, police kiosks, and the Rastakhiz Party Headquarters; cultural institutions like the Iran-America Society and the Teachers Club; and private businesses including several movie theatres, hotels, and the Pepsi-Cola installation.[708]

Tabriz, moreover, provided a clear warning signal for the U.S. consul, Michael Metrinko. He often spoke to Iranians ignored by other U.S. diplomats and began to advance an analysis of Iran much different from the embassy view after the February Tabriz unrest. He dismissed the notion that the turmoil was the result of small groups of religious and communist agitators and from February on began to report of the societal hatred of the Shah and its aggressive movement through Iranian society. Indeed, somewhat prophetically, Metrinko argued the mosques provided the numbers and the bodies for demonstrations but the financing came from the merchant class,

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[700] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential Memorandum of Conversation Tehran, "Student Demonstrations, Iran's Development, and Middle Class Unease," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, February 14, 1978).

[701] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 93.

[702] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 93; for a similar account of Qom and Tabriz please see Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, 506-507.

[703] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p.328.

[704] Armstrong, "Failing to Heed Warnings of Revolution in Iran."

[705] Richard W. Cottam, "The Iranian Revolution," *Shi'ism and Social Protest* Eds. R. I. Cole and Nikki R. Keddie (New Haven: Yale University, 1986), p. 84.

[706] Richard Cottam, "Goodbye to America's Shah," *Foreign Policy*.34 (1979): 12.

[707] Christian Science Monitor Staff, "Amnesty says Iran Still Sidesteps Fair Trials," Christian Science Monitor March 3 1978, 13.

[708] United States Consulate, Tabriz, Iran, Confidential, Airgram, "Rioting and Civil Insurrection in Tabriz: An Initial Analysis," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, March 23, 1978).

who were still upset over the anticorruption laws of the previous year. His more pessimistic reports were not only at odds with the embassy line advanced by Sullivan but also would end up being sent as air grams - a lower priority than a cable and less likely to be read by top State Department officials.[709]

Political unrest opposing the Shah managed to manifest itself next in East Berlin when protestors attacked and seized the Iranian Embassy in response to the Iranian government's handling of the Tabriz riots.[710] Iranian government officials quickly moved to depict the riots and hostility towards the Shah as communist plots. Iran severed ties with East Germany on March 3 arguing that the communist state had encouraged the embassy takeover. Further sounding the alarm of communist influence, Iranian government forces arrested General Ali Akbar Darakhshani, then 85 years old, and charged him with spying for the Soviet Union on March 27. Darakhshani, according to the Iranian authorities, had a heart attack while in custody.[711]

The Bureau of Intelligence and Research of the Department of State under the suggestion of George Griffin met in March in order to discuss the future of Iran. Most notably, the meeting drew very few high-level State analysts and consisted mainly of mid-level State employees and academics.[712] James Bill presented a paper entitled "Monarchy in Crisis" at the meeting and suggested that time did not favor the Shah.[713] Bill continued to argue the Shah would be forced to use more and more coercion and those against the regime would become even more fervent in their opposition and make increased demands while others will gravitate toward their cause. Something, Bill contended, would have to be done in order to break the cycle of violence or the future of the Shah and the future of the U.S. relations toward Iran do not appear to hold promise.[714] The *Christian Science Monitor* summarized the developments in Iran as "a growing protest movement at home proving difficult to silence" and the protests were "significantly beyond the occasional but isolated terrorist violence and shootout which has hitherto disturbed the peace in Iran" while the demonstrators consist of more than just Marxists and religious but also include middle class merchants and university intellectuals.[715] Hundreds were arrested in Tabriz for again protesting against the Shah in the end of March.[716] Additionally, March 27 through April 3 brought forty day commemorations of those killed and Tabriz and with the remembrances came more riots throughout Iran. Although most remained peaceful, the protests turned violent in Tehran, Yazd, Isfahan, Babol, and Jahrom.[717] In one case, it is estimated that twenty five protestors died when the police opened fire in Yazd as protestors chanted "Death to the Shah."[718]

April of 1978 did not bring better news for the Shah and his regime. Stempel noted that at least one "serious disturbance" occurred everyday during the month and the Shah and advisors including Hoveyda and Generals Fardust and Moinan knew that "a serious challenge was

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[709] Armstrong, "Failing to Heed Warnings of Revolution in Iran."
[710] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 328.
[711] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 328.
[712] Armstrong, "Failing to Heed Warnings of Revolution in Iran."
[713] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 62; Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 206; United States, Congress, House, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Evaluation.
[714] Armstrong, "Failing to Heed Warnings of Revolution in Iran."
[715] Geoffrey Godsell, "'Rights' Critics Pressure the Shah," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> March 2 1978, : 3, .
[716] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 365.
[717] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, 507.
[718] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 328-329; Substance of chants found in Abrahamian, 507.

afoot."[719] Iran continued to blame the source of the turmoil on communist agitators and claimed to have destroyed an espionage network tied to the Soviet Union on April 6.[720] An organization calling itself the Underground Committee for Revenge bombed the homes of four dissidents on April 8. A rally of some 300,000 strong on the next day marched in favor of the Shah in Tabriz and a number of armed Peoples Committees formed in order to launch surveillance against what the regime termed as the foreign elements that were responsible for the recent violence.[721] In addition, all major universities in Iran "were in constant turmoil" by mid-April and the U.S. embassy reported the Iranian government was attempting to disrupt the opposition through the bombing of leader's homes and physical intimidation.[722] Vance became "sufficiently disturbed at the intensity and diverse makeup of the anti-regime demonstrations" by April 8 that he took his concerns to Carter and suggested that the demonstrations against the Shah were the most serious in Iran since 1963. Yet, Sick recalled that the warning signs went unheeded and lamented that the lack of curiosity over the future of the Shah lay in several bureaucratic realities. First, Sick noted that the "U.S. reliance on the Shah had removed the incentives to maintain independent sources of information and analysis" and this held true in both Tehran and in Washington.[723] In other words, the commitment to the Shah was so engrained and the future of relations so path dependent as to eliminate any flexibility in policy. In addition, Sick also observed that "elements of the U.S. bureaucracy had themselves developed a vested interest in relations with the Shah's regime" and these vested interests meant the same bureaucrats "were not inclined to seek out problems" that may endanger "important but essentially parochial objectives."[724] April ended with the April 25 disturbances at Tehran University which resulted in police arresting sixty five students for anti-government activities.[725] Sullivan forwarded the British analysis of the unrest in Iran to Washington that same day. In short, the British diplomatic corps viewed the situation in Iran as one of a "breakdown of communications between the modernizing establishment around the Shah and the religious conservatives" which "could lead to serious internal instability."[726]

A number of U.S. officials began to sound stronger warnings about the future of the Shah in May of 1978. Ambassador Sullivan reported that many within Iran began to see the Shah as indecisive. As a result, Sick requested the writing of a new NIE on Iran. Sick also began to hear talk from both the Israeli and French embassies over not only the political turmoil in Iran but of the future of the Shah's regime.[727] Indeed, at some point enough evidence existed that both Israeli and French intelligence experts made several cogent predictions in predicting the end of the Shah's regime. Uri Lubrani, the head of the Israeli mission to Tehran, questioned whether the Shah would remain in control in early 1978. Lubrani, who formerly served as Ambassador to Ethiopia and similarly correctly predicted the end of the regime of Haile Selassie argued that it was no longer a question of if the Shah would fall but when. At that point, Lubrani concluded that the Shah would have no more than two or three years in power. The Israeli government placed enough credibility in Lubrani's analysis to notify Iranian Jews and recommend their

[719] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, pp. 94, 99.

[720] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 329.

[721] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 329.

[722] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 95; Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 41.

[723] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 44.

[724] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 44.

[725] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 329.

[726] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "British View of Situation in Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, April 25, 1978).

[727] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 42-43.

departure from Iran and also provided Lubrani's analysis to the United States. Washington's concern was that Lubrani was guilty of being too alarmist.[728] In addition, the French intelligence community – through the SDECE – compiled a report in the spring of 1978 that predicted the Shah would no longer be in power by the spring of the following year. That analysis, too, was minimized by Washington.[729]

May 6-7 coincided with the end of the forty day mourning for those killed in Yazd and followed the familiar pattern with more unrest. Students and police fought in a number of Iranian cities including Tehran, Shiraz, Isfahan, and Tabriz.[730] However, the United States Consulate in Isfahan observed the violence of May 6 itself was limited to vandalism. Isfahan was, for the most part, virtually shut down with many people staying at home and "truckloads" of police at every intersection. The days after May 6 were more troubling in Isfahan. Regime opponents developed a strategy of hit and run bombings on banks, movie theatres, liquor stores, and some government offices then fleeing on motorcycle. Thirty-six reported incidents resulted in zero arrests and contacts with police. As a result, the government of Iran created what the U.S. would refer to as "Action Squads" and the Iranian government would name Resistance Corp Units. These groups gave the government of Iran what many saw as plausible deniability so that they could "brutally suppress" opposition and investigate hit and run bombings without concern for a human rights agenda.[731]

Anti-government protests turned violent in twenty four Iranian cities on May 9-10. True to the developing pattern, bazaars and schools also went on strike.[732] Qom was targeted particularly by rioting when regime opponents exited funeral services and set fire to various public and private properties and order was only restored after ten hours and with military intervention.[733] Brzezinski highlighted concerns over the mindset and spirit of the Shah in a memorandum to Carter on May 10 in which he repeated observations made by Ambassador Sullivan that the Shah was "visibly tired and depressed."[734] The indecisiveness of the Shah also became a topic of concern for the National Security Council. Notes from May 21 spoke of the Shah as indecisive and unable to "make up his mind between either a firm and hard line or a soft and conciliatory line." Machinations by the Shah "surprised, disappointed, and perhaps even scared" much of the Iranian public. Several days later, an NSC annotation on May 24 conceded that "the internal situation in Iran is very confused and there is no assurance that anyone fully understands what is going on." That said, the continual ambiguous responses by the Shah left many "wondering if he is losing his touch."[735]

The month of May continued the pattern of anti-Shah demonstrations that had monopolized earlier months. Serious rioting in Mashad on May 11 led the government to discourage foreign travel anywhere in Khorasan province while armored cars and other heavy

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[728] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 54; Michael Arthur Ledeen and William Hubert Lewis, *Debacle, the American Failure in Iran* 1st ed. (New York: Knopf: distributed by Random House, 1981), p. 126.

[729] Michael Arthur Ledeen and William Hubert Lewis, *Debacle, the American Failure in Iran* (New York: Knopf, 1981), p. 126.

[730] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 330.

[731] United States Consulate, Isfahan, Iran, Confidential, Airgram, "Disturbances in Isfahan," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, May 6, 1978).

[732] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 508.

[733] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 330; Claim regarding military intervention made in Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, 508.

[734] Memorandum, Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, 5/10/78, NLC-1-6-2-32-7, Jimmy Carter Library.

[735] Notes, National Security Council, NLC-25-37-5-1-8, Jimmy Carter Library.

military equipment were deployed for the first time in Tehran.[736] In fact, the Shah personally led the attack on demonstrators in Tehran who called on the Iranian military to overthrow his regime.[737] A former Majles deputy related a meeting on May 13 by all heads of security and police in Iran in a later discussion with Stempel. The head of SAVAK, General Nasiri, concluded the best way to stop the protests would be to close the bazaars and use whatever force was needed. On the contrary, General Fardoust preferred dialogue with regime opponents over use of force. Ultimately, the security heads opted with Fardoust and the recommendation forwarded to the Shah – who approved of the plan.[738]

The *Christian Science Monitor* reports on the fifteenth of May that shops in Tehran were closed and "defiant students were herded off the campus, where they were dispersed by club wielding police" while workers went on strike against General Motors, Union Carbide, and Fluor and religious leaders led a general strike throughout Tehran.[739] As the unrest continued, the British Ambassador – who earlier questioned the future of Iran – curiously left for holiday later claiming that he "still did not believe that there was a serious risk of the Shah being overthrown."[740] Students protesting the presence of military guards at Tehran University were attacked by government troops in order to break the demonstration on May 15.[741] Three days later, Ayatollah Shari'atmadari warned that Iran would not see peace until the Shah allowed a constitutional government.[742]

Direct and pointed questions of the future of the Shah were also asked in a May 26 memorandum from Sick to Brzezinski. Sick spoke at length regarding how "concern about long-term Iranian stability is becoming a routine topic of discussion for the first time in many years." But, also Sick reported on the perceptions surrounding the Shah:

> … The Shah has shown signs of nervousness, his leaders are beginning to wonder if he has lost his touch, the religious leaders have had a taste of blood
> and seem to like it, the police seem incapable of controlling the mobs, and other
> sectors of society are watching and wondering whether this is a rising tide or
> merely an isolated explosion of social tension. The international community
> wonders, too…[743]

That day, Sick met with David Tourgeman of the Israeli embassy who was "quite concerned about a major political threat to the Shah's regime" and confirmed the themes advanced a day earlier by the French embassy that the Iranian government was in danger. Completing the picture, Sick also spoke with University of Texas professor Jim Bill because "he virtually predicted the present events long before the conventional wisdom (including mine) would admit that the Shah had an internal problem of any magnitude."[744]

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[736] Stempel., *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 94; Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 105.

[737] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 330; Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 366.

[738] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Memorandum of Conversation Tehran, "Religious Situation," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, May 24, 1978).

[739] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 366.

[740] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 67.

[741] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 330.

[742] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 330.

[743] Memorandum, Gary Sick to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 5/26/78, NLC-25-139-4-4-3, Jimmy Carter Library.

[744] Notes, National Security Council, NLC-25-37-5-1-8, Jimmy Carter Library.

The frequency of demonstrations at the end of May did, however, slow. Sullivan observed, on May 28, the number of demonstrations had reduced from several per day to three or four per week. That said, Sullivan indicated the slowdown was just beginning and that much needed to be done in order to reverse the last five to six months.[745] Be that as it may, May ended in much the way it began with riots – in this case at Tehran University.[746] Evidently, two groups of approximately 2500 students fought over the co-educational status of dormitories at Tehran University.[747]

June and July brought relative calm to the streets of Iran for the first time in 1978. The operative description, of course, was relative calm. Sullivan sent to Washington a report on internal political in Iran written by George Lambrakis, the political officer at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, on June 1. Lambrakis offered an overall positive assessment of the Shah but did note the possibility of future problems and suggested the Shah's political liberalization has brought many into open opposition to his regime. This report reflected the first time the Embassy connected economic troubles with the political turmoil in Iran. And, finally, Lambrakis recognized that the religious leaders and repressive government responses to unrest has had the impact of uniting the opposition.[748] A top secret CIA article in June, however, noted the demonstrations by conservative Muslims did pose a threat to the Shah and the protests had "exposed some glaring deficiencies in the ability of the police to contain mob violence."[749] Meanwhile, the Iranian economy continued to struggle. By the end of June, real wages had decreased and unemployment increased. The Shah responded with a get tough policy towards workers – which activated more strikes.[750]

Government authorities were forced to close the dormitories at Tehran University and opponents of the regime called for a general strike to commemorate the 1963 riots on June 3, while June 17 signaled the end of yet another forty day mourning cycle leading to more anti-government protests in Qom.[751] Members of the Department of State, meanwhile, testified to Congress that the U.S. continued to rely on both Iran and Saudi Arabia to protect its interests in the Persian Gulf region.[752] Two mid-level analysts within the State Department, Stephen B. Cohen and Theodore Moran, who had earlier suggested the Shah was in serious political trouble now attempted to present a zero-based analysis of the U.S. relationship with Iran. In short, Cohen and Moran wanted to reexamine every part of the relationship between the U.S. and Iran. Moran's supervisor at the time and head of policy planning, Anthony Lake, approved the plan only to, shortly thereafter, order the two to suspend work on the project.[753]

Stempel notes that the Shah and the political elite in Iran "thought the crisis had passed" but, those supporters of the Shah as well as foreign diplomats that made such a judgment were

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[745] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Iran: Why the Sudden Quiet?" *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, May 28, 1978).

[746] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 105; Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 206.

[747] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 331.

[748] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Airgram Tehran, "Iran in 1977-78: The Internal Scene," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives. Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, June 1, 1978. Armstrong, "Failing to Heed Warnings of Revolution in Iran."

[749] United States, Central Intelligence Agency, Top Secret, Article, "Iran: Increase in Religious Dissidence" *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, June 1978).

[750] Abrahamian, p. 511-512.

[751] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 331.

[752] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 106.

[753] Armstrong, "Failing to Heed Warnings of Revolution in Iran."

"misled by the apparent calm" and assumed the average Iranian was "less dissatisfied than they had been earlier" and, in doing so, were merely engaging in wishful thinking.[754] Sullivan predicted that the Shah would be able to maintain power but that the road ahead would be difficult.[755] Gary Sick was preparing a report on the future of Iran for President Carter just when Vance was hearing Sullivan's assurances that the Shah would maintain power. Sick maintained "the end was not in sight" and that the "religious leaders had a taste of blood and seemed to like it."[756] In addition, Sick argued that the Shah was "incapable of controlling the mobs" and "other sectors of the society were watching and wondering if this was a rising tide or merely an isolated explosion or social tension."[757] Sick maintained the stability of Iran was a "routine topic of discussion" for the first time in many years.[758] David Newsom, the Undersecretary of State for political affairs, traveled to Tehran in early July to discuss weapons purchases with the Shah. Newsom and many of the key embassy principals then met at the home of Charles Naas, who served as deputy chief of the embassy in Iran, and the group concluded the Shah was politically secure. That said, however, by the time of the visit the rumor in the streets of Tehran was the Shah had cancer.[759]

Violence in Mashad on July 22 led to forty killed and with the renewed unrest as Iran entered the period known as the "Tehran Spring."[760] The riots in Mashad evolved from funeral services of Shi'ite leader Ayatollah Ahmad Kafi and lasted through the 24th. However, the more significant broader aspect of the riots was that it marked the first time large numbers of working class participated in the protests.[761] Protests during the week following the Mashad conflicts took an anti-American flavor and resulted in the bombing of the U.S. Consulate in Isfahan.[762] Large memorial services in Tehran, Tabriz, Qom, Isfahan, and Shiraz all degenerated into street clashes.[763] The U.S. Embassy began reporting on the rumors, ubiquitous in Tehran and Isfahan, the Shah was having health issues by the end of July. Charles Naas noted "at every social occasion embassy officers and I have received anxious inquiries from Americans, Iranians, and other diplomats" concerning the health of the Shah but concluded to "discount well over 90 percent of the nonsense but we shall continue to try to keep ourselves informed."[764] A week later, Stempel drafted an air gram for State summarizing his discussions with a key Iranian contact who informed the Embassy that both the health and the mood of the Shah had become a concern within the Shah's government. The Embassy source counseled Stempel and the U.S. to watch the Shah closely for any health or mental issues and not to hesitate to advise the Shah to call the Regency Council in order to prepare for a transition of leadership. When Stempel suggested such planning was a bit premature, the contact "merely smiled sadly and noted it pays to think ahead."

[754] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 101.
[755] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 325.
[756] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 50.
[757] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 50.
[758] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 50-51.
[759] Armstrong, "Failing to Heed Warnings of Revolution in Iran."
[760] United States, Defense Intelligence Agency, Confidential, Report, "Intelligence Appraisal - Iran: Renewal of Civil Disturbances." *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, August 16, 1978); Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 331; Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 109.
[761] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 512.
[762] United States, Defense Intelligence Agency, Confidential, Report.
[763] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 512.
[764] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran, "Rumors Regarding Health of Shah," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, July 26, 1978).

In addition, the confidant expressed a "pessimistic view" of the political mood in Iran. Stempel decided the contact "probably overstates negative aspects of present situation."[765] In addition, the source told of a July 22 meeting between the Shah, General Fardoust, and the head of SAVAK at which the Shah ordered future demonstrations to be broken up with military force and gave the army authorization to fire upon demonstrators. In summary, the source argued the overall political situation was becoming worse and the opposition broadening. Specifically, Tudeh and other radical groups were beginning to align with Khomeini. In addition, opposition groups planned a very aggressive push to win over the students upon the opening of universities. At the same time, the pro-Shah forces have done no such planning to offer defense to opposition claims or provide an alternative view of the political situation. Finally, the issue of corruption quickly was becoming a significant political problem for the Shah. The Embassy source predicted that unless corruption was addressed in a timely manner, many of the merchant and manufacturing classes will "become convinced their interests lie with the opposition."[766]

The relative calm of June and July gave way very quickly in August of 1978 to increased civil unrest and opposition to the Shah and his regime. In fact, "grievances of all sorts suddenly found their voice" in the Islamic opposition to the Shah by late summer of 1978 – including groups that did not favor an Islamic Republic. The intellectual movement joined the Islamists in search of intellectual freedom, merchants in search of a free economy, left wing advocates searching for a more just Iran, workers looking for better wages, and, ironically, even a "drug counter-culture."[767] A memorandum of discussion between the Consul, a member of parliament, and an Iranian industrialist forwarded by the U.S. Consulate revealed popular attitudes toward the Shah. The Iranian industrialist, Halaku Kashefi, claimed the people of Iran lost trust in both the government and the Royal Family and the government was rapidly becoming irrelevant. Seventeen of twenty-four cousins in Kashefi's family had either obtained permanent resident status in the United States or their investments allowed them to do so in Europe. Amir Ammanullah, a member of parliament and the Qashqai tribal leader, concurred and noted the feelings described by Kashefi were common in Iran.[768] Rubin observes the daily briefings from State and the CIA began to paint a picture of the Shah "losing his grip and that Iran's social fabric was unraveling."[769] Karabell categorized intelligence from the U.S. Embassy as "a steady stream of increasingly grim reports" and "the information which these reports contained painted a clear picture of a regime in trouble."[770]

August continued with the familiar refrain of political street violence in opposition to the Shah's regime. Rioting in Isfahan on August 1 was termed as "substantial" and even led to the bombing of the U.S. Consulate. The bombing marked the first time protestors specifically targeted Americans or American installations. Naas predicted future clashes between civilians and the Iranian police and military forces would "activate the latent xenophobia in Iranian religious fundamentalism" reporting from the U.S. Embassy due to the absence of Sullivan. Naas

[765] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Airgram Tehran, "Uncertain Political Mood: Religious Developments, Tougher Royal Line on Demonstrators," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, August 1, 1978).
[766] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Airgram Tehran.
[767] Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution*, p. 142.
[768] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Iranian Political Situation - Overt Violence Gives Way to Quiet Rumbling," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, August 13, 1978).
[769] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 209.
[770] Karabell, *Inside the U.S. Espionage Den*, p. 55.

further concluded Khomeini's allies have been able to increase political tension using the mourning ceremonies as a political vehicle.[771] Although notably calmer, the period of August 5 - 10 did see additional political violence which was most pronounced in Qom, Shiraz, and Isfahan.[772] Abrahamian's account of Isfahan tells of an armed crowd taking control of the city.[773] Riots broke out in a number of cities throughout southern Iran on August 11. For instance, violence in Isfahan and Shiraz left seven dead and 240 injured.[774] The aggression in Isfahan grew out of the arrest of a prominent local religious leader.[775] Ultimately, Iranian authorities enforced martial law in Isfhahan, Shahreza, Najafabad, and Homayunshar at the same time reports characterized the protests "the worst in several months of sporadic anti-government violence."[776] Notably, the enforcing of martial law in Isfahan marked the first time since 1953 that such a condition existed in a provincial capital.[777] The Shah also enforced dusk-to-dawn curfews in Isfahan, Shiraz, Ahvaz, and Tabriz.[778] As the crisis continued into the late summer of 1978, internal NSC notes conceded that "the Shah and those around him have underestimated the challenge."[779] An August 13 U.S. Embassy cable also claimed violence in Tehran and Khoramabad the previous weekend. Police in Qazvin fired in the air and launched tear gas in order to break up demonstrations.[780]

The continued violence in Iran finally resulted in an overall examination of Iran's political present by the U.S. Embassy. The Embassy sent a product of that analysis to State on August 17 and suggested the U.S. should question previous assumptions and also warned of "considerable political turmoil in Iran from which many outcomes are theoretically possible." Moreover, the Embassy suggested that many of the moderate religious leaders were fearful of challenging Khomeini and the Ayatollahs themselves were involved in a struggle for primacy over the religious community. Finally, the Embassy also warned the Shah may have to resort to violence to gain the initiative but those in the Embassy "have no doubt he will do so if that becomes essential."[781] That day, a report from Harold Saunders at State indicated the religious leaders presented the greatest challenge to the Shah and were able to create a constituency that included the poor, merchants from the bazaar, and urban single men and unemployed. Saunders expressed that "some of the elite wonder if the Shah is losing his grip" and argues the end of the unrest does not appear likely in the immediate future.[782] Tensions grew even higher with the August 19 Rex Cinema fire. Unknown perpetrators set fire to the Rex Cinema in Abadan during

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[771] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Implications of Iran's Religious Unrest," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, August 2, 1978).

[772] United States, Defense Intelligence Agency, Confidential, Report.

[773] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, pp. 512-513.

[774] Christian Science Monitor Staff, "Iranian Cities under Martial Law," Christian Science Monitor August 15, 1978, 11.

[775] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 332.

[776] Christian Science Monitor Staff, "Iran Cities under Martial Law."

[777] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 513.

[778] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 206.

[779] Memorandum, Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, NLC-15-126-5-7-4, Jimmy Carter Library.

[780] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran.

[781] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran, "Iran: Where Are We Now and Where Are We Going?" *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, August 17, 1978).

[782] United States Department of State, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, "Assessment of Internal Political Scene in Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, August 17, 1978).

a crowded Iranian film. Locked doors in the cinema resulted in the death of 477 persons.[783] Iran's government and the Shah accused Islamists of the attack as a protest over westernization while members of the opposition levied the blame on SAVAK and argued the attack was a false flag terror attack designed to discredit the Islamic movement.[784] Whatever the case, the fire was the sixth in twelve days and "the others had been set by fundamentalist extremists to oppose the showing of 'sinful movies.'"[785] In fact, *Newsweek* reported that Abadan was the thirtieth such arson in the last month alone and quoted a University of Maryland professor, Reza Barheni, in observing that the Shah's regime was "unstable."[786] Funeral services held for the victims of Abadan held from August 22-25 brought even more anti-regime protests. In fact, crowds attacked buildings, fought police, and chanted "Death to the Shah" while the government was forced to resort to the military in order to bring about some form of order.[787]

Curiously, in the midst of the simmering Iranian caldron, the NIE was shelved. Sick contends work on the NIE ceased because of two major reasons – (1) the Department of State had no Iranian analysts in the INR and (2) George Griffin, INR Chief of South Asia, did not conform to the CIA and their more positive analysis of the future of the Shah.[788] The *Washington Post* investigation of the mysterious NIE – entitled "Iran: Prospect Through 1985" – similarly reported that the opposition came from State Department analyst George Griffin who questioned the optimistic nature of the NIE draft. In addition, Griffin consulted Kermit Roosevelt, who had led the 1950s coup against Mossadeq, and Roosevelt correctly predicted the Shah would withdraw under pressure and not have the will necessary to make difficult decisions.[789] Brzezinski formally brought the Iran question to Carter's attention in an August 11 memorandum. In that communication, Brzezinski passed along the observations of a friend, Bill Griffith, whose political acumen he trusted. Griffith, fresh off of a trip to Iran, noted that "on balance, I should think the domestic situation is serious and the future of the dynasty is in question." As the crisis continued into the late summer of 1978, internal NSC notes conceded that "the Shah and those around him have underestimated the challenge."[790]

August 31 protests in Mashad marking the end of the forty days of mourning for those killed in July turned to rioting, as well.[791] Prime Minister Jamshid Amouzegar resigned and the Shah charged Jaafar Sharif-Emami with forming a new government. The month closed with the *Christian Science Monitor* opining that the Shah was "facing his sternest challenge since he was temporarily ousted" but continued the Shah would remain in power "as long as he keeps the loyalty of his armed forces."[792] Meanwhile, Stempel observed that same month that military leaders were questioning the loyalty of troops and violence in Jahrom, Rafsanjan, Mashad, and Isfahan "had raised questions about whether enlisted men and draftees would fire on religious protestors."[793] Carter relied on a recent CIA report predicting that Iran was not near a

[783] Data from David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, indicates 477 dead while Preece, *U.S. Policy toward Iran*, cited 377; also see Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 513.

[784] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, pp. 54-55.

[785] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 207.

[786] Kim Willenson and William E. Schmidt, "The Shah under Attack," *Newsweek*, September 4, 1978, pp. 36-37.

[787] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 332.

[788] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 107.

[789] Scott Armstrong, "U.S. Urged 'Crackdown' on Opposition; As Turmoil Turns to Crisis, the U.S. Urges a 'Crackdown'; New Attempts to Divide the Opposition Fail," Washington Post October 27 1980, .

[790] Memorandum, Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter, NLC-15-126-5-7-4, Jimmy Carter Library.

[791] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 333.

[792] Geoffrey Godsell, "Shah Faces New-Old Tensions," Christian Science Monitor August 25 1978, 3, .

[793] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 109.

revolutionary stage and continued to believe the military would remain loyal to the Shah and the opposition "did not have the capacity to be more than troublesome in any transition to a new regime" even given the continued violence and warnings.[794] Iran continued to draw the attention of Brzezinski at the end of August. Later in his memoirs, Brzezinski wrote of Sick's increasing concern over the stability of Iran and characterized Sick's view as "isolated and in conflict with both Embassy reporting and CIA analysis" but confessed that the warnings "reinforced my growing uneasiness about Iran."[795] Brzezinski concerns resulted in a call to Iranian Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi in order to gauge the events in Iran but also to encourage "remedial action." At this point, Brzezinski began to advocate that Iranian liberalization was responsible for the unrest and guilty of "unleashing new social forces." Furthermore, Brzezinski believed that Iran lacked the necessary political and institutional framework necessary to channel these new social forces in constructive ways. Brzezinski became convinced that the Shah was in trouble after meeting with Zahedi.[796]

Late summer also brought an increase in the depth of opposition to the Shah. In the form of what Cottam called "accommodators." Oil workers and government employees went on strike for higher pay "paralyzing the government."[797] The middle class began to understand the ubiquity of the breakdown of the Iranian government by September.[798] A non-classified September 1 report from the Defense Intelligence Agency took notice of the "intense and widespread opposition to the Shah" but predicted the Shah would survive the dangerous predicament due to his support within the military. Overall, the DIA predicted the Shah "had a better of even chance of surviving the present difficulties" but also conceded "the Shi'ite Muslim leaders have the greatest ability to bring people into the streets."[799] Riots in Tehran, Mashad, and other Iranian cities arose on September 2 and Khomeini called for the overthrow of the Shah on September 3.[800] Strikes followed in public transit, textile manufacturing, broadcast employees, and throughout the ranks of civil service and consumers responded by hoarding goods in the midst of buying panics. Those in Iran with resources continued to move an estimated $500 million to overseas locations since Jaleh.[801] Parsons returned from his extended holiday and advised that "it was glaringly obvious that there had been a qualitative change for the worse and the whole Pahlavi apparatus was in danger."[802] Observers claimed the army had grown unresponsive and commanders and enlisted unwilling to firmly commit to suppressing the violence.[803] State's INR predicted the Shah would be forced to relinquish his throne by 1985.[804]

The Iranian government allowed religious demonstrations on the Eid-e-Fetr holiday as challenges abounded to the Shah's regime. Kurzman argues the national scope of the Eid-e-Fetr demonstrations moved the opposition further into the mainstream and beyond merely hard-core

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[794] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 438.
[795] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 359.
[796] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 360.
[797] Cottam, *Iran and the United States*, p. 84.
[798] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 217.
[799] United States, Defense Intelligence Agency, Non-Classified, Report, "Assessment of the Political Situation in Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, September 1, 1978).
[800] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 333.
[801] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 217.
[802] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 67.
[803] Katouzian, "The Pahlavi Regime in Iran," p. 204.
[804] United States Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Report, Secret, *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 29, 1980).

Islamists.[805] In addition, Stempel recalled that the demonstrations in Tehran alone were approximately 100,000 strong on September 4 and probably over 150,000 on September 5. The marches were symbolic in that it marked the first public calls for government action at planned demonstrations and "reflected the collective belief of opposition leaders that the Shah's new government was weak" which "encouraged them to escalate their demands to new levels, especially when the government made no attempt to block the marches."[806]

Iranian government officials rescheduled the opening of universities to mid-October due to the relentless nature of the demonstrations.[807] Finally, the government responded to further planned demonstrations on September 6 through a ban. A key variable in the Shah's change of heart appears to have been the role of Brzezinski in pushing for a harder line towards opposition. Zahedi returned to Tehran on September 5 and with him carried his perceived view of American policy which had been developed in discussions with Brzezinski. The preferred policy by Washington, as seen by Zahedi, was for a firm and hard-line response to the Shah's opposition. However, as it turns out, the policy was based more on Brzezinski's personal views and not American policy.[808] Approximately 100,000 gathered in Tehran in order to call for the overthrow of the Shah and creation of an Islamic Republic despite the government ban.[809]

Protestors met at Jaleh Square for a religious rally on September 7 causing Iranian troops to order the crowds to disperse. Abrahamian estimates that approximately 500,000 protested in Tehran alone and chanted for "Death to the Pahlevis."[810] The official government count was 122 dead and 2,000 to 3,000 wounded, the political opposition claimed that over 1000 had died, and doctors on the scene estimated 300-400 dead and ten times wounded. Sick viewed Jaleh Square, later to be known as Black Friday, as a seminal moment in the turning of a protest into a revolution.[811] Jaleh also resulted in many Americans to begin to alter their view of Iran. Yet, Rubin characterized the changing view as "a slow process" and noted that "no one pressed such doubts on his superiors; nor did anyone yet voice the idea that the shah might indeed fall."[812] Ambassador Sullivan sent a quite pessimistic report to Washington in which he suggested "the deep sense of dissatisfaction revealed by the continuing demonstrations and riots suggested that Iran could be ripe for full-scale rebellion" in early September.[813] Concurrently, Henry Precht and Jack Miklos, the former deputy chief of the mission in Tehran, gave secret testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The testimony was quite optimistic and "so blasé that it angered several senators."[814] By late October, Sick predicted that "if the oil strike continues for long it could bring down the government" and that "some dramatic action of support on our part may be essential to prop up the Shah." Several days later, Sick discussed with the Israeli embassy the evacuation of Israelis from Iran.[815] On October 30, Sick prepared a memo for

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[805] Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution*, pp. 62-63.
[806] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, pp. 114-115.
[807] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 115.
[808] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 214.
[809] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 333-334.
[810] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 515.
[811] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 55; Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 59; Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 117; Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 515.
[812] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 215.
[813] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 58.
[814] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 215.
[815] Notes, National Security Council, NLC-25-37-5-1-8, Jimmy Carter Library; Notes, National Security Council, NLC-25-37-5-1-8, Jimmy Carter Library; Memorandum for the Director, Central Intelligence from Zbigniew Brzezinski, NLC-25-95-7-1-2, Jimmy Carter Library.

Stansfield Turner on behalf of Zbigniew Brzezinski "asking him [Turner] to take a careful look at the circumstances we would face in the event the Shah's regime should be overthrown.[816]

The fallout from Jaleh was also significant inside Iran. Iranian military began to enforce a censorship of the press the day after Jaleh.[817] The *Christian Science Monitor* provided a glimpse at what it characterized as a strange partnership of anti-Shah forces in a September 12 report and observed the "Shah will need all his skill and perseverance to keep his country moving forward domestically and internationally."[818] In fact, the Shah did react to Jaleh by arresting significant opponents of his regime and charging them with subversion and took into custody others including former ministers, high level government employees, and businessmen and charging them with corruption.[819]

Jaleh did, however, result in a number of direct expressions of support for the Shah. Sadat, while at Camp David, called Iran and expressed his support for the Shah. The United States finally released riot equipment for Iran after a long and spirited debate within the Carter administration between the Human Rights Bureau and supporters of the Shah.[820] Warren Christopher, Assistant Secretary of State, contacted Vance at Camp David in order to urge Carter to speak to the Shah and express U.S. support. At the same time, Vance had grown concerned over intelligence reports indicating the Shah showed signs of depression and uncertainty. And, Vance prohibited Sullivan from making contact with Iranian opposition concerned it would contribute to what was seen as a growing confidence problem. Christopher met with Zahedi who characterized the violence of Black Friday as the result of communist agitation but Vance continued to see the unrest in terms of "a massive outpouring of pent-up economic, political, religious, and social forces."[821] Carter did telephone the Shah in order to express his friendship and hope that the political violence would be resolved and pushed him to continue with liberal reforms.[822]

Black Friday did alter the perceptions of many in the U.S. policy community. In fact, a staff member of the National Security Council, Samuel Huntington, requested a CIA analysis of a post-Shah Iran. What Huntington received was not a post-Shah analysis but, instead, a discussion of the Iranian Constitution and how a transition inside the Pahlavi dynasty would be accomplished.[823] Treverton and Klocke characterized the continued inattention by the Carter administration as reflective of the tendency of the Carter White House to dismiss bad news when it would bring key assumptions of U.S. foreign policy into question.[824] David agrees with the analysis of Black Friday and its importance to the revolution and with the continued lack of attention by the Carter administration - "After Black Friday the Islamic offensive rose in power

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[816] Notes, National Security Council, NLC-25-37-5-1-8, Jimmy Carter Library; Memorandum for the Director, Central Intelligence from Zbigniew Brzezinski, NLC-25-95-7-1-2, Jimmy Carter Library.
[817] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 55.
[818] Christian Science Monitor Staff, "The Ordeal of Iran," Christian Science Monitor September 12 1978, 24.
[819] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 334.
[820] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 57-60.
[821] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 326.
[822] United States Department of State, Limited Official Use, Cable State, "President's Telephone Call to Shah," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, September 10, 1978). Sick's account indicates the call took place on September 9, pp. 59-60; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 361; Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 326.
[823] Trverton and Klocke, *The Fall of the Shah*, p. 5.
[824] Trverton and Klocke, *The Fall of the Shah*, pp. 5-6.

and breadth. Only willful blindness now could deny the risk to the government in Iran. Hence, in our view, wishful thinking became the predominant avoidance strategy after 8 September."[825]

The U.S. appeared confused and unwilling to explore policy alternatives or face the potential reality of an Iran without the Shah even with growing evidence that the turmoil in Iran may have some broader and longer- term implications. In fact, Rubin portrayed the U.S. reaction as "foot-dragging" and the government finally agreed to cancel the NIE over the dispute between INR and the CIA and DIA concerning the future of the Shah.[826]

The draft of the NIE offered a germane and timely discussion of the political future of Iran as it stood when work was suspended. First, the report described the unrest facing the Shah as the most serious in his entire reign of thirty seven years. In addition, the draft linked the political unrest with economic issues resulting from the planned industrialization of the mid-1970s. The economic and social problems that emerged from the attempted industrialization were of a large enough scale to overwhelm the Iranian political system. Those same institutions, according to the report, were unable to respond to the increase of political expression that accompanied the Shah's attempt to liberalize. Authors of the draft NIE argued the most critical time for the Shah in attempting to preserve his regime would be from late 1978 until mid-1979 due to the social, political, and economic strains on Iran's political institutions. In an analysis of the Iranian military, the draft NIE noted the loyalty of the military to the Shah but also suggested that loyalty varied in degree and levels of support.[827] The draft NIE's discussion of the immediate future of Iran included remarks concerning the "disorientation of Iran's society and political system" and predicted tensions would exist for many years between those advocates of modernism and those of traditionalism whether the Shah remained or was replaced.[828] In conclusion, the draft NIE offered an overall pessimistic assessment of the future of the Shah as leader of Iran and concluded its analysis with the belief "the political unrest that has occurred during 1978 has raised for the first time in many years the serious possibility that the Shah may be forced from power sometime before he would choose to step aside in favor of his son."[829]

A reporter from a *Time* magazine met with the Shah on September 12 and warned that the Shah appeared ready to physically collapse. The information confounded Brzezinski when compared to a later report from a U.S. Embassy officer that the Shah appeared quite confident.[830] In Iran, local media reported on the flow of money out of Iran and published a list of 177 prominent Iranians, including members of the Shah's regime, who had transferred approximately $2 billion out of Iran in the last few weeks.[831] David Newsom later recalled the narrative of a mission of three State Department officers sent to Iran after Jaleh in order to ascertain the extent of the opposition and the level of violence. The three returned with a report summarizing how "the situation was deteriorating." Brzezinski would not allow the report to be presented claiming that State – and specifically Henry Precht – had an agenda to undermine the Shah. Newsom later contended "not everyone was caught by surprise" by the fall of the Shah.[832]

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[825] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, pp. 69-70.
[826] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, pp. 208-209.
[827] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Secret, National Intelligence Estimate, "Iran National Intelligence Estimate," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, c. September, 1978): pp. 98-104.
[828] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Secret, National Intelligence Estimate, p. 114.
[829] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Secret, National Intelligence Estimate, p. 126.
[830] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 361.
[831] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 517.
[832] Strong, *Working in the World*, p. 63.

Ambassador Sullivan relayed a significant observation to Washington in a September 14 telegram complaining that one of the ongoing dilemmas facing the Iranian military was the overall lack of training and equipment in order to confront demonstrations and crowds in a non-lethal manner. In fact, as troops took over for police in Tehran "they came equipped in full battle dress, armed with G-3 rifles, with fixed bayonets." Troops also lacked shields. As a result, the typical response to control the crowd often was firing in the air which then degenerated into firing into the crowd.[833] Parsons concluded, on September 23, that "there was very little time available for the government to regain the confidence of the people." Furthermore, he noted the "Shah agreed" with the assessment and admitted "he was no longer sure his regime would survive."[834] Moreover, Parsons would concede "the illusion of normality evaporated" by the end of September.[835] Meanwhile, reports from the United States Consulate in Shiraz spoke of the wide extent of the unpopularity of the Shah and noted "it has been extremely difficult to find anyone in southern Iran with a good word for the Shah in recent days." Yet, the populace of southern Iran also appeared to have a dislike for the Islamic fundamentalists. Hence, the Consul predicted the Shah would continue to lead Iran simply out of default.[836] On September 23, the government of Iraq placed Ayatollah Khomeini under house arrest.[837]

Another pattern in the opposition to the Shah began to develop starting September 24 – the use of strikes. Approximately 10,000 oil workers went on strike over pay but also cited underlying political issues. Strikes began to spread very quickly to other segments of the economy, too.[838] Indeed, workers in the telecommunications industry went on strike September 30 and caused serious problems in long-distance services.[839] Kurzman observes that by the autumn of 1978 the number of protestors was too high to arrest all.[840] Harris writes that much of the Shah's court and liveried footmen in his Tehran palace had abandoned the monarch. The only person that remained was the shahbanou and the two would often dine alone by candlelight because power in Tehran only functioned occasionally. The Shah did not use the palace's generator because he was concerned that a lit palace would bring more attacks.[841] Yet, the United States focused attention elsewhere. Brzezinski writes that most of the last half of September was spent on Camp David negotiations and the Iran issue would not even come up again until the end of that month.[842] Besides, Brzezinski conceded that most of the significant members of the Carter administration ignored Iran "until the crisis became very grave" because they were working on a number of other issues – SALT, Camp David negotiations, defense budget battles, talks with the

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[833] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Need for Crowd Control Equipment in Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, September 14, 1978).
[834] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 74.
[835] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 74.
[836] United States Consulate, Shiraz, Iran, Confidential, Airgram, "Political Attitudes in Southern Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, September 23, 1978).
[837] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Memorandum of Conversation Tehran, "LMI Seeks High Level U.S. Meeting," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, September 25, 1978).
[838] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 335; for impact of strikes an overall economy please see Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 518.
[839] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 335.
[840] Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution*, p. 111.
[841] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 19.
[842] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 361-362.

Chinese, and the situation in Nicaragua – and, as a result, the key decision makers were unable to focus on "what became a fatal and strategic political turning point."[843] The INR published a September 29 Interagency Memo which pointed to the lull in unrest but also suggested "considerable question" existed over whether the Shah would remain in power "over the next 18 to 24 months."[844] The month of September ended with the continued and unabated pattern of protest throughout Iran. Arsonists burned the Tehran Central Produce Market on the night of September 30 as nonviolent but anti-American displays became more numerous.[845]

Stempel recollected that the United States finally found out about the Shah's battle with cancer from the French government at the beginning of October.[846] Large scale shop closures in response to the reported Iraqi house arrest of Ayatollah Khomeini interrupted commerce in Tabriz, Kermah, Isfahan, Shiraz, Yazd, and the Tehran Bazaar beginning October 1.[847] October also brought more strikes as a manifestation of resistance to the Shah's rule. Religious leaders joined with members of the National Front and successfully called shops in Tehran and other cities to close for one day.[848] The Tehran bazaar was also closed in protest and workers from the National Iranian Oil Company, the Postal and Telegraph Administration, the National Water Board and the Bank-e-Meli and insurance and industrial firms also went on strike.[849] Prime Minister Sharif-Emami met with Parsons and Sullivan and conveyed his belief the strikes were organized by a three-headed coalition of Ayatollah Khomeini, members of Tudeh, and the National Front. Parsons recalls "wondering at the time whether the Iranian people had hit upon the means of overthrowing the regime, even if the armed forces remained loyal to the Shah."[850] Workers in many major service and industrial sectors – including hospitals, radio, television, transportation, schools, and various government services – went on strike from October 3-8 "despite government assurances that it would meet the economic demands of the strikers."[851]

Unrest also became a continued pattern at Iranian Universities. A number of university department heads signed an open letter condemning the government of Iran for deaths at recent protests. Consequently, the open letter signaled a broadening of the anti-Shah forces as "those on the list who are known to embassy would not have become involved with similar effort even as recently as six months ago." Officials from the U.S. Embassy also suggested the violence of September 30 to October 1 was more widespread than reported by Iranian media sources. For example, the press did not cover the assassination of a police chief in Mashad nor demonstrations in Kermanshah. Unrest in Iran on October 3 included demonstrations in Rezaiyeh, Douround, Zanjan, and Hamanan and featured the use of bombs and grenades while more peaceful marches took place in Dezful, Mahabad, Shahabad, Garb, and Baneh.[852] The city of Kermanshah witnessed more demonstrations from October 1 – 3 while on October 4 police and demonstrators

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[843] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 358.
[844] United States Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Report, Secret, *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 29, 1980).
[845] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political Report October 1," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, October 1, 1978).
[846] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 104.
[847] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran.
[848] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 55.
[849] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 77.
[850] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 78.
[851] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 335.
[852] Iran United States Embassy, "Political/Security Report, October 3," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, October 3, 1978).

clashed in Kashan. Police dispersed female protestors on October 3 in Hamedan and used tear gas to break up protests in Shahi against the educational system.[853]

An October 5 report from the U.S. Embassy to State indicates the number of industries impacted by strikes continued to increase regardless of press reports to the contrary. Prime Minister Sharif-Emami confessed to Sullivan in a meeting the previous evening that approximately fifty strikes had been settled. For their part, embassy analysts observed that "it seems obvious that the government has chosen to follow a reconciliatory line with strikers, giving in to most of their demands rather than risking violence" and "the effect has been, at least to date, that one strike has tended to encourage others, and the end does not yet seem in sight."[854] Meanwhile, Iraq allowed Khomeini to resettle in Paris on October 6, 1978 where he called for Iranian armed forces to overthrow the Shah.[855]

The continued protests and the Shah's inability to bring order in Iran coincided with difficult questions being asked by the CIA about the Shah's psyche. The CIA requested that State and Sullivan assess specific questions regarding the mental state of the Shah in an October 10 communiqué. For example, the CIA noted concern over what it termed "episodes of depression" by the Shah and asked if such episodes impacted the Shah's leadership and decision-making process. Specifically, and perhaps most telling, the analysis asked whether the Shah ever becomes "paralyzed with indecision."[856]

Vance met with the new Iranian foreign minister, Khosrow Afshar, as policy confusion appeared to continue in Washington, and endorsed the Shah's plan of continuing the liberalization policies as a way of dividing the secular opposition from Khomeini.[857] General Huyser observed that by the beginning of October the situation in Iran had grown so violent that Washington was discussing reducing the number of Americans and Huyser himself was weighing evacuation plans.[858] By now, Great Britain's ambassador to Iran had grown even more concerned over the future of the Shah and noted "we were starting to ask ourselves, with growing frequency, how long they [the Iranian government] could hold out in the face of continuing disorders and, more important, the paralyzing weapon of the strike."[859] Parsons spoke of the general loss of respect of the Shah and the belief that the best case scenario for the Shah would be to remain as a constitutional monarch.[860] President Carter, in an October 10 Washington press conference, assured reporters that the United States would not get involved with internal Iranian politics but added his "own hopes have been that there could be peace there, an end to bloodshed, and an orderly transformation into more progressive social arrangements."[861]

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[853] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political Report, October 4 and 5," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, October 5, 1978).

[854] United States Embassy, Iran, Limited Official Use, Cable Tehran, "Labor Unrest in Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, October 5, 1978).

[855] Cited in David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 55.

[856] United States Department of State, Secret, Letter State, "Updating the CIA Psychological Profile of the Shah - Questions Attached," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, October 10, 1978).

[857] Vance, *Hard Choices*, pp. 326-327.

[858] Robert E. Huyser, *Mission to Tehran* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), p. 12.

[859] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 83.

[860] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 84.

[861] Yonah Alexander, Allan S. Nanes, and Georgetown University, World Power Studies Program, *The United States and Iran: A Documentary History* (Frederick, Md.: Aletheia Books, 1980), p. 461.

Unrest "too widespread to describe in detail" took place throughout Iranian provinces on the weekend of October 19. [862] Rioting on October 24 in the city of Gorgan led to more arson attacks on government buildings and cinemas and banks.[863] Protests and strikes were held on October 24 in almost every Iranian city calling for the end of the Shah's regime and the return of Khomeini.[864] Carter, the next day, wrote that he received an analysis on Iran from the CIA that argued many had been "alienated" by the Shah's attempts to modernize.[865] Brzezinski recalled receiving a memo from Sick urging some form of dramatic support for the Shah.[866] At the same time, the *Christian Science Monitor* asked the question of whether the Shah would be able to survive and described the situation as of "profound concern."[867] A memorandum of conversation from a dinner in honor of a journalist from *Kayhan* noted the "remarkable identity of views" on the political turmoil in Iran from disparate sources. As an illustration, one noted columnist and another noted editor, unknown to each other, both agreed Khomeini held more influence over the masses and predicted the future of Iran would be an "Islamic State guaranteed by the military" despite the fact that neither "wants this to pass but things have gone too far, too long for an orderly transition to a democratic state."[868] Near the Caspian Sea in the city of Amol student groups seized control of the city on October 25 while 10,000 students protested in Tehran. Friends and family of the Shah began to view the unrest as the unfolding of a revolution and Sullivan arrived at the conclusion on October 26 the Shah would not make it through the turmoil.[869]

Both Carter and Brzezinski continued to rely on what they both termed as optimistic reports from Ambassador Sullivan as the situation appeared to move toward chaos.[870] News broke in the United States of the assassination of a police chief and an administrator of martial law on the Shah's birthday even as Sullivan relayed his last optimistic report on October 27. Yet, the direction of Sullivan's reports began to worry Vance. As a result, Vance called for an all-day meeting on October 27 of Iranian experts from all areas of State. A poll of some thirty or forty experts at the meeting found only four maintained the Shah would still be leader of Iran a year forward.[871] The most surreal portion of the meeting for many officials was a debate between James Bill, who compared the situation in Iran to an avalanche, versus Marvin Zonis, who felt Iran more resembled a "raging forest fire."[872] An Interagency Intelligence Memorandum of October 29 questioned whether the Shah would be able to remain in power over the next 18 to 24

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[862] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, October 22," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, October 22, 1978).
[863] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 336.
[864] Armstrong, "U.S. Urged 'crackdown' on Opposition."
[865] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 438.
[866] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 362.
[867] Christian Science Monitor Staff, "The Shah's Battle to Survive," Christian Science Monitor October 31 1978, 24.
[868] United States, International Communications Agency, Limited Official Use, Memorandum of Conversation Tehran, "Iran's Political Crisis," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck- Healey, October 25, 1978).
[869] Armstrong, "U.S. Urged 'Crackdown' on Opposition"; another account of Amol can be found in Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown*, p. 119. Arjomand claims Amol was turned into a commune with a police force of sixteen year-olds.
[870] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 439; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 359.
[871] Armstrong, "U.S. Urged 'Crackdown' of Opposition."
[872] Ofira Seliktar, *Failing the Crystal Ball Test: The Carter Administration and the Fundamentalist Revolution in Iran (*Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2000), p. 103.

months.[873] Organized pro-government demonstrations in seventeen different Iranian cities took place on October 29. However, the marches in Sanandaj, Rezayieh, Gorgon, Kashan, and Hamadan all fell victim to attacks by opponents of the regime and left the Iranian political establishment "aghast at the ease with which the Iranian political structure was coming apart."[874] Workers in Iran's oil industry went on strike on October 31. The strike reduced oil production from 5.8 million barrels per day to 1.1 million per day in the space of a week.[875] Carter continued his support of the Shah when he told Crown Prince Reza Shah during his October 31 visit to the White House that the U.S. "friendship and our alliance is one of our important bases on which our foreign policy depends."[876]

With warning bells continuing to ring, the State Department completed an analysis of Iran by the last week in October and advised the United States pursue a three-fold strategy: (1) have the Shah lead a transition government, (2) the U.S. should continue to support the Shah's liberalization attempts, and (3) the U.S. should oppose a military regime in Iran. Brzezinski began to gather allies within the administration in favor of a military regime at the same time State continued to oppose any form of military government.[877] Brzezinski – because he did not agree with the assessments – ignored the State analysis rather than utilize the memorandum as a starting point for policy discussions.[878] Sick lamented that as "strange as it may seem, by the end of October 1978, after some ten months of civil disturbances in Iran, there still had not been a single high-level policy meeting in Washington on this subject."[879] As a result, Sick perceived the analysis by State as an attempt to "stimulate a policy debate." However, the end result of the State report was a further division of State and NSC. Each department more firmly entrenched their positions: State for the continued liberalization in Iran and NSC for a firm stance and military government option.[880] A memorandum from William Odom to Brzezinski and David Aaron sounded the alarm, once again, and requested the SCC begin planning for the end of the Shah's regime.[881]

Vance returned from SALT talks in Moscow at the end of October and quickly observed that the "Shah was at a crossroads" because "martial law had failed to stop the demonstrations and strikes, which were reducing the economy to near chaos."[882] Furthermore, Vance noted that some within State viewed the Shah's regime as effectively over since the violence and strikes of September and October. He also indicated his opposition to a military government in Iran was based, at least in part, from the data that he was receiving from Ambassador Sullivan. Sullivan reported the Iranian military "had been discredited by recent events and had shown no capacity to govern or to rally public support."[883] Stempel also spoke concerning the breakdown of the Iranian military and noted that "it had been the Shah himself who had directed the army not to antagonize the demonstrators and who enforced the instructions against indiscriminate shooting"

[873] United States Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Report, Secret, *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 29, 1980).
[874] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 123.
[875] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 336; Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 366.
[876] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 112.
[877] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 68-70.
[878] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 219.
[879] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 70.
[880] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 70.
[881] Memorandum William Odom to Zbigniew Brzezinski and David Aaron, October 31, 1978, NLC-12-7-3-50-3, Jimmy Carter Library.
[882] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 327.
[883] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 328.

but that the military fired anyway in some cases.[884] Both Parsons and Sullivan met with the Shah at the end of October and "urged the Shah to accelerate the electoral process as much as possible in order to focus people's minds on something more constructive than rioting, demonstrating, and striking."[885]

Carter continued his support of the Shah for a number of reasons. First, he argued that a large motivation for his continued support of the Shah was due to his long record of being a strong ally. That said, Carter also admitted that the United States knew little about the Shah's opposition but the anti-American angle on some of the protests against the Shah were enough to "strengthen our resolve to support the Shah as he struggled for survival."[886] Carter recalled the advice given by Sullivan to push the Shah into giving the opposition a stronger voice but felt he never had a choice to do so. He believed it necessary to give the Shah complete U.S. support and "not predicate his support, as Sullivan increasingly seemed to prefer, on the acquiescence to suggestions from the American Embassy."[887]

The message from the American Embassy in Iran at the end of October was quite pessimistic. Stempel noted a shift in public opinion from all classes and all walks of Iranian life in a memo entitled "Looking Ahead: Shifting Iranian Public Attitudes." Most Iranians, Stempel observed, were cynical about the future of Iran and negative about ending unrest in a manner consistent with continued liberalization. Most troubling, however, was the "willingness among sizeable numbers who have supported the Shah consistently as Iran's best hope for the future to question whether the Shah should remain … they see little hope to break the demonstration cycle in present circumstances." Moreover, Stempel suggested many Iranians are "'thinking the unthinkable' for the first time." He also reported an overall belief the Sharif-Emami government had become a victim of events and members from ministries complain that "crowds have rampaged at will through ministries for past four or five days, and have virtually brought certain ministries to a halt." He continued that many in Iran had began to accept the fact government change may be necessary and "they are now listening seriously to opposition analysis that six months ago would have been considered balderdash." Additionally, the unrest and political violence has resulted in "questioning of basic assumption of past 15 years that Shah is tough, unchallengeable leader who is effective leader of country."[888]

If Jaleh and Black Friday was the fuse that lit the Iranian revolution, then the month of November of 1978 would probably be best described as the explosion. Parsons later explained that the events of November "finally extinguished any faint hope that might have previously existed for the Shah's survival."[889] Donovan adds that "by early November, the CIA, the State Department, the American ambassador to Iran, and even the Shah saw the futility of a repressive response to the crisis."[890] Almost all of Iran was now no longer working due to labor unrest – including a journalist strike which closed Iran's newspapers for two months.[891] The Shah was

[884] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 122.
[885] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 86.
[886] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 440.
[887] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 440.
[888] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Looking Ahead: Shifting Public Attitudes," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, October 30, 1978).
[889] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 87.
[890] Michael Donovan, "National Intelligence and the Iranian Revolution," *Intelligence and National Security*, January (1997): 150.
[891] Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution*, p. 77.

releasing political prisoners for the better part of six weeks and many now joined the fray.[892] The secular and religious opposition groups to the Shah joined under the general rubric of the Ayatollah Khomeini in advocating a no-compromise position while the Shah "became increasingly detached from reality and more indecisive."[893]

Certainly, the situation in Iran had grown dire. Huyser points to continued demonstrations in Tehran and Tabriz while the *Christian Science Monitor* reported that all oil exports from Iran had now ceased due to labor unrest which also threatened to cut off the oil supplies to refineries.[894] Sullivan relayed to Washington that the situation had grown worse and the only way for the Shah to effectively govern would be to use military force.[895] Stempel arrived at a similar conclusion and added the Shah lacked credibility that could only be regained with the use of military force and he was "no longer in a position to negotiate a successful compromise on any terms acceptable to him."[896] Troops had been moved into oil fields in order to protect the oil and the remaining workers.[897] Carter remarked "the Shah was no longer functioning as a strong leader, but was growing despondent and unsure of himself."[898] Gary Sick joined a chorus of voices complaining about the intelligence on the Iranian military not being adequate.[899] Brzezinski – pushed into action by reports from Sullivan – called to order a Special Coordinating Committee of the NSC convinced the turmoil in Iran "had reached a crisis stage."[900] Brzezinski also admitted "the Iranian crisis had been germinating throughout the year, but the recognition of it was slow to mature" but argued "our intelligence as late as the fall of 1978 was predicting political continuity in Iran."[901] Furthermore, Brzezinski concluded the Shah "will be devastated" unless he could "combine constructive concessions with a firm hand."[902] David Mark – in a memo to Vance – also clearly expressed concern in noting "only drastic measures by the Shah hold any promise for staving off a descent into chaos" and "if he does nothing to channel the course of events, he is likely to be ousted."[903] In this context, the SCC held its first meeting in order to address the growing problems in Iran. The United States evidently took two policy actions as a result of the numerous warnings. First, Carter encouraged the Shah to hang strong and, second, the SCC of the NSC concluded that the U.S. supported the Shah completely.[904] Basically, the U.S. was "in a quandary as to what it can do to bolster the position of the beleaguered Shah" and Carter officials "reportedly have concluded there is little they can do."[905] Carter reiterated his support for both the Shah and the Shah's liberal reform program while the

[892]   Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 130.
[893]   Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, pp. 119-120.
[894]   Christian Science Monitor Staff, "Strikes Halt Iran's Oil Exports," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> November 1 1978, 6; Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 12.
[895]   Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 104-105.
[896]   Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 135.
[897]   Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 366.
[898]   Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 439.
[899]   Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 104-105.
[900]   Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 359; Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 142.
[901]   Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 359.
[902]   Brzezinski., *Power and Principle*, p. 362.
[903]   Cited in David, Carrol, and Seldon, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 63.
[904]   Special Coordinating Committee, Meeting Summary, November 2, 1978, NLC-Safe D-38-99-1-8, Jimmy Carter Library; Carter, p. 439; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 364.
[905]   Daniel Southerland, "US Puzzles over Steps to Back Shah," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> November 3, 1978, 4.

State Department went as far as to claim that the U.S. believed the Shah and his government would be able to deal with the continued unrest.[906]

November 1 marked a number of anti-regime activities. Iran Air employees went on strike over political issues, a large march in Tehran demanded the release of Ayatollah Taleqani from prison, and troops and anti-government protestors clashed in Sanandaj and Zarshahr leaving twenty three dead and fifty six injured.[907] Brzezinski once again spoke via telephone to Zahedi on November 3 and continued to assure his support for the Shah no matter what course of action Iran chose.[908] Vance recalls the Shah telephoned Carter that same day in order to determine the U.S. position should Tehran move to a military government. State and Carter once again offered full support for the Shah but would not specifically advise him on how to handle what they viewed as internal Iranian politics.[909] Brzezinski followed with a call to the Shah that he had the full support of Carter and "to encourage him to act forcefully before the situation got out of hand."[910] Brzezinski suspected the Shah was not getting a similar message from State so subsequently contacted Sullivan to guarantee the policy of unquestioned support was crystal-clear. State quickly responded concerning Brzezinski's support of the Shah and indicated, instead, that the State Department favored either an opposition Prime Minister or a referendum on the monarchy. Brzezinski opined that "to me, this appeared to be a prescription for a US-sponsored political upheaval."[911] Vance addressed a question about the future stability of Iran noting "we hope that everyone in Iran will recognize that continuing turmoil and destruction serve no one's interest" at the State Department news conference of November 3.[912]

What many have described as the worst violence since Black Friday hit Tehran on November 4. Student demonstrations evolved into attempts to pull down a statue of the Shah followed by government forces responding with bullets and tear gas all of which had little effect on the rioting crowds.[913] In fact, the demonstrators began sacking banks and shops even as troops fired upon the crowd.[914] A meeting between the Shah, Parsons, and Sullivan that day consisted of the Shah dismissing the idea of a military crackdown maintaining it would solve nothing.[915]

The focus in Washington turned to the products heretofore provided by the intelligence community on Iran. In fact, Brzezinski attacked the briefing given the week before by the DCI Stansfield Turner as "inept" and "vague" and argued "we needed much better political intelligence."[916] As finger-pointing became part of the order of the day in Washington, there was no respite to the political violence in Iran. The *Christian Science Monitor* spoke of Tehran University students, on November 5, destroying anything modern during a rampage of politically

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[906] John K. Cooley, "Prince Reza: Grooming for Early Succession?" <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> November 3, 1978, 4.
[907] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 337.
[908] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 94.
[909] Vance, *Hard Choices*, pp. 328-329.
[910] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 366.
[911] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 366.
[912] Alexander, Nanes, and Georgetown University, World Power Studies Program, *The United States and Iran*, p. 461.
[913] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 56; Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 337.
[914] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, November 5, 1978," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 5, 1978).
[915] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 91.
[916] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 367.

motivated violence. However, the most significant part of the unrest "on that day were the people in automobiles who joined in the shouts against the Shah" because the middle class had benefited most from the Shah's modernization program.[917] In fact, it was the attempt to open Tehran University which would be "the catalyst that would herald the final collapse of the government."[918] Huyser later referred to the 5th as "Red Sunday" and noted that as "rioting and fires spread through the capital neither the Army nor security forces intervened."[919] The British Embassy compound had also been attacked that day.[920] The extent of the protests led to the Shah meeting once again that evening with both Sullivan and Parsons.[921] Parsons recalled "Tehran could not stand another November 5th."[922] At the encounter, the Shah informed Parsons and Sullivan of his decision to form a military government to attempt to bring order to Iran. Despite his decision, according to Stempel, every Iranian and foreigner who spoke to the Shah that night "left his presence with qualms of uneasiness" because "at the very moment when his future as the leader of his country teetered in the balance, the monarch appeared dispirited and listless."[923] Stempel added that most countries lacked an understanding of exactly how badly things were going for the Shah with the exceptions of the United States, France, Israel, Great Britain, and, possibly, the Soviet Union. The United States and the others with some idea of the political trouble could claim "individuals in each of these missions [who] had detected patterns that spelled trouble, but in no case had the decision-making process of the country involved assimilated that information and converted it into policy actions." Furthermore, the reason for the lack of policy review traces to the fact that "prescient Western analysts found their home office bureaucracies still convinced that either the Shah or the military or both would prevent a revolution."[924]

The riots of November 5 claimed a significant political casualty when Prime Minister Sharif-Imami tendered his resignation because of "what was described as the worst wave of violence in Iran in ten years."[925] The flood of public opinion in Iran turned against the Shah more with all the events of November 5.[926] The military government of General Ghulam Reza Azheri took power in order to bring order to Iranian chaos.[927] Brzezinski wrote in response that "the news that the Shah had finally opted for a military government greatly relieved me. I saw in this a welcome sign that the Shah had finally faced up to the crisis and was prepared to assert effective leadership."[928] Quickly, the State Department announced United States support of the Azheri government.[929] That said, the impact of the military government was to actually broaden opposition and the "Shah's political fortunes went steadily downhill." Those who had supported the Shah only because they wanted order restored began shifting their allegiance to the

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[917] Joseph C. Harsch, "The Shah and the USA," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> November 14, 1978, 23.

[918] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 130.

[919] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 12.

[920] Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution*; Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 337.

[921] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 97.

[922] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 97; Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 132.

[923] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 132.

[924] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 138.

[925] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report November 6, 1978," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 6, 1978); Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 112.

[926] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 140.

[927] Preece, *U.S. Policy towards Iran*, p. 113.

[928] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 366.

[929] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 366.

opposition because they felt it the best opportunity to restore law and order.[930] Kurzman theorizes the opposition became so popular that those who did not support it "became reluctant to voice their concerns publicly."[931] The Azheri military government was unable to regain order. In fact, both Zonis and Stempel observed that the Azheri military government brought little in terms of behavioral changes by the government. In fact, the same standard operating procedure of firing at protestors only in situations of self defense remained intact.[932] Azheri met with Sullivan the day after being named head of the new military government and complained the Shah would not allow him to use force and without the use of force the Shah's regime would not survive.[933] It became evident that the "fabric of imperial rule was destroyed for good" once the middle-class determined that Azheri could not restore order in Iran, [934] Stempel also observed "though the monarch consistently rejected using full repressive measures, the first days after November 5 were his last opportunity to impose his will militarily."[935]

Brzezinski attended the PRC meeting chaired by Vance on November 6 believing it was a power play by State to reassert control over Iranian policy. Brzezinski was also upset with State devoting too much time and energy to the evacuation from Iran of American citizens. He believed such an evacuation would send the wrong message and potentially harm the confidence of the Shah. Brzezinski recalled Stansfield Turner arguing at the meeting that little was known of Iranian opposition because of prior restrictions on information collecting and categorized Turner's discussion as "futile."[936] Meanwhile, the NSC was working on advance preparations for Secretary Blumenthal's planned visit to Iran. An NSC memorandum conceded the visit occurred "at a moment when the Shah's fortunes have never been lower" and the Shah faces "severe long term problems" and he had "an urgent need to establish effective government within a few weeks."[937] A significant change in the demands of the opposition also occurred on November 6. Khomeini and Sanjabi issued a statement from France rejecting any cooperation with the Shah. Sanjabi's position was significant because it marked a departure from his previous outlook that the solution could be found within the constitution and a parliamentary process.[938] Abrahamian labeled the Sanjabi and Bazargan meeting in France with the Ayatollah as a "historic pilgrimage" that "revived the secular-religious alliance that had brought about the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1906"[939]

Ayatollah Khomeini then called for the end of the Pahlavi regime, ordered Iranian troops to revolt and ruled that following orders from the Shah would be a violation of Islamic law.[940] Sullivan forwarded a telegraph to Washington the next day entitled "Thinking the Unthinkable" which would later be identified by Sick as "one of the most important US policy documents to be produced in the course of the revolution."[941] Sullivan's communiqué covered a great deal of material with reference to both Iran and the opposition. Most importantly, Sullivan indicated the

[930] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 139.
[931] Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution*, p. 137.
[932] Stempel, pp. 134-135; Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 126.
[933] Harris, *The Crisis*, pp. 103-104.
[934] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 135.
[935] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 136.
[936] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 367.
[937] Memorandum, National Security Council, November 6, 1978, NLC-20-19-2-4-3.
[938] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, pp. 337-338.
[939] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 520.
[940] James Dorsey, "Muslim Leader Urges Iran Troops to Revolt," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> November 8 1978, 7.
[941] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 94.

Shah had no support left among the Iranian people. Sullivan noted that Khomeini might become a "Gandhi-like figure" and would require political leaders to assist in governing which would ultimately result in free elections. However, Sullivan argued that in order for the above scenario to play out almost everything would have to go as planned or the results may be quite unpredictable. Specifically, Sullivan based his predictions on a number of germane assumptions with regard to Iran – (1) most officers, especially the younger ones, were pro-Western, (2) the military could and would maintain power even if the Shah left office, (3) the religious opposition required military forces in order to manufacture some form of law and order, (4) Khomeini would be somewhat passive in his approach, and (5) extremists could and would be contained by both military and political forces. Sick speculated that the name of "Thinking the Unthinkable" for the telegram was an effort by Sullivan to hint that such an event was unlikely and was motivated by the State and NSC policy divisions regarding Iran. That is, Sullivan's rationale for the telegram was to spur the Shah to exit Iran and uncover moderates that would be an alternative to Ayatollah Khomeini.[942] Brzezinski's read on Sullivan's wire was similar to that of Sick and called the predictions "Pollyannaish" while contending that Sullivan emboldened State to continue to argue that the fall of the Shah would not negatively impact Washington's geopolitical interests.[943] Whatever the motive for the telegram, the nomenclature of the telegram or anything else, what appears clear is that the warning had very little impact in the White House.[944] In fact, Sullivan did not even receive a reply and "the deafening silence on the other end of the line convinced the ambassador the situation was slipping away. The president and his advisors, he concluded, had their heads in the sand."[945]

Vance, however, had a much different take on Sullivan's warning and saw the message as illustrative of how bad the situation was for the Shah. Vance argued "Sullivan's message corroborated the analysis of some State Department advisors, but caused consternation in the White House." Basically, Vance saw the White House enveloped by "a brooding fear that any action that implied we did not expect the Shah to survive would contribute to his paralysis of will and stimulate the opposition to increased violence."[946]

Sullivan's narrative of the events at the time of the "Thinking the Unthinkable" telegram are quite revealing – "I never received a reply to this fundamental message. Instead it soon became apparent that my views were no longer welcome at the White House."[947] David observes that at this point Carter did not need special intelligence or even the Ambassador – "all he needed to do was pick up a newspaper."[948] Yet, even when "the widely available perceptions of journalists and nongovernmental authorities were confirmed from within the higher echelons of the administration, the government chose to discount opinions that made it uncomfortable."[949] The dilemma related to Sullivan's telegram – as David Newsom admitted in a 1989 interview – was that Brzezinski felt that Sullivan should have notified the administration sooner if the Shah was in so much trouble while Newsom claimed Sullivan had, in fact, done so but that Brzezinski " 'was not prepared to listen to it.' "[950]

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[942] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 100.
[943] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 367-368.
[944] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 101.
[945] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 105.
[946] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 329.
[947] William H. Sullivan, *Mission to Iran* 1st ed. (New York: Norton, 1981), p. 180.
[948] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 71.
[949] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 71.
[950] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 223.

Brzezinski, due to his unhappiness over the state of intelligence on Iran and believing Vance and State were conspiring to remove the Shah, turned to an independent businessman with knowledge of Iran to brief him on the developing situation.[951] Brzezinski's contact quickly visited Iran and returned with the recommendation the United States continue the current policy.[952] In addition, Secretary of Treasury Michael Blumenthal prepared for a fact finding mission to Iran. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Military Advisory Group in Iran noted their belief that the Shah was in complete control of the Iranian theatre during their pre-trip meetings.[953] Blumenthal made several prescient observations that he reported to Brzezinski upon his return to Washington. First, he observed the Shah was a "ghost" of what he had been in a previous 1977 visit and warned Brzezinski the Shah was a "zombie."[954] Undersecretary of State David Newsom tried, once again, with the Blumenthal report in hand to convince the White House of the depth of trouble for the Shah. A group of three analysts who had recently traveled to Iran joined Henry Precht to meet with eighteen NSC aides, including Brzezinski's deputy David Aaron and Iranian analyst Gary Sick. The emissaries from State attempted to make the point that the question was not one of who was against the Shah but who remained for him. At one point, Aaron asked Precht point blank who made up the opposition to which Precht replied "'the people, David, the people.'"[955] Khomeini issued, on November 9, a statement critical of United States policy towards Iran and promised to revisit contracts between the two states after the fall of the Shah.[956]

The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that on November 10 the Shah was "in deepest [of] trouble and not likely to get out of it easy."[957] Demonstrations in Mashad that day resulted in more firing from government troops and riots in Beshahr and Amol also led to government troops firing on protestors.[958] Carter sent a memo to Brzezinski, Vance, and Turner on November 11 citing his dissatisfaction with the quality of intelligence regarding the situation in Iran.[959] Carter maintained the Shah was a friend of the United States and a "strong and independent Iran in that area is a very stabilizing factor, and we would hate to see it disrupted by violence and the government fall with an unpredicted result" in a November 11 interview with Bill Moyers on Public Broadcasting.[960] Carter responded "I hope not" when further pushed as to if it was too late for the Shah, [961]

Details from the U.S. Embassy concerning the developments of November 12 continued the same story of unrest and protests. Embassy staff observed the increased tensions and confrontations between students and the Iranian military. Morrison Knudson, an American firm,

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[951] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 101; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 367.
[952] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 102-103.
[953] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 103.
[954] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 115; Scott Armstrong, "Vance Deflects a Call for Toughness; Vance, Predicting Disaster, Deflects Call for Toughness," Washington Post October 28 1980.
[955] Armstrong, "Vance Deflects a Call for Toughness."
[956] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 338.
[957] Joseph C. Harsch, "US: What to do about Iran," Christian Science Monitor November 10 1978, 26.
[958] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, November 11," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 11, 1978).
[959] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 105; Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 367; Leaf, "Iran: A Blind Spot."
[960] Alexander, Nanes, and Georgetown University, World Power Studies Program, *The United States and Iran*, p. 462.
[961] Alexander, Nanes, and Georgetown University, World Power Studies Program, *The United States and Iran*, p. 462.

was told the Iranian military could no longer protect its camp after an attack of the previous evening. The military fired upon protestors in Isfahan as they attempted to storm a movie house and media reports indicated violence in Beshahr, Khorramshahr, Zanjan, and Amol.[962]

The *Christian Science Monitor* repeated its warning of November 10 three days later and observed the only policy option for the United States "is sit this one out and hope that somehow the Shah or his successor will be able to restore order and get Iran moving again."[963] Embassy reports dated November 15 described violence in Iran the previous evening. Included in the narrative was an incident of troops in South Tehran firing into a crowd of demonstrators and groups in Isfahan leaving mosques, attacking local banks, and being fired upon by government forces. Finally, the Embassy reported for the first time it had received reports of those opposed to the Shah obtaining weapons – including automatic weapons.[964] Secretary of State Vance cabled the U.S. Embassy in Tehran on November 17 and, after nearly a year of violent opposition to the Shah, noted the "White House has directed that we take steps to strengthen reporting on Iranian political developments."[965] A Scope Paper on Iran transmitted from the State Department Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs the next day optimistically noted – "The Shah, while very concerned by recent events, has demonstrated considerable resilience during times of upheaval in the past. He remains in firm control…"[966] While State spoke of the Shah remaining "in firm control," Sick offered an analysis of incoming intelligence on Iran for Brzezinski. Sick spoke of a general trend in the political reporting from the Embassy as being one of "a general emphasis on explaining away the 'exaggerations' and 'distortions' in the news reports, local rumors and the like (which later proved to be true)."[967]

The policy gulf between State and NSC continued as opposition to the Shah wore on in Iran. Vance recalls that State advisors in mid-November began to push for "a clearer policy to protect U.S. interests as best we could in the face of certain and imminent change" and that within State "most believed we should immediately begin positioning ourselves to adjust to an Iran without the Shah."[968] Conversely, Vance also reflected on the continued "pressures from the White House to encourage the Shah to use the army to smash the opposition" which he believed would lead to the "disintegration" of an army filled with conscripts.[969] Furthermore, the quality of intelligence persisted as a significant part of the public debate and the *Christian Science Monitor* observed "it is self-evident that if the White House had known earlier of the magnitude of popular discontent building in the provinces, it could have warned the Shah about going too

[962]   United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report November 12," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 12, 1978.

[963]   Harsch, "The Shah and the USA."

[964]   United States Embassy, Iran. Confidential, Cable Tehran. "Political/ Security Report November 15." *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980.* Ed. National Security Archives. Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 15, 1978).

[965]   United States Department of State, Confidential, Cable State, "Political Reporting," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Foreign Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 17, 1978).

[966]   United States, Department of State, Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, "Iran Scope Paper," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 18, 1978).

[967] Memorandum, Gary Sick to Zbigniew Brzezinski, November 17, 1978, NLC-33-8-16-21-7, Jimmy Carter Library.

[968]   Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 329.

[969]   Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 330.

far too fast."[970] Sullivan's November 21 confidential cable to State reported the Shah still maintained the complete control of Iranian armed forces despite his earlier admonition to think the unthinkable while, on the other hand, analysis from the U.S. Consulate in Shiraz categorized the level of opposition to the Shah as "profound."[971] Brzezinski called for a day-long November 22 NSC meeting on Iran to include academia and those outside of government. The basic conclusion of the meeting was that the Shah would survive the holy month of Moharran but would have to devolve power after the month because he had alienated too many Iranians.[972]

The White House sent visitors on four different occasions in November to Iran in order to collect their impression of the Shah. Secretary of Treasury Blumenthal visited as did General E.F. Tighe, the director of the DIA, Robert Bowie, head of the CIA division of analysis, and Majority Leader Robert Byrd. In addition, State sent specialists from its regional bureau and from the INR. Ultimately, Byrd concluded the Shah would not respond with the "iron fist" option advocated by Brzezinski and predicted the Shah would not maintain power.[973] Furthermore, Byrd told the White House the Shah would not be able to change the flow of political events in Iran.[974] CIA station Chief Arthur Callahan also called on the Shah in late November on behalf of the White House. Callahan reported the Shah's regime was on the verge of collapse.[975] Simultaneously, the Iranian political picture was complicated even more by pressure from other Middle Eastern allies. King Hassan II of Morocco visited Washington and urged Carter to provide full backing to the Shah or else allies would not feel assured of U.S. support. Carter perceived Hassan's words to be a threat that many Middle Eastern U.S. allies would work against the Arab-Israeli peace process.[976]

Brzezinski's deputy, David Aaron, created a special working group to deal with issues raised by the special coordinating committee after Carter's attack on the quality of intelligence on Iran.[977] Brzezinski wrote in his diary a day later that he was becoming "gradually more and more concerned about the Shah's personal capacity for coping with the situation."[978] That concern appeared warranted as violence persisted. Troops fired on civilians worshiping at a shrine in Mashad, on November 20.[979] Both Qom and Masha – widely regarded as Iran's two holiest cities – were controlled by November 26 by Islamic militants who even went as far as to declare an Islamic Republic in Qom.[980] Embassy press sources also speak of two days – November 26 and 27 – of violence in Gorgan, which included clashes between protestors and

[970] Christian Science Monitor Staff, "Is America Learning in Iran?" <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> November 21 1978, 20.

[971] Iran United States Embassy, "Evaluation of Military Government," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 21, 1978). United States Consulate, Shiraz, Iran, "Opposition to the Shah," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 21, 1978).

[972] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 113.

[973] Ledeen and Lewis, *Debacle*, p. 169; Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 229.

[974] Armstrong, "Vance Deflects a Call for Toughness."

[975] Ledeen and Lewis, *Debacle*, p. 169.

[976] Armstrong, "Vance Deflects a Call for Toughness."

[977] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 143.

[978] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 370.

[979] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 339.

[980] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 143; Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown*, p. 134.

government troops.[981] Vance went public in the update sent to U.S. Embassies globally with one of the growing concerns of General Azheri – the loyalty of the Iranian armed forces.[982] By the end of November, violent protests had become common in over fifty Iranian cities and towns.[983]

It is in late November – even after the negative reports from the Embassy and visits by both Byrd and Callahan which resulted in the prediction of the Shah's demise - Carter opted to call on former Secretary of State George Ball to ascertain the situation in Iran and the Shah's chance for survival. The recommendation to appoint Ball first came from Blumenthal after his trip to Iran earlier in the month. Brzezinski agreed with the recommendation to appoint Ball because he evidently "told colleagues he was sure Ball would see things the same way he did."[984] Evidently, Ball made it clear in his first meeting with Sick that he was not nearly as optimistic as the Carter administration regarding the future of the Shah. Based upon that initial meeting, Sick predicted Ball would bring a fresh perspective to the debate but his conclusions would not be what many, Brzezinski in particular, wanted to hear.[985] Furthermore, Ball's suspicion the Shah was in deep trouble was confirmed in a series of confidential meetings with members of State and other departments and even Brzezinski's own aide, Gary Sick, believed the Shah's regime was finished.[986] Ball concluded the Shah had no future as the head of Iran's government and conceded any attempt to use Iranian troops to support the Shah would result in the breakdown of discipline and loyalty. Be that as it may, Carter and Brzezinski balked and were not prepared to accept the analysis made by Ball.[987] Ledeen and Lewis described the pattern in Washington concerning incoming information relating to Iran as one in which "the worse the situation became, the harder most Americans strove to convince themselves and others either that the situation was basically all right, or that the impending changes were actually desirable."[988] David agrees in suggesting that when evidence revealed that the end of the Shah's reign was near U.S. policy officials tried whatever means available to "make the chosen position of continued support seem viable."[989]

The tone of Ambassador Parsons became even more negative with his end of November commentary. He saw no hope for even the moderates to accept some form of constitutional solution with the Shah remaining as the Commander-in-Chief. In addition, Parsons began to seriously question the future of the Iranian military by repeated reports that troops had actually participated in riots during the November 5 unrest, units in the provinces faced large desertions, and other troops fired on helicopters or destroyed military equipment. Parsons bemoaned his "state of mind at the end of November was one of unrelieved pessimism" and "the earlier demands for the restoration of the constitution had been drowned by Khomeini's cry 'Death to

[981] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Iran, "Political/Security Report November 28," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 28, 1978).

[982] United States Department of State, Secret, Cable State, "Iran Sitrep Number 27, November 30, 1978," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 30, 1978).

[983] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 521.

[984] Armstrong, "Vance Deflects a Call for Toughness."

[985] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 121.

[986] Armstrong, "Vance Deflects a Call for Toughness."

[987] Donovan, "National Intelligence and the Iranian Revolution," p. 156.

[988] Ledeen and Lewis, *Debacle*, p. 190.

[989] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 176.

the Shah!' and the establishment of an Islamic Republic. The military could not even keep order in the streets."[990]

The CIA issued a secret report on the Shah's opposition on November 30 in which the agency determined the National Front provided little in terms of popular opposition and leaders of the Front moved toward the harder line Khomeini forces as they were in a much better position to challenge the Shah.[991] Moreover, the Intelligence Appraisal by the Defense Intelligence Agency of November 29 also spoke of the influence of the religious movement and speculated that no political compromise would occur before Moharram. Likewise, the survival of the Shah until the end of the holy month was not certain. The DIA also suggested Shiite commemorations "through the years have taken on a patriotic as well as religious meaning for Iranians" and "helped give them some sort of national identity." It was the religious holiday that reminded Iranian Shiites the Shah's place "as a temporary ruler until the last of the Imams appears." Continued opposition to the Shah's regime sparked a general emotional fervor to return to the roots of Islam that the DIA predicted would increase during Moharram.[992] The CIA sent an Alert Memorandum to the National Security Council dated the same day in which it argued Moharram would bring the largest challenge yet to the Shah and "the likely near-term political ramifications" surrounding the survival or not of the Shah. In fact, the CIA noted that should Khomeini chose to call for a *jihad* against the Shah's regime during the holy month the "resulting unrest would be so widespread that it might lead to the monarch's removal, probably by the army." Even the vaunted SAVAK no longer could keep order effectively and army resources were already stretched very thin. In addition, the CIA argued that the only effective way to end the demonstrations would be harsh and bloody repression with large casualties and such a response "would compound the violence and severely test the military's loyalty to the Shah."[993]

The CIA's analysis was based, at least partially, on the makeup of the Iranian army. While the highest ranking officers appeared to be loyal to the Shah, the enlisted and lower ranking officers came from the same economic classes as those protesting and could, in fact, not follow orders to fire on the demonstrators. The CIA longer term prognosis explains that even if the Shah survived Moharram many very serious obstacles exist in solving the political crisis and "there is in fact no evidence to suggest that a settlement between the Shah and Khomeini is possible even in principle."[994] Indeed, the political position of the Shah was considerably weaker as a result of the year of confrontations to his regime. Both opposition groups and the general population now believed the Shah lacked "the will and the strength to defend himself" and was "perceived as weak, and has lost his credibility almost completely" as a result of his "failure to take decisive and consistent action." The lack of the Shah's will comes from his "past tendency to be passive and indecisive in the face of severe adversity" but also reflects "his reluctance to acknowledge the breadth and depth of popular dissatisfaction with the Pahlavi dynasty." Finally, the CIA predicted the failure to find a political solution to the challenge to his regime may result

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[990] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 106-108.

[991] Armstrong, "Vance Deflects a Call for Toughness."

[992] United States Defense Intelligence Agency, Unclassified, Intelligence Appraisal, "Iran: The Month of Moharram," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 29, 1978).

[993] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Classification Excised, Alert Memorandum, "Iran -- Prospects for Moharram," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 29, 1978).

[994] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Classification Excised, Alert Memorandum.

in the Shah exhausting his "emotional capacities … and leave him unable to provide effective leadership."[995]

One of the evolving aspects of the protests by the end of November was the increased anti-American rhetoric. Stempel recalls the letter left under hundreds of American gates and windshield wipers – "'Death to American's imperialism. If you do not go from Iran we will kill you and your family or explode your house … Say this message to all your American friends."[996] James Bill focused the attention of the academic community to the turmoil in Iran with a winter 1978 *Foreign Affairs* piece entitled "Iran and the Crisis of '78."[997] Referring to the incidents of January 1978 in Qom that started the overt and widespread opposition to the Shah Bill contended the "occurrences since then do not support an optimistic political prognosis. December 1978, which coincides with the holy Shi'ite month of Moharram, should be an especially critical time for the Pahlavi dynasty."[998] Indeed, the CIA secured and translated a copy of Khomeini's call for action on Moharram on November 30. Khomeini requested violent demonstrations during the religious holiday which, he said, would lead to a general revolt and the overthrow of the Shah.[999] On December 2, Khomeini announced that upon his takeover of Iran oil shipments to Israel would stop and the military agreements with the United States reexamined.[1000]

Brzezinski called on the Department of Defense to draw up plans to seize Iranian oilfields in early December.[1001] Meanwhile, Ball informed Vance of Brzezinski's negotiations with Iran through Zahedi. Vance contended that the mixed messages sent as a result of two sets of negotiations "added to the Shah's confusion as to what exactly the US policy was."[1002] The Shah met with the head of France's Secret Service and confessed he would never fire on the Iranian people. The chief met with the French president upon returning to France, and compared the Shah to Louis XVI at the end of his reign.[1003] U.S. Embassy reports as Moharram approached indicated the general feeling in Iran was that very bloody clashes between demonstrators and government forces were forthcoming. The Embassy had an overall feeling of uniformity in the "mood of defiance and confrontation against the Shah and the military" gleaned from contacts within the religious and bazaar classes.[1004]

Moharram and the long-awaited confrontation commenced on the evening of December 1. Large numbers of Iranians streamed from mosques in open defiance of the curfew and confrontations with government forces immediately occurred with "heavy firing in at least five sections" of Tehran.[1005] Opposition leaders contacted John Stempel at the U.S. Embassy and pleaded for him to intervene and have the shooting stopped. Several Mullahs in Tehran

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[995]   United States Central Intelligence Agency, Classification Excised, Alert Memorandum.
[996]   Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 144.
[997]   James A. Bill, "Iran and the Crisis of '78," *Foreign Affairs* 57.2 (1978): 323-42.
[998]   Bill, "Iran and the Crisis of '78," p. 329.
[999]   United States Central Intelligence Agency, Tehran, Iran, Secret, Report Tehran, "Iran: Instructions from Ayatollah Khomeini to Stage Anti-Government Demonstrations during Moharram," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, November 30, 1978).
[1000]   Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 367.
[1001]   Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 367.
[1002]   Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 328.
[1003]   Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 129.
[1004]   United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran, "On the Eve of Moharram," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 1, 1978).
[1005]   United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report December 2," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 2, 1978).

encouraged Iranian opposition to break into American homes and take their possessions for use in street fires – but not to harm the Americans. In fact, several streets in Tehran had American homes marked with painted signs. Trouble continued on December 2 with crowds assembling at varied meeting points in Tehran. Two separate groups of demonstrators moved toward the U.S. Embassy before being repelled by Iranian troops. As the situation unfolded, the U.S. Embassy also began to receive information that many mid-level military officers see it unlikely the Shah could remain in power and believed he should flee Iran.[1006] A similar day to that in Tehran occurred in Isfahan as violent confrontations came to pass. Reports to the Embassy from the Consulate in Isfahan were of shooting at no less than eight separate locations. Opposition organizers brought in loudspeakers in order to call for a Holy War against the Shah's government. In one instance, troops chased a crowd into a mosque were additional men waited in ambush in order to hurl heavy concrete blocks onto the soldiers. The demonstrations spread to nearby villages. Even at the time, Iranian government sources admitted the demonstrators used arms against government forces. Demonstrators openly challenged the Shah's curfew and darkness brought with it a night of automatic gunfire and the sounds of tanks moving through the streets. In addition, a new tactic developed of rooftop rallies held after curfew with civilians shouting both political and religious slogans between rooftops.[1007]

Ali Amini, former prime minister, approached the Shah on December 2 with a compromise position of a regency council. The Shah accepted and then, 24 hours later, rejected the offer. Stempel argues the Shah changed his mind only after speaking to a number of top advisors, including Zahedi.[1008] Ayatollah Khomeini, in a December 3rd message from Paris, called on Iranian troops to desert military units if called upon to fire on protestors.[1009] At the same time, Iranian military officers began preparations to leave Iran after the departure of the Shah according to the U.S. Embassy.[1010] General Azheri denied the unrest was related to Khomeini and blamed the violence on foreign elements and atheists in a news conference two days later.[1011]

Back and forth and hand wringing in Washington continued over the future of the Shah. A memorandum by the CIA warned the political unrest would not only continue but would also threaten the regime of the Shah and increase danger to Americans in Iran. The CIA predicted the unrest may climax on Ashura – the final day of Moharram. Increasing strain the unrest placed upon the Iranian military also became a primary concern for the CIA and it noted that, since early November, four artillery battalions, two infantry battalions, one unknown battalion, and one armored brigade were moved to Tehran. Khomeini's call for troops to desert and his followers to shed blood to remove the Shah was seen as adding even more pressure on the military. The CIA designated the unrest as turmoil in which "the demonstrators have conveyed the impression of an overwhelming national consensus against the Shah." Moreover, reports to the CIA also indicated many of the middle level military officers believed it necessary for the

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[1006] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran.

[1007] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report December 3," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 3, 1978).

[1008] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 148.

[1009] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 339.

[1010] United States Embassy, Iran, Office of the International Communications Agency, Confidential, Memorandum of Conversation Tehran, "Attitudes toward the Shah," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 3, 1978).

[1011] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 340.

Shah to leave Iran. The Shah, according to the CIA, may not even make it through Ashura. Furthermore, the CIA report indicates the Shah "has shown no inclination to act decisively in the present crisis."[1012] Yet, even as late as December 14, the NSC concedes that little had been done with regard to the Iran issue despite the fact it was "a major international crisis" and probably due to "its festering quality, we do not recognize this."[1013]

News for the Shah was not much better at Foggy Bottom. The INR issued a report to Harold Saunders on December 5 concluding the Shah "is a spent force [who] sooner or later will be replaced by others no matter what we do" and "it is not whether he should leave but when and how."[1014] The NSC called for a SCC meeting chaired by Aaron on December 5. Aaron was quickly called away and George Ball, on day two of the job, chaired the meeting and developed the idea of a Council of Notables. Ball argued that any government formed by the Shah would not be credible to Iranian masses but a Council could serve with the support of the Shah and form the next Iranian government.[1015] Ultimately, Brzezinski did not favor the idea nor did Sullivan who argued even in the unlikely event the Shah would accept the offer it would result in too many calls for him to abdicate. Both Brzezinski and Sullivan would block Ball's suggestion.[1016]

Not only would Brzezinski stand opposed to Ball's suggested policy route, the National Security Advisor also categorized Ball's overall involvement as a waste of time. Specifically, Brzezinski recalled, "Ball's participation in our debates sharpened our disagreements while delaying basic choices by wasting some two weeks."[1017] Brzezinski pushed with vigor the concept that Iranian troubles originated with communism even in the first few weeks of December. Sick recalls a British article by Robert Moss, "Who's Meddling in Iran," claiming that the Soviet Union was responsible for turmoil in Iran. Sick complained that the article, written by someone who was not an Iranian specialist and who used no specific data to base his conclusions, became akin to policy. Brzezinski made copies and provided the Moss article to all top decision makers in the Carter administration.[1018] Moss claimed the large numbers of Soviets working in Iran joined with illegal Afghans and Armenians in order to create a temporary Khomeini government that would transition to a pro-Soviet regime in order to spread a Marxist Revolution to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.[1019] While, on the other hand, Henry Precht of the State Department contended the unrest was not related to communism but the underestimation of Ayatollah Khomeini.[1020]

Another further player arrived on the scene as the discussion in Washington over the policy course see-sawed between Brzezinski, Vance, and Ball. Secretary of Energy James Schlesinger began to lobby significant Carter allies – most notably, Brzezinski, Jordan, Powell, and Kirbo – to push Carter to not allow for the fall of the Shah's regime. Schlesinger viewed Iran

[1012] United States Central Intelligence Agency, Secret, Alert Memorandum, "Iran - Update on Moharram," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 5, 1978).

[1013] Alert Memorandum, Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, NLC-33-17-2-14-0, Jimmy Carter Library.

[1014] Cited in David, Carrol, and Seldon, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 63.

[1015] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 124-125.

[1016] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 127.

[1017] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 370.

[1018] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 123-124.

[1019] Robert Moss, "Who's Meddling in Iran," <u>New Republic</u> December 2, 1978: 18-21.

[1020] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 123-124.

as the key state in a northern tier that included Turkey and Pakistan.[1021] Meanwhile, a media sensation evolved from comments made by Carter on December 7. In response to a reporter's question regarding the future of Iran, Carter concluded that "'we personally prefer that the Shah maintain a major role in the government, but that is a decision for the Iranian people to make.'"[1022] Immediately, State issued a clarification that the Carter comment was not a change in policy.[1023] Sick referred to the comment as a "costly slip" while Zonis called it a "gaffe."[1024] The end result of Carter's comment was, even after State's clarification, that those in Iran and the United States saw it as movement away from total support from the Shah.[1025] The Shah came to believe the U.S. wanted a referendum on his future and the incident "destroyed the psychological capacity of the Shah to act."[1026] The Iranian rumor mill also hit full throttle with Carter's comments. At one point, friend of the Shah Barbara Walters telephoned the Shah concerned over intelligence reports from the United Kingdom that he would not last the weekend as ruler of Iran.[1027]

Politically motivated violence in Iran continued in December. In one instance, a central Iranian police stations was bombed and "within two or three days the credibility of the military government had been almost entirely eroded by the universal and successful defiance of the people."[1028] Indeed, reporting by the *Christian Science Monitor* noted "the newest … most disturbing aspect of the Iranian troubles is the onset of seemingly organized urban guerilla warfare in Tehran and other cities."[1029] Some of the most overt demonstrations took place on December 10-11 in the Ashura marches. Secret negotiations between the Shah and opposition forces assured that millions marched in cities throughout Iran on December 10-11 but did so peacefully. Tehranian demonstrations of December 11 remained peaceful but became more political with chants and slogans against both the Shah and the United States. Large marching crowds of protestors stopped at the Consulate in Tabriz in order to chant anti-American slogans.[1030] On the other hand, Isfahan protests did turn violent and rioters attacked offices of the SAVAK, police stations, and symbols of the West in the form of banks, stores, and movie houses.[1031] Arjomand argues that by December 11 Iran was a country of dual sovereignty – Islamic militants and the Shah both acting as the legitimate arm of the state.[1032] Kurzman compared the participation in the two days of protests to those preceding the revolutions in Russia and France. Most revolutions do not involve over 1 percent of the population although Russia and France may have been slightly higher but "in Iran, more than 10 percent of the

[1021] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 132-134.
[1022] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 127.
[1023] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 129.
[1024] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 257; Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 127.
[1025] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 152.
[1026] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 257; Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 128-129.
[1027] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran, "Shah Receives Inquiry from Barbara Walters," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 7, 1978).
[1028] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 109.
[1029] John K. Cooley, "Carter Calls for Advice on Iran," Christian Science Monitor December 7 1978, 9.
[1030] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran.
[1031] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Preliminary Political/Security Report December 10, 1978," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 10, 1978); Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 340.
[1032] Arjomand, *The Turban for the Crown*, p. 134.

country marched in anti-shah demonstrations on December 10 and 11."[1033] Cottam claimed eight million Iranians marched on December 11.[1034] Parsons argued after Ashura that "the military government could no longer pretend to be in control of the country" and "if there was a government at all, it comprised the power of the masses, directed by Khomeini through the network of the religious structure throughout Iran."[1035]

The *Christian Science Monitor* once again opined on the political situation in Iran and suggested the U.S. "failed dismally to foretell the present upheavals" and suggested "it would be well advised to reevaluate all its previous assumptions. There may in fact be alternatives – and they need not necessarily prove frightening."[1036] As the *Christian Science Monitor* would later discover, a row developed inside the Iranian government in how to respond to the Ashura marches. A moderate wing within the Iranian government emerged under the leadership of General Azheri and a hawkish group under General Oveissi. Oveissi planned to protect northern Tehran with eighty helicopters armed with machine guns that would be ordered to shoot on the crowds should they turn on the Shah's palace. [1037] Carter was asked at his December 12 news conference if he expected the Shah to remain in power and responded in the affirmative but also notably upbeat contending he "fully expect[s] the Shah to maintain power," "the situation in Iran will be resolved successfully," and also a note to those who suggested serious trouble for the Shah – "I think the predictions of doom and disaster that came from some sources have certainly not been realized at all."[1038] Sullivan forwarded requested assessments from other embassies about the political turmoil in Iran even as Carter chided those that foresaw doom and gloom during his press conference. Basically, the British felt the departure of the Shah was imminent, the French believed and did so for quite a while that the Shah's reign is finished, and the overall agreement was that Iran was "fast approaching anarchy."[1039]

The SCC discussed the Ball report in detail two days later. Ball concluded "the Shah was finished if he did not act immediately."[1040] In general, Ball felt the United States needed to work out some type of transfer of power before Khomeini could beat the United States to the punch and name his own government. Also, he argued the continued focus on a military solution was not helpful because Iranian troops may end up refusing to fire on demonstrators which would lead to the complete dissolution of the military.[1041] Both Brzezinski and Secretary of Defense Brown argued against the idea and pressured Carter to ignore Ball's advice. At that point, Carter, according to Vance, appeared to move toward pushing the Shah to compromise. Yet, Brzezinski "appeared to see a military coup, preferably in support of the Shah, as the only hope of protecting American interests."[1042] In any case, the SCC meeting resulted in Carter preparing a number of questions and a list of possible Regency Council members for Sullivan to present to the Shah, at his discretion, in a meeting scheduled for December 18.[1043] The extent to which the

[1033] Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution*, p. 121.
[1034] Cottam, "Goodbye to America's Shah," p. 4.
[1035] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 112.
[1036] Christian Science Monitor Staff, "Rethinking Iran," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> December 11 1978, 28.
[1037] Tony Allaway, "Time to Act Nears for Shah," <u>Christian Science Monitor</u> December 15 1978, 4.
[1038] Alexander, Nanes, and Georgetown University, *The United States and Iran*, World Power Studies Program, p. 464.
[1039] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran, "Assessments Requested," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 12, 1978).
[1040] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 330.
[1041] Armstrong, "Vance Deflects a Call for Toughness."
[1042] Vance, *Hard Choices*, pp. 330-331.
[1043] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 137-138.

Iranian army had been infiltrated by opponents of the Shah became a question on that same day when three anti-Shah Imperial Guard soldiers killed twelve officers in an attack at the Lavizan army base in Tehran.[1044]

Carter's names were not discussed in Sullivan's meeting with the Shah. In fact, Sullivan left the meeting feeling optimistic while Sick believed the meeting exhausted the last chance for a Regency Council. More troubling, however, for Sick was the apparent feeling of optimism from Sullivan and the Shah. Sick observed "the Shah's essentially upbeat assessment of the situation had a dreamlike air of unreality" and "it was disappointing to find the US Ambassador apparently going along for the ride."[1045] Carter, wrote in his diary on December 14 how the strikes had grown worse in Iran and "it is increasingly obvious that the Shah must share substantial government authority with civilians, including the opposition, in order to prevent having to abdicate" while it "may or may not be possible" for the Shah to maintain control over the military.[1046] Carter also met with Ball that same day in order to review his findings concerning the course of action in Iran for the United States. Sick recalls that Carter agreed with most of the Ball report but balked in terms of recommended action because he was not prepared to lecture a leader of another government on what to do.[1047] Brzezinski, on the other hand, differed with the Ball conclusions. He cited Turkey and Brazil as examples of military governments that could be gradually transitioned to civilian authority and argued the time was not right for the movement of Iran to a democracy because intermediate steps would be necessary.[1048] Rubin wrote that even as late as mid-December "the United States still did not have any coherent Iran policy nor was their even coordination between the different policy-making groups" and Carter failed to "step in to settle the debates that grew hotter daily, and so there was no rallying around one position."[1049] Moreover, the policy chosen was very much related to who among the Carter advisors projected the strongest personality and whatever might be occurring on the ground in Iran from day to day.[1050]

The investigative series done approximately two years after the fall of the Shah by the *Washington Post* marked December 15 as the key date when Vance recognized the Shah was in serious trouble. Senator Edward Kennedy approached Vance concerning Iran after having been contacted by an unhappy aide at State "asking for help in arousing Vance on the Iranian crisis."[1051] Kennedy's sense in a meeting two days later was that Vance had really no idea to the extent which the people of Iran had turned against the Shah and, furthermore, requested that Vance read the report recently issued by George Ball concerning the future of the Shah.[1052] Vance met with Ball at his Florida winter home on December 17. Ball's perception matched that of Kennedy in that he felt Vance had little appreciation for the events happening on the ground in Iran. Ball worked to educate Vance and also to appeal to him that both Carter and Brzezinski's approach in hoping to maintain the status quo was not realistic. Coincidently, the demonstrations and violence temporarily abated for a brief period once Vance took notice of Iran which allowed

[1044] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 341.
[1045] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 139.
[1046] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, pp. 441-442.
[1047] Sick, *All Fall Down*, pp. 134-136.
[1048] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 373.
[1049] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 236.
[1050] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 236.
[1051] Scott Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Itself on Vance; Vance, for a Moment, Turns the President Around on Iran," <u>Washington Post</u> October 29 1980.
[1052] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."

Carter and Brzezinski to utilize intelligence from the CIA in order to maintain that the religious holidays would mark the largest challenge to the Shah. Carter and Brzezinski believed the worst was behind the Shah after he survived Ashura.[1053]

Stempel relayed his concerns in mid-December regarding the police and military in Iran - "officers began to question seriously the reliability of their troops, particularly in the big city garrisons" and many within the police force simply joined the revolution while others were "reporting for work, but not actively patrolling."[1054] Later, Stempel would admit the "Islamic infiltration of the army had been traumatically effective."[1055] Approximately 800 soldiers joined rioters in Tabriz on December 18 and even the most optimistic figures from Iranian military intelligence revealed a more than doubling of desertions.[1056] At that point, the first analyst to unequivocally call the end of the Shah with any certainty and who was willing to attach his name to the prediction was State Department's Henry Precht. He listed the steps necessary in order to protect American interests in a post-Shah Iran and forwarded the report to Saunders and Sullivan on December 19.[1057] Precht contended the Shah had to exit in a graceful way for the United States to maintain any credibility. Ironically, Sick points out that Precht was not even slightly aware of Ball's suggestion of a Council of Notables. Sick also called for a drastic change in policy towards Iran at the same time and independently of Precht. As a result, mid-December coincided with the two most senior Iranian policy analysts – Precht at State and Sick at the White House – calling for a change in policy and, hence, putting their careers at risk.[1058] Ultimately, neither Precht nor Sick lost their job but, as Harris observed, Precht's memo was treated in a similar fashion to Sullivan's November warning and "was simply ignored at the White House."[1059] Sick noted that his recommendation, along with that of Precht, was dismissed and did not have any impact on policy.[1060] Sick later recalled his feelings concerning the lack of action on behalf of the White House:

> [It] demonstrates the overwhelming reluctance of officials at all levels to be perceived as backing away from support of the Shah. The U.S. relationship with the Shah was so deeply engrained in the minds and policies of everyone responsible that even a carefully reasoned expression of doubt was regarded as heresy that could destroy a career – hence the immense reluctance to "make the call" by proclaiming the Shah irreparably wounded.[1061]

Concurrently, Brzezinski still made the push for a forceful military response to the revolution. Brzezinski now contended that the Shah wanted the United States to take the responsibility for making the decision to use such force. Vance, Christopher, and Mondale all opposed a military solution and frequently cited Chile and Pinochet in support of their argument

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[1053] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."
[1054] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 153.
[1055] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 151.
[1056] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 332; Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 151.
[1057] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 141.
[1058] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 142-143.
[1059] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 130.
[1060] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 143.
[1061] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 142.

that a military solution would bring too much bloodshed.[1062] Brzezinski claimed he was also facing the additional dilemma that pushing a military dictatorship and "initiating such a coup went so much against the grain of the dominant values in the White House and State Department" that he would have to convincingly argue a military dictatorship "represented our best chance of avoiding a destructive and bloody civil war in Iran" and the military option would have to be seen as the last resort. Brzezinski felt such an argument was necessary but also "made it easier for Vance, Christopher, and others to counter that the time to move toward such a drastic solution had not yet come."[1063]

Agitation continued in Isfahan, Qom, and Mashad as Tehran stood oddly quiet on December 17. Pro-Shah groups in Isfahan engaged in a policy of stopping citizens in order to look for opposition documents and seized the money of all they stopped. Predictably, the end result was an increase in anger towards the Shah and the government, even from those not normally predisposed toward the opposition. The situation further evolved into one that "is ripe for further serious trouble." Meanwhile, a disturbance in Shiraz "appears to be one of the ugliest incidents of Iran's recent unrest" and was aimed at the Bahai community.[1064] Khomeini announced the following day to be one of national mourning and his loyalists responded by taking up residence at the Tehran cemetery. Whenever a body was brought to the site, regardless of the cause of death, the group of supporters "clusters around and holds rally for this brave defender of Islam who was murdered by the Shah's troops."[1065]

The loyalty and discipline of the Iranian military became a primary issue on December 18 in Tabriz. What happened is not completely clear but, at the very minimum, it appears some military forces refused to follow orders. The Embassy reported some type of demonstration was followed by gunfire. The story circulating in Iran was that a large mutiny of troops led to a battle between two groups of the military. Reports from the BBC indicated troops refused to follow orders. The U.S. Consul appeared dubious of the claims of a street battle.[1066] In contrast, the BBC stood by its story that troops mutinied and refused to engage demonstrators even when directly challenged by the government of Iran. Reliable contacts of the U.S. Embassy finally confirmed the next day that one or two companies mutinied while the Consul in Tabriz remained unconvinced.[1067] What was clear was that some type of breakdown in military discipline did occur.

Henry Precht, in a secret communication to Harold Saunders on December 19, concluded the Shah did not control Iranian armed forces and his chances for retaining even a small amount of power under some form of the Constitutional monarchy to be "marginal" in recommending the United States adjust policy in order to account for an Iran not ruled by the Shah.[1068] Then, the head of the Shah's military government, General Azheri, suffered a heart attack on December 20

[1062]   Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 371.

[1063]   Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 372.

[1064]   United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, December 19," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives. Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 19, 1978.

[1065]   United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran.

[1066]   United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, December 17," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 17, 1978).

[1067]   United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 20, 1978).

[1068]   United States Department of State, Secret, Memorandum, "Seeking Stability in Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 19, 1978).

and notified Sullivan he would not continue in his position. Sullivan felt the Iranian military *sans* Azheri would split into different factions unless some sort of compromise was reached with Khomeini in Paris.[1069] Sick learned of Azheri leaving his post on December 19 – but was told it was a firing.[1070] Immediately, Sick wrote to Brzezinski warning of a turning point and cautioned "the Shah and his dynasty are going to be swept away."[1071] The Acting Secretary of State forwarded a message to Sullivan that same day that the United States would continue their support of the Shah.[1072] As Washington forwarded its words of encouragement and support, many senior Iranian officers started sending their families to the United States and Europe.[1073] Meanwhile, Vance had no time to speak directly with Carter concerning Iran because of fast developing complications with China, the Middle East, and SALT negotiations. But, Vance argued through proxies that the United States must engage in discussions with Khomeini because his support has spread from the religious and clergy to merchants and the mass population. In addition, United States intelligence sources learned in late December that Khomeini's preparations for an overthrow of the Shah were further along than suspected and even included infiltration of SAVAK.[1074] Developments in Iran continued to spin out of control. By December 20, according to Abrahamian, "street violence was a daily occurrence, with young gangs – many of them from the slums – setting up barricades, taunting the military, and throwing Molotov cocktails at army trucks."[1075] The loyalty of the Iranian armed forces also persisted as a central question. Sullivan indicated in a December 21 report that the military remained loyal to the Shah but questioned its loyalty to General Azheri. Sullivan also noted the overall trend was a weakening of the military which has increased base security at a number of locations "apparently because of indications of decreasing loyalty to the regime among junior personnel as well as concern that deserters may attempt to return in uniform to seize arms." In addition, Sullivan reported a growing rate of desertion.[1076]

The anti-American element of the unrest also trended upward. A GTE employee's home in Tehran was firebombed on December 21. Paul Grim, an oil executive in Ahwaz was assassinated on the way to work the morning of December 23. Several more Americans reported to Embassy officials each day the receipt of threatening anonymous calls.[1077] More clashes between troops and opponents of the Shah's regime in Mashad on December 23 led to deaths of between 13 and 29 people and demonstrations that day also enveloped both Tehran and Tabriz.[1078] Government troops used tear gas to break up demonstrations in Bushehr while the

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[1069] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."
[1070] Although the Washington Post (10/29/80) spoke of Azheri suffering a heart attack. Sick's book on the fall of the Shah suggests Azheri was relieved of his position; See Sick, *All Fall Down*.
[1071] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 139-140.
[1072] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 143.
[1073] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 116.
[1074] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."
[1075] Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 522.
[1076] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran, "Attitudes and Troubles in the Iranian Military," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 21, 1978).
[1077] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, December 23," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 23, 1978).
[1078] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, December 24," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 24, 1978); Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 342.

Consulate in Tabriz reported gunfire. Crowds once again gathered outside the U.S. Embassy in Tehran chanting anti-American slogans and throwing rocks. At one point, the crowd threatened to breach the Embassy compound and U.S. Marines fired teargas in self-defense.[1079]

The day after Christmas it was clear the United States was no closer to adopting a uniform policy to Iran and the Shah than it had been when violence first broke out. Sullivan reported to Vance that the Shah once again asked about Washington's position on a Regency Council and if the United States would support repressive measures to bring about an end to the turmoil.[1080] Brzezinski recalled that the Shah had asked the United States point blank that day how he should respond to the developments in Iran.[1081] In the meantime, Vance concluded in a State Department staff meeting that perhaps he had not paid enough attention to the developments in Iran and directed David Newsom, the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs, to chair a working group in order to deal with both the day to day developments in Iran and the long-term implications of those developments. The groups were largely unsuccessful which Sick blamed on the fact that neither contained one specialist on Iran.[1082]

The December 27 *Christian Science Monitor* perhaps summarized the dilemma facing U.S. policymakers best concerning Iran in rationalizing that the U.S. "really could see no alternative to supporting him [the Shah]." The main reason for this belief was that historically the U.S. dealt with only the Shah and none of the opposition. As a result, the United States "once again consistently violated a basic rule of diplomacy which admonishes us to 'stay in with the outs.'"[1083] December 27 was also another day of continued violence in Iran. A funeral for a demonstrator killed on the previous day totaled an estimated 10,000 protestors who were led by Sanjabi. The peaceful march quickly turned chaotic when police fired upon the crowd.[1084] In addition, political prisoners set fire to the prison building in Mashad and were joined by 100,000 who believed security forces were attempting to burn the inmates. The crowd clashed with the Iranian military who called for forty tanks to help suppress the unrest.[1085]

Vance, on December 28, penned a rough draft for a memo to be sent to Sullivan and conveyed to the Shah. Brzezinski recalls Sullivan called for a communication "clearly stating that the U.S. support is steady and that it essential repeat essential to terminate the continued uncertainty."[1086] Sullivan was told to relay to the Shah "unequivocally that the United States would not support the iron fist option and that we believed he must move swiftly to establish a new civilian government to replace General Azheri."[1087] The memo originated from a discussion earlier in the day between Carter and Vance over the turmoil in Iran. Vance's concern was that Carter's support for the Shah continued to increase even as the power of the Shah declined.[1088] Later that day, Brown, Brzezinski, Turner, Schlesinger, Aaron, and Vance all met in the White House in order to establish appropriate guidance for Sullivan. Vance noted that his position, as

[1079] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran.
[1080] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 332.
[1081] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 375.
[1082] Sick, *All Fall Down*, p. 144-145.
[1083] William J. Porter, "Mr. Carter's Diplomacy: Danger Ahead?" Christian Science Monitor December 27 1978: 23.
[1084] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 238.
[1085] United States Department of State, Secret, Cable State, "Iran Sitrep Number 58, December 29, 1978," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 29, 1978).
[1086] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 375.
[1087] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 332.
[1088] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."

advocated in his draft to Sullivan, had no support in the meeting. Instead, the principals authored a telegram for Sullivan to pass on to the Shah supporting a civilian government while expressing the realization that a military government may be needed. Then, Carter and Vance made additional changes in order to clarify the military option would only have the support of the United States if it was to end the bloodshed and not simply for the Shah to maintain power.[1089] For his part, Brzezinski feared the United States was not providing the Shah with the necessary guidance – a point to which Carter agreed.[1090] Brzezinski also remained consistent in his view that the United States should remain loyal even if they felt the Shah could lose power simply to send a broader message to Saudi Arabia of United States loyalty while ensuring any change in Iranian policy would not adversely effect the continuation of Israeli-Egyptian talks.[1091] Vance, however, continued to maintain that if the United States wanted any future relations with Iran someone with the U.S. government would have to engage Khomeini and encourage the Shah to abdicate.[1092] In the meantime, the Shah's troops killed approximately thirty demonstrators in Ahvaz while in Tehran and Qazvin troops loyal to the Shah also fired on the demonstrators as jockeying over U.S. policy continued in Washington.[1093]

  The government and state of Iran was a shell of its former self by the end of December 1978. Oil production stood at an estimated 300,000 to 350,000 barrels per day in a state that that required at least double for their internal needs.[1094] The U.S. Embassy categorized the unrest as "Iran's slide into anarchy" while gangs roamed the streets destroying property and breaking into stores to take whatever they want.[1095] In Mashad, crowds attacked two police precincts and the Iran America Society while the Embassy received reports of many casualties in Ahwaz. Crowds and gangs increased their anger towards American targets and the U.S. Embassy recommended the evacuation of all dependents. Fear of an assault on the resulted in orders to troops to fire on crowd if they attempted to breach the compound.[1096] Politically, Shapour Bakhtiar agreed to form a cabinet under the Shah but was quickly expelled from the National Front.[1097] The White House perceived the movement to Bakhtiar as a positive sign because of the label of Bakhtiar as a right of center opposition figure. The view toward Bakhtiar held serve in the White House despite a report issued by the CIA only a month earlier predicting Bakhtiar would not be effective due to the divisions within Iran.[1098] In fact, both State and the Embassy in Iran were much less optimistic because they believed a Bakhtiar government to merely be a postponing of the inevitable – a Khomeini influenced government.[1099] Sullivan considered Mehdi Bazargan, a key Khomeini aide, to be not only the most likely to maintain a relationship with the United States but also the most likely to serve as Khomeini's first prime minister.[1100] In Iran, opponents of the Shah's regime attacked the British Council in Ahwaz, Shiraz, and Mashhad and the

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[1089] Vance, *Hard Choices*, pp. 332-333.
[1090] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 375.
[1091] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."
[1092] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."
[1093] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 342.
[1094] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 367; Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 146.
[1095] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report December 31," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 31, 1978).
[1096] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran.
[1097] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 120; Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 367.
[1098] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."
[1099] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."
[1100] Armstrong, "Iran Crisis Finally Forces Self on Vance."

American and Turkish Consulates in Tabriz while military forces temporarily lost control in Ahwaz and permanently lost control in Mashad.[1101] Stempel succinctly observed "the social and economic fabric of Iranian life was unraveling" and "politics was nearing open warfare."[1102]

One of the most troubling aspects of the violence in the month of December was that instances of anti-American behavior and attacks began to spike. One of the difficulties with acquiring intelligence regarding the opposition to the Shah, according to Stempel, was the fact the U.S. Embassy devoted most of its time simply to protecting Americans and assisting with their departures. In one instance, a throng of demonstrators set an official United States car ablaze at the gates of the embassy and chanted pro-Khomeini and "Death to America" slogans on Christmas Eve. The lack of response by Iranian guards resulted in the positioning of Imperial Guard units to protect the embassy.[1103] Mob violence, on December 29, destroyed the headquarters for the Iran-America society in Ahvaz.[1104] In another notable incident, Iranian security forces responded to a demonstration outside the U.S. Consulate in Tabriz that aggressively surrounded the compound.[1105]

Exactly one year to the day after President Carter had toasted the Shah as an island of stability, anti-Shah demonstrations continued in most Iranian cities and General Azhari resigned as Prime Minister.[1106] December 31 in Mashad saw troops kill an estimated 170 demonstrators. Shortly after, the Iranian government announced the Shah would leave Iran temporarily in order to seek medical treatment.[1107] As Bakhtiar prepared to take the reins of leadership from the Shah, he appealed to Sullivan to not publicly support his regime because any more endorsements from Washington would jeopardize his position. Sullivan forwarded the request to Washington and, the very next day, Washington endorsed the Bakhtiar government.[1108] Sullivan, with the support of Vance, argued the United States "immediately open communications with all the politically significant groups inside Iran in a last-ditch effort to reach agreement between the Shah and the opposition before the army disintegrated."[1109] Carter recollected that information he had received from State, CIA, and diplomats from other governments all pointed to the notion the Shah would have to leave Iran before order would be restored.[1110] Parsons observed a situation akin to anarchy and claimed "cities, towns, and villages were in an uproar and effective government had ceased to exist."[1111] Harris's investigation discovered that only eighteen days after Ashura, $2.6 billion had been transferred out of Iran and "bank employees went on strike simply to stops the flow of currency reserves out of the country" while we know from later data some 100,000 Iranians went into exile during the last three months of 1978.[1112]

[1101] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 120.
[1102] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 146.
[1103] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 155.
[1104] United States Department of State, Secret, Cable State.
[1105] United States Department of State, Secret, Cable State, "Iran Sitrep Number 59, December 30, 1978," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, December 30, 1978).
[1106] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 378.
[1107] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 56.
[1108] Scott Armstrong, "U.S. Rejects Coup Options; White House Weighs, Rejects Coup Options; Brzezinski's Message to Ambassador Sullivan Is Answered With an Unprintable Expletive," Washington Post October 30 1980.
[1109] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 332.
[1110] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 443.
[1111] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 120.
[1112] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 123.

Ultimately, the warning bells that began to lightly ring in 1977 became louder in the first half and deafening by the last few months of 1978. The warnings in the first half of 1978, like those in 1977, were mostly ambiguous enough for the Carter officials to draw conclusions consistent with their desires. In other words, the cognitive dissonance was not strong enough to openly challenge intelligence and policy conclusions regarding the Shah and Iran. Throughout most of 1978, Brzezinski maintained the belief that the Shah would prevail and use whatever force was necessary to maintain his leadership. For the most part, the troubles in Iran would remain off the administration's radar until late October of that year. Hence, incoming data was processed in one of three ways – (1) if it supported the view that the Shah would survive or somehow use an "iron-fist" to defeat protestors it was given high levels of credibility, (2) if the data offered some positive and some negative analysis, Carter and his highest ranking officials stressed the positive, and (3) reports that were of a negative nature were most often ignored or got lost in a bureaucratic morass.

In late October, the first policy meeting was finally held concerning Iran. Findings at the meeting were to telephone the Shah in order to express U.S. support and, allegedly, high-ranking Carter officials decided that there was little they could do. As a result, business as usual with Iran continued. Even when Ambassador Sullivan sent the "thinking the unthinkable" telegram and reports of "Black Sunday" reached the Carter administration, no real changes in policy resulted. In fact, Sullivan did not even receive a reply. Instead, the Carter White House, under the recommendation of Brzezinski, would begin sending emissaries to Tehran. One after another those that visited Tehran and the Shah returned with negative reports. Men including Secretary of Treasury Blumenthal, the director of the DIA, head of the CIA division of analysis, and Senator Byrd all returned with negative reports on the state of the Shah. At this point, Carter finally acted – he decided to name former Secretary of State George Ball head of a fact-finding group on the status of the Shah and the unrest in Iran. Meanwhile, Carter became less and less trusting of Ambassador Sullivan. In short, both Carter and Brzezinski, faced with more and more negative information in the latter half of 1978, actively pursued other sources. When those sources confirmed much of the pessimistic reporting, Carter then moved on to other sources. Now facing higher levels of dissonance, Carter looked for sources that would remain consistent with his own policy – which assumed the Shah would remain in power.

Chapter Nine
The Last Days of America's Shah: The United States and the Shah, 1979

As 1978 gave way to 1979, Carter was fixed in his belief that the current Iranian constitution would offer a legitimate enough basis for the formation of a cabinet led by Bakhtiar. Sullivan, on the other hand, opposed Carter's solution and pushed for the exodus of the Shah and opening of discussions with Khomeini. Carter refused and cited the need for Iranian leaders to benefit from consistent support.[1113] The next two months, according to a *Washington Post* investigative series, the Carter administration would continue to debate, a debate characterized as one of "lingering hopes," the dilemma of how to maintain the Iranian military as a force capable of insuring "the Iran of the future would continue with a pro-American outlook."[1114] As Carter's confidence in Sullivan diminished, Carter and Brown both concluded they required a source in Iran that would be able to provide information on the Iranian military. Carter argued, furthermore, that such a representative would be able to "strengthen the resolve of the military leaders and encourage them to remain in Iran in order to maintain stability even of the Shah decided to leave."[1115] On January 2, the Shah informed Sullivan of his plan to appoint Bakhtiar as Prime Minister. The Shah, however, would not cede control of the defense ministry to Bakhtiar and once again dismissed the iron fist solution because he believed strikes would destroy the economy.[1116] Sullivan forwarded a message to Vance that was for Vance's eyes only in which he argued the Washington faced the "moment of truth" in Iran and American interests would be best served with the departure of the Shah.[1117] As news of the new government began to spread through Iran, demonstrations opposed to that government did so, too. Violence in Qazvin was of particular note where rioting led to the deaths of approximately 100 people.[1118]

As Sullivan and Vance appeared in agreement in what approach to take toward the faltering government in Iran, Brzezinski and Carter met on the same day and arrived at two conclusions. Yes, the United States would be best served with the departure of the Shah but, at the same time, the two agreed to send General Robert Huyser to Iran to assist the military with the transition.[1119] Specifically, Carter appointed General Huyser as a special envoy to visit Iran and gauge both the status of the Shah and the readiness of the military should they be required to take over. Huyser, who had close contacts with the Iranian military, reported a great deal of information. His reports, however, typically were positive in nature and reflected only his limited engagement with the Iranian military – not the middle class nor the masses nor religious. Ledeen and Lewis argue the Iranian military leaders had become so accustomed to providing only positive and selected information to their superiors in order to gain confidence that they merely did the same with regard to Huyser. In fact, Huyser offered positive and upbeat assessments but "… had very little contact with the turbulent reality of Iran. Relying almost totally on his

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[1113] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 443.
[1114] Armstrong, "U.S. Rejects Coup Options."
[1115] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 443.
[1116] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 334.
[1117] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 335.
[1118] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 343.
[1119] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 376.

conversations with the generals for his information Huyser inevitably reported the situation was good and that there was no need for panic."[1120]

Brzezinski, in another discussion later that day with Carter, expressed his frustration that the United States did not do enough to help the Shah and suggested Carter back a military coup. Carter refused the coup strategy citing the coup that overthrew Mossadeq in 1953 but also because he simply saw no military leader capable of leading.[1121] As discussions finally reached the level of intervention in the policy, two very different communications were made on January 2 and January 4, respectively, regarding the situation in Iran. First, Brzezinski passed a message to Huyser to give to the Iranian military what he believed "will be interpreted by the Iranian military as encouragement to take firm action when the moment of truth arrives."[1122] The second was a cable approved by the NSC from Carter to the Shah on January 4 supporting the new civilian government and "his [the Shah's] effort to preserve the independence, stability, and integrity of Iran." Vance believed, for all intense and purposes, that Carter agreed with Sullivan's appraisal and that his recommendations be accepted.[1123] Yet, that very same day, Carter left for a summit in Guadeloupe, Mexico requesting that Vance monitor Iran and do "everything possible to strengthen the Shah."[1124] Around the same time, Carter recounted in his memoirs that he "became increasingly troubled by the attitude of Ambassador Sullivan, who seemed obsessed with the need for the Shah to abdicate without further delay."[1125] In the midst of the senior policy maker divide in Washington, Sullivan's January 3 cable indicated the U.S. Embassy was being overwhelmed with requests to address the problem of the Shah because his unpopularity was spreading to the United States and Americans, generally. Furthermore, Sullivan feared the Bazaar merchants could begin attacks on American citizens because of the U.S. continued support of the Shah.[1126]

The idea of a military coup in Iran was one that continued to have allies in both the United States and Iran. Carter recalled conversations surrounding the coup idea as they developed on January 4. Sullivan informed Washington that top Iranian military generals were ready to move to take control of the government and not allow the Shah to exit Iran. Vance, of course, opposed the coup while Carter ordered the Secretary of State to "take action to retain our relationships with the Shah and the military."[1127] Brzezinski's recollection of the coup discussion was similar. While in Guadeloupe, Vance called Carter with the news the Iranian generals were prepared to act. Carter's decision that day regarding sponsorship in a change of government was that "unless the Shah completely disowned this effort, this would mean that we were prepared to back it."[1128] Carter also decided to reach out toward Khomeini using France as a mediator.[1129] While still in Mexico, Carter met with key U.S. allies the next day and found little support for

[1120] Ledeen and Lewis, *Debacle*, pp. 184-185.
[1121] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 378.
[1122] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 378.
[1123] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 335.
[1124] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 444.
[1125] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 444.
[1126] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran, "Bazaari Views on Bakhtiar Candidacy and on Continuing Confrontation," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 3, 1979).
[1127] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 445.
[1128] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, pp. 379-380.
[1129] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 381.

the Shah and he did not even broach the idea of a coup. Concurrently, the Iranian generals had a change of heart and decided not to block the Shah's exit.[1130]

Huyser arrived in Iran from Europe the same day and discovered, through discussions with key Iranian generals, "that the whole country was out of control."[1131] For instance, Vance recalled in his memoirs that Huyser, upon his initial foray into the Iranian morass, found "generals in a state of confusion" and "they were growing increasingly disillusioned with the Shah, and several expressed an interest in attempting to contact Khomeini and the religious forces."[1132] Zonis added that by the time Huyser arrived in Iran the Shah no longer was behaving as a ruling monarch and he would have to work with members of the military at times without the knowledge of the Shah.[1133] Two general versions of the developments in Iran began to develop. On one hand, Huyser's reports would paint an optimistic picture while, on the other, Sullivan continued to be more pessimistic.[1134] For example, Huyser spoke of Sullivan's belief that Bakhtiar would not succeed and "found it difficult to accept his prediction."[1135] The end result, according to Rubin, was the White House believed the reports proffered by Huyser and increasingly viewed Sullivan as "defeatist and perhaps even disloyal to the Carter White House."[1136]

January 5 also brought a change in instructions to Huyser. Sullivan forwarded a message to Huyser from Vance to ignore previous instructions and not contact Iranian military leaders as instructed. Huyser observed that the instruction "was not a good omen" and "it made me realize there was not much unity of effort in Washington."[1137] The next day, Huyser received another message from Vance, contradicting the previous, which ordered him to commence with contacts inside the Iranian military.[1138] On the ground in Iran, protests of over 100,000 in Qom turned against the Bakhtiar government.[1139] Khomeini called on all civil service employees disobey new government ministers and bar them from government buildings. In fact, Khomeini openly likened obedience to the new government to following the orders of Satan.[1140] Huyser continued his fact-finding and discovered the Iranian armed forces had not prepared for internal disruptions and lacked any type of contingency planning in case of interruption of fuel and other necessary supplies. Huyser also discovered that safety concerns would not permit General Toufanian and his senior officers to travel in Iran dressed in their military uniform and they always were armed.[1141] Ironically, as Brzezinski and Huyser offered positive reports on the Iranian military's ability to remain intact, the Iranian generals were, perhaps, the most realistic and traveled in disguise.

Huyser's frequent meetings with Iranian generals began to focus on strengthening their resolve. From the outset, Huyser would often reflect on the lack of expediency on behalf of the Iranian military leadership. The most significant of the Iranian generals, Gharabaghi, persistently

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[1130] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 445; Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 139-140.
[1131] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 22.
[1132] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 336.
[1133] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 256.
[1134] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 247.
[1135] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 24.
[1136] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 247.
[1137] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 23.
[1138] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 27.
[1139] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 56; Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 344.
[1140] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 334.
[1141] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 27-29.

offered little hope for Huyser and the future of Iran. In one of the initial meetings with Gharabaghi, Huyser spoke of his "disappointment that Gharabaghi had not shown greater enthusiasm for writing plans to break the country's strikes and organize the military to regain control of Iran. He fully agreed on the need for emergency action, but gave absolutely no sign of getting down to it."[1142] In fact, Huyser observed Gharabaghi "saw the future as totally hopeless … there was nothing he could do about it" and the American general clearly expressed his frustration to Gharabaghi in noting the Iranians could not "sit back and expect miracles."[1143] January 7-8 brought no relenting of the violence in Iran as opposition forces organized significant demonstrations for January 7 in Tehran and several other cities – notably Yazd and Ardebil.[1144] A day later, the cities of Tehran, Qazvin, and Isfahan witnessed notable demonstrations while violent unrest grew in Tabriz as mobs targeted movie theatres, schools, and shops.[1145] Sullivan cabled Vance regarding a report filed by Richard Cottam suggesting that many of the lower ranking officers within the Iranian armed forces are more likely allied with the Khomeini faction of opposition than the Shah as he continued to express his opposition for the coup option.[1146]

Huyser forwarded his first major assessment to Brzezinski on January 9 in which he commented that the leading concern of Iranian generals was that the Shah and senior officers would leave Iran and the military would disintegrate.[1147] That day, General Rabii spoke of the necessity of a military coup. When, however, Huyser pushed for details he discovered the generals had no specific plan or design on how to successfully accomplish a military seizure of the Shah's government. Consistently, the Iranian generals were either unable or unwilling to draw up specific plans and hoped that Huyser would write an action plan for them. The schism between Huyser and Sullivan began to crystallize even more. Huyser recalled Sullivan's lack of confidence in the Iranian military and noted how it was odds with his own more positive view.[1148]

As Huyser surveyed the status of the military in Iran, the discussion in Washington concerned whether the United States should begin some discussions with Khomeini. In a meeting of Carter with Mondale, Brown, Powell, Aaron, and Vance on January 10, Carter decided to move through France to ask Khomeini to give Bakhtiar time to restore order in Iran.[1149] Sullivan, although, continued to pressure Carter to engage in direct talks with Khomeini. But, Carter rejected Sullivan's idea once again because he feared it could be seen as a lack of support for Bakhtiar's struggling government.[1150] The decision to work through France led to a response telegram from Sullivan to Vance that Carter characterized as "bordering on insolence, condemning our asking the French President to contact Khomeini instead of doing it ourselves."[1151] Carter also concluded from the cable that Sullivan "seemed unable to present an

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[1142] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 48-49.

[1143] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 49.

[1144] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 344.

[1145] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 344.

[1146] United States Department of State, Confidential, Cable State, "Further Report of Richard Cottam," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 7, 1979).

[1147] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 383.

[1148] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 57-64.

[1149] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 337.

[1150] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 446.

[1151] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 446.

objective analysis of the complicated situation in Iran" and began to primarily rely on reports filed by Huyser which Carter believed to be "balanced views."[1152]

Huyser, on January 10, noted "Iran's military leadership was in a totally helpless state."[1153] As a result, Huyser, in his report to Brown, indicated the military was not in a position to launch a coup and the United States should directly engage in talks with Khomeini. He also argued it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to draw supporters away from Khomeini and the "much more promising approach was to sound out Khomeini to establish his terms for cooperation."[1154] Carter held a White House meeting the next day attended by Mondale, Vance, Brzezinski, and Brown in which he concluded the United States would provide unqualified support for the Bakhtiar government and argued the fact Bakhtiar was the Shah's choice was enough to establish his legitimacy. Carter's position also included the cancellation of meetings in Paris with the representative of Khomeini.[1155] True to his previous communiqué to the White House, Sullivan observed "'these wishful thoughts [of the president's] were pure moonshine'" and the United States would be better served in preparing for the end of the Shah's regime and the best way to protect U.S. interests in Iran.[1156] Meanwhile, it was not until January 11, 1979, that the NSC concluded "we are giving up on the Shah only after being forced reluctantly to conclude that he is incapable of decisive action."[1157]

Huyser's obvious frustration with the Iranian military leadership continued when, on January 11, the Iranians took the day off. As a result, Huyser forced a meeting with the Shah to press the Iranian monarch on what appeared to be a general lack of expediency. The Shah confessed that he was unable to order a firm military response to the opposition and Huyser observed "the country progressively degenerated into a state of complete paralysis by January 1979."[1158] Huyser called the Iranian generals back into their offices for his daily meeting and the generals again focused on the need for a coup. As in the other occasions, the American general found absolutely no planning or willingness to plan toward the coup option. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, Huyser judged it was clear "the Shah wanted no part in a coup, because of the bloodshed it was bound to cause."[1159] Bakhtiar presented his cabinet and agenda for the new government that same day to the Majles and lifted the order of martial law in Shiraz – which resulted in violence. Anti-Shah forces set fire to SAVAK buildings and a mob burned the American flag while in front of the U.S. Consulate and fourteen protestors were killed.[1160]

Huyser's frustration with United States policy toward Iran also was growing evident and he recalled he "was walking a tightrope" because he was to provide all aid and assistance to a civilian government "and not just any civilian government, but the Bakhtiar government" but, at the same time, if Bakhtiar collapsed "then exactly at the right moment, I was too see that the military took action."[1161] Yet, Huyser's initial order "was not to give directives, just advice." When Huyser questioned Brown concerning the apparent paradox in orders, Brown "gave the

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[1152] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 446.
[1153] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 69.
[1154] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 69-74.
[1155] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 141.
[1156] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 143.
[1157] Memorandum, National Security Council for Zbigniew Brzezinski, 1/11/79, NLC-10-17-6-36-7, Jimmy Carter Library.
[1158] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 69-74.
[1159] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 84-87.
[1160] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 345.
[1161] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 88.

clear instructions that I was to remain an advisor, giving only recommendations."[1162] On January 12, Sullivan indicated the Shah would leave Iran on January 16 – after the installation of Bakhtiar as Prime Minister. Sullivan also was direct in his analysis the Shah would probably never return and all efforts should be toward maintaining the Iranian armed forces and, again, recommended the United States work to negotiate "an accommodation between the military and Khomeini."[1163] *The Washington Post* investigative series on the U.S. during the fall of the Shah later reported Sullivan turned down a request from an embassy aide that same day to meet with Ayatollah Mohammad Beheshti, the Khomeini contact in Tehran.[1164] Khomeini followed with the announcement by the Shah with one of his own indicating he would return to Iran if the Shah left.[1165] Both Huyser and Sullivan complained later that evening over the fact the United States would not directly contact Khomeini.[1166]

      Sullivan began to have second thoughts, the next day, with regard to the meeting with Beheshti and sent an embassy aide to meet with Khomeini's representative. Sullivan offered a guarantee of no military coup or crackdown if Khomeini would call off strikes and demonstrations so that the Bakhtiar government could gain necessary breathing room. Steadfastly, Khomeini's position was one of no negotiations until the Shah abdicated. Carter refused to ask the Shah to abdicate once presented with the compromise.[1167] Distrust between State and the NSC persisted when, on January 13, Sullivan and Vance spoke and concluded Brzezinski was using Huyser to convince the Iranians to launch a military coup.[1168] Indeed, the notion of a military takeover was part of the design of Huyser and Brzezinski. Iran, however, appeared to lack the necessary military leadership to accomplish a successful coup. In fact, Huyser wrote that he "was sure that the Army still had a tremendous capability" but what was needed was "leadership and the direction."[1169] Huyser also indicated he had asked the Iranians to inform him when they "might be approaching the point where they would lose the option for military action" and "his judgment and theirs was that the point was not at hand."[1170] Meanwhile, the White House called on France to pressure Khomeini to delay his return to Iran.[1171] Indeed, Sullivan and Huyser both believed a rapid return of Khomeini "could not be handled, and would cause the whole situation to come unglued."[1172] Pressure continued, especially from Brzezinski, for a military coup yet Huyser continually returned to the same problem – a lack of potential leadership.[1173]

      Opposition forces, spurred by Khomeini, adopted a new strategy during protests when on January 15 they began to use "love and kindness" and gave Iranian soldiers flowers and garlands. Huyser recalls Iranian news accounts of "the event had been blown completely out of perspective by the press" and the reason Iranian troops appeared so passive in response to the love and kindness protests was "a further indication of the troops' good training and state of

[1162] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 88.
[1163] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 337.
[1164] Armstrong, "U.S. Rejects Coup Options."
[1165] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 56.
[1166] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 99.
[1167] Armstrong, "U.S. Rejects Coup Options."
[1168] Vance, *Hard Choices*, pp. 337-338.
[1169] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 105.
[1170] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 384.
[1171] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 447.
[1172] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 113.
[1173] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 113-114, p. 123.

discipline."[1174] On the other hand, Huyser privately remained concerned over the love and kindness campaign and wrote "there was a strong uneasiness, and I must admit that I had a queasy stomach about Khomeini's new strategy … we had to move fast or we could lose the troops without ever knowing what happened."[1175] Sullivan's view of the military continued to be one of "the army leadership demoralized … and was probably incapable of holding itself together for more than a few weeks if it actually did try to seize power"[1176]

The Shah departed Iran on January 16, 1979 and Carter characterized what remained in Iran as "a shaky government, uncertain and disorganized military commanders, and an aroused people calling for the Ayatollah to come home as its spiritual and political leader."[1177] Brzezinski, in light of the consistent reports from Huyser questioning the leadership of the Iranian military and recounting how Sick had warned of the poor condition of the Iranian military in late December, how Sullivan and State consistently argued the military was not in a position for a coup, and how the intelligence community had no "firm views on the subject," concluded that "there were divided opinions on the ability of the Iranian military to act."[1178] The Iranian streets exploded in jubilation when the departure of the Shah was confirmed and "people danced in the streets for hours" while others burned portraits of the Shah, destroyed statues of the Shah, removed street signs with the name Pahlavi, and were joined by enlisted members of the army.[1179] The idea of a coup took a large step back when Gharabaghi told Huyser "that no patriotic Iranian could wish to see a confrontation between the Army and the people after His Majesty left" and the result would be that "neither the Army nor the nation would survive" and promised there would be no coup.[1180] Brown and Brzezinski requested that evening that Huyser "be sure the coup d'etat option remained open" which led him "to wonder if this rather crucial issue had really been thrashed out in Washington" because any military action would first require somehow acquiring the fuel for tanks and vehicles, which had been in short supply since the strikes commenced in December.[1181]

Brown brought more pressure to bear on Huyser for the coup option in a January 17 conversation. Brown also openly questioned whether Huyser's goals of giving Bakhtiar a chance to succeed was at odds with the military option and that, while waiting for the stability of Bakhtiar, the military would lose its effectiveness. Indeed, Huyser agreed with the argument of the Iranian military growing weaker but insisted everything would be in place for a coup within a week.[1182] The coup option was clearly still in play in the mind of Brzezinski. Sick called on experts from State and the NSC who had recently returned from Iran to meet and discuss the feasibility of the various coup scenarios and the basic conclusion, which Brzezinski's aides did not want to hear, was that no support existed for the Shah in Iran nor would any likely exist in the future.[1183] Carter assured his support of the Bakhtiar regime and called on Khomeini to delay his return home in order to give the new Iranian government an opportunity to restore order.[1184]

[1174] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 117-118.
[1175] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 118.
[1176] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 338.
[1177] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 448.
[1178] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 382.
[1179] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 144.
[1180] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 126-127.
[1181] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 135.
[1182] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 141-142.
[1183] Armstrong, "U.S. Rejects Coup Options."
[1184] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 172.

The extent of the breakdown of the Iranian military became evident in reports from the U.S. Embassy regarding bloodshed on January 17. Apparently, troops in Ahwaz loyal to the Shah attacked a crowd of demonstrators. Officers and enlisted both rebelled when told to swear allegiance to the Bakhtiar regime. Embassy sources indicated that shooting took place within the barracks.[1185]

Khomeini rejected Carter's call for a delay in his long awaited return to Iran and his supporters continued protests in Tehran, Ahwaz, and Dezful.[1186] Brzezinski authored an eight page single-spaced memo on January 18 to Carter arguing Iran would gradually deteriorate and the United States was "not likely to be presented in Iran with the luxury of a simple black-white dichotomy" and the result would be a disaster for the United States, internationally.[1187] Incredibly, Huyser received a message that day from Brown and General Jones concerning the future of arms sales to Iran. Brown and Jones informed Huyser that Eric von Marbod would be sent to Iran in order to address future arms sales. Huyser observed:

> … We in Tehran were living under no illusions about what could be done. In Washington I think they were. The fact was, that, with the banking system in a state of complete chaos, there wasn't any money available, and the Iranians had enough urgent problems without having to think months and years ahead. It was ridiculous to even raise the problem; but if that was the way Washington wanted it, we would oblige.[1188]

In Iran, Huyser recommended that Iranian generals pull all troops from the streets and limit their functions to protecting only the facilities needed in order to allow the functioning of the government.[1189]

Brzezinski began to add meetings with "increasing frequency on the Iranian issue" in response to what he characterized as "increasingly frequent and alarmist reports from both Huyser and Sullivan."[1190] In one such meeting, Mondale suggested that, perhaps, Bakhtiar needed to appeal to more of the Iranian people and suggested he work to involve Khomeini. Carter replied to Mondale's suggestion that "the threat of a military coup is the best way to prevent Khomeini from sliding into power."[1191]

Parsons sent has last report home from Iran to Great Britain on January 20. He concluded Bakhtiar "was unable to govern" but also "found Bakhtiar's resolute confidence and apparent belief that the people were responding to his government's programme admirable but grotesque: the Westernised opposition were as out of touch with the realities of the revolution as the Shah had been."[1192] Both Sullivan and Huyser requested a review of the United States policy towards Iran and warned of the return of Khomeini. Huyser, yet again, requested authorizations to inform the Iranian military the U.S. would not support a military coup and to have the army "attempt to

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[1185] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, January 18, 1979," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 18, 1979).
[1186] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 346; Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 368.
[1187] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 385.
[1188] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 145.
[1189] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 144.
[1190] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 387.
[1191] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 387.
[1192] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, pp. 127-129.

negotiate an understanding with Khomeini."[1193] A high level meeting followed between Brown, Brzezinski, Carter, and Vance which resulted in permission for Huyser and Sullivan to pursue an approach to Khomeini through France. Sullivan and Huyser were informed the U.S. would support a coup but Khomeini's return would not specifically trigger a military seizure of Bakhtiar's government.[1194]

Perhaps the most illustrative example of the power by Khomeini over the Iranian opposition was the ill-fated Regency Council attempted earlier by the Shah. The individual chosen to lead the Council, Sayyed Jalaleddin Tehrani, previously served as a minister and was loyal to the Shah. Khomeini requested an audience with Tehrani in Paris which led to Tehrani's resignation as per Khomeini's suggestion at the January 22 meeting.[1195] Fears of Khomeini's certain return led the Iranian military to respond in closing Iranian airports on January 26. That day, one hundred thousand of Khomeini's supporters protested in Tehran and troops responded by firing in the air. Deaths were estimated at forty while wounded probably numbered in the hundreds.[1196] Violence also continued in Tabriz and troops given the green light to fire, an order Embassy sources believed valid throughout Iran, which was met with crowds fighting back with guns and homemade explosives.[1197] A day later, one million turned out in Tehran to march in support of Khomeini as rumors of a coup enveloped Tehran. [1198]

January 28 brought more violence and unrest in Tehran. Crowds near the University of Tehran protested and threw stones at soldiers who opened fire and killed an estimated thirty to thirty-five of the opposition.[1199] Reports of violence also came from Abadan, Gorgan, and Rasht.[1200] The Consul in Isfahan relayed stories of the homofars - the technological troops of the air force - fighting with martial law troops. In fact, soldiers took several of the rebelling homofars into custody which resulted in a larger confrontation as additional bystanders seized weapons, stormed a police station to seize more weapons, and then arrested the soldiers in order to exchange for the homofars.[1201] The growing undercurrent of anti-Americanism in the protests forced the Vance to order all nonessential citizens and dependents out of Iran.[1202] Bakhtiar then informed Sullivan of his decision to allow Khomeini back into Iran with the hope the Ayatollah's popularity would diminish once he arrived. Vance described the decision as a "strategy of desperation, and despite our continuing public pronouncements of support, it was obvious Bakhtiar had little time left."[1203] Meanwhile, Huyser and Sullivan remained in disagreement over

[1193] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 339.
[1194] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 339.
[1195] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 346.
[1196] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 149.
[1197] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, January 27, 1979," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 27, 1979).
[1198] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran; David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 57.
[1199] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Political/Security Report, January 29, 1979," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 29, 1979); Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 368; Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 149.
[1200] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran.
[1201] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Supplement to Political/Security Report January 28: Situation Serious in Isfahan," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 28, 1979).
[1202] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 340.
[1203] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 340.

the status of the Iranian armed forces and the value of a coup. In short, Huyser saw the military as still effective and the option of a military takeover as possible while Sullivan was quite negative over the utility of both.[1204] Meanwhile, Huyser continued to face pressure from Washington over the negotiation of a new memorandum of understanding on purchases of arms. Exasperated, Huyser noted "that some people in Washington simply did not seem to understand how paralysed and helpless the Iranian government was, and how every ounce of energy was needed for immediate battle."[1205]

January 29 was a day of a great deal of continued violence in Tehran as diplomats and government officials in both Iran and the United States attempted to make sense of the chaos. For instance, rioters sacked the gendarmerie headquarters in Tehran while setting ablaze the entire red light district in Tehran and the Shams Brewery – both as symbolic acts against perceived evils.[1206] Tehran now lacked a police presence of any sort and when calls for help were made police responded with "Go ask Khomeini." Embassy sources reported that weapons were being distributed to a select number of opposition members who have some form of weapon training.[1207] Equally significant, witnesses claim that protests in Tehran also include a number of homofars and military as part of the cadre.[1208] In one example, a mob attacked and pulled from his vehicle one unlucky police general as troops fired upon demonstrators. At a loss for answers, Iranian generals even briefly discussed shooting down Khomeini's plane but abandoned the idea when the Shah refused to sanction it from his exile in Egypt.[1209] An undercurrent of anti-Americanism continued to also appear. Iranian soldiers posted inside the U.S. Embassy chanted provocative anti-American slogans. In Isfahan, a crowd attacked and beat the American consul who then relocated all Americans to nearby cities outside of Isfahan.[1210]

Huyser met with Iranian generals in order to gauge the fallout from the return of Khomeini - now believed to be set for February 1 but still steadfastly argued on behalf of the effectiveness of the Iranian military and predicted desertion rates of 5-10% while embassy estimates were of 70% or more.[1211] Stempel would later recall "Huyser's observations and conclusions about possible outcomes for the Iranian crisis, for example, may have caused policy and decision makers in Washington to overestimate the cohesiveness of the military."[1212] Khomeini ordered all Iranians to disobey the government and prepare for his return.[1213]

Ayatollah Khomeini did, in fact, return to Iran on February 1, 1979. One account, by *Le Monde*, related that a crowd of ten million people arrived in order to see Khomeini.[1214] Huyser still insisted that the military remained strong the day of Khomeini's return and desertion numbers were lower than many predicted while conceding "we were standing on a large keg of

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[1204] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 226.

[1205] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 227.

[1206] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential Cable, Tehran, "Political/Security Report, January 30, 1979," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, January 30, 1979); Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 225, 228-229.

[1207] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran.

[1208] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential Cable, Tehran.

[1209] Harris, *The Crisis*, pp. 149-150.

[1210] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential Cable, Tehran; Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 347.

[1211] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 241-242.

[1212] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 173.

[1213] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 236.

[1214] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 151; Nikazmerad, "A Chronological Survey," puts the total at a much lower number of three million, p. 347.

dynamite."[1215] Huyser spoke to Brzezinski, Vance, Brown, Christopher, and Jones via conference call on February 3 and, when queried, remained optimistic about the capability of the military – presumably to move to a coup if called.[1216]

Huyser returned to Washington on February 5 and immediately met with Brzezinski in order to provide his briefing. Once again, Brzezinski asked Huyser point blank if the Iranian military remained capable of carrying out a coup to which Huyser replied positively.[1217] Overall, Huyser's report led Carter to issue an endorsement of Bakhtiar's government. Two hours later evening newscasts cited State Department sources who predicted the Bakhtiar government would last only a few more days. The newscasts resulted in Carter meeting with middle managers at State and attacking them as disloyal and guilty of leaking too many stories.[1218] Bakhtiar permitted Khomeini to set up a parallel government to which he named Mehdi Bazargan the prime minister. Incredibly, even as Khomeini returned to Iran and his followers triumphed in the streets of Tehran, Huyser returned to Washington and reported to Carter that everything in Iran was satisfactory, the Bakhtiar government would survive, the military was doing well, and the president need not resort to action.[1219]

Despite the machinations inside Bakhtiar's government and the Lecompton-like feel of a government of competing prime ministers, Washington's official position was of Bakhtiar as the legitimate Iranian government.[1220] Huyser continued to make the Washington rounds meeting with high ranking officials. Huyser, however, confessed later that "he could not feel confident that this government was making a united effort to save Iran."[1221] And, Huyser continued to express his dissatisfaction over the failure of the Iranian military leadership to implement the plans he had helped create to take control of the customs offices. He consistently maintained the control of customs houses would, at the very least, allow the release of food stores and cut off the flood of weapons illegally entering Iran and being stored in mosques throughout the country.[1222]

Remarkably, Huyser reported on many of the same developments as did Sullivan from Tehran. Huyser emerged as a voice of optimism and Sullivan one of pessimism. Hence, Washington began to minimize reports by Sullivan and rely more on the positive analysis by Huyser:

> That Huyser's reports were taken as gospel, while Sullivan's were rejected
> out of hand, is tribute to the faith of the President and his top advisers in
> their newly developed cult of the special emissary and in the Bakhtiar
> "solution." Sullivan was by then one of the best-informed people in Tehran,
> but the information he transmitted was bad news, and not acceptable.
> Huyser, a man with very few sources aside from the frightened generals,
> was considered to be the ultimate insider, and his information was eagerly
> awaited and gratefully received. There were many visitors to the White
> House in the last weeks who told the President and Brzezinski that the news
> out of Iran seemed grim indeed, and they asked Carter and the National

[1215] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 259.
[1216] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 268.
[1217] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 368.
[1218] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 389.
[1219] Ledeen and Lewis, *Debacle*, p. 186.
[1220] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 341.
[1221] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 274.
[1222] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 279-280.

Security Adviser what the United States intended to do. The President
would smile and tell the visitors that if they only had access to the
intelligence he was receiving from Tehran, they would not worry.
Everything was under control. Bakhtiar was doing well, and the President
expected the situation to continue to improve.[1223]

David, furthermore, supported the theory that Huyser was biased in favor of the Iranian military
and cited Huyser's his long history and contacts with the Iranian military elite.[1224]

Khomeini supporters continued to gain the initiative when, on February 7, they seized
control over government and police functions in Isfahan, Qom, and Shiraz.[1225] Peaceful
demonstrations in support of Khomeini repeated the next day and included millions - including
Iranian soldiers in uniform.[1226] In fact, the U.S. Embassy estimated 1000 officers participated
while, that morning, as many as 2000 officers visited Khomeini in order to "pay homage."[1227]
Sullivan depicted Tehran on February 9 as marked by chaos and "fighting between loyal military
units and rightist and leftist bands, which were obtaining weapons from disintegrating army
units."[1228] Some of the most brutal fighting to date took place that evening within the military.
Members of the Iranian Air Force stationed at Doshan Tappeh Air Force Base in Tehran began to
demonstrate in support of Khomeini. Iranian generals sent Imperial Guards to quell the uprising.
Eventually, the Imperial Guards regained control but only after a firefight and the desertion of
some of the Imperial Guard troops.[1229] One of the most significant dimensions of the fight was
the appearance of civilians at Doshan Tappeh. They constructed barriers to keep additional
troops out of the base and an estimated 100,000 encircled the base itself and began rioting.[1230]
The fighting began in earnest once again as the sun rose. Daybreak of February 10 coincided
with members of the Iranian Air Force breaking into the base armory and seizing several
thousand weapons which were distributed at Tehran University. Huyser described the fighting as
"very bad business with many killed and wounded."[1231] The now armed regime opponents
attacked the Imperial Guard inside the base. Armed crowds also began to attack targets,
including other military bases, all through town. By noon, Doshan Tappeh fell and many within
the Imperial Guard had mutinied. The civilians and those that joined them from the Imperial
Guards seized tanks and moved to attack the Imperial Guard headquarters. The throng managed
to seize the Imperial Guard base by 2:00 PM and then moved toward the military headquarters,
which sat only two blocks from the U.S. Embassy.[1232] American civilian contractors and

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[1223] Ledeen and Lewis, *Debacle*, p. 187.
[1224] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 80.
[1225] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 348; Embassy reports from Consuls in Isfahan and Shiraz in IR 02262
question the reports of two cities under Islamic governance and, instead, argue Islamic presence is of traffic police,
parade authorities, and Islamic cooperatives but that "religious authorities do not play an enhanced role."
[1226] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 348.
[1227] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran. "Political/Security Report February 8, 1979." *Iran:
The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980.* Ed. National Security Archives. Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey,
February 8, 1979.
[1228] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 341.
[1229] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 348; Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 284; Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 341.
[1230] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 156.
[1231] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 281; Also in Nikazmerad, "A Chronological Survey," p. 349 but identified as
February 11; for role of Tehran University as weapons distribution point please see Abrahamian, *Iran between Two
Revolutions*, p. 528.
[1232] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 156.

military heeded the advice of Iranian authorities and remained hidden inside the base as the attack on Doshan Tappeh unfolded. Thousands of the civilians participating in the siege on the airbase dressed in the white shroud of martyrdom to show their willingness to die for Khomeini.[1233] Bakhtiar responded by extending curfew hours so that it now ran from 4:30 PM to 5 AM.[1234]

On February 11, a mere four days after Huyser reported the Iranian military was still in good order, Bakhtiar resigned as Iranian Prime Minister and the army chief of staff announced the army would be non-partisan in the struggle.[1235] All troops abandoned their positions on the Iranian streets and returned to their barracks.[1236] Shortly after the army retreated, Khomeini supporters seized five Iranian generals, brought them to Khomeini, and recorded their summary executions.[1237] Organized groups of regime opponents also launched coordinated attacks on Bakhtiar controlled facilities and by midday had already seized the police headquarters in Tehran, Tehran's lone radio station and transmitter, and military bases in West Tehran and at the Mehrabad airport.[1238] By the end of the day, the insurgents had taken control of the Supreme Military Headquarters.[1239] Insurgents also assassinated the Chief of the Army, General Badraie.[1240] Stempel conceded that "public order had broken down completely."[1241] Police force and military supply locations all were under attack and many seized while, seemingly, the Iranian military possessed no plan to retake key installations.[1242]

Perhaps no incident revealed more clearly the lack of understanding of the Iranian situation in Washington than the February 11 attempt to free twenty-six military advisors trapped in the Iranian military headquarters. Sullivan, while negotiating to free the trapped Americans, received a call from a NSC aide, on behalf of Brzezinski, asking Sullivan to determine the chances of success for a coup. As Harris recounts, "At this very moment, the entire Iranian general staff and the American military personnel who were America's liaisons to the general staff were hold up in a bunker in a firefight that included captured tanks."[1243]

Brzezinski described the situation in Iran on February 11 as "critical" and began to lay out three options – (1) military accommodation of Bazargan, (2) convincing the military to remain neutral in the struggle in order to maintain their force integrity or (3) encouraging the military to take control of Iran and bring back order. However, Brzezinski noted Huyser's conclusion that option three was not feasible unless the United States made a major commitment.[1244] In a conference call between Huyser and Deputy Secretary of Defense Duncan, General David Jones, Al Haig, and Brzezinski, Duncan asked Huyser if he would be willing to return to Tehran and lead a military takeover. Huyser later wondered aloud why he had never

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[1233] United States Embassy, Iran, Confidential, Cable Tehran, "Trouble at Doshan Tappeh," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, February 10, 1979).

[1234] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 281.

[1235] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 341; Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 278; Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 157.

[1236] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 341; Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 157.

[1237] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 157.

[1238] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 57.

[1239] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 57.

[1240] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 282.

[1241] Stempel, *Inside the Iranian Revolution*, p. 169.

[1242] United States Embassy, Iran, Secret, Cable Tehran, "Current Situation in Tehran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, Virginia: Chadwyck-Healey, February 11, 1979).

[1243] Harris, *The Crisis*, pp. 157-158.

[1244] Brzezinski, *Power and Principle*, p. 390-393.

been asked to lead such a coup while he was in Iran and while the military was intact with a civilian leadership in place. In short, Huyser believed Brzezinski was the only policymaker interested in such a solution at the time it was feasible.[1245]

In essence, after little more than a year, insurgents completed the toppling of the Shah's government on February 12 when they captured the Shah's palace, Miavaran, and attacked the barracks of the Imperial Guards.[1246] The Tudeh Party then announced its support for the Khomeini-led government.[1247] Iranian Fedayeen forces took over the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and held Sullivan and approximately one hundred others hostage on February 14.[1248] This time, unlike some eight months later, and after a two hour siege, troops loyal to Khomeini intervened to free the embassy.[1249] By the end of the day, the United States officially recognized Bazargan as the sovereign leader of Iran.[1250] That day, estimates of several hundred dead came from Tabriz as the result of armed guerilla groups and elements of the Iranian Army and SAVAK engaging in warfare.[1251] The last vestiges of the Shah's regime would fall victim to revolutionary violence in the ten days that followed. Specifically, Khomeini supporters executed high ranking military officers, including General Nasiri – former head of SAVAK, disbanded the Imperial Guard, and dissolved SAVAK.[1252] Sullivan, on February 7, sent a cable to Washington arguing anti-American sentiment was so strong that the embassy could no longer be protected.[1253] Now, the United States was forced to do more than think the unthinkable.

As in late 1978, Carter and Brzezinski remained committed to their belief that some vestige of the Shah's government would remain in power. At the same time, Carter sent General Huyser to Tehran in early 1979 in order to investigate the status of the Shah and provide assistance in the construction of a military government – if needed – by the Shah's generals. At the same time, the unpopularity of the Shah made it impossible to even address the idea of a military coup to European leaders. In the midst of this political chaos, the United States decided to send another representative to Tehran – this time, in order to discuss future arms sales with Iran. As Sullivan relayed reports of the demise of the Shah's military and regime, Carter and Brzezinski placed its confidence in the much more positive information relayed by Huyser. Indeed, the days of early 1979 were no different than those in 1977 or 1978. Carter, seemingly spurred on by Brzezinski, focused on the data and sources that remain aligned with his beliefs and policies. Information that did not conform was minimized, ignored, or other sources found to reexamine the data. In fact, perhaps the most symbolic illustration of Carter and Brzezinski's motivated bias in making policy decisions during the Iranian Revolution was the ultimate last-minute decision to order to long-discussed coup. That order, as we will see, was given as the U.S. military mission to Iran was trapped inside a bunker and surrounded by armed opponents of the Shah.

[1245] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 283-284.
[1246] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 57.
[1247] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 349.
[1248] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 342-343.
[1249] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 343.
[1250] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 158.
[1251] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 349.
[1252] Nikazmerad, *A Chronological Survey*, p. 350-351.
[1253] Armstrong, "U.S. Rejects Coup Options."

Part IV

IMPLICATIONS

Chapter Ten
Inside the White House and the Curious Case of Carter and the Shah

The Shah fled Iran in exile after approximately one year of political unrest. The institutions of the Shah's government fell to revolution the next month. Although the United States maintained key geopolitical interests in Iran as well as the entire Persian Gulf region, little assistance was seemingly offered to the Shah in order to save his regime. Conversely, the United States did nothing to hedge their bets in supporting alternatives to the Shah in a manner consistent with the superpower's geopolitical interests. How did it all happen? What explains the decision making by the Carter administration? One must remember that Iran was not a minor third world player in international politics. It was home of the second largest U.S. embassy in the world, the largest global consumer of American arms and munitions, and one of the two pillars on which U.S. Middle Eastern policy rested. Yet, U.S. policy towards the Shah changed very little while Carter himself was unengaged as the Shah's regime crumbled.

No doubt, the end came very quickly for America's regional ally, the Shah. Mass demonstrations and collective opposition to the Shah, latent since the 1960s, resurfaced in early 1978. The rhythm of the anti-Shah movement quickly enveloped Iranian life. Characterizations of the political unrest in Iran reveal the evolution of a mass political movement not the immediate birth of a revolution – "demonstrations were organized initially to protest against police excesses and to mourn the deaths of those killed in the firings. The frequency and strength of such demonstrations increased as more and more people fell to police bullets."[1254] The last six months of 1978 came with daily examples of political unrest in Iran – often in multiple cities. President Jimmy Carter, in his memoirs, recalled that by late December 1978, it became obvious the Shah would need to leave Iran.[1255] Meanwhile, independently, the British ambassador to Iran, Anthony Parsons, observed "the country was grinding down rapidly to anarchy."[1256] At the same time, cash transfers from Iran to Western banks so overwhelmed Iranian bankers that they went on strike – simply to slow the outflow of capital.[1257]

As the calendar turned to 1979, the news did not improve for the Shah. The U.S. Ambassador officially called for the departure of the Iranian monarch.[1258] Meanwhile, Iranian generals stationed in the capital city of Tehran were forced to travel with armed escorts and dressed in civilian overcoats in order to avoid assassination attempts.[1259] Carter broached the subject of Iran and "found little support for the Shah" meeting with European allies in Guadeloupe, Mexico the first week of January. [1260] The military advisor from the United States to Iran, General Robert Huyser, noted the state of affairs in Iran in early January to be one of "complete paralysis."[1261] On January 16, 1979 the Shah and his family left Iran in exile:

[1254] A. H. H. Abidi, "The Iranian Revolution: Its Origins and Dimensions," *International Studies* 18.2 (1979): 142.
[1255] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 443.
[1256] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 120.
[1257] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 123.
[1258] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 335.
[1259] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 79.
[1260] Carter, *Keeping Faith*, p. 445.
[1261] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 79.

… When this exit ceremony was broadcast to Iran, pandemonium broke out. People danced in the streets for hours, some brandishing Iranian currency from which the shah's picture had been cut. Traffic was often frozen in place, and people mounted the roofs of their cars to call out the joyous news. Portraits of the shah were collected and burned at most intersections. Reza the Great's tomb was opened then reduced to rubble. All the street signs with the Pahlavi name on them were torn from their poles. Some army enlisted men broke ranks and joined in the spontaneous celebration. Instant newspaper editions were distributed with mammoth headlines declaring 'The Shah Has Gone.'[1262]

Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Tehran to a celebration estimated by some to be nearly ten million people on February 1, 1979.[1263] Indeed, the juxtaposition of celebration during both the departure of the Shah and the arrival of Khomeini offered a sense of the temperature of popular Iranian opinion. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance later spoke of the disintegration of military units, including some Imperial Guard units, and the availability of weapons in the week that followed Khomeini's arrival.[1264] A mutiny began at a Tehran's Doshan Tappeh Air Force Base on February 9 that soon would involve an estimated 100,000 civilians finding common cause against government forces.[1265] Doshan Tappeh fell by noon the next day; Imperial Guard troops mutinied and led captured tanks on an assault of the Imperial Guard barracks – which was quickly seized. Then, the crowd attacked the military headquarters complex in Tehran.[1266]

Events on the ground in Iran spiraled quickly out of control. In the matter of approximately one year, the Shah went from not only the perceived dominant leader of Iran but also a powerful regional voice to exile. Iranian military leaders officially claimed non-partisanship in the fight between pro-Khomeini and pro-government forces and many simply returned to their barracks by February 11.[1267] A number of high-ranking Iranian generals were publicly executed only a few hours after the pronouncement.[1268] Events of February 11, to be sure, clearly marked the end of any semblance of the Shah constructed government. By noon, insurgents captured the police headquarters in Tehran, Tehran's only radio station and its transmitter as well as military bases in West Tehran and at Mehrabad Airport.[1269] What remained of the Iranian general staff and the twenty-six United States military advisors who worked as liaisons to the Iranian military retreated to a reinforced bunker. The bunker stood behind the insurgent's lines and in the middle of a firefight between loyalists (those of whom remained in the fight) and insurgents (or loyalists who had switched sides) armed with their newly acquired tanks. Under Secretary of State Newsom phoned for Sullivan's assessment of the current situation as Ambassador Sullivan feverishly attempted to negotiate the release of the U.S. advisors. The phone rang again fifteen minutes later and this time it was Newsom along with Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher requesting an updated status report on the situation in Tehran. Sullivan temporarily suspended negotiations in freeing the American advisors in order to answer the phone call and curtly gave his negative assessment, once again. Incredulously, Newsom called a third time – identifying the call as on behalf of National

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[1262] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 144.
[1263] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 151.
[1264] Vance, *Hard Choices*, p. 341.
[1265] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 156.
[1266] Harris, *The Crisis*, pp. 157-158.
[1267] Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 369; Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 157.
[1268] Harris, *The Crisis*, p. 157.
[1269] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*, p. 57.

Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski - and wanted Sullivan to "assess the possibility of the army staging a coup."[1270] Sullivan received a fourth phone call from Washington several minutes later. In this call Newsom wanted to know if Sullivan was in contact with the U.S. military advisors so that they could be asked about the chances for a successful coup – the very advisors who Sullivan had reported as pinned down in the underground bunker with the first call from Washington.[1271] General Huyser later wrote the White House had phoned him on that same February 11 day asking the same question regarding the chances of a successful military takeover. Huyser, who had spent approximately a month in Tehran, was asked by Deputy Secretary of Defense Duncan, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General David Jones, and Zbigniew Brzezinski if he would "be willing to go back to Tehran and conduct a military takeover."[1272]

General Huyser recalled his frustration with the question of February 11 – "a thousand thoughts were running through my mind. Why hadn't I been asked this question while I was in Tehran?"[1273] Meanwhile, Sullivan described the request from Brzezinski as one of "total absurdity … in the circumstances then existing in Tehran [that it] provoked me to a scurrilous suggestion for Brzezinski." By the way, Sullivan's exact response – much more colorful, much less professional, but yet more memorable and, ultimately, illustrative of the problems with the Carter administration decision-making process was followed up by Sullivan asking Newsom if he should translate the suggestion into Polish.[1274]

Explanations for Carter Policy Choices

Popular culture and the media often paint a landscape of Carter and Iran as an intelligence failure. However, the historical record indicates the problem was not actually with intelligence gathering but the use of available data. Policy fits and starts, subject to motivated bias resulting in wishful thinking, left the United States without a clear policy in Iran. John Dumbrell described it as "by turns, dilatory, contradictory, and manic" especially with regard to the "reluctance to abandon the Shah."[1275] The United States, for whatever reason, did little to provide necessary support for the Shah and failed to develop acceptable and realistic alternatives. Indeed, an in-depth study of the primary sources related to the Iranian Revolution appears to support the concept of a Carter administration as a passive bystander in the political turmoil in Iran. Carter policy towards Iran could best be characterized as being on "autopilot." Primary sources illustrate, furthermore, that Carter avoided the turmoil in Iran even in the face of compelling evidence that the Shah faced obvious challenges. Policy appeared to be one based upon the assumption and hopes the Shah would weather the storm.

Central to understanding the U.S. policy choices during the Iranian Revolution is the importance of asking the trite after-action questions of who knew what and when they knew it. Or, more specifically, was the Carter administration provided with any advance warning of the Shah's rapidly deleterious position. Open sources, some even as the Shah still remained as the monarch of Iran, questioned the future of the Shah and the wisdom of Washington's policy.

[1270] Harris, *The Crisis*, pp. 157-158.
[1271] Sullivan, *Mission to Iran*, pp. 252-253.
[1272] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 283-284.
[1273] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, pp. 283-284.
[1274] Sullivan, *Mission to Iran*, p. 253.
[1275] John Dumbrell, *American Foreign Policy: Carter to Clinton* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), p. 34.

Richard Sale examined the question of intelligence warning and concluded they did, in fact, exist but "were either ignored or suppressed." Sale also revealed that Paul Nitze warned of well-to-do Iranians purchasing oversees property as early as 1974 and that a State Department official noted members of the royal family began defecting from Iran in May, June, and July of 1977.[1276]

A particularly prescient article in the French *Le Monde Diplomatique* in July 1978 offered a great deal of insight into the future of Iran and the Shah. A summary and translation of the article found in Brzezinski's papers show that the French periodical spoke of the deterioration of the "façade of stability" in Iran. In addition, the article pointed to the tendency of the secular west to vastly underestimate the role of Islam in the current Iranian political unrest while noting "close links between the Shiite clergy, the merchant class and the Muslim masses." The political violence, moreover, was a "violent crisis with vast popular participation" and predicted "the fate of the Iranian regime will be played out not in Tehran but in Washington."[1277] When yet another article, a December 9, 1978 *Economist* piece, questioning the future of the Shah's regime appeared in NSC files, Carter wrote in the margin that the evaluation of a Shah's regime in jeopardy was a "distorted assessment."[1278] When a concerned citizen wrote Brzezinski on November 29, 1978 expressing frustration on the White House's view of poor intelligence on Iran mentioning the *Le Monde* article, an NSC annotation on the memo remarked that "apparently the word is getting out to the heartland that something is wrong."[1279]

Robert Graham, a *Financial Times* correspondent based in Tehran, warned of the frailty of the Shah's regime in his 1978 book *Iran: The Illusion of Power*. Graham noted the Shah developed a pattern of "buying" loyalty with Iran's new found oil-wealth after the spike in oil prices. Yet, by 1976, the Shah's grandiose spending plans left him with a depleted treasury and "a situation where, to placate one group, he risks alienating another" and that his "only defence is the loyalty of the armed forces and the efficacy of the security forces." Graham also spoke of the importance of clergy in noting "revolutionary change could not be brought about without the backing of the religious community" and "provoking the clergy has, and almost certainly will, cause bloodshed and riots."[1280] Norman Birnbaum of *The Nation*, in January of 1979, called the support of the Shah a policy failure.[1281] A former State Department official, also in January of 1979, penned *The Crisis in Iran; Why the US Ignored A Quarter Century of Warning* (under the alias of Abul Kasim Mansur) in which he listed multiple long and short-term obvious warning signs of a Shah regime in decline.[1282] A report from the U.S. House of Representatives, that same month, categorized the United States response to the political developments in Iran as a "warning failure, in that the attention of top policymakers was not brought forceful to bear on Iran until October 1978."[1283] In short, the House Report concluded policy towards Iran was based upon the

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[1276] Richard T. Sale, "Carter and Iran: From Idealism to Disaster," *Washington Quarterly* 3 (1980): 87.

[1277] Summary of News Article, National Security Council to Jimmy Carter, Brzezinski Material: Geographic File, "Iran: 10/78 – 12/13/78," Box 11, Jimmy Carter Library.

[1278] Summary of News Article, National Security Council to Jimmy Carter, Brzezinski Material: Geographic File, "Iran: 10/78 – 12/13/78," Box 11, Jimmy Carter Library.

[1279] Letter, Concerned Citizen to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 11/29/1978, Brzezinski Material: Country File, "Iran: 10/78 to 12/13/78," Box 11, Jimmy Carter Library.

[1280] Robert Graham, *Iran, The Illusion of Power* (New York: St. Marin's Press, 1978), pp. 211-212.

[1281] Norman Birnbaum, "Failure of Intelligence," The Nation January 20 1979: 40-43.

[1282] Abdul Karim Mansur, "The Crisis in Iran: Why the U.S. Ignored a Quarter-Century of Warning," *Armed Forces Journal International*, January (1979): 26-33.

[1283] United States, Congress, House, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Evaluation, *Iran: Evaluation of U.S. Intelligence Performance prior to November 1978: Staff Report.* Washington: U.S. Print Off, 1979.

"policymakers' confidence in the Shah, which intelligence did not challenge, which in turn skewed intelligence."[1284] A later study of U.S. intelligence pertaining to the Iranian Revolution by Michael Donovan argued "there was accurate and, in part, timely intelligence at the disposal of policy-makers, but the availability of this information did not redirect the long-standing policy predispositions in Washington."[1285] Iranian specialist Richard Cottam claimed the U.S. was a supporter of "the Shah well beyond the time that detached observers had understood that the royal dictatorship would soon pass into history."[1286] In fact, detailed analysis of intelligence data confirms the Department of State offered warnings about the stability of the Shah in Morning Summary format in January 1978, the Central Intelligence Agency noted a pessimistic analysis of the chances of compromise between the Shah and his political opponents in National Intelligence Daily reports in May of 1978, and by August of 1978 State had described the Shah as "losing his grip" in Morning Summary details.[1287]

Despite the analysis and evidence to the contrary discussed above it is still necessary to ask the question of whether it is possible for an intelligence failure to have occurred. A May 13, 1977 memorandum from Alfred Atherton, Jr. of the NEA to Secretary of State Vance supports the supposition of failed intelligence. Atherton describes the Shah as "in a stronger position internally than at any previous time in his long rule (36 years)" and "we expect this stability to persist for the next several years."[1288] In fact, the hypothesis of failed intelligence was championed within the Carter White House by Brzezinski himself. In a memorandum to the president dated November 10, 1978, Brzezinski laments that "the intelligence community was ill-prepared for the crisis in Iran and, consequently, we were not adequately forewarned. We have, in short, witnessed an intelligence failure."[1289] Yet, intelligence failure was not even an acceptable explanation within the offices of the NSC. A November 17, 1978 memorandum from Gary Sick to Brzezinski submitted that warning signs were advanced and that "a long piece of political analysis in August did an excellent job of identifying the sources of dissent and the key issues, without attempting to whitewash the seriousness of the problem. It recognized that there was big trouble ahead."[1290]

So, the next logical question becomes where was the State Department when the streets of Iran where teeming with revolt. Records from the Carter library provide a timeline of the State Department view. In January of 1978, State did, in fact, predict a "resurgence of dissent in Iran." By late February, officials at State compared the political turmoil to that in 1963 and argued the Shah would soon "react by cracking down" and characterized Iran as a "troubled land." State appeared to temper remarks by April when it argued "continuing disorders did not seriously threaten the regime. Moreover, predictions in May continued to discuss the likelihood of a very bloody move towards repression by the Shah while continuing to maintain the turmoil

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[1284] United States, Congress, House, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Evaluation.

[1285] Donovan, "National Intelligence and the Iranian Revolution."

[1286] Richard W. Cottam, "American Policy and the Iranian Crisis," *Iranian Studies* 13.1/4, Iranian Revolution in Perspective (1980): 302.

[1287] United States, Congress, House, Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Evaluation.

[1288] United States Department of State, Secret, Briefing Book, State, "The Secretary's Meeting with the Shah of Iran," *Iran: The Making of U.S. Policy, 1977-1980* ed. National Security Archives (Alexandria, VA.: Chadwyck-Healey, May 13, 1979).

[1289] Memorandum, Zbigniew Brzezinski to Jimmy Carter. 11/10/1978, Brzezinski Material: Brzezinski Office File, NLC-15-71-5-7-5, Jimmy Carter Library.

[1290] Memorandum, Gary Sick to Zbigniew Brzezinski, 11/17/1978, Donated Historical Material – Brzezinski, Zbigniew, NLC-33-8-16-21-7, Jimmy Carter Library.

was not at threat to the Shah's regime. By mid-August, State observed the Shah was unable to cope with the continued unrest and noted that many Iranians "sensed the Shah was losing his grip, and believed that the Iranian social and political fabric was beginning to unravel." On August 29, shortly after the Shah replaced Amouzegar with Sharif-Emami, State reported that "Iranians were seriously questioning the ability of the Shah to maintain control." However, State held out hope as late as December 1 when it predicted "the odds for the monarch's survival were diminishing."[1291]

A State Department report from John Helgerson to Harold Saunders and George Griffin dated January 5, 1979 reviewed the CIA intelligence flow at various points during the unfolding Iranian Revolution. Basically, Helgerson categorized intelligence reporting as belonging to one of four distinct time periods – mid 1977 to April 1978, April 1978 to August 1978, September 1978 to November 1978, and November 1978 to early 1979. In the first period, the CIA predicted an increase in terrorist activity and a revival of opposition to the Shah. However, most analysts saw the Shah himself as insecure but predicted the Shah would contain any type of resurgence in opposition. Finally, the mid-1977 to April 1978 period was one that would include liberalization attempts by the Shah but a general willingness to return to repression if needed for stability. In the second era of intelligence, April 1978 to August 1978, the CIA became more aware of the Shah being unsure as to how to respond to increasing civil unrest. In short, analysts characterized the political turmoil as "a widespread and serious problem for the regime, but that it will prove containable." The period of September 1978 to November 1978 brought realization by the CIA that the likelihood of a negotiated settlement was slim and the "central impression of analysts is that the Shah's regime is in grave danger." In the final generation of intelligence, the end of the Shah's regime was quite clear. Most intelligence analysts saw the Shah as "unlikely to survive challenge to his regime." As a result, the CIA turned its focus on opposition leaders in Iran and the ramifications for the United States resulting from the fall of the Shah.[1292]

Regarding the subject of the CIA, the most detailed analysis, to date, of the Carter administration and the Iranian Revolution comes from Robert Jervis. In 2010, Jervis published *Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War*. Within his book, Jervis includes most of the text of a recently declassified report he wrote for the National Foreign Assessment Center in 1979. However, Jervis's analysis is limited to the CIA and the problems with intelligence up to early November 1978 "that led the CIA to conclude that a revolution was unlikely."[1293] Jervis concluded the deficiencies within the CIA regarding intelligence came from four general categories – (1) the threat was not believed serious because if it was the Shah would surely crack down on the opposition, (2) the Shah was a strong leader and would take whatever action needed in order to save his regime, (3) a failure to understand the nature and extent of the religious opposition and Ayatollah Khomeini, and (4) a failure to appreciate the extent of Iranian nationalism and anti-American feelings.[1294]

Ultimately, Jervis concludes that "intelligence was generally consistent with U.S. policy but it does not mean that the latter was influencing the former."[1295] Moreover, Jervis noted that

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[1291] Report, Secret, "Broad Outline of the Development of State Department Perceptions on Iran," Staff Material: Middle East, NLC-25-35-3-3-0, Jimmy Carter Library.

[1292] Report, Secret, "Evaluation of Analysis on Iran," Staff Material: Middle East, NLC-25-29-6-5-2, Jimmy Carter Library.

[1293] Robert Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), p. 29.

[1294] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, pp. 24-25.

[1295] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 106.

the evidence of the Shah as vulnerable did exist but was "scattered and ambiguous" while compelling evidence also existed that the Shah could survive the political unrest.[1296] In addition, those within the United States intelligence community that saw the Shah as weak and a poor ruler viewed the political violence as a serious threat while those who maintained a more positive view of the Shah "thought he would have little trouble riding out the disturbances."[1297] Finally, Jervis takes the position that the Iranian Revolution unfolded slowly; hence, decision makers were able to "assimilate each small bit of information to their beliefs without being forced to reconsider the validity of their basic premises."[1298] Towards that end, Jervis's analysis of the intelligence concerning the political unrest in Iran is worth quoting at some length:

> Given the preexisting beliefs about Iran, the Shah, and the opposition;
> given the paucity and ambiguity of the information from the field; given the normal NFAC procedure; and given the inherent difficulty of predicting a very unusual series of events, it is not surprising that the full dimensions of the problem were not recognized until early November.[1299]

Indeed, Jervis points to a combination of factors: preexisting beliefs, ambiguous data, bureaucratic procedure, and the difficulty in predicting a revolution as explanations for the failure of the intelligence community to predict the fall of the Shah before early November.

An alternative explanation for the policy choices made by the Carter Administration during the Iranian Revolution is the suggestion Carter failed to recognize the depth of the political turmoil and, hence, developed no policy to deal with the evolving revolution. A March 1979 analysis of the fall of the Shah by *Fortune's* Herman Nickel traced warnings of the stability of the Shah back to March of 1969. One unnamed official challenged the notion that intelligence failed to warn foreign policy principals – "The revealing thing was that the warnings did come from the Iran experts in the bureaucracy, and were consistently rejected by them." In fact, the article summary told how "false premises and wishful thinking about the Shah's regime – and hesitant U.S. leadership when the crisis struck- ensured a policy debacle."[1300] Carter policy strategy with regard to the Shah and Iran "reduced to its essentials, it was to leave the crisis to the Shah to handle."[1301] Scott Armstrong's 1980 study of Carter and Iran in *The Washington Post* detailed the policy choices by Carter with regard to the Shah as one of "failing to heed the warnings" and a policy in which "Carter held hope even after Shah had lost his."[1302] Charles-Philippe David would later make the claim the policy toward the Shah and Iran was one of "foreign policy failure" by the Carter White House.[1303] Jentleson argued the Carter White House would not create a policy that would abandon the Shah nor one that would give him the support necessary to overcome the rebellion.[1304] Lawrence Grinter's analysis of the Carter Doctrine

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[1296] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 35.
[1297] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 37.
[1298] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 40.
[1299] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 43.
[1300] Herman Nickel, "The U.S. Failure in Iran," Fortune 1979.
[1301] Nickel, "The U.S. Failure in Iran," p. 102.
[1302] Armstrong, "Failing to Heed the Warnings of Revolution in Iran"; Scott Armstrong, "Carter Held Hope Even After Shah Had Lost His," Washington Post October 25 1980.
[1303] David, Carrol, and Selden, *Foreign Policy Failure in the White House*.
[1304] Bruce W. Jentleson, "Discrepant Responses to Falling Dictators: Presidential Belief Systems and the Media's Effects on the Senior Advisory Process," *Political Psychology* 11.2 (1990): 293.

recalled how the Shah blamed the United States for the loss of his throne because "what the Shah could not believe was that no plan no strategic objective existed in Washington. Yet, as events revealed, that in essence, was what lay behind the administration's response to the crisis in the Gulf."[1305]

Coupled with analysis of the United States policy towards Iran during the fall of the Shah, bibliographies and writings from many of the significant characters in the drama of the Iranian Revolution also confirmed the notion of the United States being both caught by surprise and unresponsive to the political realities as they existed on the ground in Iran. For example, special U.S. military envoy General Robert Huyser, who was charged with attempting to ensure the Iranian military would remain intact, commented he "believed that Washington should have recognized the seriousness of the situation early in 1978."[1306] British ambassador to Tehran at the time of the revolution, Anthony Parsons, described the failure of Western states to predict the fall of the Shah as "a failure to interpret correctly the information available to us. We were looking down the right telescope but were focused on the wrong target."[1307] Iranian expert Marvin Zonis also spoke of the failure of the United States to appreciate the extent of the political turmoil in Iran – "When that rage became violent, the United States failed to appreciate its seriousness."[1308] Zonis argues, in addition, the Iranian Revolution did not have an air of inevitability and the United States may have been able to alter history "but what had been needed was U.S. willingness to assume responsibility for making the hard decisions, far earlier in the revolution."[1309] For Zonis, the U.S. position toward Iran was "that as long as the United States was right with the Shah, its position would be assured since the Shah was right with Iran."[1310] Clearly, the Shah was not right with Iran and, hence, the United States would not be right with Iran. Goode expands on the Shah-centric premise in suggesting that the U.S. policy towards the Shah reflected the mood of the Shah. As a result, when the Shah became ill and fought depression in the late 1970s, the United States was left no idea how to react so policy contained "comforting conclusions American policy makers arrived at again and again."[1311]

The natural bureaucratic tendency of after-action reports led to a number of retrospective analyses of the behavior of decision makers within the Carter White House with regard to policy toward Iran and the Shah. With that in mind, another specific argument has that the failure to predict the demise of the Shah, and make appropriate policy adjustments, was not an intelligence failure but a failure in policy. The policy path was one of supporting the Shah and not developing alternative sources of intelligence data in deference to the ally. Ramazani insisted that the United States received all relevant intelligence on the political situation in Iran – until the installation of the military government – from the SAVAK.[1312] Birnbaum concurred and added that once the policy decision was made to back the Shah, the "very attempt to establish alternative sources of information became an implicit disavowal of him."[1313] Falk offered a similar analysis of policy

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[1305] Lawrence E. Grinter, "Avoiding the Burden: The Carter Doctrine in Perspective," *Air University Review*, January-February (1983).
[1306] Huyser, *Mission to Tehran*, p. 295.
[1307] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 134.
[1308] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 261.
[1309] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 263.
[1310] Zonis, *Majestic Failure*, p. 268.
[1311] Goode, *The United States and Iran*, pp. 187-188.
[1312] R.K. Ramazani, *The United States and Iran: Patterns of Influence* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982), p. 140.
[1313] Birnbaum, "Failure of Intelligence," p. 40.

failure and characterized the Carter policy as "bankrupt" in arguing that the CIA reliance on SAVAK for intelligence data on opposition to the Shah and suggesting "the erroneous, optimistic picture was sustained … by presidential advisors, especially Brzezinski, and bureaucrats eager not to confuse Carter with the facts."[1314] Indeed, Richard Sale's interview with William Quandt led to Quandt's charge that political reporting was deemphasized and that the number of staffers engaged in such a task fell from seventeen in the 1960s to two in 1977 – "… you don't report on an ally once he's become The Chosen Instrument. It's bad manners."[1315] Frances Fitzgerald's discussion paralleled the failure of policy hypothesis in suggesting that "so concentrated have Zbigniew Brzezinski and others been on their own policy of support for the Shah that they did not consider the possibility of an anti-Shah movement before it began and then, once it had started, failed to take it seriously enough."[1316] Nikki Keddie's study of Iran offered a similar refrain in noting that "until late fall top American policy makers in Washington and Tehran, misled by their limited Iranian contacts and their reliance on SAVAK and Iranian officials for their knowledge … were sure the Shah's regime would last."[1317]

Why did the United States not face the reality that all was not right with the Shah? Parsons later recalled that many in the West assumed "that he [the Shah] must be better informed about the domestic situation in his own country than we were."[1318] The Shah's responses to political unrest in the 1950s and 1960s, however, had revealed a leader who was "indecisive and reluctant." In fact, Kermit Roosevelt, a key CIA figure in the 1953 coup to restore the Shah, vainly attempted to share with the Carter Administration the Shah's weak leadership tendencies.[1319] Parsons admitted the West simply "gambled on the Shah" and "we regarded him as he wished to be regarded" even though the Shah's "vacillations and weaknesses as a young man" and his "lack of charisma as a popular leader" were well-known.[1320] In fact, even academics wrote how the Shah maintained a stranglehold over the substance of articles published in the United States regarding his monarchy. To illustrate, the *Columbia Journalism Review* characterized press coverage of the Shah as unrealistic and merely limited to how the regime in Iran described realities. So ubiquitous was the overly optimistic reporting that "the belief that the Shah had widespread popular support, for instance, went unquestioned until the scale of the 1978 demonstrations, general strikes, and labor stoppages made it impossible to sustain."[1321] Indeed, a compelling argument can be made that Washington simply feared offending the Shah and went out of their way to avoid doing so. For example, Carter exempted the Shah on human rights improvements despite the seemingly ubiquitous human rights rhetoric.[1322] Carter did not want to alienate the Shah because of his ongoing support for the Middle East peace process and the Saudi freeze on oil prices.[1323] In addition, the issue of arms sales to Iran was another motivating factor in not alienating the Shah. Moran, for example, contends that the ongoing debate over military

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[1314] Falk, "Iran and American Geopolitics," p. 48.

[1315] Sale, "Carter and Iran," pp. 86-87.

[1316] Frances Fitzgerald, "Iranian Babel," *The Nation* January 20, 1979, p. 38.

[1317] Nikki Keddie, *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 234.

[1318] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 142.

[1319] Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution*, p. 107; Rubin, *Paved with Good Intentions*, p. 204.

[1320] Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, pp. 141-142.

[1321] William A. Dorman and Eshan Omeed, "Reporting Iran the Shah's Way." *Columbia Journalism Review* 17.5 (1979): 27-33.

[1322] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors and the fall of the Shah," p. 214; also see Richard J. Barnet, "Carter's Patchwork Doctrine," Harper's, 255:1527 (1977: August); Falk, "Iran and American Geopolitics"; Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 217 and Jentleson, "Discrepant Responses," p. 367 for similar arguments.

[1323] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors and the fall of the Shah," p. 216.

sales "helped deflect critical thought about the potential for instability within Iranian society."[1324] Nickel added that negative intelligence on the Shah was not wanted by the government bureaucracy because it may jeopardize future arm sales to Iran.[1325] Sale took the arms sales explanation even further in arguing that negative reporting on the Shah would often be removed from political reports.[1326]

One could also point to the failure of the advisory process as a possible explanation for U.S. policy choices during the fall of the Shah. Alexander Moens contends that Carter advisors too quickly agreed that the Shah should liberalize and Brzezinski, isolated in his position of calling for a crackdown by the Shah, manipulated the policy procedure in order to enhance his own argument.[1327] Furthermore, Moens argues Carter did not respond to the crisis until the fall of 1978 because intelligence never indicated a threat and Carter remained preoccupied with the Camp David negotiations, Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, and the normalization of relations with China.[1328] The breakdown in process explanation also suggests that it was Brzezinski's responsibility to pressure Carter on the Iran issue but he was reluctant out of fear Carter may do something that would undermine the Shah.[1329]

The Moens process argument, however, does not offer a plausible explanation unless added to motivated bias. The tepid decision making model suggests elements of motivated bias influence the process in such a manner that preferences impact the process and product of decision making. Moens concedes that "since nobody could conceive of the Shah's fall, nobody bothered sounding the alarm, in spite of the worsening situation in Iran."[1330] Moens also alleges that "Carter failed to reconsider his stand in the face of ample indications that the Shah could not hold."[1331]

Moens alludes to even more motivated bias in the wake of Sullivan's infamous November 9 "thinking the Unthinkable" telegraph. Brzezinski's response to the telegraph was an attitude of asking why November 9 was the first time anyone in Washington was hearing about the problems with the Shah. Newsom, in an interview with Moens, noted that Sullivan had attempted to warn Brzezinski on multiple occasions but he "'… was not prepared to listen to it.'"[1332] Besides, Moens observes the Carter administration still offered no alternative to Sullivan's message even as the riots continued in December of 1978.[1333] In another veiled reference towards motivated bias in the form of decisional avoidance, Harold Brown recalled that he preferred supporting the Shah but only if the Shah would show some force in suppressing the opposition. What Brown did not want, however, was "just to let things play themselves out" and "let the Shah be overthrown, and hope whoever came after would not be too mean to us."[1334]

The narrative provided to Moens by David Newsom also carves out a role for motivated bias in the Carter decision-making process. Newsom recalled that once Henry Precht put his career on the line in December of 1978 by calling it the end of the Shah's regime Precht was

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[1324] Moran, "Iranian Defense Expenditures," pp. 178-179.
[1325] Nickel, "The U.S. Failure in Iran," p. 96.
[1326] Sale, "Carter and Iran," p. 78.
[1327] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 212.
[1328] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 217.
[1329] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 222.
[1330] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 218.
[1331] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 235.
[1332] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 223.
[1333] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 224.
[1334] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 224.

thereafter excluded from SCC meetings.[1335] In addition, Newsom notes that Sullivan once became so frustrated with the Carter administration's continued refusal to look for alternatives to the Shah that he asked Newsom if he would be able to get his point across if he tried it in Polish.[1336]

Jean Garrison argues, however, one cannot dismiss the role played by the Vance and Brzezinski struggle for control of the Carter advisory process. Carter's advisory structure allowed the necessary space for advisors to compete over policy control. Prominent advisors under Carter were permitted to construct and manipulate "frames" regarding policy issues. Hence, various advisors utilized the framing process to "lay out the borders of discourse, define relevant issues, and help select which solutions are viable and what actors are credible. This means that framing focuses on the interpretation or implication of the data, not the data per se."[1337]

An example of the framing process is the attempt at arms control with the Soviet Union. Vance and Brzezinski each saw the topic in very different ways. Brzezinski believed that discussions with the Soviet Union offered the opportunity for very deep and historic cuts in nuclear weapons while Vance was more conservative in his outlook. The Brzezinski frame won the day and Carter's acceptance of the National Security Advisor's frame "helped the President to discount disconfirming evidence."[1338] In other examples, the Horn of Africa and Cuban Brigade controversies featured a competition over the frames that left Carter conflicted.[1339] As a result, Carter policy vacillated and in each example appeared to be inconsistent. So, it is quite possible that a similar competition over frames took place over policy with Iran and that, perhaps, Carter was left conflicted over the different images presented by Vance and Brzezinski. Clearly, Vance favored continued liberalization while Brzezinski advocated a strong military response. But, ultimately, the jockeying over specific frames involves an interpretation of data. Institutionalized competition over the framing process would make likely the presence of a motivated bias or wishful thinking based upon which side of the framing process an official fell.

Policy choices during the Iranian Revolution may also have emerged from the Carter belief that a moral foreign policy is one of non-interventionism. In fact, one prescient summary of Carter's worldview held that his perspective was one based upon the liberal response to the Vietnam War. The goal, according to the liberal reaction to Vietnam, was to "regain the moral initiative for the country" by "championing the forces of social and economic change." In order to accomplish said change, Carter behavior in foreign policy required "upholding the humane values that had been subordinated to the expedients of containment."[1340] Jentleson believed Carter's worldview very much impacted his lack of response during the fall of the Shah. That lack of direct intervention by the United States reflected Carter's rejection of a bi-polar view of global politics and of U.S. geo-political power.[1341] Barnet offered a similar analysis in comparing Carter to Woodrow Wilson and suggesting Carter "believes that America's destiny is to be the architect of a new world suffused with American values."[1342]

[1335] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 226-227.
[1336] Moens, "President Carter's Advisors," p. 228.
[1337] Jean A. Garrison, *Games Advisors Play: Foreign Policy in the Nixon and Carter Administrations* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999), p. 778.
[1338] Garrison, *Games Advisors Play*, p. 789.
[1339] Garrison, *Games Advisors Play*, pp. 794-800.
[1340] Osgood, "Carter Policy in Perspective," p. 15.
[1341] Jentleson, "Discrepant Responses," p. 370.
[1342] Barnet, "Carter's Patchwork Doctrine," 32.

Using the technique of process tracing reveals that even into and past the final days of the Shah, the Carter appeared unwilling to find alternatives that, ultimately, would have served the interests of the United States or, at a minimum, admit the reality that the end was near. The policy toward the Shah remained one of unconditional and unquestioning support as the streets of Tehran, Qom, and Isfahan teemed with revolt. Even the departure of the Shah in January 1979 did little to alter the Carter administration belief that the political problems in Iran would be resolved and that a form of the Shah's government could remain in power. Motivated biases – in the form of wishes or preferences for specific policy options – offer a plausible explanation for Carter's decision-making process and the policy toward the Shah that resulted.

A thorough examination of primary sources including government documents, memoirs, and news reports has demonstrated the Carter policy towards the Shah and the growing unrest in Iran in real-time and gives direction in the investigation of Carter's decision-making process. The policy decisions of the Carter Administration toward the Shah and Iran can best be explained by a study of how individuals cultivate incoming data in the formation of perceptions, judgments, and conclusions and how resulting policy decisions are based not on neutral interpretations but a motivated processing of that data.

Carter's behavior fits a broader template of motivated bias influencing foreign policy decisions. Specifically, I hypothesize that in the decision-making process, subjects who hold a wish or a preference for a specific policy option are more likely to make policy decisions and perceive and process data in a context that is congruent to those preferences. In order to explore whether wishes and preferences offer a plausible explanation for the behavior of foreign policy principals, I suggest that an appropriate model of behavior would offer an opportunity to examine hot cognitive variables and how they interact with how subjects perceive a foreign policy issue.

Using a case study of Carter and the Shah, I have offered an explanation that proves quite general – foreign policy decisions are often the result of motivated biases and the products of those decisions are characterized by wishful thinking. And, wishful thinking is the product of a process of allowing preferences to influence prediction. In foreign policy decisions, the epistemic role played by preference shaping beliefs, perceptions, and processing may, or may not, result in policy preferences that are sub-optimal. But, the product of the decision process reflects influence from hot cognitive biases.

The idea of wishful thinking provides added value to what political scientists already know regarding decision making in foreign policy. Researchers look inside the "black box" and explore notions of cold cognition and perception but overlook the simple but consequential explanation of hot cognitive factors in the decision-making process. As one product of motivated bias, furthermore, wishful thinking is a slippery proposition to define. The source of the definitional problem, however, is in the nature of the phenomenon - a decision-maker that activates a motivated bias, has some rational empirical evidence based upon beliefs, perceptions, and processing of data to suggest that the reality they perceive and predictions they make are accurate and not wishful.[1343] In short, subjects form perceptions and beliefs and process information based upon knowledge *and* emotions. Dolan and Holbrook argue that wishful thinking – the "tendency to fit perceptions of reality into a mold that is heavily influenced by

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[1343] My initial concepts of wishful thinking were influenced by Béla Szabados, "Wishful Thinking and Self-Deception," *Analysis* 33.6 (1973): 201-5; Kathleen A. Dolan and Thomas M. Holbrook, "Knowing Versus Caring: The Role of Affect and Cognition in Political Perceptions," *Political Psychology* 22.1 (2001): 27-44.

their preferences" – is a key determinant in how people perceive.[1344] Szabados suggests that wishful thinking is more than a wish or hope but the assessment of a belief based upon the actor's perception of rationality.[1345] Throughout this study, I have attempted to redefine the decision making process in a slightly different manner; that is, wishful thinking is the product of an agent and process. The agent, the decision-maker, may be influenced by hot cognitive bias in the form of a self-serving bias and the process by motivated biases – one or both of which may lead to a product that may be ultimately biased.

The Plausibility of a Motivated Bias Explanation

Nikki Keddi is quite accurate with the suggestion that "probably only a very different set of policies over the previous twenty-seven years could have led to different results."[1346] And, Richard Cottam's supposition that the blame for the loss of the Shah's monarchy is not with the United States but can be traced to the Shah's decisions is a compelling and germane observation.[1347] That said, however, for the purposes of this study it is not relevant to prove that action by the Washington would have changed the outcome. Instead, the goal of this effort has been to explore the plausibility of motivated bias as a variable within the decision-making process. I have explored the relevancy of the hot cognitive variables within the literature and Carter's policy towards Iran during the Islamic Revolution. Policy towards the Shah fulfills the role of a case in order to discuss the plausibility of using the hot cognitive variables with cold in order to utilize a hybrid model – a Tepid Model – of decision making.

The research dilemma is how can such a supposition be falsified? Again I return to Chaim Kaufman's notion that is such a study of decision making it is appropriate to utilize a rational basis for falsification. The context of the case will help provide that basis for the null hypothesis. Iran was not just an ally of the United States but it was a central ally and also a large consumer of American goods. By 1974, the United States had lost the key Cold War proxies of Portugal, Ethiopia, and Greece. Iran, meanwhile, had served as a pillar for regional security on behalf of the United States. In fact, Iran took central roles in suppressing the Dhofar violence in Yemen, assisted with Pakistan in the Baluchistan region, and helped Somalia fight Ethiopia. At the same time, Iran spent approximately $19 billion on American weapons alone between 1973 and 1979. In 1978, for example, Iranian arms purchases of $2.6 billion reflected nearly 20% of all United States arms sales that year. In addition, again in 1978 alone, banks from the United States provided Iran with $2.2 billion in loans.[1348] As we have seen, Iran also took aggressive stances among the Oil Producing and Exporting Countries (OPEC) in order to hold the price of oil and actively supported President Carter's Middle East peace initiatives. Archival and primary sources have also shown that Iran teemed with political violence starting in 1977 and extending through 1978 until the last vestiges of the Shah's government were destroyed in February of 1979. Although many did not definitively call the end of the Shah's regime, many expressed uneasiness with his future. Carter, Vance, and Brzezinski all expressed misgivings. Henry Precht, among others at State, and Gary Sick at the NSC as well as personnel from the Israeli and

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[1344] Dolan and Holbrook, "Knowing Versus Caring," p.27-28.
[1345] Szabados, "Wishful Thinking and Self-Deception," p. 203.
[1346] Keddie, *Modern Iran*, p. 236.
[1347] Cottam, "Goodbye to America's Shah," p. 13.
[1348] Falk, "Iran and American Geopolitics," pp. 43-46.

French Embassies warned of an uncertain future for the Shah. Popular media sources and academics questioned the stability of the Shah. Even Rosalyn Carter recalls that the political violence was troubling to her husband's administration.

How did the Carter administration respond to all of these warnings? Using Kaufman's model to explain behavior from a rational point of view, one would sense that such a large consumer of American goods and purveyor of American policy would warrant quite a bit of high level policy discussion and many meetings to, at the very least, examine the sources and context of information. In point of fact, the Carter administration did have frequent policy meetings through three relevant organs pertaining to foreign relations – the National Security Council, the Policy Review Committee (PCC), and the Special Coordinating Committee (SCC). The three met a total of 223 times, combined, from January 22, 1977 until February 2, 1979. Iran was the meeting agenda merely 6 times. At the NSC, Iran, only an agenda item once, appeared on a meeting agenda on February 10, 1979, and shared billing with the Sino-Vietnamese War. On the other hand, the NSC managed four meetings on Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) alone.[1349] The PCC's agenda listed Iran only twice among 93 meetings during a similar time period. In fact, seventy four meetings of the PCC were held before Iran even found itself as an agenda item for the first time, November 6, 1978. For comparison, the PCC held seven meetings on the Middle East Peace process, seven on issues relating to Africa, and four each on Nicaragua and arms transfer.[1350] Incredibly, Iran's two times as a PCC agenda item was the same as Micronesia. And, finally, the SCC held three of 114 meetings with Iran as the agenda – meeting on 11/2/78, 11/3/78, and 12/13/78. Conversely, the SCC's meeting agenda listed SALT twenty times, the Horn of Africa nine times, and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty six times.[1351] Hence, as this significant customer and important ally faced daily expressions of political unrest, the important foreign policy arms of the United States government devoted less than 3% of the agenda of meetings to Iran. The Kaufman falsification model would lead one to believe that the number of times Iran would appear as the agenda item would be much higher. Especially when compared to the numerous warnings coming from disparate sources.

In order to more specifically analyze the plausibility of wishful thinking as a product of motivated bias and an explanation for Carter's lack of focus on the Iranian Revolution, I return to my original comments in Chapter One regarding the psyche of man and the role motivated bias plays in the decision-making process. Chapter One organized social science literature dealing with motivated bias into three very general contexts – (1) self-serving bias, (2) motivated processing of data, and (3) wishful thinking. In addition, I suggested that these basic constructs can also be seen to apply to the overall process of decision making; that is, self-serving bias applies to the decision making unit, motivated processing occurs during a process of evaluating incoming data, and wishful thinking is characteristic of an outcome or product of the process. In other words, I have provided a conceptually rudimentary model for examining agent, process, and product to determine the plausibility of the influence of motivated bias in decision making. Needless to say, however, these three conceptual categories are not sharply distinct from each other and fit what James Davis calls the "woolly" in-between. Furthermore, even though these categories lack concise boundaries and sophisticated development, they are based upon social

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[1349] National Security Meetings – Subjects, Staff Material: Office, NLC-17-142-4-1-1, Jimmy Carter Library.
[1350] Policy Review Committee Meetings – Subjects, Staff Material: Office, NLC-17-142-6-1-9, Jimmy Carter Library.
[1351] Special Coordinating Committee Meetings – Subjects, Staff material: Office, NLC-17-142-7-1-8, Jimmy Carter Library.

science observations and provide explanations for human behavior. Thus, I move next to view Carter and his Iran policy through the prisms of self-serving bias, motivated processing, and wishful thinking.

First, referencing self-serving bias, the literature suggests humans often show optimism in future events and overestimate their own abilities in comparison to others. As we have seen, Carter's confidence in his own abilities made him prone to exaggerations and rigid in his thinking. That same self-confidence resulted in an image of presidential leadership that revolved completely around one man – Jimmy Carter. Internationally, Carter undertook bold initiatives that included the Middle East peace process, negotiating the return of the Panama Canal, recognition of China, and, initially, aggressive START negotiations with the Soviet Union. These efforts represent the successes of Carter's general self-serving belief that he had the power and influence to remake geopolitics into a more cooperative venture.

On the other hand, the flip side of the self-serving and Carter-centric White House was his tendency to delay and avoid decisions that would challenge his self-view as a problem solver capable of dealing with the most complex of issues. In domestic terms, Carter delayed in asking for Bert Lance's resignation and often vacillated on key issues. For example, early in his career as a school board member, Carter attempted to walk the fence and not make clear pronouncements on the issue of school integration. Carter offered both his support and equivocated on the Equal Rights Amendment. Internationally, the Carter response to the controversy that developed over Micronesia was characterized by Carter biographer Timothy Maga as "wishful." Carter made no decision in hopes the issue would exhaust itself. The African policy examples of Angola and Namibia reveal a Carter that was hands-off and that allowed policy to drift and meander. A similar pattern emerged in Carter's policy machinations toward Nicaragua and the neutron bomb. Carter failed to convey a clear policy in each instance. And, of course, we have the lack of response by Carter as the Shah's regime was under siege.

In a very general manner, we can view Carter in one of two ways – (1) engaged and aggressive while using his and the presidency's prestige in order to find a solution and (2) the unengaged Carter who was not firmly committed to a specific course of action while allowing advisors to frame problems and solutions in a manner that is consistent with pluralistic governance – erratic and lacking unitary focus. Or, better yet, we have the Carter *projecting* self-serving bias versus the Carter *protecting* his self-serving bias. The *projector* Carter acted aggressively in attacking difficult issues proactively while the *protector* Carter was passive and preferred to avoid issues that may have challenged his self-serving bias.

I have labeled the processing of incoming data in a non-neutral manner as motivated processing. Using the case study of policy toward Iran illustrates the influence of such motivated processing in several contexts. First, the process tracing of policy before Carter reveals a pattern of perceiving the Shah in the manner he wanted and not based upon actual realities. As a result, I have found that beginning with the Johnson administration, leery of offending an ally at a time when the focus was on Southeast Asia, U.S. policy was one of asking very few questions of the Shah on domestic issues ranging from human rights violations to the standing of political opposition. By the Nixon and Ford years, the pattern of perceiving data regarding the politics of Iran with a motive – unquestioned support of the Shah – had become so widespread that it became part of the institutional culture. Assumptions were made about the durability of the Shah's regime and contradictory analysis and conclusions were not welcome. The United States would forego its own intelligence apparatus and rely on SAVAK and the Shah for the primary sources of information regarding the political realities within Iran. Furthermore, those warnings

that challenged the wisdom of U.S. policy and the durability of the Shah's regime were minimized or ignored.

The election of Carter led to virtually no changes in U.S. policy towards Iran as the former Georgia governor continued down the path blazed by Johnson, Nixon, and Ford. Through process tracing, the case study analyses give ample evidence that many sources - members of the National Security staff, the State Department, the intelligence community, foreign governments, academics, popular media, and, remarkably, even a lawyer from Michigan - all issued forceful warnings about the likelihood the Shah would remain as leader of Iran. Yet, Carter remained unengaged in the policy discussions and committed to the Shah while not overcommitted. His behavior and policy choices were wholly consistent with the unengaged *protector* of self-serving bias and the Carter of Micronesia, Namibia, Angola, and the neutron bomb.

Intelligence analysts, ultimately, did pose the right questions but were encouraged to not follow-up and upset such an important ally. The pressure to ignore such warnings, in addition, came not because of methodological issues with conclusions and estimates but, instead, because they were not consistent with policy. Bureaucratic institutions then developed a modus operandi of placing a higher emphasis on incoming information that offered a positive analysis, ambiguous streams of information were perceived in the same positive manner, and conflicting data was minimized, ignored, or challenged. Warning signs did exist with regard to the future of the Shah – in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. The error was not one of an intelligence failure but in the processing of data. Needless to say, the seeds of path dependency go back to at least the Johnson, Nixon, and Ford year while the Eisenhower administration, at best, offers a mixed record of motivated bias; however, the flow and volume of intelligence incompatible to the preferred view of the Shah placed Carter in the central position of being able to break the path dependency and ask significant questions concerning the wisdom of U.S. policy towards the Shah. Instead, the general feeling was that once things in Iran got too bad or the Shah was really threatened then he would act with an appropriate force. That assumption fed into the motivated bias while numerous intelligence reports and narrative examples portrayed a Shah who was unsteady in his resolve and unsure how to respond to political unrest while confused as to its source.

Jervis's discussion of preexisting beliefs revealed how the beliefs informed a number of perspectives on intelligence analysis. For example, many in the intelligence community activated analogies from the 1960s and argued that once the political unrest was considerable enough to threaten the Shah then he would act decisively – or, as Brzezinski called it, the use of the "iron fist." However, the problem – as Jervis notes – with such an assumption is that it could never be disproved. Based upon that assumption, the Shah did not act simply because the threat was not serious. Once the assumption was seen as incorrect it would be too late to intervene on behalf of the Shah and the regime would be removed.[1352] Yet, as Jervis notes, the idea of the Shah as firm-handed was "very plausible" and "fitted with the preexisting view of the Shah, and so became an article of faith."[1353]

Another significant role of those preexisting beliefs was illustrated by the absolute lack of intelligence data on the religious opposition. In fact, Jervis claims "the paucity of field reporting is consistent with the basic predisposition, shared by almost every one in and outside of government, that the religious groups were no longer central to Iranian society and politics."[1354]

[1352] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, pp. 69-70.
[1353] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 74.
[1354] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 87.

Moreover, such a view of the Iranian religious was the result of the overarching belief that modernization and westernization were normatively "better" for Iran.[1355] Clearly, many of the contacts within Iran reflected these assumptions as they were limited to the modernized opposition to the Shah.[1356] Notably, reports from the consulates "were generally more pessimistic than those from the embassy" and this may be explained by the wider use of contacts by the consulates.[1357] As a result, the accepted narrative in the United States was one in which it was assumed the Shah would split the opposition and that belief "was one of the main pillars supporting the conclusion that he could weather the storm."[1358] Furthermore, the general perspective of the intelligence community was one that minimized links between the religious leaders and the general population and "this outlook powerfully influenced the interpretation of incoming information … and specifically led the analysts to be insensitive to the possibility the opposition could unite behind Khomeini."[1359] So, the intelligence never even addressed whether the Shah could survive if the opposition remained united.[1360] At the same time, others within the intelligence community "may have shared the broadly held American view of liberalization [of Iran] as desirable. It is possible this had an influence on the analysis."[1361]

The final issue with preexisting beliefs surrounded the small community of scholars and analysts that did point to trouble for the Shah and his future as leader of Iran. As previously mentioned, many within the intelligence community supported the Shah and policy towards the Shah while viewing him as a strong leader.[1362] Jervis contends that "even if analysis was not directly influenced by policy" the analysts were "especially slow to give full credit to information indicating that the Shah was in serious trouble."[1363] In fact, Jervis notes that many who did, in fact, argue in early autumn of 1978 that the Shah was in jeopardy were also opposed to his regime and their warnings were often dismissed as wishful thinking.[1364]

Ultimately, in 1953, the Shah had fled his own country in the backseat floorboard of a car driven by CIA agent Kermit Roosevelt during the coup against Mossadeq. Yet, by the late 1960s, the policy community was willing to go all-in with the Shah and firmly believed he would face any threat with dogged determination. It is certainly plausible that those beliefs were the result of a motivational bias of *needing* the Shah to be powerful to project U.S. policy in the Middle East, *needing* the Shah to be powerful to continue to be the largest consumer of U.S. weapons, and *needing* the Shah to be an unchallenged unitary force in Iranian politics because that is who the United States supported. Hence, when Jervis concludes the intelligence community assumed if things were bad then the Shah would respond with appropriate force it is certainly plausible analysts believed such a supposition because they *needed* to.

The third general conceptual category I introduced was wishful thinking – allowing the influence of desires on a decisional outcome. We have already seen how a processor of data may do so in a self-serving manner and how decision making, itself, may include a motivational bias. For that reason, I labeled the end product of the biased processor or process as wishful thinking.

[1355] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p.87.
[1356] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 104.
[1357] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 106.
[1358] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 83.
[1359] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 91.
[1360] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 84.
[1361] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 68.
[1362] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 107.
[1363] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, p. 107.
[1364] Jervis, *Why Intelligence Fails*, pp. 107-108.

In order to examine the plausibility of whether Carter's policy and behavior towards Iran were wishful it is necessary to outline the policy decisions and conclusions made by Carter during the Iranian Revolution. A top secret memorandum from Sick to Brzezinski lists the initiatives taken towards Iran beginning in August of 1978.[1365] The policy inventory offers a glimpse into the interventions attempted and reveals the general attitude of Washington at the time of the Iranian Revolution. A month by month analysis illustrates a hands-off attitude more or less limited to rhetorical expressions of support.

In September, the initiatives by Washington failed to focus on the threats to the Shah's regime. September 8 coincided with State approving the sale of riot gear in order to assist the Shah and was followed by a September 10 call by Carter accompanied by a message of support. However, the next three initiatives – a September 15 notification to Iran that Justice would launch an investigation into activities by SAVAK, a September 25 briefing of the Shah on the Camp David outcome, and a September 29 letter from Carter soliciting the Shah's assistance in gaining Jordan King Hussein's support for Camp David – all continued the business as usual policy and assumed the continued Iranian role as an American proxy in the region.

October of 1978 brought continued rhetorical support for the Shah with very little in terms of concrete assistance. Cyrus Vance met with representatives of Iran on October 3 in New York and provided renewed assurances of Washington's backing. Carter relayed his support for the Shah in an October 10 press conference and, again, in a public message of October 23 for the Shah's birthday. Brzezinski reinforced Carter's remarks during an October 26 toast at the Iranian Embassy in Washington while Carter offered an additional pledge of alliance and friendship in an October 31 discussion with Crown Prince Reza. Yet, as October ended, State began to update evacuation plans and the National Security Council concentrated on a review of weapon sales to Iran.

At the outset of November, the NSC staff lobbied the German, Swiss, Belgian, Danish, and Japanese Embassies for economic assistance for Iran. Washington continued its strategy of offering moral support. Brzezinski directly spoke to the Shah and stressed Washington's support regardless of how the Shah planned on handling the growing unrest. Ambassador Sullivan echoed Brzezinski in a November 5 discussion but, at the same time, warned that the military should avoid a unilateral solution to the unrest. Administration responses in November were, yet again, dominated by shows of rhetorical support with little in substantive policy changes. A PRC meeting of November 6 resulted in the decision to monitor Iran's oil supply, inform regional allies of Washington's continued support for the Shah, a commitment to examine the possibility of economic aid, and the installation of an advanced satellite in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran to assist with communication. The pattern appears similar to the previous month – offer verbal support and engage in an exercise of hand-wringing over the fate of the Shah. Indeed, Carter finally authorized a long-awaited review of policy on November 10 which was immediately followed by a decision to postpone the review until November 30. Meanwhile, Arthur Callahan traveled to Iran on November 11 carrying yet another message of support for the Shah. Discussions of November 14 dealt with a possible visit by former President Ford (which never materialized) and Senator Byrd – ostensibly to again express Washington's support. In point of fact, the MAAG, on November 20, added to the ongoing chorus of encouragement. On November 21, State was tasked with contacting David Rockefeller and assisting with the Department of Treasury and Secretary Blumenthal on personal visits to the Shah in Tehran. That

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[1365] Top Secret Memorandum , Gary Sick to Zbigniew Brzezinski, November 24, 1978, Staff Material: Middle East, NLC-25-35-1-8-7, Jimmy Carter Library.

same day, State and Department of Defense were charged with stressing Washington's support of the Shah to Iran's military.

After the parade of American visitors, Washington's next step was to assign George Ball, in December of 1978, and General Huyser, in January of 1979, as special envoys. As we have seen, Ball, who perceived the Shah's future through a negative lens, soon was minimized in Washington and Huyser, who offered positive assessments, was elevated. Ultimately, Carter's responses to the political unrest in Iran consisted of little in new policy. Instead, a pattern emerged of Washington essentially waiting and hoping for the Shah while they attempted, in vain, to prod him into action. As evidence continued to accumulate from the Shah facing a challenge to his authority to when it became obvious the Iranian monarch was in his final days, no review of policy ensued and little help and advice was given to the Shah. Process tracing utilizing archival data and first-hand accounts illustrates Carter did little to assist the Shah at a time of increased domestic opposition and threats to his regime. Carter's policy product was one characterized by limited direct action and the avoidance of confronting an increasingly irrelevant policy based on an unchallenged Shah. This, despite January 1978 warnings from Brzezinski that the challenge was the largest since the 1960s and the Shah was uncertain how to respond, the NSC calling the Iranian unrest a "revolution" in February that year, and May 1978 warnings from NSC member Gary Sick, and both the embassies of France and Israel. Indeed, Carter's intransigence continued through the May 1978 reports by Ambassador Sullivan describing the Shah as "indecisive" while the security bureaucracy ignored calls by Sick for a new NIE. No serious policy questions were asked in June of 1978 when the CIA noted Iranian police were unable to control mob violence and when two State Department analysts requested a "zero-based analysis" of U.S. relations with Iran. Rampant rumors of the Shah having cancer were summarily dismissed as was an August report from the U.S. Consulate that the people of Iran had lost faith in the government and it was becoming irrelevant.

How can Carter's policy decisions towards Iran be explained? And, how do the previous nine chapters fit into the larger picture of foreign policy analysis? In what ways do they prepare the groundwork for future study? I selected a plausibility probe research design in order to offer guidance on these three questions. Ultimately, the most important and notable characteristic of this dissertation is whether the evidence within offers a useful enough construct to pursue additional research.

I have argued that decision making models in foreign policy should account for both hot and cold cognitive variables in what could best be described as a tepid model. In order to organize empirical evidence in a meaningful way, I suggested that the motivational – hot – cognitive variables be seen as acting at the agent level in a form of self-serving bias, through a motivationally biased process, and resulting in a wishful product. Such a construct begins to address the age-old problem with hot cognitive variables of how do we know them when we see them. Furthermore, one can determine the plausibility of hot cognitive factors influencing foreign policy decisions through agent, process, and product – or any combination of the three – utilizing the tools of process tracing. Using such a typology, I have determined that motivational variables were plausible explanations for Carter's behavior during the Iranian Revolution. That is, motivational factors plausibly explain the *why* of the descriptions often given for the Carter policy. Hence, *why* Carter failed to recognize the depth of the unrest, *why* the U.S. developed no alternative sources of intelligence other than the Shah and SAVAK, *why* Carter did not take the opposition seriously enough, *why* it was assumed the Shah would eventually resort to repression, and *why* so little attention was paid to the turmoil in Iran can all be plausibly explained by

motivational (hot) cognitive variables. Yet, we must also return to the notion of Carter's advisors and inner-circle. Brzezinski appeared to subscribe to the theory that the Shah would somehow weather the storm and Vance seemed to vacillate and not make clear his feelings towards Iran's future. When Carter did receive warnings from others – especially Sullivan – Carter, often directed by Brzezinski, ignored or minimized the information. Truly, the policy decision is in the domain of the president. In the case of Iran, however, Carter was also plagued by bureaucratic infighting and poor advice by some advisers. This atmosphere allowed for the development of motivated bias.

Finally, the analysis of Carter through this dissertation is merely a beginning and not the end of a research agenda. Although the use of the rubric of self-serving bias, motivationally biased processing, and wishful product offers - at minimum - a plausible explanation for the cases of Carter policy choices and behavior during the Iranian Revolution, such a template is, admittedly, conceptually simple. What is more important is that it gives a starting point and my future research efforts will focus on refining the nexus between hot cognitive variables and agent, process, and product in foreign policy decisions through the selection of additional cases. Certainly, examples of foreign policy that appear, at first glance, to be wishful provide a great deal of empirical evidence needed to eventually construct explanations accounting for cognitive variables in a meaningful way.

Glossary of Abbreviations

ASAT	Anti-Satellite Weapon
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CCC	Commodity Credit Corporation
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CSCE	Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe
CTB	Comprehensive Test Ban
DCIA	Director of Central Intelligence Agency
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
ERA	Equal Rights Amendment
ERW	Enhanced Radiation Weapons
FPDM	Foreign Policy Decision Making
INR	Bureau of Intelligence and Research
IPO	Initial Public Offering
MAAG	Military Assistance Advisory Group
MBFR	Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEA	Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, State Department
NFIP	National Foreign Intelligence Program
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate
NLC	Jimmy Carter Library (Atlanta, Georgia)
NSA	National Security Archives
NSC	National Security Council
PCC	Policy Review Committee
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SAVAK	Iran's National Intelligence and Security Organization Sazeman-e Amniyyat va Ettela`at-e Keshvar
SCC	Special Coordination Committee
SDECE	Service de Documentation Extérieure de Centre-Espionage
SOFA	Status of Forces Agreement
SSOD	Special Session on Disarmament
UN	United Nations

National Security Meetings - Subjects

DATE	SUBJECT
1/22/77	VP's Upcoming Trip and Discussion of Presidential use of NSC
1/27/77	Defense Issues
2/23/77	Secretary Vance Report on Middle East Trip
3/3/77	South Africa
3/22/77	SALT
4/27/77	Korea
9/6/77	SALT
2/23/77	Review of Foreign Policy Decisions
4/11/78	SALT and Secretary Vance's Trip to Moscow
5/10/78	DOD Consolidated Guidance
8/15/78	Sensitive Subject
9/1/78	Middle East Summit
9/2/78	SALT
10/6/78	Africa
12/18/78	SALT
2/16/79	Sino-Vietnamese Conflict
	Iran

Policy Review Committee Meetings - Subjects

DATE	SUBJECT
1/27/77	Panama
2/4/77	Middle East
2/8/77	South Africa and Rhodesia
2/10/77	Cyprus
3/9/77	Cuba
3/16/77	Non-Proliferation
3/23/77	Latin America
4/11/77	Horn of Africa
4/12/77	Arms Transfer Policy
4/14/77	Europe (PRM 9) and Preparations for the Summit
4/19/77	Middle East
4/21/77	Philippine Base Negotiation
4/28/77	Micronesia Status Negotiation
5/17/77	PRM 18
	Law of the Sea
6/10/77	Middle East
6/25/77	Middle East
6/27/77	PRM 24 (People's Republic of China)
7/5/77	Middle East
7/8/77	PRM 10/ Military Portion
7/9/77	Economic Aspects of Schmidt Visit
7/12/77	Middle East
7/13/77	PRM 10/ Military Portion
7/22/77	Southern Africa
7/22/77	Panama
7/27/77	PRM 8 – Trak II
	North/South Strategy
8/3/77	Cuba
8/4/77	PRM 23 – A Coherent U.S. Space Policy
8/23/77	CSCE and Eastern Europe
8/25/77	Horn of Africa and South African Nuclear Testing
8/31/77	U.S./Soviet Commercial Economic Relations
9/16/77	Antarctica
9/20/77	Southern Africa
9/21/77	CSCE
9/22/77	PRM 8 (North-South) Track III
10/11/77	Foreign Aid
10/14/77	Secretary Blumenthal's Trip to Middle East
10/24/77	South Africa
11/4/77	Common Fund

DATE	SUBJECT
11/11/77	Common Fund
11/18/77	Intelligence
11/22/77	Poland
11/25/77	Intelligence
12/1/77	Southern Africa
12/16/77	Poland
1/10/78	Arms Transfer
1/11/78	Italy
1/26/78	Arms Transfer Ceiling
2/17/78	Rhodesia
2/22/78	Debt Management
2/25/78	Humphrey – Case Bill on Foreign Assistance
2/27/78	Middle East
2/28/77	Philippine Base Negotiation
3/15/78	Intelligence Requirements
3/16/78	Monetary Situation
4/4/78	Micronesian Status Negotiation
4/26/78	U.S. /U.S.S.R. Talks – Conventional Arms Control
6/9/78	Energy Aspects of the Economic Summit
6/13/78	North Africa
6/21/78	Civilian Space Policy
7/5/78	Arms Transfer Policy for Iran and Security Assistance for Kenya
7/20/78	Intelligence
7/27/78	Newsom's Trip
7/31/78	Arms Transfer to Somalia
8/3/78	Civil Defense
8/18/78	Civil Defense
9/20/78	Space Policy
9/20/78	Civilian Space Policy
10/31/78	Nicaragua
11/1/78	CCC Credits for Poland
11/6/78	Iran
11/7/78	NFIP
11/9/78	Blumenthal's Trip to Middle East
11/13/78	Nicaragua
11/30/78	Pakistan
12/1/78	Oil Pricing
12/6/78	Mexico
12/12/78	U.S. / China Science and Technology
12/14/78	Intelligence

DATE	SUBJECT
12/26/78	Nicaragua
1/8/79	U.S. / China Economic Relations
1/19/79	Mexico
1/23/79	Saudi Arabia
1/26/79	Nicaragua
2/1/79	Secretary Brown Trip to Middle East
2/6/79	Mexico
2/8/79	Energy
2/22/79	Regional Policy Relating to Events in Iran

Special Coordination Committee Meetings - Subjects

DATE	SUBJECT
2/3/77	SALT
2/7/77	MBFR
2/25/77	SALT
3/2/77	SALT
3/10/77	SALT
4/7/77	SALT/ CBT/ Moscow Follow-up
5/4/77	PRM 25 (Arms Control in Indian Ocean)
5/9/77	SALT
6/7/77	SALT
6/8/77	PRM 27 (Chemical Warfare)
6/14/77	PRM 25 (Arms Control in the Indian Ocean Area)
6/15/77	PRM 11 (Intelligence Structure and Mission)
6/28/77	PRM 11 (Intelligence Structure and Mission)
6/30/77	SALT
7/7/77	PRM 10/ Net Assessment Portion
7/11/77	SALT
7/26/77	PRM 29 – Comprehensive Review of the Classification System
7/29/77	PRM 22 – Telecommunications Policy
8/4/77	PRM 10
8/18/77	SALT
8/24/77	Indian Ocean
8/26/77	PRM 22: Integrated Telecommunication Protection Policy
8/30/77	SALT
9/1/77	Terrorism
9/14/77	Indian Ocean
9/15/77	MBFR
9/27/77	CTB
9/30/77	Telecommunications
10/6/77	Special Activities
10/18/77	Intelligence
10/26/77	Intelligence
10/27/77	Intelligence
10/28/77	Intelligence
11/9/77	Indian Ocean
11/16/77	Enhanced Radiation/ MBFR
11/22/77	SALT
12/2/77	CTB
12/9/77	U.S. – U.S.S.R. Conventional Arms Transfer Talks
12/13/77	Soviet Airlift in Support of Ethiopia
12/21/77	Horn Of Africa

DATE	SUBJECT
12/27/77	Terrorism
1/6/78	Ocean Pollution
1/9/78	SALT
1/13/78	Terrorism
1/19/78	CTB
1/23/78	Allied Consultations
1/24/78	Indian Ocean
1/26/78	Horn of Africa
2/10/78	Horn of Africa
2/14/78	Allied Consultations and SALT
2/15/78	ASAT
2/21/78	Horn of Africa
3/1/78	Counterintelligence
3/2/78	Horn of Africa
3/6/78	SALT
3/10/78	Horn of Africa
3/16/78	Horn of Africa
3/22/78	CTB
3/24/78	Petroleum Supply Vulnerability
3/27/78	Horn of Africa
4/7/78	Horn of Africa
4/27/78	NATO Summit and SSOD
5/2/78	CTB
5/5/78	SSOD
5/8/78	Covert Action Proposal
5/12/78	SSOD
5/12/78	SALT
5/15/78	Horn of Africa and Related Issues
5/15/78	Legislative Charters
5/16/78	Intelligence
5/24/78	Conventional Arms Transfer
5/26/78	Shaba
6/1/78	ASAT
6/6/78	Petroleum Supply Vulnerability Assessment
6/12/78	CTB
6/12/78	SALT
6/15/78	Counterintelligence
6/20/78	Intelligence
6/26/78	SALT
6/27/78	Legislative Charters
6/27/78	CTB

DATE	SUBJECT
6/28/78	Intelligence
7/5/78	SALT
7/6/78	CBT
7/10/78	Conventional Arms Transfer
7/21/78	SALT
7/27/78	Implement Presidential Decision on Export Controls to the U.S.S.R.
8/4/78	SALT
8/9/78	MBFR
8/10/78	SALT
8/14/78	Intelligence
8/23/78	PRM – 38
8/25/78	Hijacking
9/1/78	SALT
9/12/78	Nicaragua
9/29/78	SALT
10/12/78	SALT
10/26/78	Sensitive
10/26/78	SALT
10/30/78	Sensitive Subject
11/2/78	Iran
11/3/78	SALT
11/8/78	Counterterrorism
11/13/78	Sensitive Subject
11/16/78	ASAT
11/20/78	Intelligence
11/21/78	Fourth Round of CAT Talks
11/27/78	Legislative Charters
12/1/78	Chemical Weapons
12/7/78	Strategic Petroleum Reserves
12/8/78	Counterterrorism
12/13/78	Iran

Significant Dates in the Iranian Revolution

DATE	EVENT
November 16, 1977	Shah visits Carter in Washington, D.C Greeted by largest political demonstrations since the Vietnam War.
November 19, 1977	Students and police clash at Writer's Association of Iranian-German Cultural Society in Iran.
December 31, 1977	Carter visits Tehran and toasts Iran as an "island of stability"
January 7, 1978	*Etela'at* (newspaper) published provocative attacks on Ayatollah Khomeini
January 8-9, 1978	Qom riots – in response to Khomeini article – included police firing on demonstrators. Attack began a cycle of protests every forty-days.
February 18-19, 1978	Anti-Shah violence in Tabriz leads to breakdown of law and order.
May 6-7, 1978	Students and police clash at university campuses in Tehran, Shiraz, Isfahan, Tabriz, and other cities.
May 9, 1978	Qom and Tabriz subject to intense rioting.
May 11, 1978	Rioting moves to Tehran.
May 15, 1978	Protests at Tehran University result in troops storming the campus.
June 17, 1978	Demonstrations in Qom and a number of other cities – but mostly peaceful.
July 22, 1978	Beginning of period of political violence and demonstrations called the "Tehran Spring."
July 23-24, 1978	Anti-Shah riots in Mashad.
August 1, 1978	Anti-Shah demonstrations in ten Iranian cities.
August 11, 1978	Martial law declared in Isfahan.
August 16, 1978	Political unrest spreads to Tehran

August 19, 1978	Rex Cinema arson in Abadan.
August 22-25, 1978	Abadan site of numerous anti-Shah riots (in response to fire at Rex Cinema).
August 27, 1978	Shah removes Prime Minister Jamshid Amouzegar and appoints Jafaar Sharif-Emami.
August 31, 1978	Violent protests in Mashad.
End of August, 1978	NIE shelved due to debates concerning the future of the Shah.
September 2, 1978	Riots in Tehran and Mashad.
September 4-5, 1978	Eid-e-Fetr anti-Shah demonstrations number 100,000 to 150,000 in Tehran.
September 7, 1978	Despite government ban, an estimated 100,000 rally against the Shah in Tehran.
September 8, 1978	Black Friday –Protests by crowds estimated in the hundreds of thousands in Tehran which leads to attacks on demonstrators at Jaleh Square by Shah's troops.
September 8, 1978	Tehran and eleven other Iranian cities placed under martial law.
September 10, 1978	Troops fire on protestors in city of Qom.
September 11, 1978	Army fires on demonstrators in Qom and Mashhad.
September 24, 1978	Largest sector of Iranian economy, oil, faces strike.
October 22, 1978	Riots in Hamadan and Bushehr result in troops firing upon protestors.
October 24, 1978	Anti-regime rioting in Gorgan.
October 27, 1978	Shah's military resorts to use of tanks against rioters.
November 4-5, 1978	Worst violence since Jaleh Square; Huyser characterizes unrest as "Black Sunday." Large areas of Tehran burned down.
November 5, 1978	Prime Minister Sharif-Imami resigns and military government under General Ghulam Reza Azheri installed to reinstall order in Iran.

November 7, 1978	Ambassador Sullivan sends telegram entitled "Thinking the Unthinkable."
November 14, 1978	Troops fire on protestors in Bazaar region of Tehran.
November 24, 1978	Troops open fire on demonstrators in Shiraz
November 26, 1978	Qom and Mashad now governed as Islamic Republics by forces opposing the Shah.
December 2-5, 1978	Moharram violence throughout Iran despite government edict banning Moharram processions.
December 10-11, 1978	Millions opposed to Shah demonstrate during holiday of Ashura and call for Islamic government. Large protests also in Mashhad, Tabriz, Isfahan, and other cities.
December 18, 1978	Riots in Tabriz include an estimated 800 military joining with the opposition.
December 19-20	Azheri relieved of his duties as head of Iranian military government.
December 23, 1978	Tehran and Mashad the site of violent demonstrations.
December 28, 1978	Violence between pro-Shah troops and protestors in Ahvaz.
December 31, 1978	Anti-Shah demonstrations in Mashad leave 170 protestors dead. Iran announces the Shah will temporarily leave Iran in order to seek medical treatment.
January 1-2, 1979	Protests continued throughout Iran but particularly violent in Qazvin.
January 3, 1979	Nomination of Shahpur Bakhtiar as Prime Minister accepted by parliament.
January 4, 1979	General Huyser arrives in Iran as a special emissary from Carter.
January 6, 1979	Bakhtiar announces new cabinet.
January 8, 1979	Violent protests in Tabriz.
January 16, 1978	Shah departs Iran to widespread celebration.

January 19, 1979	Demonstrations in Tehran of approximately one million in support of an Islamic Republic.
January 26-29, 1979	Despite government ban, violent anti-regime demonstrations in Tehran.
February 1, 1979	Ayatollah Khomeini returns to Iran.
February 9-10, 1979	Widespread insurrection and chaos results in army withdrawing and announcing neutrality in battles among pro and anti-Shah forces.
February 11, 1979	Complete collapse of Monarchy and associated institutions.
April 1, 1979	Iranian referendum on the installation of an Islamic Republic successfully passes.

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