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MAKING POLICY AND COMMUNICATING POLICY: SHAPING NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIES IN THE EISENHOWER AND KENNEDY ADMINISTRATIONS

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For my family

Nirmal K. and Chandra Bose
Enakshi Bose
and Colin Churchill Barr

ABSTRACT

This study examines national security decision making in the Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy administrations. It compares how the two presidents developed their Cold War national security strategies, focusing on how each president's decision-making process shaped his policy. The study also compares how the presidents communicated their strategies, with particular attention to possible signals conveyed to the leaders of the Soviet Union. The study focuses on two principal components of presidential decision making: leadership style and advisory system. Each case begins with the shaping of policy in the pre-presidential period and continues through the presidential campaign, transition, and first year in office.

The study finds that Eisenhower's formal leadership style ensured that he examined alternatives thoroughly with his associates before making policy decisions. Kennedy's informal leadership style increased opportunities for access to the president but also overloaded him with detail. The advantages of a formal approach to presidential decision making are brought out most clearly in Alexander L. George's "multiple advocacy" proposal, which recommends that presidents systematically review a wide range of policy options in a structured setting with their advisers before making a decision. The development of Eisenhower's "New Look" national security strategy illustrates the advantages of such a process, whereas the development of Kennedy's "Flexible Response" strategy demonstrates the problems with not using multiple advocacy. At a more general level, the study

finds that policy planning efforts early in an administration can be of great help to presidents in preparing their agendas.

Moving beyond George's proposal, the study also finds that multiple advocacy has important payoffs for presidential policy communication, namely that it can help to ensure that messages do not convey unintended signals. Presidents need to work together with both their advisers and their speech writers in drafting major addresses to make sure that their rhetoric is consistent with the policies they are advancing. This is of particular importance in the area of national security, where misperceptions can heighten tensions and exacerbate conflicts with adversaries.

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CHAPTER ONE

Studying Presidential Policy Making and Policy Communication

This study examines national security decision making in the Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy administrations. It compares how the two presidents developed their Cold War national security strategies, focusing on how each president's decision-making process shaped his policy. The study also compares how the two presidents communicated their strategies, with particular attention to possible signals conveyed to the leaders of the Soviet Union.

National security strategies are of fundamental importance in international politics because they coordinate a state's broad political ends with its diplomatic, economic, and military means, thereby guiding its specific policies. The United States had several more or less explicitly stated national security strategies during the Cold War, each of which served as a guiding principle for shaping American foreign policy. A number of scholars have examined the content of these strategies and established their importance, most notably John Lewis Gaddis in Strategies of Containment. But scholars have paid little attention to the decision-making processes that brought these strategies into being and determined how they were communicated.[1]

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[1]Analyses of American national security strategies include Aaron L. Friedberg, "The Making of American National Strategy, 1948-1988," The National Interest (Spring 1988): 65-75; John Lewis Gaddis, Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982); and Daniel J. Kaufman, David S. Clark, and Kevin P. Sheehan, eds., U.S. National Security Strategy for the 1990s (Baltimore: The Johns

My analysis focuses on two principal components of presidential decision making: leadership style and advisory system. Thus, my independent variables are a president's leadership style and advisory system, and my dependent variables are presidential policy formulation and promulgation. In examining the development of national security strategy, I build upon the theoretically rich scholarly literature on presidential decision making. I also apply that literature to the less studied area of presidential policy communication.[2]

Policy making and policy communication merit analysis together because of their complementary effects on political outcomes. A carefully made policy that is in principle well suited to achieve its purposes may go awry if it is poorly communicated. And a defective policy may in some cases be redeemed, at least politically, by a skilled communications strategy. Presidential policy communications are especially important because of the signals that they convey to different audiences, particularly leaders of other nations. Examining how presidents' leadership styles and advisory systems influence their communications

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Hopkins University Press, 1991). In the 1960s, some scholars examined the development of national security strategies based on the public record and interviews. Notable among these are Samuel P. Huntington, The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961); and Warner R. Schilling, Paul Y. Hammond, and Glenn H. Snyder, Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962). A more recent study is Ernest R. May, ed., American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC-68 (Boston: Bedford Books, 1993).

[2]I discuss the specific analyses of presidential decision making on which this study builds later in the chapter.

can yield useful insights for the scholarly literature on presidential decision making as well as for the literature in international politics on political signalling.[3]

In comparing the national security decision making of Eisenhower and Kennedy, I employ what Alexander L. George has called a "structured, focused comparison," taking as my data primary-source documents from historical archives, elite interviews, presidential addresses, contemporaneous media coverage, and other historical sources. An Eisenhower-Kennedy comparison is advantageous for this project for a number of reasons. Their presidencies are far enough in the past that the great bulk of the declassified record on their national security decision making is available. Moreover, as the first two presidents to take office after the beginning of the Cold War, Eisenhower and Kennedy had fewer precedents to draw on than their successors in establishing their stances toward the communist world. How they settled upon and communicated those stances is thus of particular importance. Finally, as I will show later in this chapter, the two

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[3]There is an evolving literature in political science on the importance of presidential policy communication. See Samuel Kernell, Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1993); Mary E. Stuckey, The President as Interpreter-in-Chief (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1991); and Jeffrey K. Tulis, The Rhetorical Presidency (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

Robert Jervis discusses how rhetoric can send signals in international politics in The Logic of Images in International Relations (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 21. Other analyses of political signalling include Raymond Cohen, Theatre of Power: The Art of Diplomatic Signalling (London: Longman Group, 1987); and Thomas C. Schelling, The Strategy of Conflict (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960). For a broader analysis of political perceptions in international politics, see Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

presidents differed sharply with respect to the independent variables in this study, perhaps more so than any other pair of modern presidents.[4]

Eisenhower and Kennedy also differed in their time frame from basic national security policy development and communication. Eisenhower's national security strategy, the "New Look," was the product of an extensive decision-making process that began in the 1952 transition and continued through Eisenhower's first year in office. Eisenhower formally adopted the New Look in October of that year, but the strategy was not fully promulgated until January 1954. In contrast to the New Look, Kennedy's "Flexible Response" strategy was established well before his election to the presidency. Flexible Response in essence was a codification of Democratic critiques during the 1950s of Eisenhower's national security policies. Kennedy's first year as president therefore is more illustrative of the application and communication of that strategy than of its development.

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[4]See Alexander L. George, "Case Study and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory and Policy, ed. Paul Gordon Lauren (New York: The Free Press, 1979), 43-68, for a discussion of how social scientists can make controlled comparisons of qualitative data and thus use case studies to develop theories of politics. Also see Alexander George and Timothy J. McKeown, "Case Studies and Theories of Organizational Decisionmaking," in Advances in Information Processing in Organizations, vol. 2 (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1985), 21-58. On the applicability of historical evidence to public affairs, see Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision Makers (New York: The Free Press, 1986).

The periods during which new presidents and their administrations establish and communicate their basic policies are both important and insufficiently studied. These periods typically include the transition between a president's election and his inauguration and the initial year or so of his presidency. Moreover, as the Kennedy case suggests, a president's policies often have significant antecedents that long precede his election to the presidency. While the importance of these periods for policy development is well known, there has been little systematic study of precisely how a president's policies emerge out of the pre-presidential period and are formulated and communicated after he wins election and takes office.[5]

In the remainder of this chapter, I will address in further detail the historical and theoretical concerns that inform my research. I begin with a brief

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[5]The classic study of presidential transitions is Laurin L. Henry's Presidential Transitions (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1960), which focuses on the official transition period, or the interregnum, from the election in November to the inauguration on January 20. Other scholars propose that the phrase "presidential transition" should include the initial agenda-setting period of a new president. See Carl M. Brauer, Presidential Transitions: Eisenhower Through Reagan (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), xiii-xiv. Richard E. Neustadt writes that the transition period broadly defined continues until "[the president] and his principal associates become familiar with the work they have to do," and he notes that this period can last up to two years. See Neustadt, Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 240. It is this broader view of presidential transitions that informs my analysis.

Studies about changes in political leadership and presidential agenda setting include: Valerie Bunce, Do New Leaders Make A Difference? Executive Succession and Public Policy Under Capitalism and Socialism (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981); Jeff Fishel, Presidents and Promises: From Campaign Pledge to Presidential Performance (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly, 1985); and Paul C. Light, The President's Agenda: Domestic Policy Choice from Kennedy to Reagan, rev. ed. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

overview of post-World War II American national security strategies, particularly those of Eisenhower and Kennedy. I continue with an analysis of the scholarly literature on presidential decision making that guides my study. I then explain why the Eisenhower and Kennedy presidencies provide an instructive comparison for this study. As we shall see, they illuminate many of the theoretical concerns raised in the literature on presidential decision making. I conclude with a brief discussion of the plan of the dissertation.

AMERICAN NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGIES AFTER WORLD WAR II

The broad strategic stances of American presidents can have policy consequences of great importance, influencing prospects for peace and stability in the international system. This point is well documented in Gaddis' influential account of American Cold War strategies. Gaddis identifies five strategies, or "geopolitical codes," which governed the national security policies of the presidents from Truman through Carter: the Truman administration's initial containment strategy; Truman's shift after the United States entered the Korean War in June 1950 to a strategy calling for vastly increased U.S. military force levels and budgets; the cost-conscious New Look strategy of the Eisenhower administration; the Flexible Response strategy of the Kennedy administration, which continued through the Johnson administration; and the Nixon administration's strategy of

detente, which continued through the Ford and Carter administrations until the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979.[6]

As Gaddis shows, these strategies alternated regularly between symmetrical and asymmetrical approaches to responding to the perceived Soviet threat. Symmetrical strategies support the maintenance of multiple military options, so that a country will be able to respond to any level of provocation its opponent may instigate. Asymmetrical strategies, in contrast, emphasize only those capabilities that give a country a comparative advantage over its adversary. The result of this approach can be that a country responds to a provocation at a higher level than that of the original confrontation.[7]

The changes in strategy from the final national security stance of the Truman administration to the New Look and from the New Look to Flexible Response illustrate the differences between symmetrical and asymmetrical strategies. After the onset of the Korean War, President Truman approved the national security document NSC 68, which held that the United States needed to increase its military forces massively so that it could respond to any Soviet challenge at the level of that threat. In contrast, the New Look aimed, as Gaddis

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[6]Friedberg, "The Making of American National Strategy," 71-75; Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, ix. Also see Friedberg, "United States Strategy Since 1945," in Centerstage: American Diplomacy Since World War II, ed. L. Carl Brown (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1990), 58-75; and Gaddis, "Risks, Costs, and Strategies of Containment," in ibid., 43-57.

[7]Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, 352-57.

puts it, to react to "adversary challenges in ways calculated to apply one's own strengths against the other side's weaknesses, even if this meant shifting the nature and location of the confrontation." The basic premise of the New Look was that the United States should rely more on naval and air power, particularly the possibility of using nuclear weapons, than on ground forces to deter communist advances around the world. In emphasizing nuclear deterrence over military buildups, the New Look was intended to ensure the nation's security without draining its fiscal resources. Eisenhower used the New Look as justification for refusing to intervene in Indochina in 1954, declaring that the United States could not afford "to police every area of the world."[8]

The Kennedy administration's shift to Flexible Response marked a return to the symmetrical principles of NSC 68. Kennedy asserted that the United States should be able to respond to Soviet actions on a variety of levels below the nuclear threshold. As he told the nation during the Berlin Crisis in the summer of 1961,

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[8]Quotation from Gaddis is in Strategies of Containment, 147. Analyses of NSC 68 and the shift to the New Look include: ibid., chaps. 4,5 passim; Huntington, The Common Defense, 47-88; and Hammond, "NSC 68: Prologue to Rearmament," and Snyder, "The 'New Look' of 1953," in Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets, 267-524. In addition to the emphasis on nuclear deterrence and fiscal restraint, Gaddis also identifies and discusses other components of the New Look, namely support for military alliances, psychological warfare, covert operations, and negotiations with the Soviet Union.

For Eisenhower's reference to the New Look in connection with Indochina policy in 1954, see "Drafts and Other Matters Pertaining to the Writing of DDE Memoirs, The White House Years," Dwight D. Eisenhower Library (DDEL), cited in John P. Burke and Fred I. Greenstein, How Presidents Test Reality: Decisions on Vietnam 1954 and 1965 (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1989), 107-108.

"We intend to have a wider choice than humiliation or all-out nuclear action." At the same time, Kennedy also was determined to maintain American strategic superiority over the Soviet Union. The corollary to this reasoning was that the United States should incur whatever costs were necessary to meet these ambitious national security goals. Consistent with that logic, Kennedy presided over a major buildup of both conventional and strategic forces. He also was more receptive than his predecessor had been to active U.S. involvement in restraining communism in developing countries. This became especially evident in Vietnam, where the Kennedy administration increased the number of American military advisers from approximately 800 to 16,000 between 1961 and 1963.[9]

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[9]Kennedy's statement is in "Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Berlin Crisis," 25 July 1961, Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy, 1961 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), 535. (Hereafter PPOP, followed by date.) Analyses of the Kennedy administration's shift to Flexible Response include Richard A. Aliano, American Defense Policy From Eisenhower to Kennedy: The Politics of Changing Military Requirements, 1957-1961 (Athens, Oh.: Ohio University Press, 1975), especially chap. 8 passim; Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, chap. 7 passim; and William W. Kaufmann, The McNamara Strategy (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), chap. 2 passim. For a discussion of how NATO came to adopt Flexible Response, see Jane E. Stromseth, The Origins of Flexible Response: NATO's Debate Over Strategy in the 1960s (London: Macmillan Press, 1988). Aside from the buildup of strategic and conventional forces, Gaddis also identifies and discusses other components of Flexible Response, including support for "unconventional" military capabilities, particularly counter-insurgency forces; efforts to strengthen alliances; attention to the non-military aspects of containment, such as economic aid and cultural programs; support for budgetary programs to use domestic resources for defense more efficiently; and continuation of negotiations with the Soviet Union.

For statistics on Vietnam, see John Galloway, ed., The Kennedys and Vietnam (New York: Facts on File, 1971), 17; and William J. Rust, American Vietnam Policy 1960-63 (New York: Da Capo Press, 1985), ix. Gaddis uses Vietnam as a case study to examine the Kennedy and Johnson administration's application of

SCHOLARLY LITERATURE ON PRESIDENTIAL DECISION MAKING

The scholarly literature on presidential decision making rests on the premise that the processes through which policies are made have significant consequences for their substance. Three contributions to that literature are central to my analysis: Richard E. Neustadt's classic study of presidential leadership, Richard Tanner Johnson's effort to identify types of presidential advisory systems, and Alexander L. George's proposal that presidents employ "multiple advocacy" in foreign policy decision making.[10]

Neustadt's study Presidential Power is the seminal analysis of leadership styles in the modern American presidency. Neustadt argues that the massive expansion of presidential responsibilities since the Great Depression has meant that modern presidents face a complex and demanding political environment, in which they can succeed only by guarding their power stakes. How presidents acquire advice and information from their advisers is central to that process. The empirical basis of Neustadt's study is a comparison of the three modern presidents

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Flexible Response in Strategies of Containment, chap. 8 passim. Also see Aliano, American Defense Policy from Eisenhower to Kennedy, 277.

[10]Neustadt, Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1960); Johnson, Managing the White House: An Intimate Study of the Presidency (New York: Harper & Row, 1974); George, "The Case for Multiple Advocacy in Making Foreign Policy," American Political Science Review 66 (1972): 751-85. There have been several subsequent editions of Presidential Power, each of which contains the original chapters plus new material. For the most part, I cite the first edition throughout this study, except in some cases where I refer to the most recent edition, which has a different title, Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents. I give the full citation for that edition in footnote three.

who had occupied the White House as of the time of his writing: Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR), Harry S. Truman, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. Writing in 1960, Neustadt expressed most approval for the highly informal practices of FDR, who was famous for his conflict-driven advisory network in which participants received overlapping assignments and competed for the president's ear. Neustadt also praised the somewhat more formal practices of Truman, arguing that Truman's commitment to being a strong president made him sensitive to his power stakes. Reflecting the prevailing perceptions of the 1950s, Neustadt considered Eisenhower to be a figurehead president, faulting what he viewed as Eisenhower's overly hierarchical advisory arrangements.[11]

Richard Tanner Johnson's 1974 typology of presidential advisory systems builds upon Neustadt's insights and systematizes them into a classification scheme. Examining not only the White Houses of Roosevelt, Truman, and Eisenhower but also those of Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon, Professor Johnson identifies three types of advisory systems: formalistic, competitive, and collegial. He defines formalistic systems as highly structured networks that employ hierarchical procedures to acquire information. Johnson's examples of a formalistic system are those of Truman, Eisenhower, and Nixon. Competitive and collegial systems, in

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[11]Neustadt, Presidential Power, chap. 7 passim. For a discussion of the development of the modern presidency from FDR's administration through the Reagan presidency, see Greenstein, "Toward a Modern Presidency," in Leadership in the Modern Presidency, ed. Greenstein (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1988), 1-6.

contrast, use more flexible information-gathering procedures, which place greater demands on a president's time. Presidents who have competitive systems, however, assign overlapping responsibilities to advisers and thereby foster rivalries among them, whereas presidents who have collegial systems seek to build teams of colleagues. Johnson has a single example for each of these classifications, namely FDR for a competitive system and Kennedy for a collegial one.[12]

Johnson predicts distinct consequences and tradeoffs for each organizational mode. He argues that formalistic systems conserve the president's time and allow for careful evaluation of the problem, but that in screening the information presidents receive, they risk distorting it. Competitive systems put the president in the center of his advisory system, but they require more of his time, and they can expose him to biased information. Johnson finds the collegial system to be a happy medium in that it also places the president in the center of the information network, but it eases stress on him by fostering cooperative relations within the White House.[13]

The distinctions that inform Johnson's classification are central to Alexander George's multiple advocacy proposal. Multiple advocacy, which combines features of both formalistic and collegial systems, is designed to expose the president to a

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[12]Johnson, Managing the White House, 3-8. Professor Johnson says President Johnson is an exception to the classification, for while the president tended toward the formalistic approach, his controlling personality kept him from employing it.

[13]Ibid., 238.

wide range of information and options. In contrast to Neustadt and Johnson, who argue that informal advisory systems enhance the quality of information and advice a president receives, George argues that informal systems produce distortions by making advice a function of the bureaucratic skills of a president's advisers. Instead, George states that advisory procedures that are explicitly structured to institutionalize debate and encourage the systematic presentation of alternative views are more likely to produce desirable policy.[14]

George proposes a number of procedures for bringing multiple advocacy into being. In particular, he stresses the importance of having someone on the president's staff, such as the national security adviser, act as a "custodian-manager." The custodian-manager coordinates the entire decision-making process by organizing meetings, summarizing views, and acting as a neutral arbiter for disputes. He also tries to ensure that the decision-making process meets three criteria: the participants have relatively equal intellectual and bureaucratic resources; the president participates actively in the process; and participants have

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[14]George, "The Case for Multiple Advocacy in Making Foreign Policy"; George, Presidential Decisionmaking in Foreign Policy: The Effective Use of Information and Advice (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1980), chap. 11 passim. Also see I.M. Destler's critique of multiple advocacy and George's response in American Political Science Review 66 (1972): 786-95. For empirical studies of multiple advocacy, see David Kent Hall, "Implementing Multiple Advocacy in the National Security Council, 1947-1980" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1982); and Alexander Moens, Foreign Policy Under Carter: Testing Multiple Advocacy Decision Making (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1990). For an application of George's theory to domestic policy making, see Roger B. Porter, Presidential Decision Making: The Economic Policy Board (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

enough time to discuss the problem and debate various options. More generally, the purpose of the custodian-manager is to provide neutral competence in the decision-making process. In contrast to such presidential national security advisers as McGeorge Bundy for Kennedy and Henry A. Kissinger for Nixon, the custodian-manager called for by George is a detached coordinator of the policy-making process and is expressly prohibited from divulging his own policy opinions.[15]

EISENHOWER'S AND KENNEDY'S DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

The contrasting nature of Eisenhower's and Kennedy's leadership styles and advisory systems makes them well-suited for evaluating the arguments advanced by Neustadt, Johnson, and George. In the past decade and a half, scholars have drawn on an increasingly rich declassified record to reassess earlier views about the Eisenhower presidency. It is now widely held, for example, that Eisenhower's leadership style was far more complex and self-conscious than earlier studies had

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[15]The national security adviser originally was called the special assistant to the president for national security affairs. But starting with the Kennedy administration, the special assistant's role in the policy-making process expanded greatly, and the title of "special assistant" eventually was replaced with "national security adviser." I discuss the change in the special assistant's responsibilities later in the chapter. Also see Anna Kasten Nelson, "The 'Top of Policy Hill: President Eisenhower and the National Security Council," Diplomatic History 7 (1983): 307-26. For a discussion of Bundy's and Kissinger's respective responsibilities as national security adviser, see I.M. Destler, Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy: The Politics of Organizational Reform (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1974), chap. 5 passim. Destler examines the U.S. foreign policy-making process in the post-war period, focusing particularly on the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations, and offers suggestions for reform.

indicated. Eisenhower deliberately maintained a public image of detachment from politics, but in private he revealed a strong analytical ability and a keen interest in political affairs. Scholars also have examined the growing amount of declassified material on the Kennedy presidency, but these analyses, though more critical of Kennedy than earlier works, have not fundamentally changed the image that his contemporaries depicted of his governing style.[16]

Eisenhower, in deliberately crafting a multi-faceted leadership style, sought to reconcile the public's contradictory expectations that the president be both an apolitical head of state and the nation's chief political leader. Publicly, Eisenhower kept himself above the political fray, refusing to get enmeshed in political disputes or "enter into personalities," as he put it, by criticizing specific individuals such as Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-Wis.). He once told reporters, "The word 'politics' . . . I have no great liking for that," and frequent media reports that showed Eisenhower golfing, fishing, and beaming his famous grin seemed to bear out that statement. This determination to maintain a calm,

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[16]For an extensive analysis of Eisenhower's leadership style based on the declassified record, see Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader (New York: Basic Books, 1982), chap. 3 passim. Neustadt, in his most recent update of Presidential Power, acknowledges this revisionist view of Eisenhower, particularly in examining Eisenhower's refusal to intervene in Indochina in 1954. See Neustadt, Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents, 295-306. Recent analyses of the Kennedy presidency based on the declassified record include James N. Giglio, The Presidency of John F. Kennedy (Lawrence, Ks.: University Press of Kansas, 1991); and Richard Reeves, President Kennedy: Profile of Power (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993). While the latter is replete with bibliographical errors, its account of Kennedy's governing style is one of the most vivid to date.

reassuring public image was in part an outgrowth of his extensive military experience. As Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe during World War II, he had quickly concluded that it was essential for him to keep troop morale high by always displaying cheerfulness and optimism.[17]

Despite his public detachment from politics as president, Eisenhower was centrally involved in his administration's policy endeavors, and he was particularly committed to having structured, coherent decision-making processes. Again, this commitment dated back to World War II, in which he had instituted a carefully defined command structure for his theater of operations. The importance Eisenhower attached to such arrangements is evident in his extensive correspondence, where he often discussed the need for explicit organizational structures. Even in his memoirs Eisenhower brought up the importance of organization, writing that although "organization cannot make a genius out of an incompetent," nor "make the decisions which are required to trigger necessary action. . . . Disorganization can scarcely fail to result in inefficiency and can easily lead to disaster."[18]

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[17]Eisenhower's statement is from his news conference of May 31, 1955, PPOP, 1955, 553. Greenstein discusses the strategy behind Eisenhower's cheerful public image in "The President Who Led By Seeming Not To: A Centennial View of Dwight Eisenhower," Antioch Review 49 (Winter 1991): 39-44.

[18]Examples of Eisenhower's attention to organization abound in The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, eds. Alfred D. Chandler, Jr. and Louis Galambos, 13 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970-89), which contain selected documents from Eisenhower's war years through his 1952 presidential campaign. One notable example is a memorandum on Defense Department organization that

Kennedy's leadership style reflected his legislative background. He entered the White House after having served three terms in the House of Representatives and eight years in the Senate. During his fourteen years in Congress, Kennedy showed himself to be a political pragmatist, concerned with policy feasibility as much as policy content. His wife, Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy, once described him as "an idealist without illusions," and his close aide and chief speech writer Theodore C. Sorensen has written that "as senator, candidate and president, his tests were: Can it work? Can it help? And, often but not always: Can it pass?" Kennedy did not try to hide his interest in the political process: when reminded of Eisenhower's statement on politics, Kennedy replied, "I do have a great liking for the word 'politics.' It's the way a president gets things done."[19]

Unlike Eisenhower, Kennedy had little experience with or interest in formal organizational procedures. Kennedy's more fluid leadership style reflects his affinity for FDR's method of governance. During the 1960 campaign and transition, Kennedy received extensive advice from two renowned presidential

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Eisenhower sent on February 7, 1948, his last day as army chief of staff, to Defense Secretary James V. Forrestal. See Galambos, ed., The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, vol. 9, The Chief of Staff, 2242-56. A cogent discussion of Eisenhower's organizational skills during World War II is in Chandler, ed., The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, vol. 1, The War Years, xix-xxxv. For the quotation from Eisenhower's memoirs, see Mandate for Change: 1953-1956 (New York: Doubleday, 1963), 114.

[19]Theodore C. Sorensen, Kennedy (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 22-23; Reeves, Profile of Power, 65. Sorensen's official title in the Kennedy administration was Special Counsel to the President.

scholars, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. and Richard Neustadt, both of whom were strong advocates of FDR's style. Schlesinger's 1959 biography of FDR lauded the president's ability to make officials compete for his ear, as it ensured that he heard many different perspectives. Neustadt's more general account of presidential leadership in 1960 also praised FDR highly, as discussed earlier. At Kennedy's request, Neustadt prepared a series of memoranda in 1960 on organizing the Oval Office, and he made numerous proposals that drew upon FDR's example. This advice reinforced Kennedy's inclination to have a loosely organized White House, and the president adopted many of Neustadt's recommendations.[20]

Just as Eisenhower and Kennedy had virtually antithetical leadership styles, so too were their advisory systems almost diametrically opposed. Eisenhower's advisory arrangements served to ensure active debate and discussion about major policy issues, at least in the area of national security, and the president himself played the central role in this process. Kennedy also was the center of his advisory network, but his information-gathering procedures were far more informal than Eisenhower's. While Eisenhower's decision-making procedures can be seen as almost a model of multiple advocacy, Kennedy's were far less consistent, sometimes resulting in rigorous debate over policy options but sometimes not.

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[20]Arthur M. Schlesinger, The Age of Roosevelt: The Coming of the New Deal (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959); Schlesinger, A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 119-24. Neustadt's memoranda are in Box 64, President's Office Files (POF), John F. Kennedy Library (JFKL).

Consistent with his preference for structure, Eisenhower introduced a number of advisory resources to the presidency. He was the first president to appoint a White House chief of staff, a Cabinet secretariat, and a White House liaison to Congress. In the area of national security, he insisted upon weekly meetings of the National Security Council (NSC), with an increased number and variety of participants; he appointed a special assistant for national security affairs to coordinate those meetings (the position now colloquially known as "national security adviser"); and he established a staff system to prepare materials for and follow up on those meetings.[21]

Eisenhower was particularly concerned with increasing the responsibilities of the NSC, which had not contributed significantly to policy making since its creation in 1947. Before the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, Truman had attended only a dozen out of fifty-seven NSC meetings. Once the war began, he held and attended NSC meetings more regularly, but the council still played a relatively limited role in presidential decision making. During the 1952 campaign, Eisenhower criticized Truman for not using the NSC more, calling it a "shadow agency" and declaring that he would make better use of this important resource. Upon his election, he immediately set about enlarging its policy-making role,

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[21]Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, chap. 4 passim.; Chester Pach, Jr. and Elmo Richardson, The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower, rev. ed. (Lawrence, Ks.: University Press of Kansas, 1991), 77-78.

asking Robert Cutler, a prominent Boston banker and Eisenhower supporter, to prepare a study on how the NSC might advise the president more effectively.[22]

The changes that Eisenhower instituted for national security decision making were based on Cutler's report, presented to the president in March 1953 and approved almost immediately. Cutler recommended, for example, that the secretary of the Treasury and the Bureau of the Budget director attend NSC meetings to ensure that the council considered the economic implications of national security policies. He also advised Eisenhower to appoint a special assistant for national security affairs, a position that Cutler himself became the first to hold. The special assistant was responsible for overall coordination of NSC activities, which included organizing meeting agendas, briefing the president on those agendas, and moderating the flow of discussion during meetings. He was expected to ensure that the NSC reviewed all sides of an issue and to bring points of dispute to the council's attention. In many respects, the role of the special assistant closely resembled that of the custodian-manager in Alexander George's multiple advocacy proposal two decades later.[23]

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[22]Christopher C. Shoemaker, The NSC Staff: Counseling the Council (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1991), 4, 10-11; Nelson, "The 'Top of Policy Hill'," 308-309; Stanley L. Falk, "The National Security Council Under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy," Political Science Quarterly 79 (September 1964): 403-34.

[23]Cutler, "Recommendations Regarding the National Security Council," 16 March 1953, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954, vol. 2, National Security Affairs (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1984), 245-57. (Hereafter FRUS, followed by year and volume number.) Also see Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 124-26; and George, "The Case for Multiple Advocacy in

Cutler additionally recommended creating a staff system for the NSC, which he would later refer to as "policy hill." On one side was the Planning Board, which prepared position papers for NSC meetings. Composed of senior representatives from the NSC's constituent departments, the Planning Board held three-hour-long working sessions twice a week to identify areas of disagreement for the NSC to address. Far from being a mere paper mill, the Planning Board regularly would "thrash out," to quote Cutler, major differences on policy between departments and often would send papers identifying "splits" in thinking to the NSC. On the other side of "policy hill" was the Operations Coordinating Board, established in the summer of 1953 to implement NSC policies.[24]

The organizational resources introduced by Eisenhower appear to have been unique in the modern presidency in encouraging sharp debate and maximizing the information set before the president and his associates. The NSC met fifty-one times during Eisenhower's first year in office and virtually ever week of his presidency thereafter. At each meeting, Cutler would summarize the relevant papers and identify areas of disagreement. A sharp debate usually would follow, moderated by Cutler. Eisenhower participated actively in those debates, encouraging disagreement and emphasizing that council members should represent

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Making Foreign Policy," 781-83.

[24]Cutler, "The Development of the National Security Council," Foreign Affairs 34 (April 1956): 441-58; Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 126-33; Nelson, "The 'Top of Policy Hill'," 309-10.

themselves, not their agencies. He wanted his advisers to leave their departmental biases behind when they attended NSC meetings so they could concentrate on arguing for policies that were in the country's best interest. While NSC meetings thus provided a forum for analyzing policy options, the power of decision lay with Eisenhower. Eisenhower relied on the NSC to review policy alternatives and analyze their potential ramifications, but he viewed the council as an advisory, not a decision-making, group.[25]

Kennedy's advisory procedures as president, in keeping with his informal leadership style, varied from issue to issue, with few officials having fixed responsibilities. Kennedy liked to describe himself as the hub of a wheel, with his many associates as the spokes. Upon entering office, Kennedy dismantled much of Eisenhower's staff machinery, including the NSC Planning Board, the Operations Coordinating Board, the Cabinet secretariat, and the positions of staff secretary to the president and chief of staff. As Sorensen writes, Kennedy "abolished the pyramid structure of the White House staff . . . all of which imposed, in his view, needless paperwork and machinery between the president and his responsible officers."[26]

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[25]Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 124-29. For remarks by Eisenhower on how he wanted the NSC to function, see memorandum of discussion at 166th NSC meeting, 13 October 1953, FRUS, 1952-1954, vol. 2, 535.

[26]Brauer, Presidential Transitions, 71; Sorensen, Kennedy, 281.

Kennedy's avid curiosity about policy issues drove his advisory processes. He was an omnivorous reader, known for his speed-reading skills. He also did not hesitate to call officials in the executive departments, or even sources outside the administration, with queries, and in so doing, he sometimes revealed that his information was more current than theirs. As Robert W. Komer, who served on Kennedy's NSC staff, puts it, "He wasn't only up with the news, he was ahead of it." Komer recalls that Kennedy once asked him about an article in the upcoming issue of the New Republic, which was not even available on newsstands at the time. Similarly, Roger W. Hilsman of the State Department remembers that Kennedy "phoned so frequently about one or another development he had read about in the morning paper that I was forced to rise earlier in the morning so I could get to the newspapers before he got to me." In addition to Kennedy's numerous direct verbal requests, he also would regularly dictate instructions for staff members to his secretary, Evelyn Lincoln.[27]

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[27]For a discussion of Kennedy's speed-reading skills, see Hugh Sidey oral history, 7 April 1964, JFKL, 35; Reeves, Profile of Power, 52-53; and Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 104-109. The Kennedy Library contains extensive documentation of Kennedy's prodigious reading and instructions to officials. See "Index of Weekend Papers" folders, Box 318, National Security File (NSF), JFKL; and "Notebook of Memoranda to Staff," Box 62, POF, JFKL. Also see Robert W. Komer oral history, 18 June 1964, JFKL, 5-6; Roger Hilsman, To Move A Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy (New York: Delta, 1964), 53; Hall, "Implementing Multiple Advocacy in the National Security Council," 437-47; Burke, The Institutional Presidency (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 75-84; and Edward B. Claflin, JFK Wants to Know: Memos from the President's Office, 1961-1963 (New York: William Morrow, 1991).

Kennedy used the NSC much less than Eisenhower had, holding only twenty-one meetings in 1961. Instead, Kennedy preferred to rely on informal meetings with advisers and ad hoc task forces to acquire information. He noted in 1961 that he had "averaged three or four meetings a week" with top national security officials, including the secretaries of state and defense, the special assistant for national security affairs, and the head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). These meetings, Kennedy said, were more useful than NSC sessions because "it is more difficult to decide matters involving high national security if there is a wider group present." When certain international problems became pressing, such as Laos, Cuba, and Berlin in 1961, Kennedy would set up an interdepartmental task force to examine the subject and make recommendations.[28]

Kennedy's special assistant for national security affairs, McGeorge Bundy, served as a key policy adviser as well as policy planner, combining advocacy and managerial responsibilities and thus going beyond the custodian-manager role that George would later advocate. During the 1960 transition, Neustadt took great pleasure in introducing Bundy to White House officials as the man who would replace five members of Eisenhower's NSC staff. While Bundy did try to tighten Kennedy's advisory procedures, particularly after the Bay of Pigs fiasco in April

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[28]"1961 NSC meetings index," Box 312, NSF, JFKL; Sorensen, Kennedy, 281-85; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 420-26. Quotation from Kennedy is in Sorensen, Kennedy, 284.

1961, Kennedy for the most part resisted attempts to have structure imposed upon his decision-making process.[29]

Kennedy's changes in national security decision making were partly rooted in the politics of the late 1950s. After the Soviets launched the *Sputnik* satellite in October 1957, many Democrats began to criticize what they considered Eisenhower's excessively bureaucratized national security staff machinery. Kennedy himself wrote in 1957 that "the massive paper work and the clearance procedure, the compulsion to achieve agreement among departments and agencies, often produce policy statements which are only a mongrelization of views." In mid-1959, the widespread criticism prompted hearings on the subject by the Senate Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery, chaired by Senator Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.). Popularly known as the "Jackson Committee" hearings, this review resulted in a series of staff reports, beginning in the 1960 transition period, which declared that Eisenhower's staffing procedures served more to adjudicate disputes between departments than to produce coherent national security policies. The reports recommended many of the procedural changes, such as abolishing the Operations Coordinating Board and holding less frequent NSC meetings, that Kennedy instituted upon entering office.[30]

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[29]Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 210, 420-22; Neustadt to Clark Clifford, "Introducing McGeorge Bundy to General Persons," 3 January 1961, Microfilm Roll #3, Clark M. Clifford Papers, JFKL.

[30]Kennedy, "A Democrat Looks at Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs 36 (October 1957): 44-59. The Soviet launching of *Sputnik* and the U.S. response to this event

Thus, Eisenhower's and Kennedy's leadership styles and advisory systems permit comparison of formal versus informal approaches to presidential decision making. Eisenhower's decision-making process additionally provides an opportunity to test George's multiple advocacy theory, while Kennedy's permits study of the consequences of not using multiple advocacy.

PLAN OF THE DISSERTATION

In the chapters that follow, I examine the general points raised about Eisenhower's and Kennedy's leadership styles and advisory systems in more detail. Specifically, two of the next four chapters examine the development of each president's national security strategy, and two examine the communication of those strategies. I devote chapter two to studying the major initial addresses of each president, namely his inaugural address and state of the union message. Those speeches provided the first indications of what each president's response to the perceived Soviet threat would be. As I will show, the variations in Eisenhower's and Kennedy's speech-writing processes were highly consequential for the rhetorical tone of the speeches and, in turn, for Soviet reaction.

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are discussed in more detail in chapter four. The Jackson subcommittee hearings marked the first full-scale review of the national security policy-making process since the passage of the 1947 National Security Act. While Jackson's subcommittee did not conclude its inquiry until 1962, its early staff reports were particularly influential in the Washington policy community. See Sen. Henry M. Jackson, ed., The National Security Council: Jackson Subcommittee Papers on Policy Making at the Presidential Level (New York: Praeger, 1965), introduction; and Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 209-10.

In chapters three and four, I put the initial speeches in their larger context, reviewing the full sequence of strategy development from the pre-presidential period to the point when each president settled upon his strategic stance. As chapter three will show, the decision-making process that led to the New Look employed not only Eisenhower's newly instituted national security advisory machinery but also an unprecedented policy planning procedure known as "Project Solarium." Three teams of specialists on national security analyzed potential Cold War strategies for about five weeks during the summer of 1953, after which they presented their conclusions to the NSC. This planning exercise played an important part in the administration's adoption of the New Look, and it represents one of the few concerted, self-conscious, and formal efforts to analyze national security strategies in the post-war period.

In chapter four, I turn to the framing of Flexible Response. As noted earlier, much of this process took place before Kennedy became president. Kennedy entered office with an already established national security strategy, developed in large part during Eisenhower's presidency by Democratic critics of the New Look. Kennedy's decision-making procedures as president were so informal that it was not until after he had made a number of important communications about his administration's perception of the Soviet threat that he convened, on a Saturday morning, a meeting of the top Soviet specialists in his administration. Kennedy had little interest in strategic planning, preferring instead to concentrate on actual policy concerns, which in 1961 included the disastrous

Bay of Pigs invasion, the contentious meetings with Soviet leader Nikita S. Khrushchev in Vienna, and the Berlin Crisis. Nevertheless, Kennedy's commitment to Flexible Response soon became evident through his policy decisions, particularly his increases in defense forces.

In chapter five, I return to political communication, this time examining each administration's promulgation of the mature version of its strategy. I begin by analyzing significant communications on national security by each president during his first year in office. In so doing, I consider what each president said, the reasoning behind it, and domestic and international reaction. Then I turn to the speech in each administration that fully captures the change in national security strategy. In both cases an official other than the president made this speech. In the Eisenhower case, I consider the intensely controversial "massive retaliation" speech given by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to the Council on Foreign Relations in January 1954. In the Kennedy case, I examine a less well-known, but possibly even more controversial, speech made by Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell L. Gilpatric before the National Business Council in October 1961.

Finally, in my concluding chapter, I pull together the preceding analyses and consider their ramifications, addressing such questions as the following: What is the effect of a formal governing style on policy making? What is the effect of an informal governing style? How does multiple advocacy, or the lack thereof, affect the decision-making process? Are these conclusions about presidential decision making applicable to presidential policy communication? How can

presidents employ these lessons during their transitions and initial agenda-setting periods? As will be evident, the archival sources I draw on in this study are richly suggestive and have implications not only for the cases I examine but also for subsequent presidents, including those of the post-Cold War era.

CHAPTER TWO

The Initial Cold War Rhetoric Of Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy

Communication strategies and practices comprise an integral part of modern American presidential leadership. Since the beginning of this century, presidents have relied increasingly on direct public appeals to help them achieve their goals. While "going public" has not replaced more traditional forms of presidential leadership, such as bargaining with Congress, it has become central to every president's repertoire. Richard Neustadt writes that a modern president faces demands from five constituencies: executive officialdom, Congress, partisans, the public as a whole, and people abroad, particularly leaders of other nations. These competing demands, combined with advances in media technology, have made rhetorical strategies essential in the modern presidency.[1]

I presented early versions of this chapter at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association and the Northeastern Political Science Association in 1993. I am grateful to my co-panelists for their helpful comments. I also am indebted to John J. DiIulio, Jr., Jameson W. Doig, Aaron L. Friedberg, John G. Geer, Fred I. Greenstein, Richard E. Neustadt, and Andreas Wenger for advice and constructive criticism throughout the drafting process.

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[1]For Neustadt's discussion of a president's constituencies, see Presidential Power, 7. For an analysis of how modern presidents use rhetorical strategies to further their policy agendas, see Kernell, Going Public. For an account of the contrasting rhetorical strategies of nineteenth-century presidents, see Tulis, The Rhetorical Presidency.

In the area of national security, presidential public communications are particularly significant because of the signals they convey to leaders of other nations about an administration's policies. As Robert Jervis writes, "The most obvious examples of signals are a state's direct statements of intention." Such statements are of utmost importance in the nuclear era, when careless or ill-planned signals from the White House can provoke a disastrous response.[2]

In examining Eisenhower's and Kennedy's initial inaugural addresses and state of the union messages, I focus on passages that express each administration's stance toward the Soviet Union and the Cold War more generally. I also analyze the drafting processes behind these speeches and the signals that the speeches conveyed to Soviet leaders about each administration's intentions.

A president's initial speeches are of great importance because of their high signalling content. The inaugural address serves a unifying function, reaffirming traditional values, expressing hope for the future, and outlining the general principles of the new administration, especially when a president is in his first term. Given the ceremonial nature of the occasion, presidents usually do not propose specific policies in their inaugural address. The state of the union message, in contrast, returns to the issues that divided the nation during the presidential campaign and outlines the administration's political agenda. Presidents typically use state of the union messages to communicate their legislative programs

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[2]Jervis, The Logic of Images in International Relations, 21.

to Congress. In so doing, they also indicate to leaders of other nations how they will cope with problems of foreign policy and national security.[3]

My analysis of the drafting processes behind Eisenhower's and Kennedy's initial speeches builds upon the scholarly literature on presidential decision making. In particular, I apply insights about presidential leadership styles and advisory systems to presidential speech-writing processes. I draw on both declassified material and elite interviews to examine the effects of Eisenhower's formal and Kennedy's informal management procedures on their respective speech-writing processes. I also apply Alexander George's multiple advocacy proposal for presidential foreign policy decision making to presidential speech writing.

I propose that multiple advocacy can help presidents not only formulate their policies but also communicate them. Appropriately designed formal advisory meetings of speech writers and policy makers are more likely than exclusively informal procedures to take account of the signals that presidential speeches can send. I propose that this is the case because formal arrangements, when appropriately designed, can ensure debate about the effects of possible presidential statements. As we shall see, the Eisenhower case provides strong evidence for this

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[3]Karlyn Kohrs Campbell and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Deeds Done in Words: Presidential Rhetoric and the Genres of Governance (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 15. For an account of how the modern state of the union message evolved in the post-war period, see Neustadt, "Presidency and Legislation: Planning the President's Program," American Political Science Review 49 (1955): 980-1021.

argument, while the Kennedy case illustrates the problems that can arise from not using multiple advocacy in presidential speech writing.

In what follows, I begin by examining remarks about the Soviet Union and the Cold War in Eisenhower's and Kennedy's speeches. I then compare the two presidents' speech-writing processes, focusing on how differences in their leadership styles and advisory systems influenced those processes. I go on to examine the available evidence on Soviet responses to the speeches, drawing on contemporaneous public records as well as recent scholarship. I conclude with observations about how differences in speech-writing processes can shape presidential communications.

THE SPEECHES COMPARED

Eisenhower's Initial Speeches

Eisenhower's initial two speeches as president were dignified and politically safe but far from memorable. His inaugural address was well-structured and clear, listing nine principles that would guide the new administration in its actions. Nevertheless, it contained few soaring phrases. Despite Eisenhower's almost exclusive focus on foreign affairs, he made reference to the Cold War only in the most general terms, employing such Manichaean imagery as "We sense with all our faculties that forces of good and evil are massed and armed and opposed as rarely before in history." Later in the speech Eisenhower tempered this imagery, stating the following as his first guiding principle:

> Abhorring war as a chosen way to balk the purposes of those who threaten us, we hold it to be the first task of statesmanship to develop the strength that will deter the forces of aggression and promote the conditions of peace.[4]

The tone of Eisenhower's inaugural address was markedly spiritual, almost sermon-like, especially since the president prefaced his remarks with a prayer he had composed that morning. One of the major themes in the speech itself was the need for citizens to have faith. After noting that "science seems ready to confer upon us, as its final gift, the power to erase human life from this planet," Eisenhower declared:

> At such a time in history, we who are free must proclaim anew our faith. This faith is the abiding creed of our fathers. It is our faith in the deathless dignity of man, governed by eternal moral and natural laws.[5]

Later in the speech, after listing the principles that would guide his administration, Eisenhower returned to this spiritual theme:

> The peace we seek, then, is nothing less than the practice and fulfillment of our whole faith among ourselves and in our dealings with others. This signifies more than the stilling of guns, easing the sorrow of war. More than escape from death, it is a way of life.[6]

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[4]Dante Germino, The Inaugural Addresses of American Presidents: The Public Philosophy and Rhetoric (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1984), 22; Eisenhower, "Inaugural Address," 20 January 1953, PPOP, 1953, 1-8. Hereafter referred to as Eisenhower, "Inaugural." For a rhetorical analysis of the speech, see Martin J. Medhurst, "President Dwight D. Eisenhower's First Inaugural Address, 1953," in The Inaugural Addresses of Twentieth-Century American Presidents, ed. Halford Ryan (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1993), 153-65.

[5]Eisenhower, "Inaugural," 2-3. On Eisenhower's decision to begin his inaugural address with a prayer, see Stephen E. Ambrose, Eisenhower, vol. 2, The President (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1984), 41.

[6]Eisenhower, "Inaugural," 7.

While not the words of a master orator, clearly the speech contained the high-minded, uplifting spirit appropriate for the occasion.

Eisenhower's state of the union message was similarly elevated in tone and general in its discussion of U.S.-Soviet tensions. The president did not make specific legislative proposals, noting in his diary that "I feel it a mistake for a new administration to be talking so soon after inauguration; basic principles, expounded in an inaugural talk, are one thing, but to begin talking concretely about a great array of specific problems is quite another." Nevertheless, Eisenhower did foreshadow his New Look national security stance in the address, insisting that the nation needed to "achieve adequate military strength within the limits of endurable strain upon our economy." As he put it, "To amass military power without regard to our economic capacity would be to defend ourselves against one kind of disaster by inviting another."[7]

Eisenhower certainly made some forceful criticisms of the communist world, declaring, for example, that "the calculated pressures of aggressive communism have forced us to live in a world of turmoil." But in keeping his critique general, he avoided striking a confrontational tone. His most publicized statement was his declaration that the U.S. Seventh Fleet would no longer patrol the waters between China and Formosa, or Taiwan. Noting that after the invasion

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[7]Eisenhower, 2 February 1953 diary entry, The Eisenhower Diaries, ed. Robert H. Ferrell (New York: W.W. Norton, 1981), 226; Eisenhower, "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union," 2 February 1953, PPOP, 1953, 12-34. Hereafter referred to as Eisenhower, "Message to Congress."

of South Korea by the North in June 1950, Truman had ordered the Seventh Fleet to make sure that Communist China did not attack the Chinese Nationalist Forces on Formosa and vice-versa, Eisenhower said:

> This has meant, in effect, that the United States Navy was required to serve as a defensive arm of Communist China. . . . I am, therefore, issuing instructions that the Seventh Fleet no longer be employed to shield Communist China."[8]

This brave-sounding declaration had no serious military implications because the Chinese Nationalist Forces could not possibly have invaded the mainland. But the announcement did serve as a symbolic concession to the pro-Chiang Kai-Shek forces in the Republican party.[9]

In concluding his speech, Eisenhower maintained the moderate tone that had marked both his inaugural address and this message, calling for the nation to follow "a middle way" in its domestic affairs. He made a similar statement about foreign policy, declaring that "there is, in world affairs, a steady course to be followed between an assertion of strength that is truculent and a confession of helplessness that is cowardly." His reference to a "steady course" could well have described the speech itself.[10]

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[8]Eisenhower, "Message to Congress," 13, 16-17.

[9]For a more detailed discussion of Eisenhower's Seventh Fleet announcement, see Ambrose, Eisenhower, vol. 2, 47; and Robert J. Donovan, Eisenhower: The Inside Story (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 28-30.

[10]Eisenhower, "Message to Congress," 34.

Kennedy's Initial Speeches

In contrast to Eisenhower's cautious, rather bland initial speeches, Kennedy's were vivid and memorable. Kennedy's inaugural address, a full 1,000 words shorter than Eisenhower's and far more tightly wrought, would surely appear on any short list of eloquent speeches. Echoing the classical Greek oratorical tradition, Kennedy employed ringing antitheses and contrapuntal sentences that have become staples in anthologies of great presidential addresses: "And so, my fellow Americans: Ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country," and "Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us."[11]

Like Eisenhower, Kennedy focused almost exclusively on foreign policy in his inaugural address. But Kennedy used more specific language than Eisenhower, juxtaposing confrontational statements with conciliatory words:

> Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty. . . . To those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.

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[11]Patrick Anderson, The President's Men (New York: Doubleday, 1968; reprint, New York: Anchor Books, 1969), 344 (page references are to reprint edition); New York Times (NYT), 21 January 1961; Kennedy, "Inaugural Address," 20 January 1961, PPOP, 1961, 1-3. Hereafter referred to as Kennedy, "Inaugural." For a rhetorical analysis of the speech, see Theodore Otto Windt, Jr., "President John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address, 1961," in The Inaugural Addresses of Twentieth Century American Presidents, ed. Halford Ryan, 181-93.

Kennedy also, of course, made his famous statement, "Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate."[12]

While Kennedy's inaugural address balanced peaceful overtures with more somber remarks about the Cold War, his state of the union message fell largely in the latter category. Kennedy began the speech with a bold and alarming warning:

> I speak today in an hour of national peril and national opportunity. Before my term has ended, we shall have to test anew whether a nation organized and governed such as ours can endure. The outcome is by no means certain. The answers are by no means clear.[13]

His discussion of national security elaborated upon this theme:

> Each day we draw nearer the hour of maximum danger, as weapons spread and hostile forces grow stronger. I feel I must inform the Congress that our analyses over the last ten days make it clear that--in each of the principal areas of crisis--the tide of events has been running out and time has not been our friend.[14]

Kennedy then identified the hostile forces that the United States faced around the world, focusing in particular on the Soviet Union and China: "Our greatest challenge is still the world that lies beyond the Cold War--but the first great obstacle is still our relations with the Soviet Union and China." He went on

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[12]Kennedy, "Inaugural," 1-2. Kennedy purposely focused on foreign policy in this speech, telling Sorensen, "Let's drop the domestic stuff altogether. It's too long anyway." Later, at the insistence of his civil rights adviser, Harris Wofford, Kennedy added the words "at home" to a sentence on the U.S. commitment to human rights around the world. See Sorensen, Kennedy, 242; and Reeves, Profile of Power, 38-39.

[13]Kennedy, "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union," 30 January 1961, PPOP, 1961, 19-28. Hereafter referred to as Kennedy, "Message to Congress."

[14]Ibid., 22-23.

to warn, "We must never be lulled into believing that either power has yielded its ambitions for world domination--ambitions which they forcefully restated only a short time ago."[15]

To combat such challenges, Kennedy declared that the United States needed to reassess its military, economic, and political tools. He announced that Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara would submit a preliminary report in the coming weeks, and that in the meantime he had issued three immediate orders: increase U.S. air-lift capacity, speed up the Polaris-submarine program, and accelerate the entire missile program. These instructions were indicative of the new administration's Flexible Response strategy, as they suggested that the United States needed to build up both its conventional and its nuclear forces to deter Soviet challenges below the nuclear threshold.[16]

Yet Kennedy also hinted that even these build-ups might not save the United States from disaster. He concluded his speech with an almost Armageddon-like warning of the problems that the nation faced:

> Our problems are critical. The tide is unfavorable. The news will be worse before it is better. And while hoping and working for the best, we should prepare ourselves now for the worst.[17]

Today, thirty-five years after Kennedy's speech, this statement still has an ominous ring. In 1961, it was even more foreboding. As historian Michael R. Beschloss

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[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid., 23-24.

[17]Ibid., 27.

puts it, "For a decade no president had spoken in such apocalyptic terms." The heightened tension from the inaugural address to this speech was unmistakable.[18]

THE DRAFTING PROCESSES COMPARED

The drafting processes behind Eisenhower's and Kennedy's initial speeches could not have been more different. Moreover, the variations serve to illustrate the consequences of Eisenhower's and Kennedy's virtually antithetical decision-making processes. Eisenhower's speech-writing processes were virtually a reproduction of the kind of collective deliberation within a presidential advisory group that Alexander George calls for in multiple advocacy. The drafting of Kennedy's speeches, in contrast, consisted of more informal processes of presidential consultation, much like those praised by Richard Neustadt and Richard Tanner Johnson.

Eisenhower's Drafting Processes

Consistent with the diverse and extensive consultations that Eisenhower employed in policy making, his speech-writing processes took advantage of a wide range of advice from both policy makers and speech writers. Eisenhower first discussed his speeches with his incoming Cabinet on a U.S. military cruiser in the Pacific about six weeks before he took office. In contrast to Kennedy, whose Cabinet selection process went well into December, Eisenhower selected his entire

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[18]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 63. Bruce Miroff makes a similar analysis of the speech in Pragmatic Illusions: The Presidential Politics of John F. Kennedy (New York: David McKay, 1976), 42-48, 64.

Cabinet in November. This allowed him to use his Cabinet as a sounding board during the transition period.[19]

Toward that end, Eisenhower took several of his appointees to Asia in December when he fulfilled his campaign promise to visit Korea to evaluate U.S. prospects in the Korean War. During his return trip, he held a number of meetings aboard the *U.S.S. Helena* to discuss the war and other major issues that his administration would face after inauguration. Several other incoming officials had joined the trip by this time, including speech-writers C.D. Jackson and Emmet J. Hughes. In the course of the meetings, Hughes read his first draft of the inaugural address to those assembled, and everyone approved its basic contents. They also discussed the substance of the state of the union message.[20]

After the *Helena* meetings, Eisenhower and Hughes went over numerous drafts of the inaugural address in informal editing sessions. In his memoirs, Hughes notes that despite Eisenhower's sometimes garbled syntax in press

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[19]Consistent with his preference for organization, Eisenhower appointed a committee to advise him on his Cabinet selections. His first attorney general, Herbert Brownell, who served on the committee, discusses the process in his memoirs, written with John P. Burke, Advising Ike: The Memoirs of Attorney General Herbert Brownell (Lawrence, Ks.: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 133-37.

[20]Eisenhower's initial group included his defense secretary and attorney general appointees as well as the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Several other Cabinet members-designate joined the return trip, including the secretary of state, treasury secretary, and budget director. For more details on the Korea trip and *Helena* meetings, see Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 92-97; NYT, 8 December 1952; and Emmet J. Hughes, The Ordeal of Power: A Political Memoir of the Eisenhower Years (New York: Atheneum, 1962), 48-52.

conferences, the president in private had "a remarkably quick and exacting faculty for editing." Hughes also writes that Eisenhower had a general aversion to rhetorical flourishes, which "extended to a distrust of eloquence, of resonance, sometimes even of simple effectiveness of expression."[21]

Consequently, in drafting the inaugural address, the two men removed several florid remarks, many of which Soviet leaders might have considered inflammatory. Among the deletions were the following:

> In our day, evil is too real and manifest for any but the witless or the heartless to say: we have nothing to fear. For rarely in man's perilous pilgrimage from darkness toward light have the forces of evil been so ruthlessly organized and so madly inspired.

And:

> This, for freedom, has been an age of siege. . . . It has not lifted because a tyranny mightier even than Nazism has plotted to storm and to mine the walls of the free world.

And:

> The challenge of this century has been the fierce attack upon [our] faith by enemies who have seemed numberless and implacable. They deny God. They enslave man. They know no image to worship but the state. . . . With the dedicated hate that despots always reserve for the free, they have stormed the walls and the homes of the free. They have filled the skies with their gaudy and ominous colors of black and brown and red. They have made of this--for freedom itself--an age of siege.[22]

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[21]Hughes, Ordeal of Power, 24-25. Fred Greenstein argues that Eisenhower often employed confusing language in public so that his policy intentions would remain unclear and thus not create political divisions in the nation. See The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 66-72.

[22]I found six inaugural speech drafts in OF101-GG, "Drafts of Messages, Speeches, Etc. 1953" (1), Box 425, Official File (OF), White House Central Files

A month after the talks on the *Helena* and still before taking office, Eisenhower resumed formal discussion of his upcoming speeches during two unprecedented, pre-inaugural Cabinet meetings, which took place at Republican campaign headquarters in New York City's Commodore Hotel on January 12 and 13. Eisenhower read the current draft of his inaugural address to his Cabinet appointees, and the group then discussed the speech at length, making several editorial changes. In leading this discussion, Eisenhower accomplished two goals. First, he was able to discuss his broad policy objectives with his advisers and make sure they understood them. And second, by allowing his advisers to review the speech, he decreased the possibility of unintended signals. For example, on incoming Ambassador to the United Nations Henry Cabot Lodge's recommendation, Eisenhower deleted a reference to Moscow as "the capital of world revolutions."[23]

(WHCF), 1953-61, DDEL. These drafts begin with the first version that Hughes presented at the *Helena* meetings and date up to mid-January. The quotations in the text were taken from these drafts. I also found drafts in the Speech Series of the Ann Whitman File (AWF), DDEL, the Draft Presidential Correspondence and Speech Series of the John Foster Dulles Papers (JFDP), DDEL, and the Emmet J. Hughes Papers in Seeley G. Mudd Library, Princeton University.

[23]Lodge said the word "revolution" would be too favorable to the Soviet image, as it would have positive connotations for people in other countries who wanted a revolution. See "Cabinet Meeting of January 12-13, 1953," Box 1, Cabinet Series, AWF, DDEL, 67-68. This folder contains a transcript of the January 12 meeting, which reveals extensive discussion of the inaugural address. For further discussion of the importance of the January 12-13 meetings, see Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 109.

Like his inaugural address, Eisenhower's state of the union message was the product of a lengthy drafting process. Eisenhower's assistant staff secretary, Arthur L. Minnich, noted afterward that the speech was "revised in greater or lesser degree at least eight times." Eisenhower and his associates discussed a first draft of the speech at the January 13 Commodore Hotel meeting. They created a committee to incorporate suggestions, and the committee produced a second draft after two meetings. Additionally, Eisenhower devoted considerable attention to this speech at his first two Cabinet meetings and first NSC meeting.[24]

In addition to formal meetings, Eisenhower also edited the speech in close collaboration with his brother, Milton S. Eisenhower, and speech-writer Hughes. In a session with Hughes, Eisenhower substituted the phrase "aggressive communism" for "Stalinism," remarking: "Stalinism is too personal. It sounds the wrong note. . . . It's always possible I'll have to be meeting with him and negotiating matters some day." The weekend before the speech, Eisenhower approved Hughes's suggestion to refer to the Soviet Union as "Soviet Russia" instead of "our potential enemy."[25]

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[24]Arthur L. Minnich, "Notes on the background and preparation of the State of the Union Message, 1953," 27 February 1953, "Eisenhower, Dwight D." folder, Box 1, Hughes Papers, Princeton University; Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 120-24. For drafts of the state of the union message, see: Box 2, Hughes Papers; Box 1, Draft Presidential Correspondence and Speech Series, JFDP, DDEL; and Box 421, OF, WHCF, DDEL.

[25]Eisenhower consulted frequently with his brother Milton on important

The attention Eisenhower and his advisers gave to the Seventh Fleet announcement particularly illustrates concern for signals. Eisenhower was aware of the effect his announcement might have internationally, writing in his memoirs:

> The practical value of the announcement was simply this: like my visit to Korea, it put the Chinese Communists on notice that the days of stalemate were numbered; that the Korean War would either end or extend beyond Korea. It thus helped, I am convinced, to bring that war to a finish.[26]

Minnich writes that the announcement was proposed as early as the *Helena* meetings and that it was "part of Secretary Dulles' thinking no later than June 1952." Clearly, then, the announcement was the result of substantial consideration. Dulles made sure the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) approved the wording of the announcement, thus taking into account the views of experts who would be especially alert to potential signals. Dulles even told Hughes that if Eisenhower decided to delay the speech, the Seventh Fleet announcement would have to be made separately, thus demonstrating his awareness of the signal it would convey. As Dulles said, "This is the psychological moment, and if we wait, we'll get into prolonged discussion, and the whole thing will bog down."[27]

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presidential decisions and events. For Milton Eisenhower's role in this drafting process, see Galambos, ed. The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, vol. 14, The Presidency: The Middle Way (forthcoming), 36-38. Also see Hughes' diary notes, 29 January 1953-1 February 1953 entries, Box 1, Hughes Papers, Princeton University.

[26]Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 123.

[27]Minnich, "Notes on the background and preparation of the State of the Union Message, 1953," 27 February 1953, p. 3, "Eisenhower, Dwight D." folder, Box 1, Hughes Papers, Princeton University; Hughes, 23 January 1953 diary entry, Box 1, ibid.

Kennedy's Drafting Processes

Kennedy's drafting processes employed far less consultation than Eisenhower's. Kennedy completely ignored certain advisory groups such as the NSC, instead working mainly with Sorensen, who has been described as Kennedy's "alter ego." Kennedy first mentioned the inaugural address to Sorensen in November, but at that time he simply gave a general description of what the speech should be:

> He wanted it short. He wanted it focused on foreign policy. He did not want it to sound partisan, pessimistic or critical of his predecessor. He wanted neither the customary cold war rhetoric about the Communist menace nor any weasel words that Khrushchev might misinterpret. And he wanted it to set a tone for the era about to begin.[28]

Kennedy did ask Sorensen in December to request suggestions from various important political figures, and Sorensen sent telegrams stating, "We are particularly interested in specific themes and in language to articulate these themes, whether it takes one page or ten pages." But soliciting suggestions was hardly equivalent to discussing the speech in a structured forum.[29]

Kennedy and Sorensen did not begin actual drafting of the speech until January 1961, just a few weeks before inauguration. After Sorensen prepared an

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[28]Sorensen, Kennedy, 240. Patrick Anderson uses the phrase "alter ego" in discussing Sorensen's role in the Kennedy administration in The Presidents' Men, 331-59.

[29]See documents in "Inaugural Address: Memoranda, Etc.," Box 62, Sorensen Papers, JFKL. People to whom Sorensen sent telegrams included several of Kennedy's appointees-to-be, including Ambassador to the United Nations Adlai E. Stevenson, Treasury Secretary Douglas C. Dillon, and Secretary of State Dean Rusk.

initial draft, the two worked together on the speech in Palm Beach, Florida, where Kennedy's father had a house. Sorensen writes that "no Kennedy speech ever underwent so many drafts. Each paragraph was reworded, reworked, and reduced." The examples Sorensen gives demonstrate concern for rhetorical effect, but they do not suggest attention to possible signals. For instance, Kennedy and Sorensen replaced "If the fruits of cooperation prove sweeter than the dregs of suspicion" with "If a beachhead of cooperation can push back the jungle of suspicion." Kennedy did receive some suggestions that illustrated concern for signals when he returned to Washington a few days before the inauguration: columnist Walter Lippmann suggested, for example, that Kennedy use the word "adversary," not enemy," when referring to the Communist bloc. But in general, the drafting process afforded little opportunity for systematic consideration of signals.[30]

Like the dog that did not bark of Sherlock Holmes fame, Kennedy's drafting processes are significant for what was absent from them, particularly Kennedy's complete failure to review either speech with his national security team as a whole. This was especially important with respect to the alarming language in his state of the union message. That language was partly a response to statements

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[30]Sorensen, Kennedy, 240-43. Also see Evelyn Lincoln, My Twelve Years With John F. Kennedy (New York: David McKay, 1965), 219-22. Sorensen writes that "actual drafting [of the inaugural address] did not get under way until the week before it was due." In an interview he explained that this meant more than a week before inauguration but not by much. Interview with Sorensen, 19 January 1996.

that Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev had made in a private meeting of Soviet ideologists and propagandists on January 6, 1961. Khrushchev had declared that "wars of liberation" in developing nations would result in more communist countries, and that the Soviet Union would wholly support those efforts.[31]

When Kennedy read the condensed version of Khrushchev's speech, released by the Kremlin two days before his inauguration, he became deeply concerned. He called for a detailed analysis of the speech, which he then circulated among the top fifty officials in his administration with instructions to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest." Given the importance Kennedy attached to this speech, he would have benefitted from convening his top national security officials to discuss the speech, its implications, and what his response, if any, should be. The U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, Llewellyn Thompson, had been sending Kennedy numerous cables on Khrushchev, including one in which he wrote that the "wars of liberation" speech illustrated only one side of a complex figure. Thompson also said Khrushchev's belligerent remarks were intended to appeal to communist China, not anger the United States. Had Kennedy discussed these possibilities in a structured setting with his advisers, he might well have decided to tone down some of his ominous rhetoric.[32]

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[31]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 60; NYT, 19 January 1961. Excerpts from Khrushchev's speech, including the section in which he discusses "wars of liberation," are in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 15 and 22 February 1961.

[32]Thompson's telegrams are in "USSR Security, 1/61-5/61," Box 125A, POF, JFKL. We know that Kennedy saw these telegrams because they are marked with

Instead, Kennedy himself wrote the provocative language that went into the speech the weekend before it was due. He did not discuss this language with his national security adviser, McGeorge Bundy, much less the entire NSC. While Kennedy did request suggestions from his Secretary of State Dean Rusk and Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, those recommendations focused not on the rhetoric of the address but on such substantive issues as the need for an immediate increase in military tools.[33]

"President has seen" in General Andrew J. Goodpaster's handwriting. Goodpaster served Eisenhower as staff secretary and continued into the Kennedy administration, at Kennedy's request, until April 1961.

Also see Stewart Alsop, "Kennedy's Grand Strategy," Saturday Evening Post (31 March 1962): 11-16; David Halberstam, The Best and the Brightest (New York: Random House, 1972), 122; and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Robert Kennedy and His Times (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1978), 422-24. Alsop writes that Kennedy did not circulate Khrushchev's speech until January 1962. But numerous historians and former Kennedy officials, including Michael Beschloss, McGeorge Bundy, and Theodore Sorensen, say that Kennedy did so in 1961, which likely means that Alsop's article contains a typographical error.

[33]Discussion with McGeorge Bundy, 2 April 1992, graduate seminar, Politics Department, Princeton University; memoranda, Sorensen to McNamara and Rusk, 23 January 1961, plus two drafts of speech, Box 63, Sorensen Papers, JFKL; Sorensen, Kennedy, 292; and Hugh Sidey, John F. Kennedy, President, rev. ed. (New York: Atheneum, 1964), 8. In 1992, Bundy said the NSC did not participate in drafting Kennedy's state of the union message. More recently, he said he "would be surprised" if he did not see a draft of the speech before its presentation. Sorensen also said he thought Bundy saw the speech beforehand. (Interviews with Bundy and Sorensen, 3 January 1996 and 19 January 1996.) But seeing the speech is not the same as reviewing and debating the possible effects of particular statements. Kennedy may have shown his speech to various advisers, but he did not conduct the more substantial editing sessions with them that Eisenhower did with his advisers in preparing his first two speeches.

Aside from Kennedy's concerns about Khrushchev's "wars of liberation" speech, the president also had domestic political reasons for adopting a grave tone in his state of the union message. Given the narrow margin by which he won election--less than 120,000 votes--Kennedy knew he did not have the popularity and public confidence of his predecessor. As Beschloss writes:

> Kennedy wished to vindicate his campaign charges that Eisenhower had been too complacent about the Soviet danger. With his slender victory margin, he needed to build national support that would help him to push his defense, foreign policy, and other programs through Congress. He knew Americans were more likely to rally to him in an atmosphere of mounting world crisis.[34]

In short, Kennedy may have been preoccupied with domestic political constraints. Still, his failure to review his foreboding remarks with his national security team prevented him from seeing that rhetoric that might appeal to his domestic audience might also prove to be far more provocative to Soviet leaders.

SOVIET RESPONSES TO THE SPEECHES

Just as the two presidents' drafting processes were very different, so too was Soviet reaction to the speeches. Neither of Eisenhower's speeches elicited a significant response from Soviet leaders. While Soviet newspapers reported Eisenhower's inauguration, they offered no commentary on his inaugural address. After Eisenhower's state of the union message, Pravda stated that his announcement about the Seventh Fleet indicated "a policy of widening aggression,

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[34]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 64.

carried out by the ruling hierarchy of the United States." Aside from this stereotypical Cold War language, however, the Soviets did not pursue the issue. It did not mark a critical moment in U.S.-Soviet relations.[35]

Some students of American foreign policy might argue that Eisenhower should have used his initial speeches to encourage some form of accommodation with the Soviet Union. But that was not Eisenhower's purpose. As he noted in his diary a few days before his inauguration, "Above all, I don't want to give the Soviets the idea they have us on the run." Furthermore, bland rhetoric on Eisenhower's part certainly was preferable to provocative rhetoric, particularly when internal Soviet politics at the time are considered. While details remain obscure, it is evident today that Soviet leader Joseph Stalin was about to embark on another major purge of alleged traitors in the Communist party. Given Stalin's unpredictable personality, Eisenhower's cautious approach seems fitting. Of course, it also now is known that Stalin became gravely ill in February 1953, and his death and subsequent internal disarray in the Soviet Union probably would have rendered even provocative signals from the United States moot. But U.S. leaders

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[35]A State Department intelligence report summarizing foreign-press reactions to Eisenhower's inaugural address noted that "in Russia there has been no direct comment on the inaugural address of President Eisenhower from either the press or radio of Moscow, although it has taken note of the inaugural ceremony. There was no editorial reaction to the speech." See Intelligence Report, 30 January 1953, "Eisenhower, Dwight D." folder, Box 1, Hughes Papers, Princeton University. For the limited Soviet reaction to Eisenhower's state of the union message, see Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 21 March 1953.

did not know much about what was happening in the Soviet Union when Stalin died, which makes Eisenhower's cautious strategy all the more appropriate.[36]

Soviet leaders were much more alert to possible signals when Kennedy gave his initial speeches. While Khrushchev made no public response to Kennedy's inaugural address, he privately seemed enthusiastic about the prospect of building a relationship with the new U.S. president. The day after Kennedy's address, Khrushchev broke two of his diplomatic rules: he telephoned U.S. ambassador Thompson at the American embassy, which he had never done before, and he asked Thompson to come in for a meeting, even though it was Saturday and Khrushchev almost never held formal meetings on weekends. This meeting marked the first private session Thompson had had with Khrushchev in months. Khrushchev said that while Kennedy's speech "obviously represented a different point of view from his own, he saw several constructive things in it," according to a subsequent telegram from Thompson. Khrushchev also said he would ask Soviet newspapers to print the full text of Kennedy's speech, which they did. Thus, despite the militant rhetoric that marked part of Kennedy's inaugural address, Khrushchev seemed to be responding only to the conciliatory language, hoping for the possibility of better U.S.-Soviet relations.[37]

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[36]Eisenhower, 16 January 1953 diary entry, The Eisenhower Diaries, 225; Adam B. Ulam, The Communists: The Story of Power and Lost Illusions, 1948-1991 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1992), chap. 3 passim.

[37]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 49-56; Thompson to State Department, 1/21/61,

If Khrushchev found Kennedy's inaugural address encouraging, he must have been greatly disappointed with the president's first state of the union message. Consider Khrushchev's overtures to Kennedy over the ten days between Kennedy's inauguration and his state of the union message. Khrushchev had sent Kennedy a congratulatory telegram on inauguration day, in which he had expressed hope for a "fundamental improvement in relations between our countries." Less than a week later, Khrushchev had authorized the release of the two U.S. RB-47 pilots who had been captured and held in the Soviet Union since the previous July. The Eisenhower administration had asked Soviet officials to release the pilots, but Khrushchev purposely waited until after the November 1960 election so that the action would help Kennedy, not Nixon. As Khrushchev told Kennedy later in 1961, this had been the Soviet leader's way of casting his vote for Kennedy. Shortly after the RB-47 pilots were released, another U.S. reconnaissance plane had violated Soviet airspace over the Karsk Sea. But Khrushchev had not publicized this incident, instead accepting Kennedy's private promise that it would not happen again.[38]

"USSR Security, 1/61-5/61," Box 125A, POF, JFKL; Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 15 February 1961.

[38]Khrushchev's telegram to Kennedy is reprinted in PPOP, 1961, 3. Also see Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 54-59. In his memoirs, Khrushchev recalls telling Kennedy about how the Soviets "voted" for him. See Khrushchev Remembers, trans. and ed. Strobe Talbott, vol. 1 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1970), 458.

Finally, as noted earlier, Khrushchev had ensured that Soviet papers printed the full text of Kennedy's inaugural address. After all that, to hear Kennedy talk of increasing U.S. military forces and preparing for an "hour of maximum danger" had to have been an unpleasant surprise. Ever since the U-2 episode in May 1960, when the Soviets had captured an American spy plane in Soviet airspace, Khrushchev had faced a barrage of domestic criticism for his attempts to reach some sort of accommodation with the United States. To maintain political power, he needed to justify those efforts by showing that there would be improved relations with the new U.S. president. But the harsh language in Kennedy's state of the union message may well have dashed the Soviet leader's hopes for reducing Cold War tensions. Certainly the speech preceded the most intense and potentially lethal period of superpower confrontation in the Cold War.[39]

Because records of the Soviet side during the Cold War are still emerging, it is difficult to assess definitively Soviet reactions at this time. It certainly would be a stretch to say that Kennedy's state of the union message caused the difficult U.S.-Soviet relations that followed. The Bay of Pigs invasion, for example, sent a

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[39]Michael Beschloss writes that Khrushchev "almost surely thought Kennedy's state of the union address a deliberate slap in the face." See Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 64. For a similar view on Khrushchev's reaction, see William J. Tompson, Khrushchev: A Political Life (London: Macmillan, 1995), 232. On Khrushchev's domestic problems after the U-2 incident, see Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 44-45; and James G. Richter, Khrushchev's Double Bind: International Pressures and Domestic Coalition Politics (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), chap. 6 passim. An excellent analysis of the circumstances surrounding the fateful U-2 flight and its aftermath is Beschloss, Mayday: Eisenhower: Khrushchev and the U-2 Affair (New York: Harper & Row, 1986).

much stronger signal to Khrushchev about U.S. intentions. Nevertheless, Kennedy's speech may have led Khrushchev to view subsequent U.S. actions more suspiciously. Beschloss proposes that the speech was the first in an escalating sequence of problems between the two leaders that led to the grim confrontation between them during the June summit meeting in Vienna; the Kennedy administration's announcement in the fall that rather than there being a missile gap in favor of the Soviet Union, the United States was overwhelmingly ahead in arms; and even Khrushchev's attempt in 1962 to redress that imbalance by putting missiles in Cuba.[40]

CONCLUSION

The four presidential addresses analyzed here and their drafting processes provide strong evidence that George's prescription for multiple advocacy in presidential foreign policy decision making also can improve the creation of public rhetoric. Multiple advocacy enabled Eisenhower to consider how different audiences might interpret his remarks and, consequently, what signals his speeches might convey, particularly to Soviet leaders. Kennedy's informal advisory processes, in contrast, lacked the systematic discussions needed to examine

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[40]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 149-50; Greenstein, "Coming to Terms With Kennedy," Reviews in American History 20 (1992): 101. For Khrushchev's impression of Kennedy after the Bay of Pigs invasion, see Arkady N. Shevchenko, Breaking With Moscow (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 110.

speeches for possible signals. The question of how Kennedy's remarks would be received in the Kremlin received insufficient attention.

Multiple advocacy can, however, have a significant tradeoff for speech writing, namely that institutionalized debate about speech content can result in rhetorically flawed speeches. Drafting by committee sacrifices eloquence in the process, as is most clearly seen in comparing Eisenhower's and Kennedy's inaugural addresses. Eisenhower frankly admitted his lack of interest in rhetorical style, writing in his diary before the inauguration, "I don't care much about the words if I can convey the ideas accurately." Kennedy, in contrast, did care about the words, and he awed listeners throughout the nation and around the world with his inspirational language. When one considers that the current president gave an eighty-one minute state of the union message in 1995--almost twice the length of Kennedy's forty-three minute address in 1961--Kennedy's concise and elegant rhetoric seems particularly appealing.[41]

Furthermore, rhetorically masterful speeches can help to mobilize domestic support for a president's policies, thereby improving his political standing. While Eisenhower did not need to boost his domestic image upon entering office, Kennedy certainly did, given his narrow margin of victory. His inspirational language may have helped him in that respect.

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[41]DDE, 16 January 1953 diary entry, The Eisenhower Diaries, 225; NYT, 26 January 1995.

Nevertheless, if policy makers were to make a choice between elegant but provocative rhetoric and rhetoric that avoids sending hostile signals, they almost certainly would choose the latter. Kennedy's speeches are memorable today because of the exceptional chemistry of his collaboration with Sorensen. But that chemistry was potentially explosive in the context of Cold War signalling.

This point is even more important in the post-Cold War era, when international relations are no longer structured by a continuing conflict between the United States and the former Soviet Union. As a result, leaders must consider potential signals in their speeches for a multiplicity of targets. Thus, a failure today to employ multiple advocacy in producing presidential public communications could be even more potentially explosive in terms of political signalling than it was during the near half-century of the Cold War.

CHAPTER THREE

The Development of the New Look

Not only does multiple advocacy characterize Eisenhower's initial speech-writing processes, it also is evident in the development of his New Look strategy, which is of both substantive and procedural interest. Substantively, the reliance of the New Look on nuclear deterrence instead of large conventional force levels is significant because it represents what Gaddis has called an asymmetrical approach to addressing the national security interests of the United States. Procedurally, the development of the New Look is of interest in that it contained what was perhaps the most systematic process of advisory deliberations in the history of the modern presidency.

At least at the declaratory level, the New Look marked a sharp departure from the previous administration's national security strategy. Republicans had sharply criticized President Truman's containment policy for both failing to prevent the spread of communism around the world and, after the onset of the Korean War, for drastically increasing military expenditures. As the leader of the Republican party, Eisenhower needed to distance himself and his administration publicly from Truman's policies, even though his approach bore some resemblance to Truman's initial containment strategy.[1]

I presented an early version of this chapter at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association in 1994. I am grateful to my co-panelists for their comments and suggestions. I also am grateful to Jennifer L. Ottavinia for sharing her extremely helpful undergraduate thesis on Eisenhower and Project

In developing the New Look, Eisenhower employed an extraordinary variety of formal and informal planning processes. Included were a number of deliberative sessions with his top administration officials, beginning even before he took office, as well as more structured discussions in the formal setting of the NSC. The most distinctive part of this process was a policy exercise of unprecedented comprehensiveness known as Project Solarium, in which three teams of national security experts examined three sharply contrasting possible Cold War strategies for the United States. These task force reports set the framework for subsequent debates on national security strategy, culminating in Eisenhower's approval of the New Look in October 1953.

Project Solarium and the framing of the New Look provide a unique opportunity to examine Alexander George's proposal for employing multiple advocacy in foreign policy making. In tracing the development of the New Look, this chapter focuses particularly on how that process meets the requirements of multiple advocacy. In so doing, it also addresses the more general question of whether multiple advocacy improves the quality of presidential decision making.

Solarium with me.

Funding from the Eisenhower World Affairs Institute, the Research Program in International Security at Princeton University, and Princeton's Center for Domestic and Comparative Policy Studies supported this research.

[1]See Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, 127-28, for a discussion of Eisenhower's views on Truman's containment strategy.

I begin by reviewing the pre-history of the New Look, examining both Eisenhower's early views on national security policy and campaign debates in 1952 on the subject. I then examine Eisenhower's initial reviews of national security policy during his first few months in office. Having set the stage for Project Solarium, I then turn to the exercise itself and to the subsequent steps that led to the final adoption of the New Look. I conclude by analyzing the effect of multiple advocacy on Eisenhower's national security policy-making process.

PRE-HISTORY OF THE NEW LOOK

Before examining the actual development of the New Look, it is important to examine the major positions on national security policy that predated the strategy and helped to shape it. Eisenhower had a well-developed set of views on national security by the time he became president, based on his extensive military experience during World War II and his subsequent responsibilities as Army Chief of Staff, informal chairman of the JCS, and Supreme Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Also of importance to the New Look was the Truman administration's initial containment strategy and its augmentation of that strategy after the onset of the Korean War. Finally, Republican critiques of containment, which became particularly forceful after the Korean War began, served to influence the development of the New Look.

Eisenhower's commitment to the basic premises of the New Look existed long before he became president. In the immediate post-World War II period,

when the former Supreme Allied Commander became Army Chief of Staff, he had regular discussions with Navy Secretary James Forrestal about the need for Americans to recognize that fighting external threats to the country could create internal threats to the nation's survival. Seven years later, by which time he had become the first Supreme Commander of NATO at President Truman's request, this issue continued to be of great concern to Eisenhower. Despite his association with the Truman administration, he was alarmed at its newly released budget estimates. In a January 1952 diary entry, he criticized the $14 billion projected deficit and the plan to spend $65 billion on "military preparedness," noting "the danger of internal deterioration through the annual expenditure of unconscionable sums on a program of indefinite duration, extending far into the future."[2]

Aside from what he viewed as the Democrats' runaway spending on defense, Eisenhower fundamentally agreed with Truman's national security policy, particularly the containment doctrine. Containment, which had its practical application in such policies as the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, sought to resist the influence and expansion of the Soviet Union beyond its borders by safeguarding key economic and military areas, particularly in Western Europe. Containment was intellectually grounded in the writings of George F. Kennan, particularly his famous "Long Telegram" from Moscow in February 1946, which

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[2]Eisenhower, 22 January 1952 diary entry, published in The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, vol. 13, NATO and the Campaign of 1952, 896-902.

warned of the post-war Soviet threat, and his pseudonymous article,"The Sources of Soviet Conduct," published in the July 1947 issue of Foreign Affairs.[3]

Despite the Truman administration's efforts at containment, the United States suffered a series of severe Cold War setbacks in 1949, most notably the loss of China to communism and the Soviet development of the atomic bomb. Such events prompted Truman to authorize a comprehensive review of basic national security policy in early 1950. A joint State-Defense committee, led by Paul H. Nitze, who had replaced Kennan as head of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, drafted the document, which would come to be known as NSC 68.[4]

NSC 68 depicted the situation vis-a-vis the Soviet Union with far greater urgency than Kennan's analyses had, concluding that the United States needed to increase its defense expenditures drastically to prepare for a possible war with the Soviet Union. Working under the assumption that the Soviets would be able to inflict unacceptable damage on the United States within a few years, NSC 68 said the U.S. economy could support higher military costs. Less than three months after Nitze's committee submitted its report to Truman, the United States became

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[3]Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, chaps. 1, 2 passim. Kennan's "Long Telegram" is in FRUS, 1946, vol. 6, Eastern Europe; the Soviet Union, 696-709. "The Sources of Soviet Conduct" appears in Foreign Affairs 25 (July 1947): 566-82.

[4]Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, chap. 4 passim.

embroiled in the Korean War. Both Korea and NSC 68 prompted the massive military budgets and deficits that Eisenhower deplored.[5]

In part because of his concern about the growing deficit, Eisenhower decided to run for president in 1952 as a Republican. The possibility of his candidacy had been a topic of great interest since his return from Europe after World War II. The Democratic party tried to draft Eisenhower as its presidential candidate in 1948, and Truman even wrote to him in late 1951 to ask if he had any intention to run the following year. The positions Eisenhower had held during Truman's tenure linked him closely to the Democratic administration's national security policy. Nevertheless, while Eisenhower did support some of Truman's policies, particularly the president's commitment to NATO, he would not accept that the United States could afford unlimited costs in the area of national security.[6]

Eisenhower also, however, had disagreements with Republican positions on national security. The Korean War, stalemated by mid-1951, had provoked a major hue and cry among Republican leaders, who blamed Truman's containment policy and proposed alternative Cold War strategies. These fell roughly under the categories of isolationism and liberation.

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[5]Ibid; May, American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC-68, introduction; Pach and Richardson, The Presidency of Dwight D. Eisenhower, 76-77. The text of NSC 68 is in the May volume, 23-82.

[6]Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 43-47.

Some Republicans--whose views in effect echoed those of the 1930s isolationists--advocated a reduced role for the United States in world affairs. Senator Robert A. Taft (R-Oh.), who was widely viewed as the party's leading presidential candidate, led this group. Before Eisenhower left the United States to become Supreme Commander of NATO in early 1951, he met with Taft and asked for his commitment to the organization. But Taft refused to support either NATO or the principles of collective security. The meeting so angered Eisenhower that afterward he ripped up a draft press statement in which he had planned to announce his absolute refusal to run for president. Although he had issued similar denials before, he decided that issuing a blanket statement prior to the 1952 presidential campaign would play into the hands of isolationists.[7]

Other Republicans supported the doctrine of liberation. This group included John Foster Dulles, Eisenhower's future secretary of state, who was widely recognized as the party's elder statesman on foreign policy. In the spring of 1952, Dulles sent Eisenhower a two-page memorandum on foreign policy, which appeared in Life magazine that May. Arguing that any effort to match Soviet conventional capabilities would lead the country into bankruptcy, Dulles declared that the United States instead should depend on its air and nuclear superiority to

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[7]Ambrose, Eisenhower, vol. 1, Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect, 467, 495-99. Eisenhower writes in his memoirs, "I believed in the NATO concept; to my mind, the future of Western civilization was dependent on its success." See Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 38. For an explanation of Taft's opposition to collective security, see Peter Lyon, Eisenhower: Portrait of the Hero (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), 441-43.

deter Soviet aggression. This proposal would come to be known as "massive retaliation," because of its implicit threat that nuclear weapons would be used to respond to conventional attacks on the United States or its allies. Once the government had established this policy, it could embark on a "political and moral initiative" to help the nations of Eastern Europe free themselves from Soviet control. Dulles did not advocate using military force, but he did recommend that the United States develop a "freedom program" for each country to encourage the "rollback" of communism.[8]

While Eisenhower agreed with the underlying principles of Dulles' proposals, especially reduction of military expenditures, he found some of the arguments to be oversimplified. As he wrote to Dulles:

> There is only one point that bothered me. . . . It is this: What should we do if Soviet *political* aggression, as in Czechoslovakia, successively chips away exposed portions of the free world? So far as our resulting economic situation is concerned, such an eventuality would be just as bad for us as if the area had been captured by force. To my mind, this is the case where the theory of "retaliation" falls down.

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[8]Surprisingly, Taft also supported liberation. While the senator opposed collective security, he envisioned a policy more sophisticated than a mere isolationist retreat to Fortress America. Taft's 1951 book, A Foreign Policy for Americans (New York: Doubleday, 1951), raised many of the concerns and proposals that Dulles presented in his spring 1952 memo to Eisenhower. Also see letter, Eisenhower to Dulles, 15 April 1952, The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, vol. 13, 1178-81, footnote four; Robert A. Divine, Eisenhower and the Cold War (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981), 13-14; Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, 127-29; Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 50; and John Foster Dulles, "A Policy of Boldness," Life 32 (19 May 1952), 146-60.

Based on his experience with NATO, Eisenhower argued that the United States needed to maintain sufficient conventional forces to encourage other countries to oppose communism.[9]

Dulles wrote back to Eisenhower, "You put your finger on a weak point in my presentation," and promised to make revisions. But similar problems arose when Dulles drafted the foreign-policy plank of the Republican platform. In trying to compose a statement that both Taft and Eisenhower would accept, Dulles wrote that the United States would be willing to use "retaliatory striking power" either to deter Soviet attack or to defeat it quickly if it occurred. Eisenhower angrily refused to let this phrase stand, saying that it promoted a form of isolationism in which the United States would reduce conventional forces around the world and rely only on the threat of nuclear attack to deter Soviet aggression. As he wrote to Dulles, "Exclusive reliance upon a mere power of retaliation is not a complete answer to the Soviet threat." Eisenhower then urged Dulles to make the final statement "one of positive, forward looking action and leadership in the promotion of collective security."[10]

Dulles was able to persuade the Republican platform committee to remove the disputed phrase, but committee members drafted other rhetoric that Eisenhower

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[9]Letter, Eisenhower to Dulles, 15 April 1952; Divine, Eisenhower and the Cold War, 14.

[10]Robert A. Divine, Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections, 1952-1960 (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), 30-36; letter, Eisenhower to Dulles, 20 June 1952, The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower, vol. 13, 1254-56.

disliked. The platform decried the Truman administration's "negative, futile, and immoral" containment policy for surrendering the initiative to the Soviets and causing the Korean War. The platform also pledged to "revive the contagious, liberating influences which are inherent in freedom." For the sake of party unity, Eisenhower countenanced these remarks.[11]

Eisenhower continued to encounter problems with fiery Republican rhetoric after his hard-fought victory over Taft at the Republican national convention in July. Dulles shocked both foreign and domestic audiences in August when he said: "What we should do is try to split the satellite states away from the control of a few men in Moscow. The only way to stop a head-on collision with the Soviet Union is to break it up from within." In another speech, Dulles called for Eastern European countries to rebel against Communist rule, and he discussed how the United States could help by encouraging resistance through radio broadcasts and air-dropping supplies to the rebels. An irate Eisenhower reminded Dulles afterward that the United States would employ only peaceful means to support liberation. In a speech of his own soon after, Eisenhower emphasized that his administration would "aid by every peaceful means, but only by peaceful means, the right to live in freedom." Thereafter, Eisenhower effectively banned references to liberation from his campaign.[12]

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[11]Divine, Foreign Policy and U.S. Presidential Elections, 1952-1960, 34-36.

[12]Ibid., 50-56.

Three broad positions, then, framed the national security agenda that Eisenhower faced after winning the November election in a landslide victory: isolationism, broadly defined; liberation of communist countries; and the Truman administration's containment policy, both initially and after the beginning of the Korean War. As we have seen, these positions had emerged from the contentious domestic politics of the Cold War, marked particularly by recriminations over the loss of China and the stalemated war in Korea. Consequently, Eisenhower would need to consider a wide range of interests in formulating his own basic national security policy.

FRAMING THE NEW LOOK: INITIAL STEPS

Virtually upon his election, Eisenhower began intensive consultations on national security policy, both informally with his top associates and more formally with the NSC. Consistent with Eisenhower's own thinking, these discussions focused on how to balance concerns about national security with concerns about the growing deficit. Not only did Eisenhower consult with his top national security and budget officials in this effort, he also brought in civilian consultants to advise the NSC. Based on these discussions, the Planning Board was able to prepare initial papers that set forth how the new administration's approach differed from its predecessor's. Perhaps even more importantly, in initiating such extensive and wide-ranging debates, Eisenhower was able both to see what his advisers thought

about national security policy and to begin to explain to them his own policy preferences.

Eisenhower led his administration's first national security policy planning exercise in the unconventional setting of a U.S. military cruiser in the Pacific Ocean. As discussed in chapter two, Eisenhower held a three-day series of meetings with his incoming Cabinet while travelling on the *U.S.S. Helena* from Korea to Pearl Harbor in December 1952. In addition to their speech-drafting contributions, the *Helena* meetings are significant because they allowed Eisenhower to discuss informally with his associates possible changes in national security policy. Eisenhower declared that maintaining current military programs over the "long haul" would turn the country into a "garrison state." He focused particularly on the need to consider the "great equation," which was how to maintain adequate military forces indefinitely without putting the country into severe debt.[13]

The ensuing discussions "broke a lot of new ground," according to Eisenhower's Attorney General Herbert Brownell. Another key Eisenhower aide, Treasury Secretary George M. Humphrey, remembered afterward that the group had extensive debates about national security policy, in which he and incoming Budget Director Joseph M. Dodge focused on how the country would pay for its military program, while Eisenhower, Dulles, and the JCS were more concerned

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[13]Douglas Kinnard, President Eisenhower and Strategy Management: A Study in Defense Politics (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1977), 7-8; Snyder, "The 'New Look' of 1953," 391-93.

with what the overall policy should be. More generally, Humphrey remarked of the meetings:

> We talked about everything you can think of that might in any way involve the things we were embarking upon--what our policies might be and all sorts of things. From the president's campaign promises and speeches--as background--we actually formulated most of our definite policies for the way we were to begin. And of course they took shape as time went on.[14]

Speech writer Emmet Hughes, who also attended the meetings, noted a more intangible but nonetheless important effect: "They provided time for the first serious communication, if not indeed their first introduction to one another, among some of the men who would most seriously shape the new administration's personality and achievement."[15]

Once in office, Eisenhower used the NSC as his primary forum for debates on national security policy. The lengthy memoranda of discussion that his NSC staff prepared after council meetings provide an invaluable record for observing the council's deliberations.[16] Throughout February and March, the NSC conducted

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[14]Interview with Herbert Brownell, 21 November 1994; George M. Humphrey and Herbert Hoover, Jr. joint oral history, 5 May 1964, John Foster Dulles Oral History Project, Mudd Library, Princeton University, 2-5. Journalist Robert Donovan, who was permitted to examine administration documents and interview top officials in the mid-1950s in connection with a book he was writing about Eisenhower, reached a similar conclusion about the *Helena* meetings, noting that they "crystallized the thinking that was to underlie the military policies of the new administration." See Donovan, Eisenhower: The Inside Story, 17.

[15]Hughes, The Ordeal of Power, 50.

[16]Selected memoranda of discussion from Eisenhower's 1953 NSC meetings and other important national security documents from his administration that year have been published in FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, pt. 1, National Security Affairs.

an extensive review of national security policy and its costs. On February 11, Eisenhower announced that the "great problem" his administration faced was "to discover a reasonable and respectable posture of defense." As he put it, "It may be possible to figure out a preparedness program that will give us a respectable position without bankrupting the nation." Treasury Secretary Humphrey echoed this view, saying that from now on the government must "pay its way," and insisting that all future policy recommendations include a cost estimate.[17]

Over the next several weeks, the NSC continued to address this issue, listening to briefings from various officials, such as Budget Director Dodge, and creating an ad hoc committee of civilian consultants to study the matter. Major differences between military and budget officials soon surfaced. On March 25, for example, the NSC heard a report from the JCS on the likely effects of proposed military reductions in the fiscal year (FY) 1954 and 1955 budgets. Each member of the JCS declared that the proposed reductions would dangerously limit his service's capabilities. Both Humphrey and Dodge objected strenuously to these conclusions, arguing that the United States could not continue its present defense posture unless it adopted "essentially totalitarian methods." Even Eisenhower seemed irked by the Chiefs' warnings, remarking that perhaps the NSC should

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[17]Memorandum to the NSC by the Executive Secretary (Lay), 6 February 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 223-31; memorandum of discussion at 131st NSC meeting, 11 February 1953, ibid., 236-37; editorial note, ibid., 244.

examine which would fatally hurt the country first, national bankruptcy or national destruction.[18]

The report by the civilian consultants, presented to the NSC in a special all-day meeting on March 31, provided a more optimistic assessment, stating that the country could both maintain a sufficient national security posture and balance the federal budget as early as FY54. Interestingly, although Eisenhower had expressed annoyance with JCS arguments for high military expenditures, he did not agree with the consultants' case for reducing national security costs either. Eisenhower said the nation should move in the direction of a balanced budget, but he insisted that it could not suddenly terminate such programs as military assistance to developing nations.[19]

After a lengthy debate over specific expenditures, in which Eisenhower, the NSC, and the civilian consultants all actively participated, Defense Secretary Wilson proposed a way to reduce defense expenditures. If the United States rejected NSC-68's assumption of a fixed "D-day," and instead based its planning on a "floating D-Day," it might be possible to cut military expenditures in the FY54 budget by $5 billion without hindering U.S. security interests. Wilson's suggestion was surprising because in just the previous NSC meeting, he had

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[18]Memorandum of discussion at 138th NSC meeting, 25 March 1953, ibid., 258-63.

[19]Memorandum of discussion at special NSC meeting, 31 March 1953, ibid., 264-81.

seemed quite reluctant to support reductions in national security expenditures. The defense secretary's change in attitude clearly pleased the president, who declared that the proposal was "even better than he had hoped for." Humphrey also expressed approval of the plan, as did the civilian consultants. Thus, through extensive debate and consultation, Eisenhower succeeded not only in getting the budget he wanted but also in getting his advisers to accept that budget, even if they had other policy preferences.[20]

After meeting with the civilian consultants, Eisenhower decided to have the decisions he had reached with his NSC put into writing. On April 8, the council reviewed a draft policy statement prepared by the Planning Board, NSC 149. This statement stressed the importance of a healthy economy for U.S. national security in its very first point:

> The survival of the free world depends on the maintenance by the United States of a sound, strong economy. For the United States to continue a course of federal spending in excess of federal income will weaken and eventually destroy that economy. As rapidly as in consistent with continuing our leadership in the free world, and barring an emergency, the United States will annually balance its federal expenditures with its federal income.

By assuming a "floating" rather than a "specific" D-day, the administration would be able to reduce its military expenditures. NSC 149 also emphasized, however, that budget balancing could not come at the expense of national security, noting that "because the United States has commitments and responsibilities which, in the

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[20]Ibid.

interest of the national security, must be met in the near future, it can approach only gradually a balancing of its federal budget."[21]

Despite its earlier approval of these general points in March, the NSC did not immediately adopt NSC 149. Instead, it conducted an intensive examination of the statement at three NSC meetings, on April 8, April 22, and April 28. In the course of these meetings, participants expressed and debated numerous differences of opinion, most of which Eisenhower ultimately resolved. For example, on April 22, Under Secretary of State Walter Bedell ("Beetle") Smith, stated that his department agreed with the substance of the first part of the document, but it had many concerns about wording in specific instances. Eisenhower then suggested that the NSC approve that section with the understanding that editorial changes would be made. In another instance, budget director Dodge declared that the Mutual Security Agency should reduce its requested appropriation. Eisenhower disagreed, and when Dodge pressed the point, the president suggested that this subject be deferred until the agency director could address the concerns. After the director, Harold Stassen, responded to Dodge's misgivings at the next meeting, the NSC approved the figures that Eisenhower supported.[22]

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[21]Draft memorandum prepared for the NSC, undated, ibid., 281-86.

[22]Memorandum of discussion at 139th NSC meeting, 8 April 1953, ibid., 287-90; memorandum of discussion at 140th NSC meeting, 22 April 1953, ibid., 291-301; memorandum of discussion at 141st NSC meeting, 28 April 1953, ibid., 302-305.

Finally, at the end of April, Eisenhower approved the revised version of the policy statement, now called NSC 149/2. Apart from some changes in wording, its substance echoed that of the original document discussed earlier. Under the direction of Eisenhower, the NSC had established that it would prepare defense budgets with an eye to the long haul, not in anticipation of a fixed D-Day, and that it would seek to balance the budget while ensuring the nation's security.[23]

Less than two months later, the NSC reviewed another document prepared by the Planning Board, NSC 153, which restated the national security policy of the Truman administration as modified by NSC 149/2. The Planning Board did not attempt any wholescale review of Truman's policy; rather, it aimed simply to consolidate that policy with the changes made by NSC 149/2. As the newly appointed director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, Robert R. Bowie, who drafted the document, explained to Dulles:

> Whereas the emphasis of the first three papers [from the Truman administration] was centered around the direct threat to our national security posed by the Soviet Union, NSC 149/2 placed greater emphasis on the threats to our economy of a long-sustained cold war and the necessity of balancing federal expenditures with federal income. . . . NSC 153 is, therefore, a summary in that it sets forth policies previously contained in four separate papers; it is a "restatement" in that it attempts to synthesize policies relating to an external threat on the one hand and an internal threat on the other.

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[23]NSC 149/2: "Basic National Security Policies and Programs in Relation to Their Costs," 28 April 1953, ibid., 305-16.

Bowie added that "this paper is not the result of a restudy, or review, of basic policy by the Planning Board."[24]

As with NSC 149/2, numerous advisers reviewed the Planning Board's "restatement" of national security policy. The JCS recommended adoption of NSC 153 after Defense Secretary Wilson asked them to study it. On June 9, the NSC went over the statement in great detail, carefully analyzing possible implications of different phrases. While Eisenhower actively engaged in this debate, hearing and responding to arguments that differed from his own views, he made clear that the final decision lay in his hands alone. As he reminded his advisers, the United States was not going to be "frozen to certain positions in advance of events," but instead "would have to decide its position in the light of the situation existing at the time." After further debate, the council agreed to adopt NSC 153.[25]

Within five months of entering office, then, Eisenhower already had approved two major statements on national security policy based on extensive discussions with his NSC and other advisers. One statement focused on the need to maintain both an adequate military defense and a healthy economy, while the other incorporated this focus into the policy statements of the Truman

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[24]Memorandum by the director of the Policy Planning Staff (Bowie) to the Secretary of State, 8 June 1953, ibid., 370-71; interview with Robert R. Bowie, 30 November 1994.

[25]Memorandum by the JCS to the Secretary of Defense (Wilson), 5 June 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 372-73; Memorandum of discussion at 149th NSC meeting, 9 June 1953, ibid., 373-78. For the text of the approved policy, NSC 153/1, see ibid., 379-86.

administration. But these efforts did not address other major national security questions, namely the concerns about containment, isolationism, and liberation that had surfaced during the 1952 election. To address these issues, Eisenhower turned to Project Solarium.

PROJECT SOLARIUM

Eisenhower had several reasons for initiating an overall review of basic national security policy in 1953. Within his administration, he needed to establish his approach to national security. Within his party, he needed to settle the issues that had divided Republican leaders during the campaign. And more generally, the death of Stalin in March signified the end of an era for the Soviet Union. In light of this momentous event, it was particularly appropriate for the United States to reassess its Cold War strategy.[26]

According to Eisenhower's NSC assistant Robert Cutler, it was John Foster Dulles who first proposed a "thorough overhaul of the prior administration's basic national security policy." On a Sunday afternoon in the spring of 1953, Foster Dulles invited Cutler, Under Secretary of State Walter Bedell Smith, CIA director Allen Dulles, and Special Assistant to the President C.D. Jackson to his home to discuss informally some of his national security concerns. Cutler writes in his

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[26]I am grateful to Robert Bowie for explaining how Stalin's death marked the end of an era and why, therefore, it served as an additional stimulus for Project Solarium. Interview with Bowie, 30 November 1994. Also see Richard H. Immerman, "Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist: An Agonizing Reappraisal," Diplomatic History 14 (Summer 1990): 319-42, especially 335-36.

memoirs that Foster Dulles outlined three possible strategies so impressively that his listeners urged him to make the presentation to the president. The four men met with Eisenhower the following day in the White House Solarium--hence the name of the project--and the president approved Foster Dulles' proposal.[27]

A recently declassified NSC memorandum confirms Cutler's story but also indicates that it was Eisenhower who determined how Project Solarium actually would be organized. On May 8, Foster Dulles, Treasury Secretary Humphrey, and most likely Cutler, met with Eisenhower to discuss the project. Dulles made several points about the U.S. situation, including the following: time was not working in favor of the United States, communism was spreading rapidly in developing countries, and the current U.S. national security policy would not prevent the Soviets from chipping away at the free world. He then proposed a number of actions, such as "drawing a line" around the free world and warning the Soviets that crossing that line would be considered an act of war. Dulles also suggested that the United States should attempt to improve its prestige by having some "successes" in the Cold War.[28]

Eisenhower rejected Dulles' proposal to "draw a line," but he did agree that the United States needed to change its present policy and make a convincing case

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[27]Robert Cutler, No Time for Rest (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1965), 307-309.

[28]"Solarium Project," 8 May 1953, "Project Solarium" (3), Box 15, Executive Secretary's Subject File Series, NSC Staff Papers, 1948-61, DDEL. The memorandum does not identify an author, but it most likely was prepared by Cutler.

for the course of action it would adopt. To meet this need, he said, the administration should conduct a major policy exercise. As the memorandum of record says:

> The president said he would like to see set up some teams of bright young fellows, each team to take an alternative, each team to tackle its alternative with a real belief in it just the way a good advocate tackles a law case--and then when the teams are prepared, each team should put on in some White House room, with maps, charts, all basic supporting figures and estimates, just what each alternative would mean in terms of goal, risk, cost in money and men and world relations.

In making this proposal, Eisenhower outlined the basic features of Project Solarium. Clearly convinced of the need to conduct an intensive review before approving a major policy change, he noted that "against such a background, the NSC would be qualified to come to a decision" about basic national security policy.[29]

After this meeting, the organization of Project Solarium began in earnest. The next day, Cutler wrote to Bedell Smith that "upon the president's direction and as a matter of urgency, the alternatives outlined in the attachment will be explored and presented to the National Security Council. The undertaking may be referred to as 'Solarium.'" Cutler, Bedell Smith, and Allen Dulles would serve as the working committee for the project. Their responsibilities would include organizing a panel to draft the "terms of reference" to be examined for each of three

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[29]Ibid. I am grateful to Mr. Bowie for explaining to me how Cutler's memoirs are consistent with the May 8 memorandum. Interview with Bowie, 30 November 1994.

alternatives and forming the task forces that would research and present those alternatives to the NSC. Because this was to be a highly classified exercise, the cover story was that a "Board of Review on National Security Education" would be conducting a study at the National War College.[30]

Over the next few weeks, the directing panel of Project Solarium developed specific instructions for each task force, completing this job by June 1. Alternative A proposed continuing the current policy of containment with some modification from NSC 149/2, namely that the administration also would seek to balance the federal budget. The primary goal, of course, would be to maintain the nation's security. Working under the assumption that time was on the side of the free world, this defensive strategy would aim to build strength in the free world to deter Soviet aggression until the Soviet system collapsed from internal weaknesses.[31]

Alternative B proposed "drawing a line" around areas in the world that the United States would not permit to fall to communism. The United States would make clear that it would not permit Soviet advancement beyond this line without risk of general war. This alternative bore some resemblance to the views of those Republicans who wanted to limit the U.S. role in world affairs, as it meant that the United States would no longer engage in peripheral wars. Instead, it would rely on

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[30]Memorandum for the Record by the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (Cutler), 9 May 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 323-26; Memorandum by the President to the Secretary of State, 20 May 1953, ibid., 349-54.

[31]Paper Prepared by the Directing Panel of Project Solarium, 1 June 1953, ibid., 360-66.

nuclear deterrence to prevent war, but if that did not inhibit Soviet aggression, it would consider the possibility of general war.

Alternative C proposed taking on a more offensive role in the Cold War, namely improving the free world's prestige by stepping up efforts to create dissension within the Soviet bloc. In so doing, the United States would aim to "roll back" communism in the Eastern European countries. A more contentious strategy than either A or B, this alternative built upon the case for liberation that many Republicans had made during the 1952 campaign.

The directing panel also briefly considered adding a fourth alternative of engaging in intensive negotiating efforts with the Soviet Union for a strict two-year period. The reasoning was that the United States would continue to have nuclear superiority for the next two years, and therefore it should take advantage of this ability to negotiate from a position of strength. But Cutler and Smith eliminated this option, deciding that it could be construed as recommending "preventive war" if negotiation attempts proved unsuccessful.[32]

The task forces began their work in early June and spent about five weeks researching their topics before making their final presentations to the NSC on July 16. General Andrew J. Goodpaster, who served on Task Force C and became Eisenhower's staff secretary in late 1954, recalls that the task forces followed an strenuous schedule: "My recollection is that we started at eight o'clock and broke

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[32]Ibid.; Snyder, "The 'New Look' of 1953," 408-409.

for lunch briefly, and for dinner. We might have an hour of exercise in the afternoon but then worked until about midnight and [did] that for about five weeks." When the task forces reported their conclusions in July, about forty officials were in attendance, including regular NSC members and advisers as well as other members of the executive branch and members of the National War College. Additionally, the task force participants numbered seven per group. For the entire day, this gathering of about sixty people devoted itself to reviewing and debating the alternatives presented in the task force reports.[33]

Ambassador Kennan, who chaired Task Force A, said later that his group supported essentially a modified version of the Truman administration's initial containment policy. Given Kennan's role in shaping that policy, the similarity was unsurprising. For the past few years, Republicans had sharply criticized Kennan's containment strategy, especially after the United States became embroiled in the Korean War. Under pressure from Dulles, Kennan resigned from the Foreign Service in early 1953. It was with some satisfaction, then, that Kennan presented his views to Eisenhower's NSC just a few months after he had left the administration:

> I derived, I must say, a certain amount of amusement from [Project Solarium], because I had to present our whole task force's report

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[33]Quotation from Goodpaster is in Project Solarium Oral History, 27 February 1988, p. 13, Box 93, John Foster Dulles Centennial Conference Papers, Seeley G. Mudd Library, Princeton University. Hereafter referred to as "PSOH." For a list of the people who attended the Project Solarium presentations, see Minutes of the 155th Meeting of the NSC, 16 July 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 394-96.

personally, and Foster Dulles sat at my feet and was thus instructed on what the policy ought to be toward the Soviet Union.[34]

While Task Force A concluded that the United States needed "significant improvements" in its national security policy, it stated that these changes could be made within the framework of NSC 153/1. According to Task Force A, the United States and the free world were far better off than the Soviet Union and its satellite states, and time was on the side of the United States. Nevertheless, although the risk of general war was low, a rapid demobilization of U.S. military forces would be most likely to invite aggression. The government would need to spend more money to ensure adequate security, and such expenditures were "well within U.S. sustained economic capabilities." The United States clearly had "the economic capacity to provide a high plateau of preparedness--certainly the program envisaged by Task Force A--over a sustained period." As the report said, "Stated in one sentence: The United States can afford to survive."[35]

Task Force B presented a unilateral approach to national security. It proposed that the United States draw a line around the NATO area and the Western Pacific, that it make clear to the Soviets that crossing this line would have

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[34]Kennan, PSOH, 5-6. Also see Kennan, Memoirs, vol. 2, 1950-1963 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), 181-82.

[35]"A Report to the National Security Council by Task Force 'A' of Project Solarium," 16 July 1953, 43-56. (I received copies of the task force reports from Fred Greenstein. They are available both in the Eisenhower Library and the National Archives.) In addition to Kennan, the members of Task Force A were: C. Tyler Wood, Rear Admiral H.P. Smith, Colonel George A. Lincoln, Colonel C.H. Bonesteel, III, Captain H.E. Sears, and John M. Maury, Jr.

dire consequences, namely nuclear war, and that it be prepared to act accordingly. This proposal would not replace current national security policy; indeed, the task force agreed with many of the recommendations made by Task Forces A and C. It merely modified those recommendations with one premise: "The warning of general war as the primary sanction against further Soviet-bloc aggression, under clearly defined circumstances, is the best means available for insuring the security of the United States, for the present and the foreseeable future." While Task Force B's recommendations would not reduce defense expenditures, they would serve to stabilize expenses and to get the most for one's money, or "more bang for the buck."[36]

Task Force C called for a more activist strategy by the United States to reestablish its primacy in the Cold War. Contrary to what Task Force A had said, Task Force C concluded that "time has been working against us," and that therefore "we must arrest, reverse the trend by positive action." It urged the United States to "seize the political initiative and operate aggressively against the Soviet bloc by waging a political offensive. Such a strategy would, while not designed to provoke war, *accept a substantial risk of war*, whenever justified by the gains to be achieved." (Italics added.) To meet these objectives, Task Force C proposed "military, economic, diplomatic, covert and propaganda" efforts. While

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[36]"A Report to the National Security Council by Task Force 'B' of Project Solarium," 16 July 1953, 1-35. The members of Task Force B were Major General James McCormack, Jr. (chair), John Campbell, Major General John R. Deane, Calvin B. Hoover, Colonel Elvin S. Ligon, Philip E. Mosely, and James K. Penfield.

these efforts would be costly, the task force was certain that "our people, when they understand that their nation's security depends primarily upon their readiness and willingness to provide support through taxation, will not fail to do so."[37]

That the president had listened carefully to the three reports and absorbed their arguments was immediately evident. Goodpaster recalls that after the last presentation, Eisenhower "jumped up" and summarized the three reports for about forty-five minutes, without a note. Kennan remarked later that Eisenhower "spoke, I must say, with a mastery of the subject matter and a thoughtfulness and a penetration that were quite remarkable. I came away from it with the conviction (which I have carried to this day) that President Eisenhower was a much more intelligent man than he was given credit for being." If this was not high enough praise, Kennan also said the president "showed in doing [the summation] his intellectual ascendancy over every man in the room on these issues."[38]

Eisenhower declared that he had never seen "a better or more persuasively presented staff job." He saw many similarities in the three presentations, which he thought were more important than the differences. The only thing worse than losing a global war would be winning one, because there would be no individual

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[37]"A Report to the National Security Council by Task Force 'C' of Project Solarium," 16 July 1953, 9-10, 19-50, 64. The members of Task Force C were: Vice Admiral Richard L. Connolly (chair), Lieutenant General Lyman L. Lemnitzer, G.F. Reinhardt, Kilbourne Johnston, Colonel Andrew J. Goodpaster, Leslie S. Brady, and Colonel Harold K. Johnson.

[38]Interview with Goodpaster, 25 February 1993; Kennan, PSOH, 7. Goodpaster recalls the second Kennan quotation in PSOH, 12.

freedom afterward. Also, if the government demanded more of its citizens than they were willing to give, it would be forced to turn to controls, which would lead to loss of liberty and creation of a garrison state. Then Eisenhower stated that more work remained. He asked that the task forces combine the best features from their individual reports into a unified presentation. They might present a sanitized version of this final report to congressional leaders, and they also could use it to outline an overall policy plan for the government to adopt.[39]

Task force participants did not share the president's enthusiasm for synthesizing their work. Each report was based on different premises, and each had different views about the Soviet Union's intentions and objectives. Goodpaster recalls that "we thought that the product would be--I think someone used the term mongrelized, if we attempted in that way to combine it." The participants also were exhausted from the long, hot weeks of working on the individual reports, and many of them had delayed commitments to address. As Goodpaster says, "We had been away from home a long time and had worked every day during that period."[40]

When Cutler reported the participants' resistance to Eisenhower, he found that the president "seemed very put out and left it to me to work out what I thought best." Cutler then decided that the NSC Special Staff would prepare a

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[39]Memorandum by the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (Cutler), 16 July 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 397-98.

[40]Ibid.; Goodpaster, PSOH, 13-14.

summary of the principal points from each report. The task forces would review the summary for accuracy, and it then would be distributed to the NSC. The council would identify areas that required further study and ask the Planning Board to follow up on those concerns.[41]

Project Solarium resulted, then, in three extensive studies of possible national security strategies, which the Planning Board would use to draft a new basic national security policy paper for the Eisenhower administration. The project additionally served to educate the NSC about alternative strategies, and it provided an opportunity for the president to show his advisers how he thought the alternatives could be synthesized into one overall policy. In October 1953, the NSC would adopt a policy paper that clearly was grounded in the efforts of Project Solarium.

FROM PROJECT SOLARIUM TO THE NEW LOOK

While Project Solarium played an important part in the shaping of the New Look, it was hardly the sole input. Numerous other studies took place within the administration in 1953, including, for example, National Intelligence Estimates prepared by the CIA and a report by a special committee on the international information activities of the executive branch. In July, Eisenhower asked his recently appointed JCS to conduct a study of the nation's defense posture. Furthermore, as the administration began to plan the FY55 budget in the fall, NSC

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[41]Memorandum by Cutler, 16 July 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 398.

members engaged in heated discussions about national security commitments. The Planning Board made use of these and other sources in preparing a basic national security policy paper for Eisenhower, which he finally approved after much NSC debate at the end of October.[42]

Two weeks after Project Solarium, the NSC turned the task of drafting a new basic national security policy paper over to the Planning Board. On July 30, the council reviewed a summary of the task force reports as well as a two-page memorandum by the Solarium Working Committee, a subset of the Planning Board. This memorandum outlined the task forces' conclusions and proposed a new policy that incorporated the three reports, as Eisenhower had requested. During the meeting, however, several participants, including Eisenhower, raised concerns about this proposal. Ultimately the NSC decided that the memorandum would serve as guidance for the Planning Board, along with the points raised during the meeting, as the Board drafted a new policy paper.[43]

As the Planning Board went to work, Eisenhower's new JCS was busy preparing its own report for the president. Eisenhower had indicated in May that

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[42]I am grateful to Robert Bowie for discussing with me the numerous sources in addition to the Solarium reports that went into preparing the New Look policy paper. Interview with Bowie, 30 November 1994.

[43]Memorandum to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary (Lay), 22 July 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 399; Summaries Prepared by the NSC Staff of Project Solarium Presentations and Written Reports, ibid., 399-434; Memorandum of discussion at 157th NSC meeting, 30 July 1953, ibid., 435-40; Memorandum by the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs (Cutler), ibid., 440-41.

his new appointees would have this responsibility, responding approvingly to a reporter's question about whether they would be expected to "come up with different strategical concepts and different estimates of the power we should have":

> We do have a new approach. We feel that the United States has a right to think that there is a new approach, a study that is made without any real chains fastening to the past. The Secretary of Defense felt he should have an entirely new team, and I agreed with him.

Given Eisenhower's annoyance in March with JCS calls for increased military expenditures, his desire to make new appointments was quite logical. Bringing in new officers would help the president greatly in developing policies, as he would be able to impress his national security views upon his new team.[44]

Less than two months later, Eisenhower made good on his call for a "new approach." On July 1, he sent a memo to Defense Secretary Wilson asking that the new JCS conduct a study of the administration's defense policies before taking office. As he wrote: "What I am seeking is interim guidance to aid the [National Security] Council in developing policies for the most effective employment of available national resources to insure the defense of our country for the long pull which may lie ahead." The officers particularly needed to remember "the urgent need for a really austere basis in military preparation and operations." To help

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[44]The new appointees were Admiral Arthur W. Radford as JCS chairman, Admiral Robert B. Carney as Chief of Naval Operations, General Matthew B. Ridgway as Army Chief of Staff, and General Nathan F. Twining as Air Force Chief of Staff. See Snyder, "The 'New Look' of 1953," 410-12; Eisenhower's news conference of 14 May 1953, PPOP, 1953, 293-94; and Editorial Note, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 326-27.

them in this effort, Eisenhower said the JCS should consult with Treasury Secretary Humphrey and Budget Director Dodge in preparing their report.[45]

When he met with the JCS two weeks later, Eisenhower emphasized that he did not want a major staff exercise and said they should draw upon their extensive collective experience in presenting their views. General Ridgway, incoming Army Chief of Staff, recalls that Eisenhower wanted them to "make a completely new, fresh survey of our military capabilities in light of our global commitments." In so doing, they needed to consider the problem of the "great equation," namely how to balance military needs with fiscal responsibility. Because the JCS drafted their report on the Navy Secretary's yacht, the *Sequoia*, it came to be known as the *Sequoia* exercise.[46]

In their final report, submitted on August 8, the JCS made a radical proposal for strengthening the nation's military position without weakening its economy: redeploy U.S. forces over the next two years with the cooperation of both Congress and U.S. allies. They also recommended that the administration

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[45]Eisenhower to Secretary of Defense, 1 July 1953, "NSC 162/2" folder, Box 12, Disaster File, NSC Staff Papers, DDEL.

[46]Quotation from Ridgway is in Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway, as told to Harold H. Martin (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 267. Also see Stephen Jurika, ed., From Pearl Harbor to Vietnam: The Memoirs of Admiral Arthur W. Radford (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1980), 320-21; Snyder, "The 'New Look' of 1953," 413-15; and Editorial Note, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 394. The note says no record of Eisenhower's meeting with the JCS has been found in State Department files.

announce publicly "a clear, positive policy with respect to the use of atomic weapons." Explaining their proposal in more detail, they said:

> The course we have in mind would reverse our present strategic policy. It would place in first priority the essential military protection of our continental U.S. vitals and the capability for delivering swift and powerful retaliatory blows. Military commitments overseas--that is to say, peripheral military commitments--would cease to have first claim on our resources.

In making this proposal, the JCS reaffirmed the concepts outlined in NSC 153/1, stating that "the primary national responsibility is to insure our survival as a free nation. This includes the stability and durability of our economy." While noting that more detailed studies were needed, they concluded that balancing these interests would require the far-reaching changes in national security policy that they recommended.[47]

Although all four members of the JCS signed the *Sequoia* report, they actually had many differences of opinion about its recommendations, as became evident in the August 27 NSC meeting, which Eisenhower did not attend. Army Chief of Staff Ridgway told the NSC that he favored exploring the "concept" of reducing U.S. troops abroad, but this did not mean he would support actual implementation. Navy Chief of Staff Carney said the proposal was the only one possible given "budgetary limitations," but its implications were so serious that it might prove unacceptable. In contrast, both JCS Chairman Radford and Air Force Chief of Staff Twining argued that while redeployment would have to be

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[47]JCS to Secretary of Defense, 8 August 1953, "NSC 162/2" folder, Box 12, Disaster File, NSC Staff Files, DDEL.

approached carefully, it was necessary and ultimately would cost less than the present policy. Radford also noted that for the new policy to work, the administration would have to make clear its views on using atomic weapons. Despite these obvious conflicts, each of the chiefs agreed that the country was over-extended, and each said budgetary considerations were not the only reason he had proposed redeployment.[48]

Eisenhower was pleased with the chiefs' conclusions, though he emphasized that the concept of redeployment was not new, insisting that it had been part of U.S. national security objectives since World War II. Yet when Dulles proposed a few days later that the administration begin to consider such a policy, Eisenhower responded that "while it is true that the semi-permanent presence of United States forces (of any kind) in foreign lands is an irritant, any withdrawal that seemed to imply a change in *basic* intent would cause real turmoil abroad" (italics in original). Thus, the *Sequoia* report did not initiate a major change in U.S. policy.[49]

Still, the report had an important effect in that it helped Eisenhower to make clear to his new chiefs that they needed to consider budgetary constraints in

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[48]"Nature of the Report--August 27, 1953 NSC Meeting," 1 September 1953, ibid.; Memorandum of discussion at the 160th NSC meeting, 27 August 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 443-55.

[49]Memorandum by Cutler to the Secretary of State, 3 September 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 455-57; Memorandum by the Secretary of State, 6 September 1953, ibid., 457-60; Memorandum by the President to the Secretary of State, 8 September 1953, ibid., 460-63.

their policy proposals. In following Eisenhower's guidelines, the JCS had to think about a military posture that would protect both national security and the economy. Even if they did not agree that both interests were in danger, they had to recognize that this administration would pay great attention to both concerns. Additionally, the report allowed Eisenhower to hear a fresh perspective from his JCS before they became involved with the specific concerns of their respective departments.

Along with the Project Solarium reports, the JCS study served as one of the many sources that the Planning Board used in drafting a new basic national security policy paper. Robert Bowie, who represented the State Department's Policy Planning Staff on the Board, recalls that the group met three or more times a week, often for three hours at a time, to examine and discuss draft papers. On September 30, after much review by participants and other officials, the Planning Board distributed a complete draft statement, NSC 162, to the council.[50]

A lengthy and heated debate over NSC 162 ensued at the October 7 NSC meeting, which illustrates well how Eisenhower employed multiple advocacy in national security decision making. Cutler started by outlining the principal points of NSC 162 and summarizing the major differences of opinion. Once the discussion began, Cutler played the role of custodian-manager superbly, clarifying points when needed, redirecting debate when it diverged, and ensuring that the

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[50]Interview with Bowie, 30 November 1994; Editorial Note, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 463-64; Note by the Executive Secretary to the NSC on Review of Basic National Security Policy, 30 September 1953, ibid., 489-90; "Draft Statement of Policy Proposed by the NSC," 30 September 1953, ibid., 489-514.

council considered each area of disagreement. Eisenhower participated actively in the debate, pressing his advisers to elaborate on their views, explaining why he agreed or disagreed with them, and ultimately, after the points of disagreement had been presented and defended, stating his conclusion. In so doing, he sometimes was able to bring the NSC to a consensus, but even when he did not, he nevertheless made clear to his advisers the reasoning behind his decision.[51]

Of greatest concern was whether NSC 162 should recognize two "principal threats" to the United States, namely the security threat of Soviet aggression and the economic threat of "spending for defense over a sustained period largely in excess of our revenues." Budget Director Dodge and Treasury Secretary Humphrey advocated recognition of both, insisting that "over the long haul, we could easily be destroyed by either of the two threats, external or internal." The rest of the NSC disagreed. According to Secretary of States Dulles, "The facts simply did not justify the conclusion that you have got to balance the budget." Defense Secretary Wilson pointed out that "if we ever go to the American people and tell them that we are putting a balanced budget ahead of national defense it would be a terrible day." Similarly, the JCS noted in a report to the NSC that the economic threat was "incidental" to the Soviet threat, and that "of itself, it cannot

[51]Memorandum of discussion at 165th NSC Meeting, 7 October 1953, ibid., 514-34.

be considered as having implications comparable to the basic threat involving our survival as a free nation."[52]

Responding to the JCS report, Eisenhower remarked that "we could lick the whole world if we were willing to adopt the system of Adolph Hitler." While the American people could be persuaded to make sacrifices for a few years, he said, maintaining heavy defense expenditures over the long term would be unacceptable. He then proposed that a section of NSC 162 that both sides had found acceptable be moved to the beginning of the statement. This section stated that the basic problem of national security policy was to "meet the Soviet threat to U.S. security," and "in doing so, to avoid seriously weakening the U.S. economy or undermining our fundamental values and institutions." The council agreed with this recommendation, and Eisenhower approved it.[53]

Debate over national security policy continued at the October 13 NSC meeting, beginning with a reminder from the president about participants' responsibilities. Eisenhower said his advisers were expected to represent not their departments but their own opinions about policy matters, so that the council could "reach a corporate decision and not merely a compromise of varying departmental positions." While many meetings in Washington were designed to produce

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[52]Ibid.; JCS to Secretary of Defense, 6 October 1953, "NSC 162/2" folder, Box 12, Disaster File, NSC Staff Papers, DDEL.

[53]Memorandum of discussion at 165th NSC meeting, 7 October 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, 514-34.

"acceptable compromises," the president was interested in getting "the best solution of our problems by the corporate mind represented here." As he put it, "We want your brains and hearts, with your background."[54]

During the subsequent discussion, the need for the president's reminder soon became clear. In discussing the defense budget for FY55, Defense Secretary Wilson said the JCS had not been able to recommend "significant changes" in the number of combat forces because the administration had not yet changed its basic national security policy. The JCS particularly wanted a clear decision on when the United States would use atomic weapons, as it would be difficult for them to recommend reductions in force levels if they could not "shift emphasis from conventional to atomic weapons." Displeased, Eisenhower rejected this explanation, saying that "you are not going to get away, as my military advisers, with confining your recommendations to major combat forces only." He went on to say that the JCS ought to make its decisions on the basis of what would achieve "a respectable posture of defense." As he noted, "We cannot hope for a perfect defense. . . . The thing to do is constantly to bear in mind a defense posture related to the long pull." Furthermore, Eisenhower refused to give the chiefs a definitive statement on when atomic weapons might be used. Thus, Eisenhower made clear that any decision about using atomic weapons would be his alone, and

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[54]Memorandum of discussion at 166th NSC meeting, 13 October 1953, ibid., 534-49.

that the JCS would have to begin making decisions about force levels "on a genuine austerity basis." The outlines of the New Look were becoming evident.[55]

The NSC settled upon a complete exposition of the New Look at its October 29 meeting, when it reviewed the Planning Board's revisions to NSC 162. Of major concern during this meeting was a sentence calling for "a strong military posture, *with emphasis* on the capability of inflicting massive retaliatory damage by offensive striking power." The JCS had recommended that the sentence say "a strong military posture *to include* emphasis on the capability . . ." (Italics added for both quotations.)[56]

Navy Chief of Staff Carney said the change was needed because the United States depended on more than just offensive striking power in its military posture. The word "emphasis" suggested that the administration was considering changes in the composition of its forces, namely the possibility of redeploying American forces from overseas. Eisenhower insisted, however, that the statement was accurate, and that it did not imply any immediate plans for redeployment. He also declared that the NSC record of action would not contain any notice of the "JCS dissent." While they were his military advisers, "he made the decisions." As with

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[55]Ibid.

[56]JCS to Secretary of Defense, 27 October 1953, ibid., 562-64; Memorandum of discussion at 168th NSC meeting, 29 October 1953, ibid., 567-76.

the October 13 meeting, it was clear that his decisions would be administration policy, regardless of what disagreements had surfaced during debate.[57]

The next day, Eisenhower approved the final document, NSC 162/2. It began by acknowledging both the military and the economic threat that the United States faced and went on to draw upon each of the Project Solarium reports in its policy conclusions. Following Task Force A's support of containment, it declared that the United States would seek to "prevent Soviet aggression and continuing domination of other nations," but it would not try to "dictate the internal political and economic organization of the USSR." NSC 162/2 did not adopt Task Force B's recommendation of "drawing a line," but it said the United States should make clear its intent to "react with military force against any aggression by Soviet bloc armed forces." It also noted that "in the event of hostilities, the United States will consider nuclear weapons to be as available for use as other munitions." Finally, consistent with Task Force C's proposals, it recommended that the United States employ propaganda and covert measures to exploit Soviet problems and complicate governance in Soviet-dominated countries. The Planning Board thus succeeded in bringing together the three reports as Eisenhower had requested.[58]

After exhaustive planning and debate, then, Eisenhower approved a new basic national security policy statement nine months into his first year as president.

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[57]Ibid.

[58]Statement of Policy by the NSC, attached to Report to the NSC by the Executive Secretary, 30 October 1953, ibid., 577-97.

The amount of effort that had gone into drafting this policy was unparalleled. The pre-inaugural *Helena* sessions, the massive analysis undertaken with Project Solarium, and the intense debates during Planning Board and NSC meetings all represented a wealth of strategic planning. That planning has implications for presidential decision making on national security more generally.

CONCLUSION

Eisenhower's national security decision-making process more than fulfilled the expectations of multiple advocacy. The president invited a wide range of officials to attend NSC meetings, and he encouraged those officials to speak their minds. Eisenhower additionally restructured the NSC to serve as a forum for active debate, and he appointed a special assistant to ensure that options were discussed thoroughly and alternative points of view presented. The president himself participated actively in the process, particularly in setting up Project Solarium. Finally, Eisenhower and his advisers spent more than nine months debating possible strategies before settling upon NSC 162/2. Together, these factors ensured that the Eisenhower administration had thoroughly analyzed the concepts behind the New Look.

The decision-making process was not a pure exercise in multiple advocacy, however. Appointing Kennan to head Task Force A in Project Solarium gave that group a clear advantage over the others. As the architect of the original containment strategy, Kennan had more authority and experience in U.S.-Soviet

relations than any of the other task force participants. Furthermore, Kennan's natural commitment to the strategy meant, of course, that he would present a strong case for it. Kennan himself later noted that "as one who had played a permanent part in devising the first reaction to what was seen as the Soviet threat. . . . It probably occurred to the organizers that I would be a good person to explain it and to lead that particular task force."[59]

Eisenhower's own participation in the decision-making process also served to shape the broad contours of the debate. From the very beginning, Eisenhower had insisted on the importance of the "great equation" between military strength and a healthy economy. After the Solarium task forces presented their reports, Eisenhower almost effortlessly summarized their conclusions and discussed the similarities between them. Upon receiving the JCS report, Eisenhower expressed his approval of the recommendations but then declared that they were not feasible for the immediate future. In each case, Eisenhower's swift but well-reasoned analysis suggests that he had been thinking about these matters for some time already.

If this is the case, why, then, did Eisenhower go through such a rigorous decision-making process before adopting the New Look? His actions suggest another use for multiple advocacy besides its effect on decision making. While

[59]Kennan, PSOH, 3-4.

Eisenhower may have employed multiple advocacy in part to aid his thinking on national security, he also used it to commit his aides to his chosen policy.

Kennan suggests that Eisenhower had political reasons for ordering an reexamination of containment in Project Solarium. Containment had been "quite clearly formed" in the Truman administration, and partisan loyalties required that Eisenhower subject that strategy to critical review. As Kennan says, "I suspect that the whole purpose, really, of the Solarium exercise was . . . to decide how much of the old Democratic policy it would be permissible for [Eisenhower] to take over and how it should be prepared and brought forward to the American public." Eisenhower may have supported containment, but he could not just accept a Democratic administration's national security strategy. Making the best possible case for containment, as Eisenhower did by appointing Kennan to head the task force, would help to sell the policy to a Republican administration.[60]

Bowie makes a similar argument, noting that "in general, Eisenhower essentially felt the containment policy was virtually the only feasible one, but it had been somewhat clouded by NSC 68." Consequently, "Eisenhower wanted a review, a general look at the situation, and what would be an appropriate strategy to deal with it." Bowie also says Eisenhower had another purpose, namely to "educate the people who were going to be involved in any way, he wanted them to hear the arguments, he wanted them to learn the background by hearing these

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[60]Kennan, PSOH, 19.

experts expound it and by having the reports, and then he wanted them to hear him say, 'This is the way it's going to be.'"[61]

Whether Eisenhower actually changed his thinking as a result of these deliberations is impossible to determine. Goodpaster says Project Solarium did not tell Eisenhower "anything that he hadn't thought through before." Eisenhower himself wrote of his advisory meetings: "At the very least, this kind of discussion never failed to give me a deeper understanding of questions." Such an elaborate and extensive decision-making process might not have greatly influenced a man who entered the Oval Office with long-established views on national security, but it nevertheless was useful for him in considering different policy options.[62]

Even if the decision-making process behind the New Look ended up reaffirming Eisenhower's already established views, it still served as an important exercise in policy formulation for his advisers. After going through Project Solarium and numerous other debates on national security, they clearly knew Eisenhower's reasoning behind his chosen policy. Even if they did not agree, they understood what the administration policy would be and the rationale behind it.

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[61]Bowie, PSOH, 21-22.

[62]Interview with Goodpaster, 26 February 1993; Goodpaster, PSOH, 21; Eisenhower, "The Central Role of the President in the Conduct of Security Affairs," in Issues of National Security in the 1970s: Essays Presented to Colonel George A. Lincoln on His Sixtieth Birthday, ed. Amos A. Jordan, Jr. (New York: Praeger, 1967), 215.

Thus the Eisenhower case suggests that multiple advocacy may be useful not only for policy analysis but also for facilitating governance in new administrations.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Development of Flexible Response

The New Look and Flexible Response could hardly have been more different in their development. The phrase "New Look," originally coined in response to changes in women's fashions after World War II, became connected with national security policy during Eisenhower's presidency. The concept of Flexible Response, in contrast, was defined and known as such before Kennedy became president. By the time Kennedy entered the White House, there was a well-developed Democratic critique of the New Look, focusing on its ostensible overreliance on nuclear weapons. Democrats argued that the United States needed to increase its conventional forces so that it would not be solely dependent on nuclear weapons in facing perceived threats from the Soviet Union.[1]

This defense posture became more sharply defined with the 1959 publication of The Uncertain Trumpet by recently retired General Maxwell D. Taylor. Taylor, who had resigned earlier in the year as Eisenhower's Army Chief of Staff, declared that it was time to replace the Eisenhower administration's strategic doctrine with "the strategy of Flexible Response," which he defined as "a capability to react across the entire spectrum of possible challenge. As Taylor

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[1]For the origins of both terms, see William Safire, The New Language of Politics: An Anecdotal Dictionary of Catchwords, Slogans, and Political Usage (New York: Random House, 1968.)

noted, "It is just as necessary to deter or win quickly a limited war as to deter general war."[2]

Kennedy was committed to the concept of Flexible Response well before he became president. As a senator in the 1950s, he wrote articles and made speeches supporting this approach to national security. As president, his policies were consistent with the aims of Flexible Response. But in his day-to-day decision making, Kennedy was characteristically more concerned with pragmatic and concrete policy issues than with conceptual doctrinal statements. He refused to approve formally any of the several basic national security policy papers that were circulated within his administration because he wanted to keep his options open in specific instances.[3]

Unlike Eisenhower, Kennedy had little interest in organizing a concentrated sequence of planning activities to help him formally establish a national security strategy. In many respects, Eisenhower's planning process resembles what Charles E. Lindblom has called "synoptic" decision making, defined as "choos[ing] among alternatives after careful and complete study of all possible courses of action and

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[2]Maxwell D. Taylor, The Uncertain Trumpet (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), 6-7.

[3]For Kennedy's speeches on national security during the 1950s and the 1960 presidential campaign, see John F. Kennedy, The Strategy of Peace, ed. Allan Nevins (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960); and Senate Committee on Commerce, The Speeches of Senator John F. Kennedy: Presidential Campaign of 1960 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961). I discuss some of Kennedy's most important writings on national security during this period later in the chapter; complete listings are in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature.

all their possible consequences." Lindblom presents this process as a rarely achieved ideal, but Eisenhower closely approximated it through the thorough analysis of multiple options described in the previous chapter. The decision making behind Flexible Response, in contrast, better resembles what Lindblom calls "disjointed incrementalism," or a process in which "various aspects of any one problem or problem area are analyzed at various points, with no apparent coordination and without the articulation of parts that ideally characterizes subdivision of topic in synoptic problem solving."[4]

Because Kennedy's national security policy was in large part shaped by a continuing debate that dated back to the late Truman years, I begin this chapter by tracing the pre-history of Flexible Response in the decade before Kennedy's presidency. I then examine some of Kennedy's public statements during that period that indicate his support of Flexible Response. Next I analyze Kennedy's efforts to address basic national security policy concerns during the 1960 transition. I go on to survey the development of Flexible Response in the Kennedy administration. I conclude with observations about the effect of Kennedy's decision-making procedures on his strategy formulation.

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[4]David Braybrooke and Charles E. Lindblom, A Strategy of Decision: Policy Evaluation as a Social Process (New York: The Free Press, 1963), 40, 105-106; Lindblom, "The Science of 'Muddling Through'," Public Administration Review 29 (Spring 1959): 79-88.

PRE-HISTORY OF FLEXIBLE RESPONSE

A number of factors in the 1950s helped to shape the basic tenets of Flexible Response. The Soviet explosion of an atomic bomb in August 1949 meant that the United States no longer had a monopoly on nuclear power for deterring aggression. This development particularly influenced the Truman administration's approach to national security, as Truman's adoption of NSC 68 made evident. As we have seen, Eisenhower rejected the principles of NSC 68 when he took office, but Democrats continued to make their case for relying less on nuclear weapons and building up conventional forces. The Democratic critique grew stronger throughout the 1950s as charges of a "missile gap" favoring the Soviet Union gained currency.

NSC 68 represents perhaps the most important antecedent of Flexible Response. As noted earlier, NSC 68 declared that the United States needed to increase its military expenditures massively to stay ahead of the Soviet Union. The rationale was that with the Soviet development of nuclear weapons, the United States would not be able to rely on its strategic superiority to deter the Soviet Union from aggression in the non-communist world much longer. Consequently, it needed to build up both its conventional and its nuclear forces so as to be able to respond to Soviet aggression on a variety of levels. NSC 68 was grounded not only in concerns about the Soviet threat but also in Keynesian economic theory, which held that the United States could afford increased expenditures without incurring long-term budget deficits or higher taxes. Both Paul Nitze, who as

director of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff was responsible for drafting NSC 68, and Secretary of State Dean Acheson, who gave him that assignment, accepted the Keynesian premise that the United States could assume the financial burden needed to increase its military forces to the recommended levels.[5]

Another antecedent of Flexible Response from the same period was the deliberations of a group of Harvard and MIT academics, many of whom would advise Kennedy when he became president. Led by two MIT scientists, Jerrold R. Zacharias and Jerome B. Wiesner, the group met regularly during the winter of 1949-50 to discuss the U.S. national security posture. Its participants included McGeorge Bundy, who would become Kennedy's national security adviser; Carl Kaysen, who would become Bundy's deputy; and John Kenneth Galbraith and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., both of whom also would serve in the Kennedy administration. The group was especially concerned with the heavy emphasis on nuclear deterrence in national security policy. In the spring of 1950, several members of the group publicly called for a buildup of conventional forces, so that the United States would not have to use an "all-or-nothing" strategy to respond to a Soviet challenge.[6]

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[5]Ernest R. May, "NSC 68: The Theory and Politics of Strategy," in American Cold War Strategy: Interpreting NSC 68, 3-9. Gaddis discusses how Keynesian economic theory influenced NSC 68 in Strategies of Containment, 93-94.

[6]Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 306-308; interview with Schlesinger, 27 April 1995. For the group's statement, see NYT, 30 April 1950.

From 1950 to 1952, American military expenditures did soar: Congress authorized $48.2 billion in defense spending for FY51, which was a 257 percent increase over the White House's original request of $13.5 billion. Whether this exponential increase was a response to NSC 68 or the military requirements of the Korean War, which the United States entered in June 1950, is a matter of debate. Most likely both were factors, as Truman needed to increase military spending to finance the Korean War, and NSC 68 provided him with justification for doing so. By the time Truman left office, national security expenditures had risen almost four-fold over their pre-Korean War level, from $13.1 billion in FY50 to $50.4 billion in FY53.[7]

Eisenhower, as we have seen, entered office determined to reduce defense expenditures. A fiscal conservative who did not accept Keynesian assumptions, Eisenhower insisted that the country could not support such enormous expenditures over the long term without damaging the economy and therefore weakening its national security. The New Look was first publicly promulgated in what came to be known as Secretary of State Dulles' "massive retaliation" speech of January 12, 1954. Dulles declared that the United States no longer would rely on massive and expensive military buildups to meet Soviet aggression. Instead, the policy would be to deter such aggression--to achieve "a maximum deterrent at a bearable cost"--

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[7]Paul Y. Hammond, "NSC-68: Prologue to Rearmament," in Schilling, Hammond, and Snyder, Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets, 351, cited in Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, 113. Also see Appendix in Strategies.

by "depend[ing] primarily upon a great capacity to retaliate, instantly, by means and at places of our choosing." Critics of this policy, most of them Democrats, immediately took issue with Dulles' remarks, arguing that a reliance on nuclear weapons was at once provocative to the Soviet Union and overly limiting to the West.[8]

The Democratic critique of the New Look became more focused and intense during Eisenhower's second term. Following the 1956 presidential election, the Democratic National Committee established a agenda-setting group known as the Democratic Advisory Council (DAC). The DAC was intended to provide a forum for the policy positions of Democratic liberals, particularly supporters of Adlai Stevenson, who thought that their views were represented inadequately by the Democratic leadership on Capitol Hill. But the DAC soon became the source of very non-Stevensonian foreign policy proposals. While Stevenson and his associates favored strengthening military forces, they also were optimistic about improving U.S.-Soviet relations. But Acheson became chairman of the DAC's foreign policy committee, and he and his vice-chairman, Nitze, maintained that the

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[8]The text of Dulles' speech appears in Department of State Bulletin 30, no. 761 (25 January 1954): 107-110. Gaddis discusses the speech in Strategies of Containment, 147-51. Also see Douglas Brinkley, Dean Acheson: The Cold War Years, 1953-1971 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 19-21. I examine the speech, its evolution, and its effect more closely in chapter five. Two important Democratic critiques of Dulles' speech are Chester Bowles, "A Plea For Another Great Debate," New York Times Magazine (28 February 1954); and Dean Acheson, "Instant Retaliation: The Debate Continued," New York Times Magazine (28 March 1954). Brinkley discusses both articles in Dean Acheson, 21.

Soviet threat they had outlined in NSC 68 still existed. The two generated an outpouring of statements, press releases, and pamphlets that foreshadowed Flexible Response by calling for major increases in U.S. military force levels to counter all types of Soviet aggression.[9]

The Soviet launching of *Sputnik* on October 4, 1957 powerfully bolstered Acheson's and Nitze's arguments. In launching the first artificial earth satellite, the Soviet Union scored an enormous propaganda coup. In the United States, *Sputnik* was comparable in its shock value to Pearl Harbor, as it was widely argued that if the Soviet Union had the rocket power to send a satellite into space, then it must have the power to inflict a massive attack on the United States. This argument became even more persuasive the following month, when the Soviets launched a second earth satellite, *Sputnik II*, which contained a dog. This capability suggested that the Soviets soon would be able to send a person into

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[9]Brinkley, Dean Acheson, 54-58; Herbert S. Parmet, The Democrats: The Years After FDR (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 151-58; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 299-300.

The views of former Connecticut governor and ambassador to India Chester Bowles were representative of the Stevenson wing of the DAC. While Bowles favored building up U.S. military forces to counter Soviet aggression, he was primarily interested in aiding the developing world through economic and political programs. More militant Democrats thought such programs were insufficient to counter the Soviet threat. For a more detailed discussion of Bowles' views, see Howard B. Schaffer, Chester Bowles: New Dealer in the Cold War (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 121.

space. Meanwhile, the U.S. attempt to launch a rudimentary earth satellite in December 1957 resulted in the rocket exploding on the launch pad.[10]

The *Sputnik* launchings fueled fears that the United States was, or would soon be, experiencing a "missile gap" with respect to the Soviet Union. The origins of this debate dated back to the mid-1950s, when some U.S. intelligence estimates had predicted that a "bomber gap" might soon favor the Soviet Union. While this fear proved to be unfounded, a similar question arose in 1957: Was the Soviet Union outdoing the United States in missile development? Soviet leaders suggested as much in January of that year, provoking intense debate in both the U.S. media and Congress. By late summer, Senators Henry M. Jackson (D-Washington) and Stuart Symington (D-Missouri) were contending that budget reductions in defense policy had caused the United States to lag behind the Soviet Union in missile production.[11]

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[10]Robert A. Divine, The Sputnik Challenge: Eisenhower's Response to the Soviet Satellite (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), xiii-xvi, 43-44, 71-72.

[11]On the origins of the phrase "missile gap," see Safire's New Language of Politics. Also see Edgar M. Bottome's The Missile Gap: A Study of the Formulation of Military and Political Policy (Rutherford, N.J.: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 1971), 34-38, 73-75. In addition to declarations within the United States of a missile gap, Soviet leaders also began to claim in the latter part of the 1950s that the United States was falling behind in missile development. In January 1957, Pravda stated that "It is common knowledge that the United States is far from being a monopolist either in the sphere of nuclear weapons, or even less so, in the sphere of long range missiles. Here it would be more appropriate to talk of America's lag." NYT, 24 January 1957; Bottome, The Missile Gap, 34.

Foremost among post-*Sputnik* claims of a missile gap were two highly publicized reports on the U.S. defense posture, both of which concluded that the United States needed to spend much more on defense to maintain its national security. Eisenhower himself had requested the first report six months before *Sputnik*, when he appointed a Security Resources Panel to produce a top-secret study of the country's civil defense needs. The panel, which became known as the Gaither Committee because of its chairman, H. Rowan Gaither, broadened its assignment to encompass the entire defense posture of the United States. In its final report, drafted by Nitze and presented to Eisenhower in November 1957, the Gaither Committee declared that within a few years, the Soviet Union would be able to destroy U.S. strategic forces. The committee recommended that the United States increase both its missiles and its conventional forces, and those conclusions were soon leaked to the press. Shortly thereafter, in January 1958, a study group commissioned by the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation in 1956 published a report that reinforced the Gaither Committee's recommendations, reaching similar conclusions about the urgent need for more military expenditures.[12]

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[12]H. Rowan Gaither was chairman of the board of the RAND corporation. Morton H. Halperin discusses the history of the Gaither committee in "The Gaither Committee and the Policy Process," World Politics 13 (April 1961): 360-84. For summaries of both the Gaither and Rockefeller reports, see Bottome, The Missile Gap, 44-47; and Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 27-31.

Originally, Nitze was not a member of the Gaither committee, as it was a presidentially-appointed group and Nitze clearly was a critic of Eisenhower's policies. But the committee asked Nitze to serve as a consultant, and later asked him to write the final report. David Callahan summarizes Nitze's participation on the Gaither committee in Dangerous Capabilities: Paul Nitze and the Cold War (New York:

The shock of *Sputnik* also was felt on Capitol Hill. On November 25, 1957, Senate Majority Leader Lyndon B. Johnson, who chaired the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Preparedness, convened highly publicized hearings on the nation's defense capabilities. For the next two months, the subcommittee heard testimony from officials in the military services, the scientific community, and the administration. Like the Gaither and Rockefeller groups, Johnson's subcommittee urged large increases in military appropriations, concluding that the United States was falling behind the Soviet Union in missile development. These conclusions were reinforced in January 1959, when Defense Secretary Neil H. McElroy told reporters in a background briefing that the Soviet Union would have a three-to-one advantage over the United States in operational intercontinental ballistic missiles by 1961. Subsequent congressional hearings resulted in further demands for more defense spending. Concern about the missile gap surged again in January 1960, when the head of the Strategic Air Command, General Thomas S. Power, declared that the Soviet Union needed to develop only 300 ballistic missiles to be able to

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Edward Burlingame, 1990), 166-71.

While the Gaither and Rockefeller studies were the most widely known in the national security debates of the late 1950s, other reports also were important. These include: studies by the Air Force and RAND corporation in 1959-60 that recommended not striking Soviet urban areas in the event of a nuclear attack; a report by the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group in late 1960 that examined various strategic weapons; and a RAND study in the late 1950s that considered the effects of different deterrent forces. See Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 25-40.

destroy U.S. strategic retaliatory forces. The congressional hearings that ensued reiterated previous attacks on the country's defense posture.[13]

Given the ongoing critique of the New Look since 1954, and particularly the intense debates after *Sputnik* on the alleged missile gap and the adequacy of the nation's military forces, national security naturally was a central concern of the aspirants to the presidency in 1960. This most likely would have been true in any case for Kennedy, who was much more interested in foreign than domestic policy. As he used to say, "Domestic policy can only defeat us; foreign policy can kill us." Once Kennedy decided in 1956 to start preparing for the next presidential election, his actual policy commitments became more defined and specific.[14]

KENNEDY'S PRE-PRESIDENTIAL VIEWS ON NATIONAL SECURITY

In spite of his longstanding interest in foreign policy, Kennedy participated only infrequently in congressional debates on that or any other topic before 1956. His performance during his six years in the House has generally been viewed as lackluster: Sorensen has wryly observed that Kennedy's low attendance record was one of the few distinguishing characteristics of his tenure there. Kennedy's

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[13]Divine, The Sputnik Challenge, 61-68, 79; Bottome, The Missile Gap, 51-61, 86-99, 118-35; NYT, 8-9 February 1961. In addition to the heated congressional hearings discussed earlier, the national media also devoted extensive attention to the missile gap question. Bottome discusses many of the articles published between 1957 and 1960, in sources ranging from the New York Times to Aviation Week, in The Missile Gap.

[14]Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 426.

involvement in foreign affairs did not increase markedly in the immediate aftermath of his 1952 election to the Senate, in part because he underwent two major back operations, each followed by a long convalescence. Moreover, Sorensen writes that in the early 1950s, "an inner struggle was being waged for the spirit of John Kennedy--a struggle between the political dilettante and the statesman, between the lure of luxury and lawmaking."[15]

Policy leadership, if not lawmaking, won out. Kennedy increasingly spoke out on issues in the period leading up to the 1956 campaign, and he became dramatically more visible as a political leader after his highly publicized attempt to win the vice-presidential nomination that year. Soon after the Democratic national convention, Kennedy and his associates began to campaign to make him the Democratic presidential nominee in 1960. Kennedy succeeded, for example, in getting himself appointed to the prestigious Senate Foreign Relations Committee in January 1957. The following October, he published a comprehensive critique of current foreign policies in Foreign Affairs, focusing particularly on the Eisenhower administration's responses to "forces of nationalism around the world."[16]

Kennedy's most significant pre-presidential statements on national security dealt with the question of whether the United States would soon face a "missile

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[15]Sorensen, Kennedy, 27, 39-40.

[16]James MacGregor Burns, John Kennedy: A Political Profile (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1959), 193-98; Kennedy, "A Democrat Looks at Foreign Affairs," Foreign Affairs 36 (October 1957): 44-59.

gap" favoring the Soviet Union. Shortly after the second *Sputnik* launching in November 1957, Kennedy declared that the United States was falling behind in the satellite-missile race because of "complacent miscalculations, penny pinching, budget cut-backs, incredibly confused management, and wasteful rivalries and jealousies." In a speech to the Senate the following August, Kennedy warned of the looming U.S. "missile lag," a phrase he borrowed from War and Peace in the Space Age by retired General James M. Gavin, who had resigned from the army earlier that year in protest of the New Look. Kennedy declared that "we are rapidly approaching that dangerous period which General Gavin and others have called the 'gap' or the 'missile-lag period'--a period, in the words of General Gavin, 'in which our own offensive and defensive missile capabilities will lag so far behind those of the Soviets as to place us in a position of great peril.' " Kennedy then added that 1960-64 would mark the "most critical years of the gap." In October, Kennedy favorably reviewed Gavin's book, calling it "a coldly realistic appraisal of the radically altered military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union."[17]

As the presidential election grew closer, Kennedy's attacks on the alleged missile gap mounted, and his support for the Flexible Response concept became

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[17]For Kennedy's declaration after the second *Sputnik* launching, see NYT, 7 November 1957, and Bottome, The Missile Gap, 50. For Kennedy's Senate speech of August 14, 1958, see Kennedy, The Strategy of Peace, 33-45. Also see James M. Gavin, War and Peace in the Space Age (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958). Kennedy's review of this book is "General Gavin Sounds The Alarm," The Reporter 19 (30 October 1958): 35-36.

evident. In October 1959, Kennedy asserted that "we have been driving ourselves into a corner where the only choice is all or nothing at all, world devastation or submission." He went on to call for a buildup of both nuclear and conventional forces. A month later, Kennedy described Eisenhower's presidency as "years the locusts have eaten," contending that the Soviet Union was ahead in missile development and production, "while we, for seven years, have cut our forces, reduced our budgets, held back our missile programs, wasted our money and time and scientific talent, and all the while assuring the American people that we could never be second-best."[18]

Kennedy's commitment to Flexible Response grew stronger with the publication of General Taylor's The Uncertain Trumpet in 1959. He wrote to Taylor to praise the general's "most persuasive" arguments, and he even expressed his compliments to Taylor's editor, writing that "this book makes it clear that we have not brought our conventional war capacities into line with the necessities of our foreign policy. It is a book which deserves reading by every American." In a speech to the Senate in June 1960, Kennedy detailed those foreign-policy "necessities," declaring that the next president would face the following situation:

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[18]Kennedy, "Conventional Forces in the Atomic Age," speech in Lake Charles, Louisiana, 16 October 1959, and "The Years the Locusts Have Eaten," keynote address to the annual convention of the Democratic party of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, 13 November 1959. Both speeches are reprinted in Kennedy, The Strategy of Peace, 183-86, 193-98. Winston Churchill first used the phrase "years the locusts have eaten" during a 1936 debate in the House of Commons.

> He will find himself with far-flung commitments without the strength to back them up. He will inherit policies formed largely as reactions to Soviet actions--their limits set by budgeteers without regard to world conditions or America's needs. . . . He will face a world of revolution and turmoil armed with policies which only seek to freeze the status quo and turn back the inevitable tides of change.

Kennedy then called for an extensive build-up of U.S. missiles that would "make invulnerable a nuclear retaliatory power second to none," as well as an increase in conventional forces that would enable the United States to "regain the ability to intervene effectively and swiftly in any limited war anywhere in the world."[19]

Kennedy did not specifically address the missile gap question in his acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention in July. But as the Democratic presidential nominee, he naturally endorsed the party platform, which stated that "our military position today is measured in terms of gaps--missile gap, space gap, limited war gap," and went on to commit the party to "recast[ing] our military capacity in order to provide forces and weapons of a diversity, balance and mobility sufficient in quantity and quality to deter both limited and general aggressions." After the convention, Kennedy continued to attack the alleged missile gap and support a more flexible defense posture than the Eisenhower administration's so-called "massive retaliation" policy. For example, in a review of Deterrent or Defense by British captain B.H. Liddell Hart, Kennedy noted that

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[19]JFK to Harper & Brothers, 17 December 1959, Box 461, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL; JFK to Taylor, 9 April 1960, Box 471, ibid.; Taylor, Swords and Plowshares (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), 179-80; Taylor oral history, 12 April 1964, JFKL, 3-4; Kennedy, The Strategy of Peace, 14 June 1960 speech.

he "shared Captain Hart's judgment" that, in Kennedy's words, "responsible leaders in the West will not and should not deal with limited aggression by unlimited weapons whose use could only be mutually suicidal."[20]

It is evident, then, that Kennedy supported a massive buildup of both nuclear and conventional forces long before he became president. Sorensen points out that Kennedy never used "precise dates and numbers" in discussing the question of a missile gap during the 1960 campaign. Nevertheless, Kennedy clearly warned of the imminent vulnerability of the United States if it did not step up its missile production. His proposals for improving the U.S. position vis-a-vis the Soviet Union were consistent with the tenets of Flexible Response.[21]

NATIONAL SECURITY DELIBERATIONS DURING THE 1960 TRANSITION

After his narrow election victory on November 8, Kennedy faced a number of pressing responsibilities in the short period between election and inauguration. Perhaps the highest priority was appointing his Cabinet and other top officials. Kennedy additionally had to meet with President Eisenhower to discuss major policy issues that would continue into the new administration. Finally, Kennedy

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[20]Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 18-19; Bottome, The Missile Gap, 137-38; Hart, Deterrent or Defense: A Fresh Look at the West's Military Position (New York: Praeger, 1960); Kennedy, "Review of Deterrent or Defense by B.H. Liddell Hart," The Saturday Review of Literature 43 (3 September 1960): 17-18. For Kennedy's statements on defense policy after the Democratic National Convention, see The Speeches of Senator John F. Kennedy: Presidential Campaign of 1960; Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 18-19; and NYT, 9 February 1961.

[21]Sorensen, Kennedy, 612.

needed to determine how he would develop campaign pledges into a desirable and feasible political agenda. While Kennedy did not directly address his commitment to Flexible Response in meeting these responsibilities, his actions demonstrated his support of the strategy.[22]

Kennedy differed markedly from Eisenhower in how he conducted his transition activities. While Eisenhower had selected his entire Cabinet by the end of November, Kennedy did not fill his last Cabinet position until December 17. As of December 6, Kennedy had not yet named his secretaries of state and defense, even though he met with Eisenhower that day to discuss major foreign policy issues that would carry over into the new administration. And Kennedy's nearest equivalent to Eisenhower's extensive discussions on national security aboard the *Helena* and at the Commodore Hotel was his review of task force reports that he had assigned during the campaign.

Kennedy immersed himself deeply in making his Cabinet and other personnel choices. As Sorensen reports, "For the top thirty to fifty jobs, the bulk of the work and all the final decisions rested with Kennedy. He personally interviewed dozens, studied the writings and qualifications of others, and placed calls all over the country to check references." Beyond the Cabinet, Kennedy additionally was concerned about secondary officials. Sorensen notes that even after the Cabinet appointments, "some sixty additional key policy posts and several

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[22]Kennedy's margin of victory in 1960 was less than 120,000 votes. For an analysis of this narrow margin, see Sorensen, Kennedy, 211-23.

hundred more key positions remained to be filled, and [Kennedy] was determined not to delegate to the Cabinet full discretion in the selection of the 'sub-Cabinet.'"[23]

Kennedy made evident his support of Flexible Response during this process by asking many of the principal Democratic critics of the New Look to serve in his administration. Paul Nitze, for example, became Kennedy's assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs. Jerome Wiesner was asked to head the White House Office of Science and Technology. Roswell Gilpatric, Dean Rusk, and Walter W. Rostow were appointed deputy secretary of defense, secretary of state, and deputy special assistant for national security affairs, respectively. Each of these five men had participated in either the Gaither or the Rockefeller study. Once in office, Kennedy asked Dean Acheson to serve as a consultant on various policy areas, including NATO and Berlin.[24]

Kennedy's transition meetings with Eisenhower did not bring up Flexible Response, but they did reveal that the president-elect was more interested in pressing policy matters than in overall policy reviews, which suggested that he was

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[23]Quotations from Sorensen are in Kennedy, 254-55. For details on Kennedy's Cabinet and sub-Cabinet appointments, see ibid., 251-57; and Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 127-55.

[24]Rostow became head of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff in November 1961. Ball identifies officials from the Kennedy administration who had participated in the Gaither and Rockefeller studies in Politics and Force Levels, 29-31. For Acheson's involvement in the Kennedy administration, see Brinkley, Dean Acheson, 117, 135; and Acheson oral history, 27 April 1964, JFKL, 10-11.

prepared to accept Flexible Response without further analysis. Kennedy and Eisenhower formally met twice during the transition, on December 6 and January 19. During the first meeting, Eisenhower explained to Kennedy how "policy hill" operated, and he recommended that the president-elect not disband it before seeing it function. Other topics of discussion at the meeting included Berlin, Cuba, and Laos. In January, Kennedy requested a second meeting because, as he later said, he "was anxious to get some commitment from the outgoing administration as to how they would deal with Laos, which they were handing to us."[25]

Aside from these meetings with Eisenhower, Kennedy reviewed policy issues primarily through reading task force reports. Shortly after his nomination in the summer of 1960, Kennedy had announced that he was commissioning a series of advisory committees to examine various policy areas and report to him after the election. The composition of these task forces reflected the different groups within

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[25]The Eisenhower-Kennedy meetings set the 1960 transition poles apart from 1952, when Eisenhower and Truman had only one pro forma meeting before inauguration. In 1960, Eisenhower and Kennedy each put someone in charge of transition issues, General Wilton B. Persons and Clark Clifford respectively. Not only did Persons and Clifford meet regularly, they also ensured that incoming Kennedy officials met at least once with their Eisenhower counterparts. The Eisenhower administration kept an invaluable record of these meetings, which are in Box 1, Transition Series, AWF, DDEL. The Kennedy record is much more haphazard: there are some notes and memos in the Clark Clifford papers, but none of the detailed descriptions available in the former. Memoranda by Kennedy and his associates on the transition meetings are in "Eisenhower, Dwight D.," Box 29A, POF, JFKL. Quotation from Kennedy is in dictation record, 19 January 1961, ibid. For a powerful analysis of the Laos discussion on January 19, see Greenstein and Immerman, "What Did Eisenhower Tell Kennedy About Indochina? The Politics of Misperception," Journal of American History 79 (September 1992): 568-87.

the Democratic party, particularly those whose candidates had not been nominated.[26]

In the area of national security, for example, Kennedy created three task forces to address different policy concerns. He asked Senator Symington, who had been a contender for the Democratic nomination and was a strong supporter of massive increases in military expenditures, to head a task force that would consider Defense Department reorganization. Adlai Stevenson, who did not enter his name for nomination in 1960 but whose overwhelming popularity was demonstrated by a large "Draft Adlai" movement at the convention, was asked to prepare a report on foreign policy problems. Kennedy also asked Paul Nitze to head a task force on national security policy. In announcing this last task force, Kennedy declared that it would be nonpartisan in its work. But the participants' experiences suggested that they would be critical of the New Look: Roswell Gilpatric and James A. Perkins, for example, had served on the Rockefeller and Gaither study groups, respectively.[27]

Kennedy's task force assignments were characteristic of his disjointed incremental approach to decision making. Like Project Solarium, the task forces

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[26]Sorensen, Kennedy, 236-38; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 155-61.

[27]The members of Nitze's task force are listed in the transcript of Kennedy's August 30, 1960 press conference, The Speeches of Senator John F. Kennedy, 56. In addition to the three task forces discussed, Kennedy created four more during the campaign, and he established another twenty-two after the election. Ultimately, twenty-four of the twenty-nine task forces submitted their reports to Kennedy before his inauguration.

reviewed different perspectives within the president's party. But Kennedy's task force project was far looser and more decentralized than Project Solarium. Each of Kennedy's task forces worked on its own, and each submitted its report to Kennedy individually after the election. Additionally, Kennedy sometimes gave overlapping assignments, which created friction among his advisers: Stevenson, for example, was displeased with the creation of Nitze's task force, because he thought it would duplicate his own responsibilities. But Schlesinger writes that Kennedy, "in the mood of FDR, did not intend to confer on anyone exclusive rights to advise and perceived positive values in competition." After the election, Kennedy created additional task forces on foreign policy, but he specifically told one of the heads not to consult with Nitze. Schlesinger explains that "this was not that [Kennedy] liked Nitze less, but that he liked a variety of advice more." Kennedy's ad hoc approach to culling this advice--asking one person to prepare a report, then asking others to prepare follow-up studies--illustrates well his informal advisory processes.[28]

Given its participants, Nitze's task force predictably made recommendations in favor or Flexible Response. The group urged a number of prompt defense decisions, including: "quick fixes to overcome our short-term deterrence gap"; "longer-range decisions affecting our general war capabilities"; and "decisions affecting our limited war capabilities." The group also advised Kennedy to "early

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[28]Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 155-61.

arrive at a judgment on the two or three basic strategic issues" that his administration would face upon entering office, noting that "the last administration has never clearly faced up to the issue of the degree to which we should rely on nuclear weapons in limited wars. . . . Budgetary pressures and the pressures for greater general war capabilities have caused a continuous squeeze on our non-nuclear capabilities."[29]

Flexible Response and basic national security policy concerns were less relevant to the Stevenson and Symington analyses. Sorensen writes that the Symington recommendations, which proposed a major reorganization of the military services, were "too controversial to be more than a stimulant to future planning." Stevenson's report, which numbered fifty-eight pages, plus two support papers and four appendices, addressed several foreign policy concerns, such as NATO and foreign economic policy. The lengthy report prompted Kennedy to assign additional task forces on more specific issues, such as Latin America, Africa, and the U.S. Information Agency.[30]

The effect of Kennedy's task force reports on his policies is difficult to ascertain. Roswell Gilpatric, who served on both the Symington and Nitze task

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[29]"Report of Senator Kennedy's National Security Policy Committee," Box 1074, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL, A1-6. Also see Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), 177-80, 195.

[30]Sorensen, Kennedy, 236; "Report to Honorable John F. Kennedy from Adlai E. Stevenson," Box 1074, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 156-59.

forces, later described the efforts as "useful exercises for the president to find out sort of the cut of the jib of the people who were on the task forces." Kennedy's hands-on management of the task forces indicates that their reports were primarily for his benefit, unlike the Project Solarium reports, which were prepared for a larger audience. As Schlesinger writes, Kennedy "clearly considered the task force effort as above all a service for himself." Nevertheless, Sorensen says all of the task force reports "provided useful facts, arguments, and ideas, and nearly all were directly reflected in legislation." Certainly Nitze's task force reached conclusions that reinforced Kennedy's views on Flexible Response.[31]

Aside from Nitze's report, Kennedy did not conduct any review of basic national security policy during his transition period. But there is some evidence that he wanted to have some sort of overall policy review before making major defense decisions. In the last week of December, Sorensen sent incoming Defense Secretary McNamara a list of questions from Kennedy. Among them were the following: "Should there be a supplemental Defense budget for fiscal 1961 submitted?" and "What changes should be made in the fiscal 1962 budget?" Additionally, the letter stated that "the new administration will have to undertake a basic reevaluation of our defense strategy, targets and capability before we can reach a decision on these additional expenditures or on any possible savings in

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[31]Gilpatric oral history, 1970, JFKL, 4; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 160-61; Sorensen, Kennedy, 238.

other areas where your guidance is needed." Once in office, however, Kennedy's attention turned to other priorities.[32]

KENNEDY IN OFFICE

Kennedy entered office with a well-developed mindset about the country's national security needs. McNamara says Kennedy believed from the beginning that the United States needed to "develop a capability for . . . a controlled, flexible response, a response tailored to the specific level of political or military aggression." Similarly, Gilpatric notes that "by the time the Kennedy administration was inaugurated, it was more or less taken for granted that this was going to be the theme of our strategy, at least in Western Europe, and there wasn't any dissent about it." Consequently, in making national security decisions, the Kennedy administration did not question such assumptions as the need to build up conventional and strategic forces. While Kennedy authorized studies of certain aspects of Flexible Response, he never initiated a review of the strategy as a whole. Nevertheless, Kennedy's commitment to Flexible Response became evident in his first year through his policy actions and communications.[33]

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[32]Sorensen to McNamara, 23 December 1960, "Transition Correspondence, 12/23/60-1/3/61," Box 18, Sorensen Papers, JFKL; Gilpatric oral history, 30 June 1970, JFKL, 65; McNamara oral history, 4 April 1964, JFKL, 8; Sorensen, Kennedy, 602-603.

[33]McNamara oral history, 4 April 1964, JFKL, 8; Gilpatric oral history, 30 June 1970, JFKL, 72.

Nineteen-sixty-one was, as Robert F. Kennedy would later say, "a very mean year" for Kennedy, one that was punctuated with troubles including the Bay of Pigs invasion, civil war in Laos, contentious meetings with Khrushchev in Vienna, the Berlin Wall, and Soviet resumption of nuclear testing. In each episode, Kennedy made policy decisions that were consistent with Flexible Response, but he never formally approved this strategy. Indeed, he had little interest in conceptual analyses, preferring instead to concentrate on actual policy concerns. As McGeorge Bundy puts it, Kennedy "thought of things discretely, piece by piece, message by message, problem by problem." While he did initiate several policy planning efforts during his administration, in the end he refused to ratify a document comparable to Eisenhower's NSC 162/2.[34]

Aside from the president's lack of interest in having a basic policy statement, Kennedy's ad hoc approach to decision making further hindered attempts to organize a basic national security policy review. Despite numerous efforts by Bundy and others to structure the president's decision-making process, Kennedy insisted on acquiring information and making decisions more informally. Consequently, his commitment to Flexible Response never received the scrutiny that the New Look did under Eisenhower, even though there were times in 1961 when such a review would have been highly desirable.

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[34]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 349; interview with Bundy, 3 January 1996.

During the transition period, Eisenhower and his associates had urged the incoming administration to continue their procedures for national security decision making. On December 6, as noted earlier, Eisenhower had recommended that Kennedy not disband any part of "policy hill" before fully understanding its purpose in the decision-making process. When Eisenhower's NSC special assistant, Gordon L. Gray, met his incoming counterpart, McGeorge Bundy, a few weeks later, he recommended that top Kennedy officials review Eisenhower's most recent basic national security policy paper (BNSP). Bundy said he did not plan to undertake a major review of all the Eisenhower administration's policy papers, as the NSC would have more immediate concerns to address. As Gray recalls:

> Mr. Bundy indicated that his present thinking was that he would not proceed in the same manner as General Cutler had proceeded in 1953. That is to say, he now sees no need for an urgent and massive review of all policy papers inherited by the new administration. Mr. Bundy ventured the opinion that our policies are largely dictated by external events and that he didn't anticipate that there would be any significant policy shifts. He felt that his time and the time of the various elements of the NSC should be spent getting ahead with the immediate and pressing problems. I suggested to Mr. Bundy that at least he would wish to review the basic national security policy paper.[35]

Once in office, Bundy did propose to Kennedy that the NSC staff conduct such a review. Before the first NSC meeting on February 1, he wrote to Kennedy that "the most urgent need is for a review of basic military policy. What is our

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[35]Eisenhower's record of his December 6 meeting with Kennedy is reprinted in volume two of his memoirs, Waging Peace: The White House Years, 1956-1961 (New York: Doubleday, 1965), 712-16. Also see Gray, memorandum for record, 11 January 1961, "Change of Administration" folder (3), Transition Series, AWF, DDEL.

view of the kind of strategic force we need, the kinds of limited-war forces, the kind of defense for the continental U.S., and the strategy of NATO?" Bundy went on to say that "there are other policies currently active that need examination, but none is as important as the basic military-political policy." This recommendation coincided with Kennedy's instructions to McNamara during the transition about undertaking "a basic re-evaluation of our defense strategy, targets and capability."[36]

Initially, Kennedy seemed interested in following up on these goals. On February 9, at his second NSC meeting, Kennedy declared that Bundy should "initiate a thorough analysis and reappraisal" of the Eisenhower administration's most recent BNSP and then make "appropriate reports to the Council for consideration." In so doing, Bundy should consult with representatives from State, Defense, CIA, and other relevant agencies. Unlike Eisenhower, Kennedy clearly did not intend to have the NSC serve as the primary forum for conducting policy reviews, with much of the groundwork done by the Planning Board and such special groups as the Project Solarium task forces. As Bundy aptly noted in a memorandum to the president: "Formal meetings of the Council are only part of its business; you will be meeting with all its members in other ways, and not all decisions or actions will go through this one agency." Nevertheless, Kennedy's

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[36]Bundy to Kennedy, "Policies previously approved in NSC which need review," 30 January 1961, "NSC meeting #475," Boxes 312-13, NSF, JFKL; Sorensen, Kennedy, 602-603; Sorensen to McNamara, 23 December 1960, "Transition Correspondence, 12/23/60-1/3/61," Box 18, Sorensen Papers, JFKL.

request for an overall study that the NSC would consider was consistent with the spirit of careful policy analysis and review that had prevailed under Eisenhower.[37]

It soon became evident, however, that immediate policy concerns would take precedence over longer-range efforts. Two months after Kennedy's request, NSC staff member Robert Komer proposed to Bundy that they "hold off basic policy until the administration has finished its initial series of crash reviews of key segments of it, and we have a better idea of what overall thrust we want." Komer gave three reasons in support of this recommendation:

> (a) everybody is too busy now with urgent problems to devote much time to the serious effort which a worthwhile new look at basic policy should entail; (b) in fact, we are putting out new basic policy in cumulative fashion through the series of presidential messages, speeches and other means through which one really focuses on key issues; (c) we have not yet completed the look in depth at various programs which is desirable as a useful underpinning.[38]

This proposal marked a complete inversion of the policy planning process. Rather than definitively settling upon a basic policy approach that would guide specific decisions, the Kennedy administration instead would make numerous such decisions before affirming what its overall policy should be. As Komer put it, "Let's hold up a basic review until the administration gets its 'second wind,' i.e. until we have finished the first round of major policy reviews and are getting into

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[37]Record of Actions by the NSC at its 476th meeting, 9 February 1961, "NSC meeting #476," Boxes 312-13, NSF, JFKL; Bundy to Kennedy, 31 January 1961, "NSC Organization and Administration, 1/30-1/31/61," Box 283A, NSF, JFKL.

[38]Komer to Bundy, "Timing of a Basic Policy Review," 11 April 1961, "Staff Memoranda--Robert Komer, 4/1-4/16/61," Box 321, NSF, JFKL.

next year's budget cycle." Eventually, the NSC staff decided to postpone work on an overall policy paper for the time being.[39]

Other groups within the administration also attempted to draft a BNSP in 1961, but these efforts proved unsuccessful as well. The international security affairs (ISA) division of the Defense Department, in conjunction with the State Department and the JCS, began work toward this end in the spring of 1961. Nitze, who headed ISA and had drafted the first Cold War BNSP, NSC 68, recalls in his memoirs that the advantage of such a document was that it "provided a measure of guidance to the Departments of State and Defense and the military services." While a BNSP might not provide much help in coping with actual events, it did "lend general coherence to U.S. policy." Thus, Nitze was keenly interested in revising the Eisenhower administration's final BNSP. But he soon ran into difficulties with the JCS. As he recalls:

> While they acknowledged the merits of flexible military response, which we strongly advocated in our draft document, they argued that the paper was more appropriate for inclusion in a joint military planning document than as a statement of national security policy. A BNSP, they argued, should consist of a series of succinct policy statements which provide guidance as to objectives rather than attempt also to specify the means to be used to achieve those ends.

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[39]Ibid.; Bromley K. Smith, Organizational History of the National Security Council During the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, monograph prepared for the NSC, 1988, 27-29. (Smith completed this monograph just days before he died in 1987; the Council published it in 1988.)

Because of these disagreements, the BNSP did not progress significantly in 1961.[40]

Intensive drafting efforts resumed when Bundy's deputy, Walt Rostow, became head of the State Department's Policy Planning Council in December 1961. Rostow broadly extended the scope of the BNSP, sending Kennedy a 284-page analysis the following March of national security issues facing the administration. After reviewing the document, however, Kennedy refused to ratify it. Carl Kaysen, who replaced Rostow as Bundy's deputy, recalls that when he saw the president about the draft paper, Kennedy said, "It's a lot of words, isn't it? Walt writes a lot of words." As Kaysen puts it, Kennedy "just wasn't interested." A clear sign of the president's lack of interest in such overarching analyses, shared by Bundy, Kaysen, and others, was the nickname soon assigned to these reports: the "bean soups" (BN SP).[41]

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[40]Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost: At the Center of Decision (New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1989), 250-52. I have not found any draft BNSPs from 1961 in the Kennedy Library, but other documents confirm that there were efforts to prepare such a statement that year. See McGeorge Bundy to William P. Bundy (Nitze's assistant in ISA), 2 May 1961, "McGeorge Bundy correspondence, 5/1-5/6/61," Box 398, NSF, JFKL; and "Master List of Planning Problems," 31 July 1961, "Policy Planning, 6/61-8/61," Box 303, NSF, JFKL.

[41]Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, 200; Rostow, The Diffusion of Power: An Essay in Recent History (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 174-76; Kaysen oral history, 11 July 1966, JFKL, 99-102; interview with Bundy, 3 January 1996; interview with Kaysen, 28 July 1995; interview with Schlesinger, 27 April 1995. Rostow's March 1962 BNSP, cited extensively in Gaddis' Strategies of Containment, is in Box 7, Vice-Presidential Security File, Lyndon B. Johnson Papers, Lyndon B. Johnson Library. I have not located a copy in the Kennedy Library.

Kennedy reacted similarly upon receiving revised drafts later in 1962 and again in 1963. Although he had finally rescinded the Eisenhower administration's final BNSP in January 1963, he did not replace it with another policy statement. Instead, officials were told that "for the present, current policy guidance is to be found in existing major policy statements of the president and Cabinet officers, both classified and unclassified."[42]

Kennedy's top national security officials had several reasons for not wanting a basic policy paper. Bundy did not think a BNSP had much value: the executive secretary of the NSC under Bundy, Bromley K. Smith, says Bundy "believed policy had to be stated in other ways . . . presidential speeches, news conferences, speeches and news conferences of principal members of the administration." McNamara similarly told Nitze in the spring of 1963 that "he didn't believe there was anything to be gained by the formulation of such a document. . . . A reading of the president's and his (McNamara's) public statements was sufficient to delineate our national security policy." Kaysen thinks "the notion of a document which uttered a few sentences about everything in the world signed by the president was silly, and we just didn't need one."[43]

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[42]Smith, Organizational History of the NSC, 29. Revised BNSP drafts from 1962 and 1963 are in Box 294, NSF, JFKL.

[43]Ibid., 28; Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost, 252; Kaysen oral history, JFKL, 100.

Rostow makes a similar case for why Kennedy did not want to approve a BNSP formally. First, Kennedy already knew what his national security strategy would be. As Rostow says, "As far as the main directions of policy are concerned, he had those all in his head. He didn't need a BNSP to tell him what his basic stance in military policy was." And second, Kennedy did not want the bureaucracy to think that the administration was committed in advance to particular policies. The president did not, in Rostow's words, "want the bureaucracy to use the document to lock him in." Rostow himself does not criticize the president's decision, saying, "I never resented this. . . . I never regarded the BNSP as a critical aspect of the planning process. We used it as a basis for speeches."[44]

While overall policy planning efforts thus never reached fruition under Kennedy, the president did initiate smaller studies that reflected his endorsement of Flexible Response. Upon entering office, Kennedy asked McNamara to organize a review of U.S. defense capabilities, noting in his first state of the union message that he was expecting "preliminary conclusions" by the end of February. McNamara later remarked that the assignment required "compressing fifteen years of postwar history into four weeks." Following Kennedy's preferred method of analysis, McNamara created four task forces to conduct this review. Two of the task forces focused on Flexible Response: one, headed by Nitze, examined U.S. conventional force capabilities, while the second, headed by Defense Department

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[44]Rostow oral history, 25 April 1964, JFKL, 65-66.

Comptroller Charles J. Hitch, looked at U.S. strategic forces. The third and fourth task forces concentrated on research and development, and military installations, respectively. Each task force was composed of both military and civilian representatives from the Defense Department, as well representatives from the Bureau of the Budget.[45]

As with Project Solarium in the Eisenhower administration, then, Kennedy also used task forces to examine his defense posture. But the two efforts were very different. Project Solarium served as an overall review and analysis of three alternative national security strategies. McNamara's task forces, in contrast, were more operational, focusing on what military force levels would be appropriate for the already accepted tenets of Flexible Response. Ultimately, the task forces recommended adding $2.1 billion to the defense budget. These recommendations served as the "blueprint," to quote McNamara, for Kennedy's special message to Congress on the defense budget in March. Consistent with Flexible Response, that message recommended increases in funding for both strategic and conventional forces.[46]

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[45]JFK, "Message to Congress," PPOP, 1961, 24; William W. Kaufmann, The McNamara Strategy (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), 47-48; Sorensen, Kennedy, 602-604; Henry L. Trewhitt, McNamara: His Ordeal in the Pentagon (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 19-20; Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 115-26; Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost, 242-45; Alain C. Enthoven oral history, 4 June 1971, JFKL, 4-5.

[46]Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 120-21; Robert S. McNamara, In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam (Random House: Times Books, 1995), 24-25. I discuss Kennedy's defense message in more detail in chapter five.

Other defense studies in 1961 similarly had more of an operational than a conceptual focus. McNamara submitted a "Reappraisal of Capabilities of Conventional Forces" to the president in May, which looked further at the FY62 budget. McNamara also initiated studies of his own to reexamine spending in the Defense Department. On March 1, he presented a list of ninety-six questions--which would come to be known as "McNamara's trombones"--to the department, asking for detailed reports on various military matters. Alain C. Enthoven, a RAND economist who worked under McNamara and supervised the responses to these questions, later remarked that the defense secretary "really shook up the department" with this list. McNamara additionally introduce a Planned Programming Budgeting System to the Defense Department, which sought to reduce duplication in the service budgets by centralizing the resource-allocation process. Defense Department analysts would evaluate the nation's defense needs and then determine how the services as a whole could meet those needs. All of these efforts concentrated on policy plans and their costs, but they did not address more basic questions about the Kennedy administration's overall defense posture.[47]

Whereas Kennedy had little interest in pursuing basic national security policy reviews, he did initiate informal, free-wheeling sessions on policy areas that

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[47]McNamara to JFK, "Reappraisal of Capabilities of Conventional Forces," 10 May 1961, "Department of Defense, 5/61," Box 273, NSF, JFKL; Enthoven oral history, JFKL, 8-13; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 318; Sorensen, Kennedy, 604; Trewhitt, McNamara, 85-86.

demanded immediate attention. Shortly after entering office, for example, on a Saturday morning in January, Kennedy held a lengthy meeting on Cuba and Vietnam, at which he decided that the United States should spend an additional $28.4 million to increase the number of South Vietnamese forces by 20,000. Two weeks later, on February 11, Kennedy held another important Saturday-morning meeting, this time on U.S.-Soviet relations. Participants included both administration officials and top Soviet specialists: Kennedy, Vice President Johnson, Rusk, Bundy, ambassador to the Soviet Union Llewellyn Thompson, and three former ambassadors to the Soviet Union, Charles E. Bohlen, W. Averell Harriman, and George F. Kennan. The latter three were employed in the Kennedy administration as counselor to the State Department, ambassador-at-large, and ambassador to Yugoslavia, respectively.[48]

Kennedy's purpose in convening this meeting was to learn as much as he could about Khrushchev and the Soviet Union. For two-and-a-half hours, the president listened to his advisers discuss Soviet politics, interrupting only when he wanted to ask a question or clarify a point. The question of overall U.S. defense posture did not come up, though Thompson did say American officials might be overestimating Soviet conventional force strength. Instead, participants concentrated on such topics as the general condition of the Soviet Union and its

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[48]For memoranda on the January 28 Cuba and Vietnam discussions, see "Cuba General, 1/61-4/61," Box 35A, NSF, JFKL; and "Vietnam General, 1/61-3/61," Box 193, NSF, JFKL. On the February 11 meeting, see Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 68.

government, current Soviet attitudes on foreign affairs, and useful American policies and attitudes toward the Soviet Union.[49]

Participants later remarked on Kennedy's intense curiosity about the Soviet Union. Bohlen said, "I never heard of a president who wanted to know so much. . . . [He had] a mentality extraordinarily free from preconceived prejudices, inherited or otherwise . . . almost as though he had thrown aside the normal prejudices that beset human mentality." Thompson was impressed with "the way the president drew out the thoughts of everyone present, without revealing his own thoughts." Kennan noted that Kennedy was uncertain about a number of issues--"to what extent he should credit the good will of the approaches that were being made on the other side, whether he should have a summit meeting, how he should go about this."[50]

Despite Kennedy's obvious interest in U.S.-Soviet relations, the president made no effort to examine the points raised during this meeting in any systematic way. While the meeting provided Kennedy with useful information about Khrushchev and the Soviet Union, it did not contain the rigorous analysis of

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[49]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 68-70; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 304-306; Sorensen, Kennedy, 541-42; "Notes on Discussion of the Thinking of the Soviet Leadership, Cabinet Room, February 11, 1961," 13 February 1961, "USSR Security, 1/61-5/61," Box 125A, POF, JFKL.

[50]The first part of Bohlen's statement is in Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 70, and the second part is in Bohlen oral history, 21 May 1964, JFKL, 7-9. Also see Kennan oral history, 23 March 1965, JFKL, 41-44; and Thompson oral history, 25 March 1964, JFKL, 2-4.

competing positions that took place in Project Solarium. Indeed, as with the reports from the Defense Department, the advice Kennedy received during this session was more policy-oriented than conceptual.

While Kennedy evinced little interest in conceptual policy analyses, his actual policy decisions in 1961 demonstrate his commitment to Flexible Response. Within ten days of taking office, Kennedy announced an immediate defense buildup to counteract possible Soviet aggression. Two months later, in a special message to Congress, Kennedy declared that he was requesting major increases in the defense budget. In May, Kennedy extended the Cold War into outer space with his challenge that the United States would be the first to put a man on the moon. In July, in response to Soviet threats about Berlin, Kennedy announced a further increase in conventional force strength. These decisions to increase and publicize U.S. military strength culminated with Deputy Defense Secretary Gilpatric's announcement of overwhelming U.S. strategic superiority in October 1961.[51]

Many of these defense decisions would have benefitted from a review beforehand of the administration's overall national security objectives. A perfect opportunity arose early in the administration with the news that there was no "missile gap" favoring the Soviet Union. On February 6, McNamara told reporters in a "background" news conference that campaign rhetoric about a "missile gap" might have been exaggerated. McNamara said the classified

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[51]I discuss each of these public announcements in more detail in chapter five.

information he had examined revealed that the Soviets were not engaged in a crash missile buildup, and that the United States and the Soviet Union had about the same number of operational nuclear missiles. If anything, the United States was ahead. McNamara's remarks made headlines the next day, with several newspapers reporting that a Kennedy official had denied the existence of a missile gap. Republicans immediately accused the president of having created a false campaign issue. Kennedy responded that the Defense Department had not completed any conclusive studies about the existence, or lack thereof, of a "missile gap," stating, "It would be premature to reach a judgment as to whether there is a gap or not a gap."[52]

McNamara's comments on the supposed missile gap put pressure on the administration to demonstrate the truth of its campaign charges by following through on its promise to initiate a major missile buildup. Desmond Ball writes that the subsequent increases in strategic forces that Kennedy announced in his March 28 message to Congress were made in haste: "While fears of a missile gap

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[52]This discussion of the missile gap draws on the following sources: Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 89-93; Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 65-66; Schlesinger, A Thousand Days, 317, 499-500; and Sorensen, Kennedy, 610-13. Deborah Shapley summarizes the "background" press conference episode in Promise and Power: The Life and Times of Robert S. McNamara (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1993), 97-99. Today it is evident that the United States never did experience a missile gap with respect to the Soviet Union, and that the Eisenhower administration was aware of this fact because of its U-2 flights. Whether Kennedy had this information during the campaign remains a matter of debate. For opposing arguments on what Kennedy really knew about the "missile gap" before becoming president, see Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 19-22; Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 25-28; and Sorensen, Kennedy, 610-13.

were being dissipated, the new administration was still unaware of how great U.S. strategic superiority was." Ball goes on to say that the administration need not have proposed revisions to the FY62 budget so quickly. Had the administration taken another three months, he argues, it would have had more information on Soviet military capabilities. But for political reasons, the strategic buildup began much sooner.[53]

Had Kennedy followed up on McNamara's slip by initiating a study of the nation's defense capabilities and needs, he might have been less inclined to increase U.S. strategic forces. While it is not possible to say for sure what difference such a review would have made, at the very least it would have forced the president and his associates to consider carefully the implications of a Flexible Response defense posture. Rather than assuming that increases in strategic and conventional forces were required, they would have had to examine and question the validity of these assumptions. By not engaging in such a review, the Kennedy administration initiated a series of defense increases that do not appear to have been necessary for U.S. national security.

CONCLUSION

It is thus evident that despite Kennedy's commitment to Flexible Response, the president never reviewed or formally approved this change in strategy from the Eisenhower administration. By doing away with Eisenhower's national security

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[53]Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 123-26.

decision-making apparatus, Kennedy removed the institutional structures that would have prompted such a review. Instead of replacing them with more informal procedures that better suited his leadership style, he instead adopted a completely ad hoc approach to decision making during his first year in office, basing important defense decisions on analyses that failed to evaluate systematically the overarching concepts behind policy proposals. As a result of this disjointed incrementalism, the Kennedy administration examined only aspects of Flexible Response, without ever analyzing the strategy as a whole.

Some top Kennedy officials have said their president did not need a basic national security policy review like those conducted in the Eisenhower administration. Both Bundy and McNamara, as noted earlier, say the president's strategy was enunciated sufficiently through public pronouncements and that ratifying a formal document on Flexible Response would have served only to tie Kennedy's hands in specific situations. Other officials, however, disagree. Nitze, for example writes in his memoirs that while he "understood the president's reluctance," he still "believed more definitive guidance was necessary--if not essential--for both the State Department and the Defense Department." He further believed that "some restraint on the president's options might not be a bad thing." Because the Kennedy administration had no BNSP to turn to for policy guidance, Nitze reaches the following conclusion:

> As it was, we tended to be in a perpetual state of reaction to one crisis after another rather than working toward long-term goals. Events, in other words, were shaping our policy, rather than we shaping events. . . . The

> evolution of policy during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations was ad hoc. We learned certain lessons from specific episodes, but these lessons were never amalgamated into a coherent policy structure. Events in Southeast Asia, for example, led us into a labyrinth from which it was difficult to recover.[54]

Students of Kennedy's defense policies make similar arguments. Gaddis writes that the support for "symmetrical response" that Flexible Response implied led the Kennedy and Johnson administrations into Vietnam. Ball suggests that the lack of systematic decision making in the two administrations prompted the large strategic missile buildups of the 1960s. Such questions are not the focus of this analysis, but it is clear that the central tenets of Flexible Response were consistent with these major policy decisions.[55]

It is true that while Kennedy resisted formalizing his approach to national security in a BNSP, he made his commitment to Flexible Response clear through a series of speeches in 1961. But publicly announcing a change in strategy is not problem-free: different audiences may react very differently to particular statements, and it is more difficult to take back a poorly worded passage in a speech than it is to revise a classified document. Thus it is necessary to examine more carefully just how Kennedy communicated his support for Flexible Response in 1961.

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[54]Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost, 252.

[55]Gaddis, Strategies of Containment, chap. 8 passim.; Ball, Politics and Force Levels.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Communication of the Developing Strategies

Eisenhower and Kennedy employed almost parallel methods in communicating the New Look and Flexible Response. Each president explained his views on national security policy in press conferences and speeches during his first year in office. In each case these assertions were partly connected to the ongoing deliberations discussed in chapters three and four and partly a reaction to unfolding domestic and international events. Each president also assigned the task of officially promulgating his administration's defense posture and policies to a high-level subordinate, in the Eisenhower case Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and in the Kennedy case Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric.

This chapter traces the communication of each president's developing strategy during his first year in office. It begins by examining what Eisenhower and Kennedy said about national security policy in their press conferences and speeches. In so doing, it also surveys the very different political environments in 1953 and 1961. A struggle for power dominated Soviet politics in 1953, as officials vied to fill the immense vacuum left by the death of Stalin. Given their preoccupation with internal conflicts, Soviet officials may have been less concerned with examining Eisenhower's public pronouncements for possible signals. Kennedy, in contrast, became president at a time when Soviet leader Khrushchev

was eager to improve U.S.-Soviet relations. Thus, Khrushchev may have attached special significance to Kennedy's public statements.

After examining the two presidents' communications, the chapter turns to the Dulles and Gilpatric speeches, here following a similar structure to that of chapter two. It analyzes the content of the speeches, the drafting processes behind them, and the signals that they may have conveyed to Soviet leaders. Major addresses by top administration officials merit special attention because their signalling potential can be as high as that of initial presidential speeches. Eisenhower never discussed the New Look's increased reliance upon nuclear deterrence in any of his public pronouncements in 1953, instead letting Dulles do that in a speech to the Council on Foreign Relations on January 12, 1954. Similarly, while Kennedy publicly outlined his commitment to Flexible Response during the campaign and in office, he left it to Gilpatric to make the official public declaration of the strategy in a speech before the Business Council, a group of the country's leading business leaders, on October 21, 1961.

Given the significance of the Dulles and Gilpatric speeches, it is notable that the drafting process behind each did not employ multiple advocacy. While Eisenhower had consulted extensively with his top officials in preparing his initial speeches, the drafting of Dulles' address was much more closely held. A number of top-level officials participated in drafting Gilpatric's speech, but they did not engage in systematic consultations. Reactions to the speeches suggest that multiple

advocacy is as important for drafting major administration statements as it is for presidential speeches.

EISENHOWER'S NATIONAL SECURITY COMMUNICATIONS IN 1953

Eisenhower's public statements in 1953 on national security policy emphasized two major themes: that of achieving what Gaddis calls "the maximum possible deterrence of communism at the minimum possible cost," and that of working toward some form of accommodation with the Soviet Union. The first theme was communicated regularly during Eisenhower's weekly press conferences as he replied to reporters' queries about how his determination to consider the "long haul" in making military preparations would influence his budget calculations for FY54 and FY55. Eisenhower also gave special radio addresses to the nation in which he discussed this subject. The president communicated his second theme in two famous addresses, namely his "Chance for Peace" speech in April and his "Atoms for Peace" speech in December. Both speeches focused on the possibility of more peaceful relations with the Soviet Union in the post-Stalin era.[1]

Military Sufficiency and Fiscal Moderation

Given Eisenhower's attention to the federal deficit in his campaign and his initial speeches, it is no surprise that this topic came up frequently during his press conferences. On February 17, in his first meeting with the press, Eisenhower gave a twenty-minute presentation on pressing political issues, during which he

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[1]Quotation from Gaddis is in Strategies of Containment, 165.

announced that "until the deficit is eliminated from our budget, there is no hope of keeping our money stable." The following week, he acknowledged the difficulty of balancing the budget, noting that "if it weren't difficult, it would have been done long ago," but his commitment to the goal was clear.[2]

Eisenhower's first full explication of the economic aspects of the New Look came in two press conferences at the end of April, around the same time that his administration was reviewing the budget document NSC 149/2. On April 23, he firmly rejected the idea of drastically increasing defense expenditures by a specific year as NSC-68 had urged, declaring that "if you are going on the defensive, you have got to get a level of preparation you can sustain over the years." He then elaborated:

> So I don't say that the attack is coming in ten years or that we should build us up in five years. I say we have got to devise and develop a defensive program we can carry forward in company with our allies. And until we have got a better solution to these terrible tensions in the world, that is our answer--and not to build up to a maximum in '54 and then look around and say, 'What happens to us now?' . . . You cannot build a defense, where it has to last for years, reach a peak in '54 and then start to deteriorate. To my mind it makes no sense.[3]

Eisenhower outlined his fiscal and defense principles in more detail the following week. He started his press conference by reading out loud a lengthy statement, later distributed to reporters, which began with the following:

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[2]NYT, 18 February 1953; "The President's News Conference of February 17, 1953," PPOP, 1953, 47-48; "The President's News Conference of February 25, 1953," ibid., 61.

[3]"The President's News Conference of April 23, 1953," ibid., 209-10.

> I would like to present to you in a general way, and with fairly broad strokes, what I consider the sensible framework within which the United States and its allies can present in hard military fact an ever more effective posture of defense. A true posture of defense is composed of three factors--spiritual, military, and economic. Today I shall talk only about the last two.[4]

The president then emphasized the need "to bring American military logic and American economic logic into joint strong harness," noting the high military expenditures of the previous administration and calling for "a completely new, fresh look without any misleading labels." The rest of his statement elaborated upon these points and revealed two fundamental differences between Eisenhower's approach to national security and that of the Truman administration. First, Eisenhower refused to base military strength on preparing for a "year of maximum danger," arguing that the country could not afford to focus its production energies on a particular date and then maintain that high production capacity into the future. Second, while national security remained the first priority of the administration, it also would be conscious of the budgetary effects of its defense programs and would seek to balance expenses with revenues. For as Eisenhower noted, "If [military affairs and economic affairs] are allowed to proceed in disregard one for the other, you then create a situation either of doubtful military strength, or of such precarious economic strength that your military position is in constant jeopardy."[5]

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[4]"The President's News Conference of April 30, 1953," ibid., 239.

[5]Ibid., 239-42. My research indicates that this press conference marked Eisenhower's first use of the phrase "new, fresh look." I have not been able to determine, however, whether it was this statement that prompted the media to start

Eisenhower followed up on his call for a "new, fresh look" with two radio addresses to the American people in May and August. The first one, given on May 19, dealt specifically with national security and its costs. Eisenhower explained that the Cold War danger for the United States was "more than merely a military threat," declaring that Soviet leaders "hoped to force upon America and the free world an unbearable security burden leading to economic disaster." To avoid this situation, Eisenhower said, the country required a defense that "we can bear for a long and indefinite period of time. It cannot consist of sudden, blind responses to a series of fire-alarm emergencies." Two months later, on August 6, Eisenhower gave a radio report on the achievements of his administration to date. One of the accomplishments mentioned was the administration's "striving to bring the budget under control."[6]

The statements discussed represent a few of the many illustrations of Eisenhower's emphasis on fiscal moderation in his 1953 public communications. The issue became a major topic of discussion again later in the year, when the administration began to prepare its FY55 budget. But the president's argument

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referring to Eisenhower's defense posture as the "New Look." One source says the term originated with Senator Taft, who requested in 1953 that the incoming JCS take a "new look" at the nation's defense needs. See Survey of International Affairs, 1954 (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), 101, footnote four.

[6]Eisenhower, "Radio Address to the American People on the National Security and Its Costs," 19 May 1953, PPOP, 1953, 307; Eisenhower, "Radio Report to the American People on the Achievements of the Administration and the 83d Congress," 6 August 1953, ibid., 554.

remained the same. Of equal, if not greater, interest in 1953 were Eisenhower's overtures to the Soviet Union for relaxing world tensions.

Eisenhower's "Peace" Speeches in 1953

After his initial addresses in early 1953, Eisenhower's next major speech was "The Chance for Peace," given to the American Society of Newspaper Editors on April 16. This speech marked Eisenhower's first real discussion as president of the possibility of relaxing U.S.-Soviet tensions. Since Stalin's death the previous month, Eisenhower had been keen on making a public statement about the opportunity that now lay with the Soviet Union's new leadership. Despite reservations by Dulles, who favored a more cautious approach, Eisenhower decided that he should take the initiative in advocating better relations between the two countries.[7]

Declaring that "the world knows that an era ended with the death of Joseph Stalin," Eisenhower went on to say of the new Soviet leadership, "Its future is, in great part, its own to make." He noted the "precious opportunity" that the Soviets now had and stated that "the United States is ready to assume its just part." The president then made several specific proposals, including support for an "honorable

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[7]Ambrose, Eisenhower, vol. 2, 94-96. For an almost day-by-day account by speech writer Emmet Hughes of the drafting of this speech, see "Diary Notes 1953," Box 1, Hughes Papers, Mudd Library, Princeton University. Also see FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 8, Eastern Europe; Soviet Union; Eastern Mediterranean, 1107-31, 1143-47, and especially 1173-83. The last excerpt is a detailed memo by Walt Rostow, who at that time was a professor at MIT, on the origins of the speech. Rostow participated in the early stages of the drafting process.

armistice" in Korea and the reduction of armaments worldwide. But the speech was noteworthy not so much for its specific suggestions as for its overall emphasis on the need to achieve a just and lasting peace. As Eisenhower said in his concluding remarks, "There is, before all peoples, a precious chance to turn the black tide of events. If we failed to strive to seize this chance, the judgment of future ages would be harsh."[8]

Domestic response to the "Chance for Peace" speech was overwhelmingly positive. Representatives from both parties in Congress praised the president for "seizing the initiative" in trying to reduce world tensions. The Soviet response was less favorable, as Pravda published a front-page editorial some days later that rejected all of Eisenhower's terms for a settlement of tensions. But the newspapers did print the full text of the speech, which at least indicated interest in having Soviet citizens read the president's remarks. U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union Charles Bohlen noted that the printing of the speech marked an event "of great importance and in my experience unparalleled in the Soviet Union since the institution of the Stalinist dictatorship." A more recent analysis, based on declassified material from Soviet archives, attaches less significance to the speech, suggesting that top Kremlin officials vying for power at the time were in disagreement as to its purpose. It is not evident, then, that "The Chance for

[8]Eisenhower, "Address 'The Chance for Peace' Delivered Before the American Society of Newspaper Editors," 16 April 1953, PPOP, 1953, 179-88.

Peace" bolstered U.S.-Soviet relations in any real sense, but it certainly did not exacerbate them.[9]

Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech was the product of a much larger drafting process, beginning in the spring of 1953 shortly after Stalin's death and going through numerous permutations before the president delivered the final version to the U.N. General Assembly on December 8. The original idea was to have the president give a candid discussion about the enormous destructive potential of atomic weapons, which led to the project being nicknamed "Operation Candor." But after several drafts, Eisenhower and his associates decided that they did not want a speech that focused only on the gloomy possibility of nuclear holocaust. Eisenhower then suggested that he make a more hopeful proposal, namely that both the United States and the Soviet Union should donate some atomic materials to an international agency, which would use those materials for peaceful purposes. The new project, renamed "Operation Wheaties" because the drafters began to hold breakfast meetings, began to take shape, with participants editing the speech up to the day of its presentation. Numerous advisers and speech

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[9]For domestic and Soviet reaction to the speech, see NYT, 17 April 1953; Time, 4 May 1953; Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Khrushchev (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996), 157; Richter, Khrushchev's Double Bind, 46-47; and FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 8, 1162-66. The full text of the Pravda editorial is in Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 16 March 1953. Not everyone in the U.S. government agreed with Bohlen's optimistic analysis of why Soviet officials published Eisenhower's speech. See, for example, "Special Estimate: The Soviet Statement of 25 April 1953 in Reply to President Eisenhower's Speech on 16 April 1953," 30 April 1953, FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 8, 1168-69.

writers took part in the drafting process, including C.D. Jackson, Emmet Hughes, John Foster Dulles, and retired Rear Admiral Lewis L. Strauss, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission.[10]

Eisenhower began his speech by discussing the history of atomic weapons and their destructive potential. He noted that the Soviet Union now had both atomic and thermonuclear capabilities, which meant that the U.S. monopoly no longer existed, though quantitatively the United States was still far ahead. Nevertheless, while Eisenhower affirmed that the U.S. defense capability was so great that it could "inflict terrible losses upon an aggressor," he insisted that this was not "the true expression of the purpose and the hope of the United States." On the contrary, he said, harking back to the language of his inaugural address, "my country's purpose is to help us move out of the dark chamber of horrors into the light, to find a way by which the minds of men, the hopes of men, the souls of men everywhere can move forward toward peace and happiness and well being." To achieve this goal, Eisenhower presented his proposal for having countries donate portions of their atomic stockpiles to an international agency under the auspices of the United Nations.[11]

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[10]Ambrose, Eisenhower, vol. 2, 131-35; McGeorge Bundy, Danger and Survival: Choices About the Bomb in the First Fifty Years (New York: Random House, 1988), 287-95; Donovan, Eisenhower: The Inside Story, 183-93; Eisenhower, Mandate for Change, 251-55. For extensive documentation on the drafting of this speech as well as follow-up actions, see FRUS, 1952-54, vol. 2, especially 1056-292, 1526-27.

[11]Eisenhower, "Address Before the General Assembly of the United Nations on Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, New York City," 8 December 1953, PPOP, 1953,

The next day the New York Times reported that a "silent, raptly listening audience," including Soviet bloc representatives, responded with thunderous applause after Eisenhower's address. A few days later a State Department intelligence report noted that Eisenhower's remarks "received almost universal acclaim by opinion-forming media in the Free World, fully comparable if not exceeding the warm welcome accorded his speech of April 16." The Soviet media responded more critically to the speech, however, calling it a propaganda device and declaring that the president had both threatened atomic war and avoided the question of total worldwide disarmament. While U.S. and Soviet officials made attempts over the next years to follow through on Eisenhower's proposals, they made no serious headway. Nevertheless, although "Atoms for Peace" did not result in any substantive arms control efforts, it did demonstrate Eisenhower's interest in talking hopefully about peace rather than provocatively about war.[12]

It is evident, then, that Eisenhower's primary concerns in his 1953 public communications were the importance of orthodox economic tenets and the need to steer the world away from risks of war toward the possibilities of peace. While there clearly was another major component to his national security policy, namely

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[12]NYT, 9-10 December 1953; Ambrose, Eisenhower, vol. 2, 149-51; "Intelligence Report: Official Foreign Reactions to President Eisenhower's Speech of December 8, 1953," 14 December 1953, and "Intelligence Report: World Reaction to President Eisenhower's Speech of December 8, 1953," 15 December 1953, "UN Speech, 12/8/53" (2), Box 5, Speech Series, AWF, DDEL.

increased dependence on nuclear deterrence, it is important to note that the president himself did not even raise, let alone stress, this subject publicly. Instead, Eisenhower consistently maintained a calm, reassuring, and hopeful tone in his public statements on national security.

KENNEDY'S NATIONAL SECURITY COMMUNICATIONS IN 1961

Kennedy's national security communications during his first year in office were far more somber than Eisenhower's. Given the escalating tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1961, this was to be expected. The news that there was no missile gap favoring the Soviet Union, the Bay of Pigs failure, the Soviet success in sending a man into space, the contentious Vienna meetings, and the Berlin Crisis all increased the pressure on Kennedy to sound firm, even grave, in his public pronouncements. Consistent with the tenets of Flexible Response, Kennedy regularly called for building up U.S. military forces to counter potential Soviet aggression, particularly in his attempts to deal with the missile gap controversy in early 1961, his special state of the union message in May, and his speech on the Berlin Crisis in July. In so doing, however, he may well have aggravated the situation with the Soviet Union.

The Non-Missile Gap

The most important subject Kennedy had to address upon entering office was the question of the missile gap, which became headline news after McNamara revealed to reporters in early February that there was no such gap favoring the

Soviet Union. The importance of this issue during the 1960 campaign naturally meant that such information would spark great controversy. The Washington Post reported that "No Missile Gap Exists," and the New York Times declared that "Kennedy Defense Study Finds No Evidence of A 'Missile Gap'." As McNamara remembered later, "They broke the damn door down." It was no surprise, therefore, that the issue dominated Kennedy's press conference the following morning.[13]

When asked to "set the record clear" on the missile gap, Kennedy parried the question, reporting that McNamara had told him that "no study had been concluded in the Defense Department which would lead to any conclusion at this time as to whether there is a missile gap or not." Kennedy added that Defense officials were studying what changes to make in the military budget "in view of our strategic position." In trying to defuse the subject, Kennedy was doing what was politically necessary. After hearing of McNamara's remarks, Republicans in Congress said Kennedy should apologize to Eisenhower, and some even proposed that the election be held again. A publication by the Republican National Committee called the missile gap the "grand deception" of the 1960 campaign.

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[13]McNamara's statement is in Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 65. Also see NYT and Washington Post (hereafter WP), 7 February 1961.

Given his razor-thin margin of victory, Kennedy did not at all want to become bogged down in accusations that he had fabricated a campaign issue.[14]

Of less immediate interest to Kennedy but perhaps even more important, was Khrushchev's reaction to McNamara's remarks. U.S. revelations of Soviet strategic inferiority could only hurt Khrushchev domestically. Furthermore, Khrushchev may have questioned the Kennedy administration's motives in making this news public. As Michael Beschloss writes, "[Khrushchev] may have assumed that the seeming provocations of Kennedy's first seventeen days were not isolated events but a deliberate campaign to herald a harsh new American strategy for dealing with Moscow." Beschloss argues that Khrushchev may have interpreted a series of events since Kennedy's inauguration as insults. First, Kennedy officials had rejected proposals for an early summit meeting. Second, the United States had trespassed, supposedly accidentally, on Soviet airspace just days after Khrushchev had released the RB-47 fliers. Third, Kennedy had made several provocative remarks about Cold War tensions in his state of the union message. And now

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[14]"The President's News Conference of February 8, 1961," PPOP, 1961, 67-68; Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 65-66; Ball, Politics and Force Levels, 92-93; NYT and WP, 9 February 1961. Joseph W. Alsop, a major political columnist of the 1950s and 1960s, wrote in his memoirs that "President Kennedy would probably not have won the 1960 election without the supposed 'missile gap' issue to aid him." See Alsop, "I've Seen the Best of It," written with Adam Platt (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), 415. Alsop, who was a friend of Kennedy's, was a vehement critic of the Eisenhower administration's defense posture. Between January 25-29, 1960, Alsop examined the alleged missile gap in a series of articles in the New York Herald Tribune.

Kennedy's top defense official had revealed that the United States was better off militarily than the Soviet Union.[15]

After this initial flap, however, Kennedy did succeed in turning attention away from the missile gap. Questions about U.S. military strength surfaced regularly in press conferences over the next month, and each time Kennedy was careful not to say too much. He finally brought the subject to a temporary close in March, when he sent his special message on the defense budget to Congress, which was based on the Defense Department's reappraisal. Although Kennedy declared that "it has been publicly acknowledged for several years that this nation has not led the world in missile strength," he went on to say that "it would not be appropriate at this time or in this message to either boast of our strength or dwell upon our needs and dangers," thus neatly bypassing the missile gap question.[16]

Instead, Kennedy used his defense message to make a case for Flexible Response. Declaring that "our arms must be adequate to meet our commitments and ensure our security, without being bound by arbitrary budget ceilings," Kennedy called for major increases in funding for both strategic and conventional forces. While he asserted that "our strategic arms and defenses must be adequate to deter any deliberate nuclear attack on the United States or our allies," he also

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[15]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 66. On Khrushchev's early requests for a summit meeting, see ibid., 41-47.

[16]Kennedy, "Special Message to Congress on the Defense Budget," 28 March 1961, PPOP, 1961, 231-32.

emphasized that "our objective now is to increase our ability to confine our response to non-nuclear weapons." The goal, as he put it, was to keep the U.S. defense posture "both flexible and determined."[17]

Overall, Kennedy's defense message sparked little response. The Republican National Committee did publish a sharp critique of his proposals, stating that "the clear purpose of the message . . . is to obscure the simple fact that the new administration is proposing whopping federal deficits as far into the future as forecasts can be made." But aside from this predictable partisan reaction, the proposed defense increases did not result in any major debates domestically or internationally.[18]

It is nevertheless clear that Kennedy's defense message marked an important shift in national security policy and that this was recognized at least within his administration. Bundy, for example, wrote to Sorensen that "whatever the president says will become a part of our national security policy," and he further noted that the president would be "rewriting basic military policy which came on to him from the Eisenhower administration." Thus, Kennedy's defense message served to introduce Flexible Response and put a halt to queries about the missile

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[17]Ibid., 230-32.

[18]NYT, 29 March 1961.

gap, doing so without creating any political disruptions. His subsequent speeches on national security, however, would have a more questionable effect.[19]

Kennedy's speeches on national security

Two months after he sent his defense message to Congress, Kennedy again requested an increase in military expenditures, this time as part of a larger set of budget requests. On May 25, Kennedy addressed a joint session of Congress, delivering what he described as a special second state of the union message. The highlight of this speech was Kennedy's declaration that the United States should send a man to the moon by the end of the decade. In summoning the country to assume such an ambitious goal, Kennedy seemed to be returning to his campaign promise to "get the country moving again." As he put it:

> No single space project in this period will be more impressive to mankind, or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish.

To achieve this goal, Kennedy said, the United States would have to make a firm fiscal commitment, which would cost approximately seven to nine billion dollars over the next five years.[20]

In addition to funding for space exploration, Kennedy also requested increased appropriations for non-nuclear military strength, thereby reaffirming his

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[19]Bundy to Sorensen, "Defense Message," 13 March 1961, "Department of Defense, General, March 1961," Box 273, NSF, JFKL.

[20]Kennedy, "Special Message to the Congress on Urgent National Needs," 25 May 1961, PPOP, 1961, 396-406; NYT, 26 May 1961.

Flexible Response policy. He noted that he had "directed a further reinforcement of our own capacity to deter or resist non-nuclear aggression," adding that what was needed was "a change of position to give us still further increases in flexibility." Specific proposals included additional appropriations for the army, a greater emphasis on guerrilla warfare forces, and more funding for civilian fallout shelters.[21]

Domestically, a second state of the union message may have served Kennedy's purposes. While members of Congress were cautious about the cost of his proposals, they did express support for his general objectives. Additionally, the proposal to send a man to the moon by 1970 held particular appeal for the public at large, given Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin's successful orbit into space the previous month. Internationally, however, Kennedy's requests for higher defense expenditures were more problematic. Kennedy's aides had urged him not to make a new military request less than two weeks before he met Khrushchev at Vienna. But Kennedy, concerned with shoring up his prestige before the meeting, disregarded their advice. His advisers' concerns proved to be well-founded in Vienna, where Khrushchev mentioned that because the United States was planning a military buildup, perhaps the Soviet Union should do so as well.[22]

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[21]Ibid.

[22]NYT, 5/26/61; Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 113-14, 165, 221; Richter, Khrushchev's Double Bind, 144-45; memoranda of conversation from Vienna meetings, 3-4 June 1961, "USSR--Vienna meetings," Box 126, POF, JFKL.

Kennedy's speech two months later on the Berlin Crisis further heightened U.S.-Soviet tensions. On the evening of July 25, Kennedy gave a radio and television report from the White House on how the United States planned to deal with Soviet threats about Berlin. This subject had dominated Kennedy's agenda since Khrushchev had warned him in Vienna that the Soviet Union intended to sign a peace treaty with East Germany by the end of the year. Such an act would be unacceptable to the United States, which did not recognize East Germany and insisted upon maintaining unimpeded access to the Allied sectors of Berlin, which were inside East Germany.

To respond to this threat, Kennedy announced plans for a major defense buildup. He declared that he was requesting an additional $3.4 billion dollars from Congress for defense expenditures, almost half of which would be for non-nuclear weapons, ammunition, and equipment. Expecting to double and triple draft calls in the coming months, Kennedy said he also would ask Congress for the authority to call up the reserves. While he acknowledged that these actions would be costly, he reminded listeners that "we can afford all these efforts, and more--but we cannot afford not to meet this challenge." His closing remarks reinforced the gravity of the occasion: "In meeting my responsibilities in these coming months as president, I need your good will, and your support--and above all, your prayers."[23]

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[23]Kennedy, "Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Berlin Crisis," 25 July 1961, PPOP, 1961, 533-40; NYT, 26 July 1961; Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 256-61.

In the United States, the speech prompted widespread support for the president's objectives. As the New York Times noted, "Though differences of opinion developed on specific measures proposed by the president, a widespread willingness to make necessary sacrifices was indicated." Not surprisingly, Soviet leaders had a very different reaction. Publicly, they described Kennedy's speech as "warlike" and "unreasonable," saying that the president was using Berlin as an excuse to step up the arms race. Privately, Khrushchev told Kennedy's disarmament adviser, John J. McCloy, that the United States had declared "preliminary war" on the Soviet Union. McCloy later reported that the Soviet leader was "really mad on Thursday after digesting the president's speech. . . . My estimate is that the situation is probably not yet ripe for any negotiation proffers by us but too dangerous to permit it to drift into a condition where cramped time could well lead to unfortunate action."[24]

It is evident, then, that Soviet officials were especially attentive in 1961 to possible signals in Kennedy's public communications. While Kennedy's statements on Flexible Response, such as his defense message, appear not to have had much effect, the non-missile gap incident and Kennedy's calls for defense buildups were highly consequential. Certainly the actual policy conflicts that year between the United States and the Soviet Union were the primary cause of strained relations, but Kennedy's stern public statements also contributed to the tension.

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[24]NYT, 27 July 1961. Quotations from McCloy are in Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 262-64.

OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION OF THE NEW LOOK

Turning now from Eisenhower's and Kennedy's own communications on national security to the complete enunciations of their defense postures by other officials, several points about the New Look, which I examine first, merit attention. While Dulles' speech marked the first full promulgation of the New Look, the secretary of state never actually employed that term. The first Eisenhower official to use the phrase "New Look" in connection with defense posture was JCS Chairman Radford, who did so in December 1953. Nevertheless, although Radford briefly referred to atomic weapons in his speech, he did not develop the point. One month later, Eisenhower himself publicly discussed the nation's nuclear capability, but he, too, did not fully elucidate the thinking behind the New Look, instead leaving that responsibility to Dulles.

Radford, who spoke to the National Press Club in December 1953, defined the New Look as "the development of an armed posture which can be supported year in and year out, on a long-term basis; not just one year--nor two years--but for ten years or even twenty years if necessary." Noting that the United States "cannot be strong everywhere simultaneously," he said the JCS was planning "force levels which provide us mobile, versatile, combat forces in readiness, and an adequate mobilization base." But Radford did not discuss the related plan to rely more on the threat of atomic warfare to deter aggression, apart from saying that "atomic weapons have virtually achieved conventional status within our armed

forces," and adding that this administration was committed to keeping U.S. air power superior to that of any other country in the world.[25]

Eisenhower elaborated on the subject in his second state of the union message on January 7, 1954. In discussing the nation's defense posture, he stated, "We shall not be aggressors, but we and our allies have and will maintain a massive capability to strike back." He went on to note several considerations that were guiding the administration in its defense planning, including the following: "While determined to use atomic power to serve the usages of peace, we take into full account our great and growing number of nuclear weapons and the most effective means of using them against an aggressor if they are needed to preserve our freedom." With these statements, Eisenhower made clear that nuclear weapons were an important component of his national security strategy, but he did not elaborate as to their specific role.[26]

Secretary of State Dulles provided a fuller, and more memorable, explanation of the role of nuclear weapons in the New Look in his speech to the Council on Foreign Relations less than a week later. Noting that "it is not sound to become permanently committed to military expenditures so vast that they lead to 'practical bankruptcy,'" Dulles declared that the administration needed to get

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[25]For the text of Radford's speech, see NYT, 15 December 1953.

[26]Eisenhower, "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union," 7 January 1954, PPOP, 1954, 6-23.

"maximum protection at a bearable cost." To achieve this objective, Dulles announced the following:

> This can be done by placing more reliance on deterrent power and less dependence on local defensive power. . . . Local defenses must be reinforced by the further deterrent of massive retaliatory power. . . . *The way to deter aggression is for the free community to be willing and able to respond vigorously at places and with means of its own choosing.* (Italics added.)[27]

With this strategy, the administration would be able to base military decisions on its own policy choices rather than having to respond to an opponent's actions. As Dulles said, "That permits a selection of military means instead of a multiplication of means." Consequently, "it is now possible to get, and share, more basic security at less cost." Summarizing the new policy, Dulles reiterated that the United States now would "depend primarily on a great capacity to retaliate, instantly, by means and at places of our own choosing."[28]

Given the importance of Dulles' speech, it is surprising that these remarks were not reviewed more carefully in the drafting process. Dulles spent about two weeks preparing the speech, revising more than ten drafts, and he also cleared it with Eisenhower and principal members of the NSC. But the speech was never reviewed in a structured setting the way Eisenhower's initial communications, his "Chance for Peace" address, and his "Atoms for Peace" speech were. Certainly

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[27]John Foster Dulles, "The Evolution of Foreign Policy," Department of State Bulletin 30 (25 January 1954): 107-10.

[28]Ibid.

Eisenhower's speeches were more important than those of his subordinates, and it would be unrealistic to expect them to employ his extensive clearance procedures for their own addresses. But major statements of administration policy surely deserved special attention. Dulles had declared that he was presenting "an overall view of those policies which relate to our security," and he also had noted that his remarks were based on "some basic policy decisions" made by Eisenhower and the NSC. Clearly, then, this was designed to be a significant address.[29]

Perhaps the most ironic aspect of the drafting process is that Eisenhower himself approved, indeed contributed to, the controversial statements in the speech. Eisenhower added the sentence about depending upon "a great capacity to retaliate" just days before Dulles gave his presentation. Additionally, Eisenhower told Dulles that the speech "appears to be excellently adapted to the audience you will have." Eisenhower may have felt so confident of his ability to determine when, if ever, to use nuclear weapons that he did not find the ambiguity in Dulles' speeches disturbing. But this was exactly the kind of assumption that multiple advocacy might have brought to the surface. Had other national security officials, such as the JCS and the defense secretary, discussed the speech in a group setting, they

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[29]For drafts of the speech, see "Speech: 'Evolution of Foreign Policy,' 1/12/54," Box 322, John Foster Dulles Papers, Personal (hereafter referred to as "JFDP, Personal"), Mudd Library, Princeton University. On the drafting of the speech, see "Re: Article by John Foster Dulles," Box 78, ibid.; and "December 1953 [Telephone Calls]" (2) and "January 1954 [Telephone Calls]" (2), Box 6, Chronological Series, JFDP, DDEL. I am grateful to Richard Immerman for sharing with me his research on the drafting of Dulles' speech.

might well have raised concerns about the language that would have led Dulles and Eisenhower to reconsider. Simply clearing the speech individually with various officials removed the possibility of such deliberations.[30]

Domestic response to Dulles' speech was fiercely negative. Paul Nitze, who attended the talk, recalls in his memoirs that he "looked in amazement" at his dinner-table companions as Dulles' words "sank in." Both Chester Bowles and Dean Acheson published pieces in the New York Times Magazine sharply criticizing the "massive retaliation" doctrine. As noted in chapter four, they and other Democrats were particularly upset with the implication that the United States would respond to an act of local aggression with general war. More generally, there was much confusion as to precisely what Dulles had meant. As Time noted some weeks later:

> The questions snowballed. Did Dulles mean that the U.S. would abandon local ground defense, perhaps withdraw its ground troops from Europe? Would the U.S. rely solely on air-atomic power? Did Dulles mean that any war would automatically be turned into the big atomic war? Did "instantly" mean that the president would take the U.S. into war without consulting Congress or allies?[31]

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[30]See "Dulles-January 1954," Dulles-Herter Series, AWF, DDEL; Bundy, Danger and Survival, 255-60, especially footnote thirty-nine; Robert H. Ferrell, ed., The Diary of James C. Hagerty: Eisenhower in Mid-Course, 1954-1955 (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1983), 7; and Kinnard, President Eisenhower and Strategy Management, 26-27. Kinnard was the first person to discover Eisenhower's addition to the speech.

[31]Nitze, From Hiroshima to Glasnost, 151; Bowles, "A Plea For Another Great Debate"; Acheson, "Instant Retaliation: The Debate Continued"; Time, 29 March 1954. For further discussion of U.S. and allied reaction, see Council on Foreign Relations, The United States in World Affairs, 1954 (New York: Harper Brothers,

Soviet reaction to the speech has been more difficult to ascertain. Given that Dulles had made similar remarks before, particularly during the 1952 campaign, Soviet leaders may not have found anything new in this address. In his 1952 Life magazine article, for example, Dulles had called for the free world "to develop the will and organize the means to retaliate instantly against open aggression by Red armies, so that, if it occurred anywhere, we could and would strike back where it hurts, by means of our own choosing." Nevertheless, because the speech was touted as and thereafter considered a major statement of national security policy in the Eisenhower administration, it likely did receive some attention from Soviet leaders. But internal leadership battles within the Soviet Union may have meant that officials did not have time to consider the speech more carefully. It does not appear to have created the uproar within the Soviet Union that it did domestically.[32]

Both Eisenhower and Dulles sought to temper the domestic uproar over "massive retaliation," which was how many people began to identify Eisenhower's defense posture, even though Dulles had not used that specific phrase. In a press conference in March, Eisenhower sought to clarify Dulles' remarks:

> Well, now, I will tell you: Foster Dulles, by no stretch of the imagination, ever meant to be so specific and exact in stating what we would do under

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1956), 52-56; and Survey of International Affairs, 1954, 98-102.

[32]Dulles, "A Policy of Boldness," 151. James Richter notes in Khrushchev's Double Bind, 48, that Dulles' speech may have bolstered the arguments of Soviet leaders who did not want to negotiate with the United States.

> different circumstances. He was showing the value to America to have a capability of doing certain things, what he believed that would be in the way of deterring an aggressor and preventing this dread possibility of war occurring. So no man, I don't care how brilliant he is, would undertake to say exactly what we would do under all that variety of circumstances. That is just nonsense.[33]

Dulles went so far as to publish a revised and expanded version of his speech in the April issue of Foreign Affairs. This article explained the administration's policy much more carefully, noting that "local defense is important," but also that "the main reliance must be on the power of the free community to retaliate with great force by mobile means at places of its own choice." Elaborating on the implications of this policy, Dulles said:

> It does not mean that if there is a communist attack somewhere in Asia, atom or hydrogen bombs will necessarily be dropped on the great industrial centers of China or Russia. It does mean that the free world must maintain the collective means and be willing to use them in the way which most effectively makes aggression too risky and expensive to be tempting.

With this statement, Dulles made clear what he had stated in his speech but had nevertheless provoked much controversy: that the United States would maintain the *capacity* to retaliate massively to aggression but that this would not be its automatic response.[34]

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[33]The President's News Conference of March 17, 1954, PPOP, 1954, 325-26.

[34]Dulles, "Policy for Security and Peace," Foreign Affairs 32 (April 1954): 353-64; Mark J. Schaefermeyer, "Dulles and Eisenhower on 'Massive Retaliation'," in Eisenhower's War of Words: Rhetoric and Leadership, ed. Martin J. Medhurst (East Lansing, Mi.: Michigan State University Press, 1994), 27-45.

Eisenhower's views about his duties and those of his secretary of state may shed some light on why he chose to let Dulles give this speech. The declassified record on the Eisenhower presidency has made clear that while Eisenhower consulted more closely with Dulles than perhaps any other official, in the end the president himself made the final decisions. Yet Eisenhower was not unwilling to let Dulles be the primary administration spokesperson on foreign policy. Not only did doing so permit Eisenhower to remain publicly above the political fray, it also enabled him to use Dulles as a "lightning rod" for public criticism on controversial policy matters, as a number of scholars have documented. By having Dulles talk about "massive retaliatory power," Eisenhower may have thought he could convey his administration's increased commitment to nuclear deterrence without having to grapple with critical reaction himself. Even if, however, this was Eisenhower's intention, the ongoing criticism he faced throughout the rest of his administration about "massive retaliation" suggests that he should have employed a more nuanced approach.[35]

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[35]Studies of the Eisenhower-Dulles relationship include Immerman, "Eisenhower and Dulles: Who Made the Decisions?" Political Psychology 1 (Autumn 1979): 21-38; and Gaddis, "The Unexpected John Foster Dulles: Nuclear Weapons, Communism, and the Russians," in John Foster Dulles and the Diplomacy of the Cold War, ed. Immerman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 47-77. On Eisenhower's use of Dulles and other officials as "lightning rods," see Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 87-92; Stephen Hess, Organizing the Presidency, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1988), 61-62; and, most recently, Richard J. Ellis, Presidential Lightning Rods: The Politics of Blame Avoidance (Lawrence, Ks.: University Press of Kansas, 1994), 74-85.

It is evident, then, that Dulles' speech was not a success, creating a domestic furor about the administration's national security intentions. Whether it made a difference to Soviet leaders cannot be determined from the Soviet archival material that has emerged so far, but the harsh domestic reaction alone suggests that both the president and the secretary of state should have considered possible responses more carefully beforehand. While the speech may not have increased Cold War tensions, it clearly fostered concerns and misperceptions within the United States.

OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION OF FLEXIBLE RESPONSE

Gilpatric's speech was emphatically more consequential for U.S.-Soviet relations than Dulles'. By the time Gilpatric spoke to the Business Council in the fall of 1961, tensions between the two countries had intensified markedly. The building of the Berlin Wall in August had heightened U.S. concerns about Soviet intentions in Germany, though Khrushchev did in October rescind his threat to sign a separate peace treaty with East Germany by the end of the year. Khrushchev also had announced at the end of August that the Soviet Union would resume nuclear testing, and by the eve of the twenty-second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in October, the Soviets had already conducted several tests. Additionally, Khrushchev had publicly declared that the Soviet Union would explode a fifty-megaton bomb--the largest ever--by the end of October. He had claimed in a six-hour speech before the twenty-second Congress that the Soviet

Union was strong enough militarily to "crush any aggressor." It is not surprising that the Kennedy administration decided it should respond to these grandiose assertions.[36]

Gilpatric made evident at the outset that his speech would be a major statement of U.S. policy, declaring that his purpose was "to develop further for you the thinking behind our present defense policies and programs." He then reviewed the administration's policy decisions over the past year, noting that Kennedy had initiated a major study of U.S. defense capabilities in January and that this had resulted in some "significant changes," including: increased spending for military readiness and civil defense; a determination that "our arms must be adequate to protect our commitments and ensure our security without being bound by arbitrary budgetary ceilings"; and a commitment to "improve the flexibility of our defenses, by improving our ability to make swift, selective responses to enemy attacks on the free world regardless of time, place or choice of weapons." Later he declared that "we are seeking to acquire flexibility rather than rigidity in the options open to us." Thus Gilpatric definitively established the Kennedy administration's commitment to Flexible Response.[37]

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[36]Robert M. Slusser, The Berlin Crisis of 1961 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 157-78, 303-14.

[37]Address by Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric to the Business Council, 21 October 1961, in U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Documents on Disarmament, 1961 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962), 542-50.

While its support for Flexible Response made this speech important in and of itself, what really made it historically significant was Gilpatric's announcement of U.S. strategic superiority. Noting that rigid Soviet security could not prevent the United States from evaluating and comparing "the relative military power of the two sides," Gilpatric then stated the following:

> The fact is that this nation has a nuclear retaliatory force of such lethal power that an enemy move which brought it into play would be an act of self-destruction on his part. . . . The destructive power which the United States could bring to bear even after a Soviet surprise attack upon our forces would be as great as--perhaps greater than--the total undamaged force which the enemy can threaten to launch against the United States in a first strike. *In short we have a second-strike capability which is at least as extensive as what the Soviets can deliver by striking first.* (Italics added.)

With this statement, Gilpatric completely disposed of Soviet claims of strategic preeminence. Reiterating this point at the end of his speech, Gilpatric declared that "the Soviet's bluster . . . must be evaluated against the hard facts of United States nuclear superiority." The massive destructive capabilities of the United States were now evident.[38]

Gilpatric's speech marked the Kennedy administration's first official acknowledgment of U.S. strategic superiority, which had been a matter of debate ever since McNamara's remarks about the non-missile gap in February. Kennedy himself authorized the speech shortly after the CIA provided him with a definitive report in September, based on satellite reconnaissance, that the Soviet missile program was vastly inferior to that of the United States. Kennedy may also have

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[38]Ibid.

decided that a stern statement of U.S. capabilities would make Khrushchev more hesitant about further inflaming the Berlin Crisis. As Roger Hilsman, who headed the State Department's intelligence division, remembers:

> Khrushchev's several ultimatums on Berlin indicated that, if he were allowed to continue to assume that we still believed in the missile gap, he would very probably bring the world dangerously close to war. Thus the decision was reached to go ahead with telling the Soviets that we now knew.[39]

Kennedy also decided, however, that he should not be the one to make the announcement, telling journalist Hugh Sidey, "When I get up and say those things it sounds too belligerent." Instead, the deputy secretary of defense was chosen for the task. As Bundy later explained, Kennedy and his associates wanted the speech to be "received as a statement of official administration policy," but they also did not want it to be "too high and mighty."[40]

Given the thought that went into deciding who should announce U.S. strategic superiority, it follows that Gilpatric's speech underwent an extensive clearance procedure. Gilpatric himself reviewed the text of speech in separate meetings with Rusk, McNamara, and Bundy. But the officials did not as a group

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[39]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 328-32; Roger Hilsman, To Move A Nation: The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 163-65; Arnold L. Horelick and Myron Rush, Strategic Power and Soviet Foreign Policy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 83-85; John Prados, The Soviet Estimate: U.S. Intelligence Analysis and Russian Military Strength (New York: Dial, 1982), 117-19.

[40]Hugh Sidey, John F. Kennedy, President, 2d ed. (New York: Atheneum, 1964), 218-20; interview with Bundy, 3 January 1996.

engage in any systematic analysis of possible Soviet reactions. Such a discussion might, for example, have led to a thorough airing of a concern of the principal drafter of the speech, Pentagon aide Daniel Ellsberg. Ellsberg asked NSC staff member Carl Kaysen why Kennedy did not privately tell Khrushchev that the United States was aware of its vast strategic superiority over the Soviet Union. This point made sense, as the president could easily have sent Khrushchev copies of U.S. satellite photos. But Kaysen dismissed Ellsberg's objection, saying, "John Kennedy isn't going to talk that way to Khrushchev." Had multiple advocacy been employed in the drafting process, participants would have thoroughly examined and debated the point.[41]

The Kennedy administration went to pains to make clear that the speech represented approved administration policy. The day of the speech, Pentagon spokesmen declared that it had been cleared "at the highest levels of the government." Secretary of State Rusk reaffirmed this point the next day, when he said in a television interview that the speech was "an official statement. It was a well-considered statement, and it was based upon the facts." The attention that Kennedy officials sought to draw to the speech makes it all the more surprising that possible reactions were not systematically considered.[42]

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[41]Personal communication with Gilpatric, 26 June 1995; Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 329-30; Bundy, Danger and Survival, 381-83; Peter Wyden, Wall: The Inside Story of Divided Berlin (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 258-59.

[42]WP, 22 October 1961. For Rusk's October 22, 1961 television interview, see Department of State Bulletin 45 (13 November 1961): 801-806.

The lack of a systematic review was not consequential domestically, as Gilpatric's speech received the serious attention that the administration had intended it should. Time referred to it as "the administration's sternest warning yet to Russia about the danger of starting a war, however big or small." Similarly, the Washington Post stated that the speech was "the toughest made to date by a high Kennedy administration official--at least in warning Russia of the consequences of its current aggressive course." The Post went on to note that Gilpatric's remarks were "in sharp contrast with prior official statements since the Berlin crisis arose, which emphasized the buildup in conventional United States arms and soft-pedaled nuclear policy."[43]

Whereas in the United States the firm tone of Gilpatric's speech was accepted as necessary, the Soviet response was markedly different. Izvestia described the speech as " 'a typical' speech by a representative of the American military, boastful in tone and outrageous in content." Noting the increases in military appropriations that Gilpatric had described, Izvestia declared, "The U.S. intends to intensify the arms race not only with hydrogen arms, but also with conventional weapons." It further noted that the speech had been "cleared at the highest level," and that Rusk had endorsed the remarks the following day. In so

[43]Time, 27 October 1961; WP, 22 October 1961; NYT, 23 October 1961; Wall Street Journal, 23 October 1961; U.S. News & World Report, 6 November 1961.

doing, the Soviet paper stated, "the U.S. government shows that it intends to carry on, as before, a policy of increasing international tension."[44]

Soviet leaders also responded directly to Gilpatric's speech. On October 23, in an address to the Twenty-Second Party Congress, Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Malinovsky declared, "What can one say to this one more threat, to this petty statement? Just one thing: the threat does not frighten us." Malinovsky went on to say that Gilpatric was wrong about U.S. strategic superiority, and that the United States "must make substantial corrections" in its analyses. The next day the Soviet Union went on to demonstrate its nuclear strength by detonating a more powerful strategic weapon than any the world had ever seen--a thirty-megaton bomb. And on October 30, Khrushchev followed through on his warning that the Soviet Union would explode a fifty-megaton bomb, despite numerous entreaties from other countries not to do so.[45]

By openly revealing U.S. strategic superiority, the Kennedy administration seriously weakened Khrushchev's already delicate domestic standing. As Beschloss writes, "Kennedy may have strengthened his own domestic political standing and reassured American allies, but he also provocatively undermined Khrushchev's

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[44]Current Digest of the Soviet Press, 22 November 1961.

[45]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 331-32; Lebow and Stein, We All Lost The Cold War, 39; Slusser, The Berlin Crisis of 1961, 380-87; NYT, 24 October 1961; Wall Street Journal, 24-31 October 1961. Malinovsky's speech is reprinted in Documents on International Affairs, 1961 (London: Oxford University Press, 1965): 364-74. The quotations in the text are taken from this reprint. Both Slusser and Beschloss use slightly different versions of these quotations, but the points made are the same.

position in the Kremlin and in the world." Hilsman, Kennedy's State Department intelligence chief, later pointed out that "the implications of the message were horrendous . . . The whole Soviet ICBM system was suddenly obsolescent." It then became incumbent that Khrushchev reassert Soviet strength in some dramatic fashion, to make clear to the world that the Soviet Union was not militarily weaker than the United States. Indeed, both Beschloss and Hilsman suggest that Gilpatric's speech contributed centrally to Khrushchev's risky decision the following year to place Soviet missiles secretly in Cuba.[46]

CONCLUSION

What can we say, then, about Eisenhower's and Kennedy's communications of national security policy during their first year in office? Eisenhower's communications contained far less controversial political signals for the Soviet Union than Kennedy's. While U.S.-Soviet relations had become more strained by late 1961, thus making it necessary for Kennedy to use forceful language, there were opportunities, as his advisers noted, for him to tone down his declarations. As it was, his announcements about defense buildups may well have exacerbated the already shaky situation with Khrushchev after the Bay of Pigs.

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[46]Beschloss, The Crisis Years, 331-32; Hilsman, To Move A Nation, 164-65. Sovietologists who have noted how the Gilpatric speech exposed the frailties with Soviet military power include Richter, Khrushchev's Double Bind, 144-47; and Tompson, Khrushchev: A Political Life, 240-41.

Given Eisenhower's general tone of caution and hopefulness in his own communications, it is surprising that he approved Dulles' remarks about "massive retaliatory power" in the Council on Foreign Relations speech. Eisenhower's opinion of his secretary of state's limitations further bolsters this point. Less than four months into his administration, Eisenhower took stock of his Cabinet members in a diary entry, remarking on their capabilities and problems. Of Dulles he wrote: "He is not particularly persuasive in presentation and, at times, seems to have a curious lack of understanding as to how his words and manner may affect another personality." These concerns would appear to provide all the more reason to employ multiple advocacy in reviewing major addresses by Dulles. Perhaps Eisenhower was so certain of his ability to control decisions about nuclear weapons that he paid less attention than he should have to Dulles' statements about using those weapons. Clearly he and Dulles did not consider sufficiently how such statements would be received. They also did not initiate the broad review and consultation that such a major exposition of administration policy merited.[47]

Gilpatric's speech to the Business Council had similar problems. While many officials reviewed the Gilpatric speech beforehand, they never met as a group to analyze its purpose and possible implications. Consequently, there was no opportunity to debate such questions as whether the Kennedy administration should so publicly reveal U.S. strategic superiority. Given that the Gilpatric

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[47]Eisenhower's statement is in 14 May 1953 diary entry, The Eisenhower Diaries, 236-40.

speech appears to have aggravated U.S.-Soviet relations, the lack of such review is all the more glaring.

These two cases further bolster the argument that George's prescriptions for multiple advocacy in presidential decision making also are applicable to speech writing. The Eisenhower-Dulles case in particular illustrates that even presidents who are skilled at policy analysis need to employ multiple advocacy in deciding how they will communicate those policies. Had Dulles and Gilpatric engaged in systematic consultations with officials familiar with their speech topics, they might well have avoided the adverse domestic and international reaction that they respectively faced.

CHAPTER SIX

Reflections on Presidential Decision Making

In this chapter, I turn to the broader implications of my analysis. Comparing how Eisenhower and Kennedy developed and communicated their national security strategies raises important points about presidential decision making generally, as well as about the two presidents and their decision-making processes. My conclusions fall under five headings: classifying presidential decision-making processes; formal versus informal management styles; the uses of multiple advocacy for presidential policy making; the uses of multiple advocacy for presidential policy communication; and strategic planning in the presidency.

THE CLASSIFICATION OF PRESIDENTIAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

We have seen in this study that Richard Tanner Johnson's classifications of "formalistic" versus "collegial" approaches to decision making do not adequately capture the realities of Eisenhower's and Kennedy's processes. Eisenhower employed formal procedures in making decisions, but his process was by no means formalistic as Johnson defines the term. Eisenhower's advisers did not present him with single "least-common denominator" recommendations that they had negotiated beforehand. Rather, his decision-making process was explicitly designed to bring a wide range of policy options to his attention. The Planning Board sessions that set the agendas for NSC meetings encouraged, indeed required, sharp debate over

policy issues. The NSC meetings themselves were occasions for brisk debate in which Eisenhower's associates argued their often conflicting positions in the president's presence. No one was more emphatic on the importance of such debate than Eisenhower himself, who recalled in his memoirs that he never expected his advisers to reach unanimity on a policy decision. "Had they presented a unanimous conclusion," he commented, "I would have suspected that some important part of the subject was being overlooked, or that my subordinates had failed to study the subject."[1]

In addition to his use of formal structures, Eisenhower also employed informal means to acquire information, which further differentiates his practices from those outlined in Richard Tanner Johnson's "formalistic" classification. His daily communications with Dulles enabled him to address the highly confidential aspects of national security questions that could not be brought up in NSC sessions. He also had regular informal contacts with an extensive network of personal advisers, not least his brother and confidant Milton.

Just as the term "formalistic" does not adequately characterize Eisenhower's decision-making processes for national security, so too is "collegial" an imperfect description of Kennedy's processes. At least in 1961, those processes were so fluid that Kennedy really did not represent the hub of an informally coordinated advisory network. Kennedy was by no means cut off from information, as his

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[1]Eisenhower, Waging Peace, 632.

copious reading and his far-ranging personal inquiries of officials at all levels of government demonstrates. But Kennedy did not channel that knowledge into any systematic analysis of different policy options, as can be seen in his failure to review the central tenets of Flexible Response upon entering office. The most glaring example in the Kennedy administration of how problematic this lack of organization and coordination could be is, of course, the Bay of Pigs. Irving L. Janis has convincingly argued that this extraordinary fiasco resulted from "groupthink," a pattern of group decision making in which the desire among members for concurrence with their leader leads them to fail to engage in systematic policy analysis. Needless to say, such a process hardly meets the requirement of sharp give-and-take that is central to the "collegial" classification.[2]

But Kennedy's learning curve was noticeably steep. His decision-making process during the Cuban missile crisis has been widely acclaimed for its rigor and sharp consideration of alternatives. Indeed, Janis concludes that Kennedy's decision-making process in the second Cuba crisis was ideally suited to avoid groupthink. Richard Tanner Johnson says the process shows that by 1962, Kennedy's practices had become truly and effectively collegial.[3]

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[2]Irving L. Janis, Groupthink: Psychological Studies of Policy Decisions and Fiascoes, 2d ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982), 14-47. A useful study of the history behind the Bay of Pigs invasion is Trumbull Higgins, The Perfect Failure: Kennedy, Eisenhower, and the CIA at the Bay of Pigs (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987).

[3]Janis, Groupthink, chap. six passim; Johnson, Managing the White House, 142. The classic analysis of decision making during the Cuban missile crisis is Graham T.

Clearly, then, classifying presidential leadership styles and advisory systems is a difficult business. Not only is there significant variation between presidents within a category (Eisenhower's formal arrangements worked far differently than Nixon's), but presidents also can use different models of organization throughout their administrations, as Kennedy did. Nevertheless, classifications are inevitable. Practitioners as well as scholars inevitably seek patterns and regularities as they canvass the White House arrangements of previous presidents. Kennedy's desire, for instance, to draw upon FDR's example was based in part on what he had read about FDR's "hands-on" governance. Furthermore, to state that Eisenhower's decision-making processes were largely formal and Kennedy's largely informal is accurate. But classifications need to be approached with caution, and more attention should be paid to specific cases. As Eisenhower himself often said, "All generalities are false, including this one."[4]

FORMAL VERSUS INFORMAL MANAGEMENT STYLES

While classifying presidential decision-making processes is no simple task, it nevertheless is possible to identify some basic patterns in different approaches.

Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (New York: HarperCollins, 1971). More recent studies, which make use of recently declassified materials as well as the conferences in the past few years of Soviet and American participants in the crisis are Beschloss, The Crisis Years, and LeBow and Stein, We All Lost the Cold War.

[4]For a comparison of Eisenhower's and Nixon's decision-making processes, see Burke, The Institutional Presidency, 59-75. Eisenhower's statement is in Ambrose, Eisenhower, vol. 1, 77.

As we have seen, Eisenhower's and Kennedy's virtually reciprocal styles each had tradeoffs. Eisenhower's attention to organization meant that orderly channels for acquiring information, making decisions, and following up on their implementation were put into place soon after he entered office. Eisenhower's decision-making process for national security illustrates this point well, as demonstrated by the "policy hill" of the Planning Board, the NSC, and the Operations Coordinating Board, but Eisenhower also instituted similar procedures for domestic policy making, creating a Cabinet secretariat to organize that process. Eisenhower's additional use of informal means to gather advice and information meant that he was not dependent on these formal resources, but their existence served to ensure the systematic review and analysis of policy alternatives.[5]

The shortcoming of an orderly decision-making process such as Eisenhower's is that it may discourage creativity. In the Eisenhower administration, this appears to have been more often the case with domestic than national security policy. Domestic policy proposals typically were sent in writing to the White House, where a staff secretariat would examine them, make comments, and solicit views from relevant officials before sending a complete packet to the president. Eisenhower's chief of staff, Sherman Adams, played the primary role in this process, often working with participants to bring together divergent views before presenting a recommendation to the president. His stern,

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[5]Greenstein discusses how Eisenhower's Cabinet secretariat helped shape domestic policy in The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 113-14.

hard-bitten manner undoubtably discouraged some aides from bringing their views to Eisenhower's attention.[6]

Even in the domestic sphere, however, Adams was no Berlin Wall. Despite public impressions at the time, other staff members besides Adams had direct access to the president, and Eisenhower himself sought counsel from a variety of sources, both inside and outside the administration. Furthermore, many of the matters in which Adams took the leading role were lower-level concerns, such as minor patronage appointments. Eisenhower was much more directly involved in major policy issues. Still, Eisenhower seems to have played a more hands-on role in domestic policy after Adams' departure. One key aide of the period recalls that Adams' successor, General Wilton B. Persons, was more likely than Adams to bring officials to the president so they could discuss their concerns directly. The result, according to that aide, was that Eisenhower became much better informed about domestic issues.[7]

Because of his highly fluid decision-making processes, Kennedy was more accessible than Eisenhower. As Maxwell Taylor put it, "You might have to wait until late in the night, but if you sent word you needed to see the president you got

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[6]For a discussion of Adams' responsibilities, see Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 138-150. Also see Adams' memoirs, First-Hand Report: The Story of the Eisenhower Administration (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961).

[7]The key aide was Elmer B. Staats, who served on both the Operations Coordinating Board and the Bureau of the Budget staffs under Eisenhower. His remarks are quoted in Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 147-48.

to see him." Sorensen notes that "no staff member, Cabinet member or Congressman with important business to lay before [Kennedy] had any difficulty seeing him alone." Kennedy's ready availability, combined with his energy and intense curiosity about policy issues, was an invitation to policy innovation. Perhaps the best example of such a fresh departure is the Peace Corps, an idea that was conceived during the 1960 presidential campaign and put into place by executive order during Kennedy's first hundred days. Had Kennedy subjected this imaginative proposal to an extensive staff review, its critics might well have prevailed, and it might never have emerged.[8]

Nevertheless, Kennedy's informal leadership style also had several drawbacks. Because Kennedy lacked means of winnowing information, he risked being overloaded with detail. Moreover, he did not have channels in place for processing the information he received. McGeorge Bundy brought the shortcomings of Kennedy's procedures to his attention as early as April 1961, noting that "it has repeatedly been necessary to bring even small problems to you and still smaller ones to the White House staff, while more than once the ball has been dropped simply because no one person felt a continuing clear responsibility."

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[8]Both Taylor's and Sorensen's statements are in Sorensen, Kennedy, 374. On Kennedy's creation of the Peace Corps, see ibid., 184, 347, 531-32.

Bundy's warning carries particular poignancy because it came just before the Bay of Pigs.[9]

Although both presidents' management styles had strengths and weaknesses, the informal approach typified by Kennedy appears to be more problematic. While formal processes are not problem-free, they have less potential for resulting in policy failures, as the president does not make decisions before thoroughly examining policy alternatives with his associates. It may be possible, however, for presidents who have informal management styles to achieve some of the benefits of more formal approaches by adapting their advisory systems in certain ways. Perhaps one of the most important adaptations should be to bring some form of multiple advocacy into the process.

USES OF MULTIPLE ADVOCACY FOR PRESIDENTIAL POLICY MAKING

Alexander George's multiple advocacy proposal can be seen as a means of maximizing the strengths of the two processes just discussed and minimizing their weaknesses. As we have seen, Eisenhower's development of the New Look is perhaps the most multiple-advocacy laden process in the history of the modern presidency. The extensive discussions of national security policy in NSC meetings provided an opportunity for Eisenhower to think out loud about his already well-

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[9]Bundy to JFK, "Crisis Commanders in Washington," 4 April 1961, Box 62, POF, JFKL. Bromley K. Smith, who served as executive secretary of the NSC during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, has said Kennedy needed a better review process for determining which papers merited his attention. See Smith oral history, 23 July 1970, JFKL, 18.

developed views and hear others' reactions. Members understood that they were expected to present their opinions without reservation, which meant that wide-ranging debates ensued, in which policy differences quickly came to the surface. Eisenhower guaranteed that debates would proceed fruitfully by charging NSC special assistant Cutler with the tasks of moderating these meetings and ensuring adequate consideration of policy alternatives. The most vivid illustration of this process in 1953 is, of course, Project Solarium, which was highly successful in its effort to present the pros and cons of three alternative national security strategies to the NSC.

Even if multiple advocacy did not change Eisenhower's views on national security, it also had the important effect of conveying his chosen policy to his associates and explaining to them the reasoning behind it. That Eisenhower may well have been sure of his policy preferences beforehand is at least partially evident. His personal secretary, Ann Whitman, has noted that he sometimes complained privately about NSC meetings, saying he knew "every word of the presentations" in advance, but he felt that "to maintain the interest and attention of every member of the NSC," he had to "sit through each meeting." Eisenhower's comment further reveals that he saw another purpose to his highly structured process besides that of aiding decision making, namely that of team building and coordination.[10]

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[10]For Whitman's recollection, see Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 133.

Still, to say that Eisenhower's purpose in creating such a structured decision-making system was simply to foster team spirit among his top officials overstates the case, as the process did help Eisenhower substantively in making decisions. Recent research on Eisenhower's decision not to intervene in Vietnam in 1954 shows that the president initially considered ordering an air strike but later decided not to intervene. Eisenhower himself said he benefitted from hearing his officials debate their positions in his presence, even if he did not always change his mind. As he explained at length in 1967:

> I have been forced to make decisions, some of them of a critical character, for a good many years. And I know of only one way in which you can be sure you've done your best to make a wise decision. That is to get all of the people who have partial and definable responsibility in this particular field, whatever it be. Get them with their different viewpoints in front of you, and listen to them debate. I do not believe in bringing them in one at a time, and therefore being more impressed by the most recent one you hear than the earlier ones. You must get courageous men, men of strong views, and let them debate and argue with each other. You listen, and you see if there's anything been brought up, an idea that changes your own view or enriches your view or adds to it. Sometimes the case becomes so simple that you can make a decision right then. Or you may go back and wait two or three weeks, if time isn't of the essence. But you make it.[11]

While Kennedy, as we have seen, did not employ multiple advocacy in his national security decision making in 1961, his advisers did make efforts to move him toward a more structured decision-making process. McGeorge Bundy, in particular, sent Kennedy numerous memoranda throughout his administration

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[11]Burke and Greenstein compare Eisenhower's 1954 decision making on Vietnam with Johnson's decision making in 1965 in How Presidents Test Reality. Eisenhower's statement is in an interview for the Columbia Oral History Project, cited in Greenstein, The Hidden-Hand Presidency, 246-47.

requesting that the president systematize his advisory methods. In May 1961, for example, Bundy wrote to Kennedy that "we need some help from you so that we can serve you better." Though Bundy insisted that the Bay of Pigs invasion "was not a disgrace and there were reasons for it," he went on to state the following:

> But we do have a problem of management: centrally it is a problem of your use of time and your use of staff. You have revived the government, which is an enormous gain, but in the process you have overstrained your own calendar, limited your chances for thought, and used your staff incompletely. You are altogether too valuable to go on this way; with a very modest change in your methods you can double your effectiveness and cut the strain on yourself in half.[12]

Bundy proposed three means to help Kennedy achieve this goal, all of which resembled procedures employed in the Eisenhower administration. He recommended that the president "set aside a real and regular time each day for national security discussion and action," which meant, he said, "taking time for reports of current action, review of problems awaiting solution, and planning of assignments that have a long-term meaning." Bundy particularly noted the importance of employing the NSC more efficiently in this effort, saying that it "really cannot work for you unless you authorize work schedules that do not get upset from day to day. Calling three meetings in five days is foolish--and putting them off for six weeks at a time is just as bad." Although Kennedy had asked Bundy to start giving him daily foreign affairs briefings first thing in the morning, this had not worked out very well. As Bundy put it, "I have succeeded in catching

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[12]Bundy to Kennedy, "White House Organization," 16 May 1961, "White House General, 1961-62," Box 290, NSF, JFKL.

you on three mornings, for a total of about eight minutes. . . . Moreover, six of the eight minutes were given not to what I had for you but what you had for me."[13]

Bundy's other recommendations were that the president stick closer to his schedule and that he initiate better staff work within the White House. Declaring that "the White House is a taut ship in terms of standards--but not in terms of schedules," Bundy reminded Kennedy that letting meetings run overtime disrupted both his own and others' schedules and additionally was a waste of "executive energy." Better staff work was needed so that Kennedy would be certain that "there is no part of government in the national security area that is not watched over closely by someone from your own staff." To make this happen, Bundy requested a daily meeting with the president, so that he could talk with Kennedy about "how we can help you a whole lot more than we have yet succeeded in doing."[14]

Despite these and other efforts by Bundy to structure the president's decision-making process, Kennedy never did institute mechanisms for systematic debate on major policy issues. While Kennedy himself sometimes admitted that he wanted to make better use of the NSC, he never followed through. In October 1961, for example, Kennedy told Bundy that he would like to have more frequent

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[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

NSC meetings, and Bundy, evidently pleased, replied: "I very strongly agree with this plan. There are lots of kinds of business which . . . we can dispose of more efficiently if meetings are regularly scheduled." Bundy recommended holding NSC meetings every other Thursday, and he noted that other aides were hoping to have regular Cabinet sessions on the alternate Thursdays. Clearly, then, it was not only in foreign policy making that more organization was desired. Perhaps recognizing Kennedy's dislike of meetings, Bundy added, "it probably will not bore you more than one time in four." But Kennedy must have found even this ratio unsatisfactory, as he never did stick to a regular NSC schedule, holding only twelve meetings in each of his remaining two years in office.[15]

Bundy, when reminded recently of the memoranda he sent to Kennedy in 1961, laughed and remarked on his own naivete. As he put it, "Presidents are going to do their work the way they are. They really don't have time to remake their work habits for every assistant that wants it done this way." But the military buildups in the Kennedy administration, the crises that kept cropping up, and the ongoing organizational concerns of Kennedy's top associates all suggest a real need for more structured decision-making procedures.[16]

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[15]Bundy to Kennedy, 10 October 1961, "NSC meeting #491, 10/13/61," Box 313, NSF, JFKL. Indexes for the 1962 and 1963 NSC meetings are in Boxes 313-14, ibid.

[16]Interview with Bundy, 3 January 1996.

Certainly Kennedy could never have tolerated "policy hill" Eisenhower style. Not only was it inconsistent with his instincts, his severe back problems made him physically unsuited for lengthy meetings. But shorter yet regular meetings of top advisers whom Kennedy trusted and respected might well have been possible, particularly if his national security staff had assumed responsibility for running the meetings according to Kennedy's preferred style. In other words, the staff could have ensured that policy questions were clearly laid out, participants were prepared to make their arguments without digressions, and participants would be ready to answer the president's likely questions. Still, all of these requirements would have markedly increased the staff's workload, thereby taking it away from other tasks that Kennedy may have considered more important.

In the final analysis, then, it is evident that multiple advocacy has many uses for decision makers, but for it to work successfully, the person in charge must be committed to employing it. Kennedy's actions during the Cuban missile crisis indicate that he could be receptive to some form of multiple advocacy in urgent situations, but his overall impulses were far more informal. Perhaps Bundy and others could have expressed their concerns about organization more strongly to the president, but action ultimately depended, as Bundy pointed out, on the person in the Oval Office. As Kennedy himself once said, "In the final analysis, the President of the United States must make the decision."[17]

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[17]Sorensen, Kennedy, 285. Kennedy made this statement in discussing the responsibilities of the NSC.

USES OF MULTIPLE ADVOCACY FOR PRESIDENTIAL POLICY COMMUNICATION

In addition to its contributions to policy making, multiple advocacy also has payoffs for presidential policy communication. Employing multiple advocacy in developing those communications can help to ensure that the resulting messages do not convey unintended signals. As we have seen, this is of particular importance in the area of national security, where misperceptions can heighten tensions and exacerbate conflicts with adversaries. Simply clearing a speech with different officials individually may not be sufficient, as is evident with Dulles' "massive retaliation" speech, which had negative domestic reaction, and Gilpatric's speech to the Business Council, which appears to have been threatening to the Soviet leadership. Instead, it is preferable for the president to meet face to face with both his advisers and his speech writers, so that the rhetoric of his addresses is consistent with the policies he is advancing.

The need to pay attention to potential signals in presidential addresses is even greater in the post-Cold War era than it was during the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations, when the United States and the Soviet Union primarily were concerned with communicating with each other. Today's multipolar international system increases the risk of conveying misleading signals. Certainly presidents, in seeking to reduce that danger, will not be able to employ the extensive consultations for every speech that Eisenhower did for his initial addresses. To do so would overload the capacity of any administration.

Furthermore, the low risk involved with routine speeches would not justify such an effort. But major, high-level administration statements ought to receive close scrutiny because they are likely to be examined carefully both in the United States and abroad.

Presidents will always, of course, maintain the flexibility to decide who should and should not participate in the drafting of their speeches. It would be neither reasonable nor realistic to expect that presidents will consult with a fixed set of officials for all speeches on a particular subject. But in assembling the team of individuals who will participate in drafting an important speech, presidents should be sure to include advisers with rich and varied viewpoints, so that the effect of their words is thoroughly debated. Otherwise, presidents fail to expose themselves to a genuine multiple-advocacy process.

In Eisenhower's case, multiple advocacy sometimes was the enemy of eloquent expression. But this effect is not inevitable, as presidents can be simultaneously attentive to substantive clarity and rhetorical appeal. Indeed, in the later period of the Kennedy presidency, Bundy and Sorensen began to collaborate regularly over the president's speeches. Sorensen would send Bundy speech drafts, and Bundy then would hold a meeting with those officials who he thought should review the speech. While the circulation of drafts does not represent pure multiple advocacy, it does approximate that process. Bundy and his associates would check

the substance of the drafts, and Sorensen would incorporate their comments into a speech consistent with Kennedy's style.[18]

An excellent illustration of how presidents can work simultaneously with their policy advisers and speech writers can be found in an account of the Truman administration by the journalist John Hersey. Hersey, who was given special access to the White House in 1950 for a series of New Yorker articles on Truman, was present during the drafting of Truman's address to the nation in December about the recent Chinese entry into the Korean War. Hersey reports that a "squad of speech-drafters and advisers," including Secretary of State Dean Acheson, Special Counsel Charles S. Murphy, and speech drafter Marshall Shulman, participated in the process. He describes an extensive process of give-and-take, led by the president himself, in which language and substance were brought into harmony with one another. Perhaps the best explanation for why this process was necessary was Truman's own exhortation to the group:

> I don't think there's ever been a more important declaration of national policy--I *know* there's never been since I got to be President--than this one. It's terribly important for me to make this statement clear and forceful. We have to weigh every word and every idea in it.[19]

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[18]Interview with Bundy, 3 January 1996.

[19]John Hersey, Aspects of the Presidency (New Haven: Ticknor & Fields, 1980), 76.

A further insight that this comparison of Eisenhower and Kennedy points to for future presidents is the importance in and of itself of effective strategic planning early in an administration. Eisenhower's transition activities are particularly instructive as a model of early planning efforts that other presidents would profit from examining closely. By appointing a committee to advise him on his Cabinet selections and instructing it to report back to him in a timely fashion, Eisenhower kept himself from being overburdened and avoided excessive delay. While Kennedy, too, created an advisory committee, he remained deeply involved in time-consuming personnel details. Eisenhower, in completing his Cabinet selections before the end of November, was able to begin early the process of convening his Cabinet-to-be for preliminary discussions. Kennedy, in contrast, had not even decided on a number of such major Cabinet selections as his secretaries of state, defense, and the treasury at the time of his December 6 meeting with Eisenhower. The continuing relevance of the Eisenhower experience is highlighted by the chaotic transition process of President Clinton, whose inability to choose his Cabinet expeditiously contributed to the turbulent beginnings of his presidency.[20]

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[20]For a discussion of Eisenhower's belief in the importance of delegation, see Greenstein, " 'Centralization is the Refuge of Fear': A Policymaker's Use of a Proverb of Administration," in The Costs of Federalism, eds. Robert T. Golembiewski and Aaron Wildavsky (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Books, 1984), 117-39.

Another element of the Eisenhower experience that merits attention by future executives is Project Solarium. Highly-structured, large-scale planning efforts can be of enormous value to presidents in preparing their policy agendas. The extensive decision-making process that led to Eisenhower's adoption of the New Look helped him to establish what his military goals in his upcoming budgets should be. Had Kennedy employed this sort of process, he might not have initiated such a major strategic buildup during his first year in office. While planning processes can be time-consuming, their long-term benefits for presidential agenda setting may well outweigh short-term inconveniences. Even Sorensen acknowledges that "Kennedy should have made more time available for meditation and long-range planning," though he adds that Kennedy "would not have particularly enjoyed it."[21]

Certainly it would be difficult for a president today to conduct as comprehensive a study as Project Solarium. In the present, media-dominated era, it is virtually unimaginable that such an exercise could take place without some public awareness of the event. Still, the advantages that accrue from structured analyses of different policy alternatives surely justifies some loss of secrecy. Presidents cannot organize Solarium-like exercises for every policy issue, but questions of long-term significance, such as the role of the United States in the post-Cold War era, certainly deserve some systematic attention. Without any sort

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[21]Sorensen, The Kennedy Legacy (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 168.

of planning structure, it is easy for presidents to become so involved in day-to-day problems that they lose sight of their larger goals.[22]

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In the final analysis, the process of presidential decision making is so dependent upon the person at the helm that generalizations inevitably have to be modified when they are applied to new presidents. Nevertheless, American chief executives are bound to profit from examining the rich legacy of the modern presidential experience. The magnitude of their contemporary responsibilities makes it essential that they do so.

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[22]Jeffrey H. Birnbaum vividly portrays the chaos in the early Clinton administration in Madhouse (New York: Random House, 1996). While there were many factors behind that situation, one key problem clearly was the lack of any overall policy agenda.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AWF	Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower Library
BNSP	Basic National Security Policy paper
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
DDEL	Dwight D. Eisenhower Library
FDR	Franklin D. Roosevelt
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
FY	Fiscal Year
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JFDP	John Foster Dulles Papers, Eisenhower Library and Princeton University
JFKL	John F. Kennedy Library
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSC	National Security Council
NSF	National Security File, Kennedy Library
NYT	New York Times
OF	Official File, Eisenhower Library
POF	President's Office Files, Kennedy Library
PPOP	Public Papers of the Presidents
PSOH	Project Solarium Oral History, Princeton University
WHCF	White House Central Files, Eisenhower Library
WP	Washington Post