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PRESIDENTIAL CHOICE: LIMITS OF LEADERSHIP  
IN FOREIGN POLICY.

Yale University, Ph.D., 1975  
Political Science, general

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PRESIDENTIAL CHOICE:  
LIMITS OF LEADERSHIP IN FOREIGN POLICY

A Dissertation  
Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of  
Yale University  
in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

by  
Jong Ryool Lee  
May, 1975

## ABSTRACT

### PRESIDENTIAL CHOICE: LIMITS OF LEADERSHIP IN FOREIGN POLICY

Jong Ryool Lee

Yale University, 1975

The purpose of this study is to place the dynamics of presidential leadership in foreign policy in broad perspective, and to organize and interpret quantitative data in an attempt to delineate changing patterns of presidential behavior and policy as they interact with the domestic and foreign environments of the nation.

The theoretical concept employed is that leadership is that group-problem-solving, with the nation treated as a group. Specifically, this study is designed to examine the hypothesis that presidential leadership is invoked by the nation in order to solve national problems stemming from threats from international environments and domestic economic conditions.

One intriguing aspect of this problem-solving process is, when the President is responsive and effective, as a person he does not enjoy political support because the solution of external problems tends to come at the cost of domestic economic stability. This thesis is supported by analysis of time-series data which show variation across and within Presidencies. The data are organized around three conceptual

dimensions: presidential powers, presidential policies, and presidential roles, for each of which aggregate indicators are compiled and analyzed with the aid of quantitative methods.

Indicators of presidential power deal largely with relations with the Congress, including the frequency of presidential vetoes and overriding actions, as well as congressional treatment of annual legislative programs. Presidential policy includes patterns of changing national priorities as revealed in national budgetary allocation as well as in the shift of verbal emphasis in State of the Union messages. Presidential role includes the relation of the President with the public. In all three dimensions, the analysis demonstrates a significant impact of domestic economic conditions on presidential politics and policy. The analysis suggests that the cold war Presidents have not necessarily become powerful or uniquely equipped to exercise personal control over national matters; the data demonstrate that change in presidential behavior and policy are not only patterned, but also predictable on the basis of domestic economic conditions and external situations.

As the national sense of threat from external environments recedes, economic problems are likely to characterize future Presidents. Accordingly, this study will throw light on the probable shape of the role of the President and the role of the nation in the world.

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## Chapter One

### Perspectives on Presidential Leadership

"Were the eye not attuned to the Sun,  
The Sun could never be seen by it."  
Wolfgang von Goethe

There is little doubt that the American Presidency is the central place of leadership. As the involvement of the United States in world affairs has grown in importance, so decisions and actions emanating from the White House have grown in terms of their impact upon national and international affairs. The President's decisions and actions have vital significance for millions of people in the nation and around the globe.

Inevitably, one's definition of presidential leadership reflects, to a certain extent, one's view about politics and policy. There is no agreement as to what presidential leadership means and what it does, or whether it is desirable or not. In many previous studies on the Presidency, substantive and theoretical concerns are always interrelated. One can readily assume that a dynamic, responsive, and effective leader will be a valuable asset to the nation. Nevertheless, the problem is complicated by a difficulty in observation and measurement of leadership. This is particularly true because the President today performs a variety of roles in relation with the Congress, the Executive branch, the public at large, and with foreign countries. His activities are almost conterminous with all of the activities

of modern government. Given the importance of the office in national and international politics, a need has developed to theorize about what factors condition the patterns of presidential leadership.

In this sense, this research stems from a broad concern about society and politics, which used to be called "policy science."<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of discussion, it will be useful to follow Lasswell's suggestion about approaching political leadership:

The suggestion is that an adequate approach is problem-oriented, hence aware of the five intellectual tasks referred to in terms of goal, trend, condition, projection, and alternatives. The recommended approach is also contextual, since it deals with politics as part of the social process to which it belongs and with which it is in perpetual interaction. Such an approach must also be multimethod, since it utilizes all available methods of model building, data gathering, and processing. In short, the recommended method for studying leadership, as for investigating any phenomenon, is configurative. The approach is problem-oriented, contextual, and multimethod.<sup>2</sup> [Emphasis is original.]

In the following discussion, we first consider the problems of presidential leadership and how these problems should be analyzed. This chapter is not, therefore, a review of existing literature, nor is it an attempt to present

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<sup>1</sup>Harold Lasswell and Daniel Lerner, eds., The Policy Science (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1951), 3

<sup>2</sup>Harold Lasswell, "Political Systems, Styles, and Personality," in Lewis Edinger, ed., Political Leadership in Industrialized Societies (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), 318-319

the empirical hypotheses to be tested; the emphasis, rather, is on the conceptual and analytic dimensions of the problems. This emphasis partly stems from the fact that most previous studies have been overwhelmingly historical, institutional, and biographical; quantitative and analytic literature is extremely sparse. Even if methods are simply tools of thinking, one may delimit or expand the scope of problems and solutions within one's field of observation. Consequently, in response to the recent emphasis on linkages between domestic and foreign policy, an attempt will be made to relate the pattern of presidential leadership to changing national and international problems.

#### Problems of Presidential Leadership

Political leadership is usually defined as a position, within a society, characterized by the ability of the incumbent to guide and structure the collective behavior pattern of the members of the society over the allocation and creation of values.<sup>3</sup> The concept of leadership has been developed in an attempt to describe, explain, and prescribe a distinctive yet elusive aspect of political activity: the influence of one person over another. Analytically, it involves the thorny problem of defining "who leads whom, where."

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<sup>3</sup>Lewis Edinger, Ibid., 15.

Recent studies of various levels of political activity have established that there is no personality trait that defines leaders in all situations. Basically, leadership is viewed as a relationship that holds between a leader and follower under varying circumstances. Studies have resulted in the accumulation of evidence showing that the successful or obeyed leader is one who can help group members achieve their goals.<sup>4</sup> In a variety of situations, needs of the group members are stressed as the most important aspect of the relationship. The basic postulate is that the more the leader (or any other member) helps other members achieve their goals, the greater will be the members' acceptance of him. By acceptance, it is meant that the members are willing to follow the leader's suggestions and to express satisfaction with his or her conduct.<sup>5</sup>

This postulate is not, by itself, a theory. Often leadership studies specify such conditions as the goals that motivate the group members, and the acts or characteristics of a leader that help the members achieve these goals. If we measure each leader on the relevant factors, we can predict their acceptance by their particular group. This basic postulate usefully applies not only to leaders in simple settings, but also to those in complex organizations,

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<sup>4</sup>C. E. Gibb, ed., Leadership (Penguin Books, Inc., 1969).

<sup>5</sup>D. C. Pelz, "Leadership in a Hierarchical Organization," in C. E. Gibb, Ibid., 338-339.

including those political communities existing as groups of people living with patterned forms of interaction and institutions. The development of mass media has made the interaction between the Chief Executive and the nation more frequent and the relationship more intimate, even during the inter-election period. The pattern of leadership desired or prevailing within a society differs greatly from one culture to another, and from one time to another.<sup>6</sup>

In many writings on the American Presidency, presidential leadership is often an abstract characterization of the practices of such "great" Presidents as Lincoln, Wilson, and the two Roosevelts. It is difficult to pin down all of the features that were common to these Presidents. Yet the concept of presidential leadership has come to be associated with three positive qualities: action, strength, and success. Action implies the willingness of the President to use his power and other political resources to push his preferences and policy. Strength implies a relationship with other actors in the system, characterized by the ability of the President to prevail when his preferences and policies conflict with those of others. Success, often associated with some objectively posited national goals and objectives, assumes that there is a causal linkage between

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<sup>6</sup>A renewed interest in political leadership is reflected in Glenn Paige, Political Leadership: Readings for an Emerging Field (New York: Free Press, 1972).

the President and the national conditions achieved. However, it must be recognized that success cannot be measured by standards other than those of the group in which a leader operates.<sup>7</sup>

It is a common observation among historians and political scientists that the great Presidents are usually identified with an active period of national and international development. In this sense, it is a curious fact that, in spite of the vastly expanded global involvement of the United States during the cold war period, the American people did not have, in the accepted traditional sense, a great President. Presidents Truman, Johnson, and Nixon desired to be strong Presidents but fell short of their aspirations, as demonstrated by their ending of their political careers before completing two consecutive terms.

Of course, it is possible to say that historical evaluation may change current opinion. For instance, Thomas Bailey had predicted in 1965 that President Johnson, because of the mounting crisis and the American commitment in Vietnam, was likely to be ranked among the "near-greats."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>The most relevant to the point is Arthur M. Schlesinger, "Our Presidents: A Rating by 75 Historians," New York Times Magazine, July 29, 1962, 12 ff; C. A. Amlund, "President Ranking: A Criticism," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 8 (August, 1964), 309-315; Thomas Bailey, Presidential Greatness (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966), passim.

<sup>8</sup>Thomas Bailey, Ibid., 335.

It is doubtful, however, that he was still so optimistic about President Johnson's place in history, after the United States became massively involved in the war with a divisive political effect at home and abroad. In any event, the experience suggests that the contemporary President has not become uniformly strong, nor active, nor successful despite the enormous expansion of the role of the country in the world.

A more sophisticated analysis suggests that presidential powers and roles are differentiated into several 'issue areas.' Aaron Wildavsky, for example, advanced the thesis that there are "two Presidencies," one concerned with domestic affairs, and the other with foreign and defense affairs.<sup>9</sup> His point is that American Presidents were much more successful in controlling foreign and defense policy during the cold war period than domestic affairs. This view is shared by many scholars, but some also note that there has been further division of the role into policy clusters or subsystems. The shortcomings of these views are the neglect of the interdependence of domestic and foreign affairs in policy-making processes and impacts.

A President is often regarded as being in a good position to integrate and coordinate various national goals and

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<sup>9</sup>Aaron Wildavski, "The Two Presidencies," Transaction, 4 (December 1966), 7-14; Dorothy James, Contemporary Presidency (New York: Pegasus, 1969), passim.

policy, given the growing interdependence between domestic and foreign policy. In addition, achievement in one area may reinforce or reduce the chance of success in the other. For example, President Truman was usually considered successful in foreign policy, but unsuccessful in his efforts to accomplish many pronounced domestic programs and policies. On the other hand, President Johnson's dramatic achievements in domestic programs was overwhelmed by his failure to maintain public support of his conduct of the war in Vietnam. Similarly, Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy, while very popular during their incumbency, were not accorded any memorable policy accomplishments.

One of the questions that now arises is to what extent a President is free to choose the policy problems he will take care of and the way he will solve them. Every cold war President took office in the hope of concentrating on domestic welfare, although President Kennedy was obviously determined to improve American international power and prestige as well. Each incumbent has presided over a vast extension of American commitments abroad. It is fair to ask whether a President is free to choose his policy or whether he is forced to make policy choices by the pressure of circumstances.<sup>10</sup> An answer to this question is important

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<sup>10</sup>Dan Nimmo and Thomas Unga, American Political Patterns: Conflict and Consensus (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1967), 342 ff.



because it is often assumed that a President is free to define his problems as well as to choose his preferred course of action.<sup>11</sup>

The questions cannot be answered with assurance without developing a satisfactory theory that describes and explains presidential behavior. First of all, in order to judge whether a President is active, strong, or successful, we need some criteria that can be observed and compared. All too often, historical abstraction lacks precision and objectivity because it is based on impressionistic accounts of many complex variables. For instance, if one is to judge whether or not President Nixon was strong, active, or responsive, we have to develop objective indicators of presidential behavior and policy. Because political relationships change all the time, it is important to have some operational criteria against which the change can be compared. For instance, President Roosevelt was not powerful all of the time during his incumbency; his preferences were often

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<sup>11</sup>For example, the President is supposed to have the power to make issues, the power to focus, and the power to blur issues. Emmet J. Hughes, The Living Presidency (New York: Coward, McCann, and Geoghegan, Inc., 1973), 225; George E. Reedy outrightly rejects the notion that there is something called "decision-making" process in the White House. In his words; "A President makes his own decisions as he wants to make them, under conditions which he himself established, and at times of his own determination." The Twilight of the Presidency (New York: World Publishing Co.,

thwarted and truncated in the face of adverse political environment.<sup>12</sup>

Also, description is not possible unless there is some operational theory about the national political process because the President interacts in a complex way with a variety of domestic actors over a wide range of issues. If leadership is a relationship, not a personality trait that remains constant, it is imperative to consider the total situation within which the President must operate. Harold Laski correctly points out that the essence of the Presidency is that it is an American institution.<sup>13</sup> It functions in the American environment and has been shaped by the forces of American history; therefore, it must be evaluated by American criteria based upon its responses to American needs and problems. This suggests that presidential leadership is invoked as an instrument of goals and aspirations that have evolved in response to a variety of domestic and foreign challenges.

#### Context of Presidential Leadership

For clarity of thinking, it is useful to conceive of

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1970), 30-31.

<sup>12</sup>Louis Koenig, The Chief Executive (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968), 137.

<sup>13</sup>Harold Laski, The American Presidency (New York: The University Library, 1940), 26.

the President as operating within several concentric circles. The nucleus is the President as an individual who occupies the central position in an overlapping set of decision-making units.<sup>14</sup> Constitutionally, he is the head of the Executive branch and, by virtue of his election, he is the head of the government; by the law of nations, he is considered as the voice of the nation in the international arena. One might further differentiate the domain of people acting in concert, such as the Presidency, the elite, or the free world, etc. The structure can be visualized by diagramming it as in Figure 1.1.

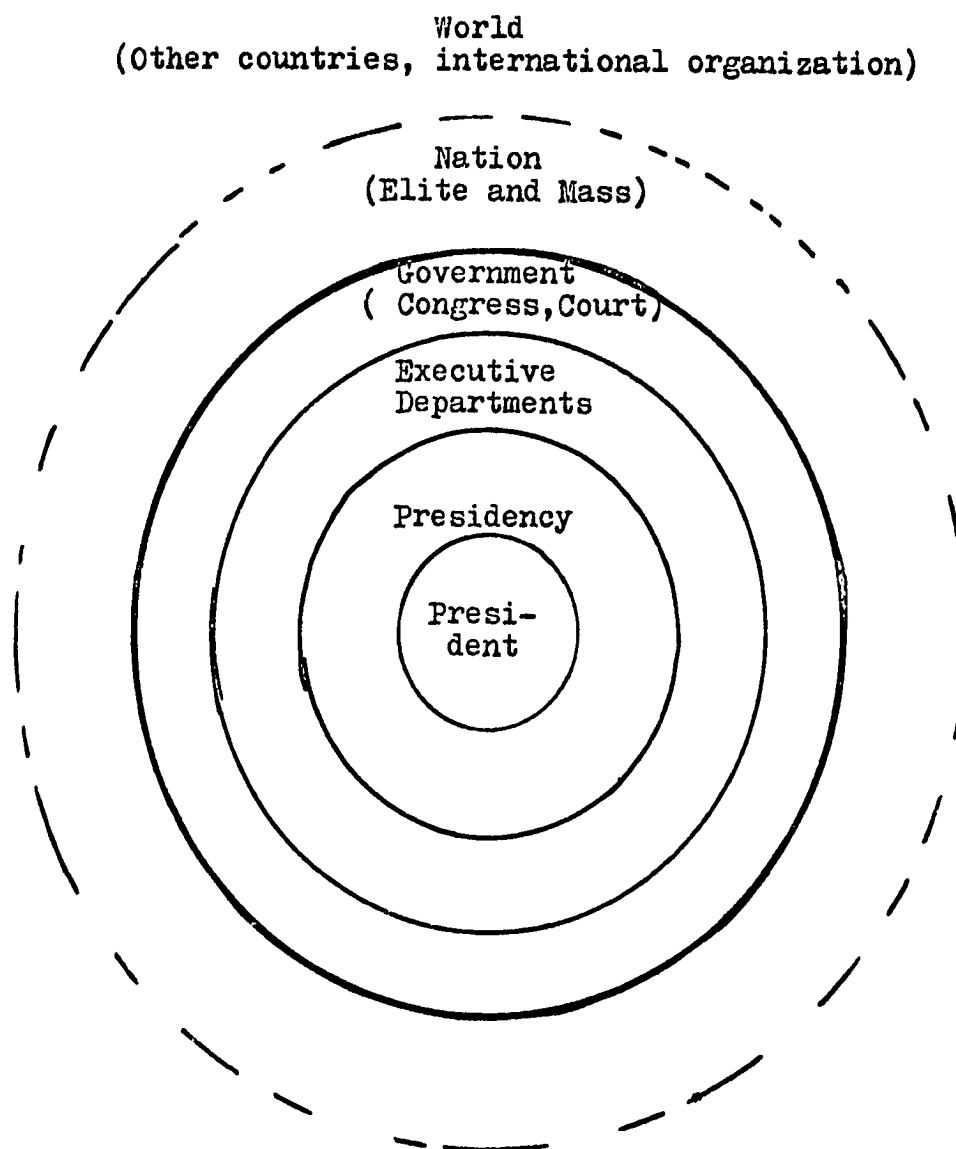
(Figure 1.1 here)

What we usually call "presidential" includes the President as a person, the Presidency as an institution, and often the Executive branch as a whole. If one is interested in a high level of abstraction, each decision-making unit

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<sup>14</sup>Methodologically, this boundary-drawing operation is used to represent a unit or level of analysis problem, with a significant consequence on one's theory. The most difficult and important question is the relation between the small unit and the larger unit within which the small unit is only a part. This problem is usually called a problem of linkage, creating analytic difficulties in every level of human activity. Heinz Eulau, Micro-Macro Analysis: Accents of Inquiry (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1969), 1-19; David Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," in Klaus Knorr and Sydney Verba, eds., The International System (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 77-92.

Figure 1.1  
Decision-making Units as Concentric Circles



might be viewed as a system, with its own inputs and outputs in interaction with the environment. For example, the President as a person can be considered as a personality system, with an internal make-up and having external relationships through his roles and powers. When the nation is viewed as a whole, the system becomes a national system, with the Constitution being the most important internal element. Even though each circle may have been well analyzed by previous studies, the interrelationships have been ignored. For instance, foreign policy is largely the behavior of the nation, no matter who actually formulates or executes it.

This point was made to stress that the American President is a member of the society that he leads.<sup>15</sup> He shares certain problems of the day with his contemporaries through the socializing process. He also shares certain characteristics of behavior with other leaders, with congressional members as a sub-group of the people, and he shares certain beliefs and attitudes with his executive officials when he performs his tasks. Within these broad similarities, there are differences of opinion, attitudes, and preferences with regards to the Executive branch, the Congress, the government, elite, or nation as a whole. Politics occurs as a part of this conflict and consensus within each decision-

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<sup>15</sup>Doris A. Graber, Public Opinion, the President, and Foreign Policy (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1968), 363.

making unit within the context of the large unit. Conflict occurs, often intensively, between President and Congress, Democrats and Republicans, elites and masses, conservatives and liberals, and between internationalists and isolationists. But this conflict is part of the political process within the context of the overarching national community.

Presidential leadership, as one type of executive leadership, has been an enduring policy problem because it is viewed as an instrument for the achievement of national goals. Even though it may be difficult to determine what the national goals are, some are certainly concerned with procedures by which the nation arrives at binding decisions. For example, the Constitution is the most general rule of decision-making by which a society allocates political power to each actor. When a President sustains a veto on a bill, the decision is not only a personal decision made by the President or a collective decision by Congress, but it becomes a national decision at the same time, insofar as it is obeyed by the people and obtains as a law in the society.

However one may define democracy, democratic procedures are closely associated with some values defining the decision-making process; such as the 'separation of power,' 'freedom of the press,' and 'popular consent' in the United States. How to achieve democracy best might be called a 'political policy,' in the sense that it requires clear assumptions and alternatives specifying the decision-making procedures to be followed in achieving the goals of the society.<sup>16</sup>

The normative decision-making theory implied in social welfare functions usually treats this question as exogenously determined.

In many problems of much narrower scope, however, it is possible to distinguish the decisions on procedures as instruments of some specified goals. One clear example is the organization of executive departments, or creation of presidential commissions with specific tasks. That is, substantive goals such as national security, social welfare, economic growth and stability, or a balanced budget are somewhat clearly distinguished from organization and specific procedures on how to deal with those problems.

Political conflict often centers around procedural issues as well as substantive issues because the process and content of policy are often interrelated. Decision-making situations resulting from the interaction of the degree of conflict and consensus on procedure and substance can be illustrated as shown in Table 1.1. When there is conflict over both the substance and procedures, the situation can be called "non-decision," because no collective decision is possible. On the other hand, if there is a consensus on substance as well as on procedure, there is no real political issue. Therefore, this situation can be called "non-

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<sup>16</sup>Vernon Van Dyke, "Process and Policy as Focal Concepts in Political Research," in Austin Ranney, ed., Political Science and Public Policy (Chicago: Markham Press, 1968), 39.

issue' because no problem of political power arises.<sup>17</sup> One example is crisis decision-making, where consensus is easily arrived at on policy as well as on authority. It is often pointed out that even the Constitution becomes malleable in the face of an overwhelming national crisis.

(Table 1.1 here)

The problem of presidential leadership is then viewed as a broad procedural policy issue. No one wants presidential leadership for its own sake. Presidential power or leadership is viewed as an instrument of some higher-order purpose or goal. In this sense, one's view differs greatly, depending on how he views the instrumentality of presidential leadership and whether he is committed to procedural values or substantive values in terms of national purpose.

A number of eminent political scientists, such as Edward Corwin, committed to the constitutional process, have been especially critical of a superpowerful Presidency and have proposed limiting his authority by tying him closely to congressional advisors. Corwin in fact wondered whether the Presidency is a potential matrix for dictatorship. He feared that the Presidency had become 'dangerously personalized' in two senses: first, the leadership which

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<sup>17</sup>cf. Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, "Decisions and Non-decisions: An Analytic Framework" and "Two Faces of Power" in Roderick Bell, et al, eds., Political Power (New York: Free Press, 1969), 94-109.



Table 1.1

## Paradigm of Conflict and Consensus

-Classification of Policy for a Collective Entity-

		Substance(Goals)	
		Consensus	Conflict
Process (Means)	Consensus	None-issue (e.g. crisis decision- making)	Substantive Policy (orginary policy- making)
	Conflict	Procedural Policy (e.g. organiza- tion)	Non-decision (no collective decision possible)

it affords is dependent upon the accident of personality, against which the haphazard method of selecting Presidents offers no guarantee; second, there is no governmental body which can be relied upon to give the President independent advice and which he is bound to consult.<sup>18</sup> More recently, Holcombe expressed concern over the expanded role of the President as chief of state to the extent of jeopardizing the balance of the constitutional system.<sup>19</sup> This view has increased, in the form of demands for congressional resurgence in foreign policy-making, in the aftermath of the war in Vietnam. Louis Fischer, for instance, challenges the classical notion that the Executive branch is uniquely equipped to handle foreign affairs.<sup>20</sup> On the whole, these scholars conclude that Congress should assert its prerogatives in foreign policy-making and restructure its procedures to ensure that it is a significant participant in the day-to-day processes that determine American foreign policy.

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<sup>18</sup>Edward Corwin, The President: Office and Powers (New York: New York University Press, 1947), 363, 372-373; Herman Finer, The Presidency: Crisis and Regeneration (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1960).

<sup>19</sup>Arthur Holcombe, "The American Presidency in the Nuclear Age" in Al Lepawsky, Edward Buehrig, and Harold Lasswell, eds., The Search for World Order (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971), 334.

<sup>20</sup>Louis Fischer, President and Congress (New York: Free Press, 1971), 205-229.

In contrast, strategic theorists who are committed to the national interest in the international arena have been strong proponents of presidential leadership as a way to overcome some shortcomings of pluralistic decision-making processes. George Kennan, Hans Morgenthau, Kenneth Thomson, and Henry Kissinger tend to agree on the failure of pluralistic processes to yield a coherent, consistent foreign policy; they then conclude that only a "strong and wise" President can serve national interests, following the classical notion of a dilemma between democracy and effectiveness of foreign policy.<sup>21</sup>

This attitude largely stems from their emphasis on the nation as an unitary actor and their desire for a consistent, coherent policy. In short, they start with the description of the reality as consisting of diverse, inconsistent, and unstable elements in the United States policy, and then arrive at the prescription for simplifying the process by introducing the personal leadership of the President. On the whole this approach is a variation of the normative theory that viewed executive leadership as the solution to 'immobilism,' which is presumably inherent in a pluralist

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<sup>21</sup>Hans Morgenthau, "The American Tradition in Foreign Policy," in Roy Macridis, ed., Foreign Policy in World Politics (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), 223; G. F. Kennan, Memoires 1925-1950 (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1967), 53; Kenneth Thomson, Political Realism and the Crisis of World Politics (New York: John Wiley &

democracy.

In a sense, the belief in presidential leadership as the motivating force in orchestrating diverse functions became widespread as well as dominant during the cold war period. Many political scientists were concerned in one way or another with the ability of the President to develop 'sacrifice potential' or 'responsiveness' of elites and masses to overcome cold war exigencies. In essence, they were policy scientists in the sense that they addressed themselves to the broad policy problems facing the nation.

#### Statesman's Dilemma: Role Paradigm

Consideration of presidential leadership as an instrument of achieving national values and goals requires a description of how the President actually performs his roles within the political system. Seligman distinguishes two leadership roles performed by the President in the nation. One is instrumental, that is, making decisions for achieving national goals and means. The other is expressive, meeting the psycho-cultural needs of the nation as a symbol of national unity and power.<sup>22</sup> This distinction, derived from differentiation of leadership roles in most small group

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Sons, Inc., 1960), 53.

<sup>22</sup>Lester Seligman and Michael A. Baer, "Expectations of Presidential Leadership in Decision-Making," in Aaron Wildavsky, ed., The Presidency (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1969), 18 ff.

studies, actually corresponds to the distinction made by Walter Bagehot one century ago between the 'efficient' and 'theatrical' parts of government.<sup>23</sup> The conspicuous position of the President in the political arena, however, brings about the fusion of the two functions. In addition to the fact that the President, along with the Vice President, is the only federal officer who is directly accountable to the national electorate, the need of the country for his response to complex and delicate national problems made the role of the President something like a generalist leader.

This point should not be taken to mean that a President represents the 'general will' of the nation or that he should lead the nation as an inspired or charismatic leader. The basic point is that the role of the President has been somewhat fused across three fundamental dimensions: issues, actors, and time. Even small-group researchers report many findings on the differentiation of such a general leader who combines affective needs of members and task performance of the group.<sup>24</sup> The basic role of President, in many ways, is to bring some kind of simplicity and coherence to an overly complex political process and policy. That is, the President is held responsible for many issues over which he has

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<sup>23</sup>Walter Bagehot, "The English Constitution," World's Classics, No.330 (New York: Oxford, 1949), 202.

<sup>24</sup>R. F. Bales and P. E. Slater, "Role-differentiation in Small Decision-Making Groups," in C. E. Gibb, ed., Leadership, 255-276.

little control, because the jobs expected of a President usually exceed the resources available. In other words, a President, no matter what his personal preference, is expected to take an appropriate action whenever a salient national problem arises. Unlike a more specialized leader, such as the Secretary of State or Defense, the President is expected to be accountable for both peace and prosperity.

The point is often made that extreme power, imbued with extreme responsibility, does not necessarily imply a powerful leader.<sup>25</sup> The experience of the cold war Presidencies might be viewed as "a crisis of legitimacy," a difficulty in maintaining public support. This difficulty might stem from what Sprout and Sprout call the 'stateman's dilemma' in meeting increased societal demands with decreasing national resources.<sup>26</sup> This problem is not unique to the United States, but is common to many western industrialized societies, as demonstrated by frequent change of Chief Executives because of scandals and other economic crises. Even if this

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<sup>25</sup>Nelson Polsby, Congress and the Presidency (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), 30.

<sup>26</sup>Margaret and Harold Sprout, Ecology and Politics in America (New York: General Learning Press, 1971). The important root of the dilemma is the size and inflexibility of the military budget. See Harold and Margaret Sprout, "National Priorities: Demands, Resources, Dilemmas," World Politics, 24 (January 1972), 293-316; Bruce Russett, What Price Vigilance? (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

Given the conflict of interests and bargaining processes among different actors and institutions within a society, the national leader is in a very vulnerable position when the demand from different sectors of the society is not well balanced. What aggravates the risk of the national leader is the fact that many of the decisions made by other people are perceived, for legal as well as political reasons, as those of the President.<sup>27</sup>

Personalization is one persistent pattern in presidential politics. The President is often described as not only the figurehead but as the spearhead of the formulation of policy. Many specific policies and programs are associated with President's names; for example, the Monroe Doctrine, the Truman Doctrine, the Eisenhower Doctrine, Point Four, Alliance for Progress, and Open Door. The danger is that personalization results in some misconceptions about American politics when the chief contender often assumes the center of attention.<sup>28</sup> Personalization without due consideration of the context can be seen in the tendency to consider policy

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<sup>27</sup>Charles E. Jacob, "The Limits of Presidential Leadership," in Sidney Warren, ed., The American President (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960), 90-101.

<sup>28</sup>Robert Dahl, Pluralist Democracy in the United States: Conflict and Consensus (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1967), 103-108; Thomas Cronin, "The Textbook Presidency," in Charles Peters and John Rothchild, eds., Inside the System (New York: Praeger, 1973), 6-19.

outcome largely in terms of personal skill of the participant. A set of impersonal conditioning factors, given the expectations and high hopes placed on a President, might limit the effectiveness of the most skillful executive.

The attention and expectation focused on the leader as a national symbol requires a high degree of performance not only in terms of policy demands, but also in terms of high moral conduct. Personalization interacts with the institutionalization of the Presidency; the growth in the size and functions of the White House staff organized for the purpose of assisting the President to meet public expectations.

If the Chief Executive is expected to make a statements about some policy, then corps of experts and speech writers are grouped to produce such a statement. Before the Executive makes decisions, various people, playing specific and general roles, define the situation and its alternatives for him. His painful duties are largely carried out in his name by others. Institutionalization is the result of the growth of expectation of presidential initiatives. On the other hand, however, it is to be added that demand for leadership will grow, because the President will appear to be able to achieve high standards in solving the major problems of the

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<sup>29</sup>Richard Neustadt, Presidential Power: Politics of Leadership (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960). The revival of his theme is seen in Norton E. Long, "Reflections on Presidential Power," in Michael P. Smith, ed., American Politics and Public Policy (New York: Random House, 1973),



nation because of resources made available by the expanding size of the staff.<sup>30</sup>

Personalization and institutionalization occur in the context of expansion and bureaucratization of the Executive branch of the government. As American responsibilities and involvement have spread throughout the world in recent decades, there has been a concomitant proliferation and multiplicity of interests in foreign policy bureaucracies. Recent Presidents have taken, increasingly, a personal hand in formulating and executing foreign policy and defense policy in order to regain control of American foreign policy and to cut through the maze of instrumentalities around him.<sup>31</sup>

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214-221.

<sup>30</sup>In most recent writings about the Presidency, institutionalization is narrowly used to define the growth of the White House staff. Seligman, "Presidential Leadership: The Inner Circle and Institutionalization," Journal of Politics, 18, (August 1956), 410-426; Thomas Cronin and Sanford D. Greenberg, eds. The Presidential Advisory System (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969). A broad meaning of institutionalization, however, is growth of a body whose functions, attitudes, and norms of procedure exist and remain very much the same, independently of the actual persons. For a fresh outlook along this line, see Henry Fairlie, "Thoughts on the Presidency," in Dennis S. Ippolito and Thomas G. Walker, eds., Reform and Responsiveness (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1972), 223-242.

<sup>31</sup>James R. Cobbleddick, Choice in American Foreign Policy (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1973), 26-36; Richard Snyder and Edgar Furnis, Jr., American Foreign Policy (New

Personalization concurrently interacted with institutionalization and the bureaucratization. In Longaker's words, the problem of the cold war President was "to reassert the primacy of the President above the jungle of his own administration."<sup>32</sup> The failure of the President to respond to bureaucratic norms and interests explains the predicaments and failures of Presidents in achieving their objectives, through persuasion or any other means.<sup>33</sup>

In a larger context, however, the above processes occurred under the impact of nationalization of American politics. The concept of positive state is well established within the institutional setting of federalism and separation of powers. Problems once deemed to be purely local matters - race relations, urban slums, education, social security - are now among the major concerns of the national government. Though the impacts of national programs and goals are felt, even in congressional elections, the Presidency has been at the center of the trend toward nationalization. Over the

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York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1954), 182-208.

<sup>32</sup>Richard P. Longaker, "The Cold War Presidency," in Alfred Junz, ed., Present Trends in American National Government (New York: Praeger, 1961), 67.

<sup>33</sup>Harold Sheidman, Politics, Position and Power: The Dynamics of Federal Organization (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Graham Allison and Molton Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and some policy implication," in Raymond Tanter and Richard Ullman, eds. Theory and Policy in International Relation (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 40-79.

last few decades some interests, notably civil rights groups and organized labor dissatisfied by the Congress, turned toward presidential leadership to achieve more favorable representation of their goals.<sup>34</sup>

One indicator of nationalization is the allocation of all national resources to the operation of the modern government. One fifth of the total national income every year, and the various government programs, are devoted to almost every national need and concern. The federal government has also assumed the right to intervene, through a variety of means including federal spending and taxation, in order to maintain specific responsibilities such as economic stability and prosperity, when the free market is not likely to function properly.

The nationalization of politics occurs concurrently with the internationalization of the nation. Internationalization here means the increasing importance of foreign relations within the nation as well as their importance in the world. National security has been constantly near the top of the list of priorities for the nation in terms of resources devoted to defense and foreign affairs. Externally, this meant a vast increase of commitments and influence around the globe.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Nimmo and Unga, American Political Patterns, 334.

<sup>35</sup>Bruce Russett and Alfred Stepan, "The Military in America: New Parameters, New Problems, New Approaches," in Russett and Stepan, eds., Military Force and American Society

Even if it is an accepted theoretical proposition that crisis or conflict with external groups enhances internal unity and cohesion in any size of groups, it is often obscured that internal cohesion and unity in turn enhance the capacity to deal effectively with external environment. It is difficult to say which comes first, except in abstract theoretical terms. One sets one's goals higher when there are available means to achieve them. A threat is felt more acutely when there is something valued or of interest to protect. This interactive perspective is helpful in understanding politics as man-milieu relationship at any level of political activity.<sup>36</sup>

#### Political Matrix - Empirical Bases of Analysis

The development of presidential leadership as a concurrent process cannot be easily observed or measured. The complexity of presidential leadership can be put, in the phrase of Andrew McFarland, as "multi-dimensional, multi-lateral, and mixed-motive conflict in a pluralist setting."<sup>37</sup>

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(New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973), 3-14.

<sup>36</sup>Harold and Margaret Sprout, An Ecological Paradigm for the Study of International Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968); Bruce Russett, "A Macroscopic View of International Politics," in James Rosenau, et al, eds., The Analysis of International Politics (New York: Free Press, 1972).

<sup>37</sup>Andrew McFarland, Power and Leadership in Pluralist Systems (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969), 189.

This study emphasizes presidential leadership as a national problem-solving process in response to domestic and foreign conditions.

The first question to be asked is to what extent and why the cold war Presidents differed from earlier Presidents. The focus is on the similarities between the presidential environments of the Presidents who presided during that period. The second question is to what extent and why the cold war Presidents differed, over time, in the pattern of their responses to their political environments. In this case, the focus of analysis is the variations among and within Presidencies. In any event, the analysis centers around describing and explaining the pattern of change in presidential power, policy, and role, as these factors relate to the domestic and foreign conditions of the country.

It was pointed out earlier that the phenomenon of leadership includes aspects of the political process that are commonly analyzed on the basis of policy decision, power, and role. The notion of an active, strong, and successful President actually coincides with each of these elements in the political process, but on a personal level. Just as presidential leadership is inseparable in many ways from personal leadership, institutional leadership, or executive leadership, so the notion of leadership is difficult to separate from decision, power, or role. The point stressed is that these three concepts, while reflecting distinct views about politics, having been developed independently of each

other according to different intellectual traditions. Nevertheless, the three concepts are distinguished easily when the focus of analysis is specified in a linkage framework.

A number of previous studies have revealed internal operations of each unit of decision-making. Table 1.2 lists some of the focal events that have been part of the political processes as well as separate subfields of political science.

There have been enormous amounts of recent research on these processes of government, concentrating on the internal operation of each decision-making unit. Unlike traditional approaches, these empirical observations reflected increased specialization and differentiation of roles within political science. Conscious application of insights, methods, and concepts developed in other disciplines have characterized increased understanding of the complex processes within and outside the government. One important shortcoming has been that each unit has been viewed as a contained whole, with the possibility of losing sight of the large process. Inflow of psychology, economics, sociology, and other contents have certainly enriched our understanding of the process. Difficulty arises, however, when analysis of one part of the process is extended to explain the whole process.

This fallacy of inferring the whole from analysis of a part usually comes at the cost of ignoring the linkages between different issues and actors. This parochial outlook has been particularly serious because of peculiar emphasis

on case study methods. Enthusiasm to generalize from a case to a more general phenomenon makes the researcher ignore the large socio-economic context of the case under study. This is particularly true of the study of foreign policy decision-making. Emphasis on crisis decision-making naturally leads a researcher to select the most dramatic and the most conspicuous cases of presidential decisions, ignoring a wide universe of non-crisis processes and policies. A multi-methodology is called for to overcome some analytic and conceptual pitfalls that are inherent to every method of analysis.

(Table 1.2 here)

This methodological emphasis on linkages between different actors requires one to focus on the changing national context of leadership as a process as well as a policy. The discussion as to how much power the President has accumulated cannot be ascertained unless one has some notion about how much power other actors -such as Congress, public opinion, the bureaucracy, or the famous military-industrial complex- have amassed. The relationship is complicated by postulation of interchange among the actors. For example, if the public controls the President, then the power of the public increases as presidential power increases. In focusing on the President, a clear view is often obscured by lack of knowledge as to how much power Congress or the bureaucracy has accumulated. Most importantly, it is often forgotten how much power the nation has accumulated in dealing with domestic

Table 1.2  
Key Concepts in Presidential Leadership

Unit	Relations	Internal Decision-Making Process "Decisions"	External Impact of Decisions "Power"	Linkages "Roles"
President	Presidential Character	Presidential Power	Personalization	
Presidency	Presidential Advisory System	"Inner Circle"	Institutionalization	
Executive Branch	"Bureaucratic Politics"	"Bureaucratic Power"	Bureaucratization	
Government	"Separation of Power"	"Welfare State"	Nationalization	
Nation	"Party Politics"	"National Power"	Internationalization	



and foreign environments.

The basic thesis can be put simply: after the second world war, presidential leadership has been invoked by the nation whenever it sensed a threat from the external environment. Presidential leadership was invoked as a means of dealing with cold war exigencies. But the President as a person has not been always successful because foreign policy commitments have brought about domestic economic instability, to the discredit of the presidential leadership. This implies that if the economic problems become serious, foreign policy problems become less important in national politics; foreign policy loses priority and, consequently, the President loses some of his grip on the American people. Therefore, it is a plausible expectation that when the cold war environment loses its significance the President is likely to lose his public appeal and leadership for a while, until enough national consensus is achieved on the pressing domestic economic problems that require national action. A President may inspire or facilitate the process, but the role of the President is less impressive in this politico-economic cycle than is commonly supposed. In the following chapters we will examine the linkages, at various levels, between broad problems of national policy.

The data are organized around three conceptual clusters: presidential power, policy, and role. Presidential power is defined as the probability of presidential preference to become the national decision. Largely, presidential power

is derived from the process of interaction between the President and Congress. If one focuses on the executive-congressional relationship, it is undeniably clear that the Executive has been given great freedom of action, since World War II, in a changed world that has contained some elements of crisis. In addition, lack of information, expertise, and procedural ineffectiveness as well as the intricacies of problems have facilitated concentration of power in the hands of the Executive. The more crucial the foreign policy issue, the greater the likelihood of war risks, the more likely is Congress to cooperate with the Executive for national unity, yielding all initiative to the Executive branch. This pattern is a product of congressional choice as much as it is a product of presidential leadership. Nevertheless, the President does not always get what he wants in the legislative process. Operational definition of power is usually given as the ability to initiate, modify, and veto national policies. The data on presidential vetoes and the fate of legislative programs are analyzed in some detail.

The second concept is presidential policy. The purpose of analysis is to reveal patterns of presidential policy as expressed in budgetary allocation and other political activities. The focus here is the substance of policy, that is, how responsive and effective has the presidential priority and policy been in determining national priority and policy. Given the importance of the war in Vietnam in

national politics, a chapter is devoted to analysis of the politico-economic linkage during the war period.

The third concept is the role of the President; that is, what he is expected to do and to perform in relation to economic conditions. The focus of analysis is the relation of the President with the public. The basic assumption of this study is that patterns of presidential leadership have not fundamentally been altered through the cold war. The notion of 'historical dynamics' is based on the continuity of political relationships, including hypotheses on the law of change or transformation. Therefore this study covers, in theory, the Presidency in general, though the data and analysis are primarily focused on the post-World War II period. This implies that some of the analysis here can be extended to analyze the pattern in past histories as well as to predict the likely shape of the future, if sufficient empirical data are made available.

## Chapter Two

### National Mood Theory

"There can be no science of politics unless there are such uniformities, these constants of behavior, which admit formulation as laws."

G. E. Catlin

This chapter presents a perspective of presidential leadership as it relates to the domestic and foreign problems of the nation. It does not require a great deal of insight to suggest that the nature and style of presidential leadership will depend largely upon the nature and complexities of the problems the nation encounters at a certain moment of time. In the first place, presidential power is closely linked to the growth and expansion of the nation as a whole. The rise of the nation from a cluster of Atlantic states into a global power eventually impelled presidential responsibilities of comparable magnitude. Yet this does not necessarily mean that the President's power or the nation's role in the world has grown in a steady, smooth manner. There have been repetitions, trends, and cycles in various aspects of political life as the nation coped with recurring problems such as economic prosperity, social welfare, and national security.

Presidential leadership can be viewed as only one facet of a large socio-political process. How a nation organizes and sustains a distinct pattern of leadership is, broadly speaking, a function of national style; at least in the sense in which W. W. Rostow uses the term:

The concept of national style is a way of describing how the United States has typically gone about solving its problems. The ultimate motivating sources of nations -like those human beings who make them up- are complex and elusive. The recurrent pattern of a nation's performance, however, is more accessible to study and description. Once the main elements in a national style are established, one can consider how, out of the interplay of men and environment, a national style slowly changes. <sup>1</sup>

In a broad sense, national style is entrenched in the nature of the society, functioning of the political system, structure of the government, and a wide range of values prevailing in the society. All these factors are difficult to simplify in any meaningful sense, because these are more or less products of accumulated national experiences. This chapter is an attempt to throw light on the cyclic character of the American government. What underlies the alternation of a surge of presidential leadership and an apparent decline of presidential prominence? Can a historical pattern of alternation provide a useful insight in interpreting contemporary events as well as predicting the future form of presidential roles?

These questions have been brought to the forefront by the reaction to the war in Vietnam. It is an accepted truth that decisive changes in American politics and policy usually occur as a result of a war. Because presidential power is closely interlinked to the role of the nation in world affairs, it is hardly surprising that any fundamental

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<sup>1</sup>W. W. Rostow, The United States in the World Arena (New York: Harper Publishing Co., 1960), xix.

challenge to American interests and power in the world must involve the question of the proper stature of the President in national affairs. Nevertheless, the questions require careful analysis because the reaction to the war is complicated by a diffuse and pervasive development: the erosion of the many familiar features of the cold war. One puzzling fact is that the frustrating experience of the war occurred at a time when the United States had become the most powerful nation in the world, with military commitments and presence in virtually every major area of the world. In addition, the war coincided with intensified domestic troubles that competed for attention and resources. One wants to know to what extent the reaction to the war resulted in a reaction against the general foreign policy and the principal institution that shaped the American involvement.<sup>2</sup>

A useful approach to this problem is to identify and assess the major factors and processes as revealed in national history. The war in Vietnam is viewed as an incident in a much larger drama - the expansion of American power and involvements during the cold war period. The cold war itself can be viewed, in turn, as a part of the historical dynamics of the nation. Yet we are not concerned with the biography

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<sup>2</sup>In the aftermath of the war in Vietnam, many books speculating about the future shape of American foreign policy have appeared. The most relevant to this chapter is Robert E. Osgood, et al, eds., Retreat from Empire? (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1973).

of a nation, but the pattern of change in national mood, as it expresses itself in major aspects of American politics and policy. In the following discussion, we will first define the concept of national mood, then relate the concept to aspects of national-problem solving in relation to domestic economic conditions. An attempt is made to theorize the role of the President as one aspect of politico-economic linkages, with particular emphasis on the historical context.

### National Mood and National Policy

'National mood' is used to denote a widespread sentiment or feeling within a political community with regard to broad issues of politics and policy. No nation can exist without some consensus of feeling about basic values such as mass material welfare and freedom, or commitment to certain modes of resolving political conflict such as constitutional democracy. Some of these values and basic attitudes are difficult to observe and analyze, even though they are deeply incorporated in the operation of a political institution. At a more or less operational level, however, there are a certain set of sentiments focused on current issues of major significance. For example, many people can share the belief that the President has become too powerful, or that the country should play an active role in world politics; or people may simply express satisfaction over general policy or performance of certain leaders and institutions. National mood refers to such a broad, diffuse and changeable senti-

ment widespread within a nation at a certain point in time. The notion of mood stresses the fluidity of sentiment, even though it may endure for a sustained period of time, depending on the external conditions.

The concept of mood has been assimilated into a common language, since it has been widely used to denote a shared feeling within a political entity of a variety of sizes and levels, such as 'isolationist mood' of the nation, or 'cutting mood' of Congress in the context of the appropriation process. Furthermore, it is often used to refer to some pattern of climatic relations among two or more entities, such as international 'detente' or 'cooperative mood' between the President and Congress. For this reason, the concept of mood is often inseparable from such widely used terms as 'opinion context' or 'climate of expectations.' In any event, the concept of mood is associated with the aggregate and diffuse nature of human responses. It is basically a tendency of behavior, a disposition to act in one certain way rather than in another.

Unfortunately, the concept of mood has come to have a more or less negative connotation, since Gabriel Almond used the term to stress the instability of American public opinion.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Gabriel Almond, American People and Foreign Policy (New York: Praeger, 1968), 69-115; James Rosenau, Public Opinion and Foreign Policy (New York: Random House, 1961), 35-37.



He used the term primarily to distinguish between 'policy,' which is an explicit statement of assumption about reality and the definition of alternatives and, preference, on broad public issues. We use the term in a neutral sense. In the first place, it is doubtful that mood and policy can be sharply differentiated in actual policy-making processes.

Many general policy statements are couched in broad and often ambiguous concepts such as 'free world,' 'national security,' or 'threat from communism.' Policy-making actually involves an application of these broad concepts in interaction with daily events, as decision-makers assign priorities to diverse interests and objectives, and interpret national and international situations at a particular moment in time.

This brief point should not be taken to mean that the United States does not have any coherent policy or that policy process is irrational or unpredictable, as is a common criticism of American foreign policy. The main point is that policy is primarily shaped in a continuous interaction with changing situations as perceived by the decision-maker.

The concept of mood becomes relevant because we view the policy process as inductive rather than deductive in many cases. This cannot be otherwise, given the fact that decision-makers deal with uncertain futures with policy consequences appearing at a remote time in interaction with many other complex factors. If the concept of mood is freed from

negative connotation, it can serve as a valuable theoretical construct with an emphasis on the very dynamic nature of policy-making processes.

At the level of the general public, the national mood is related to what V. O. Key, Jr. calls "permissive consensus" opinion dykes which permit leaders to act and to justify their choices after the event in large substantive areas.<sup>4</sup> The concept is approached by David Easton as "support" which constitutes a store of political good will.<sup>5</sup> As such it taps widespread political sentiments which are not always depleted by disappointment over specific policy output.

The concept of mood is useful to describe the political process characterized as tacit or implicit bargaining. The most common example is the exchange of support for legislative measures whereby a Congressman agrees to go along with the President for a particular piece of legislation in anticipation of favorable treatment of his future requests for resources at the President's disposal. Policy-making at a higher echelon of leadership often relies upon emotional appeals to many sectors of the society, without any particular individuals in mind, in an attempt to enlist broad

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<sup>4</sup>V. O. Key, Jr., Public Opinion and American Democracy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), 552-555.

<sup>5</sup>David Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York: John Wiley & Sons, INC., 1965), 153-170, 212-219, 420.

support. Such support is identical to the trust or confidence in the President or the Presidency on the part of the general public, as it is measured by public opinion survey.

Even though the above terms are all couched in different theoretical terms they all try to measure the willingness of a group of people to approve the conduct of leaders within the group over a wide range of issues. Development of mass media and speed of change in contemporary events suggests that this diffuse support tends to be channeled into the policy-process in a variety of ways.<sup>6</sup> As Gamson argued, when the level of trust is high, the authorities are able to make new commitments and, if successful, increase such support even more.<sup>7</sup> When it is declining, authorities may find it difficult to meet existing commitments and to govern effectively. If one admits that many problems facing a President during his incumbency were not campaign issues at all, the importance of maintaining such a trust or confidence becomes apparent.

In addition to or separate from the good will focused on a leader or institution, there is a permissive consensus on certain issues, with a somewhat clear indication of policy preferences. For example, in the decades since World

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<sup>6</sup>Karl Deutsch, The Nerves of Government (New York: Free Press, 1966), 118-127.

<sup>7</sup>William Gamson, Power and Discontent (Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1968), 45-46.

War II, the majority has come to accept, at least in principle, the necessity for the United States to play an active role in world affairs.<sup>8</sup> This support is largely based on a consensus feeling that the United States must pursue its national interests in the world beyond its boundaries if Americans are to enjoy the fruits of freedom and prosperity at home. Large majorities have taken what is called 'internationalist positions' on a wide range of foreign and defense issues, such as large defense expenditures, alliance commitments in defense of Western Europe and certain parts of Asia, the stationing of American troops in support of these commitments, sizable sums of foreign military and economic aid, and active participation in United Nations. On nearly all of these issues, a nation-wide consensus was said to exist, cutting across most demographic groupings in the country. In short, this consensus meant a domestic support or willingness to use political, economic and, if necessary, military means to resist the spread of communism represented by the Soviet Union. Accordingly, the United States has made its influence felt around the globe, often involving the actual use of military force in Korea, Vietnam, Dominica, Congo, and the Middle East.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>William Casper, "The 'Mood Theory': A Study of Public Opinion and Foreign Policy," American Political Science Review, 64 (June 1970), 536-546.

<sup>9</sup>Robert Osgood, et al, eds., America and the World (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970).

Yet at the later part of the Sixties, the experience of the protracted involvement in Vietnam presumably brought about a changed outlook in the nation. A series of debates among scholars, as well as policy-makers, suggests that there are cross-currents of opinion, even though there is a shared feeling that there should be 'no more Vietnam.' The majority of people came to believe that the war was a mistake, and also came to express opposition to large defense expenditures.<sup>10</sup> Concern arose as to whether a growing public disinclination to risk further involvement would lead to the abandonment of American commitments abroad and to the emergence, in substance if not in name, of a new isolationism.<sup>11</sup>

The question is complicated by the fact that public support of active foreign policy is often closely interlinked with support of the Presidency. It is possible to expect that a retrenchment in world affairs would have significant consequences on the principal institutions that had forged the role of the country in the world. At the turn of the Seven-

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<sup>10</sup>Bruce Russett, "Revolt of the Masses: Public Opinion and Military Expenditures," in Bruce Russett, ed., Peace, War and Numbers (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972), 299-319; John Mueller, Presidents, War and Public Opinion (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1973).

<sup>11</sup>Robert Tucker, "The American Outlook: Change and Continuity," in Osgood, et al, eds., Retreat from Empire (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 29-77.

ties, the feeling was widespread that presidential power had grown far too dominant over the conduct of foreign affairs and that the time was ripe for a reassertion of congressional and public influence over American activities abroad. This mood was partly based on the belief that the war in Vietnam was a result of questionable commitments made by American Presidents.<sup>12</sup>

It is easy to exaggerate the uniqueness of the conflict in Vietnam or the relaxation of tension in the international arena to explain the changed mood of the nation. One important point to make is that international situations, while being important, do not compel, by themselves, particular decisions or responses; unless they are given priorities and interpretations by decision-makers. Certainly there would be no more Vietnam in its unique sense. Yet there might well be another involvement in a major area of conflict such as the Middle East, Latin America, or Southeast Asia, depending upon the willingness of the leaders and the public to use national power to bear on the international situation.

What becomes essential is the nature and intensity of the public mood toward the President and the role of the country in world affairs. It might well be that the reaction to Vietnam is simply a temporary change in outlook, that can be subjected to quick mobilization by happenings abroad

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 32-33.

or willful use of resources by the men at the top, without basic erosion of support of the enlarged role itself. Given the enormous grasp of the President in the area of foreign policy in relation to the public, as is commonly supposed, it is not surprising that many observers expressed concern over the possibility of presidential dominance despite the public mood to the contrary. The concern largely stems from the experience given to the Nixon Presidency which appeared to have demonstrated continuity of presidential dominance in the area of foreign policy.<sup>13</sup>

The questions raised above cannot be answered with any assurance unless we find a satisfactory explanation of the process whereby presidential leadership operates within the context of national mood. What is necessary is the proper time perspective. One cannot ascertain the nature of the national mood until one observes it over a sufficient period of time, with delineation of basic dimensions and their interrelationships. For this purpose, it will be essential to delineate patterns of national responses to domestic and foreign challenges.

#### Cyclic Theories of National Mood

The concept of national mood is hardly distinguishable, in many respects, from the concept of national ideology.

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<sup>13</sup>Francis Rourke, "Domestic Scenes: The President Ascendent," in Robert Osgood, et al, eds., Retreat from

This latter concept is usually operationalized by responses to interviews or questionnaires. Mood, however, is based on three descriptive criteria. First, it is the aggregate of sentiment widespread within the nation. Basically this criterion refers to the extent to which people share the same sentiment. Second, mood is a diffuse feeling toward a political object, in the sense that specific items are not well differentiated. This criterion is related to scope of the issue toward which the sentiment is generated. For example, the national mood may indicate opposition to a wide range of issues such as defense expenditures, the war in Vietnam, alliance or international organization at the same time. The third, and most important, criterion is changeability which is basically a matter of consistency over time and should not be confused with consistency across individuals within the nation or consistency across issues. Policy or ideology usually invokes the notion of consistency of behavior as well as explicitness of components of one's behavior. In contrast, mood emphasizes variability.<sup>14</sup>

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Empire, 79-108.

<sup>14</sup>Singer proposes to treat the personality, attitude, and opinion, as separate but interdependent psychological attributes: personality is the most inclusive and all-embracing psychological property attributed to human being; a more restricted, malleable and observable cluster of individual attributes is called attitude; opinion is more specific than attitude, markedly more transitory and appreciably more susceptible to systemic observations and measurement.



It is worthwhile to mention that the concept of mood reflects researchers' views and their emphasis on the dynamic, fluid, and changing nature of the political process. Fundamentally, this is related to what one is trying to explain. For example, it is one thing to explain why the President has veto power; it is quite another to explain how he exercises that power on certain occasions. Similarly, it is one thing to explain why defense expenditures were high during the cold war period, and another matter to explain why defense expenditures changed during the cold war period. The former question asks to explain a constant, the other a variable. An adequate theory should embrace both the long-term and short-term factors. In many cases, however, long-term changes are simply accumulation of small changes up to a certain threshold value from which the relationship shifts significantly.

This point was made to emphasize that the concept of national mood is basically a theoretical construct that purports to explain behavior and process. Just as attitude is measured from behavior on the basis of certain theoretic-

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He suggests in a straightforward way to convert the individual psychological properties so that they can serve as the basis for a distinct cultural variables of any subnational, national and international system. Thus, personality can become the basis for national (or any other social system's) character; attitude, the basis for ideology; and opinion, the basis for climate. David Singer, "Man and World Politics: The Psychological Interface" Journal of

cal postulates, so is mood measured by behavior manifest in political process because mood is something that is postulated to underlie the behavior in different situation.<sup>15</sup> Simply stated, we know that Congress and the President are in a cooperative mood by observing that the two institutions agree more often than they disagree. The question of whose preference prevails comes into the picture only when the two parties disagree. When there is a widespread consensus within a community, it would not matter very much who makes the decision or who has power, because the outcome would be the same. In this sense, national mood tries to tap the more fluid aspect of political processes and policies in actual operations.

Broadly speaking, national mood can be observed in four dimensions, in terms of the basic characteristics of process and policy content at each point in time that can be analyzed. These four dimensions have been noted by many scholars engaged in independent fields of observation:

- (1) Process: i) conflict and cooperation between the President and Congress (role of President)  
 ii) competition between Republican and Democratic Party (role of party)

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Social Issues, 24 (July 1968), 127-53.

<sup>15</sup>The interactional view postulates that behavior is a function of both environmental situations in which actors find themselves and the psychological dispositions they bring to these situations. Fred Greenstein, Personality and Politics (Chicago: Markham Publishing Co., 1969), 28-29.

- (2) Content: iii) ideological conflict between conservatives vs. liberals (role of government)  
 iv) foreign policy mood between isolationism vs. internationalism (role of the country)

Historical patterns of change in each dimension are often described as progressive spirals that are basically combinations of trend and cycle.

### Presidentialism vs. Congressionalism

The Constitution contains the basic rules of decision-making, under which conflicts are resolved into a national decision. It is axiomatic that the United States Constitution is a bundle of compromises over different social forces and ideas. Many scholars tend to assume that the intermittent conflict and compromise between the two branches of government may reflect different social and political forces that supply different political bases to each branch. Different methods of election and different constituencies in actual operation produce differences in emphasis on socio-economic interests that have easy access and benefits. Herring sees the relation as a balance between centrifugal forces converging in the Congress and centripetal forces focused on the Chief Executive.<sup>16</sup> During many international

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<sup>16</sup>He argues "In fact, presidential policy, however pure in motivation, must mean the promotion of certain interests at the expense of others." Pendleton Herring, Presidential Leadership: Political Relations of Congress and the Chief

crises, when alternative courses of action have been subjects of domestic political debate, the meaning of the Constitution has often been reexplored, particularly with respect to the extent of the interrelationships and limits of federal, presidential, and congressional powers.

Because the socio-political base seldom remains static, the balance of power shifts regularly.<sup>17</sup> Changing roles of each branch in national politics were noted by both Galloway and Egger in their separate works, each following the notion of a pendulum model. Galloway, in his subjective judgment, divided American history up to 1951 into ten subperiods, five of which were designated as periods of "presidential or executive leadership."<sup>18</sup> The other five subperiods were labelled as periods of congressional supremacy, conflict, or short fluctuations of power, characterizing the ebb of unambiguous presidential initiatives or assertiveness.

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Executive (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), 31.

<sup>17</sup>Thomas Jefferson is cited as having first predicted that the United States would undergo years of "legislative tyranny," to be followed "at a more distant period" by the "tyranny of the executive power." James M. Burns, Congress on Trial: The Legislative Process and the Administrative Process (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1949), 187. For a brief review of empirical analyses, see Roger H. Davidson, "Congress and the Executive: The Race for Representation," in Alfred de Grazia, ed., Congress: The First Branch of Government (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1967), 365-402.

<sup>18</sup>George B. Galloway, History of the House of Represent-

In a more unequivocal manner, Egger suggests that the pendulum shifts as an alternation between two poles of national mood, "presidentialism" vs. "congressionalism." He subsequently attempts to define oscillations of eleven subperiods, which add up to 100 years of presidentialism, and 76 years of congressionalism.<sup>19</sup>

The reason for the rise and fall of executive leadership is explained as a group process by Bentley.<sup>20</sup> In essence, he suggests that if the group interest works out a fair and satisfying adjustment through the legislature, then the executive sinks in prominence; that when the adjustment is not perfected in the legislature, then the executive arises in strength to do the work. If the nation is viewed as a whole, Bentley's idea can be applied to the nature of the national problem. Some problems, such as foreign crisis or threat to the economic system, are largely 'executive' in nature. When there is a wide consensus on goals to be achieved, the disagreement will be merely a matter of method, that is, how to win a war, or how to get out of a depression and so on. Since the Executive branch is endowed or asso-

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tatives (New York: T. Y. Crowell Co., 1961), 236-269.

<sup>19</sup>Rowland Egger, The Presidency of the United States (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), 63. He defines "congressionalism" as "the state or condition in which the influence of the legislative is generally predominant," and "presidentialism" as "the state or condition in which the executive provide the major influence and leadership."

<sup>20</sup>Arthur Bentley, Process of Government (Cambridge:

ciated with long-held images of efficiency such as unity, dispatch, or efficiency, presidential responsibilities will be enhanced by the increased volume of national problems which are basically executive in nature, no matter where the constitutional power lies.<sup>21</sup>

### Republicans vs. Democrats

Conflict and cooperation between the President and Congress occurs within the context of the two-party system. In American Democracy, both parties have preserved solid cores of strength, with the independents often holding the balance of power. As one group continues in power, more and more of the independents will turn away from it so that at a certain time a new majority is brought into being and the policy shifts.

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Harvard University Press, 1967), 359.

<sup>21</sup>According to Huntington, a policy-making process is legislative in character to the extent that (1) the units participating in the process are relatively equal in power (and consequently must bargain with each other), (2) important disagreements exist concerning the goals of policy, and (3) there are many possible alternatives. A process is executive in character to the extent that (1) participating units differ in power, (2) fundamental goals and values are not at issue, and (3) the range of possible choices are limited. Samuel P. Huntington, The Common Defense (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 146

The patterns of change in partisan alignment in national elections have received much empirical attention. The study on party development leads Burnham to assert that the cycles in elections are "a prime manifestation of the dominance of that function" in American politics.<sup>22</sup> Donald E. Stokes and R. Iversen have demonstrated statistically that forces exist that make for two-party competition and equilibrium between the parties, although they do not seek to identify the forces.<sup>23</sup>

The shapes of the cycles were examined by Charles Sellers, who shows not only that there exist cyclic movements of the vote distribution between the Democratic and Republican Parties, but also that these oscillations of the underlying pattern are governed by certain principles.<sup>24</sup> He delved into the three phases of the cycle: equilibrium, realignment, and ascendancy of each party. If a political party as a group of leaders is viewed as a vehicle of public mood, both parties cannot be classified permanently; both parties tend to shift with the changing mood, although one will move more quickly.

However, it is a striking fact that, as Wilfred Binkley has observed, there has been a consistent difference between the types of Presidents the two parties have produced.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>W. Burnham, "Party Systems and the Political Process," American Party System (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), 288-289.

<sup>23</sup>Donald E. Stokes and R. Iversen, "On the Existence of

To a remarkable degree, Democratic Presidents have come to office in times of crisis more often than have Republican. The difference seems to lie in a greater preference of the Democratic party for strong Presidents. This may be due to considerable differences in the conceptions of the President's proper role in legislation as held by the major parties and by different Presidents. These differences are ones of degree and are related to the question of how active should the President be in the legislative process.<sup>26</sup> Yet this matter should be also read as a progressive spiral. Even Eisenhower, who took as nearly extreme a position of presidential passivity vis-a-vis Congress as any modern President, was often considered a genuine activist, in practice, in initiation of legislative bills. In popular expectation as well as in practice, however, the role of the President will reflect the similarities and differences between the two parties on overriding national problems.

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Forces Restoring Party Competition," Public Opinion Quarterly, 26 (Spring 1962), 159-171.

<sup>24</sup>Charles Sellers, "The Equilibrium Cycle in Two Party Politics" Public Opinion Quarterly, 24 (Spring 1965), 16-38

<sup>25</sup>Wilfred Binkley, President and Congress (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1947), 381-382; Wilfred Binkley, The Man in the White House (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959), 17-40.

<sup>26</sup>V. O. Key, Jr., Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, Co., 1942), 709.



### Liberalism vs. Conservatism

In the domestic domain, politics is simplified as a conflict and compromise between conservatist versus liberalist forces. One of the most important dimensions is the role of government in the society, particularly with respect to economics.

American conservatives tended to accept Locke's view of property as an inalienable right of individuals and extended this notion of natural rights to large private business corporations which other schools of thought might view as highly artificial organizations, created by the laws under which they are chartered. American conservatives also often share Adam Smith's trust in the benefits of economic 'laissez faire': government should not interfere with private activities and the rights of property. In most conflicts between government and some existing business interest, American conservatives tend to oppose the government -tax authorities, regulatory agencies, and the like- and side with the individual or corporation, if these represent interests of substance. Insofar as there is a 'conservative' and 'liberal' cleavage, that cleavage is along Republican-Democratic lines. The Republican party leaders tended to believe that "what is good for the business is good for the country."<sup>27</sup>

Schlesinger applies cyclic theory of national mood to

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 239.

American history as an ideological shift of sentiments between conservatism and liberalism:

Any scrutiny of American history discloses the alternation of these attitudes. A period of concern for the rights of the few has been followed by one of concern for the wrongs of the many...An era of quietude has been succeeded by one of rapid movement. More motion, however, is no proof of liberalism; it may be forward or backward or even in circles. The test is whether the object is evidenced not by words but by the resulting legislative and executive accomplishment. Such oscillations of sentiment, moreover, express themselves through changes of direction within a party as well as by displacement of one party by the other. 28

He holds that probably the balance has always been much the same: a small shift from one side to the other determining the dominant mood. But he adds that these periodic shifts are not merely the action of a pendulum, but a progressive spiral: "Liberalism grows constantly more liberal, and by the same token, conservatism grows constantly less conservative."<sup>29</sup> Today the notion of positive state has been firmly rooted, yet we see some difference of opinion over many issues of national policy, particularly those of macro-economic policy.<sup>30</sup>

The two parties do not differ on all issues or at all times. It is a common view that there is a kind of tendency

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<sup>28</sup>Arthur M. Schlesinger, Path to the Present (New York: Macmillan Co., 1949), 87-88.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 88.

<sup>30</sup>Herbert McLosky, et al, "Issue Conflict and Consensus among Party Leaders and Followers," American Political Science Review, 54 (June 1960), 406-407.

to converge on many aggregate economic problems. For instance, there is no difference between the Republicans and Democrats with the respect to the ardent pursuit of high levels of employment and high and steady rates of growth of real income. Each party is so broadly constituted that quite aside from any loss of votes it is in the interest of each party to seek these goals.<sup>31</sup> Nor do the parties differ in their intellectual or political resources to deal with macro-economic policy. In addition, the differences in foreign policy tended to be less significant than were those in domestic issues.

Within a general consensus of the basic social and political values between conservatives and liberals, however, there is always a difference in the order of priority given to national problems and goals, with the result of significant different courses of action on important national issues. The degree of conflict and consensus depends largely on the context in which the nation finds itself in association with international environment.

#### Isolationism vs. Internationalism

Shifting mood in American foreign policy has been noted

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<sup>31</sup>Anthony Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1957), 135-141; Gerald H. Kramer, "Short-term Fluctuations in U.S. voting behavior: 1896-1964," American Political Science Review, 65 (March 1971), 131-143.

among various dichotomies, such as realist vs. idealist, interventionist vs. isolationist, expansionist vs. consolidationist, militarist vs. pacifist, and recently hawks vs. doves. It is difficult to determine which has been the dominant ideology, since the meaning and content have changed with the nation's problems. The isolationist label was affixed to the United States primarily by Europeans and by American preoccupied with Europe. What bothered them was not that America ignored the outer world -a palpable untruth- but that it refused to choose sides in European conflicts. As Walter Lippman points out, their term 'isolationism' is misleading because the word conceals the dynamic and expansionist energy of the American nation.<sup>32</sup>

One basic element in the nation's history is the expansionist program which carried Americans westward across a vast continent that was virtually empty but enormously rich. From the French wars of the eighteenth century to the close of the nineteenth century, the American purpose was to open up a continental territory, to consolidate the Union, and to make it as invulnerable as possible against other powers. Continental expansion was pursued in the context of attempted

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<sup>32</sup>Walter Lippman, "Isolation and Expansion," in Robert E. Goldwin, ed., American Foreign Policy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 154; Kenneth Thompson, Political Realism and the Crisis of World Politics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), 174-189.

isolation from the conflicts and penetration of powers outside the Hemisphere. Ironically, believers in the taming of the continent were called isolationists; "By nature and by mood, it is not neutralist nor pacifist."<sup>33</sup>

In a relativistic sense, however, there seems to be a certain pattern of alternation between active and passive foreign policy as a matter of national priority or strategy. Dexter Perkins suggests that there is a rhythm in the foreign policy of the United States, a distinct pattern to be traced in connection with America's wars.<sup>34</sup>

In a more or less systematic way, Klingberg analyzed some cyclic patterns in foreign policy mood. He used the term "extroversion" to refer to a "nation's willingness" to bear upon other nations, to exert positive pressures (economic, diplomatic, or military) outside its borders, and the term "introversion" in the opposite sense.<sup>35</sup> Using a variety of indicators including naval expenditures, annexations, armed expeditions, diplomatic pressures, and attention devoted to foreign affairs in presidential State of Union Messages, Klingberg charted the alternation in mood since

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<sup>33</sup>Lippman, Ibid., 154.

<sup>34</sup>Dexter Perkins, The American Approach to Foreign Policy (New York: Atheneum, 1968), 136 ff.

<sup>35</sup>Frank L. Klingberg, "The Historical Alternation of Moods in American Foreign Policy," World Politics, 4 (Oct. 1951), 241-260.

the Revolutionary War. He found that, beginning in 1776, American attitudes toward international affairs have gone through eight alternating phases of introversion and extroversion as follows:

Introversion	Extroversion
1776-1798	1798-1824
1824-1844	1844-1871
1871-1891	1891-1919
1919-1940	1940-

Writing in 1951, Klingberg predicted that the United States was "probably capable of great world leadership for another decade or more." On the basis of his cyclic theory, he suggested, further, that it was logical to expect America's involvement well into the Sixties. Depending upon how one interpretes the public reaction to the conflict in Vietnam, his forecast may well be correct. Huntington, for instance, asserts that the Klingberg cycle came "right on schedule." He gathers that at an earlier point in time a war with the same consequences would not have evoked the same reaction.

### Linkages

This discussion suggests that there are not only some regularities in each dimension, but also each cycle is inter-related with the other. The task that remains are conceptual integration and measurement. Cyclic theories are based on somewhat gross generalizations of characteristics, and no study is explicit about what actually produced such cycles and what governs the pattern. One obvious reason is that

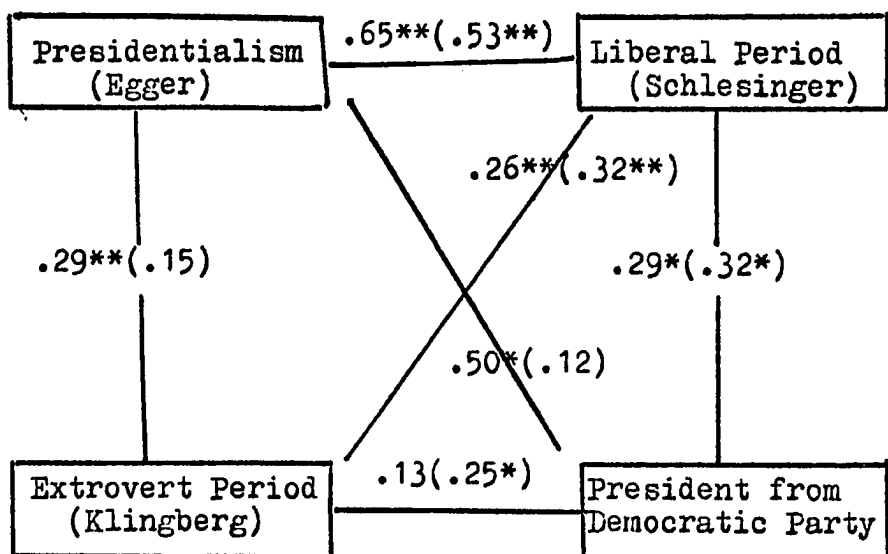
each cycle is studied separately, without seeing some linkages among the various aspects of politics and policy. In addition, the periodization is mostly based on the tenure of the presidential incumbent.

As an initial step toward a better understanding of the dynamics involved, some convergence of observation can be noted. From the discussion above, it may be concluded that the mood of presidentialism, liberalism, extrovertism, or strength of Democratic party are highly interrelated. A convenient measure of these relationships is the product-moment correlation varying from  $\pm 1$  to 0, when each biennial period is dichotomized into 1 or 0, depending upon how that period is characterized by different historians. Figure 2.1 shows some significant association among these dichotomized variables, though the relationship is somewhat low between extrovert and presidential period. By this crude measure, 'strong' Presidents are associated closely with Democratic and liberal periods of national history.

(Figure 2.1 here)

On the whole, the diagram indicates positive associations among different characteristics of the times, as judged by different observers except the party control of the White House. The years of executive leadership tend to be also liberal years, and to a lesser degree, tend to be extrovert years. This result appears to give some support to the general hypothesis that foreign crises and surge of liberal social forces tend to reinforce the position of the Chief

Figure 2.1  
 Correlations among Characteristics  
 of the times  
 -21st through 81st Congress-



Note: The coefficients in the parentheses are for the whole history, since the 1st Congress.  
 \*\*significant at less than .01 probability level.  
 \*significant at less than .05 probability level.



Executive as a national leader. It is also possible to say that Democratic Presidents are more likely to preside over executive, liberal, and extrovert periods of the nation if the pattern persists in the future.

### Dynamics of Politico-Economic Linkage

We need to explain why such cycles occur and why and how the cycles in the four dimensions of American politics and policy are interlinked. A theoretical explanation requires something more than simply saying that cycles are inherent in any functioning system. Even though it is a common belief that reaction to a period of strain and tension, following an intense activity, there is a need for a period of rest and relaxation, this does not tell why the cycles should occur regularly. Nor is it very useful to say that when a system always consists of two opposing poles, thesis gives way to antithesis. What is necessary is specification of the process whereby the four dimensions interact.

One neglected aspect is the pressure stemming from the conditions of the domestic economy. Health of the domestic economic system becomes one of the most powerful pressures for the obvious reason that it has to do first with the very conditions of living, and then with other important policy goals of men in social settings. For foreign and domestic policies it provides limits of resources available to the nation. When the nation has a relatively stable and growing economy, the political system is normally free of strain

even though the distribution of economic rewards is very unequal. But when either inflation or recession occurs, with the total size of the pie fixed, pressures begin to build up with significant impact on the political mood of the nation. When a serious economic crisis develops, such as depression or simultaneous inflation and unemployment, the pressure is likely to stir the political system. The decisive economic dislocation usually occurs after a war-induced spending.<sup>36</sup>

This point should not be understood as suggesting an economic determinism. On the contrary, economic conditions are partly influenced by the policy decisions made by the policy-makers as well as by the nation as a whole. One clear example of an important decision made by the nation as a whole is the election of a certain leader or his party on the basis of specific policy programs. A President usually comes to office with a distinct policy priority and outlook, which may have, though not apparent at the time, decisive influence on the course of the national economy. Indeed, the reason why many researchers have failed to establish the direct impact of the business cycle on politics is that they have ignored the human aspect of politics.

As will be discussed in some detail in later chapters, the national mood includes consensus or conflict on national

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<sup>36</sup>Peter McGrath, et al, eds., The American Democracy (New York: Macmillan Co., 1973), 676-680.

priorities as the basic dimensions of analysis. It suffices here to say that problems of national priority occur in the context of limits of national resources and limits of national attention. To put it simply, no society can solve all of its problems at the same time. First, limit of national resources requires adjustment of many legitimate, yet conflicting, goals such as welfare, security and economic growth. The body politic is composed of a very large number of human beings. Hence it is perfectly capable of operating as a parallel system, carrying on many activities simultaneously. Nevertheless, as Herbert Simon points out, some crucial political processes -in particular, legislative and institutional change that affect important values- occur only in the presence of the simultaneous attention of a large number of people.<sup>37</sup> If one such issue is on the active agenda, most others should be postponed. Presidential leadership and the party seem to play an important part in the process of politico-economic linkage as a national problem-solving process.

Presidential leadership is exhorted by the nation according to the dominant national mood prevailing in the country. The President may play a great role in stimulating and mobilizing the more passive portion of the society to

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<sup>37</sup>Herbert Simon, "Political Research: The Decision-Making Framework," in David Easton, ed., Varieties of Political Theory (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), 21-28.

undertake a new policy and to follow it for a considerable time, given some symbolic and administrative advantage of the position. It is in this sense that presidential leadership can be viewed as an instrument of national problem-solving. Strong Presidents can crystallize liberal policies and sentiments of the nation, but apparently cannot 'turn the tide' except when the general mood supports presidentialism.

After the basic task of economic readjustment is achieved, then the whole perception shifts. A new problem arises. V. O. Key, Jr. argues that foreign policy questions become salient when the country enjoys a period of economic plenty and the number of domestic issues is limited; with "a full chicken in every pot" and two cars in average garage, the public can turn its attention to the international arena.<sup>38</sup> There seems to be some evidence to suggest that this belligerent spirit is fostered by the buoyant confidence generated by economic recovery after a substantial downswing. This theory therefore rejects the notion that economic stress causes war as an outlet for frustration.<sup>39</sup> It is in this sense that the pattern is more American than universal.

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<sup>38</sup>Key, Public Opinion and American Democracy, 163-168.

<sup>39</sup>Quincy Wright, A Study of War (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 1111-1112; Michael Haas, "Societal Change and National Aggressiveness 1900-1960," in J. D. Singer, ed., Quantitative International Politics (New York: Free Press, 1968), 215-244.

The activist foreign policy occurs when the economy expands rather than contracts.

The point to be stressed is that it is not that domestic economic stress generates a disciplined bloc of opinion that directs its anxieties against the foreigners: rather, American mood of activism is related with the optimistic mood after an economic crisis is overcome or in the process of recovery. This spillover of activism over issues areas explains at least why all the wars in this century, including the wars in Korea and Vietnam, occurred under Democratic Presidents. As James Sundquist asserts: "If activism and conservatism are matters of temperament, then one would expect a party leadership that is activist at home to be activist (or interventionist) abroad."<sup>40</sup> One important point, which is often forgotten, however, is that through this cyclic process, the polity expanded its capacity and influence in the world, with the concurrent growth of the federal government, the Presidency, and the overall size of the economy.

Active involvement in world affairs, spurred through war or threat, naturally tends to increase presidential power, because during crisis or emergency, there is a profound tendency to look to the President than the legislature as a source of decision. One paradoxical aspect of this process from the President's viewpoint is that as a person

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<sup>40</sup>James Sundquist, Politics and Policy (Washington, D. C.: Brookings Institution, 1968), 502.

he seldom enjoys the fruits of expansion of the economy or the influence of the nation in the world during his lifetime. Most Presidents tend to be discredited during their incumbency, mainly because expansion of the economy or the commitment to war results in dislocations in the economy, creating a new mood focused on domestic problems. The aftermath of war brings a violent shift. The emergency powers of the President are curtailed, and even though the executive officials may be left with a larger residue of power than they ever enjoyed, there is a renewal of emphasis on legislative rather than executive solutions to the problems of the day.<sup>41</sup>

When serious domestic issues develop and become salient, foreign policy starts losing significance. Warren Miller provides some empirical evidence showing that economic confidence is associated with general foreign policy directives. Those pessimistic about the economic conditions of the country tended to adopt foreign policy attitude of withdrawal. He opines that the base of popular sentiment on which national foreign policy depends to some degree on the health of the national economy. A sharp downswing in business conditions would not only set limits on what the nation's leaders felt could be expended on foreign policy,

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<sup>41</sup> Bertram Gross, "Timing the Offspring," in Edward Schneider, ed., Policy-Making in American Government (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1969), 90.

it would also set limits on what the electorate would condone in the way of internationalist foreign policy activities.<sup>42</sup>

It follows that abrupt changes in domestic economic conditions after an active involvement in world affairs may increase the strength of the isolationist sector as demands for domestic welfare legislation and tax relief assume primacy. A political leadership dedicated to an isolationist position can reflect or stir an undercurrent of anxiety about domestic conditions and thereby gain support for its policies. The President who adheres to the old perception might try to resist the new mood, but after a while he is likely to be rejected through party and electoral process. The political fate of T. Roosevelt and W. Wilson can be drawn as examples. The notion that the public sets outer limits on national policy can be viewed as the process of such changing equilibrium between the leader and the nation.<sup>43</sup> This brief discussion suggests that presidential leadership is simply one aspect of a complex interaction between political and economic environments. The process of historical dynamics can be described as phases of the politico-economic cycle.

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<sup>42</sup>Warren E. Miller, "Socio-Economic Analysis of Political Behavior," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 2 (August 1958), 239-255.

<sup>43</sup>Key, Public Opinion and American Democracy, 554; Bernard Cohen, Public's Impact on Foreign Policy (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1973), 206.

### Mood-Hypothesis

The mood-policy cycle, as a dynamic process, can be put as follows:

- (1) Sluggish economic growth and resulting dissatisfaction strengthens the activist force.
- (2) Activist force tends to support the Democratic party because of its relatively liberal position between the two major parties.
- (3) The Democratic party tends to rely on presidential initiative and programs toward activist policy.
- (4) Due to the activist policy and programs, immediate economic problems are solved, and the economy begins to expand.
- (5) With no immediate domestic problems, priority turns to the problems abroad, with higher aspiration and capacity of international goals, resulting in expansion of presidential power. This process occurs concurrently with a confident public mood, and tends to be translated into a more aggressive foreign policy.
- (6) Expansion of influence or involvement in war comes to the point where domestic problems are ignored, even creating economic instability.
- (7) The tendency to look to the Presidency as a source of legislation during the emergency or expansion period tends to shift, because the public loses confidence in the President's ability to solve neglected domestic problems and complications. The emergency powers of the President are curtailed, even though the executive officials may be left with a larger residue of power than they ever before enjoyed. There is a renewal of emphasis on legislative rather than the executive solutions to the problems of the day.
- (8) Conservatives tend to gain strength, leading the slowdown of economic activity, and the decline of support for active foreign policy.
- (9) This leads to the first phase of the cycle: sluggish economic growth gives rise to the activist force.

This process, as historical dynamics, can be diagrammed



as in Figure 2.2. Since an election occurs within a fixed time interval, the whole politico-economic cycle takes at least four or more years to complete, and it may be added that the basic pattern can be interrupted by unique events and personalities during the election period.

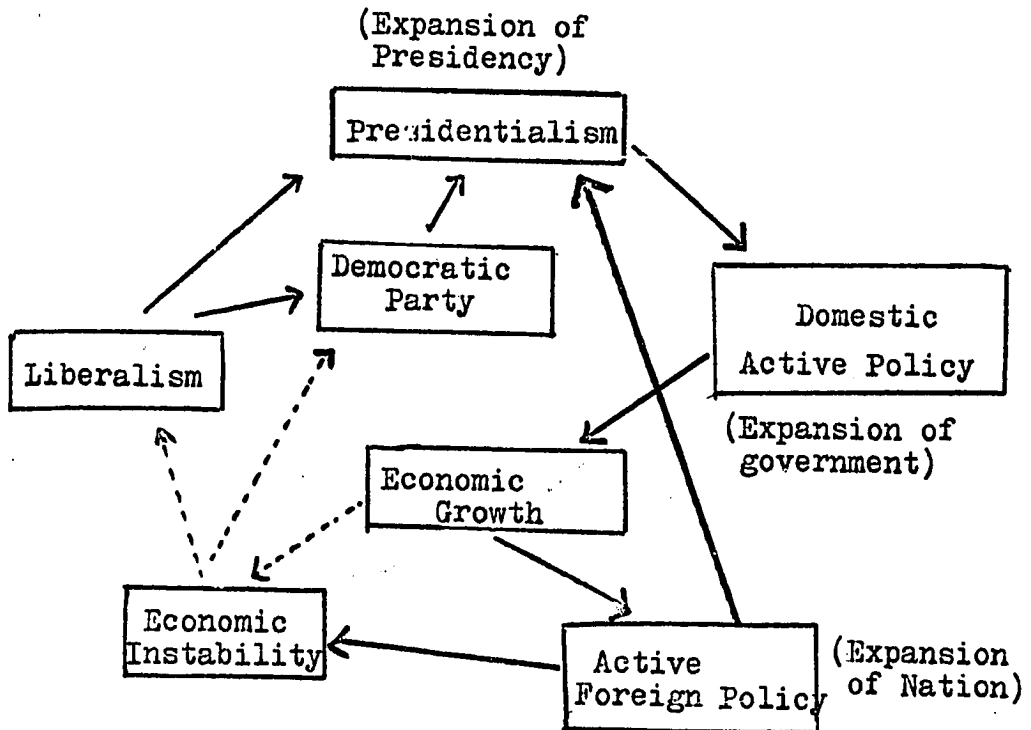
(Figure 2.2 here)

There is no agreement as to whether such a cyclic pattern is a good thing. From a long-term perspective, however, basic change can be viewed as collective learning through common experience. Nations 'learn' by adapting their objectives and methods to what can be conceived as attainable by their decision-makers. Learning is a rational process of redefining objectives as leaders discover that persistence with the initial aims is self-defeating or too costly. This change of goals is related with the concept of 'goal-changing feedback' in association with the environment of any system. When a goal reaches a threshold value, or if cost or loss hits a tolerance limit, then a reverse feedback sets in to produce a change of behavior.

The change may occur on a short-term basis as well as on a long-term basis. It is worthwhile to add that a long-term change of national mood will be accompanied by a comparable shift in dominant political ideology or framework of interpretation prevailing in the society at certain moments of time.

The national mood theory formulated above is in many ways a sweeping generalization of the nation's historical

Figure 2.2  
Politico-economic Dynamics of National Mood



Note: Solid arrows indicate generally positive influence. The dotted arrows indicate generally negative influence in a short-term dynamics. The completion of the cycles will usually take one generation, because in each phase, it takes time for a social force to have any impact. When the small impacts are cumulated, the system is transformed; the result is that the dotted lines assume positive relationships.

experience. Apparently it is difficult to put the specified interrelationships to a hard empirical test because they are described in a dynamic and developmental fashion. Nevertheless, it is possible to isolate and analyze key elements on the basis of available data.

## Chapter Three

### Power to Veto

"The strength of the Congress consists in the right to pass statutes; the strength of the President in the right to veto them." James Bryce

The purpose of this chapter is to examine, to a limited extent, the cyclic theories of national mood on the basis of aggregate data.\* The focus of analysis is the frequency of presidential vetoes and congressional overriding actions, both of which are aggregated over each Congress to yield one of the longest time-series data available on the interrelations between the President and Congress. This research proceeded with an assumption that some regularities found in veto behavior can shed light on changing patterns of national mood, especially the contention of power and conflict of roles between the two vital national institutions.

A series of descriptive, predictive, and explanatory hypotheses on veto behavior is investigated here with the aid of multiple regression methods. First, an attempt is made to delineate patterns of interaction on the veto with a focus on possible trends or cycles over the years. Then, three kinds of variables are examined as predictors of veto behavior. Among these variables are the following: personal characteristics of the presidential incumbent, including

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\* A slightly different version of this chapter will be published; "Presidential Vetoes from Washington to Nixon,"

such obvious indicators as career style and party membership; the "power situation" - partisan and electoral factors within the political system that directly bear on executive-legislative relationships; and finally the "socio-economic environment," variables which attempt to measure the internal or external setting of the political system. The results show that a significant proportion of veto behavior can be predicted by a combination of all of these. Relative potency of each variable is assessed by application of multiple regression models.

#### Presidential Actions and Congressional Reactions

It is a common notion that the frequent exercise of the veto power reflects effective presidential leadership.<sup>1</sup> Rowland Egger and Joseph Harris assert that the stronger the President, the more frequently he uses the power.<sup>2</sup>

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Journal of Politics, 37 (May 1975), in press.

<sup>1</sup>The data analyzed here were coded from U.S., Congress, Senate, Presidential Vetoes: Record of Bills Vetoed and Action Taken and Action Taken thereupon by the Senate and the House of Representatives; 1789-1968 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1969); and for the 91st Congress from Congressional Quarterly Almanac (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Service, 1971). In coding, distinction was made between private versus public bills, and between regular versus pocket vetoes. See Clement E. Vose, "The President's Veto of Private Bills," Journal of Politics, 26 (May 1964), 397-405.

<sup>2</sup>R. Egger and J. Harris, The President and Congress

This view stems partly from an emphasis on executive influence in the legislative process in terms of the number of bills stopped from becoming law. As to the actual effectiveness of the veto as a check on Congress, the testimony of statistics is almost conclusive. The record shows that from Washington to Nixon up to 1970 the veto was employed 2,257 times, of which 1,293 were regular vetoes, that is, bills returned by the President to the House of its origin with messages stating his objections. The fact that only 75 vetoes or 6.0 percent of regular vetoes have ever been overridden demonstrates that the veto, once issued, is normally final in the legislative process.

It is equally possible, however, to argue that more vetoes indicate less actual influence in the legislative process, for if the President had real control of Congress, the latter would not pass the undesirable bills in the first place. When Congress is willing to cooperate or ready to accept presidential initiatives in legislation, there is less likelihood of invoking vetoes. Richard Neustadt suggested that a President with weakened position might resort to negative measures at his disposal, like the veto.<sup>3</sup> But the veto power is not merely negative; it has at times been

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(New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1966), 51. Reflecting this popular opinion, "great" Presidents are those who used the veto power frequently.

<sup>3</sup>Richard Neustadt, Presidential Power (New York: John Wileys & Sons, Inc., 1960), 90.

used as a positive instrument of bargaining or as a weapon of legislative leadership by the Chief Executive.<sup>4</sup> It has been pointed out that a threat of a veto has often been sufficient to deter Congress from passing a bill against the President's wishes.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, a President might be deterred from vetoing a bill approved by overwhelming congressional majorities.

This consideration suggests that veto behavior can be best understood as an indicator of role conception held by each institution toward the other, or the "mood" of executive-legislative relationships, rather than as an indicator of actual strength. Frequency of presidential vetoes seems to reflect a President's disposition to assert his will over congressional preferences, whereas frequency of overriding actions reflects congressional disposition to assert its will over expressed presidential objections. Therefore, congressional reactions to vetoes constitute an important

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<sup>4</sup>Edward Corwin, The President: Office and Powers (2d ed. : New York: New York University Press, 1956), 343; Nelson Polsby, Congress and the Presidency (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), 196; Egger and Harris, President and Congress, 51; Wilfred Binkley, The Man in the White House (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 143.

<sup>5</sup>F. D. Roosevelt was reportedly prone to call occasionally for "something I can veto," as a reminder to departmental heads and Congress alike. Neustadt, "Presidency and Legislation: the Growth of Central Clearance," American Political Science Review, 48 (September 1954), 656.

dimension in the veto process.<sup>6</sup>

In this analysis consideration is given to the aggregation of overriding actions in each Congress, from the 1st through the 91st. The usual method of aggregation by President only tends to overlook whatever variations there are within a single Presidency due to the fact that one President encounters more than one Congress, some of which almost inevitably have different partisan compositions and levels of activities. Aggregation by Congress yields time-series data with equal time interval, reflecting variations across Presidencies as well as within Presidencies. The analytic relations among the number of bills, frequency of presidential vetoes, and congressional overriding actions can be given by the following simple formula:

$$V = BP \dots\dots (1) \qquad R = VC \dots\dots (2)$$

where V denotes the frequency of presidential vetoes; B, the number of bills passed by Congress; R, the frequency of congressional overriding actions; and P and C the presidential propensity to veto and congressional propensity to override, respectively. It is a priori true that when there is no bill, there cannot be any veto. The absence of a veto rules out any overriding action. Propensity to veto as well as

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<sup>6</sup>A suggestion that congressional overriding actions are an indicator of presidential leadership effectiveness was made by William Keefe and Morris Ogul, The American Legislative Process: Congress and the States (2d ed.: Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968), 148-149. An at-



absolute frequency can be dependent variables in this analysis.

For purposes of analysis, it is possible to generate a number of plausible hypotheses about what shape the time-series of veto behavior should take. The first hypothesis suggests a continuously increasing use of the power. It is quite a popular notion that presidential power has been expanding as the nation encounters more difficult and complex problems. As early as 1890, Edward Mason predicted:

As the business of the country increases, as legislation piles its bills still higher and as the whole social and political network grows more complicated in its demand and conflict of interests and its multiplicity of interferences, more and more will be the necessity of cutting Gordian knots with the swift, sharp edge of having an executive brave enough to take the responsibility of interposing his veto. <sup>7</sup>

The second hypothesis suggests a long-term cyclic pattern in veto behavior. Historians concur on a somewhat regular alternation of power between the President and Cong-

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tempt was made to see how congressional overriding actions are related with other measures of congressional attitudes. The rate of overriding actions correlates .304 (significant at the .05 level) with the event of the Senate having ever rejected a cabinet member nominated by the President for the entire history. Further, it correlates -.604 with presidential legislative boxscores for the 80th to the 91st Congresses for the period in which data are available.

<sup>7</sup>Edward Mason, The Veto Power, 1789-1890 (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1890), 140.

ress in history. It is well known that there have been some periods when the President played a dominant role in legislative matters, while some other periods are characterized by congressional dominance.<sup>8</sup>

The third hypothesis might suggest a regular short-term fluctuation of veto behavior within an incumbency. This hypothesis can be derived from varied sources, including what Edward Corwin calls "law of ebb and flow" in presidential leadership.<sup>9</sup> The point is that it is exceptional for a President to maintain effective leadership throughout his years in the White House because Congress possesses a set of powers to check and balance presidential dominance.<sup>10</sup> Congress may be following his lead in time of emergency or at the psychological thrust of an electoral mandate. Yet congressional docility evaporates as an active presidential role generates grievances which accumulate and are expressed in congressional criticism. In pejorative terms, Burns calls

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<sup>8</sup>Rowland Egger, The Presidents of the United States (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1966), 63; George Galloway, History of the House of Representatives (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1961), 236-269; Francis Wilcox, Congress, the Executive and Foreign Policy (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 16.

<sup>9</sup>Edward Corwin, President: Office and Powers, 333.

<sup>10</sup>Norman Small, Some Presidential Interpretation of the Presidency (2d ed.: New York: Da Capo Press, Inc., 1970), 194.

it "the cycle of deadlock and drift after a short period of honeymoon."<sup>11</sup> Pendleton Herring observes that a President is usually discredited by Congress before he leaves office.<sup>12</sup>

Each hypothesis is based on one element in observed patterns in presidential-congressional relationship; linear trend, long-term cycle or short-term cycle. Yet none is entirely adequate in describing the variations in veto series. Figure 3.1 shows the frequency of vetoes and overriding actions across Congresses.

(Figure 3.1 here)

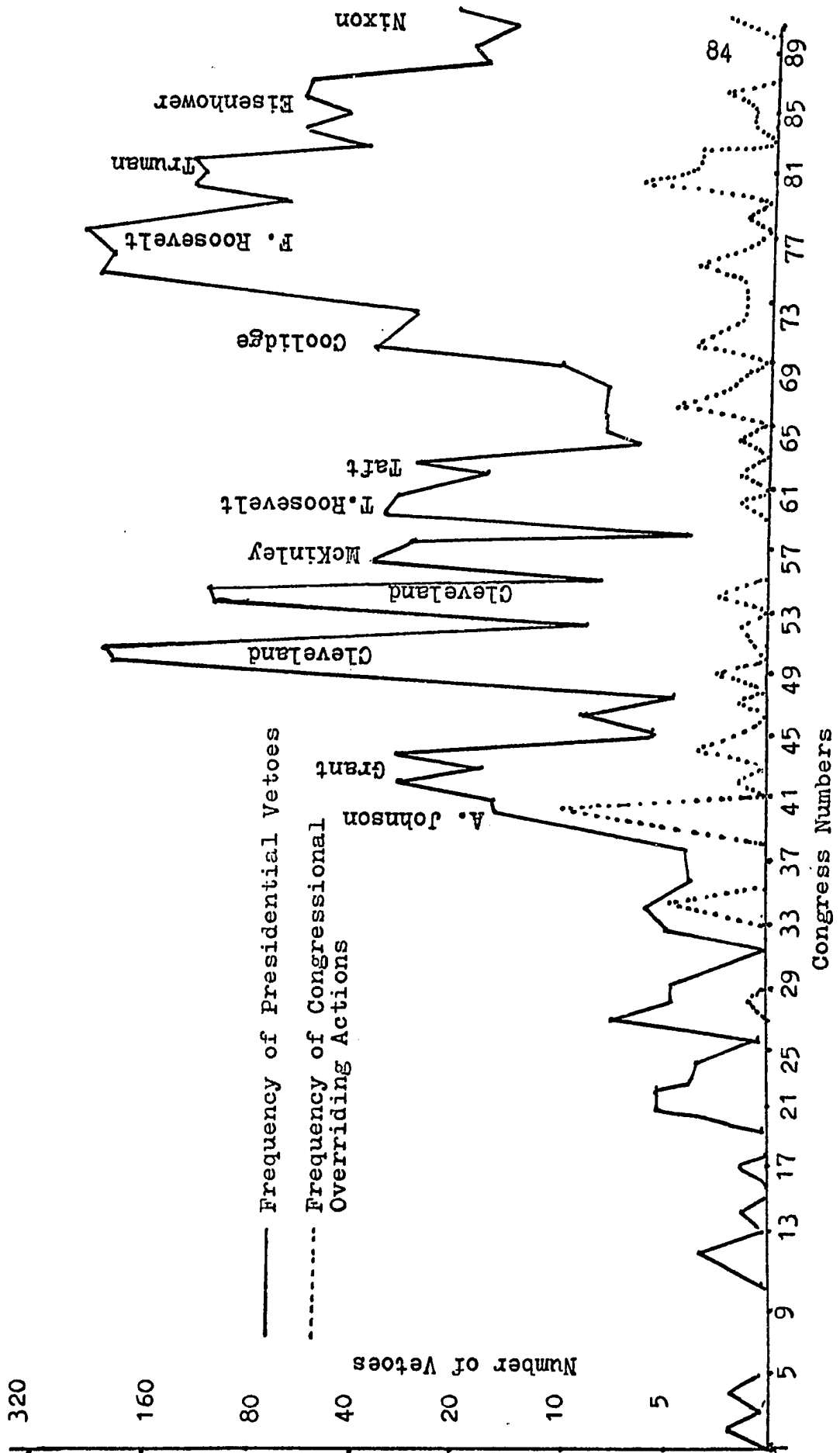
The variation has been considerable. Setting precedents, Washington vetoed two bills, one on constitutional grounds, the other for expediency. Later Presidents from Adams through Taylor exercised the veto with restraint; eight of them never used the veto. Although the use of the power has increased on the whole since the Civil War, no linear or cyclical patterns are well substantiated. The use of the power has been in decline since Franklin Roosevelt. Part of the reason is that more than half of all vetoes in history are ascribed to two distinguished Presidents --the so-called "veto Presidents" Franklin Roosevelt and Grover Cleveland. Cleveland killed, on the average, one bill out

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<sup>11</sup>James M. Burns, The Deadlock of Democracy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), 2.

<sup>12</sup>Pendleton Herring, Presidential Leadership (New York: Rinehart and Co., 1940), 8.

Figure 3.1  
 Frequency of Presidential Vetoes and Congressional Overriding Actions



of six; Roosevelt one out of twelve. Yet variation in congressional reactions is also notable. Among the 30 Presidents who exercised the veto, seven had all of their vetoes sustained, whereas the majority of vetoes by Presidents Franklin Pierce and Andrew Johnson were overturned by Congress.

In spite of the notable skewness of distribution, some patterns emerge when both presidential vetoes and congressional reactions are simultaneously taken into account. The percentage of vetoes on public bills is cross-plotted with percentage of overriding actions on regular vetoes in Figure 3.2 for the 71 Congresses since the inauguration of Andrew Jackson. Note that the square root of each data point is used in the scale in an attempt to correct for the skewness in percentages. The number of the Congress together with the corresponding President's name is indicated for each data point. Also the average score for each dimension is used as a dividing line to aid in understanding the relative position of each point in the configuration.

It is possible to offer some tentative interpretations. The lower left quadrant, which includes four Congresses with veto-free records, might be called a "cooperative pattern," because it is characterized by a relatively low rate of vetoes and no overriding actions. One can infer that the President was reluctant to or did not feel the need for resorting to the veto power to impose his will, or that the Congress was not in a position to reassert itself against



relatively few exercises of the power by the President. Although this situation may mean inaction at times, it is not surprising that many activist Presidents, like Jackson, Lincoln, Wilson, Theodore Roosevelt, Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, belonged in whole or in part of their incumbencies to this category.<sup>13</sup>

(Figure 3.2 here)

The upper left-hand quadrant includes cases of a higher rate of congressional rejections combined with a low level of vetoes. This quadrant can be dubbed "congressional authority" in the sense that Congress demonstrated its ability to reassert itself against pronounced objections of the President.

On the other hand, the upper right-hand quadrant, with a high rate of vetoes and of overriding actions, obviously indicates a pattern of conflict between the President and Congress. The most conspicuous is the struggle that arose in Andrew Johnson's incumbency, with 15 of 25 vetoes overturned. Even Franklin Roosevelt and Grover Cleveland, the two "veto Presidents," were not immune at times to rebellious congressional response.

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<sup>13</sup>It is somewhat instructive to note that President Grant, judged by historians as a "weak" President, started each of the two terms in this category. Thomas Bailey, Presidential Greatness (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1966), passim. However, it is noteworthy that James Bryce ranks Grant among great Presidents. Bryce, The American

Finally, the lower right-hand quadrant might be designated as "presidential authority." This division includes the cases where high propensity to veto is combined with low propensity to override. That is, the President stopped many bills from becoming law without overt congressional rejections. At least in a negative sense, it can be said that he exercised his power effectively to sustain his preference over Congress.

It is noteworthy that variation occurred across and within Presidencies. Excluding non-veto Presidents, the only Presidents who never moved out of the "cooperative pattern" are McKinley, Lincoln, Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson. And none remained in the "presidential authority" pattern throughout his whole incumbency. It might be noted that congressional behavior is more variable than presidential vetoes within Presidencies. If one carefully follows the trajectory of each Presidency, he will find a certain regularity in a swing from lower to higher rate of overriding actions -- a swing indicating a growing congressional assertiveness against a President over the period of his incumbency.

In summary, there are some indications of trends or cyclic patterns in veto behavior. Nevertheless, the historical course is not so neat or regular as to allow a firm prediction. One should look for basic factors that are operative in producing the considerable variations among

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Commonwealth (New York: Macmillan Company, 1893), I, 85.



and within Presidencies.

### Independent Variables

For the sake of conveniences, the variables that are hypothesized as influencing veto behavior can be grouped into three categories; person, power situation, and socio-economic environment.

#### Person

Since the Presidency is a highly personalized office, it is productive to analyze presidential behavior in terms of differences in personal styles.<sup>14</sup> Of particular relevance here is the common distinction between legislative and executive politicians with a focus on prepresidential career style.<sup>15</sup> Aside from the intermittent emergence of military heroes or other professionals, the White House has been primarily occupied by legislative politicians who have served

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<sup>14</sup>Excellent examples are given in James Barber, Presidential Character (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1972), passim; and Erwin Hargrove, Presidential Leadership: Personality and Political Style (New York: Macmillan Company, 1966), passim.

<sup>15</sup>C. H. Titus found a "queer rhythm" manifested in the presidential elections. He observes the action of a pendulum, moving back and forth between three styles of politicians elected elected President --legislative, executive, and specialist or expert. Titus, Voting Behavior in the United States (Berkeley: University of California Press,

as senator or congressman in the national legislature or executive politicians who have served as governor of a large state. The ample evidence in the literature suggests that a person assumes a role congenial to his personality, and that if he plays a certain role, he also tends to internalize some values associated with the role.

From this standpoint, it is a plausible hypothesis that a President of legislative background will be reluctant to resort to coercive measures like the veto power either because he is familiar with the internal power structure of Congress, or because he has acquired some respect for the legislative body as an institution. It is equally plausible to suggest that the Congress is likely to be friendly to a President who served as one of its members.

In contrast, it has been pointed out that the governor resembles the President in the general format of his functions and power and particularly in his relationship with the legislature in the smaller domain of his state.<sup>16</sup> Most governors possess item vetoes and play the role of party or legislative leader. This experience accounts for Wilfred Binkley's description of the governorship as an "incomparable executive apprenticeship" for the Presidency.<sup>17</sup> If a

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1935), 57-58.

<sup>16</sup>Louis Koenig, The Chief Executive (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1968), 392-396.

<sup>17</sup>Wilfred Binkley, The Man in the White House (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959), 17-40; Wilfred

governor is accustomed to the veto power, it is possible to hypothesize that the governorship experience will be positively related with the frequency of vetoes. The actual indices of these career experiences used in this study are the years of service in the federal legislature or in a gubernatorial office.

In addition, this study includes a dummy variable to distinguish the party membership of the President. He may or may not conform to the role expectations associated with his party. V. O. Key, Jr., has observed that Democratic Presidents have subscribed to the doctrine that the Chief Executive should provide forceful leadership, whereas Republicans have, with a few exceptions, leaned toward a restricted view of their role in the belief that law-making should be left to the Congress.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, Democrats are expected to veto more bills than Republicans.<sup>19</sup>

#### Power Situation

It is a truism that presidential power is heavily influenced by the circumstances under which the President operates. One obvious factor is the partisan composition

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Binkley, President and Congress (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1947), 381-382.

<sup>18</sup>V. O. Key, Jr., Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1942), 709.

<sup>19</sup>The data on presidential careers were compiled from Joseph Kane, ed., Facts about Presidents (New York: H. W.

of the two branches. Woodrow Wilson explicitly stated one hypothesis: "If the House and Senate are of one party and the President and his ministers are of the opposite, the presidential party can hardly be said to be in power beyond the hindering and threatening faculty of the veto."<sup>20</sup>

The index of "opposition party" is constructed by the formula (H+S), where H takes one when the House is controlled by the opposition party, but takes zero if it is not, and the same formula is used for denoting the Senate. In other words, we are assigning the value of two to cases when both Houses are opposed, one to either House opposed, and zero for none opposed. This index is based on the assumption that the threshold of majority is more important than the absolute proportion of partisans and that each House operates somewhat independently of the other. The index of the opposition party is expected to have independent impact on frequency of vetoes and overriding actions.

Besides this party link, the popular standing of the President is often considered an important factor in his power position with the Congress. The fact that he is the only official, with the exception of the Vice President, who is accountable to the national electorate, is apparently a source of executive-legislative conflict. One can entertain a hypothesis that the greater the popular support a

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Wilson Co., 1968), passim.

<sup>20</sup>Woodrow Wilson, Constitutional Government in the

president can rally behind him, the more likely he is to be assertive in dealing with Congress when a conflict of preferences occurs. Of critical importance here is the President's over-all popularity rather than his standing on a particular issue.<sup>21</sup> A straightforward measure of this general support is the percentage of popular or electoral votes he received in the previous election.

This consideration provokes another hypothesis on the possible effect of expecting that a President will remain in office. Laski suggests that it is the simple psychology of leaders on Capital Hill to try to maintain friendly relations with a President who is likely to stay longer in the White House.<sup>22</sup> An example is the apparent erosion of leadership for "lame-duck" Presidents. Because of difficulties involved in attempting to measure the expected stay in power, however, this study did not fully incorporate this hypothesis. Yet this phenomenon can be partly covered by distinguishing the Presidents who did not run for another term, *ex post facto*. Thus a dummy variable takes one if the President ran for re-election, zero otherwise. Thus for many one-term or two-term Presidents, this variable actually

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United States (New York: Columbia University Press, 1911), 177.

<sup>21</sup> Harold Laski, The American Presidency (New York: The Universal Library, 1940), 144-145; V. O. Key, Jr., Public Opinion and American Democracy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), 284-287.

<sup>22</sup> Laski, Ibid., 138.

denoted the first term.

Another dummy variable is generated by distinguishing the periods before and after the mid-term election. Apart from the fact that the Congresses elected at mid-term tend to have fewer presidential partisans because they lack a "coattail effect," these Congresses have three distinctive characteristics. First, they do not have a "honeymoon period" with the President because by definition the "honeymoon" refers to the first session of a President's term of office. As Laski puts it: "A President who has something real to say and do --the condition is important-- can usually count on a honeymoon period. What he asks for will in large measure have assurance of being granted. It is usually toward the end of the first congressional session that the buttons are taken off the foil."<sup>23</sup> Secondly, Congresses elected at mid-term encounter a President who has been in power for at least two years; this tenure suggests that the "coalition of minority"<sup>24</sup> might have taken effect --a term which refers to the phenomenon of gradual erosion of political support for a President as he is forced to act on a variety of issues, thus alienating many of his former supporters. Since John Mueller measures this effect simply by the number of years passed since inauguration, it is virtually identi-

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 140.

<sup>24</sup>John Mueller, "Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson," American Political Science Review, 64 (March 1970), 20.

cal to the dummy variable in this study for mid-term election Congresses except that the number of categories is reduced because of biennial aggregation. The third feature is the fact that presidential elections are near. There is no way of separating these complicating factors. One simplifying factor is, however, that these factors tend to predict erosion of support for a President after the mid-term congressional election, thus increasing the recalcitrance of the Congress elected at mid-term. In this sense, this dummy variable measures the effect of the expectation of power which is not measured by the variable on the effect of running for re-election.<sup>25</sup>

### Environment

It is hardly deniable that the internal or external setting of the nation has tremendous consequences for the President and Congress. Edward Corwin, Pendleton Herring, Harold Laski, Clinton Rossiter, and other scholars have hypothesized at least briefly on the causal relationship between presidential influence and concurrent national crises or societal developments.<sup>26</sup> A well-grounded proposition is

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<sup>25</sup>Partisan composition in Congress was based on Guide to the Congress of the U.S. (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Service, 1971), passim. Other political variables including electoral votes are compiled from Kane, Facts about Presidents, passim.

<sup>26</sup>Clinton Rossiter, The American Presidency (2d ed.;

that in times of foreign crisis or serious involvement in world affairs, Congress is willing to cooperate with presidential leadership. When national survival is perceived to be at stake, there is less likelihood of conflict.

One dramatic evidence in support of this proposition is that of over 2,000 vetoes, few are related to foreign or military affairs, a fact which indicates that foreign or military issues have received deferential treatment.<sup>27</sup> And one can further hypothesize that military crisis is likely to reduce the chance of conflict on a wider range of issues because the Congress is willing to follow presidential leadership. As a measure of military or foreign crisis, the number of armed forces per 1,000 population was employed.

On the other hand, over-all economic environment is allotted by the general price level. One simple hypothesis is based on the assumption that economic instability is likely to find an outlet in congressional debates and criticism which increase the chance of congressional assertion. One difficulty is that there is still some dispute over what the price level really ascertains. Some analysts still

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New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1960), 113-128.

<sup>27</sup>This generalization excludes tariff issues over which the veto was frequently used, often arousing a severe political controversy. There are also several vetoes on immigration bills, most of them private bills. See Carlton Jackson, Presidential Vetoes, 1792-1966 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1967), 12-36. A discussion of congressional attitudes in contemporary context is given by Aaron



argue that higher prices are simply a side effect of economic growth or expansion. Yet it should be emphasized that those who live with high prices tend to view them as a pressure rather than as a sign of prosperity.<sup>28</sup> In popular perception the effect of high prices is more visible and stringent than the additional income generated by the total expansion of the economy.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, United States economic history shows that the serious inflation reflected in high prices was an undesirable consequence of wars that were financed by producing additional currency.<sup>30</sup> If economic instability is in general a cause of loss of public trust

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Wildavsky, "The Two Presidencies," Transaction, 3 (December 1966), 7.14.

<sup>28</sup>The relevant empirical findings are well reviewed in Gerald Kramer, "Short-Term Fluctuations in U.S. Voting Behavior, 1896-1964," American Political Science Review, 65 (March 1971), 131-133.

<sup>29</sup>Charles Lindblom, "Historical Magnitudes and Developments Affecting the Amount and Type of Federal Expenditure," Joint Economic Committee, 85th Congress, Federal Expenditure Policy for Economic Growth and Stability (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1957), 8; Jong R. Lee, "Changing National Priorities of the United States," in Bruce Russett and Alfred Stepan, eds., Military Force and American Society (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1973), 89-95.

<sup>30</sup>Lawrence Murdoch, Jr., "Inflation vs. Unemployment; Must we Choose?" in Heinz Kohler, ed., Readings in Economics (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1968), 187-195.

<sup>31</sup>The data on military personnel and wholesale price index are based on Historical Statistics of the United States

for a President, this measure is expected to have positive association with congressional recalcitrance, other factors being equal. The actual index used is the wholesale price index adjusted with 1910 as 1,000.<sup>31</sup>

### Multiple Regressions

These independent variables were subjected to multiple regression analyses in an attempt to assess the independent impact of each variable on frequency of vetoes and overriding actions. The analyses involved two difficulties: (1) apparent nonlinearity of the relationship, and (2) inter-correlation among independent variables. These problems were treated in a rather conventional manner within the general framework of linear regression models.

First, the nonlinearity of the impact of the independent variables in the frequency of veto behavior is apparent in the skewed distribution as well as in the analytic relationship between the absolute frequency and the propensity to veto or override. To overcome this problem, this research specified two nonlinear forms of equation. The first model becomes:  $V_p = B (b_0 + b_i X_i + u)^2 \dots\dots\dots (1-1)$

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from Colonial Times to 1957 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1965), passim; Supplement to the Historical Statistics of the United States (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1965), passim; and U.S., Bureau of Census, Statistical Abstracts of the United States (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1964-70), passim.

where,  $V_p$  denotes frequency of presidential vetoes,  $B$ , the number of bills passed,  $X_i$ , the independent variable and  $b_i$ , its associated coefficient, and  $u$ , random disturbance. Here it is assumed that  $u$ , denoting the effect of other variables not included in this equation and measurement errors, fits the standard assumption of regression models. The expression in the parentheses in the above equation can be interpreted as the propensity to veto. The actual estimation of this model was conducted by regressing the square root of  $V_p/B \times 100$  on the specified set of independent variables.

An alternative formulation is based on the assumption that the proportion of vetoes decreases as the number of bills increases. That is, it is unreasonable to expect that a President who vetoes 10 bills out of 100 would veto 100 bills when there are 1,000 bills. This consideration leads one to devise an exponential model as follows:

$$V_p = B^{b_0} e^{b_i X_i + u} \dots\dots\dots (1-2)$$

A natural logarithmic transformation of this equation was used in estimating the associated parameters in this model.

A parallel formulation was applied to the congressional overriding actions as well. Further, on the basis of observation that Congress does not even attempt to overturn many of the vetoes, some measure of significance of a bill was needed. One feasible way is to see whether Congress has ever attempted to overturn a veto by putting it to a vote in either House. Actually the percentage of overriding

actions with respect to total overriding attempts is highly correlated with the percentage of overriding actions with respect to the total frequency of vetoes.<sup>32</sup> The form of equation for Congress can be given as follows:

$$R = A (c_0 + c_i X_i + v)^2 \dots\dots\dots (2-1)$$

where A denotes the frequency of attempts to override. And the logarithmic model is also given as follows:

$$R = V c_0 e^{(c_i X_i + v)} \dots\dots\dots (2-2)$$

Secondly, intercorrelations among the independent variables are hard to avoid. The usual way is to observe the effect of adding or dropping variables in the question. This experimentation makes it apparent which variables are essential and which variables are redundant, once certain variables are represented in an equation.<sup>33</sup> The additional influence of each variable, given other variables in the equation, is considered statistically significant at .05 level when the standard error is less than half of the estimated coefficient.

(Table 3.1 here)

The result reported here is the regressions based on the data for 71 Congresses, the 21st through the 91st. This is the maximum time span during which the elections operated

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<sup>32</sup>The product moment correlation coefficient is .75 for the entire history.

<sup>33</sup>Arthur Goldberger, Econometric Theory (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1964), 192-201.

Table 3.1 Results of Regression Models

Dependent Variables	Presidential Vetoes		Congressional Overriding Actions	
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Congressional Experience	-.028* (.011)	-.039* (.014)	-.111* (.055)	-.018 (.015)
Governorship Experience	.054 (.049)	.049 (.061)	.637* (.253)	.077 (.064)
Democratic Party	.449* (.140)	.623* (.175)		
Electoral Votes %	.015* (.005)	.021* (.007)	.095* (.032)	.015* (.007)
Opposed Party in Congress	.129 (.102)	.307* (.123)	1.180* (.580)	.259* (.130)
Run for Re-election	-.270* (.102)			-.162 (.190)
Mid-term Election Congresses	.075 (.138)		1.678* (.786)	.404* (.179)
Military Force	-.002 (.006)	-.003 (.008)	-.070* (.035)	-.021* (.008)
Economic Instability	.002 (.002)	.002 (.004)	.024* (.008)	.006* (.002)
Public Bills Passed (log)		1.050* (.180)		
Total Vetoes (log)				.231 (.073)
Trend (t)	.003 (.003)		.003 (.015)	
Constant	.093	-5.950	-1.980	-1.254
Explained Variance R <sup>2</sup>	.40	.67	.41	.46

Note: The figures in the table are multiple regression coefficients, with standard errors given in parentheses. A regression coefficient is considered statistically significant if its size is twice greater than its standard error. \* indicates it is significant at .05 or lower probability level.

in some form of a two-party system. The nonlinear transformation employed makes it difficult to translate the effect of each independent variable in terms of the frequencies. Yet the statistical significance will give a direct indication of relative potency of the variables. Each equation is significant at less than .001 level, though the additional effect of each variable is not uniform.

The result of the multiple regressions shows in general that presidential behavior is more significantly accounted for by a President's background and power situation than by socio-economic environment, whereas congressional reactions are better accounted for by power situation and environment. Since alternative forms of equations inevitably affect the relative significance of some variables, final judgment on the impact of each variable should be based on the results of both models.

The first equation reported in Table 3.1 is a typical result of regressions based on Model 1-1. This equation explains about 40 percent of variance in presidential propensity to veto, with a combination of 10 predictor variables. Most important is the impact of the party of the President. Democratic Presidents tend consistently to veto more bills than Republicans do. In a sense this tendency is not surprising at all, because the two distinguished veto Presidents were Democrats. On the other hand, the number of years spent in the national legislature tends to proportionately reduce the propensity to veto.

The independent impact of political variables is somewhat sensitive to adding or dropping variables in the equation since many of them are interrelated. For instance, opposition party control occurs very often as a result of mid-term elections. Also, those Presidents running as an incumbent for another term of office tend to receive a higher percentage of electoral votes than do the newly incoming Presidents. Moreover, the percentage of electoral votes in a presidential election is correlated with the average of the percentage of presidential partisans in each House of Congress. It is due to this confounding fact that the average of the percentages of presidential partisans in each House of Congress is not significantly associated with the frequency of veto.<sup>34</sup> The trichotomous variable, "opposition party control," performs consistently better in various combinations of independent variables. And it is clearly seen that the greater the percentage of electoral votes a President received, the greater his propensity to veto, as hypothesized.

This situation is similar in the second equation, based on a logarithmic transformation as specified in Model 1-2. Here, opposition party control contributes a significant amount of explained variance in the propensity to veto. As

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<sup>34</sup>Only the percentage of presidential partisans in the House of Representatives shows a significant association (-.236) with the rate of overriding action to regular veto, and -.285 with successful overriding actions per attempts.

in the first equation, congressional experience, electoral votes, and Democratic party are significant independent influence in presidential vetoes. This equation explains 66 percent of all variance. This improved predictive power was achieved partly by including the number of bills as an independent variable. As one might expect, the coefficient for the variable is close to unity, indicating a convergence of results for the two models.

The effect of socio-economic environment on presidential vetoes seems to be negligible in both equations. One can infer that this statistical insignificance is partly due to the historical fact that Democratic Presidents, more often than Republicans, tended to preside over "extrovert," "liberal," and "executive" periods of the nation, as observed by historians.<sup>35</sup> Allowing for the effect of the party of the President, there is no additional variation that is accounted for by the two socio-economic variables. However, the environment significantly affects congressional behavior.

It should be pointed out also that independent impact

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<sup>35</sup>These expressions are characteristics of the time which tend to show some cyclic patterns in American history. See Frank L. Klingberg, "The Historical Alternation of Moods in American Foreign Policy," World Politics, 4 (October 1951), 241-260; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Path to the Present (New York: Macmillan Company, 1949), 87-88; Galloway, History of the House, 236-269; Egger and Harris, President and Congress, 63; Charles Sellers, "The Equilibrium Cycle in Two Party Politics," Public Opinion Quarterly, 29 (Spring 1965), 16-38.



of governorship experience is not very significant, although the sign of the coefficient is correct. This result reinforces rather than refutes the hypothesis on the differentiation of political career styles --legislative versus executive politicians. These two careers paths to the White House are almost exclusive of each other. Except for William McKinley, who spent much time in Congress before he assumed a governorship, congressional experience was not the asset of those Presidents who advanced from gubernatorial office to the Presidency--Rutherford Hayes, Grover Cleveland, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge, Franklin Roosevelt. It is because of the negative correlation between the two career variables that governorship experience does not perform a significant role in the equation. The result shows that the number of years in Congress is a better predictor of veto behavior as a summary measure of career styles.

The significance of variables somewhat shifts in equations on congressional overriding actions. First, the dummy variable for the Democratic Presidents shows significance in neither a statistical nor a substantive sense. In other words, there is no indication that Democratic Presidents tend to confront assertive Congresses. Instead, the effect of socio-economic environment becomes conspicuous. It also turns out that the Congresses elected at mid-term are much more rebellious than might be expected simply from the loss of presidential partisans. With the effect of "opposition

party" allowed, the dummy variable for mid-term election Congresses shows a significant independent impact on congressional reaction.

The third equation in the table on success rate of overriding actions as a percentage of attempts to override explains 41 percent of variance. As hypothesized, size of the military force has a negative coefficient while price level is positively correlated with overriding actions, given other political and career variables in the equation. This fact upholds the hypothesis that Congress is ready to follow presidential leadership when the country is involved in foreign affairs while economic instability tends to generate criticism and discontent. In addition the equation shows that the opposition party, post mid-term election, and career style of the President tend to have a significant impact on congressional reactions to vetoes, as expected.

The fourth equation on frequency of congressional overriding actions parallels in functional form the second equation on presidential vetoes. On the whole, regression based on this model shows poorer empirical fit than regression based on vetoes. Part of the reason can be found in the fact that the frequency of overriding actions is much lower than that of vetoes, as indicated by the absolute size of the coefficient associated with the veto included in the equation. That is, only a small fraction of presidential vetoes ever become the concern of congressional actions. Nevertheless, this equation still accounts for 46 percent of variance.

Although the standard error of some coefficients became larger, the basic pattern of the third equation is retained to large extent in this fourth equation. The notable exception is the career style of the President, which became insignificant in this equation.

Of particular importance in these two equations on congressional reactions is the persistent impact of the mid-term election Congresses. Mid-term election Congresses have some distinctive characteristics that incline toward reinforcing the tendency to be rebellious against presidential leadership. The equations show that mid-term election Congresses overturn more vetoes, even when the effect of other variables including "opposed party" is fully allowed. Therefore, it is possible to say that a President's power to sustain his veto will probably be seriously reduced in the later period of his administration.

To substantiate this point, it can be noted that out of 19 cases of truncated majority, 16 occurred as a result of mid-term election. It is apparent that the incidence of opposition party control and the distinct characteristics of mid-term election Congresses combine to produce a high rate of presidential vetoes and congressional overriding actions. Yet it is on the congressional reactions that the mid-term election has an independent impact.

#### Discussion

One basic finding which emerges from the regression

analysis is that presidential vetoes and congressional reactions are in substantial part responsive to personal characteristics of the President, objective changes in the power situation, and internal or external setting. Not all of the "strong" or "active" Presidents resorted to the power frequently. Nor was congressional reaction favorable toward presidential exercise of power all the time. Even within a short time span, the executive-legislative relationship manifest in veto behavior is subject to influence from shifts in the objective situation.

If one has a previous knowledge of those indicators used in this analysis, the frequency of vetoes and overriding actions can be predicted within the range of stated statistical accuracy. Particularly, presidential vetoes are well predicted by the indices of opposition party control, percentage of electoral support, the President's partisan origin, and his previous congressional experience, whereas congressional overriding actions are significantly accounted for by incidence of opposition party control, electoral support, post mid-term election, the size of military forces, and over-all economic instability.

On the whole, the estimated influence of these variables is stable over the period. In spite of the development of the "modern" Presidency in this century, some basic pattern seems to persist. First, the residuals in the regressions do not show any systematic pattern for the twentieth century. This research further sought to learn whether there

is any fundamental change in the relationships by running separate regressions on the observations for this century. The result is not reported here, but it can be said that the statistical significance of the independent variables is maintained with the exception of price level. This price deviation is understandable since the first half of the century was plagued with several serious depressions rather than inflation. If one had included the unemployment rates, he could have estimated the differential effects of economic instability on veto behavior. However, the unemployment rates were not available before this century.

One suspects that the index used for military crisis might have resulted in an underestimation of the effect of military crisis or postwar conflict upon the President and Congress. Continuing presence of the military forces, which are reduced gradually rather than dismantled immediately after a war or crisis is over, may account for such an underestimation. The equations might have achieved a better fit if one had taken this military holdover into account. In spite of these limitations, the analysis tends to support the hypothesis that military crises diminish congressional propensity to override vetoes, whereas price instability tends to increase that propensity. One might add that it has been an historical pattern that Congress, while willing to support the President in pursuit of military goals, usually reasserts itself after the crises is over, a thesis which is partially confirmed in this study on veto behavior.

The emphasis should be put, however, on the finding that it is rather the congressional attitude which the environment directly affects.

The variables that are important both for the President and Congress are the incidence of opposition party control in Congress and the degree of electoral support. These variables not only contribute to a high propensity to veto but also to a high propensity to override, a result earlier designated as a conflict pattern. What spurs speculation is the finding that the electoral strength of the President tends to increase rather than reduce the chance of conflict in the use of veto power. Part of the reason is the interactional nature of conflict. When a President, reinforced by landslide or strong popular support, becomes assertive in dealing with Congress, Congress feels compelled to reassert itself once in a while and has enough resources to frustrate presidential dominance if there are no countervailing factors present that induce it to be cooperative.

In a sense, lack of assured party support and rivalry between the two institutions are built-in features of the political system. The complexity of the electoral process and the different roles assigned to the two institutions tend to give rise to different political bases and resources which come into play in the presidential-congressional relations. Then conflict is a more familiar process when the factors that compel cooperation are absent. Although veto behavior is merely one tip of the iceberg in the presu-

ably complex interaction network, it seems apparent that attitudes manifested in veto behavior reflect an important aspect of the executive-legislative relationships. Particularly, if the presidential party does not control the Congress and the President has reason to believe that he has a public mandate, one can predict with a certain degree of confidence that there is going to be conflict.

If one turns his attention to contemporary relations, specific characteristics of this nuclear era have apparently reduced the effect of some variables. One notable example will be the career style of the President. In this era no President was recruited to fill the White House from the gubernatorial office. It is suggestive, however, that this phenomenon occurred in times when the importance of or stake in foreign policy has assumed unprecedented dimensions. Under a sustained feeling of crisis or intense United States involvement in world affairs in recent decades, the gubernatorial office might have lost some of its appeal to the electorate as a source of presidential timber, because a governor does not deal with foreign policy problems. It may be that the gubernatorial career will regain its strength in comparison with senatorial experience if domestic issues become predominant in national politics.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Daniel J. Elazar, "Which Road to the Presidency?" in Aaron Wildavsky, ed., The Presidency (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1969), passim.

It will be risky to predict the probable pattern in the years ahead from this short analysis of historical data. A useful direction for further research might be to include personality traits of Presidents as well as substantive characteristics of the bills under deliberation as additional explanatory variables. One available source for this purpose seems to be presidential veto messages, which tend to reveal motivations and rationales for veto actions. Understanding the role of the President in national politics will be enhanced by incorporating various aspects of the office into a meaningful framework of analysis. For the time being, one can only speculate, in broad perspective, on the implications of the findings presented in this chapter. A careful examination of the variables that are found important in this analysis helps to explain political difficulties surrounding the Presidency in the early 1970's --the period which is not covered in this analysis.

The first is an isolationist mood generated by the war in Vietnam and serious economic instability associated with the war.<sup>37</sup> These two factors were found to increase the assertiveness of Congress. No less important, the two institutions are dominated by different political parties. Under such adverse circumstances, any President might find

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<sup>37</sup>Jong R. Lee and Jeffrey Milstein, "A Political Economy of the Vietnam War," International Peace Science Society Papers, 21 (Philadelphia: International Peace Science Society, 1973), 41-63.



it difficult to establish effective leadership or maintain a cooperative relationship with Congress. The 91st Congress, the most recent data point in this research, already showed a congressional authority pattern, for it overrode two of nine vetoes. There was indication that the second Nixon administration might be characterized by a conflict pattern, (with the motivating factor being the landslide re-election) in attempt to counter growing congressional assertiveness. One dramatic sign is the exchange of veto versus overriding action over the war powers limitation bill. Undoubtedly, the idiosyncratic circumstances generated by the Watergate events and President Nixon's handling of the matter have aggravated his power situation. Yet the circumstantial factors comprising the political environment of the Presidency seem to weigh too heavily to be ignored. Thus one might even suggest that a "crisis of the Presidency" was amply predictable had there not been a unique event such as the Watergate affair. If the turn of events continues to prescribe a reduced role for the Presidency in national politics in the years to come, whoever may come to occupy the office might find it necessary, sooner or later, to rely on the veto power as a legislative weapon at his disposal.

#### Summary

This chapter examined a series of hypotheses on the frequency of presidential vetoes and congressional reactions. The pattern in veto behavior is not easily described in terms

either of trends or of long-term or short-term cycles. Yet regression analysis shows that a significant amount of variation in presidential veto behavior is explained by the President's background and partisan or electoral factors, whereas congressional behavior is well predicted by objective changes in political and socio-economic environment. Specifically, with factors being equal, presidential propensity to veto increases:

- (1) when the President is a Democrat;
- (2) in an inverse proportion to the number of years he spent in Congress;
- (3) when Congress is controlled by the opposition party;
- (4) in direct proportion to the percentage of electoral votes he received in previous elections.

On the other hand, congressional propensity to override vetoes tends to increase systematically:

- (1) when Congress is controlled by the opposition party;
- (2) in direct proportion to the percentage of electoral votes for the President in previous elections.
- (3) when Congress convenes after the mid-term election;
- (4) in direct proportion to the level of economic instability;
- (5) in an inverse proportion to the degree of military crisis.

## Chapter Four

### Power to Initiate

The purpose of this chapter is to examine changing patterns of executive-legislative relationships on the basis of aggregate data for the period 1947-1972. The problems and issues that the nation has encountered since World War II are so vastly different from earlier history that they have caused significant change in the relation between the President and Congress. One example of this change is the conspicuous role of the President in initiation of legislative programs dealing with major national goals such as national security, social welfare, economic stability and growth, and other governmental operations.

Unlike the veto power, the role of the President as an initiator of national policy is based on modern practice rather than an explicit grant of authority by the Constitution. The provision that the President "shall from time to time give the Congress information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient" serves as a constitutional basis for active participation of the President in the national legislative process. Through a series of domestic and international crises, this vague grant of authority has become an important source of presidential leadership in shaping national policy and providing some coherence among major goals of modern government.

The focus of analysis in this chapter is on the percentage of successful proposals, which is often tabulated as the "presidential boxscore." This measure, while crude, can indicate the changing mood of executive-legislative relation over national policy, when the nature of issues, personalities, and political factors are taken into account.

### Legislative Programs and Presidential Success

Annual legislative programs of the President can be analyzed from many different perspectives. To a significant degree, the expanded role of the President in the legislative process reflects some basic changes in socio-economic life in this century. For example, the regular economic prescriptions that are expected of a President and his capacity to dominate the media, thereby overshadowing other political institutions, affect the legislative branch as well as the executive. It is doubtful, however, that dominance of the President has ever resulted in an abrogation of the "checks and balances" principle as a fundamental rule of governmental operation.<sup>1</sup>

One of the commonly neglected facts is that Congress

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<sup>1</sup>It is a common notion that Congress lost its power because it has many defects as a representative body. Samuel Huntington, "Congressional Responses to the Twentieth Century," in David Truman, ed., The Congress and America's Future (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), 16.

has also accumulated an awesome reservoir of power and influence in the process of historical development. Overshadowed by the expansion of presidential office and prominence of presidential activities, the expansion in potential or actual influence of the legislative body has been largely obscured. Today, Congress appropriates over two hundred billion dollars, and creates or oversees three million federal administrative personnel and their activities. The simple logic is that if the President becomes powerful, Congress also becomes powerful through its control over the President given by the Constitution.<sup>2</sup> The major question is whether or over what issues Congress actually uses the power to assert its will. To assert or not to assert itself constitutes one important element in national policy-making.

In the past decades, the exigencies of the cold war intensified the need for functional interdependence between the President and Congress. The members of Congress felt it unnecessary to repudiate the President's legislative role of the President because they needed information, expertise, and alternatives with which to work.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the expand-

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<sup>2</sup>It is difficult to interpret executive-legislative relations as a two-player zero-sum game. Lawrence Chamberlain, The President, Congress and Legislation (New York: Columbia University Press, 1946), 453. He emphasizes that Congress is more important than generally supposed.

<sup>3</sup>The power of the executive lies in his chance to choose problems and the alternatives for debate. Robert Dahl, Congress and Foreign Policy (New York: Harcourt, Brace &

ed role of the Presidency itself can be viewed as the process of national problem-solving in which the President and Congress play their part. No President can get all he wants; no Congress would block all of the presidential wishes. Despite the different perspectives of each institution, there has been a need to work out cooperative relations in order to solve the problems of the day.

Annual legislative programs represent one of the personalized, as well as institutionalized, aspects of the contemporary Presidency. Beginning with the annual State of the Union address, usually delivered by the President in person, the White House sends a host of other communications under the President's name, including the Economic Report, the Budget Message, and a series of specific proposals on almost every major area of legislation. After the specific proposals become part of the congressional agenda, they are followed up in a number of ways such as the legislative liason activities by the President's personal staff, informal personal contact with congressional leaders, or occasionally by mobilization of public support through direct appeal. In spite of striking differences in approaches and styles of operation among Presidents, the annual legislative programs themselves have become highly institutionalized since the Presidency of Harry Truman. The Congress now expects presidential initiatives in the legislative process, and it

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Co., 1950), 58-65.

accepts, rejects, or modifies his proposals.<sup>4</sup>

In recent years, the contest of presidential and congressional wills has assumed the character of a "spectator sport." Presidential popularity and that of his specific programs, as well as the mood of the Congress and chance of a bill passing the legislative corridors, are daily matters that attract national attention. The press and periodicals keep boxscores on the President's success or failure by checking congressional approval or rejection of the President's requests. The success or failure of a legislative measure is often attributed to the executive personality, as if it were a personal achievement of the incumbent.

Although the fate of the President's legislative programs is the most conspicuous index of the relations between the President and Congress, it may be a false measure of presidential success. Some people deplore the "boxscore mentality" which tries to measure presidential leadership in terms of legislative batting averages.<sup>5</sup> It is true that much of what a President does not achieve with Congress consists of what he does not attempt. Moreover, the achievement of a President in producing changes through legislative action is understated by any tabulation of bills

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<sup>4</sup>Dorothy James, Contemporary Presidency (New York: Pegasus, 1973), 198-200.

<sup>5</sup>Ralph Huitt, "Political Feasibility," in Austin Ranney, Political Science and Public Policy (Chicago: Markham Press, 1968), 266.

passed and failed in any one session. Although measures that require legislative action are usually important, much of the really important legislation has originated in earlier years or even decades. A President who sponsors an important innovation but does not see it enacted in his own time may have made a greater contribution than the President under whose leadership it actually becomes law.<sup>6</sup>

It might be suggested, however, that the percentage of presidential proposals that pass through the legislative maze will indicate at least the degree of cooperation, or lack of it, between the President and Congress. In this sense, presidential boxscores seem to measure what Emmet Hughes calls the "accommodating spirit" of the Congress to a presidential incumbent.<sup>7</sup> One supporting evidence is that the overall boxscore correlates significantly (-.54) with fewer vetoes for each session, though the number of cases is too small for further analysis.

The presidential boxscore as an indicator of the executive-legislative relations becomes clear when one posits that a "rule of anticipated reaction" is operative. In the first place, sending proposals to Congress for legislative action requires a more or less explicit priority decision. The enormous work load of congressional members as well as

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<sup>6</sup>Grant McConnell, The Modern Presidency (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1967), 49.

<sup>7</sup>Emmet J. Hughes, The Living Presidency (New York: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc., 1973), 224.



the different perspectives that prevail in Congress might cause a President to trim his programs. For instance, it is not unusual that the President withhold some legislative proposals for fear that they would meet outright congressional rejection. Recalling the Senate's rejection of American participation in the League of Nations, a President is likely to avoid, as far as possible, making proposals that would be obviously unacceptable to Congress.<sup>8</sup>

The data on annual legislative programs were compiled from annual issues of the Congressional Quarterly Almanac since 1947. Because the boxscore is a tabular checklist of the President's programs, presented in neither greater nor less detail than is found in presidential messages, the individual requests necessarily differ from one another in their scope and importance. Unlike the usual practice of summing up the overall boxscore, this study computed separate boxscores for seven distinct areas: foreign policy, military policy, labor policy, tax and economy, agriculture, welfare, and general government operation. Since Congress does not always say "yes" or "no" to a proposal, but often modifies the bill significantly, this study relies on Con-

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<sup>8</sup>Lawrence Radway, Foreign Policy and National Defense (Atlanta: Scott, Foreman and Co., 1969), 116-117. In Radway's words, "the possibility of retaliation at times and obstacles of their (Congress') own choosing serves as a constant constraint." This process of anticipated reaction is a norm in nominating procedures of significant offices.

gressional Quarterly Service's evaluation of a legislative action to determine whether the final compromise amount to approval or rejection of presidential wishes. The items tabulated in the boxscore include only the specific legislative requests contained in President's messages to Congress and other public statements during a calendar year. Excluded are the regular routine appropriations for continuing government programs and operations as well as nominations.<sup>9</sup>

### Two Presidencies Hypothesis

Evidently, congressional willingness to support the President depends heavily on the nature of the issues. One important issue area is foreign policy; an area, by its nature, peculiarly within the presidential sphere, even though the Senate has the Constitutional power to approve or disapprove treaties. Another is military policy which, due to increased military commitments during the cold war period, has enhanced the appropriation role of the House of Representatives. Aaron Wildavsky made the point that Congress never rejected a major foreign or military policy proposal during the cold war. He went on to suggest that there are "two Presidencies," one concerned with domestic affairs, the other with foreign and defense policy. From the fact that the President has a relatively high boxscore

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<sup>9</sup>Congressional Quarterly Almanac (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Service, annual issues).

in defense and foreign policy issues, he concluded that Congress was more permissive in these areas than it was in domestic issue areas.<sup>10</sup>

The notion of "two Presidencies," however, should be qualified by the fact that there has been a considerable shift of congressional approval each year, even on foreign and military issues, as shown in Figure 4.1.

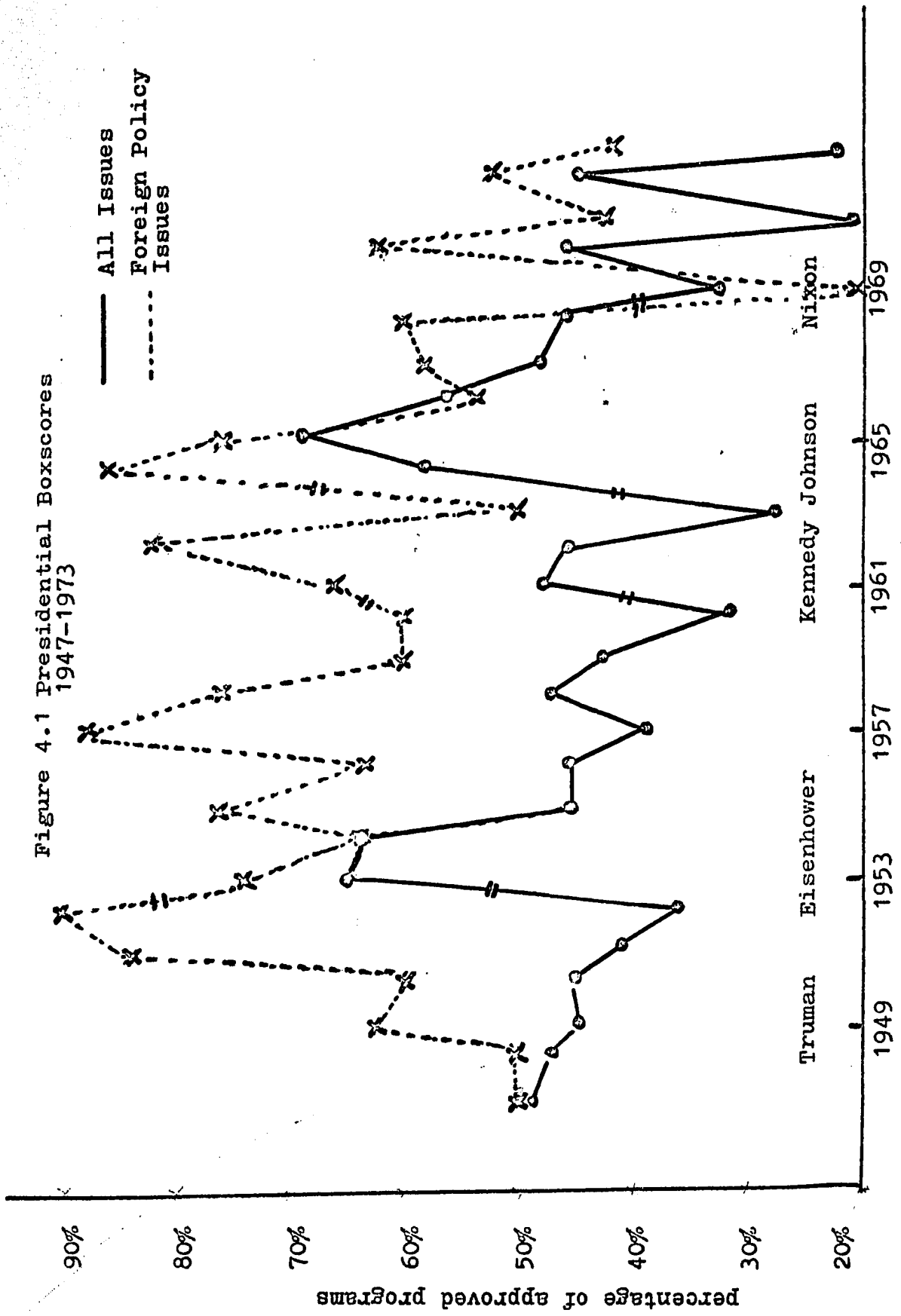
(Figure 4.1 here)

Two questions arise. The first is methodological as well as practical: to what extent does the overall presidential boxscore summarize the variation of permissive mood across issue areas as well as over time? The second question concerns the inevitable interrelationships among different issues. How conflict or consensus on one issue spills over to other issues? These questions are important because in summing up the boxscore, one makes a fundamental assumption that each bill is subject to the same underlying mechanism. In other words, the boxscore is based on the assumption that Congress applies the same decision rule to each proposal, no matter how different each legislative action may be in terms of importance, issue characteristics, time, or any other circumstance. Even though the assumption is inevitable for the purpose of generalization, there is need to know more about the variation stemming from issue cha-

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<sup>10</sup> Aaron Wildavsky, "The Two Presidencies," Transaction, 4 (December 1966), 7-14.

Figure 4.1 Presidential Boxscores  
1947-1973



racteristics and change of time. One useful method is a simple regression analysis of congressional approval of the President's legislative initiatives for each issue area. The basic relationship can be expressed as follows:

$$A = a + bP + u \dots\dots (1)$$

where P denotes the annual frequency of presidential legislative proposals;  
 A, the annual frequency of these proposals which Congress approves;  
 a and b are parameters to be estimated; and  
 u, random errors.

In this formulation, the regression coefficient 'b' can be interpreted as "congressional permissiveness." The intercept 'a' should be zero in most cases, because there cannot be any congressional approval if no proposal is made. If the intercept is close to zero, the regression coefficient 'b' will vary between zero and one, indicating Congress' willingness to give what the President wants. In other words, the permissiveness coefficient attempts to measure approximately what proportion of the President's proposals for each issue area is likely to become law.

The statistical significance of the permissiveness coefficient is measured by the proportion of the explained variance or ' $r^2$ .' This measure indicates the degree to which the frequency of Congress' approval can be predicted on the basis of the frequency of the President's proposals. Since we seek to compare characteristics of different issues in terms of presidential-congressional relations, it is

possible to interpret the size of explained variance or  $r^2$  as "stability" of congressional permissiveness. The higher the  $r^2$ , the more stable is the relationship.

It is worthwhile to emphasize that permissiveness and stability are two analytically different dimensions of the President's legislative role. For example, if Congress makes it a rule to pass one tenth of the President's proposals each year, the permissiveness is low. But insofar as Congress adheres to the rule of decision, the relationship is stable: one can predict with confidence that if the President proposes 200 bills, Congress will act on 20 bills. In this case the explained variance will be close to unity, regardless of the low permissiveness. On the other hand, if Congress passes one half of the President's bills in one year, and two-thirds in another year, the relationship is said to be more variable than stable, even though the absolute size of the permissiveness is higher than the previous example.

This point is important in interpreting the result reported in Table 4.1. Each row defines one simple regression equation for a subsample of issues, as labeled in the first column. For the sake of simplicity, one might as well ignore the intercepts, because they are negligibly small. The table enables one to tell, in a relative sense, not only on what issues Congress was most permissive, but also on what issues the permissiveness coefficient was most stable.

(Table 4.1 here)

As expected, defense policy has the highest permissiveness coefficient, as well as the highest stability coefficient, rendering support to the notion that Congress has been more permissive in the area. The table shows that about 75 percent of the President's defense policy proposals are likely to be acted upon by Congress.

By this simple formula, about 91 percent of variance in the frequency of the President's legislative proposals which Congress approves each year can be predicted. Substantively this finding suggests that Congress gave the most favorable treatment of presidential initiatives on defense matters in the past decades on the most stable basis. This interpretation is in line with Bruce Russett's finding on the substantial continuity of the Senate's voting pattern on "general defense" issues between the 87th Congress and the 90th Congress.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast with the stable permissiveness of Congress on defense issues, foreign policy proposals such as treaties, trade, and foreign aid appropriations received on the whole less favorable legislative support, with a higher degree of fluctuation from year to year. Even though congressional permissiveness in this area (.68) still ranks the second

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<sup>11</sup>Bruce M. Russett, What Price Vigilance? (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 26-53

Table 4.1  
 Congressional Permissiveness in Each Issue Area  
 (Regression of the Frequency of Congressional Approval  
 on the Frequency of Presidential Proposals: 1947-72)

	Constant	Permissiveness Coefficient	Stability Coefficient	F
	a	b	r <sup>2</sup>	
Defense Policy	-1.637	<u>.75</u> (.17)	<u>.91</u>	19.8
Foreign Policy	.213	<u>.63</u> (.30)	<u>.69</u>	4.4
Welfare	-4.330	<u>.58</u> (.20)	<u>.81</u>	8.7
Agriculture	.165	<u>.56</u> (.27)	<u>.68</u>	4.3
Labor	-.574	<u>.50</u> (.28)	<u>.62</u>	3.2
Economy and Tax	-.293	<u>.43</u> (.31)	<u>.49</u>	1.9
General Government	-1.982	.41 (.19)	<u>.71</u>	5.0
All Issues	-14.490	.53 (.19)	<u>.80</u>	8.1

Note: Standard errors in parentheses  
 The coefficients directly relevant to the  
 discussion in the text are underlined for  
 attention.



among the seven issue categories considered, the stability ranks only the fourth, indicating that there has been considerable variation over time in the area.

In the area of domestic policies, Congress was on the whole much less permissive, even though coefficients in welfare and agriculture policies came somewhat close to that of foreign policies. The lowest permissiveness score is in the area of general government operations. That is, Congress is least responsive to the President's proposals on government reorganization or personnel expenses. However, the explained variance in this area is somewhat high, suggesting that congressional legislative action is significantly proportional to the number of presidential proposals. The relatively low, as well as insignificant, coefficients are in the area of tax, economic, and labor policies. In these areas, Congress not only rejected many of the presidential proposals, but also its mood was least stable, as suggested by the low explained variance. In short, the simple regression analysis shows that more than half of the presidential proposals resulted in congressional actions, with foreign and military policies having received the most favorable treatment. The overall boxscore conceals some significant variations across issues.

The above analysis is based on the assumption that the congressional attitude on each issue remains more or less constant over time. Difficulty arises, however, when one realizes that congressional permissiveness can spill

over from one issue to other issue areas. For the purpose of analysis, it is customary to assume that each issue area operates independently of the others.

It is well known that Congress consists of more or less autonomous committees, which largely determine the fate of a bill. Nevertheless, there are many centripetal forces as well within Congress, keeping the legislative body united and cohesive, particularly in relation to the Executive branch. It is not rare that a fight over one issue is carried over to another issue, eventually capturing the whole legislative body with a combat spirit. By the same token, accommodating spirit in one issue area can be merely one manifestation of widespread feeling or relation transcending each issue. For example, acceptance of presidential leadership in the area of foreign and defense policy can readily spill over to the economic and social issues as they did when traditional distinctions between domestic and foreign policies became blurred during the cold war. In many cases it is even difficult to specify the causality. They are floating together bound by the same factors - to borrow Ralph Huitt's word, "the political wind" - which might include the national and international climate of the time.<sup>12</sup>

If the "spillover" effect among issue areas suggests a basically positive impact of cooperation in one area over

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<sup>12</sup>Ralph Huitt, "Political Feasibility," 267.

that in another, there is also a possibility of negative impact. That is, it is plausible to say that high permissiveness in one area should come at the cost of low permissiveness in other issues. Congress, because of its committee system, can function perfectly well as a parallel system; that is, many problems can be dealt with at the same time. But for many important things, the attention of the whole Congress is required. Besides, the leadership resources may also be limited by characteristics of a decentralized decision-making process within Congress. The essence of the compromise and bargaining process is that if the President gets one thing, he has to give up something else. It is surely not insignificant that foreign affairs are the major preoccupation of the Chief Executive in terms of the time devoted to such matters, the money spent on them, and the high stakes involved in the decisions on peace and safety of the country. Longaker points out, for example, that President Truman had to put off or yield many of his domestic programs to win his foreign policy proposals.<sup>13</sup> Another example is the experience of President Johnson. After 1965, the rapid escalation of the war in Vietnam made it increasingly difficult for him to persuade Congress to adopt his expensive domestic programs.

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<sup>13</sup>Richard Longaker, "The Cold War Presidency," in Alfred Junz, ed., Present Trends in American National Government (New York: Praeger, 1961), 68.

The multiple regression method is not suitable for testing the hypothesis on interrelationships among several time-series of the same nature. For one thing, one cannot ascertain the impact of the foreign policy boxscore on domestic boxscores, simply by regressing one time-series on the other. While multiple regression is a useful method for assessing the impact of known independent variables on known dependent variables, it is not a good method for tracing the underlying trait or unknown cause that is presumed to explain the variation in the many known variables. For example, psychologists often assume that support for high defense expenditures or support for Vietnam policy stem from some underlying attitudes called "interventionism." Similarly, the foreign policy boxscore or domestic policy boxscores can stem from some underlying pattern of relationship between the President and Congress, such as cooperative mood. Factor analysis is a useful method for revealing patterns of interrelation on the basic underlying dimensions.

The result of a factor analysis on the boxscore series on seven issues is presented in Table 4.2. Of the many factor analytic methods, this study used a principal component analysis, which is primarily designed to explain the variance among a set of variables in terms of minimum number of independent factors, extracted in the order of explained variance, without assuming any unique feature for each variable. That is, the first factor which explains the largest covariance among the set of variables, is assumed

to vary independently of the second factor with the second largest explained variance.<sup>14</sup> The factor loading can be interpreted as a correlation of a variable listed in the first column with the underlying factor or dimension, as labeled at the top of each column.

Even if factor analysis is usually considered as an inductive method, it is a useful tool for simplifying complex relationships among many variables on the basis of an explicit hypothesis. In this study, if Congress' willingness to give what a President wants varies uniformly across various issue areas, factor analysis will yield a single factor. The result in Table 4.2 does not illustrate this assumption very well. The result shows that percentage of congressional approval on presidential proposals can be divided into three independent dimensions. It will be instructive to recall that instead of the notion of "two Presidencies" some scholars suggested differentiation of four Presidencies: (1) "foreign affairs" Presidency, (2) "welfare policy" Presidency, (3) "aggregate economy" Presidency, and (4) "moral leadership" Presidency.<sup>15</sup> If the last category is ignored because of its irrelevance to the data, the result of the factor analysis is more than suggestive.

(Table 4.2 here)

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<sup>14</sup>A succinct discussion of this method can be found in D. N. Lawley and A.E. Maxwell, Factor Analysis as a Statistical Method (London: Butterworth, 1963).

<sup>15</sup>Rexford G. Tugwell and Thomas Cronin, eds., The Pres-

Table 4.2 Dimensions of Congressional Support, 1948-1972

Issues	Factors			% Communality
	Infrastructure Factor 1	Domestic Welfare Factor 2	External Relations Factor 3	
Foreign Policy	.105	.069	.899	.82
Military	.452	.320	-.586	.65
Labor	-.203	.901	-.124	.87
Welfare	.507	.610	.124	.64
Agriculture	.669	-.344	-.089	.57
Tax and Economy	.777	-.025	-.009	.61
Government Operation	.859	.187	-.002	.77
% Total Variance	33.8	10.6	16.2	70.6

Note: Figures are factor loadings of boxscore.

Principal component factor technique was applied, putting 1.00 in the main diagonals of the correlation matrix. Factors with latent roots greater than or equal to 1.00 were varimax-rotated.

The first factor, which explains almost 34 percent of the covariance among the boxscore series, can be interpreted as the "infrastructure" of government, because the boxscore on governmental operation, taxes and economy, and agriculture are highly correlated with this factor. This cluster of issues involves legislative action in relation with the size and role of the federal government. It was shown earlier in the regression analysis that these variables show not only the greatest amount of variation each year but also show lower support scores. While governmental activities in the economy and other areas are normally expected, they are still the most controversial issues in politics. It is to be pointed out that military policies, as well as welfare policies, are also correlated with this infrastructure factor. This is understandable in the light of the allocation of economic resources involved in these policies.

The second factor can be interpreted as a "domestic welfare" factor, including the labor and welfare policy. Given the structure of Congress which organizes the two policy issue areas in one committee, the finding that these issues constitute one independent dimension of congressional permissiveness is not surprising. Even though these policies tend to follow partisan lines, it is important to recall that the welfare issues tended to show relatively stable permissiveness in terms of legislative support over the

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idency Reappraised (New York: Praeger, 1974).

period. Presidential as well as congressional activism on these issues peaked during the Kennedy-Johnson period. This domestic policy factor accounts for 21 percent of variance in the data.

The third factor is obviously the "external affairs" factor; this includes foreign and defense measures. It is somewhat surprising that the military boxscore has a negative correlation with this factor. One reason is that foreign aid bills or treaties received particular emphasis in the aftermath of the Korean war and the Vietnam settlement. Emphasis on diplomacy or treaties tended to occur when military issues were in a period of equilibrium, providing few controversial issues. Defense policy has domestic and foreign aspects, because of the sheer size of its resources. The fact that defense policy is loaded on all three of the factors delineated here indicates the impact of military policy in the policy-making process, particularly in the relation between the President and Congress.

The implications of the findings cannot be overemphasized. The analysis above, while rendering basic support to the notion of two Presidencies, in the simple sense that foreign and defense policies are differentiated in terms of congressional permissiveness, does not rule out the cost of this permissiveness on that of other domestic issues over which the President seems to have less power and control. Nor does it explain the variation, over time, of Congress' support in each issue area.



## Presidential Boxscores

The analysis above was concerned with patterns of relationship among boxscores on different issues. It suggests that congressional permissiveness, while varying with issues, shares certain common characteristics. Like any other institution, Congress responds to various stimuli from internal and external environment. For purpose of analysis, it is possible to suggest several factors that are commonly supposed to influence congressional permissiveness.

The first variable is the party composition of Congress. Evidently the President will be in a better position the more party members he has in Congress. The variable used was the percentage of presidential party members in each House, and the average for both Houses was used as the measure of party strength for presidential policy. In addition, a dummy variable, taking the value of one for Democratic control of the White House, was necessary to examine the traditional activism of that party in its relations with Congress or legislation.

It can be said that Congress also operates within a political climate of expectation that prevails in the country at certain moments of time. One important political factor is the public support of the President. Neustadt explicitly states that "a President's standing with Congress depends upon Congress' view of his standing with the country."<sup>16</sup> The measure used here as the indicator of presidential pop-

ularity is the annual average of percentages of positive responses to the Gallup Poll query, "Do you approve or disapprove of the incumbent's handling of his job as President?" This variable is expected to have a positive impact on the presidential boxscore.

Another indicator of the public climate of expectation is the public perception of important problems. It is almost axiomatic that presidential leadership is invoked or catered to when the country faces international crises or threats to its national security. Less frequently than the Gallup Poll measurement of presidential popularity, the American Institute of Public Opinion asked its national sample the question, "What do you think is the most important problem facing the country?" The variable used here is the annual average, in percentages, of those who named international or foreign affairs as the most important problem. This series fluctuated somewhat dramatically during the cold war period, depending upon the events. It also showed certain long-term patterns, which will be analyzed later in Chapter 8. The basic hypothesis here is that salience of international problems is expected to have a positive impact on congressional support, because this measure of public issue salience indicates at least the cold war climate of the nation.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Richard Neustadt, Presidential Power (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960), 87.

<sup>17</sup>The data for these two opinion indices were compiled from George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-

In addition to the two measures of public pressure, it is possible to hypothesize that the policy environment of the country has important impact on presidential-congressional relations. One important policy environment is the relative size of the defense budget as a percentage of the total federal expenditure.<sup>18</sup> Some people might suggest that the power to determine the size of the defense budget has shifted to the hands of the executive, reflecting less of an explicit congressional choice. Nevertheless, the "power of the purse" still lies with the Congress, implying that Congress has a share in the final shape of the budget. In this sense, the relative size of the defense expenditure seems to reflect the relative importance of defense preparedness to the nation, which constitutes one important element of the national policy environment.

Unlike the above variables which are not under the President's direct control, presidential emphasis in the definition of national problems attempts to measure a more or less direct and personal choice of a President. The measure used here is the percentage of presidential State of the Union addresses devoted primarily to the discussion of national security and foreign affairs. This measure of

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1972, 3 volumes (New York: Random House, 1972).

<sup>18</sup>The data come from The Budget in Brief (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, every year). See Chapter 5 for further discussion of the source.

presidential attention, while representing only one time point in the beginning of each year, can reflect the priority attached to different issue areas in his relation with the Congress. By examining the extent to which this variable affects the degree of congressional willingness to support the President in each issue area, one can draw inference about the impact of the presidential choice of issues on the legislative process.

The nature and specific characteristics of the above variables are analyzed separately in later chapters. Of immediate concern is the relative potency of each variable in predicting congressional approval of presidential legislative proposals. In an attempt to consider all the relevant factors, some other variables were also used as predictors of congressional cooperation in association with the above variables. The first is the indicator of aggregate economic conditions, which included annual percentage change in the consumer price index, unemployment as a percentage of the civilian labor force, and annual percentage change in real personal income. The second is the impact of time, a gradual erosion of presidential leadership as time approaches the election year. This time impact is measured simply by a sequence of numbers starting with one in the first year of each administration, with the last year taking the value of four.

The third is a set of dummy variables, with each representing the presidential incumbent by taking the value

of one during a President's incumbency, zero otherwise. As discussed earlier, it is very common to attribute legislative-congressional relations to the personality in the White House. The difficulty is that with only five Presidents under study, it is almost impossible to measure -- however one may theorize about them -- the personality characteristics that are supposed to contribute to legislative leadership. The dummy variables will at least suggest the extent to which a President's legislative boxscores have differed significantly from those of other Presidents.

Similarly, a set of dummy variables was used to represent the specific nature of each issue area. That is, it was assumed that each issue area has a different constant in a multiple regression equation in which the dependent variable is the boxscore in each issue area each year. By combining the percentage of presidential proposals that passed Congress each year, we have a total of 156 observations (N) in the multiple regression. That is, the boxscore in each issue every year is treated as an observation unit. The basic model can be put in matrix notation as follows:

$$A_{ij} = a_0 + P_j + K_i + bX + e$$

where A is the percentage of approved proposals in issue area i;  
 $P_j$ , a set of dummy variables, representing each President j;  
 $K_i$ , a set of dummy variables, representing each issue area i;  
 $bX$ , a vector of independent variables and associated coefficient b;

$a_0$ , an intercept;  
 $e$ , random error term.

The result of multiple regression based on this model is presented in Table 4.3. Because the number of independent variables including the dummy variables is extremely large, a stepwise regression was applied in such a way that a variable from the set was selected in the order of highest partial correlation with the dependent variable with respect to the variables already in the equation.

(Table 4.3 here)

The first equation predicted 29 percent of the variation in the boxscore across issue areas each year on the basis of dummy variables and time factor alone. As expected, foreign and military policies showed higher coefficients, while labor policy had the lowest coefficient. This pattern is consistent with the result presented before. One important variable was the decline of support at the lapse of time. No less important, dummy variables representing each President did not show a significance, in the equations, except that President Johnson stood out as extremely successful in terms of legislative batting averages.

Even President Johnson's record becomes insignificant, however, when other independent variables discussed above are added to the equation. In the second equation, which accounts for 34 percent of variance across issues over time, President Kennedy stands out as having had a significantly lower legislative support than other Presidents. Instead,

Table 4.3

## Multiple Regression of Presidential Boxscores, 1947-1972

Dummy Variables for Issues	Equation 1	Equation 2
Foreign Policy	24.302(5.126)	24.302(5.010)
Military Policy	21.810(5.126)	21.810(5.010)
Labor Policy	-11.922(5.126)	-11.922(5.010)
Agriculture Policy	12.434(5.126)	12.434(5.010)
Dummy Variable for Presidents		
Johnson	12.352(4.218)	-2.292(8.734)
Kennedy		-19.294(8.564)
Political Environment		
Year since inaugu- ration	-4.215(1.487)	-3.830(1.581)
Inflation		-0.604(0.664)
Public's perception of <u>Cold War</u> environment		0.479(0.231)
President's Security Emphasis		-0.241(0.121)
Party in the Senate (Presidential)		0.536(0.361)
Constant	49.273	12.817
R <sup>2</sup>	0.29	0.34
F	11.403	7.679
N	156	156

Notes: Each column defines one multiple regression equation with standard errors in parentheses.

the cold war environment, as indicated by public perception of important problems, had a significant influence, while presidential attention was a negative influence on the congressional support. On the whole, the result shows that impact of idiosyncracies of each Presidency was negligible, whereas the issue characteristics and the cold war environment had the most significant predictive power. When the issues were differentiated, impact of party lineup and socio-economic variables do not seem to have contributed very much to the congressional tendency to support the President.

#### Presidential Boxscore - The Overall Measure

The above analysis has shown that congressional willingness to support the President in each session differs greatly among issues, while there are some observable patterns in terms of the influence of public pressures and other political environments. The question that arises is to what extent the aggregate boxscore can be predicted on the basis of political environment variables. Interest in the overall measure of support is usually greater than is that in measure of support in each issue area in actual politics. This is similar to the great interest attached to the overall popularity of a President no matter how the nation may breakdown in terms of regions, parties, or races. In the second place, one might suspect that the independent variables, because they are primarily aggregate, can be better compared with the aggregate measure of congressional support. There-



fore, it is necessary to examine the pattern in the aggregate measure of the presidential boxscore on all issues.

One practical problem in aggregating the boxscore is that the higher permissiveness in the foreign and defense issue area is not well reflected in the overall boxscore, because the legislative proposals on these areas are relatively fewer in frequency than are those on other domestic issues. This point will become clear when we examine the result of multiple regression analysis of the overall boxscore of the independent variables discussed above. The typical result is given in an equation form as follows:

$$\text{Overall Boxscore} = 28.565 + 5.795 \text{ Democrat} - 0.858 \text{ Security Emphasis}$$

(2.249) (0.096)

$$- 0.289 \text{ Popularity} + 0.564 \text{ Defense Preparedness}$$

(0.107) (0.102)

$$- 3.895 \text{ Time} + e$$

(1.049)

(Note: Standard errors are in parentheses.)

$$R^2 = 0.87$$

One striking result is the negative impact of presidential security emphasis. Presidential efforts to make issues of national security or other foreign affairs do not bring about positive results in terms of overall legislative support. Rather, it seems true that when a President puts emphasis on foreign and defense policy, it should come to a certain extent at the cost of domestic legislation. This finding basically supports the point made by Longaker about

the cold war Presidency. In other words, the gain in the improved score of foreign policies is offset by the lower score of domestic programs, which generally outnumber foreign policy proposals. In part, the negative impact of presidential verbal emphasis is interpreted as stemming from the nature of aggregate data.

President Nixon, for instance, put a substantial share of his energy into foreign affairs, leaving to others much of the responsibility for developing domestic proposals and dealing with Congress. His failure to give more personal attention to domestic matters and to cultivate closer relations with Congress no doubt had something to do with the administration's legislative record, which is relatively lower in the amount of legislation requested as well as in the legislative output of Congress.

The above consideration, however, should not obscure the basic finding that defense preparedness still has a significant impact on congressional support. If we assume that the budget is a product of joint decisions made by the executive and legislative branches, the policy environment characterized by defense priorities undoubtedly has some spillover effect on the overall boxscore. The decline of the sense of threat, as revealed in lower defense posture, will partly explain the erosion of cooperative relations between the executive and legislative branches.

No less important is the negative impact of time. The result shows that a President tends to lose congressional

support by about four points each year as the election year comes nearer. The size of the decline is quite similar to that in the loss of presidential popularity as reported in Chapter 8. In addition, the impact of presidential priorities and presidential popularity show negative signs, contrary to our expectations. Therefore the data do not support the notion that public standing does help a President in getting his preference through Congress.

One plausible explanation for the finding that presidential popularity has little or even negative impact on legislative boxscore is a point made in the chapter on presidential vetoes: an institutional check and balance between the President and Congress. If the President becomes too dominant on the basis of popular support, congressional jealousy comes to the fore to check presidential dominance. It was found that the degree of electoral support increases rather than decreases congressional propensity to override presidential vetoes, other factors being equal. In this sense, negative impact of popularity on congressional support is consistent with the earlier finding. One qualification to be made is simply that the institutional conflict of role should be observed over a longer period of time than is considered in this chapter.

A more plausible explanation is that, because of limited attention and limited resources available to the President, popularity and legislative effectiveness tend to conflict. Eisenhower, for instance, was popular despite his

inaction on many occasions. It is possible to argue further that he was popular because of the fact that he did not act on many controversial issues. John F. Kennedy, another popular President, was criticized for "hoarding" his popularity during his incumbency; that is, for not using it to push his legislative proposals.<sup>19</sup> This implies a basically negative relationship between popularity and legislative leadership, other things being equal. At times, a popular President may be reluctant to risk his popularity by pushing legislative proposals. This does not rule out the possibility that public support of a President's position on specific issues may have a positive impact on legislative process. Yet it is open to dispute on how many policy issues the public has expressed its definitive preference.

Another possibility, which is not amenable to easy analysis and measurement, is that both popularity and congressional support are governed by the context of national mood. That is, the same factors and the same underlying dynamics govern the behavior of Congress and the public in the same direction, even though the relationship between the two measures is basically negative. The bivariate correlation between public support and congressional support

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<sup>19</sup>Theodore Sorenson, Decision-Making in the White House (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 48-51; and Elmer Cornwell, Jr., Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), 300-306.

is .42. It is possible to say that national mood is neither congressional support nor public support as measured by public opinion polls, but a widespread feeling shared by congressional members as well as by the public at large. Such interpretation is supported by the positive impact of defense expenditures and the public's perception of the importance of foreign policy problems on the legislative boxscore. The long-term trend is analyzed in Chapter 9. No less important is the nature of the prominent problems facing the country. When the national attention is focused on foreign environment, the President can easily win support on many other issues. The external pressure from the public comes rather in the form of focus of attention on foreign issues rather than in the form of a mere popularity. In this sense, the impact of public awareness of a problem seems to have some influence on overall executive-legislative cooperation. The point to be made is that presidential leadership becomes less appealing when dominant national problems are focused on domestic issue areas.

(Table 4.4 here)

This interpretation is supported by the relative impacts of the public cold war environment and presidential "security emphasis" on boxscore of selected issue area, as reported in Table 4.4 in simplified regressions. The result shows that the cold war environment, as perceived by the general public, is a much better predictor of congressional permissiveness in any issue area. Presidential "security

Table 4.4

Relative Impact of 'Cold War' Environment and Presidential Security Emphasis on Legislative Boxscores, 1947-1972

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Boxscores		
	All Issues	Foreign Policy	Economic Policy	Welfare Policy
Public Perception of 'Cold War' Environment	1.681 (0.640)	1.360 (0.297)	1.269 (0.351)	1.445 (0.268)
President's Security Emphasis	-0.551 (0.126)	-0.186 (0.124)	-0.734 (0.270)	-0.502 (0.171)
Constant	34.24	-7.94	11.71	-4.734
R <sup>2</sup> (explained variance)	0.523	0.572	0.390	0.560
F (significance)	12.60	15.35	5.75	14.64

Note: Standard errors in parentheses.

emphasis" has perverse signs, even in the area of foreign policy, once the impact of cold war perception is represented in the equation. It is to be noted that the two independent variables are moderately correlated with each other (.43).

On the whole, the impact of partisan composition is negligible, except that Democratic Presidents tend to have higher boxscores because of the overall dominance of the Democratic party in Congress during the period. In addition to the frequent appearance of the southern-conservative coalition cross-cutting party lines on domestic issues, the impact of partisan composition was diluted by the general acceptance of bipartisanship, particularly in the area of foreign and defense policy. This bipartisanship was basically an attempt to extricate the requisites of national security commonly perceived, from the constant pull of political requirements for domestic concerns, the stress on party competition, the resistance to centralized party direction, and traditional distrust of the executive.

Bipartisanship, from the perspective of Congress, involves arrangements that will produce the necessary inter-party agreement on fundamental policy directions and on the implementation of programs without foreclosing either party's prerogatives to criticize the views and actions of the other and, where possible, to reap political advantage.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Burton Sapin, The Making of United States Foreign

Bipartisanship is required because, under the American system, the party that controls the President does not necessarily control the Congress. It is worth recalling that, for 11 years between 1946 and 1972, the executive and legislative branches were controlled by different parties. Given the nature of the parties, however, the President wants to develop a broad base of support as far as possible for his national security policies and programs, even when his party has the majority in both Houses. The fact that the problem of bipartisanship is in good part one of executive-legislative relations suggests that traditional distrust of the executive, and other things, can become intermixed in congressional as well as presidential policies. In any case, the bipartisan spirit was not merely confined to security programs, but also carried over to domestic issues, as suggested by the relations between President Eisenhower and the Senate's Democratic majority leader Johnson. In any event, it involves the fundamental role of the Congress: the "oversight" role of a loyal but critical opposition.

It is a matter of dispute as to what extent bipartisanship influenced executive-legislative relations. On one hand, there is a view which suggests that bipartisan arrangements have also tended to be limited by the presence of individuals in both parties who refuse to "go along," and by the political rule of the game that allows the opposi-

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Policy (New York: Praeger, 1966), 58.



tion party to take advantage of difficulties and failures, despite the previous support of policies that led to them. The point is well exemplified by the Korea and Vietnam experiences.<sup>21</sup>

At best, on major decisions, the President involved some influential congressional leaders to avoid criticism. In this sense, the dominant pattern may be simply "extra-partisanship," in Westerfield's word, in the sense that the President and his party takes the primary responsibility, while the influential congressional leaders, such as committee chairman and floor leaders from both parties, are given some information and consultation.<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand, an argument has been advanced recently that bipartisanship has been too successful, that there is too little criticism of either the basic premises or the detailed implementation of U. S. policy, and that at times the price of bipartisan support has been the foreclosing of lines of policy choice and the imposition of too great a rigidity, too great a conservatism, on U. S. foreign policy.

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<sup>21</sup>Robert Tucker, "American Outlook: Continuity and Change," in Robert Osgood, et al, eds., Retreat From Empire? (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), 28.

<sup>22</sup>Bradford Westerfield, Foreign Policy and Party Politics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 16, 390-410; and "Congress and Closed Politics in National Security Affairs," Orbis, 21 (August 1966).

Criticism of bipartisan foreign policy has been somewhat articulate in the wake of the war in Vietnam with a focus on presidential power. For instance, Frank Church reflects a changed mood on Capitol Hill by asserting that the doctrine of bipartisan support at home, far from removing foreign policy from the arena of partisan politics, "has simply gathered more power into the hands of the President by eliminating, between elections, any semblance of organized opposition in Congress."<sup>23</sup>

It is not certain, however, to what extent the changed mood will change the habit of Congress to defer judgment on solving of major national problems. It is pointed out that all Congress can do, when a complex and difficult national problem such as major economic crisis is encountered, is to discuss the problem for a while, then send it to the Executive branch.<sup>24</sup> One balanced view will be that Congress cooperated with the Executive branch in collective problem-solving in coping with the cold war exigencies, leaving no

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<sup>23</sup>Frank Church, "Of Presidents and Caesars," in Robert A. Goldwin, et al, eds., American Foreign Policy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 55.

<sup>24</sup>Edward Corwin, The President: Office and Powers (New York: New York University Press, 1956), 330. Discussion of the problem in the more recent context is found in David Mayhew, "The Congress: An Interpretative Essay," manuscript, 1971.

President a complete dominance in domestic or foreign policy. A useful further study will be to incorporate the characteristics of each bill instead of an aggregate. From the data, one can only conclude that perception of a common threat was the basic element in the executive-congressional relationship during the cold war period. In general, Congress was willing to accept presidential leadership in the realm of national security to expedite dealing with international exigencies. Congress, even when it was controlled by the party which does not control the Presidency, was under considerable pressure to go along with the President and his national security policy for patriotic as well as political reasons. It might well be said that the President, too, wanted and needed congressional support when he took primary responsibility for foreign policy decisions and actions. It is difficult to say that the need for a national consensus was necessarily a political gain for a President. It might be true that Congress was in general on the "periphery" in defense and foreign affairs,<sup>25</sup> but it has never been a spectator.

#### Summary

Changing levels of congressional approval on a Presi-

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<sup>25</sup>James Robinson, Congress and Foreign Policy-Making (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1962), 13, 212-214.

dent's annual legislative programs was analyzed from the perspective of executive-legislative relations for the period 1947-1972. Patterns of variation in legislative boxscores, broken down into seven issue areas, can be divided into three clusters, with the economic issues least subject to presidential leadership. While congressional permissiveness is the greatest in foreign and defense issues, the gain is obscured by low boxscores of other areas, when an overall measure is used. The overall boxscore is best predicted by the public perception of the cold war and "defense preparedness." Party composition does not have significant impact on overall or separate boxscores, except that Democratic Presidents tend to show higher boxscores than the Republican Presidents. The overall conclusion is that the impact of personality is minimal, once the variables are taken into account.

## Chapter Five

### The President and the Changing National Priorities of the United States

The purpose of this chapter is to examine patterns of changing national priorities of the United States on the basis of budgetary allocations and rhetorical emphasis in State of the Union messages.\* One important role of the President in the political system is to define national priorities among the multitude of goals and tasks of modern government. In Sorenson's words, "any President, in short, must always be setting priorities and measuring cost."<sup>1</sup> A President is required by law and practice to present annually to the Congress his assessment of the nation's problems and his proposals dealing with them. Preparation of federal budgets and State of the Union messages are two major means of performing such policy leadership.

Unlike earlier chapters that dealt with the process of policy-making as manifest in the exercise of power to veto or to propose, this chapter is concerned with the substance

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\* An earlier version of this chapter was published as part of "Changing National Priorities of the United States, 1947-1972," in Bruce Russett and Alfred Stepan, eds., Military Force and American Society (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973).

<sup>1</sup>Theodore C. Sorenson, Decision-Making in the White House (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 28.

of national policy; with a focus on short-term shifts of goals and means of allocating national and presidential resources in the period since World War II. Distinction between process and content of national policy cannot be absolute. Obviously the question of "who makes policy?" is inseparable from the question of "what kind of policy will obtain with the nation?" Yet the expansion of the formal and informal powers of the President does not necessarily mean a presidential control of details or implementation of national policies. Nor does it provide a firm basis for prediction of what goals or activities are particularly accentuated each year.

Customary scholarly emphasis on the process of decision-making on a specific issue, while providing a richness of details and procedures, tends to obscure the nature and substance of national choice that occurs in the context of interdependence of domestic and foreign policy problems, and interaction among various elements of the society. Of increasing significance is the problem of balancing domestic needs and demands stemming from international environments, so called "security versus welfare" problem.<sup>2</sup> In the following, we will first discuss theoretical assumptions underlying the concept of national priority, delineate the dimen-

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<sup>2</sup>William T. R. Fox, "The Study of Relations in International Relations," in Al Lepawsky, et al, The Search for World Order (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1971), 386-400.

sions of controversy as an interplay among operating theories influential in the policy-making process, and then examine patterns of budgetary and rhetorical priority among a variety of national goals.

It is the intent of this chapter to demonstrate that there has been a considerable shift in national priorities in the last few decades. It will be shown, with the aid of factor analysis, that in budgetary as well as in political allocation of resources the shift tends to involve a choice between security and welfare. By giving a precise contour to the actual choice made each year, we will be able to determine the extent to which presidential choice reflects change in the objective political environment.

#### Setting National Priority

The concept of national priority reflects an awareness of the growing interdependence of domestic and foreign policies; in part, a universal phenomenon of this century stemming from industrialization and the expanded role of modern government in private sphere socio-economic life. This interdependence received particular attention when the cold war intensified the conflict between two systems of government to such an extent that it began to affect almost every aspect of the nation's socio-political life. There was a call for a "total strategy" that combined military, political, and economic aspects of the conflict in a coherent

and consistent manner in order to cope with the problems arising from the novel international environment.<sup>3</sup> This required, inevitably, a close examination of costs and benefits of specific policies in terms of national goals or purposes. In a similar vein, it was suggested that interdependence and fusion of domestic and foreign policy must be coped with by the development of "national policy," which integrates and coordinates somewhat disparate and specialized functions and activities.<sup>4</sup>

On a descriptive level, there has been a recent effort to reveal the interrelationship between domestic societal factors and the foreign policy of a country. The increased usage of the term "linkage" among scholars of international politics reflects this trend.<sup>5</sup> The concept of national

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<sup>3</sup>Harold Lasswell, "Psychological Policy Research and Total Strategy," Public Opinion Quarterly (Winter, 1952-53), 491-500; Harold and Margaret Sprout, Foundations of National Power (New York:

E. M. Earle, "Political and Military Strategies for the U. S." Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science (Jan. 1941), 112-119; F.S. Dunn, "Peace Strategies in an Unstable World," Yale Review (Winter 1948), 226-240.

<sup>4</sup>Carl Friedrich, "International Politics and Foreign Policy in Developed (Western) Systems," in R. Barry Farrell, ed., Approaches to Comparative and International Politics (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1966), 97-119.

<sup>5</sup>Karl Deutsch, "External Influence on the Internal Behavior of States," in R. B. Farrell, ed., ibid., 5-26; James Rosenau, ed., Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy (New



priority could be understood as part of this new awareness in academic as well as in actual politics. From the perspective of decision-makers, establishing priorities is a daily matter of decision-making, because they must always determine which problems to take care of, whom to listen to, and which alternatives to consider. One important factor is that not all decision-makers are concerned with integration or priority decisions. Only a handful of leaders, including the President or key congressional leaders, are in a position to understand and adjust national policies in their total context.<sup>6</sup>

In a broad sense, the problem of national priority occurs in the context of two fundamental limitations; limit of national resources and limit of national attention. The first is the limit of resources available for meeting increased societal needs and demands for public service. The most persistent, difficult, and significant issue faced by the government after World War II was balancing the needs of national security against other social needs. Because military force has been, by far, the most costly of the nation's policy resources, it has imposed a definite limit on the resources available for other purposes and directly affected the allocation of resources among major interests of the society. Each administration had to balance what Hunting-

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York: Free Press, 1969).

<sup>6</sup>Roger Hilsman, "The Foreign Policy Consensus: An Inter-

ton calls "the Great Equation," in which the major components were a variety of national goals such as national security, social welfare, tax reduction, and balanced budget.<sup>7</sup> Although these goals are all accepted as legitimate by most segments of the society, a possibility still exists that realization of one goal may limit realization of others. Therefore, relative importance attached to each goal or set of goals cannot but change, due to the change of configuration of internal and external factors.

More specifically, the high priority given to military goals and means in the past decades points to the question of what defense spending means in terms of dividing up national resources. Russett has stated that defense should come at the expense of something else. He has shown that defense comes partially at the cost of private consumptions, and partially at the cost of social welfare needs such as hospitals and schools.<sup>8</sup> Controversy still remains as to why and how this relationship holds.<sup>9</sup>

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im Report," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 3(December 1959), 376.

<sup>7</sup>Samuel Huntington, Common Defense (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 197.

<sup>8</sup>Bruce Russett, What Price Vigilance? (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 26, 137-156.

<sup>9</sup>J. Hollenhorst and G. Ault, "An Alternative Answer to Who Pays for Defense?" American Political Science Review, 67.(Sept. 1973), 760-763. While their replication study confirms the finding that consumers pay heavily for defense,

The question of national priority also stems from another fundamental fact that people's span of attention is limited. The body politic is composed of a very large number of human beings; consequently, it is perfectly capable of operating as a parallel system, carrying on many activities simultaneously. Nevertheless, as Herbert Simon points out, some crucial political processes, especially legislative and institutional changes that affect important conflicting values, occur only in the presence of the simultaneous attention of a large number of people.<sup>10</sup> A simple example of this is the postponement of domestic issues by tacit or explicit agreement during war time. The span of attention becomes relevant because most important changes call for action by the President and Congress or other specific, unique institutions. Congress does have a capacity for parallel action through its committee system, but capacity is moderate, and applies primarily to routine, administrative matters.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, formal and informal communication

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they claim that they had found a significant change in sub-periods among "trade-off" relationships between defense spending and the other GNP expenditure categories.

<sup>10</sup> Herbert Simon, "Political Researches: The Decision-Making Framework," in David Easton, ed., Varieties of Political Theory (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), 15-24.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 21.

channels of a society appear to be capable of handling only a very few topics at a time. If one such issue is on the active agenda, most others are crowded off.<sup>12</sup> The notion of national attention has been usually operationalized by content analysis of elite newspapers or leaders' verbal behavior.<sup>13</sup>

The importance of priority in the policy-making process has been noted by many scholars. No communication system can function without a set of operating preferences or criteria on the basis of which a limited number of issues are selected and processed among a multitude of data. Values determine, in society and politics as well as in individual life, which messages and which types of information should take precedence over others in attention and in their transmission to other persons.<sup>14</sup>

Empirical evidence suggests that the fate of a given issue is largely determined by its level of priority in the minds of individuals who will influence its outcome. As one study put it, "Where a given issue stands in priority

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<sup>12</sup>The concept of "salience" is primarily based on the assumption that peoples' span of attention is limited. Robert Lane and David Sears, Public Opinion (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 96-97.

<sup>13</sup>Harold Lasswell, World Politics and Personal In-Security (New York: Press Press, 1965), 141.

<sup>14</sup>Karl Deutsch, The Nerves of Government (New York: Free Press, 1966), 94-96.

affects not only the fight for resources but also the manner of its handling."<sup>15</sup> The pressures of time, scarce resources, and the need to maintain effective social relationship within the political system are such that an individual can choose to push only a very few issues of highest priority. Therefore, one can predict an individual's behavior on a given issue only with reference to the entire map of conflicting issues with which he is dealing. Thus, in addition to the goals of individual decision-makers, the priority of a given issue will be determined by continuing expectations about role-playing behavior and adherence to the roles of the influential individuals who are playing the ongoing political game.<sup>16</sup>

It is difficult, however, to specify the limits of resources and attention in a precise manner, because we envision a close interaction between a decision-maker and his environment. Comparison over time can be made only in a relative rather than an absolute sense. What has often

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<sup>15</sup>Raymond Bauer, et al, American Business and Public Policy (New York: Atherton Press, 1963), 480.

<sup>16</sup>Enid C. B. Schoettle, "Policy-making in a Political System," in Raymond Bauer and Kenneth J. Gergen, eds., The Study of Policy Formation (New York: Free Press, 1968), 175; James Rosenau, National Leadership and Foreign Policy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 33; David Easton, A Systems Analysis of Political Life (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1965), 444-448.

been neglected is the question of how and why a certain issue came into being in the first place. For instance, to account for the decision to send troops to Vietnam in 1965 and after, one must do more than explain the considered alternatives or the decision itself. It also has to be explained, first of all, how the Vietnam conflict came to be on the national agenda. How did attention come to focus on that issue instead of all the other issues that might stir the nation?<sup>17</sup> Here we have to postulate a "psychological interaction," to borrow a phrase from Sprout and Sprout, between national priority and the changing environment impinging on the decision-makers.<sup>18</sup> The reduced stature of Great Britain in the contemporary world, due to domestic resource limits, exemplifies this point.<sup>19</sup> In spite of difficulties in operationalization, there seems to be a need

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<sup>17</sup>Layne D. Hoppe coped with the concept of an "agenda of government" and discovered that it "is a shorthand expression for a set of continuous incremental processes of problem perception, identification, and policy formulation and proposing carried on by an equally complex structure of institutions, groups, and individuals." Layne D. Hoppe, "Agenda Setting Strategies: Pollution Policy," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Arizona, 1969, 202.

<sup>18</sup>Harold and Margaret Sprout, "An Ecological Paradigm for the Study of International Politics," Princeton Center of International Studies Research Monograph, no. 30, 1968.

<sup>19</sup>Joseph Frankel, National Interest (New York: Praeger, 1970), passim.

to understand the patterns in the shifts of emphasis among national goals. Budget data and contents of presidential messages provide valuable starting points for this purpose.

The annual budget is a package of the most important and comprehensive decisions on priorities which the society makes in the course of a year.<sup>20</sup> Annual preparation of the budget may require the review of major programs and goals before limited resources can be allocated in order to meet the most pressing national needs. The federal budget, which is the main vehicle for communicating the details of the President's assessment and recommendations, is thus the chief instrument for forcing and recording Executive branch decisions about national priorities - about the activities of the federal government to be devoted to each objective, and about who should bear the costs. The annual review necessitated by the preparation of the budget also gives the President and Congress an opportunity to weigh the effectiveness of federal programs in achieving their purposes and to consider how they might be improved.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Charles Schultze, et al, Setting National Priorities: the 1973 Budget (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1972), 1.

<sup>21</sup> A recent study shows that there has been considerable shift of priority within an agency, even though total sum may remain somewhat stable. Peter B. Natchez and Irvin C. Bupp, "Policy and Priority in the Budgetary Process," American Political Science Review, 67 (Sept. 1973), 951-963.

Because the federal budget is, however, an inevitably complex financial plan, its significance as a national priority-setting instrument has in the past been obscured in a welter of technicalities. It was only in the aftermath of the war in Vietnam that the importance of the budget has become a matter of public awareness. This was accompanied by a decline in the popular willingness to accept large military expenditures.<sup>22</sup> The increased intensity of public debate on national priorities in the late Sixties seems to suggest that the budget is a means of determining how national resources should be allocated - the relative importance to be accorded public and private needs, defense and domestic spending. Thus the budget is considered the most comprehensive single vehicle for examining practically every aspect of public policy. As Wildavsky points out, budgeting is "the translation of financial resources (symbolic of other resources) into human purposes."<sup>23</sup>

It is generally observed that the President is at the heart of the budgetary decision-making process. In fact, budget-making is a continuous process of interchange among the President, the executive agencies, and the Congress. If the President is responsible for recommending the order

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<sup>22</sup>Bruce Russett, "The Revolt of the Masses: Public Opinion on Military Expenditures," in Russett, ed., Peace, War, and Numbers (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972).

<sup>23</sup>Aaron Wildavsky, The Politics of the Budgetary Process (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1964), 4.



of national priorities to Congress, Congress is, at least in theory, responsible for legislatively determining, with independence and authoritativeness, the nature and rank of the nation's priorities.<sup>24</sup> It is frequently pointed out, however, that the role of Congress is in reality quite marginal.<sup>25</sup>

Though the Bureau of the Budget is at the center of the budgetary process for aggregating and adjusting national demands and aspirations, its chief role is to help the President carry out his policy goals. Therefore, the orientation of the Bureau depends upon that of the President. The President here should be understood to mean not only the individual, but also the top decision-making institution known as the Office of the President and including his influential advisors and staff.

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<sup>24</sup>Kenneth Boulding, ed. National Priorities (Washington, D. C.: Public Affairs Press, 1969), 48.

<sup>25</sup>Robert Benson and Harold Wolman, eds., Counter-Budget (New York: Praeger, 1971), 339-342; A. Enthoven and K. W. Smith, How Much is Enough? (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 311. He speaks of the "need for more balanced debate on basic defense issues outside the Defense Department. And also Adam Yarmolinsky (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 38-53. The point here is that "the role of the Congress is limited primarily by the complexity of the budgetary process, as well as by the fear of being charged with neglect of the nation's defense, and by the concern of individual Congressmen and Senators with the welfare of their states and districts."

Presidents are invariably made aware of the priority-setting role of the budget. For instance, President Johnson made the following point: "The overall size of the federal budget reflects the needs and demands of public services as a whole." The composition of the budget reveals much about the nation's priorities.<sup>26</sup> For obvious reasons, however, budget data are insufficient to reveal presidential choices. The budget reflects, simultaneously, a yearly process of administration and decisions among alternative political priorities. That is, budgets are at once measures of the way government is organized and of the policy decisions that the organization implements. Presidential policy preferences are expressed in the annual State of the Union message to the Congress.

The President's State of the Union message is an institutionalized review of national problems and policy preferences presented by the top decision-maker to the whole nation. Though it is invariably overlain with rhetoric and justifications for his policy choices, it is certainly the most comprehensive single document with which one can trace his values and aspirations as well as his definition of the national situation. Each message sets forth national goals, defines priorities and further specifies how those goals are to be attained. Furthermore, the President's

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<sup>26</sup>President Johnson's first budget message to Congress. Congressional Report, vol. 27 (January 17, 1969), 1.

position expressed in the message provides a guideline for members of the administration during the course of that year.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, verbal shifts of emphasis in the messages will reveal those personal choices which cannot be easily traced in the budget data.

### Dimensions of National Priority

Two levels of national priorities are usually distinguishable. The first is the allocation of resources between public and private sectors; the second is the allocation of resources among the various programs within the public sector.<sup>28</sup> What complicates budgetary decision-making is that it is involved with these two levels at the same time.

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<sup>27</sup>Robert R. Sullivan, "The Role of the Presidency in Shaping Lower Level Policy-Making Process," Polity, 3 (Winter 1970), 201-221.

<sup>28</sup>This distinction includes the state or local share of national resources in the category of the public sector. In this analysis, however, only the federal share is considered. As to the expanded role of the federal government in the economy, see M. Weidenbaum, The Modern Public Sector (New York: Basic Books, 1969), 157; James Tobin, National Economic Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 45; Charles Schultze, "Budget Alternatives after Vietnam," Agenda for the Nation (New York: Doubleday, 1968), 14.

Theories and views about national priorities naturally become ideological beliefs and calls to action for certain political and social forces. Public discussion, including that of scholars and policy-makers, can be classified by what each eventually supports publicly, regardless of the underlying logic or justification for the position taken. Two broad spectra of opinion can be separated and analyzed.

First, there is a controversy between views which, for convenience, we will call "militarist" and "pacifist." The "militarist" goes on the assumption that more defense expenditure assures greater national security, whereas the "pacifist" sees danger in a reckless arms race and military over-preparedness. A wide spectrum of opinions on this issue can be put simply as a "hawk vs. dove" continuum. It is a typical argument of the hawk that this country is too rich to risk its survival by maintaining only a slim margin of security.<sup>29</sup> A dove will argue that the marginal return of additional military preparedness is close to zero.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Tobin, National Economic Policy, 60. "We are too rich a country to keep our defenses at the margin of taking very serious risks to our very survival. A nation on the edge of starvation might of necessity be on the edge of insecurity. The United States has no private uses of resources so compelling that they justify keeping the western world in such a precarious position that any reduction in the budget will gravely threaten the security."

<sup>30</sup>Sidney Lens, The Military Industrial-Complex (Kan.-

The second spectrum of opinions causing controversy concerns the proper role of government in society, and in the economy in particular. Keynesian theory stands on one side stating that high and deficit government spending is often essential if the recession-bound capitalistic economy is to work. Deficit financing is employed not infrequently as a deliberate fiscal policy intended to promote production by increasing aggregate demand at a time when the economy is in a slump. The idea is balancing the economy, rather than balancing the budget.<sup>31</sup> This line of reasoning, emphasizing the discretionary power of government, can be designated as "fiscal activism."

Opposing this line of thought is a more deep-rooted belief that federal spending should be kept to a minimum because government is, by its nature, less efficient than the private sector in providing services. Private firms, the theory contends, are relatively free of bureaucratic red tape and political manoeuvring.<sup>32</sup> It is argued that private

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sas City: Pilgrim Press and National Catholic Reporter, 1970), 143-144: "If a nation is ready to accept the simple theorems on which militarism is predicated - whether real or made to look real - each 'crisis' will evoke the demand for 'more'... and its spokesmen and theoreticians will soon be scurrying for new 'crises' on which to peg their argument for more preparedness." And Seymour Melman challenges the basic assumptions of defense-spending in his book, Pentagon Capitalism (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970), 163-169.

<sup>31</sup> Tobin, National Economic Policy, 35, 49-55.

production is carried on at closer to minimum cost than public production. A balanced budget is preferred to a deficit. And there is an underlying traditional belief that a minimum of government is still the best government. In a sense, this feeling is more widespread among the public than the Keynesian theory is.<sup>33</sup>

These two dimensions of controversy can be illustrated in a four-cell diagram in which the defense budget over the years is plotted on the vertical axis to represent the choice made in national priorities between hawks and doves, and the non-defense budget is plotted on the horizontal axis to represent the choice made between fiscal activism and fiscal conservatism or between monetary and fiscal economic policies. The resulting diagram shows how, over the years, national resources have been divided among various public programs according to decisions made on national priorities. Any theory or argument can be put in one of the four cells made by the cross combination of these two dimensions of controversy.

Thus, each of the four theories has had an opportunity to become the basis of national policy decisions, at one

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<sup>32</sup>David Ott and Attiat Ott, The Federal Budget Policy (Washington, D. C.: The Brooking Institution, 1966), 54-57.

<sup>33</sup>The controversies between the two positions in terms of purely economic theories, that is, "fiscal vs. monetary policies," is well summarized in the discussion between M. Friedman and W. Heller, Monetary vs. Fiscal Policy: A Dialogue (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969).

time or another with the changing foreign or domestic environment.

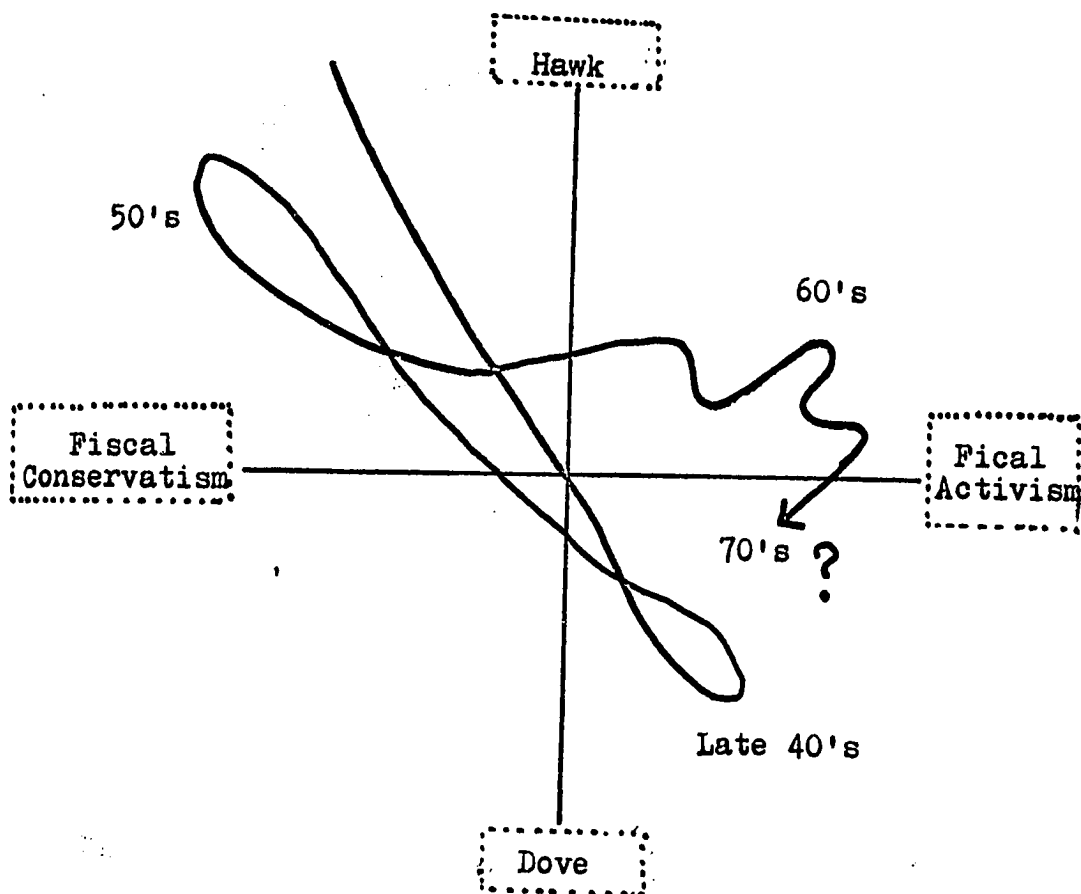
(Figure 5.1 here)

If each of these dimensions is independent of the other, the conclusion is evident. For instance, a hawk and fiscal conservative would agree with a defense increase, but he would suggest cuts in other civilian spending instead. Conversely, a dove-activist would suggest defense cuts, but increases in other civilian spending. Because of the unprecedented high level of defense spending throughout the postwar era, the two dimensions often either combined or conflicted with each other, with a balanced budget never having been achieved. Thus the focus of debate was how and to what extent to minimize the federal deficit.

Since each of the four is not only a theory but also an operating policy, each has its proponents and practitioners who try to put their favorite into action in the political arena. The course that this nation finally took each year is indicated by the curved line in Figure 5.1. Each decade has its own character.

Further, the political process is assumed to consist of the bargaining and compromise among diverse and legitimate interests comprising the pluralistic political system. Sometimes, as Wayne Moyer's findings suggest, it is competition and conciliation among the different theories and political ideologies held by decision-makers, rather than their material interests.<sup>34</sup>

Figure 5.1 Theories of Public Activity



Note: The relevant data are presented in Figure 5.3.  
The curved line with arrows indicates the course taken by the nation in the allocation of resources.



Since there is a broad consensus on the method by which the conflict of diverse interests and views is resolved, the final policy advocated at different levels of the political process reflects the distribution of influence held by those groups and individuals.<sup>35</sup> McNamara often maintained, the federal budget is "a quantitative expression of policy preferences in that year."<sup>36</sup> It will, therefore, also provide a clue as to whose policy preferences prevailed in the choice of alternative uses of resources. If each group can be assumed to try to maximize its influence in dividing up the national pie, the final decision may not necessarily be a rational choice for the whole nation.

#### National Priorities as Expressed in the Budget

The two dimensions of national priorities discussed above are highly interrelated. For one thing, it is not only the military establishment that underwent a significant change since World War II; the role of the government has also rapidly expanded. Just as the level of defense expen-

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<sup>34</sup>Wayne Moyer, "House Voting on Defense," in Bruce Russett and Alfred Stepan, eds., Military Force and American Society (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 106-142.

<sup>35</sup>Robert Dahl, Who Governs? (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), 321; and Democracy in the United States (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1972), 387-398.

<sup>36</sup>K. Clark, et al., eds. The President and the Management (New York: Praeger, 1969), 19.

ditures is one indicator of the military role, so the high level of federal spending indicates the expanded role of the government. The federal activities which were managed with a mere four million dollars at the start of the nation, now absorb more than one fifth of the total national income every year and the various programs of the government touch upon almost all pressing national needs and concerns.<sup>37</sup>

The impact of defense expenditure increases on the federal share of the national output is apparent in a cross-plot of the two indices in Figure 5.2. With the exception of 1951, each increase in defense expenditure resulted also in an increase in the total outlay of the government, thus limiting the private uses of resources. ( $r=.97$ )

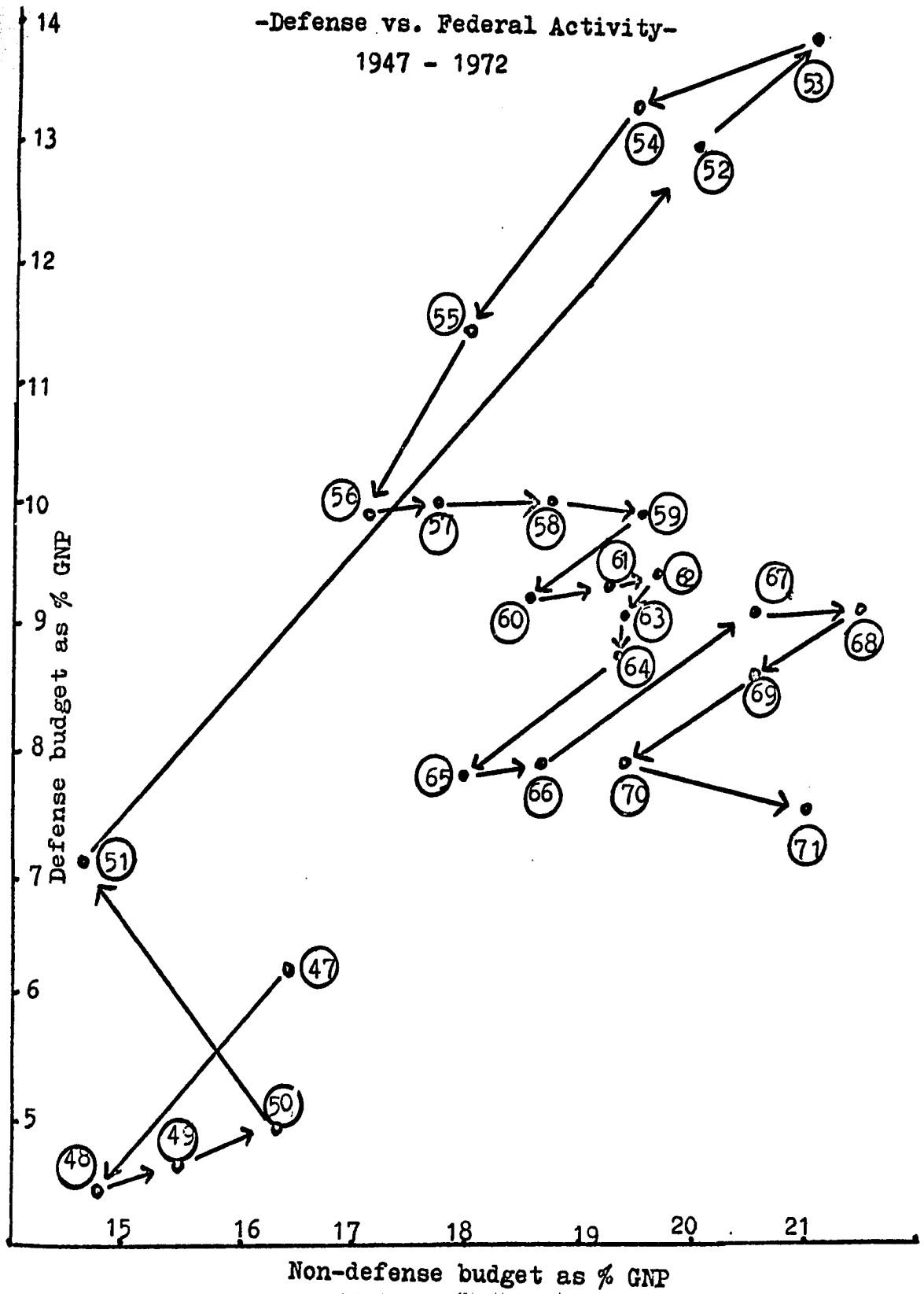
(Figure 5.2 here)

One notable trend is that defense spending goes up more sharply than it comes down. Though the overall trend toward a greater federal role in the economy is visible, it is to be noted that military expenditures since 1956 have sustained their position in claims on the national income with only minor fluctuations somewhere between the levels of the late Forties and the Korean War peak. Considering that the national economy has grown considerably during this period, this has meant a growing defense budget,

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<sup>37</sup>The data on budget composition relied on: U.S., Bureau of the Budget, The U. S. Budget, and supplementary documents, the Budget in Brief (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, annual issues 1944-1972).

Figure 5.2  
Changes in Two Levels of Priorities



and it is not too unreasonable to infer that the military establishment has a stabilized voice in national politics. President Eisenhower's warning against the acquisition of unwarranted influence by the military industrial complex<sup>38</sup> is to be read against the background of his experience in office, as indicated by the line in the diagram linking 1956 to 1959.

If defense expenditures are, as discussed above, an indicator of the prominence of military influence in the political system, whether due to foreign threats or not, and if non-defense spending is an indicator of fiscal activism, the relative emphasis during each decade in the post-war era can be clearly seen in the course taken by this nation. The two dimensions vary somewhat independently of each other, since various functional breakdowns of non-defense spending cancel each other out.

(Figure 5.3 here)

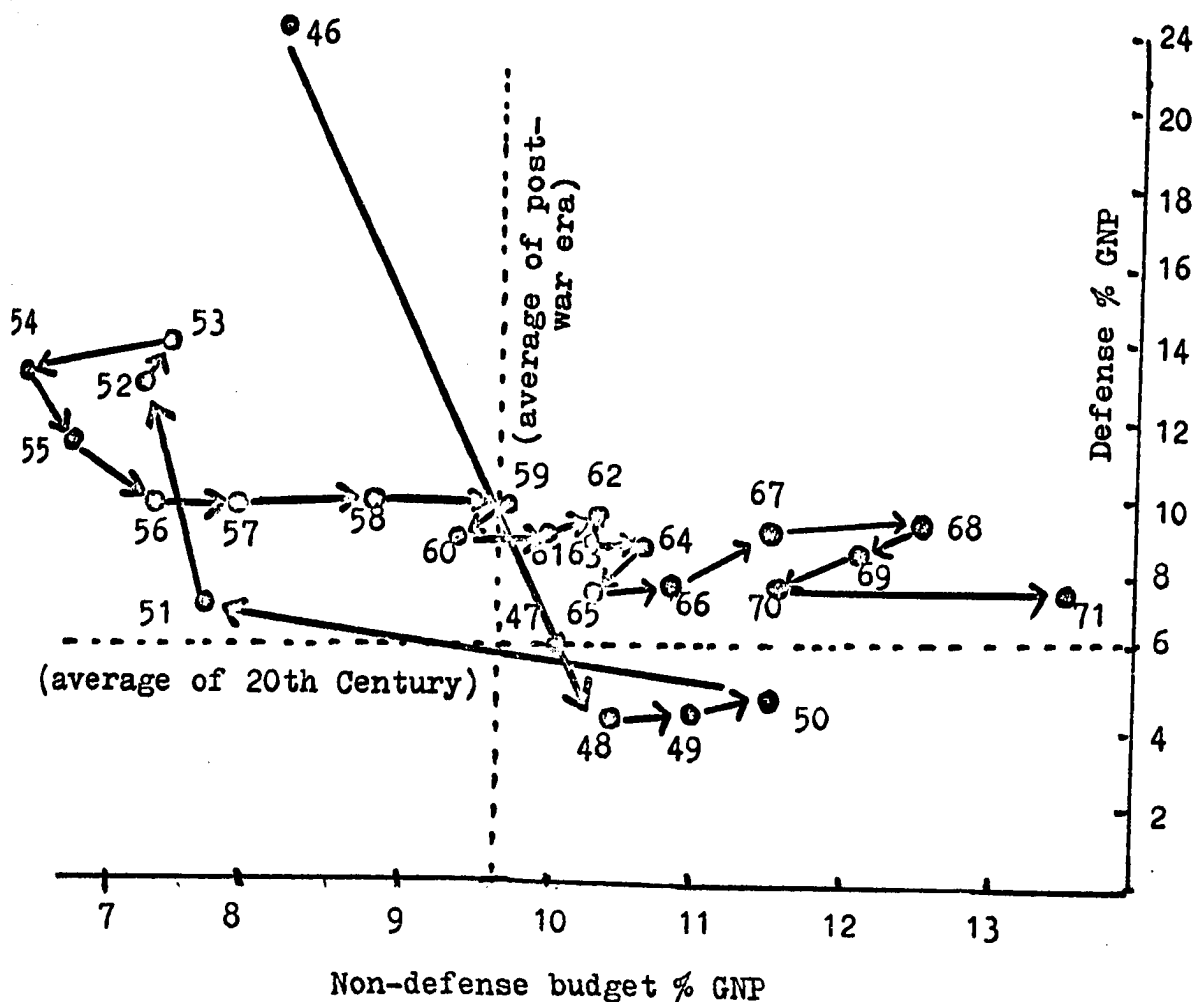
The course of this nation, and the relative influence of political forces is visible in Figure 5.3. Each decade has its distinct characteristics in the pattern of dividing up the national resources. The relative importance of defense expenditure in the national priority list was at its lowest in the late Forties. Right after World War II, the national mood emphasized peace and caring for social needs which had been left unmet during the war. Then the

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<sup>38</sup>Dwight Eisenhower, "Farewell Address," Bulletin,

Figure 5.3

Two Levels of National Priorities  
-Defense vs. non-defense-



Note: Each year is expressed as a point in the plot and the trajectory of year-to-year change is shown by the arrow lines linking each year in sequence. The horizontal scale represents non-defense federal outlays as a percentage of GNP, and its average of the period since 1946 is indicated by the dotted line. On the other hand, the vertical scale denotes annual defense expenditures as a percentage of GNP, and the average for the 20th century is marked by the dotted line. Compare this figure with Figure 5.1 given before.

ideological confrontation with Soviet Russia, culminating in the Korean war, went hand in hand with a national policy of maintaining high levels of defense expenditure. At the same time conservatism forced decision-makers to cut down civilian spending in an attempt to offset the menace to economic stability caused by high defense spending.

The data make it clear that the relative importance of defense spending was decreasing, and domestic needs such as education, health, and housing were gaining political footholds until curbed by the war in Vietnam.

Given the total amount of resources that the government can afford to spend, determining priorities each year takes the form of allocating limited resources to meet the most urgent national needs. Which government programs then suffered most when security needs pushed up the defense budget?<sup>39</sup>

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U. S. Department of State (February 6, 1961).

<sup>39</sup>Since the budget of FY 1969, a unified budget concept has been adopted by the recommendation of the President's Commission on Budget Concepts submitted on October 10, 1967. In the past, three sets of budget totals had been highlighted: the administrative budget, the consolidated cash budget, and the national income accounts budget. Minor inconsistencies of budget figures among sources result from the change of criteria stemming from the new budget concept. The data used for 1958-1972 were given by the Bureau of the Budget based on this new concept. For earlier periods, the administrative budget figures were used. Two functional categories, "space research and technology," and "income security" were removed from the data set because of some missing data points.

The data collected consist of a breakdown by functions of the federal budget as percentages of the total federal outlays of that year. They were analyzed by several related yet different techniques, in order to be sure that the results were not distorted by any one method.

A factor analysis of the federal budget, classified by the function it is called upon to perform, outlines the basic dimensions of the necessary choices that underlie the process of dividing up resources for competing national needs. This is a way of describing succinctly the inter-relationship among various categories of functions performed by the government. Three independent dimensions of competing claims on national resources were discovered in this analysis of the data. The factor loadings shown in Table 5.1 can be understood as equivalent to correlation coefficients, i.e. they measure the degree of association, between the categories of government functions in the rows and the three underlying dimensions of competing claims on resources, the factors, in the columns.<sup>40</sup>

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For an explanation of the different budget concepts, see Ott and Ott, Federal Budget Policy (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1967), 14-15; and also Bureau of the Budget, Budget in Brief (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), 63-64.

<sup>40</sup>Rudolph Rummel, Factor Analysis (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970); T. W. Anderson, "The Use of Factor Analysis in the Statistical Analysis of Multiple Time Series," Psychometrica, 28 (March 1963).

(Table 5.1 here)

The first factor is best described as a bipolar dimension, defense versus social welfare. This result is in line with Russett's finding: defense expenditures tend to come only at the expense of social welfare.

The second factor is interpreted as government infrastructure, since these variables include government functions that require some minimum level of spending if the government is to be operative. It seems logical that "international affairs and finance" loads here because performance of that function requires trained personnel and a reasonable degree of continuity. In terms of national resources used, the State Department is the least costly.<sup>41</sup>

The third factor is interpreted as urban versus rural. Though relative importance in the budget composition (5%) is almost negligible, this factor indicates that emphasis on urban spending has been accompanied by neglect of agriculture and land. There is a natural trend toward more urbanization.

Next, another factor analysis (not reported in detail here) was applied to the elasticity of categories of government functions, their proportional increase or decrease in

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<sup>41</sup>Henry Nash, American Foreign Policy (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1973), 66.

<sup>42</sup>Elasticity is defined as the ratio of the proportional increase in Y to the proportional increase in X. That is,



Table 5.1

Dimensions of Competing Budgetary Allocation (1947-72)

<i>Functions of Government</i>	<i>Factors</i>			
	<i>F<sub>1</sub> Defense vs. Social Welfare</i>	<i>F<sub>2</sub> Government In- frastructure</i>	<i>F<sub>3</sub> Urban vs. Rural</i>	
Defense	.74			
Commerce & transportation	-.91			
Health	-.77			
Education	-.58	.58		
Veterans		.97		
International affairs & finance		.95		
Interest		.92		
General gov't		.91		
Natural Resources		.82		
Housing			.89	
Agriculture			-.83	
<i>% Total Variance</i>	45.4	22.6	18.3	86.3%

Factors with latent roots greater than or equal to 1.0 were varimax-rotated. Signs were adjusted. Principal component factor technique was applied, putting 1.00 in the main diagonals of the correlation matrix.

relation to the total budget. The basic relationships among the categories of government functions remained the same, revealing even more strikingly the conflict between defense and social welfare in dividing up the budgetary pie. The only important difference between the two different analyses was that in the elasticity analysis the "urban-rural" dimension merged with the "defense-welfare" dimension, and "veterans" constituted a distinct pattern. Except for "housing," which showed association with defense, this analysis revealed that the choice between defense and social welfare was the primary concern that decision-makers have had to face during the period, even when, in dividing up the pie, they considered only the marginal increase or decrease of each function of government.

An alternative technique used for uncovering the underlying relationships among variables is to present in a diagram a two-dimensional configuration of variables with their dissimilarities indicated by the distance between points. In multi-dimensional scaling, the closer two points are in the plot, the closer the relationship those variables have.<sup>43</sup>

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$$\text{Elasticity} = \frac{\Delta Y}{\Delta X} \cdot \frac{X}{Y}$$

<sup>43</sup>This scaling method does not assume a linear relationship among entities. Instead, multidimensional scaling is a technique of representing N objects or variables geometri-

(Figure 5.4 here)

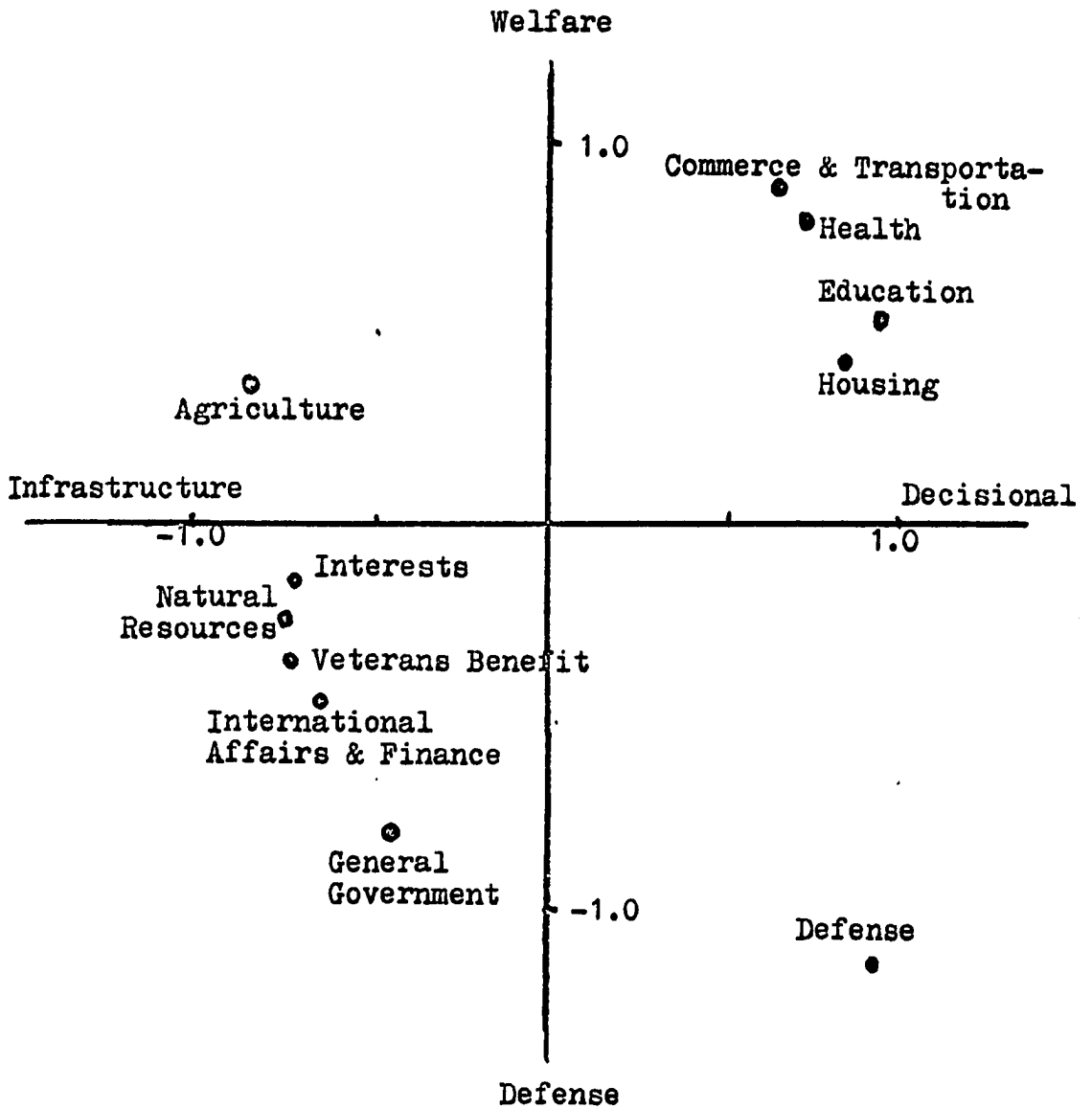
The two dimensions revealed by this analysis can also be interpreted in the same way as those of the factor analysis described above, "government infrastructure" and "social welfare versus defense," respectively. This is a striking result, considering that the two methods are based on quite different mathematical assumptions.

The meaning of these results is obvious. Policy choices, or decisions as to priorities, tend to take the form of

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cally by  $N$  points, so that the interpoint distances correspond in some sense to dissimilarities between objects. Instead of dissimilarities, the actual measurements may be similarities, interaction rates between groups, correlation coefficients as in the case of this chapter, or other measures of proximity or association of diverse kind. The basic notion is the "psychological nearness" between a pair of entities, and the technique is designed to reveal the spatial structure contained only latently in the original data. The procedure uses only the rank order of the measurements. The first of the two fundamental conditions imposed on the solution is "monotonicity," which requires that the rank order of  $N(N-1)/2$  distances between the  $N$  points should be monotonically related with the rank order implied in measuring the degree of association of the variables. An additional requirement is that the final configuration should be of the smallest possible dimension. A criterion to judge goodness of fit of the configuration to the data is "stress," which measures to what degree the monotonicity is violated in a given configuration. This can be understood as the "residual sum of the squares" in other linear statistical models. For further discussion, see J. B. Kruskal,

Figure 5.4  
 Multi-dimensional Scaling of Budgetary Allocation  
 1947 - 1972



Stress = .082



alternatives between high defense spending and social development.

It is not difficult to see why social welfare has significantly suffered from the defense program. Since defense spending makes the government budget large and taxes unpleasantly high, political considerations and pressures inherent in the bargaining process force policy-makers to look for "controllable programs" to maintain the ceiling of total expenditure. Social welfare has indeed been considered fair game in the search for such "controllable programs," since many items of infrastructure spending are committed by law, leaving little discretionary power to decision-makers to alter them.

In some eyes, social welfare has been a residual function of government, contingent upon relaxation of defense needs. In the fiscal years of 1964 and 1965, it is evident that the declining defense budget was a new catalyst in producing Johnson's magic compound of great new social programs, tax cuts, and tight control on the total of the federal budget. But the war in Vietnam reversed this trend.<sup>44</sup>

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"Multidimensional Scaling by Optimizing Goodness of Fit to a Non-metric Hypothesis," Psychometrica, 29 (March 1964), 1-27; and R. Shepard, "The Analysis of Proximities: Multidimensional Scaling with an Unknown Distance Function I," Psychometrica, 27 (June 1962), 125-140.

<sup>44</sup>Arthur Okun, The Political Economy of Prosperity (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970), 125.

It is no coincidence that civil rights leaders and supporters of the welfare state were among the earliest critics of the war effort in Vietnam. It seems fair to conclude that high defense expenditure comes at the cost of schools, hospitals, and public transportation.

#### National Needs as Perceived by Presidents

The second question raised in examining the establishment of national priorities is how the President perceives pressing national problems each year. For most Americans, the President is an important focus of political attention. In an opinion poll, when asked who was "in the best position to see what the country needs," 61 percent of those questioned indicated the President, and only 17 percent chose Congress. On the other hand, only 10 percent thought the President had the "most to say in the way our government is run," while 52 percent indicated Congress had.<sup>45</sup>

The State of the Union message is now considered a major vehicle to convey the President's definition of the national situation to the nation. The style or content of each message is far from uniform. In the process of preparing the message, however, the most pressing problems facing the nation come to be included in one way or another. Pre-

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<sup>45</sup>The poll data by the Survey Research Center was quoted by R. Sigel, "Image of the American Presidency," Midwest Journal of Politics, 10 (February 1966), 128.

paration of the message is a part of the decision-making process.<sup>46</sup> We will next examine the kind of themes the President has particularly emphasized in these messages, and how the emphasis has changed since World War II.

The data consist of content analyses of State of the Union messages from 1946 to 1972. Twelve major themes appear in every message. The first subset of data was obtained by assigning rank-order scores from 12 to 1 to each theme, according to the order in which each appeared in the message.<sup>47</sup> The minimum amount of text given a rank score was a paragraph, or alternatively three sentences that stressed that theme; if the theme did not meet these criteria, the rank score was considered to be zero. A second independent subset of data was obtained by considering the number of sentences a President used to emphasize a particular theme as a proportion, or a percentage, of the total number of sentences devoted to substantive problems in the whole message. We

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<sup>46</sup>Clark, The President and Management of National Security, 232. Usually the annual State of the Union message is viewed as a product of reconciliation and interaction among diverse demands and opinions in the administration. The decision process involved in speech writing is dramatically depicted in Eric Goldman, The Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson (New York: Dell, 1968), 40-43, 47-48, 53-54, 579-580. A general account is given by Seymour Ferish, The View from the White House (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1961).

<sup>47</sup>The implicit assumption is that a President will

will call the first subset of data "message rank," the second "message length."<sup>48</sup> A chart showing "message length" over the years, major themes as a percentage of the total contents, is presented in Figure 5.5.

(Figure 5.5 here)

The diagram shows that presidential perception is more sensitive and flexible than is the budgetary process, as will be seen later. In an attempt to delineate patterns of needs perceived by the Presidents, each of the two subsets of data was factor-analyzed. As there is a high degree

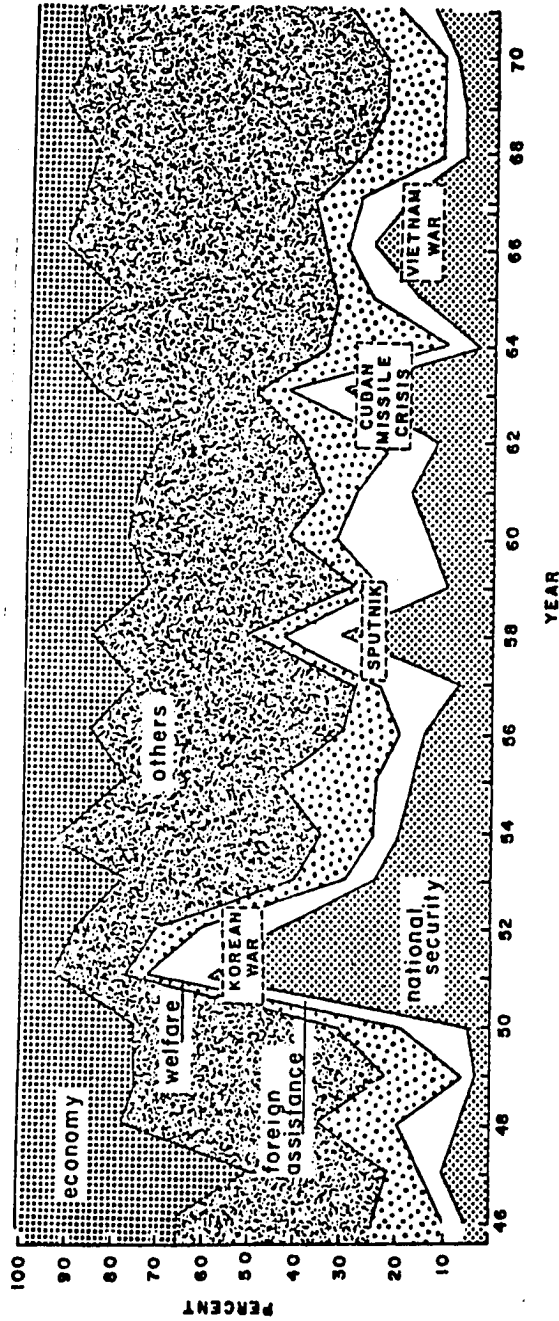
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present the issue he deems important before the less important issues. In some of the messages, the President specifies the degree of importance by saying "the most important issue (or goal) is...." Some psychological studies have positive, if not conclusive, relationship between the order of presentation and persuasibility. See Carl Hovland, et al, Communication and Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), 121-126.

<sup>48</sup>Fred Israel, ed. The State of the Union Messages of the Presidents, vol. III, 1905-1966 (Washington, D.C.: Harold Steinberg and Robert Hector, 1966). Other years, annual issues of Congressional Almanac (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Service). In 1953 both Truman and Eisenhower, and in 1961 both Eisenhower and Kennedy gave separate State of the Union messages. Those of the new in-coming Presidents were taken in such cases. However, in 1969, Johnson, not Nixon, gave the Message. And in 1971, Nixon's separate address on foreign policy was assumed to be a continuation of his State of the Union message. There is a high degree of congruence between the two data sets. The average correlation between corresponding themes from



Figure 5.5  
 National Needs as Perceived by Presidents,  
 (State of the Union Messages, 1946-1971)



Note for Figure 5: Scores for the five categories in each State of the Union message add up to 100%. The five categories are: = percentage of themes on national economic problems; = percentage of all other themes; = percentage of social welfare; = percentage of foreign assistance; = percentage of themes for national security in the annual State of the Union messages. In this figure, the four peaks for national security are marked by four historic events: the Korean War, the launching of Sputnik, the Cuban missile crisis, and the War in Vietnam.

of congruence between the two data sets, only the result based on the rank-order score is reported.

In the first place, the emphasis on national security was not the only dominant theme in each speech; the President spent much time in talking about the economy and social welfare as well. (The mean of the defense content was 18.4 %, whereas the mean of the economic content was 15.4%.)

Secondly, unlike the composition of the budget in its current value or as a percent of the total, the variables of presidential perception of needs do not show high correlation with similar data for preceding years. In the case of the message rank data, only five variables show auto-correlation significant at the level of .05, and in the case of the message length data, only four. This is contrasted with the high degree of auto-correlation of budget data to be discussed later.

(Table 5.2 here)

Here again, the first rotated factor is interpreted as "foreign concern" versus "social welfare." just as in the case of budgetary allocation. The second factor is called "economic stability," the third factor "equality." The fourth factor "budgetary conservatism" of government, and the fifth "peace." These results illustrate how a

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the two sets of data was. .61. The overall fit by canonical correlations shows that 45 % of each can be reproduced by the knowledge of the other set.

Table 5.2

Dimensions of Competing Perceived Needs (Message-Rank Data)  
(1946-71)

Themes	F <sub>1</sub> Security vs. Social Wel- fare	F <sub>2</sub> Econo. Stabil- ity	F <sub>3</sub> Equal- ity	F <sub>4</sub> Fiscal Conserv- atism	F <sub>5</sub> Peace
Foreign Aid	.79				
National Defense	.77				
Space & Tech.	.55				
Unemployment & Poverty	-.86				
Health	-.82				
Farm & Farmers		.85			
Economy & Inflation		.82			
Civil Rights			.86		
Education			.85		
Balanced Budget				.79	
Urban Problems				-.65	
Peace & Negotiation					.88
% Total Variance 80%	27.2	14.7	15.8	11.2	11.2

Note: Principal component analysis was used; factors with latent roots higher than 1.0 were vari-max rotated.

President perceives national problems.

What is striking is that a President perceives defense needs as conflicting with those of social-welfare such as health and unemployment. Social welfare is, the data indicate, something to be seriously considered, especially when the foreign threat is alleviated. The President's concern with education constitutes a different dimension of needs perceived, along with civil rights. Education is approached from the view point of the egalitarian principle, such as "equality of opportunity."

The analysis also indicates that a President tends to view national security, foreign assistance and the space program as a set of needs that should be handled together. It is to be recalled that, in the factor analysis of the budget described above, "national defense" varied independently of "international affairs." What does this imply? A speculation is that over the entire period military policies and strategies did not go hand in hand with a framework of foreign policy. This relationship changed in the Sixties, however. In a factor analysis for the budget data of 1959-1971, "international affairs and finance" correlates .97 with the "defense vs. welfare" factor.

It is possible to conjecture that, at the turn of the decade, either the Defense or the State Department was gaining in importance over the other, if the budget is viewed as a quantitative indicator of departmental activities. The possibility of the Defense Department having gained

more control than the State Department seems more plausible for explaining what happened.

In order to explore how the relative emphasis given to each theme varies from year to year during different administrations, factor analysis was applied, treating each year as a variable. The analysis indicates that there were five distinct clusters of years, grouped around common characteristics.

(Table 5.3 here)

The first cluster of years may be called the "Cold War Era." Many of the Eisenhower years are grouped here. In this period there was considerable stress on national security and foreign assistance, on the build-up of military strength and on national survival in the cold war.

The Korean war, in particular, changed the national environment perceived by decision-makers. The shift of Truman's verbal behavior from 1950 to 1951 is striking. In 1950, he stood firm toward "challenges of communism," which, "in its ruthless struggle for power, seizes upon our imperfections and takes advantage of the delays and setbacks" of democratic nations. But he used only 4.8 % of his speech for national security. This makes a striking contrast with 61% in 1951, his first message after the outbreak of the Korean war. In that message he devoted only 3.0% to the needs of the economy in contrast with 20.0% in the previous year. He stressed that "many of the things we would normally do must be curtailed, or postponed," because

Table 5.3

Grouping of Years by Needs as Perceived by Presidents  
(Message Rank Data, 1946-1971)

Incumbent President	Year	F <sub>1</sub> Years of Cold War	F <sub>2</sub> Years of Con- version	F <sub>3</sub> Years of Guns & Butter	F <sub>4</sub> Years of Equal- ity	F <sub>5</sub> Years of Decis- ion	Mean Rank Order
Truman	1951	.50					1) Defense
"	1952	.75					2) Foreign Aid
Eisenhower	1953	.88					3) Budget
"	1957	.62					4) Economy
"	1958	.74					5) Science & Technology
"	1959	.91					
"	1960	.65					
Truman	1946		.88				1) Economy
"	1947		.86				2) Budget
Eisenhower	1954		.73				3) Poor
"	1955	.50	.55				4) Health
"	1956		.78				5) Peace & Negotiation
Nixon	1970		.77				
"	1971		.55				
Kennedy	1961			.70			1) Poor
Johnson	1964	-.59		.69			2) Defense
"	1966			.61			3) Education
"	1967			.86		.56	4) Health
"	1969			.69			5) Urban Problems
Truman	1943				.91		1) Economy
"	1949				.92		2) Health
Kennedy	1962	-.54			.58		3) Civil Rights
"	1963			.53	.53		4) Agriculture
"							5) Education
Truman	1950					.81	1) Peace & Negot.
Johnson	1965					.90	2) Defense
"	1968					.87	3) Foreign Aid
							4) Economy
							5) Poor
Percent Variance		20.0	17.3	15.4	12.1	15.1	80.9 percent

"the threat of world war is real." In 1952, he made it clear again, that "we have no choice but to build up the defense." The cold war era was opened with the acceptance, or even encouragement of the American public as indicated in public opinion polls favoring an active role in world politics.

The second group of years is characterized by postwar adjustment to peace. There is a relatively high emphasis on conversion to a peace-time economy, peace and negotiation, and above all, return to a balanced budget. The whole nation was urged to be prepared for demobilization and release of this tension. This pattern is consistently revealed in the postwar years of three administrations.

The third group of years are those in which the messages express as much concern about domestic problems, such as unemployment, national economy, education, civil rights and so on, as about national defense. Themes of international peace or foreign economic assistance except for the sake of national security are relatively less apparent. In the four Johnson years that cluster here, high priority was given to both defense and social problems.

There was an explicit effort in these messages to justify the war in Vietnam in terms of national security. In 1966, Johnson showed his determination on Vietnam : "but we will give our fighting men what they must have, every gun and every decision, whatever the cost or whatever the challenge."

There was more concern during these years for urban problems than for rural ones. It is not surprising that two Kennedy years are clustered on this dimension. In 1961, his accentuated theme was the economy, and how to "get the country moving again." However, he gave attention to space research and security as well, in his pronounced effort to build a credible deterrent. Keynesian economics became a theoretical tool of expansionistic policies, while a "balanced budget" also appeared tenaciously in each message. Economic problems such as labor-management disputes began to be included specifically as part of the national agenda. Those years grouped here are years of "guns and butter," those in which the messages stressed an effort to meet both foreign and domestic needs.

The fourth cluster of years may be called "the years of equality." There was a particular emphasis in the messages of these years on equality or civil rights and on economic growth. The first weight was given to economic prosperity. Yet "investment in youth," "safeguarding its health," and "protecting the basic human rights of its citizens" were particularly emphasized as a means to "strengthen the nation," as in 1963, or because the "basic sources of our strength are spiritual" as in 1948.

The fifth group of years, which includes Johnson's program for the "Great Society" in 1965, is characterized by a heavy emphasis on international peace, economic cooperation with foreign countries, and national security,



though high priority is also given to domestic problems. It seems ironic that peace is particularly emphasized in the messages immediately preceding a major war, both in 1950 and 1965. There was a grave choice for the nation between war and peace.

Compare Table 5.3 with the plot of the budgetary course taken by the nation in Figures 5.1 and 5.3. On the whole, the "years of the cold war" correspond to the decade of "hawk-conservative," the years of "guns and butter" are mostly in the Sixties; this fits the theory of "hawk-activism." One important difference, however, in the presidential perception of national needs is that the years of the Sixties divide into three clusters, reflecting a notable shift in a brief period. In short, the data indicate that the Sixties were the most turbulent years.

The mood in the early Sixties deserves emphasis because it reflects a national reaction to the experience of the war in Vietnam. The formal enunciation of the so called Nixon Doctrine came in President Nixon's first message to Congress on the "State of the World" and remained the recurring theme of the annual messages during the first administration. Responding to the frustration in Vietnam, the President in effect called for a lowering of the United States profile abroad through a greater sharing of responsibilities and increased self-reliance by its allies. Stressing the beginning of a new era, which marks, he said,

a "watershed" in American foreign policy out of the cold war, President Nixon maintained that U. S. relations with allies would change from one of "predominance" to one of "partnership." Yet the shift of emphasis from "era of confrontation" to "era of negotiation," while reflecting changed perception of international environment, does not conceal high degree of domestic import,<sup>49</sup> necessitated by a need to reduce the burden of "super power."

One should not be misled to take the shift of rhetorical emphasis at face value, because the verbal declarations always remained too vague and inconsistent to allow a firm prediction of policy direction. As Tucker points out, the Nixon Doctrine does not make a sharp departure from earlier Presidents.<sup>50</sup> In its view of the American position in the world, the essential continuity in the basic strategy is evident. It affirms that the United States must continue to define its broadest aim as the achievement of an international order congenial to American values, an aim that transcends specific tangible interests in various parts of

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<sup>49</sup>The practice of submitting a foreign policy report-which has become known as the "state of the world" message-was inaugurated by President Nixon in February 1970. The first report and its succeeding ones outlined the events of the previous year, objectives for the current year and the administration's basic foreign policy philosophy.

<sup>50</sup>Robert Osgood, et al, eds., Retreat from Empire? (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973).

the world. Moreover, it asserts that the active role of the United States in world politics is the envisioned existential component of the new international order. Yet it would be going too far to say that the Nixon Doctrine, or whatever policy pursued by Nixon, is simply an "exercise in nostalgia," a return to the calmer days of the Eisenhower era in its emphasis on a reliance on American ground forces and naval power for areas outside of the western Hemisphere and Europe.<sup>51</sup>

The Nixon strategy, while depending upon structural continuity in political-military relationships, reflects a significant change of foreign outlook. This outlook embodies premises about the efficacy of American foreign power, the intensity of communist threat, and the nature of America's vital interests which constitute a revision of the familiar cold war consensus no less far-reaching than the revision of diplomatic strategy. The Nixon administration has none of the optimism in the capacity of the United States to intervene against a wide spectrum of local attacks and insurgencies in the Third World that moved the Kennedy administration. Rather, it makes a special point of contrasting

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<sup>51</sup>Richard Barnet, "The Security of Empire," in Robert W. Gregg and Charles W. Kegley, Jr., eds., After Vietnam (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1971), 35. There are some authors who see a similarity between the Nixon Doctrine and the "massive retaliation" Doctrine of Dulles. See Alan M. Jones, U. S. Foreign Policy in a Changing World (New York:

its limited view of the efficacy of America's military power in the Third World with President Kennedy's views. U. S. aid in the defense of other allies and friendly nations would maintain its treaty commitments, but would not assume a primary responsibility as a world policeman. It says, in effect, that if an invaded country cannot save itself with American economic and military assistance, American troops cannot save it, at least not at a tolerable cost. It is this different perception and outlook that Robert Osgood characterizes as "military retrenchment without political disengagement."<sup>52</sup> At this point, it is instructive to recall that the two Nixon years included in this analysis belong to the years of conversion, showing similarities in rhetorical emphasis to postwar years under Truman and Eisenhower. This similarity suggests that the President is seldom free from changed policy outlook stemming from the negative impact on domestic society of two decades of activist foreign policy.

The analysis does not render support to the fear expressed by some strategic theorists that reaction to the failure in Vietnam might lead the nation to the early isolationism which was characteristic of the early Thirties.<sup>53</sup>

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David McKay Co., 1973), 17-23.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Osgood, Retreat from Empire?, 9.

<sup>53</sup> See Richard Pheiffer, ed., No More Vietnam: The War and The Future of American Foreign Policy (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968).

The "retreat from world empire" seems to be understood in relative terms rather than absolute. The change occurs in the context of continuity. The cold war consensus, while having lost its previous cohesiveness and automatic response, seems to give way to a new normalcy of international commitments with a reduced threat in the international environment. The point is that foreign policy problems seem to become more or less domesticated, because as this chapter attempted to show, resources for foreign commitments are intricately interlinked with domestic politics and priorities.

#### Conclusion

It seems fair to say that within the period since World War II, there have been notable shifts of patterns in presidential perception of national needs, as well as in the allocation of resources, thus reflecting the changing priorities of the nation. From a longer historical perspective, these changes may seem merely a matter of degree. Yet a small change when cumulated over time can become a change in the long run. The important point is that the decision facing the nation tends to require a choice between security and welfare, at least in relative terms. The overall judgment is that Presidents have been responsive to the mood of the nation in their allocation of resources as well as in their perception of national problems, though this is not evident in their daily activities.

## Chapter Six

### Political Environment and National Priorities

The previous chapter showed that during past decades a considerable shift in national priorities took place, in terms of budgetary output as well as in terms of presidential perception of national needs. The task that remains is to relate this change of national priorities to changes in domestic and foreign conditions of the country. The primary purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the empirical relationships among three clusters of variables: national priorities as perceived by the President, national priorities as expressed in budgetary allocations, and the broad political environment that comprises the context in which national priorities are set or operative.\*

One important finding that deserves emphasis here is that national priorities change greatly within a Presidency, whereas some years across different Presidencies share some common characteristics regardless of the political affiliation or personality of the incumbent. Intuitively, it seems clear that these similarities and differences among Presidencies reflect changes in the objective environment, which

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\*The earlier version of this chapter was published as part of "Changing National Priorities of the United States," in Bruce Russett and Alfred Stepan, eds., Military Force and American Society (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973).

interact continuously with priority and policy decisions. Beyond this obvious point, however, consensus among observers vanishes. For each has a significantly different notion as to which variables are important and what are the strength of relationships. Often the controversy centers around the causes and consequences of defense expenditures or high priority given to military goals and means. In spite of some inherent difficulties in measurement and inference in such a broad problem, this chapter presents an analysis of some controversial issues with the aid of quantitative techniques such as canonical analysis and multiple regression method. Starting with a broad framework, three important aspects of national priorities are highlighted: First, the extent to which budgetary allocations reflect presidential perception of national needs. This broadly bears on the problem of presidential control and influence with regard to the Executive branch. Second, the extent to which the national priority reflects objective conditions of the country. This is directly related to the consequences or effectiveness of priority decisions in coping with chang-ign national problems. Third, the causes or determinants of national priorities. This is related to the problem of receptivity or responsiveness of the priority system to the demands or moods of the nation. In all three of these interrelated aspects, the absolute and relative size of the defense budget becomes the central focus of the analysis.

## Bureaucratic Politics and National Priorities

It was stressed earlier that the annual budget reflects not only the administration's decisions as to the governmental activities decision-makers deem the most appropriate for the realization of various objectives, but also the implementation of these decisions. Among the many decisions in the process of setting national priority, military spending is the most costly in terms of national resources. If the size of defense expenditures represents an explicit and implicit decision about the relative value to the nation of military uses of national resources, allocation among competing military programs similarly represents decisions about the relative contribution of each program or strategic choices. Thus, Richard Neustadt calls the defense budget the principal "action-forcing paper," which compels the nation's chief policy-maker to make strategic choices affecting national security.<sup>1</sup> The choices on the total size of competing military programs, over the years, have determined the state of the nation's defenses and its ability to pursue national goals which depended upon military strength.

Ideally, various national security programs serve

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<sup>1</sup>Richard Neustadt, "Presidency and Legislation: Planning the President's Programs," American Political Science Review, 69 (December 1955), 980-1021; and "Presidency and Legislation: The Growth of Central Clearance," American Political Science Review, (September 1954), 641-647.



foreign policy objectives by deterring aggression and, should deterrence fail, by protecting the nation's security interests by the use of force. Furthermore, the very existence of military forces influences the expectations of allies and adversaries, thereby constituting an important element in the conduct of foreign affairs. The complexity and difficulty become apparent, however, when one realizes that the priority decisions, presented in the current economic and political circumstances, can represent commitments to long-term programs that will affect the priorities far into the future. For this reason, it is frequently suggested that national priority should be determined not only in terms of its current features, but also in due attention to its long-term in fiscal and foreign policy implications.<sup>2</sup>

It is an empirical question, however, whether the annual decisions are based on long-term calculations of national costs and benefits that accrue to a society as a whole. In spite of some rationalizing efforts, as evidenced in the introduction of program-budgeting procedures, priority decisions involving the broad goals or objectives suffer from fundamental limitations of human knowledge and information.<sup>3</sup> In the first place, the rate of exchange among diverse

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<sup>2</sup>Charles Schultze, et al, Setting National Priorities: 1972 Budget (Washington, D.C. : Brooking Institution, 1971).

goals is usually in doubt. No one is certain of the difference between a military budget of 70 billion dollars and that of 75 billion dollars in terms of national power or security generated. One doubts that President Johnson would have committed one-half million troops in Vietnam, had he been aware of all the economic and political consequences of his decisions. A plausible alternative to the rational or rationalizing image of the policy-making process is the suggestion that military policy can only be understood as the responses of the government to conflicting pressures from its foreign and domestic environment.

Ample empirical evidence has been accumulated in recent years to suggest that military policy or security programs are determined by political process of consensus and conflict among diverse interests and perspectives within Executive branches or even within the military establishment. Foreign and defense policy-making show more similarities than differences to other areas of public policy. Viewed in this broad context of American government and politics, military and foreign policy cannot be separated from fiscal and domestic policy. In addition to the limit of resources and attention analyzed in the previous chapter, these familiar procedural characteristics of policy-making provide clues to the nature of policy output as well as to the form

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<sup>3</sup>Charles Hitch, Decision-Making for Defense (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), 26 ff.

of conflict.

We envision a close interaction between the situation and actors involved in the situation. An actor is not external to the situation, but in a state of continuous relationship with change of the situation and definition of the situation. As Halperin points out, when government officials enmeshed in the gears of the decision-making process consider a proposed change in foreign policy, they often see and emphasize quite different things and reach different conclusions. For example, a proposal to withdraw American troops from Europe may be viewed as a challenge to the functions and missions of the Army and its definition of national interest or methods to achieve it, the direct manifestation of which is the size and budget of the Army.<sup>4</sup> The resultant balance of power among different perspectives gives the system a striking stability, over time.

The above point should not be taken to imply that no major shift can occur in a single year. A somewhat dramatic shift can occur, and has occurred, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, due to the change of domestic and foreign environment. Although bureaucratic theorists are not very optimistic about the possibility of innovative change within the large organizations, it is plausible to hypothesize that obvious changes in objective conditions boost or rein-

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<sup>4</sup>Morton Halperin, "Why Bureaucrats Play Games," Foreign Policy, 2 (Spring 1971).

force certain political force by providing basis for arguments and pressures.<sup>5</sup> Issues recur between Hawks and Doves, and between activists and conservatives, although the basis has changed for all actors by the configuration of events and actions in more specific contexts. A Hawk in 1970 was in many ways different from a Hawk in 1965. Nevertheless, a difference between a Hawk and a Dove was as real in 1970 as in 1965. It is essential to grasp the recurring dimensions of the controversy.

One important element of such a controversy is the relation of defense expenditure to foreign crisis. It is hardly true to say that defense effort is simply a response to a threat from hostile external forces. The intensity or relative importance of foreign threat depends upon the values and interests of the society in general, and goals and means defined in foreign policy in particular. At times, a turmoil in Europe can be a "matter beyond the edge," whereas a Communist insurgency in a remote area such as Vietnam can become a matter of grave national concern, depending on definition of the national interest and the specific situation by political leaders who invariably estimate the relevance of certain events on the basis of

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<sup>5</sup>Graham Allison and Morton Halperin, "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implication," in Raymond Tanter and Richard Ullman, eds., Theory and Policy in International Relations (Princeton: Princeton University

feasibility or availability of resources. This is particularly true because the United States has projected its military as well as its economic power into almost every sphere of world affairs, with the result that many international developments now are no longer independent of United States intentions and actions.

This question of parochial perspectives or interests within the government is directly related to the second question of what perspective or interests the President tends to represent among diverse voices. It is easy to say that the President should integrate or coordinate national policy in view of national interests. Yet the President cannot be neutral in policy conflicts. He has to take one view or prefer one alternative to another. The question is whether the President, viewed as one actor among many, tends to prefer hawkish or dovish positions when other factors such as party or personal background are taken into account. Such diverse scholars as Longaker and Richard Barnet show a striking agreement in observing that the choices the President presents necessarily presume a deeper American involvement abroad, though the arguments in support of this proposition differ greatly.<sup>6</sup> For either good or bad, themes

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Press, 1972).

<sup>6</sup>Richard Barnet argues that the President is tempted to resort to hawkish policy, because he can have, free from constraints of domestic conflict, "the illusion of success"

abound in suggesting that the presidential outlook will favor active participation in world affairs, for various grounds such as the ease of arriving at consensus during crisis, political position improved, access to the foreign sources and contacts, and so on.<sup>7</sup> What underlies this view is the classical hypothesis on interaction between domestic support and foreign conflict behavior of political leaders.

The theory that the natural tendency of the administration is to increase the defense effort implies that the

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when he acts as commander-in-chief. See Roots of War (New York: Atheneum, 1972), 93. On the other hand, Longaker points out that a President has a better view of the world situation, hence presenting more expensive alternatives than the public would allow. See Richard P. Longaker, "The Cold War Presidency," in Alfred Junz, ed., Present Trends in American National Government (New York: Praeger, 1961), 68.

<sup>7</sup>The development of America's "cold war" global posture makes it plausible to argue that Presidents desiring a freer hand in foreign affairs often have been driven to convert minor incidents into crises for the purpose of imposing cohesion upon the members of the foreign policy establishment. See Theodore Lowi, "Making Democracy Safe for the World: National Politics and Foreign Policy," in James Rosenau, ed., Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy (New York: Free Press, 1967), 295-331. He warns against the danger of "overselling" of a perceived external threat by executives who feel hemmed by institutional and political constraints on their behavior.

stronger the administration is the greater would be the tendency toward a high level of military spending. Bureaucratic theorists, however, tend to suggest that not the weakness but the strength of the administration limits the scope of defense activities. For instance, Huntington argues that a strong administration securely in power can maintain the desired balance between military expenditures and other needs without recourse to an economy drive. He specifically points out that all three economic drives between 1947 and 1960 came immediately after the administration had scored an electoral victory and was anxious to assert its influence over the military establishment.<sup>8</sup>

Overarching these two questions discussed above, there is a third problem of some controversy: the positive impact of defense expenditures on the expansion of national economy. In the long run, conflict among diverse goals, particularly one between security and welfare, can be mitigated by the steady expansion of the economy as a whole. Simply put, when the economy appears to grow rapidly, there is less grumbling about the way the pie is divided. But when it grows more slowly than expected, there will be greater displeasure within and without government circles. In some cases, the expansion of security programs, domestic welfare programs, or private expenditures could be achieved through the expan-

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<sup>8</sup>Samuel Huntington, Common Defense (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 234.

sion of total national economic activities.<sup>9</sup> Controversy exists as to whether the limit was reached to the point where expansion of one sector must come only at the expense of another sector. Equally important is the problem of economic stability, because the past few decades have been characterized by relatively steady growth with strong inflationary pressures rather than with a depression in any way comparable to the earlier experience of the United States or other Western nations.

It is instructive to recall at this point that presidential perception shifts more flexibly than the shift in budgetary allocation. Besides the inherent differences between budgetary data and verbal behavior, the bureaucratic process seems to reinforce the slowness of priority change. Dramatic changes are hardly made in a single budget. Commitments to continue federal programs already on the books and obligations to meet built-in cost-increases in these programs take up a substantial part of the available funds and prevent both the administration and the Congress from making major shifts in funds in any one year. While every budget affords at least some opportunity for the President and Congress to indicate their changing priorities, only a perspective that covers a number of years can illuminate the really large changes taking place in the scope and em-

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<sup>9</sup>Arthur Okun, The Political Economy of Prosperity (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970), 125.



phasis of federal activities.

### Political Outcome and Political Environment

A working hypothesis is that there is a dynamic relationship between national priorities and the political environment. National priorities may be determined, in part, in a way to meet changing situations. Once the priorities are determined, they will affect the situations, whether or not the effect was desired. Change of situation, in turn, gives rise to a revival of old issues within the government or the Executive branch, the resolution of the conflict being the national priority at a certain moment. For instance, the emphasis given domestic programs at the beginning of the Sixties is credited to the sagging economy, which in turn can be traced back to the "overheating" of the economy by the high expenditure necessitated by the Korean war. In general, federal fiscal policy is expected to have not only a stabilizing influence on the economy, but also a stimulating effect on economic growth. Because of its very size, the defense expenditure becomes one crucial component of such fiscal politics.

Each of the controversies discussed above cannot be put to an empirical test with any ease, because the number of variables to be included is too large, while historical observations are too few. Yet generalizations can be made by isolating the central point of controversy and investigat-

ing the interrelationships among the key variables. In addition to the two sets of data already analyzed in the last chapter, some other political and economic variables have been selected and analyzed in an attempt to determine the potency of each controversial point by the use of correlational and regression methods. The socio-economic data are compiled from publicly available sources, though they were subjected to various forms of transformation appropriate for analysis.<sup>10</sup>

The first question was the extent to which national priority reflects political environment. This question can be answered on the basis of strength of association among different conceptual clusters, defined as national priority as expressed in presidential State of the Union messages, national priority as expressed in the budget, and socio-economic indicators that are supposed to measure the political environment. One difficulty is that the three concepts are multidimensional in nature. Even though some specific problems can be separated for purpose of analysis, recognition of the multidimensionality as a fact of reality underlies the three stages of analysis. The first stage is reduction of the variables into a smaller set of variables. The second was to measure the overall fit between the three sets of variables. The third was to analyze the relationship among a specified set of variables in some detail.

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<sup>10</sup>Socio-economic data were compiled from various sources:

Eighteen socio-economic variables were selected as indicators of political environment. A criterion in selecting the socio-economic variables was the relevance of the variable to the themes or goals that appear in State of the Union messages, as well as theoretical ground. As possible indicators of the foreign crisis perceived by decision-makers, this selection included the level of United States troops deployed abroad and the U. N. vote on the China problem, which is indicative of a changing international climate.

Note that in this analysis every variable is transformed into the yearly difference or change rate, except that the number of war dead and civil disturbances have been subjected to logarithmic transformation. Whatever functional simultaneous or lagged relationships they may have assumed, it is environmental conditions as they exist in each year that force decision-makers to make choices.

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GNP growth rate is based on "Flow Fund Accounts, 1945-1968," Federal Reserve Bulletin, Aug. 1970, A70 ff; balance of payments and gold stock data come from International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics (Washington, D.C.: IMF, 1950, 1956, 1964 and 1970); civil disturbance data are compiled and weighted by population from Aaron Wildavsky, Military Establishment (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 165-182; most of other data are based on Historical Statistics of the United States, from Colonial Times Through 1957, and its supplementary edition, Continuation to 1962 and Revisions (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964-1970); U. S. troops deployed abroad come from U.S., Dept. of Defense, U. S. Military Logistics (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government

Factor analysis was the method used to reduce the large number of variables into a smaller, more manageable set. The usefulness of factor analysis is this reduction of variables in terms of covariance. If a smaller number of original variables can be found which account for most of the variance, then considerable time and effort is saved. However, the exploratory factor analysis is only a preliminary phase of time series. Once the investigator has decided what the important variables are, he can investigate further the interrelations among them and the mechanism of their formation. A further advantage of factor analysis is that an individual unit of analysis ( a year in the case of this chapter), can be given a composite score in the factor space by weighing each variable in proportion to its contribution to the factor that represents the underlying construct. Such use of factor analysis is a combination of psychometric and scaling theories.

Seven dimensions of the changing environment were revealed by factor analysis. Based on this analysis, seven indices were selected as representing the seven dimensions of the environment, each of which is posited to vary independently of the others. The seven indices are as follows:

- (1) foreign crisis (annual change in the percentage of U.S. troops deployed abroad),
- (2) economic growth (real GNP growth rate),

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Office, 1970).

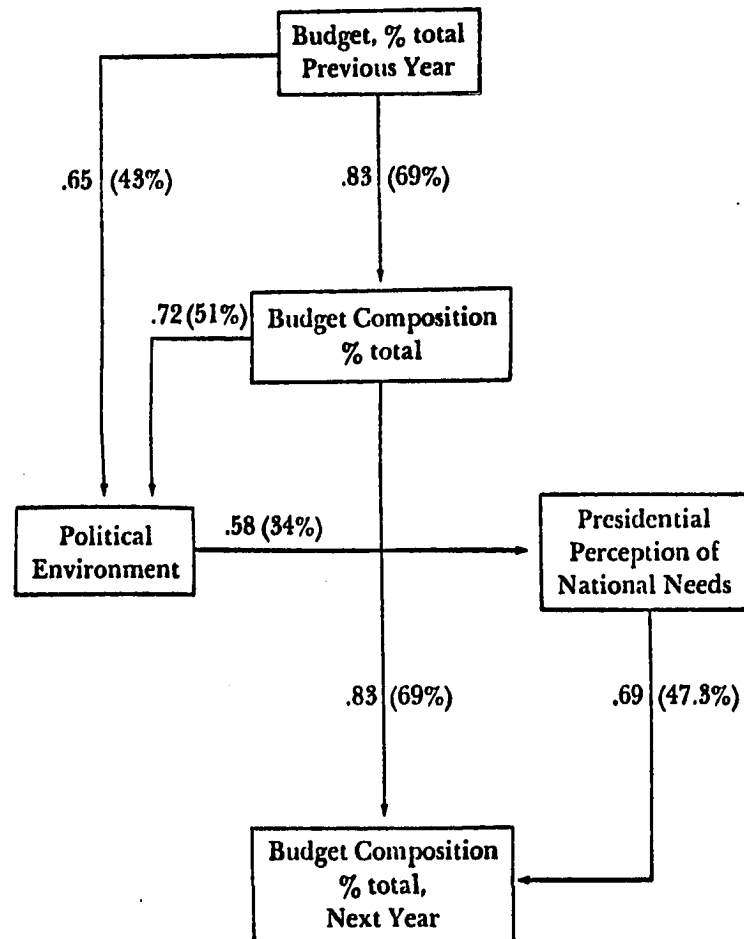
- (3) economic stability (annual change in consumer price index),
- (4) social instability (logarithmic value of the frequency of civil disturbances),
- (5) social frustration (divorce rate change),
- (6) international climate (change in percentage of U.N. vote in support of Red China), and
- (7) imbalance of trade (import/export rate)

Either the factor score or index selected can be analyzed on the basis of one's hypothesis specifying the relationships between each dimension of socio-economic environment and the indicators of national priority. The first important thing is to establish the overall relationship between budgetary allocation, perceived needs, and the environment. Depending upon how one views the causal direction, the close relationship may reveal the responsiveness of the priority system or impact of the system in interaction with the changing domestic and foreign environment. In an attempt to reveal such an interaction between the priority, perception, and environment, canonical analysis was conducted for factor scores of the three data sets, with appropriate time lag. The result is reported in Figure 6.1.

(Figure 6.1 here)

The goal of canonical analysis is to find the number of ways in which two sets of variables are related, the strength of relationships, and the nature of relationships so defined. The procedure makes it possible to determine the maximum correlation between a set of predictor variables

Figure 6.1  
Interaction of National Priorities with Environment



*Coefficients given are trace correlations from canonical analysis based on the factor scores of each data set. This criterion measures the overall goodness of fit between the two batteries of variables linked by arrows. The average percent of variance explained is given in each set of brackets.*

and a set of (rather than a single) criterion variables. The advantage of this method over multiple regression method is that the researcher is no longer required either to pick and choose among criteria in order to select the one which seems best to reflect the behavior being studied or to assign an arbitrary weight to create a single index out of a set of variables which is supposed to tap different aspects of a multidimensional concept. The logic is to define canonical variates and a linear transformation of each set of variables so that the new composite variable from one set correlates maximally with that of the other set.<sup>11</sup>

There are commonly two statistical criteria used to judge how good a fit is. The overall fit between two sets of variables is usually represented by "trace correlation," a mean variance explained. This measures how much variance between the criterion set of variables can be reproduced by the predictor set of variables. The second measure is canonical correlation between the corresponding canonical variates from each set, indicating the strength of the particular relationship.

The diagram in Figure 6.1 indicates the overall measure of fit between hypothesized dyads of the different factor

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<sup>11</sup> Rudolph J. Rummel, Factor Analysis (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970), 121-126; and, for general discussion of method, see W.W. Cooley and P.R. Lohnes, Multivariate Procedures for the Behavioral Sciences (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1962).

score sets. The result demonstrates a significant degree of interaction among budgets, perception, and environment. What is most striking is the staying power of the budgets. Sixty-nine percent of the variance in budget composition on three dimensions can be reproduced by knowledge of the budget last year. It is also shown that budgetary allocation has significant impact on the political environment of the same and the following year. The higher degree of association given for the same year might indicate that there is some feedback from the environment in the budgetary process.

In comparison with the staying power of the budget, it is indicated that a President's perceived needs have much less impact on the shape of final budget output. The trace canonical correlation between budget composition (1947-1972) and message length (1946-1971) turned out to be .69. In other words, 47 percent of variance in national priorities as expressed in budget composition can be explained by presidential perception of needs as expressed in the State of the Union messages.

The analysis indicates that the model of incremental decision-making holds better. Presidential priority, while having significant impact on budgetary composition, seems to be diluted by the counterveiling pressures in the bureaucratic process. In this connection, it is important to note that budgetary allocation has significant consequences on the socio-political environment. The table of canonical analysis for budget-environment interaction is reported in



Table 6.1. On the average, the 65 percent of variance in environment is explained by the composition of the budget last year.

(Table 6.1 here)

Some results of the canonical analysis deserve mentioning when the focus is on meaningful coefficients;

$$\begin{aligned}
 &.50 \text{ (Defense)} + .90 \text{ (Infrastrure)} \\
 &\Rightarrow .61 \text{ (Economic Recession)} + .88 \text{ (Social Frustration)} \\
 &\quad + .52 \text{ (Social Instability)} \\
 &\qquad\qquad\qquad (R^2 = .723)
 \end{aligned}$$

The analysis indicates that a weighted sum of defense expenditure and infrastructure tend to increase a weighted sum of social frustration, economic recession, and social instability. This does not support, at least as far as the United States is concerned, the theory that rational decision-makers are likely to engage in aggressive foreign behavior or building armaments in an attempt to divert domestic instability or frustration. On the contrary, this analysis tends to indicate that domestic instability or social frustration is likely to be followed by a decrease in the priority given to military spending, which implies that a political system is to a certain degree receptive to social demands. On the whole, however, it can be said that this receptiveness is rather marginal in the light of the large proportion of variance in defense spending which is explained by the shape of last year's priorities.

Table 6.1  
Interaction of National Priorities  
with Political Environment, 1946-1970  
- Canonical Analysis -

I. Impact of Budget Composition on Environment (one year lag)											
Budget Composition			Environment								
Defense	Infra-structure	Urban	Econ. Stability	Econ. Recession	Social Frustration	China	Foreign Crisis	Social Instability	Trade Imbalance	R	% Var. Explained
.50*	.90*	-.05	-.09	.61*	.88*	-.02	-.12	.52*	-.26	.85	72.3%
-.53*	.19	.87*	.36	-.81*	-.67*	-.26	.69*	.73*	.04	.59	34.8%
-.70*	.40	-.51*	.22	-1.19*	-.57*	.65*	-.20	.33	.29	.46	21.2%
II. Influence of Environment on Budget Composition											
Budget Composition			Environment								
.10	.92*	-.33	-.69*	.41	.00	-.05	-.24	-.53*	.13	.93	86.5%
-.67*	.32	.68*	-.40	.30	.33	.08	-.05	.79*	.06	.69	47.6%
.74*	.65*	.22	-.10	-.29	.29	-.15	.45	-.08	.77*	.50	25.0%

Coefficients given are canonical coefficients.  
Coefficients greater than .50 were asterisked for attention.  
Signs were adjusted.

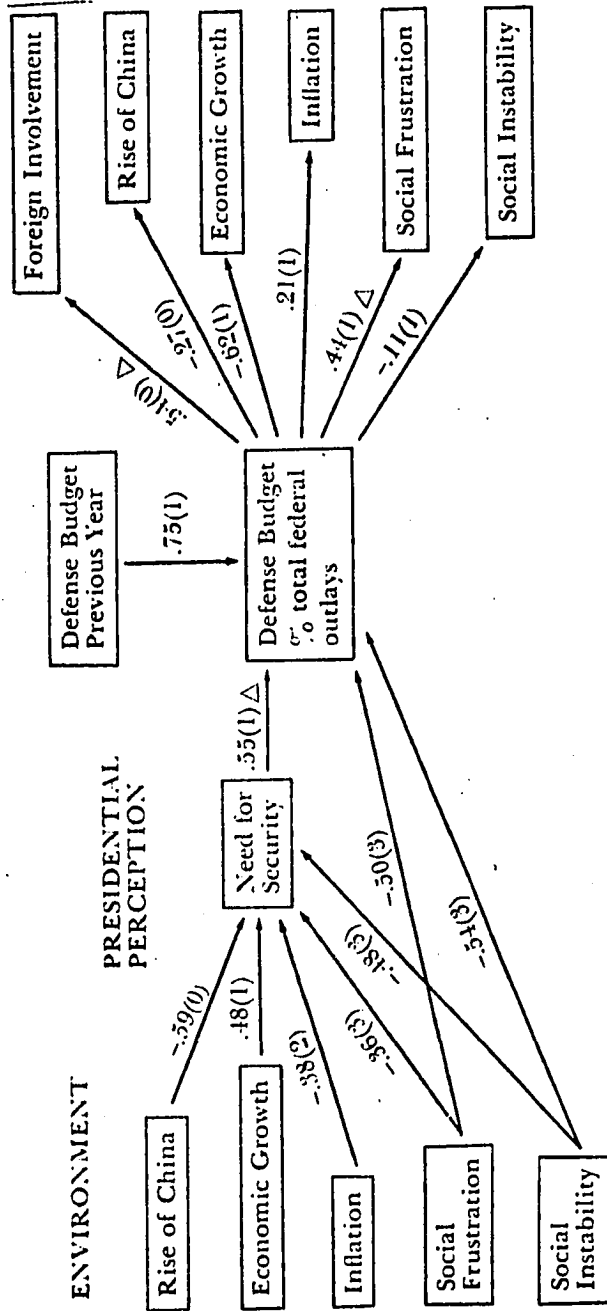
The bivariate relationships among selected original variables is partly revealed in the correlation coefficients presented in Figure 6.2. The focus was to highlight bivariate relationships between defense expenditure as percentage of total federal outlays and major environmental variables.

(Figure 6.2 here)

Bivariate linkages between the priority given defense and a multiplicity of hypothesized determinants of the environment, and the effect of these relationships are apparent in the diagram. Presidential perception of the need for national security explains about 30 percent of the defense expenditure. On the other hand, social instability tends to cause a decrease in the relative importance of defense expenditure and an increase in the relative importance of urban spending. Government infrastructure expenditure seems to be influenced by presidential emphasis on foreign assistance. It is to be recalled that in the factor analysis presented in chapter 5, international affairs and finance loaded on the factor of "infrastructure." Though not reported here, the analyses indicate that recession or economic instability tend to be associated with the relative importance of infrastructure spending. When the economic situation suggests the need for government action in fiscal policy or other measures, general government expenditure is likely to be increased.

As an alternative method to investigate, further, the

Figure 6.2  
Interaction of Defense Priority  
with Political Environment  
(1946-1970)



Correlation coefficients between two indicators linked by arrows are given with number of years lag in parentheses. Original variables were used as specified above. A small triangle ( $\Delta$ ) means that the bivariate correlation is based on annual difference of the defense budget as a percent of the total federal outlays.

relationships between defense, presidential perception of security needs, foreign crisis, and the environment, multiple regression was applied to a reduced number of variables from each of the original data sets. This topic will be discussed in some detail.

### Foreign Threat and Priority

Almost no American would argue that the United States has no need for a defense posture. There is a general consensus that it takes great cost and sacrifice for this nation to survive in the nuclear age. The real issue is, how much defense is enough to protect this nation and its vital interests at home and abroad from existing and potential threats from hostile forces. Though it is a difficult task to estimate the benefits and costs to society from additional federal expenditures, the problem of priority arises when national security is a matter of degree. If additional defense expenditures do not add to national security, such spending would be useless. Given the fundamental difficulty in this problem, it is not surprising that there occurs a recurring debate on this issue in and outside of the decision-making system.

A Hawk argues that the high priority given to national security, and thus high defense spending, has been necessitated by the foreign situation. The high cost has been, it is claimed, simply a response to foreign developments and is

necessary for national survival. What is implied in such an argument is the evident assumption that any additional buildup will contribute to national security. Military leaders or the military decision-makers representing the military establishment, because of their commitment to national security and their sensitivity to foreign threat, tend to reflect the perspective of a Hawk.<sup>12</sup> They tend to emphasize that a defense posture is essential under a mounting foreign threat. For instance, Defense Secretary Melvin Laird declared, in his first "posture statement," that "Never have the challenges to our national security exceeded in number and gravity those which we found on taking office," with the obvious conclusion that "any further cut of defense would be a very dangerous course." To press his point he pointed to a new Russian threat: "the Soviet Navy has more ships deployed away from the Soviet Union than ever before."<sup>13</sup>

A Dove follows a different logic. He emphasizes that an arms race is a mutual provocation. Therefore, to ward off a nuclear war that, if it ever happened, would leave no victor, a race for peace is suggested. High defense preparedness, it is often argued, contributes not to security, but to the "likelihood of resorting to military solutions. For instance, Richard Barnet put the point bluntly: "The

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<sup>12</sup>This seems to hold even after the war in Vietnam is over. Military officials tend to represent a Hawk's view. See Bruce Russett, "Political Perspectives of U.S. Military and Business Elite," Armed Forces and Society, 1 (Fall 1974),

policy of seeking national security through permanent war preparation and intermittent wars directly contributes to the crisis of planetary survival... It generates an atmosphere of conflict and competition in which the minimal measures of cooperation necessary to insure planetary survival become impossible."<sup>14</sup> Walter Reuter made the similar point: "It has become apparent that the massing of armies and armament leads to war, not to peace."<sup>15</sup>

C. Wright Mills may have been too simplistic when he prophesized in 1958 that the immediate cause of World War III is the preparation for it. His point is that the mere availability of plans and weapons is a temptation to use them: "It may be a temptation which is acceded to in a minority of instances, but it is enough to make the preparation for war an independent factor in creating it."<sup>16</sup> His view came to be believed by many more people when the war in Vietnam became unpopular. One interpretation of the war is that the policy of flexible response and counter-insurgency formulated during the Kennedy administration made U. S. involvement in the war feasible and inevitable. With strategies

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79-108.

<sup>13</sup>The New York Times, August 22, 1963.

<sup>14</sup>Richard Barnet, "Illusion of Security," Foreign Policy, 3, (Summer 1971), 34.

<sup>15</sup>Walter Reuter, "Goals for America," in Kenneth Boulding, eds., National Priorities (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1969), 66.

<sup>16</sup>C. Wright Mills, The Causes of World War III (New York:

worked out in such detail and with the forces at hand to implement them, "it is virtually inevitable that there will be a few occasions when the American government, whatever the rhetoric of its leaders, will be carried out across the brink to actual combat."<sup>17</sup>

This view also provides a revised interpretation of the Cuban Missile Crisis, which is generally believed to have succeeded because of U. S. nuclear superiority. Starting with the point that the "missile gap" was a myth, Ralph Lapp suggested that the U.S. had, by building more missiles than was necessary, induced the Soviets to do the same. His point is that Khrushchev's decision to invest missiles in Cuba in 1962 was not an insane gesture, but rather "an act of political desperation," designed to offset the U.S. missile advantage that existed in the early Sixties.<sup>18</sup>

History provides no data as to the correctness of one or the other of these theories in precipitating or averting a nuclear war. But in an attempt to test how these alternative theories fit into the real world situation, the defense budget can be studied in its relationship to foreign crisis. The difficulty, however, is that there is no agreed-upon

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Ballantine Books, 1960), 86.

<sup>17</sup>Sidney Lens, Military-Industrial Complex (Kansas: Pilgrim Press, 1970), 81.

<sup>18</sup>Ralph Lapp, Arms Beyond Control: The Tyranny of Weapons Technology (New York: Cowls, 1970), 7-10.



yardstick to measure foreign crisis.

Foreign crisis is basically a matter of perceived environment rather than an objective external state of affairs. Therefore it involves a cognitive process. One way to measure an unmeasurable environment is, as in the common practice of psychology, by observing the response of the subject to the environment to be measured.<sup>19</sup> When there is an international crisis judged to threaten vital interests, the nation will deploy more troops to foreign bases ready to fight a war or for any other contingency. Thus the changing level of troops deployed abroad in relation to the total military force will indicate the degree of military crisis or overseas involvement. The actual index used is the annual change in the percentage of U.S. troops abroad as a proportion of the total U.S. military force. Given the more or less tautological nature of the above indicator, presidential perception of security needs, as expressed in the State of the Union messages, was used as another indicator of foreign crisis. These two indices correlate .70.

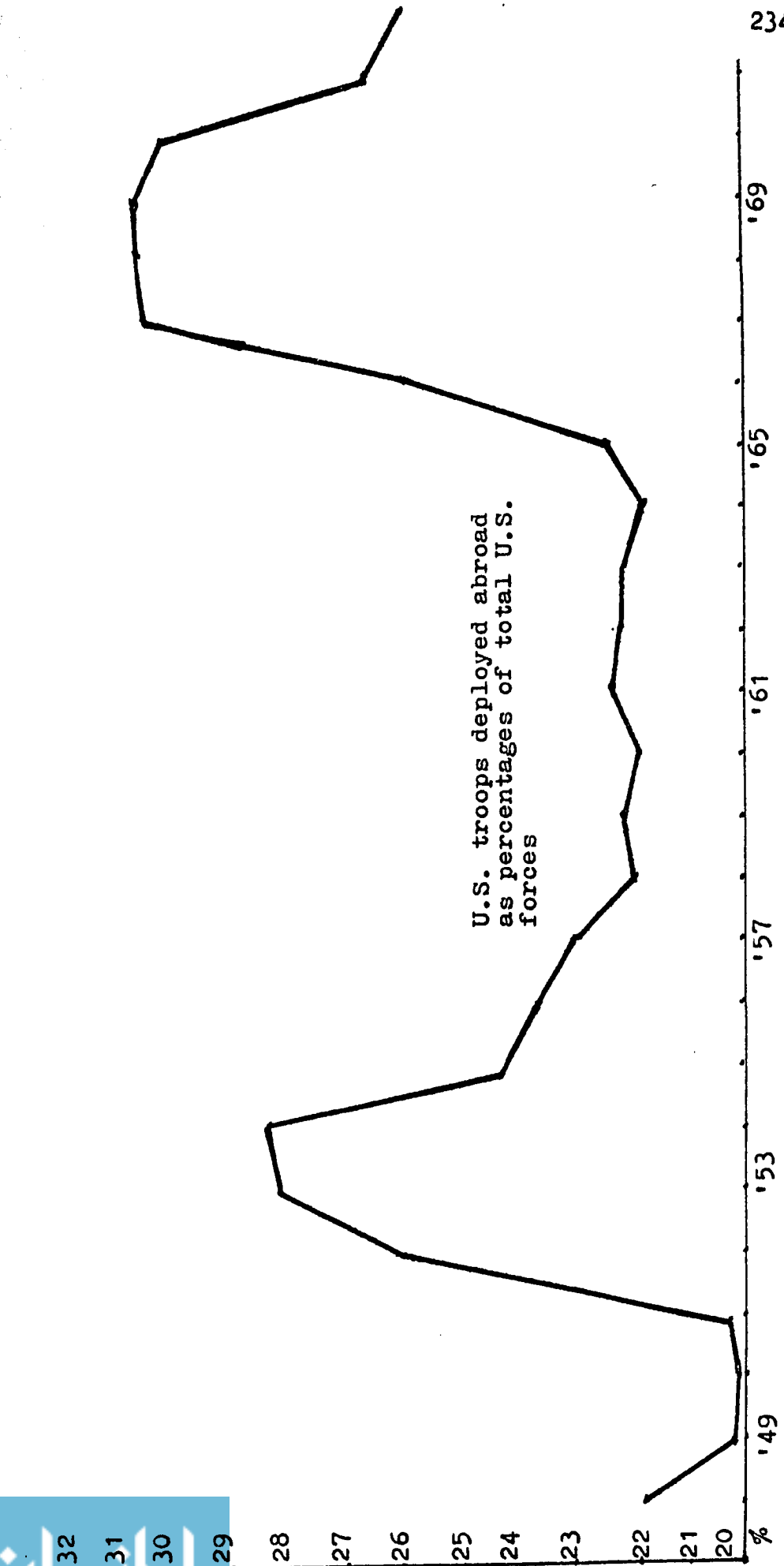
(Figure 6.3 here)

If a Hawk's position is indeed determined by his

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<sup>19</sup>For instance, a widely used method of attitude measurement is to let the subject report his response to some experimental stimuli. This is actually equivalent to "measuring attitude from behavior, since the report is a kind of overt behavior. See C. Kiesler, et al, Attitude Change (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1969), 23-38.

FIGURE 6.3. Changing Levels of Foreign Commitment



observation of external events, then the correlation between the defense budget and preceding foreign crisis will turn out to be high, since high defense expenditure is presumably only a response to the foreign environment. Conversely, if a Dove's argument holds, foreign crisis or overseas military involvement will follow, rather than precede, high military expenditures. One necessary assumption is that future events cannot cause precedent events.

The result of correlational analysis appears to support both the Hawks' and Doves' positions with some qualifications. First, there is some indication that defense expenditure varies, at least somewhat, with the President's perception of the need for security. The size of the defense budget in relation to the total federal budget is to some extent explained (30.3 percent) by fluctuations in the proportion of the State of the Union message devoted to discussing security. But defense expenditures do not show significant correlation with the President's view of security needs until the time-series effect, the effect of the previous budget upon the present one, is removed. The extent to which the defense budget is only marginally related to the President's perception of security needs is more evident when the defense budget as a percentage of the GNP, rather than as a percentage of the total federal budget, is used as an indicator of the priority given defense.

(Table 6.2 here)

Consequently, it seems fair to give partial credit to the

Table 6.2

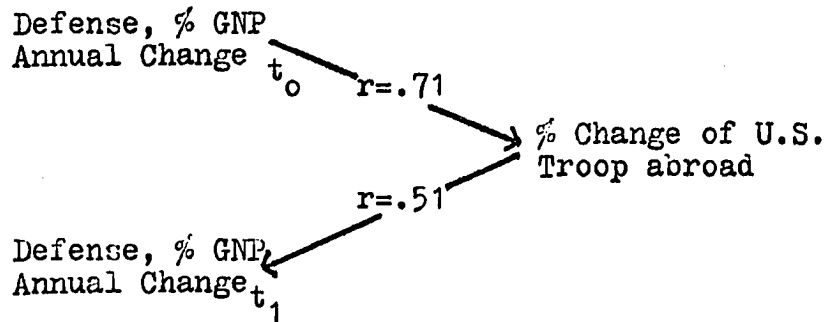
Regression of Defense Expenditures  
(1946-1972)

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	Defense as % of GNP	Defense as % of Budget (1)	Security Need (Message length (2)
Defense <sub>t-1</sub>		0.44 (0.057)	0.57 (0.13)	0.95 (0.07)
Security Need (Message length <sub>t-1</sub> )		0.10 (0.02)	0.31 (0.11)	
Economic Need (Message length <sub>t-1</sub> )				0.36 (0.31)
UN China vote				-0.98 (0.26)
Troops abroad <sub>t-1</sub> (%)			1.03 (0.42)	2.19 (1.11)
GNP growth rate <sub>t-1</sub>			1.93 (0.21)	1.00 (0.48)
Civil disturbance				-0.41 (2.37)
Constant		2.89	14.2	-13.26 22.54
R <sup>2</sup>		0.76	0.63	0.90 0.57

\*Standard errors are in parentheses.

Hawk's argument that high defense priority has been merely a response to the changing foreign environment and the security needs it has generated.

What is more important, however, is that there is persistent evidence that foreign crisis or overseas involvement, as indicated by an increase in the proportion of U.S. troops stationed abroad, is a consequence of high defense priority rather than its cause. After time-serial effects are removed from the variables, the following relationship persists between military priority and foreign involvement:



Note that the U.S. troop level abroad is "as of June 30" of each year, when the fiscal year ends. Awareness of the exact location of the variable in time is essential for possible causal inference. This empirical relationship tends to reinforce the Dove's position that intentions and actions of this country are largely responsible for foreign involvement. In exploring contingencies which might affect the vital interests of the United States under conditions of nuclear stalemate, the judgment and the policy choices of the decision-makers may well lead to a spiral of interaction between higher defense priorities and military solutions.

It might be true that Presidents, without enough diplomatic resources to rely on, resorted to military solutions on many occasions, even before they tried political and diplomatic methods in dealing with international crises. Given the discussion on bureaucratic politics, it is possible to argue that sufficient resources available to military planners and decision-makers mean actually the strength of the voice of the military perspectives and solutions in the national decision-making process.<sup>20</sup>

A possible explanation for the phenomenon of military spending seeming to cause foreign crises is psychological. High defense priority and expenditures will provide more plans and readiness. It is in this sense that Doves argue for reduction in defense spending: "Maybe the greatest risk from possessing a needlessly big military force is the temptation to use it too readily."<sup>21</sup> What is more important, however, is the vast expansion of the influence of the nation around the globe during this period. Without this factor it is

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<sup>20</sup> Charles Schultze discusses "the propensity of military planners to prepare against almost every conceivable contingency or risk." Charles Schultze, "Balancing Military and Civilian Programs," in Kenneth Boulding, National Priorities, 41. Note that the general purpose forces were built to fight simultaneously nuclear, conventional, and limited war. A definition of "threat" posed by a happening in a foreign land is likely to give weight to the judgment of professional military men.

<sup>21</sup> Russett, What Price Vigilance, 183.

difficult to explain why the decision-makers felt threatened by a local insurgency in the first place. The extension of interests and commitment on a global basis was possible with the resources that make the commitment feasible and credible.

Therefore, in addition to the staying power of the budget, another factor enters the picture, that is, the availability of resources stemming from the expansion of the total size of the economy. The third column in Table 6.2 shows that the relative size of the budget, as a percentage of the total federal expenditure, is significantly influenced by the presidential perception of economic needs as well as by the rate of the growth in Gross National Product. The equation indicates that with the effect of the previous year's defense budget and the level of relative troop strength abroad represented in the equation, the GNP growth rate and the presidential discussion of economic problems have significant independent impacts on the total size of the defense budget as a percentage of the total federal expenditure. The equation explains ninety percent of variance in the defense budget, with all the coefficients remaining significant. When the economy is expanding, the country can afford to spend more on defense. This is why an arms-race model fails to establish a correlation between U.S. defense expenditures and the corresponding measure of the Soviet defense.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Henry Nash, American Foreign Policy: A Response to A Sense of Threat (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1973), 169.

This point is further supported by the fourth equation in the table, where presidential emphasis on security is used as a dependent variable in a regression of several environment variables. Recalling that presidential perception of security needs has some, even if marginal, impact on the size and proportion of defense spending, it is worthwhile to note that presidential security emphasis is significantly influenced by the size of the economic growth, together with foreign commitment and the change in the international environment as indicated by the rise of the Red China. On the other hand, the domestic troubles indicated by the frequency of civil disturbance has a negative impact on presidential emphasis on national security. This analysis supports the earlier analysis that a President can afford to seek foreign goals and interests when there is less domestic trouble.

The expanding economy can not only provide resources to fulfill foreign commitments, but also may create a buoyant mood and activism, contributing to the reduction of bureaucratic conflict over the size of the budget. While the size of the national pie is growing, the game is not a conflict characterized by a zero-sum game. This analysis fits particularly the policy of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations who went on the assumption that "guns and butter" can be achieved at the same time. When one reverses the causal direction, however, it becomes another matter of controversy: the impact of defense spending on economic growth.



## Opportunity Cost of Defense

One focus of controversy between fiscal activism and conservatism is whether defense spending preempts national resources or whether it increases economic prosperity. Unlike the earlier analysis, this question brings up operational theory about the consequences of defense spending instead of causes. As far as decision-makers act on the belief, the size of defense spending is well explained. But validity of a theory operating in policy-making should be proved by bringing about the desired consequences predicted by the theory. In this sense, it is important to investigate the consequences rather than causes of defense spending.

Keynsian theory states that government spending can play a role in the economy when the economic growth is sluggish. But because government spending is limited by domestic politics or traditional fear of an unbalanced budget, some economists suggested that the economy can receive the stimulus it needs from defense expenditure.<sup>23</sup>

The theoretical argument is that resources will remain idle if their use is not prompted by effective creation of aggregate demand. Kennedy and Johnson were supposedly the two Presidents who took the Keynsian theory to heart.<sup>24</sup> Yet

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<sup>23</sup>James Tobin, National Economic Policy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), 60; Murray Weidenbaum, Modern Public Sector (New York: Basic Books, 1969), passim.

<sup>24</sup>Charles L. Cole, The Economic Fabric of Society (New

some Keynesian economists argue that not all public spending is beneficial.<sup>25</sup> It is a common belief, however, that if defense spending goes down abruptly, it will create difficulties in new sectors of the economy and certain cities and regions that are deeply dependent on military contracts.

The data show that, with a six month's lag, the unemployment rate is negatively associated with defense expenditure as a percentage of the GNP, statistically significant at the .05 level. However, if the effect of the trend which unemployment statistics have shown over a long period of time is removed, this relationship almost disappears. Thus, it is hard to credit defense expenditure with a positive effect on unemployment.

There is, however, considerable indication that defense expenditure is detrimental to the real GNP growth rate. For the period of 1946-1969, 61 percent of the variation in the real GNP growth rate can be related inversely to defense expenditure as a percentage of the GNP. Note that the one year lag makes the difference, because the relationship within the same year is positive as explained in the last section.

#### Linear Regression

Independent Variable: Defense Expenditure as % of GNP  
(1946-1969) -one year lag-

Dependent Variable	Regression Coefficients	% variance
Real GNP Growth Rate	-.49**	61%**
Consumer Price Index	.24*	22%

\*\*significant at .01 level

\*significant at .05 level

This relationship holds when defense as a percentage of federal budget is used as the independent variable. The equation becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Annual GNP} &= 12.97 - .19 \text{ Defense \%} + e \\ \text{Growth Rate} & \quad \quad \quad (.05) \text{ Budget } t-1 \end{aligned}$$

$$R^2 = .38$$

The negative impact of defense spending on economic growth is thus clearly visible. Explanations are many. First of all, it would be misleading to say that a high priority on defense expenditure was the product of a deliberate fiscal policy. The high level of defense spending has been primarily brought about by sudden foreign crises, war, and commitments abroad. This has complicated fiscal-monetary policy.

An official view has been that American prosperity does not depend on the defense buildup and would not need high military spending to support it in peace time: "The cost of war has been a load for the economy to carry - not a supporting 'prop'."<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>For example, James Tobin points out that "demand can be expanded in ways that do not accelerate, indeed even retard growth in capacity itself." Tobin, National Economic Policy, 94.

<sup>26</sup>Report to the President, from the Cabinet Coordinating Committee on Economic Planning for the End of Vietnam Hostilities, 1968, 187.

It may be true that a sharp cut in defense spending would cause transitional unemployment in areas with a high proportion of defense industry. It is recognized that military contracts go to a highly concentrated market, with a relatively small group of companies doing most of the business. For this reason most of the increases, if any, in domestic employment caused by defense spending tend to be centered in industrialized areas where the labor force and the industrial base are likely to be mobile, and which would therefore be able to adapt fairly quickly to change. This is perhaps the reason why the decrease in the relative importance of the defense budget is not highly correlated with unemployment as a national aggregate.

Next, it is conceivable that the diversion of productive investment in human resources such as manpower training, education, and health, to investment in defense as shown above, is responsible particularly for the subsequent low GNP growth rate. The loss in productivity during the war years is demonstrated by statistics. During the late Fifties and early Sixties, the rate of growth of output per man-hour was 3.2 percent on the average; but in some of the major Vietnam war years the rate fell to .08 percent in 1969 and 2.0 percent in 1967, though the year 1968 showed a good performance of 3.3 percent.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>The Review of Radical Political Economics, special issue (August 1970), 2.

When high defense expenditure has resulted from sudden war or other such foreign commitment, it has eventually involved a problem of conversion to peacetime, which has complicated the task of fiscal and monetary policy. A war usually necessitates mobilization of resources and their diversion from a consumer-oriented economy to use in effectively prosecuting the war. When the war ends, the economy naturally faces the basic problem of detaching itself from government control or direction.

These arguments tend to be proven valid because the data demonstrate the strong negative correlation between the level of defense spending and the real GNP growth rate.

The belief that high defense spending is essential for economic prosperity often stems from the widely-shared observation that World War II solved the Great Depression; it is said that the need for war production and mobilization enabled the government "to spend itself out of the Depression."<sup>28</sup> However, this lesson, which ignores enormous powers of the President to control the economy during the war period, is at variance with the relationship described above between defense spending and real economic growth in the postwar era.

A comparison with other economics will illumine this point further. For 22 western countries, including Japan,

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<sup>28</sup>Cole, Economic Fabric, 224.

Pearsonian product moment correlation coefficients were calculated as a measure of association between defense spending and economic growth. If war production or a high defense budget were essential for the economic viability of a mature capitalist state, then the countries with the most heavy military spending would show high rates of economic growth.<sup>29</sup>

(Table 6.3 here)

This hypothesis does not hold true in most of the European countries, as shown in Table 6.3. They demonstrated far better economic growth rates than the United States, with much lower defense spending than the United States, because they relied on the U.S. Military shield. The average growth rate of 22 western capitalist political systems, including Japan, for 1950-1960 was 4.61 percent, with an

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<sup>29</sup>The data are from Charles L. Taylor and Michael C. Hudson, World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972, 2nd edition). A caveat is in order in interpreting this table, since the data for GNP growth rate precede the data for defense spending from the point of view of time. GNP growth rate is an annual average for the period ending in 1965, whereas defense expenditure is for 1965 alone. Thus the point argued in the text is relevant to this table when the defense expenditure in 1965 is interpreted as not different considerably from the overall level of defense spending through the period.

Table 6.3

Correlation Coefficients between Defense Spending and Economic Growth for 21 Western Democracies

Indices of defense expenditure	Indices of GNP Growth Rate		
	Average 60-65	Average 50-65	per capita 50-65
per capita 1965	-.31	-.14	-.15
% of GNP* 1965	-.29	-.17	-.13
% of GNP** 1965	-.35	-.13	-.13

(No coefficient is statistically significant.)

\* U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency Figures.

\*\* Institute of Strategic Studies Figures.

Notes: Countries included in this analysis are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, West Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, New Zealand, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The data are based on Charles Taylor and Michael Hudson, World Handbook of Political and Social Indicators, (and ed; New Haven, Yale University Press, 1972).

average of only 3.3 percent of the national output used for defense purpose. The correlation between defense expenditures and the economic growth rate of western political systems turns out to be negative, but statistically insignificant. For example, West Germany, which in one year allocated 4.1 percent of its total national output to defense, showed a 5.3 percent growth rate in output per employee. This was almost double that of the United States. Japan, with defense spending only 1.0 percent of its total output, achieved a 7.7 percent rate in the same year.

The impact of a high military priority on the American economy is notable in the postwar years, 1946, 1954, 1967, and 1969. Because the magic of compound interest makes a small difference in the GNP growth rate much bigger and more meaningful in the future, the burden of heavy defense expenditure falls on both present and future generations by retarding economic growth. It is hardly surprising, then, that many people came to have unfavorable attitudes toward defense expenditures.

#### Incrementalism

Then what is the picture of defense expenditure, when it is considered as a dependent variable, since decision-makers are presumably responding to the changing environment? What are the primary causes of defense spending? In the data there is no evidence that defense spending is in-



creased to solve the unemployment problem. The unemployment rate correlates  $-.45$  with the next year's defense budget as a percentage of the GNP. On the contrary, the data indicate that since World War II the defense buildup has happened when the economy was in full gear. It is possible to reason that a decision-maker can afford to be more sensitive to foreign developments when the economy has no serious problems. The Vietnam buildup provides a good example; it happened when the economy had shown its longest, and most balanced growth in history. Because of the defense buildup, it is pointed out in one official view, fiscal-monetary policy has been handicapped.

It is evident that defense expenditure depends only partially on foreign crisis, and that it seems to generate more foreign involvement, with a severe negative impact on economic prosperity. Then what explains the high level of defense expenditure? Much of the explanation seems to lie in the phenomenon of bureaucratic inertia, called "gradualism."

There is a well-taken argument that the budgetary process is incremental, not a "zero-sum budgeting."<sup>30</sup> It is argued that the largest determining factor of the size and content of this year's budget is last year's, with special

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<sup>30</sup> Aaron Wildavsky, The Politics of the Budgetary Process (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1964), 13.

attention given to a narrow range of increase or decrease. In the case of defense budgeting, Benson deploras such a situation:

The Defense Department budgeting process virtually concedes last year's amount and focuses on whatever incremental changes have been requested. The result, of course, is higher budgets, with past year's errors compounded year after year." 31

This is not peculiar to the defense budget. All items of the budget show significantly systematic autocorrelation. On the average, 70 percent of the variation of each expenditure can be predicted by its previous value.

Once a commitment to a defense program is made, the momentum is often too great for it to be subjected to complete reevaluation or control. Actually, the Bureau of the Budget applies different rules to military budget recommendations from those it uses to control civilian programs.<sup>32</sup>

The data show that 89 percent of the variation in the defense budget can be predicted by a simple equation for the 1947-1971 data (The statistical significance of a coefficient is indicated by the standard error in parenthesis, since the coefficient divided by the standard error gives

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<sup>31</sup>As quoted by William Proxmire in Kenneth Boulding, National Priorities, 129.

<sup>32</sup>President Nixon officially ruled that the defense budget must be subjected to reevaluation by the Bureau of the Budget. See Yarmonlinsky, Military Establishment, 87.

the t-test score, e denotes random error).

$$D_t = \frac{.55}{(.05)} D_{t-1} + \frac{.09}{(.02)} S_{t-1} + \frac{.35}{(.07)} G_t + .97 + e$$

where,

D denotes Defense Budget as a percent of the GNP,  
 S, percent of Security Emphasis in presidential State of the Union message, and  
 G, GNP growth rate.

This equation can be put in verbal terms: the relative size of the defense expenditure is determined by the previous year's budget's share of the Gross National Product, security needs as perceived by the President, and the rate of economic growth, with previous defense expenditure being by far the most important item.

In the final analysis, the extent to which the defense budget is determined by previous budgets, incrementalism may be entrenched in the ideals or values of this democratic system, as it is justified by complex institutional arrangements, and partially by the need for continuity of policy. But, in the face of the mounting evidence that national choices of policy have an impact which results in significant feedback to the environment, a call for reordering national priorities is not irrelevant in the light of the way the system of assigning priorities, with both its costs and its benefits, has worked during the last three decades.

Richard Barnet raises, if in somewhat harsh words, an important choice before the nation:

Can we change America's present destructive definition of national security without dismantling the bureaucratic structures which promote a military definition of the national interests? Can we still have a military establishment anything like the present one without continuing to have an interventionist policy? 33

Given this incremental nature of budgetary process, it is not certain how a President can make a sharp departure from earlier administration. The five Presidents during the period have applied different approaches to the bureaucratic process. President Eisenhower, for example, allegedly fixed a ceiling on defense expenditures, the division of which was left to conflict and consensus among the representatives from each service with the result of inter-service rivalry. President Kennedy introduced a rational method, that is, determination of program on its own merit, which resulted in an expanded budget.

The experience of President Nixon who freed key foreign policy decision-making from existing bureaucratic apparatus and concentrated it in the White House staff, led many observers to conclude that a President still had the power to dominate foreign and defense policy. It should be pointed out, however, that the President's mastery of decisions was greatest where policy depends least upon bureaucratic organization for its execution. Summit meetings with foreign heads of state or preparation of a new policy statement could be easily arranged without involving national resources

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<sup>33</sup>Barnet, "Illusion of Security," 84-85.

or bureaucratic organization. A doubt was raised whether Nixon did really effectively get around the bureaucratic maze in the determination of national priorities.

This discussion of incrementalism built in the system should not detract from the main thrust of analysis in this chapter. Even if incremental, the national priority interacts more or less closely with domestic and foreign environment. A President has some impact on the budgetary allocation, which becomes notable only when changes over a period of years are observed. Impact of foreign commitments on the economy is further analyzed in Chapter Seven, for the period of the Vietnam war.

#### Summary

This chapter analyzed interrelationships between three conceptual clusters: national priority as expressed in the budget, national priority as expressed in the presidential State of the Union message, and the politico-economic environment, with a focus on causes and consequences of defense spending. The overall conclusion to be drawn is that budgetary allocations are receptive to presidential perception as well as changes in environment, while the impact is still marginal due to incrementalism built into bureaucratic politics. Impact of defense spending on the

economy is negative, because the data show that defense spending hurts economic growth. The result supports the notion that when the economy is expanding, the President and military decision-makers can afford to spend more on defense with a result of increased foreign commitment, which in turn creates economic instability.

## Chapter Seven

### Presidents and Vietnam

"We know that at the hour of decision in public and private life, faced with the tormenting choices that are always a part of man's destiny, none of us can ever be certain that we are right."  
Lyndon B. Johnson

The purpose of this chapter is to apply the perspectives presented in earlier chapters to the United States policy in Vietnam. The focus of analysis is the pattern of interaction between the Presidents and the public during the war period. Emphasis will be placed on the impact of domestic economic conditions on political support, which invariably influenced the conduct of the war by Presidents Johnson and Nixon.

The quantitative materials in this chapter will be primarily drawn from an earlier study by Jong Lee and Jeffrey Milstein on the military process of the war.<sup>1</sup> Because the original study, based on a system of simultaneous equations, was primarily concerned with explanations and predictions of the military interactions between the United States, South Vietnam, and the Communist forces, there is no need to duplicate the whole study here. Nevertheless, some of

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<sup>1</sup>Jong R. Lee and Jeffrey Milstein, "A Political Economy of the Vietnam War, 1965-1972," International Peace Science Society Papers, 21 (1973-1974), 41-63.

the findings deserve reexamination, because the study highlighted some important aspects of the limit-setting role of public opinion in foreign policy. In addition, the study relied on monthly data on the war and the national economy, which provided a firm basis for quantitative analysis.

The problem is not simply whether the public attitude affected the presidential decisions, but to what extent and through what process it influenced the course of the war. With appropriate aid from historical and public opinion data, this chapter will examine the importance of deteriorating economic conditions on erosion of political support, which in turn led to the eventual withdrawal of American troops.

#### National Commitments in Vietnam

The war in Vietnam has become one of the most crucial experiences of the American people, not only in terms of length and costs, but also in terms of political conflict and debate it generated within the country. Though the war is over, in terms of direct American military involvement, controversies persist as to why the country got involved in the lengthy war, who bore the principal responsibility for the involvement, and what will be the impact on the future shape of United States foreign policy. Answers



to these questions will differ greatly, depending upon how one interprets the public support of presidential policy during the period from 1965 to 1972, when American troops were directly engaged in military operations in Vietnam. The tumultuous period was presided over by two Presidents, who differed in personality, party, and policy outlook. Both Presidents, however, pursued the basic guidelines of United States foreign policy they had inherited from earlier administrations. The American involvement in Vietnam was so long and so persistent that we may well call it national commitment.

It is somewhat obscure which President made the most critical decision on national commitment in Vietnam. For most of the cold war period, the United States waged war in Indochina directly or by proxy. Thousands of small and important decisions were made by a number of people during that period in response to complex factors that seldom remained static.

The Pentagon Papers traces United States involvement back to the Truman administration's decision to give military aid to France in her colonial war against the Communist-led Viet Min. Essentially, the goal of preventing the collapse of South Vietnam and, with it, all of Southeast Asia was established by the Eisenhower administration which committed direct military and economic aid to support the weak Ngo Din Dien government. History demonstrates that

the successive administrations developed a sense of commitment to a non-Communist Vietnam, a readiness to fight the North in order to protect the South, and a direct military escalation.<sup>2</sup>

No matter how one may differ in evaluating American policy in Vietnam, it seems clear that there has been a consistent United States policy throughout the Third World during the cold war period. It is pointed out that the basic policy behind the Vietnam intervention was the Truman Doctrine that was developed and applied to the case of Greece and Turkey.<sup>3</sup> This doctrine became a "high policy" in translating ambiguous concepts of national security to concrete intermediate policy goals in response to a sense of threat from communism in other areas of the world.

What we usually call the "domino theory" falls basically within the broad definition of national security in the postwar context. United States policy in Vietnam is merely one case, undoubtedly the most important one, of such foreign policy doctrine. It remained virtually intact during the Johnson and Nixon administrations, even though the strategy and priority changed in association with the

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<sup>2</sup>The New York Times, ed. The Pentagon Papers (New York: Bantam Books, Inc., 1971).

<sup>3</sup>Paul Seabury, Power, Freedom and Diplomacy (New York: Random House, 1963), 291 ff.

domestic problems and local situations.

The consistency of goals in Vietnam between the two administrations is more than apparent in the close parallel in verbal emphasis of the two Presidents. Examples are given in Table 7.1.

(Table 7.1 here)

At times, verbal behavior may not be consistent with actual policy behavior. But at least the verbal behavior may reflect either the policy preference or belief of the speaker, or what the speaker believes will be the belief of the audience. In any event, the statement reveals the continuity in United States commitment in Vietnam, which had been widely supported throughout the cold war period.

It is one question to ask why different Presidents failed to reconsider American goals. It is quite another to ask what means have been used to achieve those goals. The first question is basically explained by the cyclic theory that was presented in Chapter 2 on national mood. It is only the second question that is analyzed here. By establishing constancy of goals, we can examine the change of means as a response to changing international and domestic conditions. Simply put, the responses of American Presidents at all times have been to alter the means; that is, to change the nature of United States military involvement. At most important junctures of the war (the fall of Diem, the Tonkin Gulf incident, the Tet offensive, and changes of administration), the goal of sustaining the

Table 7.1

Consistency of U.S. Policy in Vietnam:  
Verbal emphasis of Presidents

	<u>President Johnson</u>	<u>President Nixon</u>
1. Commitment	"A friendly nation has asked us for help against communist aggression." (Jan. 25, 1965)	"In response to the request of the government of South Vietnam, President Eisenhower sent economic and military equipment." (Nov. 24, 1969)
2. Policy Goal	"The people of South Vietnam will be given the chance to work out their destiny in their own way." (July 25, 1966)	"We seek the opportunity for the South Vietnamese people to determine their own political future without outside interference." (March 9, 1970)
3. Anti-communism	"We have been engaged in a struggle in South East Asia to stop the onrushing tide of communist aggression." (April 8, 1968)	"America has sacrificed for the right of 18 million people in a far-away land to avoid the imposition of communist rule against their will." (May 11, 1970)

South Vietnam government was preserved, although operational goals and means changed depending on situational factors which can be easily observed and measured.<sup>4</sup>

The brief overview suggests that the war in Vietnam -- presidential actions as well as public reactions-- can be analyzed in terms of costs in blood and treasure to the nation. The point to be stressed is that, with the goals remaining constant, the changing level of military commitment can be described as a function of costs which interact closely with the military situation in Vietnam.

In accordance with previous chapters, we can postulate the role of the President as a problem-solver for the nation. Obviously, we cannot enumerate the thousands of specific decisions or factors that shaped these decisions. Instead, we can discuss contours of United States actions in terms of the general trend of escalation and deescalation. The basic framework of analysis was based on identification of four categories of factors that interacted with each other

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<sup>4</sup>Jeffrey S. Milstein and William C. Mitchell, "Dynamics of the Vietnam War," in Walter Isard, ed., Vietnam: Issues and Alternatives (New York: Shenkman Publishing Co., 1969); and Jeffrey S. Milstein, Dynamics of the Vietnam War: A Quantitative Analysis and Predictive Computer Simulation (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1973). An impressionistic account of the early phase of the war suggests that calculation of the costs and risks of particular actions and the assignment of relative priorities change in the course of military conflict. See William Simons, "The Vietnam Inter-

during the war period: political support, military outcomes, economic conditions, and the situation in Vietnam.

The original empirical model estimated was a very complex one that included thirteen dependent variables. Only those parts directly related with the President and the public can be separated and discussed. The basic relationships for the United States policy can be presented in a simplified diagrammatic form as follows, with causal direction indicated by arrows.

(Figure 7.1 here)

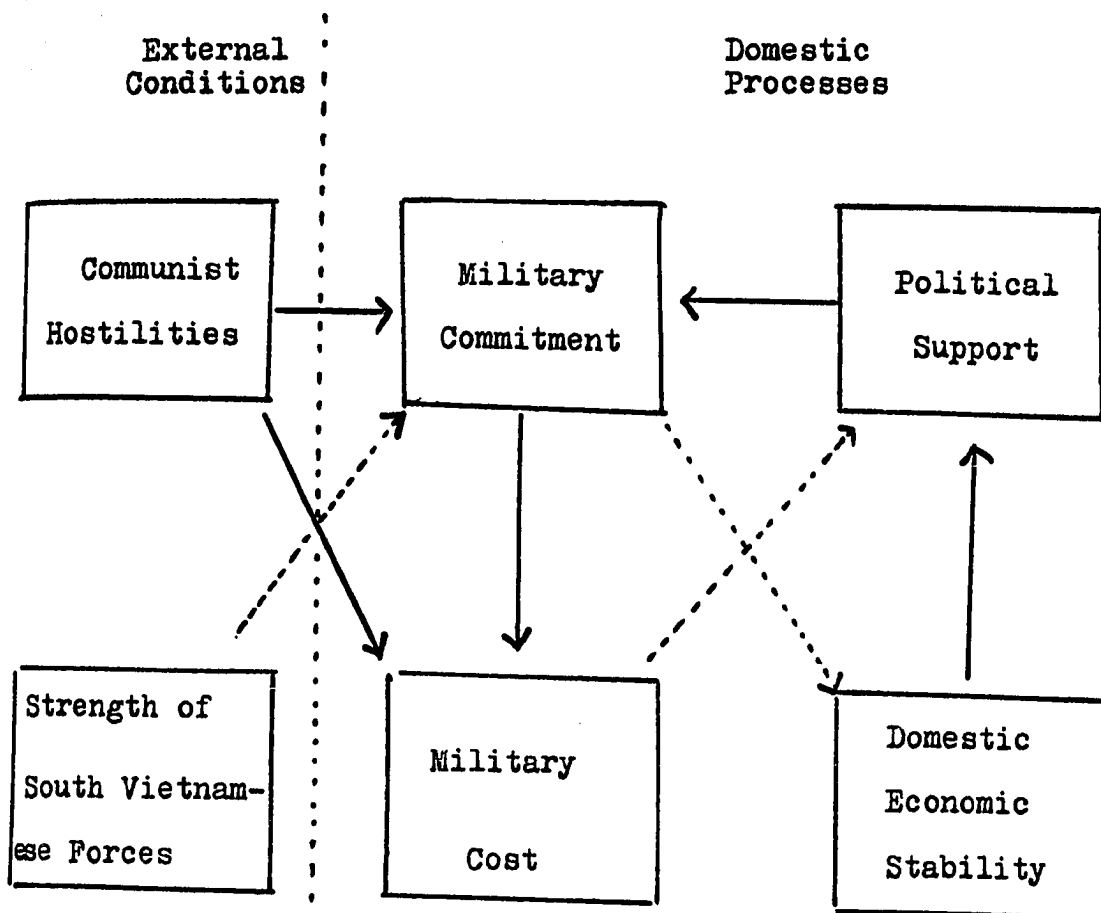
The empirical analysis reported here will be divided into three parts. First we look at how United States casualties and deterioration in domestic economic conditions were related to the public support of a President. Second, we will look at what impact the changing level of public support had on troop commitment and the size of American casualties, in association with Vietnamization of the war. The third part tests the hypothesis that heavy commitment of national resources to the war had an adverse effect on the sound operation of the national economy, particularly on inflation with a focus on the implications of such an adverse effect on presidential choice.

All the results are reported in the form of regression equations, estimated by the two-stage least squares method

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vention, 1964-65," in Alexander George, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1971), 200.

Figure 7.1  
Military-Economic Hypotheses



Note: Arrows indicate hypothesized direction of influence; solid arrows indicate direct relationships, whereas dotted arrows specify undesirable side effects.

for the period of January 1965 - May 1972, on the basis of monthly data.<sup>5</sup>

### Political Support

Numerous studies on public opinion during the Vietnamese war have shown that support of the war was in general decline, although there was some fluctuation in response to dramatic events and progress in Vietnam. As a trend, more and more people came to judge the U. S. involvement in the war a mistake. One important fact is that despite great differences of opinion among subgroups within the nation, the pattern of change in public support over time demonstrate striking parallels across different subgroups in society. That is, all of the subgroups (Republicans and Democrats, blacks and whites, and northerners and southerners) showed similar ups and downs in supporting the war.

This point becomes visible in trends of war support

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<sup>5</sup>Methods used here are described well in J. Johnston, Econometric Methods (New York: McGraw-Hill Co., 1963), 231-274; and Henry Theil, Principles of Econometrics (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1971), 429-483. The public opinion data are based on George Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1972, 3 volumes (New York: Random House, 1972). and The American Institute of Public Opinion, The Opinion Index, monthly issues. The economic indicators come from U. S., Bureau of Commerce, Survey of Current Business (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office),



broken down by subgroups in the study of John Mueller, though he did not make an explicit point about the similar shape over time.<sup>6</sup> In spite of widespread dissatisfaction, however, the war went on and it is difficult to assess the impact of public opinion on its conduct. The relation between public opinion and presidential policy was partly complicated by the people's tendency to follow the President's judgment without definite information. Because of this, many researchers have concluded that the President is freer in handling the war issues.<sup>7</sup> Particularly, the experience of the Nixon administration appeared to show that the public was supporting the war effort, as he extended the war into North Vietnam.

If public support for the war had no direct bearing on many specific Vietnam decisions, it may still have influenced overall direction of the policy in its contour. It might be suggested that what was important for the President and his advisors was not merely public approval of specific policy, but overall political support. Citizens

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monthly issues.

<sup>6</sup>John Mueller, "Trends in Popular Support for the Wars in Korea and Vietnam," American Political Science Review, 65 (June 1971); and President, War and Public Opinion

<sup>7</sup>Seymour Martin Lipset, "The President, the Polls, and Vietnam," in Naomi Rosenbaum, ed., Readings on the International Political System (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1970), 74.

may disagree with a particular policy yet still approve of the President in terms of other areas of policy performance or expectation, given the various problems facing the country and cross-cutting nature of public opinion. The impact of public opinion boils down to the question of how important the war was in a citizen's general decision to approve or reject a President.

The variable used for "political support" in the United States was the difference between positive and negative responses to the Gallup Poll question, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way the President is handling his job?" The Vietnam issue must have been one of the most important factors in accounting for the change in the indicator of political support, but it was not the only factor. As previous studies demonstrate, public support in one area may spill over to other areas so that it becomes important for a President to maintain an overall support on the basis of public confidence. One basic hypothesis is that political support depends, to a large extent, upon the objective conditions of the economy as well as the cost of military involvements.

One vivid indicator of military cost was the number of American soldiers killed in action. This variable was transformed into a logarithmic value in an attempt to reduce the effect of extreme values. Important indicators of economic conditions that were hypothesized to influence political support were unemployment, inflation, and personal

income. Unemployment was represented as the percentage of unemployed per 1,000 civilian labor force. The variable for inflation was the annual percentage change of consumer price index. Personal income was also transformed into the annual percentage change. In addition, a dummy variable was included to distinguish the Nixon administration from Johnson's, taking the value of 1 for Nixon, and 0 otherwise. The equation developed follows, with standard errors in parentheses:

$$\begin{array}{rclclcl}
 \text{U.S.} & & \text{U.S.} & & \text{Un-} & & \text{In-} \\
 \text{Public} & = & \text{Casual-} & - & \text{employ-} & - & \text{fla-} \\
 \text{Support} & & \text{ties} & & \text{ment} & & \text{tion} \\
 & & (2.4) & & (0.3) & & (2.5) \\
 & & & & & & \\
 & & -.02 & \text{Income} & + & 46 & \text{Nixon} & + & 140 \\
 & & (1.90) & & & (7) & & & \\
 & & & & & & & & \dots\dots\dots (7.1)
 \end{array}$$

The equation shows that political support for each President tends to be well predicted by the cost of the war in blood and economic conditions. It indicates that public approval of the President is systematically affected by the number of the casualties and the objective state of inflation and unemployment. All the coefficients turn out significant with expected signs, with the exception of "real personal income" which proves to be redundant because of its intercorrelation with inflation and unemployment. The extremely large coefficient for the dummy variable representing Nixon's administration indicates that there might have been significant change in the liability of

Vietnam. Nixon came to power with a pledge to end the war. It is understandable that the Vietnam war was not an unbearable burden for him to carry. The fact remains, however, that once this idiosyncrasy is taken into account, political support was systematically influenced by military casualties and economic conditions.

#### U. S. Military Commitment

One of the most important indicators of U.S. involvement was the level of U.S. troops fighting in South Vietnam. Though funds for troops should be appropriated by Congress, decisions on troop levels rest with the President as the constitutional commander-in-chief. As will be discussed later, Congress in general provided full support for the war effort in Vietnam. The level of troops was basically determined by domestic pressure to reduce U.S. casualties in association with the military conditions that prevailed in Vietnam, given the basic policy goal of sustaining anti-Communist government.

If domestic support was adversely affected by U.S. casualties in Vietnam, it follows that the President was under pressure to reduce the number of troops stationed in Vietnam, because the number of casualties was obviously a function of the U. S. troops. One important factor was the strength of the South Vietnamese forces. The policy of Vietnamization of the war that started with the Johnson

administration and pursued by the Nixon administration was designed to improve the capacity of the South Vietnamese forces to fight the Communists. It is to be recalled that the basic reason for the direct U.S. troop commitment was the inability of the endogenous forces to hold out against the Communist guerilla units without the intervention of the U.S. combat troops. This implied that both U. S. troop levels and U.S. casualties were greatly dependent upon strengthening South Vietnamese forces so that they could assume the major combat responsibilities. This implied that U.S. forces would be able to get out of the war as soon as the South Vietnamese forces were able to assume the war.

Another important factor is, naturally, the strength and intensity of the Communist forces composed of North Vietnamese regulars infiltrated from the North and Vietcong units organized in the South. For lack of better indicators, intensity of Communist hostilities is measured by the frequency of armed attacks by Communist forces of battalion size or larger, whereas the strength of South Vietnamese forces (Vietnamization) was measured by the frequency of ground operations by South Vietnamese forces of battalion size or larger. Like casualties, these variables are also transformed into logarithmic values instead of raw figures. The U.S. military casualties are a function of these three military variables.

$$\text{U.S. Casualties} = .0077 \text{ U.S. Troops} - .13 \text{ Armed Attacks} \\ (.0005) \quad (.15)$$

$$-.98 \text{ Vietnamization} + 9.9 \\ (.17)$$

..... (7-2)

The most important factor in this equation is the level of U.S. troops and the degree of Vietnamization. It seems that the Communist armed attacks did not significantly affect the U.S. casualties, as indicated by the perverse signs of the coefficients. Part of the reason is the nature of the guerrilla warfare. There has been some argument suggesting that "search and destroy" tactics resulted in higher casualties than did direct Communist attacks on U.S. bases which were on the alert.<sup>8</sup>

In any armed conflict, casualties are expected by both decision-makers and soldiers. Casualties in Vietnam were considered a meaningful indicator of military outcomes because there has been no chance of total victory for either side throughout the period of protracted conflict. Moreover,

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<sup>8</sup>Tad Szulc, "Hanoi Calls for the Infliction of Heavier Combat Losses on U.S.," The New York Times (April 21, 1970), 13; Robert H. Johnson, "Vietnamization: Can it work?" Foreign Affairs, 48 (July 1970), 629-647; Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, "Vietnam: December 1969," A Staff Report, Committee Print, 91st Congress, 2nd Session (February 2, 1970), Section 7, 18.

both sides fought the Vietnam war as a war of attrition, in which one of the strategic objectives was to kill as many enemy forces as possible. As the rhetoric of the war went, it was a "test of the will to persist." "Kill ratios" or other military statistics were used by defense analysts as indicators of relative military gains or advantages, yet the absolute number of troops killed in action is a more vivid indicator of the outcome, since no side won militarily. Given the psychological effect of casualties on the outcome of military success, it is possible to say that casualties actually required more troop reinforcement. Obviously, additional troops were required to offset military disadvantages or attrition. Actually both Presidents Johnson and Nixon more than once emphasized that additional troops were required to reduce casualties.

If either President had to face the dilemma between the pressure to limit or reduce military commitment and the requirement of achieving military success, the dilemma was complicated by the characteristics of the decision-making process.

Bureaucratic politics within the decision-making apparatus emphasizes that policy output is often based on incremental decisions rather than a sharp departure from past policy or commitment. Under Kennedy, the military pressed for the total defeat of North Vietnam, the State Department was concerned with preventing the collapse of Southeast Asia, and presidential advisors around Kennedy demanded that the

United States stand up to the Communists, especially in light of the failure of the Bay of Pigs. The existence of counterveiling forces implies that a policy, once adopted, is difficult to change.

This situation seemed to hold true during the whole Vietnam war period. Faced with each new deterioration in the situation, the easiest alternative was to increase or decrease the number and kinds of targets that could be bombed, or increase or reduce the number of troops that were committed. The result was incremental decision-making, with no chance to consider sharp departures from existing policy. It is often pointed out that the Presidents compromised with both Hawks and Doves.<sup>9</sup> This tendency worked against both those who advocated all-out military effort to bring about a total victory and against those who advocated a reversal of United States policy. One will be struck by the smooth shape of the data representing American troops in South Vietnam shown in Figure 7.2.<sup>10</sup>

(Figure 7.2 here)

In spite of the difficulties of incorporating the

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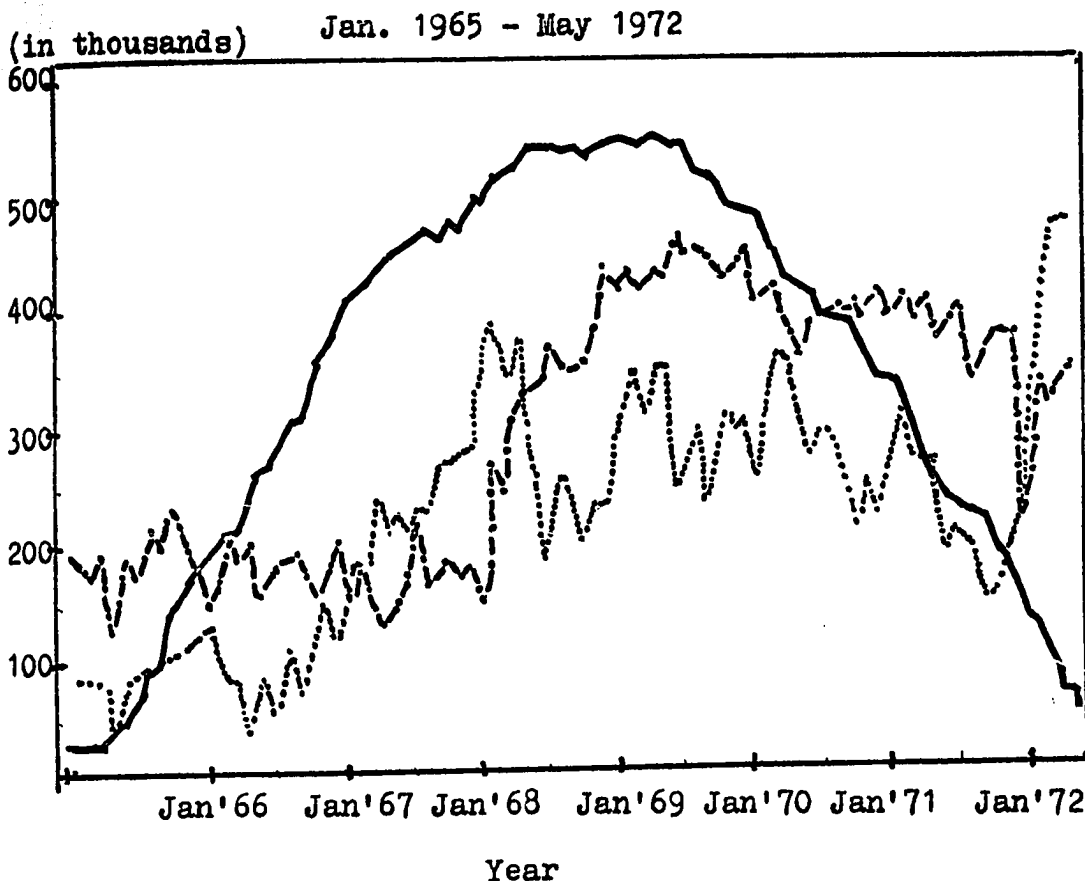
<sup>9</sup>Most persuasive analyses are advanced by Leslie Gelb, "Vietnam: the System Worked," Foreign Policy (Summer 1971), 140-173; and "The Essential Domino: American Politics and Vietnam," Foreign Affairs (April 1972), 459-475; cf. Daniel Ellsberg, Papers on the War (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1972).

<sup>10</sup>Military statistics of the war in Vietnam was made available by Office of the Secretary of Defense.



Figure 7.2

## Military Hostilities in South Vietnam



- U.S. Troops (in thousands)
- - - S.Vietnamese Ground Operations
- ..... North Vietnam+Viet Cong Armed Attacks

Notes: The scale applied only to levels of U.S. troops, because other figures are logarithmic values.

Source: Statistics on South-East Asia, unclassified documents, Office of the Secretary of Defense.

process in a regression equation, one feasible approach was to relate additions or reductions to other external and internal conditions. It was hypothesized that the marginal increase in U.S. troop commitments is associated with military conditions and level of political support. For instance, if no decision was arrived at on the troop level in the current month, the level of troops stayed as it was the previous month.

The basic hypothesis was that the United States troop level would be largely predicted if we had information about the number of hostile military actions by the North Vietnam and Vietcong, number of military actions by South Vietnamese forces, the previous U.S. casualties, and the degree of public approval of the President. In other words, additions to U.S. troop levels were positively related to additional Communist armed attacks, U.S. casualties, and U.S. public support; negatively with South Vietnamese ground operations. Thus the level of U.S. troops in South Vietnam was put as a regression equations as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} \Delta \text{ U.S. Troops} = & 4.1 \text{ U.S. Casualties}_{t-1} + 2.6 \Delta \text{ Armed Attacks}_{t-1} \\ & - 26.3 \text{ Vietnamization}_{t-1} + 31 \text{ U.S. Public Support}_{t-1} + 130 \\ & (0.9) \quad (2.6) \quad (10) \quad (17) \\ & \dots\dots\dots (7-3) \end{aligned}$$

In general, the estimated coefficients of the equation tend to have statistical significance in the hypothesized

direction. First, the level of United States military action was largely a response to the level of casualties and to the effect of Vietnamization, rather than to the hostile actions of the Communist forces. On the other hand, the coefficient of political support turns out significant as hypothesized. What is striking is that the erosion of political support is, other than the effect of Vietnamization, virtually the only variable that reduced the escalatory tendency of the war.

Both Presidents made decisions in a hawkish direction when public support was high. In other words, without decline of political support, the war tended to drag longer. The positive signs of the coefficients for both Communist attacks and U.S. casualties suggest that the military condition exerted a pressure for continued U.S. troops in order to sustain the war without quick Vietnamization.

This analysis fits the historical observation. President Kennedy introduced troops secretly because he feared public opposition. In the spring of 1964 Johnson decided against escalation because of the election year.<sup>11</sup> It is instructive that both of these Presidents expected the mass influence to oppose American involvement, despite the common belief that the American people rallied around a President who had taken military action. Given the basically favorable

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<sup>11</sup>Ellsberg, Papers on War, 102.

image of the President, initial response to military action was no doubt a short-term boost of support, partly reinforced by the swelling of attention. But this support was of short duration; the cost of the war returned to hurt the popularity of the President.

### Presidential Dilemma

The analysis suggests that public opinion had the most important impact on the general course of United States military commitment, while there was no direct connection between public opposition to the war and many specific decisions made on Vietnam. The point to be stressed is that the Presidents occasionally took unpopular actions despite anticipated negative public reaction. Therefore it is hardly surprising that the tone of the public opinion surveys relating to U.S. policy alternatives in Vietnam did not coincide in any notable way with the action taken by the Presidents. It is only through the impact on the overall political support of a President that the public had influence on American policy in Vietnam.

The process can be well illustrated, particularly in the decommitment phase of military involvement during the Nixon administration. What puzzled many observers was that President Nixon apparently maintained support for his Vietnam policy and silenced active opposition to the war.<sup>12</sup> The fact is that the President did not restrict himself to

a policy of gradual withdrawal from involvement in Indochina. He also took several bold, aggressive actions, such as the invasion of Cambodia in 1970 and Laos in 1971, and the mining of harbors in 1972, all of which he insisted were necessary to disrupt Vietcong sanctuaries and supply routes. There was a rise in anti-war sentiment after each of these incidents, but it always subsided as U.S. troops continued to leave and U.S. casualties continued to fall.

Vietnamization and the gradual withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam could be seen as policies designed to win popular support in the United States on two grounds. American casualties were reduced and eventually ended. And inflation tended to be reduced as number of U.S. troops and war costs declined. The Nixon administration was plagued by a generally higher rate of inflation than the Johnson administration was for any given number of troops in Vietnam. President Nixon, however, was able to keep his popular support, in spite of the higher rate of inflation, by reducing U.S. troop commitments and American casualties. Other factors being equal, the decline of support from the general public kept him on the general course of withdrawal, though, because of the marginal relationship, it took four years to accomplish a virtually complete decommitment of

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<sup>12</sup> Robert Tucker, "The American Outlook: Change and Continuity," in Osgood, et al., Retreat from Empire?, 29-78.

## U.S. troops.

It might be noted that the United States economy was improving in 1971 and the first half of 1972. President Nixon would have been under more intense and earlier popular pressure to withdraw U.S. forces from Vietnam had economic conditions in the United States not been improving. As the economy improved, President Nixon's political position was strengthened. He was therefore politically more able to withdraw U.S. troops more slowly. The slower U.S. withdrawal and the Vietnamization policy gave the South Vietnamese government more time to strengthen itself politically and militarily, thus increasing its capacity to cope with the Communist forces after the U. S. withdrawal. This explains why Nixon was able to maintain support for his war policy, while having time to search for negotiated settlement.

One important problem that had a lasting implication for each President was, however, the impact of troop commitment on the national economy. Even if it was difficult to attribute the fluctuation in unemployment, inflation, and real personal income to the level of troop commitment or war costs alone, a plausible hypothesis is that war costs had a desirable or undesirable side effect on the economic indicators. Since war cost was a direct function of U.S. troop level stationed in South Vietnam, the war cost figure itself was not included in this analysis. The following diagram describes the inevitable politico-military-economic linkages during the period under study. Coefficients given

are bivariate product-moment correlations between the variables connected by arrows.

(Figure 7.3 here)

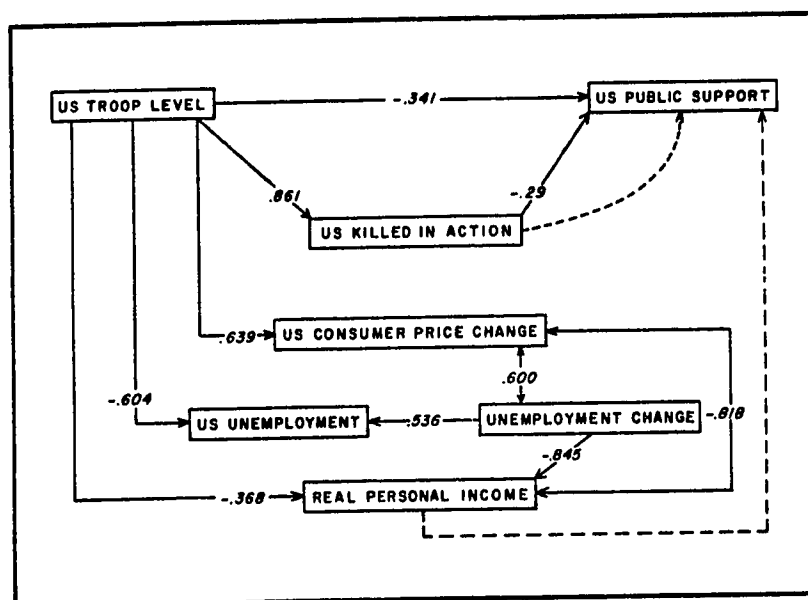
Figure 7.3 indicates that U.S. troop levels had a mixed effect on the American economy. High troop levels hurt price stability and personal incomes, but a quick withdrawal of troops was also associated with increased unemployment, indicating a postwar conversion problem in the economy. There is no evidence, however, to show that economic conditions had any direct influence on presidential decisions on the Vietnam war, except the fact that President Kennedy and Johnson did not have to worry too much about the economy.

U.S. involvement in the war started to have a significant impact on the economy in the summer of 1965, when major commitments of U.S. ground forces first began. At that time, the U.S. economy was remarkably well-balanced, was in the longest period of peacetime expansion in its history, and was operating at full capacity. As early as 1966 there was a warning inside the Executive branch against the possibility of "overheating" the economy.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Arthur M. Okun, The Political Economy of Prosperity (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1970), 62 ff; cf. Robert Eisner, "The War and the Economy," in Sam Brown and Len Ackland, eds., Why are We Still in Vietnam? (New York: Random House, 1970); Terence McCarthy, "The Garrison Economy," in Edgar Litt, ed., The New Politics of American Pol-

Figure 7.3  
Military Economic Linkages



Note; The numbers given are Pearsonian product-moment correlation coefficients between two variables connected by arrows. The period covers January 19 through May 1972.



The new military expenditure required by the Vietnam war generated a demand-push inflation in the economy, an inflation not dampened for political reasons. The Johnson administration was initially unwilling to levy new taxes to finance the additional war costs because additional taxes would have to be approved by the Congress. Congressional scrutiny of a proposed war tax would also have involved a congressional and public awareness of the deepening U.S. involvement in the war, something the Johnson administration sought to avoid.

The resulting imbalance between fiscal and monetary policy is apparent in the simultaneous deterioration in inflation and unemployment during the war period. The inflationary effect of the war costs on the national economy is visible in the cross-plot shown in Figure 7.4 of U.S. troop levels in Vietnam and the rate of inflation computed over the same month of the previous year.

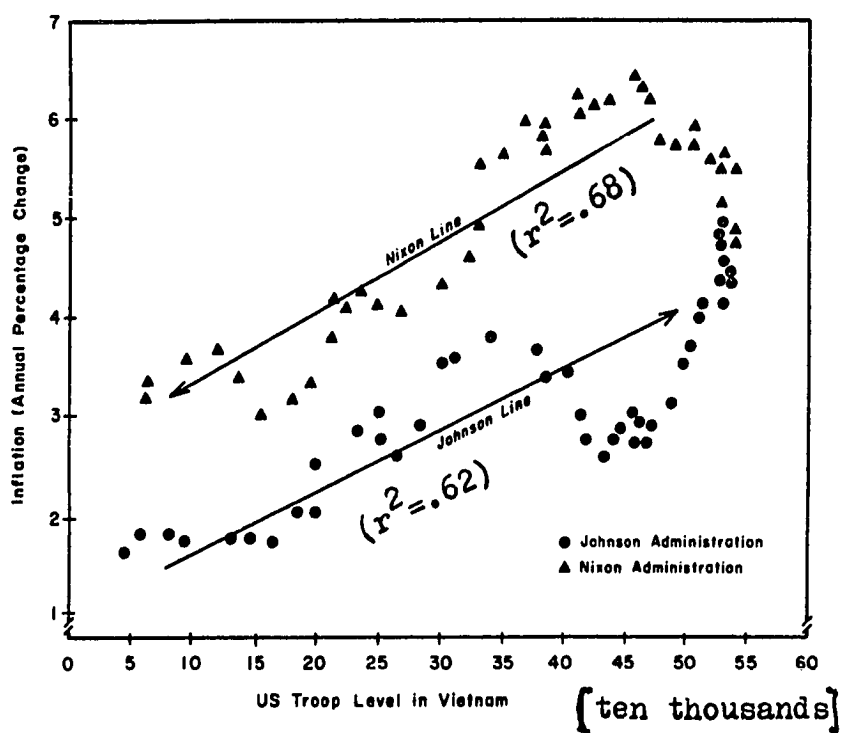
(Figure 7.4 here)

There is no indication to support the notion that foreign troop commitments can help solve the unemployment problem in the U.S. economy. For any given level of troops, both unemployment and inflation rates were higher during the decommitment period than for the period during which

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itics of American Policy (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1969), 39-49.

Figure 7.4  
Scatter Plot of Troop Level and Inflation



Note; The coefficient  $r^2$  indicates the degree to which the variance in the dependent variable is predicted by that of the independent variable.

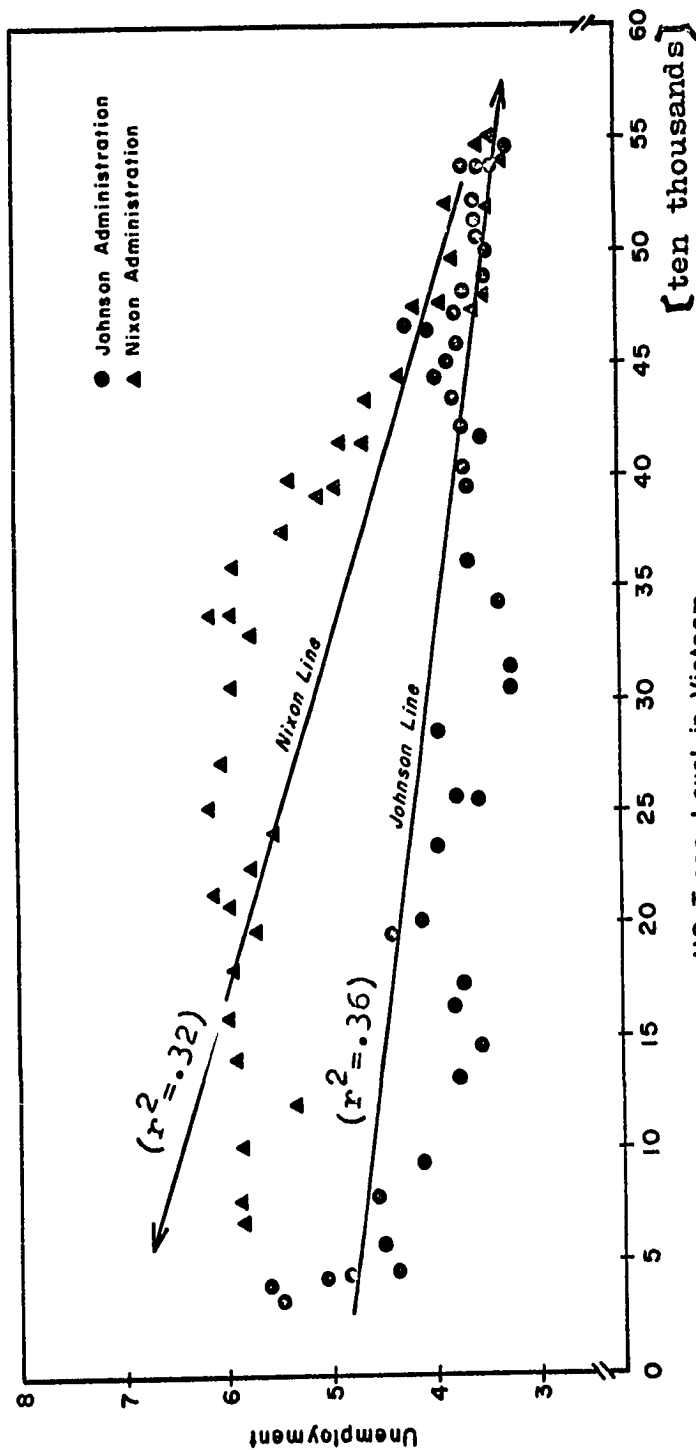
U.S. troops were being committed to Vietnam, as illustrated in Figure 7.5. The unemployment and high inflation were consequences rather than causes of military involvement.

(Figure 7.5 here)

The domestic political implications of these findings are clear: greater public approval for the President and his Vietnam policy was dependent upon fewer American casualties and improvement of the domestic economy; fewer casualties depended upon fewer American troops in Vietnam; and lower inflationary pressure also depended upon reduction of military costs of the maintenance of U.S. troops in South Vietnam. Then, President Nixon's policy of reducing U.S. military involvement in the war was a correct one for his purpose of keeping the popular support necessary for his reelection.

A paradoxical aspect of the findings is that U.S. intervention in Vietnam illustrates both the strengths and weaknesses of United States Presidents. On the one hand, there is public and congressional permissiveness on presidential conduct of the war. On the other hand, as troop strengths and casualties decreased, the salience of Vietnam also declined. After the de-Americanization of the war, the general public largely returned to their traditional concern with domestic issues. The first question is whether the public had ever clearly faced and accepted the consequences of defeat in Vietnam. The experience of the first Nixon administration renders doubt that the public discarded

Figure 7.5  
Scatter Plot of Troop Level and Unemployment



Note: The coefficient  $r^2$  indicates the degree to which the variance of the dependent variable is predicted by that of the independent variable.

permissiveness toward presidential handling of the war, because there was an almost uniform pattern of public approval of major escalatory measures taken by both Presidents during the course of the war.

This tendency to support the President in the face of challenge to American power and prestige was probably inseparable from the feelings of increased belligerency with which the public responded to this and earlier Communist offensives. Perhaps this tendency is explained by the public expectation that the measures improved early termination of the war. It was pointed out that the election in 1972 really provided a choice to the electorate between a policy of unconditional withdrawal and a policy of "peace with honor." George McGovern, the Democratic presidential candidate in 1972, by laying bare the consequences of defeat, appeared to increase the public's support for Nixon and his Vietnam policy.<sup>14</sup>

This does not detract from the finding that the war took a toll on Nixon's popularity, as it had on President Johnson's. As discouragement over the conflict in Southeast Asia grew, Nixon's popularity rating declined. As dissatisfaction over the war grew to its highest point, and

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<sup>14</sup>Robert Tucker, "American Outlook," in Robert Osgood, ed., Retreat from Empire, 75; and Alan Jones, U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changing World (New York: David McKay & Co., 1973), 15.

early grumblings over the flagging economy were recorded, Nixon's popularity slumped (in June 1971) to its lowest point up to that time: 48 percent. The fact remains, however, that two peaks of political support were reached as a result of his handling of Vietnam: the 68 percent approval following a nationally televised speech in which he called for "Vietnamization" of the war in November 1969; and another 68 percent approval in January 1973 when the ceasefire terms were agreed to.

The point is that until the war was over, the public was rather permissive in their general support of Nixon. One important fact supporting this point is that the two peaks of popularity in Nixon's Presidency were achieved as a result of his handling of Vietnam. And Congress, like the people it represented, supported the search for "peace with honor." Although many congressional votes taken on measures to curtail the war and to demonstrate growing disillusionment with America's role in Indochina, Congress continued to give both Presidents Johnson and Nixon full support in funding military operations in Southeast Asia.

From the mid-Sixties through the signing of the ceasefire agreement, 94 roll-calls had been taken on the question of limiting or halting American involvement in the Indochina war. Anti-war amendments were attached to bills dealing with defense procurements, foreign aid, defense appropriations, and military sales, among others. But no matter what the package, Congressmen against the war were unable

to muster enough strength to send explicit policy directives to the President. Among 94 recorded votes on Indochina-related measures, 85 were in the period from 1969 to 1972. Many of the measures were killed by either House, except a few general measures that were designed to enhance the congressional role in foreign policy, such as the war-powers limitation bill, which in no way bound the President in his effort to reach settlement.<sup>15</sup> Only when the ceasefire agreement was signed and U.S. troops and prisoners of war returned home, did Congress become defiant of the administration's Indochina policies, as demonstrated by Congress' refusal of Nixon's request to provide funds, within a supplemental appropriation bill, for continued bombing in Indochina.

At this point, it is instructive to look at the result of the Gallup Poll taken immediately after the Vietnam settlement. The overwhelming majority of 80 percent expressed a general satisfaction with the peace agreement reached, with only 9 percent opposed. Sixty-eight percent agreed with Nixon's claim that the United States had achieved "peace with honor." The general population was hawkish on many items. For example, 57 percent against 29 percent believed that the recent bombing of cities helped bring

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<sup>15</sup>Congressional Quarterly Service, Congress and the Nation, III (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Service, 1974), 944-948.

about the peace agreement. Nevertheless, most of the people were pessimistic about the agreement. Forty-one percent against 35 percent did not agree with the notion that the agreement will last. Fifty-four percent against 27 percent did not agree with the statement that when U.S. troops were withdrawn, a government could be nurtured in Vietnam strong enough to withstand the Communist political presence. Seventy against 16 percent expressed their expectation that after U.S. troops were withdrawn in the next few years, North Vietnam would be likely to try to take over again. Yet the overwhelming majority opposed sending U.S. troops or bombing North Vietnam, if North Vietnam does try to take over South Vietnam again.

(Table 7.2 here)

This public sentiment expressed itself in successful congressional attempts to limit presidential power and foreign commitments. The message was clear: the Vietnam experience must not be repeated; the war power must be shared; oversea's commitment must be reviewed. But it is clear that all of these challenges became effective only after the war was over.<sup>16</sup> This suggests that the willingness of Congress to support a President is not a matter of

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<sup>16</sup>Leslie H. Gelb, "The Essential Domino: American Politics and Vietnam," Foreign Affairs, 50 (April 1972) 459-475; and "The Pentagon Papers and the Vantage Point," Foreign Policy, 2 (Spring 1972), 25-41



Table 7.2  
Public Reactions to the Vietnam Settlement\*  
Selected Questionnaires  
(Jan.25-31, 1973)

<u>Questions</u>	<u>Responses</u>		
	Yes	No	No Opinion
<u>General Mood</u>			
"In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the Vietnam peace agreement reached?"(Yes: satisfied)	80	7	13
"President Nixon has said that the United States sought to achieve peace with honor. Do you think we are achieving this, or not?"	58	26	16
"Do you think the peace agreement is likely to last, or not?"	35	41	24
<u>Expectation</u>			
"Do you think the recent bombing of cities in North Vietnam helped bring about the peace agreement, or not?"	57	29	14
"After U.S. troops are withdrawn from Vietnam, do you think North Vietnam, in the next few years is likely to try to take over South Vietnam again, or not?"	70	16	14
"When U.S. troops are withdrawn from Vietnam, do you think a strong enough government can be nurtured in Vietnam to withstand Communist political pressure, or not?"	27	54	19
<u>U.S. Policy</u>			
"Suppose when U.S. troops are withdrawn, North Vietnam does try to take over South Vietnam again, do you think the United States should send war materials to South Vietnam, or not?"	38	50	12
"If North Vietnam does try to take over South Vietnam again, do you think the United States should send troops to South Vietnam, or not?"	13	79	8

\* Source: The American Institute of Public Opinion, The Gallup Opinion Index, Release (February 1973)

Constitution or law, but a deep-rooted tendency to defer judgment to the President when the country is involved in a conflict, even after there is enough reason to question the wisdom of administration. "As long as fewer Americans are in Vietnam, fewer Americans are being killed, and the cost of the war is being reduced, opposition to the President's policy was not sufficient to change that policy."<sup>17</sup>

From the perspective of a President, the analysis suggests a clear limitation on the concept of two Presidencies. Nixon, for the most part, received high marks from the American people for his conduct of foreign affairs. Even when he was inextricably mixed in Watergate affair, with his popularity hovering around in the 20's, a majority of Americans, 54 percent, accorded him approval for his efforts in the international arena.<sup>18</sup>

If Nixon's foreign policy achievements did not account for more public acclaim it was because, after American participation in the Vietnam war ended, the public seemed to turn its attention to domestic problems. None of his dramatic efforts abroad were enough to overshadow the staggering economy or, of course, the Watergate affair. From

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<sup>17</sup>Gelb, "The Essential Domino: American Politics and Vietnam," *ibid.*, 474.

<sup>18</sup>The Gallup Opinion Index, Report no. 111 (September 1974).

a high point of 68 percent approval reached after the Vietnam settlement, Nixon's popularity plummeted to an unprecedented 44 points in 18 months. After a short period of "energy criss," inflation tended to be the nation's top concern as far as Gallup Poll showed.

The survey indicated that Nixon's rating would have declined on the basis of public economic worries alone. As a result of rising unemployment and continued inflation, public confidence slid down, offsetting the gains achieved by gradual withdrawal of troop from Vietnam. If the commitment and decommitment from Vietnam had significant impact on the economy, as analyzed here, then there was a persistent, insolvable dilemma for Nixon. It is difficult to imagine how, under similar circumstances, any President could avoid erosion of public confidence.

#### Summary

The overall conclusion to be drawn is that Presidents Johnson and Nixon were not unresponsive to public demands. The pattern of interaction between both Presidents and the public on U.S. military policy in Vietnam was analyzed on the basis of monthly data on public support, military statistics, and the domestic economic indicators for the period 1965-1972. The results can be summarized as follows:

- (1) public approval of presidential performance was significantly influenced by the reduction of U.S.

troops, and the degree of unemployment and inflation;

- (2) change in U.S. troop strength was marginally influenced by the degree of public support and the degree of Vietnamization;
- (3) increase in troop commitment resulted in inflationary pressure, whereas decommitment was accompanied by rising unemployment. Both of these indicators were higher during the Nixon administration than were they during the escalatory phase during the Johnson administration;
- (4) the deteriorating economic conditions in turn contributed to the declining confidence in the President; and
- (5) the overall conclusion is that the general public influenced the overall course of the President's policy.

## Chapter Eight

### Changing Patterns of Popular Leadership

This chapter seeks to analyze changing patterns of presidential relations with the public as they interact with changing domestic economic conditions. The previous chapter examined the profound impact of domestic economic conditions on public support of the Chief Executive, and the process whereby the decline of political support influenced presidential conduct of the Vietnam war. Some of the findings are extended to the five Presidents since World War II in an attempt to generalize about presidential roles.

The central issue is the problem of defining presidential roles. What he is expected to do and what he can do depends upon how, and to what extent, overall public support is influenced by what a President does. One of the neglected questions in the earlier chapters is the extent to which a President can influence or mobilize public support through a variety of public activities. This chapter examines aggregate data on these activities of the five Presidents, and attempts to assess the impact of these activities, in association with domestic economic problems, on public confidence in the Chief Executive by the use of multiple regression method.

Linkage between the President and the Public

Four years is a long time, far too long for the electorate to hold the same preferences it expressed at the polls. Given the speed of change in contemporary events and problems, there is a need for information about the public attitude toward the occupant of the White House and other salient political issues. One crucial fact is that many important problems and their practical ramifications were not campaign issues during the election period.

The mass media and public opinion surveys seem to play an important part in the leader-mass linkage during the inter-election period. They function, according to many of public communication analysts, as channels of information running from the policy-makers to the public as factual and policy information gatherers for the general public, and channels for the expression of opinions and measurements of interest running from the public to the public to the policy-makers. Recent experience suggests that votings at the polls is merely a climax of political interaction that has been a continuous process among the diverse elements of society.<sup>1</sup>

One of the opinion indices that has gained wide accep-

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<sup>1</sup>Harold Mendelsohn and Irving Crespi, Polls, Television, and the New Politics (Scranton: Chandler Publishing Company, 1970), passim. And Leo Bogart, Silent Politics: Polls and Awareness of Public Opinion (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1972)

tance as a measure of presidential popularity is the response to the Gallup Poll query, "Do you approve or disapprove of the incumbent's handling of his job as President?" While there can be some objections concerning what the query really measures (presidential popularity or the legitimacy of the administration), it can at least be taken literally to mean the degree of the nation's approval of presidential performance at a particular moment of time.

The behavior of the Gallup Poll series from Truman to Johnson was subjected to an excellent analysis by John Mueller. He has shown that the popularity line is in a general decline as time passes between elections, with dramatic international events boosting and "economic slump" hurting a President's popularity. In spite of the interesting regularities found in his study, its theoretical implication is rather sparse because most of the explained variance comes from idiosyncracies of each administration. Mueller concluded that it is difficult to predict presidential popularity with objective conditions alone.<sup>2</sup> There is a need to know more about the impact of the President's activities and domestic economic conditions on the popularity line. To political scientists, the trend line measuring public approval of the President provides valuable insights as to the fluctuation of the public's political support,

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<sup>2</sup>John Mueller, "Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson," American Political Science Review, 65 (March 1970),

and into the reasons that explain that fluctuation. On the other hand, attempting to analyze the drift in terms of opinion on specific issues, such as welfare legislation or foreign aid, often proves futile.

One confounding fact is that for most Americans the President is, at any moment of time, the object of a host of mixed and sometimes contradictory emotions. There are elements of ideology, policy, personality, and party at play in any individual's attitudes and feelings. In addition, institutionalization of the Presidency itself makes it difficult for many Americans to differentiate their respect for the office from their view of its occupant. Inevitably, a citizen's response to an opinion survey will be influenced by flows of current events as well as by his conception of how the President should behave.

A President sees some benefit, for personal as well as political reasons, in maintaining a high standing with the populace. A number of presidential activities are, therefore, designed to create a favorable image of himself. Many means of presidential communication with the public (press conferences, public speeches, and news releases) are now institutionalized features of the contemporary Presidency. Although the impact of these activities on the public image of the President is not well-known, they are often regarded as potential sources of presidential leadership.<sup>3</sup>



It is open to dispute whether or not increased access to mass media and exposure of the President to the public helps him. If we postulate a rational and responsible electorate which "throws rascals out" on the basis of some objective criteria of performance such as inflation, unemployment, or personal income, the President as a person does not enter the picture. All the President can do is to try to achieve objectively determined goals. His standing with the public will then be dependent upon the fluctuation of the national economy. On the other hand, if we postulate a shrewd politician, who is extremely skillful in knowing how to capture public attention at crucial moments, how to dramatize events or his own acts, and how to teach the significance of acts and events to the nation, there is no need to worry about erosion of public confidence in the Chief Executive. Public support will be simply a function of personal skills of the man in the White House.

Concern arises, however, because it is well-known that the American people trust their President, but they tend to invest their optimism, their faith, and their affection in

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<sup>3</sup>Elmer Cornwell, Jr., Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965); and his article "Role of the Press in Presidential Politics," in Richard Lee, ed. Politics and the Press (Washington, D. C.: Acropolis Book, 1970), 31.

one man. This is closely related to the President's symbolic role as head of State. Omnipresence of the President in the flow of national news and events might create an exaggerated image of the President as a person who is making major national decision or capable of solving all the problems of the nation. It is not difficult to argue that high hopes focused on the President can be easily frustrated when the expectation is not met. Given the symbolic grasp of the President in American politics, a repeated frustration might lead to a loss of confidence in the system itself.<sup>4</sup>

Even though the consequences are difficult to measure in precise terms, examination of changing patterns of presidential relations with the public can become the basis for determining whether the concern is justified. This chapter will first examine the data on levels of press attention to presidential activities, and then attempt to assess the impact of these variables in association with economic indicators and idiosyncratic factors on public support of Presidents.

### Press Attention

It is often assumed that the process of expanding the presidential image, as the focus of the nation's attention

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<sup>4</sup>James Barber, "Resonances; Presidential Style and Public Mood," unpublished manuscript, 1971.

and source of national initiative, is reflected in the news content of mass media. Elmer Cornwell revealed a rising curve of presidential news in major newspapers in this century. He interprets this as reflecting the rising tendency for the public to focus primary attention on the Presidency at the expense of other parts of the national government, including Congress.<sup>5</sup> There are two justifications for this inference. First, the great bulk of the electorate's knowledge about government comes from the mass media. Second, there is undoubtedly a feedback process involved: because the President is liked and respected, a demand for news has developed and has been catered to by the press. In any event, it is possible to assume that the amount of presidential news reflects the prominence of the President in the public consciousness.

The measure of press attention in this chapter is simply the frequency of presidential news items with photographs of the incumbent that appeared in the New York Times each month. The selection of this particular newspaper is a matter of practicability. In political research, it is the most frequently used paper due to the availability of its rich index. In addition, the paper is perhaps one of the most influential because of its national orientation. It

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<sup>5</sup>Elmer Cornwell, Jr., "Presidential News: The Expanding Public Image," in Aaron Wildavsky, ed., The Presidency (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1969), 310-319.

is certainly not representative of the prestige papers in a cross-sectional sense. It might be representative in a time-serial sense, because many studies have established that, despite a wide variation of policy and priority in allocation of competing news items among the nation's newspapers, the pattern of change over time shows striking parallel.<sup>6</sup>

The criterion of presidential photographs is used in order to make the coding simple and reliable, because much of presidential news is couched in various headings such as President, Presidency, White House, the administration, the government, Washington, and so on. In addition, inclusion of a photograph seems to imply personal involvement of the President in the story or reports. The frequency of presidential news that appears in the front page correlates .84 with that of presidential news appearing in all the news pages. The "all pages" figure will be used as the primary indicator of press attention. The annual aggregate is reported in Figure 8.1.

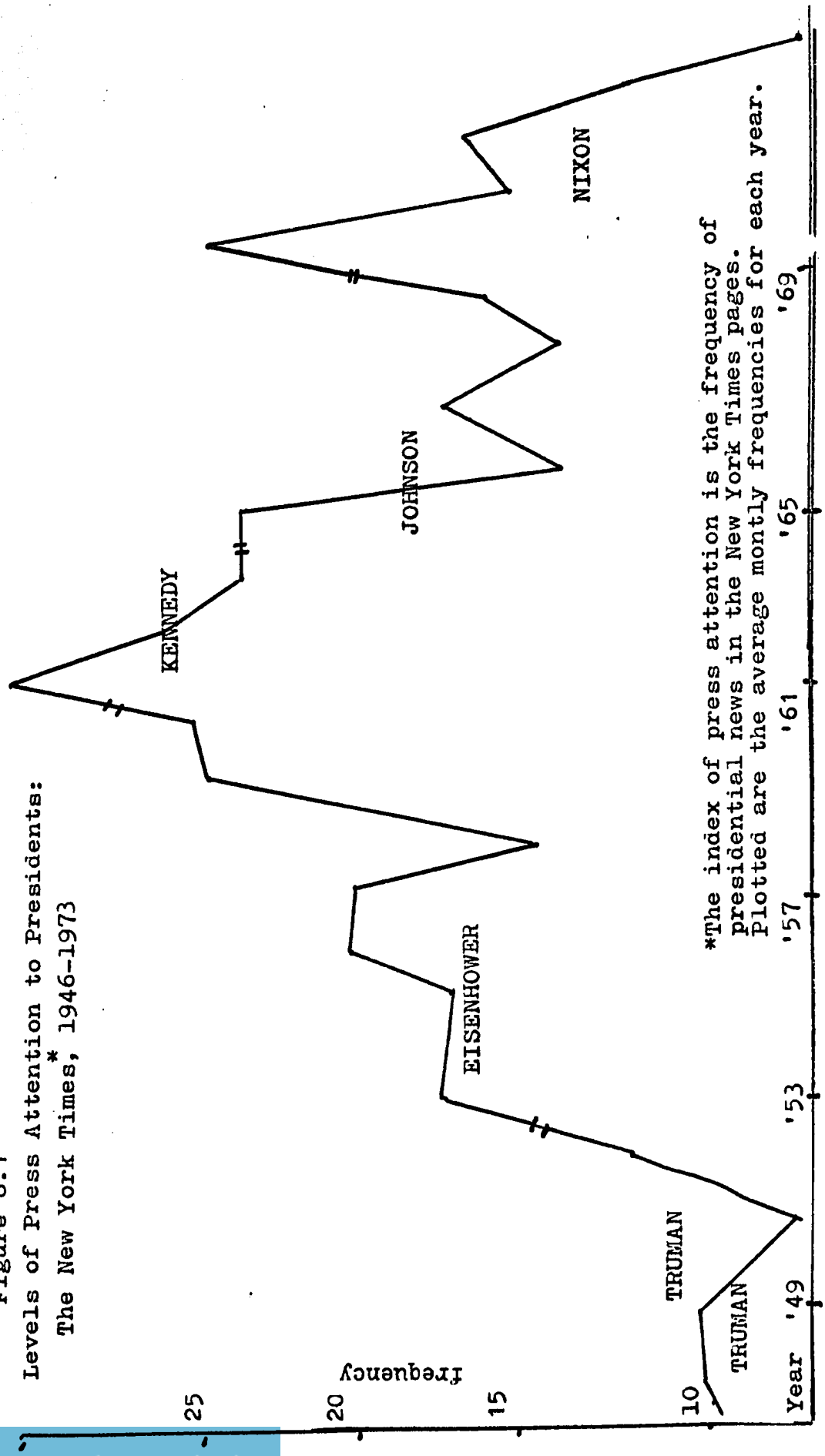
(Figure 8.1 here)

The graph clearly invalidates the common notion that attention to the President during the cold war has arisen continuously. In spite of some small ups and downs within

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<sup>6</sup>For example, in the selected years in this century, presidential news of the New York Times and that of the Providence Journal fluctuate similarly revealing striking parallelism. Ibid., 317.

Figure 8.1  
Levels of Press Attention to Presidents:  
The New York Times\*, 1946-1973



\*The index of press attention is the frequency of presidential news in the New York Times pages. Plotted are the average monthly frequencies for each year.

each administration, press attention was in a general ascent, peaked in the first years of the Kennedy Presidency, and then went into a general decline except during the first year of the Nixon administration. Thereafter, attention level given to President Nixon dropped significantly to the lowest level of attention since H. Truman. This suggests that national attention to the President as a source of leadership had come around full-circle since the Truman administration. President Eisenhower received a high level of press attention, despite his relatively passive approach in policy-making. As one might expect, President Kennedy was the one who enjoyed a high level of press attention. In spite of intense public relations activities by Johnson and Nixon during the war in Vietnam, the downward trend was one factor that they had to cope with. These findings invalidate the very common impression that President Nixon was at the center of national attention due to his frequent visits abroad. This point can be made clear by examining different levels of presidential activities.

### Presidential Activities

Presidential activities differed greatly among and between Presidencies, reflecting the different styles of leadership of each President. One measure of presidential activism is the frequency of communication activities he makes in the course of performing his duty. Since President

Truman, all the presidential addresses, remarks, and messages, including contents of press conferences, are reproduced in the Presidential Papers which are published annually.<sup>7</sup> In spite of varying importance of each address or speech, the total frequency in each month indicates the level of presidential activity. Secret activities are not, of course, reflected in this tabulation. Nevertheless, almost all of the other kinds of presidential activity are included, ranging from a President's remarks to a group of Boy Scouts visiting the White House to a toast to a foreign head of state. Therefore, the total frequency can be taken to indicate the amount of a President's public activity each month.

Frequency of news conferences was counted separately, providing another indicator of presidential activity in relation with the public. Even though some Presidents had weekly news conferences on a regular basis for some time, the frequency and practice of holding press conferences are not uniform. President Truman's news conference (before the era of television) were relatively brief and unstructured, while more recent Presidents enjoyed a wide coverage by the media in a more structured format. Presidents, at times, tried to avoid press conferences in anticipation of embarrassing questions and public probes, particularly when

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<sup>7</sup>The Presidential Papers (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), 1946-1972.

the government was plagued by unsuccessful policies and serious scandals. For the same reason, regularly scheduled press conferences are often recommended as an informal device for the press and the public to have a much needed opportunity to get information about presidential activities, and thus to hold the President answerable to the public.<sup>8</sup>

As illustrated in Figure 8.2, press conferences have been in a general decline during the past decades, except for the frequent usage by Johnson in 1966 in his effort to mobilize public support for his conduct of the Vietnam war.

(Figure 8.2 here)

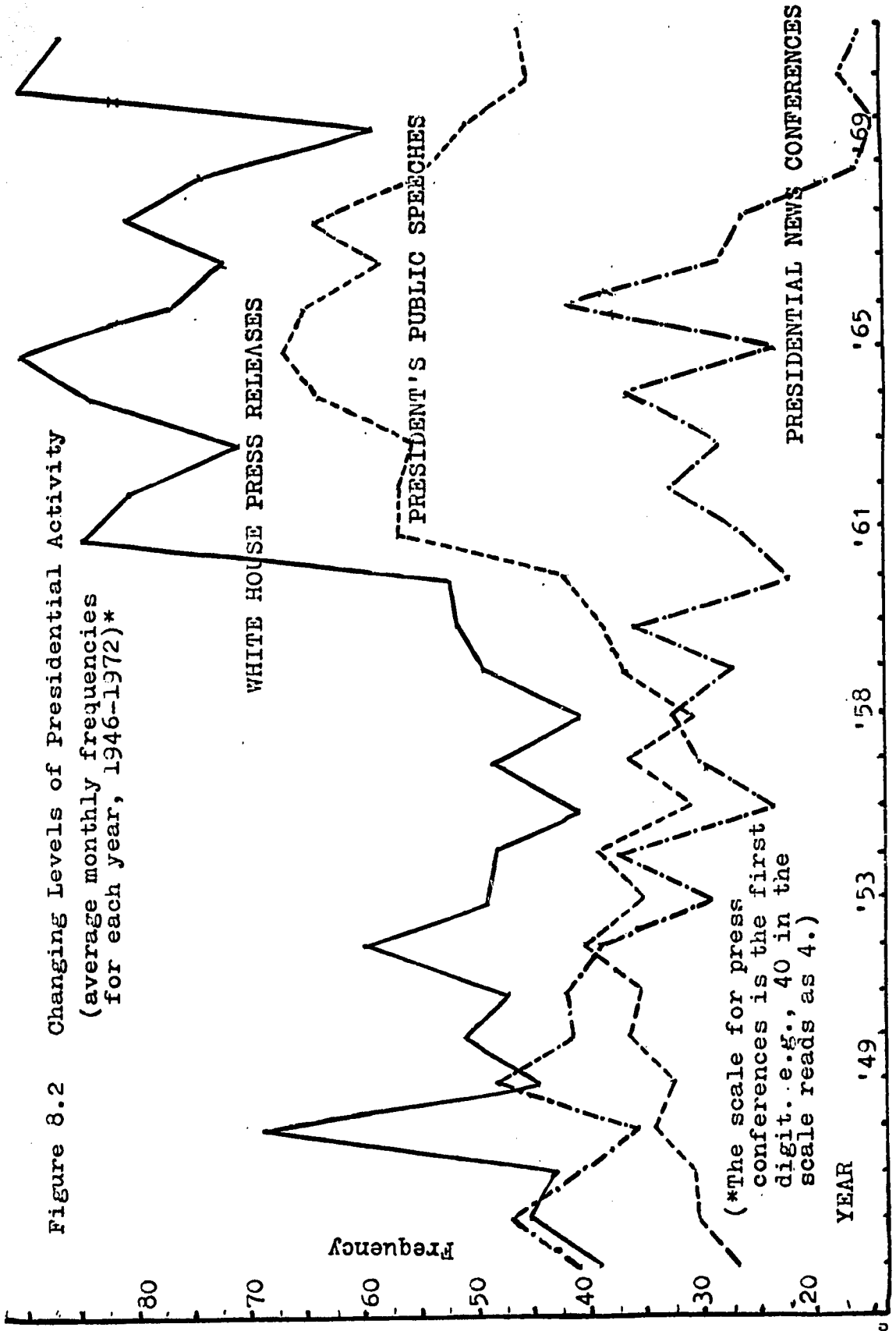
What began to have increasing importance in place of a direct personal encounter between the President, the nation, and the press, were "press releases" prepared by the White House public relations staff in order to provide information about the President's daily activities. The fact that complete press release files have been kept since the Roosevelt era suggests that the earlier, more or less unstructured, activity became highly institutionalized in recent practice. Elmer Cornwell, who examined the impact of press releases on the mass media for a few sampled months, concluded that press releases are a potent source of presidential publicity, since two-thirds to three-fourths of the

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<sup>8</sup> Tugwell and Cronin, Presidency Reappraised, 182; George Reedy, The Twilight of the Presidency, 243.



Figure 8.2 Changing Levels of Presidential Activity  
(average monthly frequencies  
for each year, 1946-1972)\*



releases received some coverage in newspapers.<sup>9</sup>

We can assume that three variables of presidential activity (the frequency of public activities, news conferences, and press releases) are under direct presidential control; at least more so than are the economic variables or the press attention index. A summary statistic for each President is presented in Table 8.1, reflecting different approaches of each President in relation to the public. A statistical test by analysis of variance indicates that each President was significantly different from the others. In other words, differences among the Presidents were more significant than differences within each Presidency at different months. Among the five Presidents, President Eisenhower showed a lower score on each of the presidential activity variables; this supports the common interpretation that he exercised a restrained style of leadership.

(Table 8.1 here)

The total volume of press releases was the highest in 1948 during the first Truman administration, until it made a sharp upturn by President Kennedy. That reliance on press releases was followed by later Presidents. Contrary to the widely held belief that President Kennedy resorted to press conferences frequently to communicate with the nation, he was among the lowest in terms of average score, next only to President Nixon. Nixon held press conferences roughly

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<sup>9</sup>Elmer Cornwell, *Presidential Leadership*, 232-234.

Table 8.1

Volume of Presidential Activity and Press Attention  
1946-1972 (monthly averages)

President	Presidential Activity			Press Attention	
	Frequency of Public Speeches	Frequency of News Conferences	News Releases	Front Page	All Pages
Truman	24.4 (9.6)	3.07 (1.30)	41.0 (25.6)	3.44 (2.16)	12.34 (5.08)
Eisenhower	29.1 (13.2)	1.97 (1.32)	41.8 (19.0)	7.42 (3.70)	20.57 (8.10)
Kennedy	48.8 (16.4)	1.88 (1.17)	68.7 (24.8)	9.15 (3.14)	25.07 (6.49)
Johnson	51.5 (14.2)	2.51 (1.54)	68.0 (21.3)	6.48 (3.72)	17.85 (6.65)
Nixon (1st term)	37.2 (15.5)	0.46 (0.58)	69.3 (22.3)	5.17 (3.73)	13.92 (7.26)
Average for all Period	34.6 (16.8)	2.09 (1.54)	52.07 (25.85)	6.08 (3.80)	17.39 (8.03)
F (Analysis of Variance)	45.87	28.69	23.80	29.41	36.43
Cases	335	335	335	335	335

Note: Standard deviations are in parentheses.

once in two months in contrast with President Truman's three times a month. In addition, the total volume of President Nixon's activity was much lower than that of President Kennedy and Johnson. If one is reminded that Nixon was a relatively "weak" President in relation to the Congress, as indicated by his veto behavior, he might be described as a "passive" President as well. He was less active in terms of public activities and press conferences, while his public activities were well recorded by the White House staff in the form of press releases. It might be noted that the high point of press release activity during the later half of the first Nixon administration was partly accounted for by a new practice of reporting presidential activities in more detail. For instance, releases included the records of the President's meetings with congressional leaders or cabinet members which occurred in a somewhat informal context.

The data described here, while crude, indicate changing patterns of presidential relations with the public. Presidential activities are more frequent, in general, during the recent period than in the 1950's, while there is a notably declining trend in the 1970's. On the other hand, recent Presidents tended to rely more often on press releases than on press conferences. The presidential press conferences tended to lose significance as an institutionalized means of linkage.

This general observation should not overshadow the

great variations within each Presidency, depending upon job demands under varying circumstances. Given the heavy work load of a contemporary President, one may expect a negative relationship among various activities, because frequent news conferences might mean sacrifice of some other activities on a President's agenda. On the other hand, it is obvious that the index of press attention should reflect, to a large extent, the volume of presidential activities. Intercorrelations among the activity variables, press attention, and presidential popularity as measured by Gallup Polls are reported in Table 8.2.

(Table 8.2 here)

As one might expect, press releases are very highly correlated with presidential activities (.76). On the other hand, the frequency of news conferences varied somewhat independently within and across Presidencies. As indicated, the index of press attention shows significant association with the total volume of presidential public activities, news releases, and popularity, providing a tentative support for the notion that press attention is a crucial link between presidential activity and public support. Intuitively, it is clear that affection tends to go hand-in-hand with attention.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>This is found to hold not only in interpersonal relations, but also in International relations. Harold Lasswell, World Politics and Personal Insecurity (New York: Free Press,

Table 8.2  
Intercorrelations between Activity and Support

	Public Speeches	News Conference	Press Release	Press Attention	Popularity
Public Speeches (335)		-0.116	0.739	0.388	0.125
News Conference	-0.116		0.202	0.100	-0.053
Press Release	0.739	-0.202		0.241	0.086
Press Attention	0.388	0.029	0.241		0.502
Popularity	0.125	-0.053	0.086	0.502	
Trend	0.463	-0.455	0.505	0.188	-0.060
Front page Attention	0.309	-0.056	0.192	0.843	0.023

\*The figures in the parentheses indicate the number of cases.

The correlations change slightly when the observations are divided into subperiods. During the Kennedy-Johnson period, for instance, the correlation between the monthly aggregates of press attention and popularity shifts to .43 in comparison with .50 for the whole period, for which popularity measures are available. On the whole, the pattern persists for the whole period in terms of statistical significance. The "trend" in the table is simply the sequence numbers of each month, starting with the Truman administration, indicating whether the variable increased or decreased as a rough function of time.

#### Presidential Popularity

The variables discussed above were used as predictors of presidential popularity in association with other factors. Presidential activities are hypothesized to have a generally positive influence on his popularity. First, it is a President's role to inform and explain his policy or actions. To live up to popular expectation, the President must communicate more frequently with the public. In other words, the leader who acts more frequently, and appears more often in the public consciousness, will be perceived by doing the job well. It is pointed out that a President can take

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1965), 146-147; and Bruce Russett, Community and Contention (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1963), 161.

some action, even a wrong one, and not lose his popularity, because the President is given approval simply by acting on many issues, even if some respondent do not like the substance of his actions.<sup>11</sup> The index of press attention is also expected to have a positive influence on popularity, because increase of communication among favorable people tends to reinforce positive affection. Although adverse publicity is still a possibility, a positive impact is expected in general.

The economic indicators are basically the same as those analyzed in the last chapter, except that the period was extended to cover the five Presidents. Monthly data on real personal income were transformed into an annual percentage change on the basis of change from the same month of the previous year. Similarly, the variable used as an indicator of inflation is the change of the consumer price index, in percentages, from the same month of the previous year. This practice is considered useful to avoid the problem of seasonal variation common in many economic variables. Unemployment is simply the proportion of unemployed per one thousand civilian labor force. Unemployment and

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<sup>11</sup>Key, Public Opinion and American Democracy, 426-427; James J. Best, Public Opinion: Micro and Macro (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1973), 243-244; and Dorothy James, Contemporary Presidency, 58-57.



inflation are expected to hurt a President, whereas an increase in income helps.

In addition to the variables described above, some other variables are included. First, the declining trend within an administration is simply measured by a sequence of numbers starting from one, with the fourth year taking the value of four. Second, in an attempt to take into some idiosyncratic characteristics for each administration and war period, a group of dummy variables were used. That is, each administration was represented in a regression equation by one dummy variable taking the value of one, with zeroes for all other administrations. In a multiple regression, these variables were supposed to measure the extent to which each administration diverged, in terms of its average popularity, from a general pattern that is predicted by other variables included in the equation. In other words, one can determine statistically whether it is necessary to assume a different constant for each administration. Similarly, two additional dummy variables were allowed to denote specific characteristics of the war periods, one for the Korean war and the other for the war in Vietnam.

Within a general framework of a linear model, some experimentation was necessary to determine which were redundant, once other variables were represented in the equation. The practice of adding or dropping variables from equations was helpful, because in many cases, independent variables are interrelated. The typical results of regression

analysis are presented in Table 8.3.

(Table 8.3 here)

In the table, each column is one equation, with estimated coefficients for the independent variables included in that particular equation (standard errors are given in parentheses). The first equation did not include presidential activity variables and war variables, accounting for 85 percent of variance. The second equation accounts for 90 percent of the variance in popularity, with presidential activity and war variables included.

The result demonstrates the significant impact of economic variables on public support of the President. Annual rates of inflation have statistically significant coefficients while the impact of unemployment becomes redundant. This redundancy apparently stems from the intercorrelations among economic indicators. That is, unemployment is usually negatively correlated with inflation or growth in income.

For this reason, two variables seem to be sufficient to indicate overall domestic economic conditions. Thus, when real personal income is dropped from the equations, unemployment tends to contribute significantly to the proportion of explained variance, in some equations not reported here. One important historical fact, however, is that high rates of unemployment did not hurt Eisenhower and Kennedy greatly. Accordingly, some equations tend to have perverse signs on the estimated impact of unemployment. In spite of the

Table 8.3

Regression of Presidential Popularity  
(1948-1973)

Independent Variables	Equation (1)	Equation (2)
Inflation	-0.485(0.159)*	-1.470(0.195)*
Unemployment		0.122(0.493)
Personal Income annual percentage change	0.787(0.179)*	0.350(0.176)*
Major address		0.003(0.380)
News Conference		0.098(0.284)
News Release		0.004(0.217)
Press Attention	0.250(0.063)*	0.217(0.059)
Years from inaugu- ration	-4.171(0.407)*	-4.001(0.059)
<b>Dummy Variables</b>		
Truman (2nd term)		-20.39(2.504)*
Eisenhower (1st term)	11.966(1.743)*	3.072(1.907)
Eisenhower (2nd term)	4.964(1.705)*	2.480(2.185)
Kennedy	11.210(1.932)*	1.087(2.550)
Johnson (1st term)	8.780(2.550)*	
Johnson (2nd term)	-4.961(1.695)*	-22.45 (6.890)*
Nixon (1st term)	2.933(1.589)	-13.85 (6.890)*
Nixon (2nd term)	-19.393(2.524)*	-23.83 (2.550)*
Korean War		-7.012(2.55)*
Vietnam War		11.098(6.72)
Constant	60.621	71.30
R <sup>2</sup>	0.85	0.90
d.f.	186	179
F	89.135	87.15

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; \*significant at 0.05 or lower probability level.

difficulty, a tentative interpretation can be offered. In quantitative terms, the first equation in column 1 of Figure 8.3 shows that a 10 percent annual price increase is likely to reduce presidential popularity by close to 5 percentage points, whereas a 10 percent increase of real personal income will increase popularity by close to 8 percentage points, other things being equal. This impact shifts significantly in the second equation. The impact of inflation becomes even higher in the second equation. Basically, all of the equations show the significant impact of economic conditions, particularly of inflation.

In the second equation, the coefficient denoting the period of Vietnam conflict shows that its overall impact on presidential popularity was insignificant. Any war of such a long duration would make it difficult to designate any specific characteristics without due consideration of different subperiods. As analyzed in the last chapter, the first Nixon administration demonstrated that the Vietnam war was not an inescapable burden on presidential popularity insofar as domestic costs were being reduced. Nor was the war as salient an issue in national politics as inflation and other economic problems. As a matter of fact, a Gallup Poll taken in 1971 reported that 45 percent of the American people specifically mentioned inflation as the most important issue facing the country, in contrast with 15 percent for Vietnam. This problem will be discussed later.

The nine dummy variables denoting idiosyncracies of

each administration showed significant coefficients only when the variables of presidential activities and dummy variables for wars were excluded from the independent variables. As expected, Eisenhower, during his first term of office, and Kennedy stand out as the most popular President when economic conditions, declining trends within each administration, and the degree of press attention are taken into consideration. In other words, it is difficult to explain their popularity in a statistical sense without allowing some constant term that keeps the popularity around 11 to 12 percentage points higher than would be predicted by the factors mentioned above. Personality of the incumbent will also be an important factor.

Most of these idiosyncratic variables tend to lose weight in size as well as in statistical significance, however, when presidential activities and war dummy variables are included in the regressions, as shown in the second equation. The only coefficients that remain significant among the administration dummy variables are those associated with Truman's second term, Johnson's second term, and the first Nixon term. The fact that all the three Presidents were among the so-called "war Presidents" is suggestive. If the coefficients for the wars and coefficients for the administrations are combined in interpreting the result, it can be said that President Truman's popularity was 27 points lower due to the Korean war and other characteristics specific to his administration, than would normally be

expected from the political and economic variables considered here. In contrast, Nixon lost only four points, and Johnson 12 points during the Vietnam war.

Although expected, the impact of press attention is striking. This variable alone could account for 25 percent of the variations in popularity within and among Presidencies. In quantitative terms, presidential news of 10 items or more might improve popularity by 2 points. This causal inference in a strict term would be too far-fetched, however, because the index was used here as an indicator of a more general concept of national attention. In addition, it is possible to suggest that press attention will invariably interact with presidential activities. A postulation of simultaneous causation might result in different coefficients. The point remains, nonetheless, that once the press attention variable is represented in the equation, presidential activity variables do not have any independent impact. Singly or in association with other variables, the presidential activity variables do not show significant relationship with the popularity measurement. The impact of declining trends within each administration persists in spite of the presence of "press attention" in the equation, eroding four point each year on the average. It is to be noted that the size of annual decline in popularity is virtually the same as the loss of congressional support, as reported in Chapter 4.

Even though the measure of press attention used here

includes both domestic and foreign affairs in association with the presidential news reported, it partly covers what John Mueller calls the effect of "rally around the flag," a boost of support for the President in the face of international events. As a matter of fact, John Mueller included, in his measure, several non-international events such as presidential inauguration. In addition it is difficult to identify major international events, except after the fact. The measure used here, while crude, can be useful because of its simplicity and reliability. It is possible to assume that attention to the President tends to swell in the face of national crises and international events. <sup>12</sup>

Basically, the boosted position of the President in such obvious mistakes as the revelation of the U-2 flight over Soviet Russia or the Bay of Pigs incident cannot be explained except by the concept of attention. Given the basically favorable image the American people have of their President, the initial response will be a benefit-of-doubt syndrome when there is not enough information. Therefore, it is a temporary phenomenon. As relevant adverse information comes in, public support might easily evaporate. It is misleading to attach great significance to temporary support due to swelling of attention.

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<sup>12</sup>John Mueller, "Presidential Popularity from Truman to Johnson," American Political Science Review, 65 (March 1970).

## Presidential Choice

The general picture that emerges from the regression analysis is that presidential popularity generally declines after inauguration, while it fluctuates with the economic conditions and level of press attention. The level of presidential activities does not seem to matter very much. This suggests that the manoeuvrability of a President in relation with the public is quite limited. Since this is a simplification of the reality seen by observing general patterns rather than unique features of each administration, it will be useful to clarify and qualify some of the findings.

It might be disturbing that among the economic variables, inflation rather than unemployment has a greater impact on popularity. It was pointed out earlier that unemployment tends to show perverse signs in many equations, though not all of the equations are reported here. The basic explanation for this is the relative importance of each goal in the national economy. Very often the goal of economic growth tends to conflict with the goal of economic stability. Even though it is the goal of Keynesian policy to achieve economic growth under full employment and price stability, empirical analysis by the so-called "Philips curve" shows that full employment and low inflation are two incompatible goals. Perhaps it will be too far-fetched to argue that these two goals reflect conflicting class



interests.<sup>13</sup> But it is often the case that any policy designed to help the unemployed or the low income people has to risk inflationary pressure in the economy. This dilemma is real, even when the nation is viewed as a whole.

From a historical perspective, the past few decades recorded a period of sustained expansion and growth unprecedented in history, even though there have been occasional recessions. Until recently, the American economy tended to be plagued with inflationary pressures, under relatively full employment. Naturally, inflation became a national concern more often than did unemployment. In this respect, examination of Gallup Polls on the most important problems facing the country and economic outlook reveals the somewhat accurate perception of the public on the economic condition of the country. Out of 56 surveys, inflation or cost of living was mentioned 30 times as the most important problem facing the country, in contrast with unemployment which was mentioned only 8 times, by more than 10 percent of the sample.<sup>14</sup> From this perspective it is not surprising that inflation had a generally greater influence on presidential

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<sup>13</sup>H. G. Johnson, "Problems of Efficiency in Monetary Management," Journal of Political Economy, 76 (September 1968), 986.

<sup>14</sup>As repeatedly discussed in the text, foreign and defense issues were in general most salient. Race or civil right issues were mentioned occasionally. The trend is shown in Chapter 9.

popularity. Within the context of the long-term prosperity and growth, however, there have been some notable shift in public mood, in association with economic problems facing the country.

At this point, it is necessary to consider the psychological factor. Objective economic conditions should be perceived as a problem in the first place. Even if the objective indicator shows high unemployment, people can have an optimistic view that it will be solved quickly or soon go away. In this case, a President would not be punished or blamed for the objective economic conditions. Besides, people should see some connection between governmental policy and the objective economic conditions. There is no point in throwing out a government or party leader when there is no expectation that the other party will do better. What becomes important is the circumstances under which the government or the President comes to power and the image of the presidential party.

It is possible to suggest two different hypotheses on the behavior of the electorate. One hypothesis states that the President who comes to power with the promise of solving unemployment will be punished severely when he does not live up to his promise. For instance, Goodhart and Bhansali have shown that the popularity of the Conservative party leaders in Great Britain is less sensitive to the unemployment rate than is that of the Labor party leaders.<sup>15</sup> This finding is understandable if one assumes that the Conservative party

is likely to come to power with the expectation of solving an inflation rather than an unemployment problem. That is, the Conservative party leader is going to be punished more severely for inflation, because he was given support to achieve stability. In other words, a leader is punished for what he promised and failed to achieve than for what he did not promise.

The other hypothesis is the opposite of the British pattern. That is, it is plausible to argue that the President who comes to office with the promise of ending unemployment will not be blamed for unemployment as far as there is the expectation that the unemployment problem will be solved. Instead, he is punished for whatever area in which he fails. President Lincoln used to say that a failure catches up easily than a success.

The British pattern does not seem to hold for Presidents of the United States. As mentioned earlier, President Kennedy was very popular in spite of high rate of unemployment during his incumbency, partly because there was some expectation that the unemployment problem was being solved. If one divides the period into two subperiods, Kennedy-Johnson years of Democratic party leadership versus the first Nixon Republican administration, correlations among economic vari-

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<sup>15</sup>C. A. E. Goodhart and R. J. Bhansali, "Political Economy," Political Studies, 18 (Spring 1970).

ables and popularity turn out as follows:

(Table 8.4 here)

From this analysis, it is possible to suggest that Democratic Presidents were punished for inflation, whereas the Republican President was punished for unemployment; quite the opposite of the British pattern. In support of this suggestion, the popularity of President Eisenhower is closely associated with the percentage of the populace which expected "more people to be out of jobs within the next six months" as shown by Figure 8.3. Unfortunately, for other periods, the survey data are too sparse to discern any pattern.

(Figure 8.3 here)

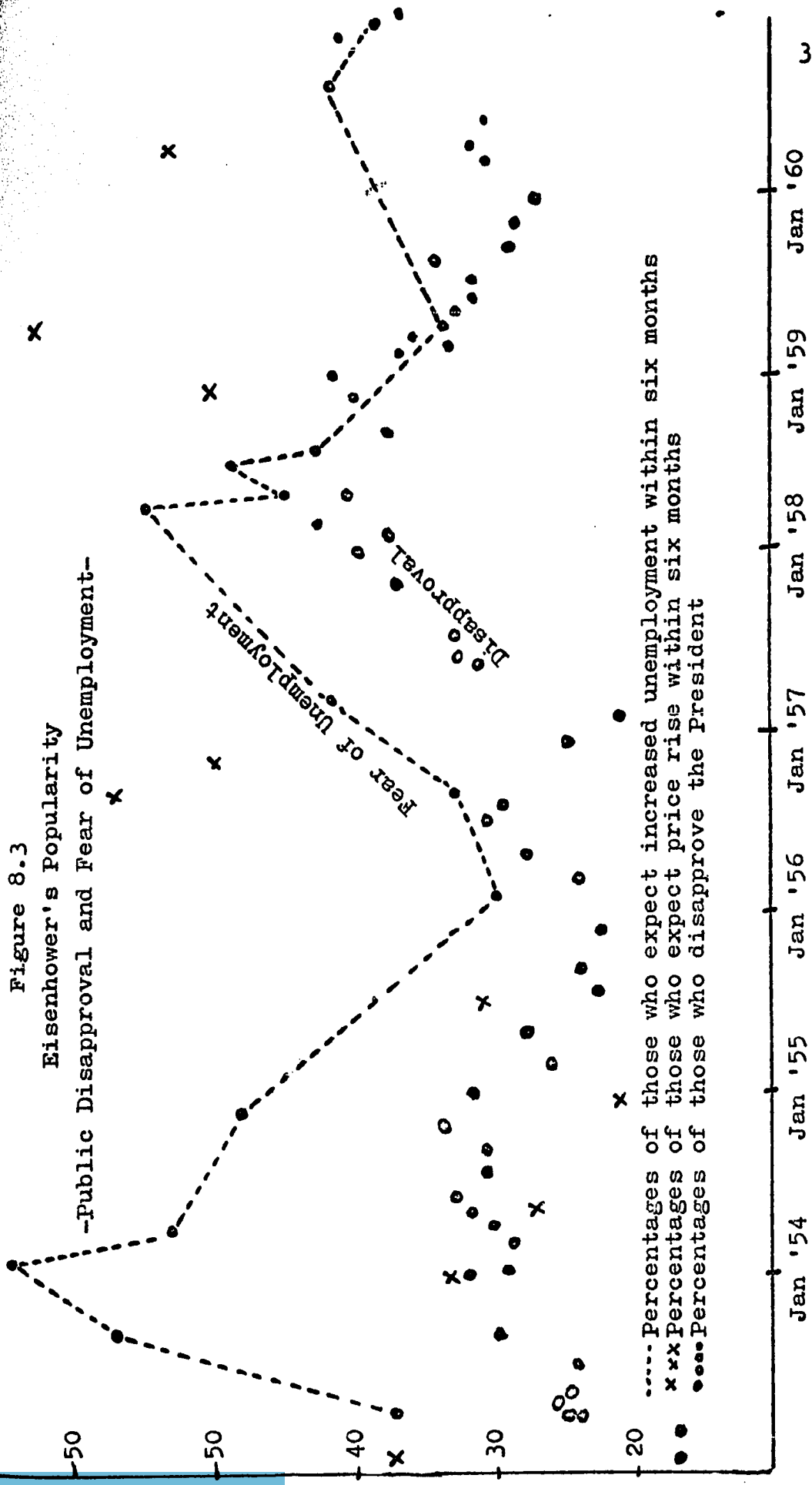
This brief analysis suggests that Democratic Presidents are severely punished for inflation while Republican Presidents are severely punished for unemployment or an expectation of unemployment. This American pattern qualifies the notion that Republicans and Democrats have converged on an aggregate economic policy during the past decades. It is important to note that the dominant mood of the nation will interact with the party policy: history suggests that the Democratic party tended to come to power with the problem of unemployment, whereas the Republican party came to power with promises of solutions for the rate of inflation in recent decades. The two parties differ in the priorities they customarily give to national problems. Given the dilem-

Table 8.4  
Correlations between Economic Indicators and Popularity  
for Subperiods 1961-1972

		Nixon Period			
		Popularity	Real Personal Income	Inflation	Un- employment
Kennedy-Johnson Period	Popularity		.077	.402*	-.779*
	Real Personal Income	.015		-.722*	-.009
	Inflation	-.446*	-.323*		-.493
	Unemploy- ment	.661*	-.062	-.820	

Note: \* Statistically significant at .001 level.

Figure 8.3  
 Eisenhower's Popularity  
 -Public Disapproval and Fear of Unemployment-



..... Percentages of those who expect increased unemployment within six months  
 \* \* \* Percentages of those who expect price rise within six months  
 ••••• Percentages of those who disapprove the President

Note: Data from Gallup Poll series.

ma between inflation and unemployment, the dynamic pattern of alternation is easily derived. Democratic President actually may inevitably have to face the problem of inflation by solving an unemployment problem, whereas Republican Presidents may have to risk having unemployment in order to eliminate or escape from inflation. The party image maintained by the electorate --Democratic as a party of inflation and the Republican as the party of unemployment-- seems to reflect some fundamental problem of domestic economy which invariably interacts with policy choice.

The pattern of the dynamic relationships will require a more sophisticated analysis and more refined measures. From the perspective advanced in this research, the dynamics have both long-term and short-term implications. Given the incompatibility of economic goals, the President is likely to lose support anyway during his incumbency, because when one problem is solved, a new problem comes up, demanding a new national priority and a focus of national attention. Further research will be useful for investigating such a dynamic interaction of simultaneous causation on the basis of more refined measures of attention and activity. At the present stage of data and analysis, it suffices to reveal some basic patterns. At least, it can be pointed out that presidential activity has some influence on popularity through its impact on press attention. This consideration does not detract from the general point that inflation was the more severe problem having a significant impact on

public approval of presidential performance.

### Summary

This chapter analyzed the impact of presidential activities, press attention to presidential news, and domestic economic conditions on public approval of presidential job performance. The analysis was based on monthly data for the five Presidents since Truman to Nixon. The findings include:

- (1) Among indicators of presidential activities, in relation with the public, the use of the press conference declined ever since President Truman, being replaced by press releases generated by the White House staff. Overall level of presidential press activity increased sharply during the Kennedy administration, and has been in a continuous decline since then;
- (2) Index of press attention to a President rose continuously, peaked in the Kennedy term, and then went into a general decline. Press attention to President Nixon was as low as that to President Truman;
- (3) Indicators of presidential activities do not have any independent influence on public support. In general, public support tends to decline by 4 points each year, with a fluctuation being dependent upon



the level of "press attention" and "economic fluctuation";

- (4) Among the economic variables, inflation tends to be the most important. As a further hypothesis, it is suggested that Democratic Presidents tend to be punished for inflation, while Republican Presidents are punished for unemployment;
- (5) In conclusion, the findings invalidate the notion that Presidents can easily mobilize public support or attention.

## Chapter Nine

### Limits of Presidential Leadership

"Public sentiment is everything.  
With public sentiment, nothing can  
fail; without it nothing can succeed."  
Abraham Lincoln

The purpose of this final chapter is to review the major findings presented in the earlier chapters and to discuss some theoretical and substantive implications of the findings. Given the broad scope of the study and explanatory nature of some data, it will not be relevant to list propositional outlines, as might be expected from the conclusion of a dissertation. Nor will it be useful to conclude with a congratulatory remark about the ingenuity of the American people in having preserved such a unique and dynamic office, as has been common in writings about the Presidency. The concern in this chapter is a prospective one. Can the presidential office continue to serve its purpose as an effective national problem-solver; or will it sink in prominence as the nation becomes more and more involved in domestic priorities and problems?

It is no new insight to suggest that the Presidency is in a period of transition. Nevertheless, as an eminent economist once put it, a transitional period is the time which falls between two transitional periods.<sup>1</sup> The major

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<sup>1</sup>Jacob Viner, as quoted in Isaiah Frank, "Economic

thrust of this study has been to analyze the continuity and change in patterns of presidential leadership in association with recurring national problems. Presidential relations with other actors in the system, while being complex and fluid, reveal certain regularities and patterns as a result of interacting political and economic factors. Thus a useful insight into the future is largely dependent upon the extent to which the pattern in the past will hold for the years ahead. There is at least some value in speculating about the probable consequences of current trends and events in the light of earlier chapters.

It seems clear that the national mood surrounding the Presidencies in the Seventies impels a reduced stature for the President as well as a less interventionistic foreign policy, as the sense of threat from the international environment subsided and the mood of international detente developed. Yet there is no agreement on the direction, intensity, scope of, and the possible consequences of these changed moods. Much of the future shape of the Presidency will undoubtedly be influenced by how the people will interpret the impact of Watergate, and the impact of Vietnam on domestic politics and society. Nevertheless, it is easy to exaggerate the uniqueness of these historical events. As a way of sum-

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Constraints," in Robert Osgood, et al, eds., America and the World (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970), 237.

marizing the basic analysis, we can discuss the cross-current trends of national mood and policy. By examining the scope of change in national mood on a variety of dimensions we will be on a sound basis for suggesting predictive hypotheses as to whether the Presidency will continue to grow or whether it will contract as quickly as it expanded.

In the following, we will first discuss the theoretical and conceptual problems with a focus on common analytic pitfalls. And then we will review the major findings with an emphasis on long-term trends and patterns in an attempt to provide a sound empirical basis for national choice and consideration, even though it may require further research and verification. It is in this spirit that the likely shape of determining factors are brought together.

### Paradox of Presidential Power

The basic assumption that underlay this research was the notion that there are certain laws that govern presidential life which, in turn, are predictable on the basis of objective political and economic conditions. The basic picture that emerges from analysis of the data presented in earlier chapters is that as the focus of the nation's hopes and attention, a new President starts office with a reservoir of support and good will, and generally enjoys a short period of "honeymoon." Almost invariably, however, this support and goodwill is drained by development of events,

over which the President may have little control. The gradual erosion of support that beset most the recent Presidents renders doubt about the common notion that the cold war Presidents became too powerful.

As presidential power increased, so did the President's responsibilities. There is a "frustrating equation," to borrow Emmet Hughes' phrase, in the nation as well as in the world: "to possess greater powers to possess greater problems at greater risk does not assure a political gain."<sup>2</sup> The same forces and events for which a President is made responsible also threaten to be those in which he is made vulnerable.

Even though it is difficult to arrive at a precise definition of power and responsibility, we used the concept of power to denote the probability of a President's preferred policy or action becoming the will of the government, whereas the concept of responsibility was used as part of a more general concept "role": sanctioned expectation about his performance. While it is an enduring normative dilemma to ensure a congruence between power and responsibility in a modern constitutional democracy, we can approach the dilemma as more than a legal principle. It will be useful to discuss presidential power in terms of a more

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<sup>2</sup>Emmet Hughes, The Living Presidency (New York: Coward, McCann, and Geoghegan, Inc., 1973), 176.

generalized concept of power.

Undoubtedly, presidential influence has increased vastly in the last few decades in any of the commonly conceived dimensions of power: domain, scope, range, and weight.<sup>3</sup> Domain refers to the number or kinds of people who are affected by one's choice. A contemporary President can reach beyond the governmental institution, directly to the people and the nation as a whole. Scope refers to the number and kinds of issues over which a President has influence. The growing responsibility of a modern government has impelled the scope of presidential power to grow to a comparable magnitude. Particularly, the importance of foreign and defense policy in this era has increased presidential grasp of the political process to an unprecedented importance. Range of power refers to the kinds and forms of influence. In addition to the power to initiate, and the power to veto, a President is equipped with diverse legal and political resources to exercise his influence in major policy areas. Weight of power refers to the impact of one's preference. It is well known that a President can exert a great amount of pressure on the shape of a certain policy, if he puts all of his resources behind it.

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<sup>3</sup>Robert Dahl, "The Concept of Power," Behavioral Science, 2 (July 1957), 201-215; and Dorwin Cartwright, "Influence, Leadership, and Control," in Roderick Bell, et al, eds. Political Power (New York: Free Press, 1969), 123-165.

The President tends to appear more powerful than he actually is, however, because of several common analytic pitfalls. The first pitfall is to list presidential influence or power in terms of domain, weight, range and scope, and conceiving of presidential power as their sum. A common example is the description of a "textbook Presidency," which lists presidential power in terms of power over Congress, power over executive departments, power over the press, power over foreign countries, and then conceives of presidential power as the algebraic sum of these powers. This analytic pitfall can occur on the scope of presidential power. For instance, one can list the presidential power over foreign policy, presidential power over economic policy, presidential power over defense policy, and then conceive of presidential power as the total sum of these powers. The same thing happens to the range of power. That is, presidential power is often the sum of power to initiate, power to modify, and power to veto a national decision. The most common example is the listing of presidential roles in terms of various constitutional provisions, such as head of state, head of the Executive branch, or chief legislator and so on. This way of thinking makes the President appear much more powerful than he actually is. It is of essential importance to establish relationship between different powers in terms of presidential resources, because some powers may reinforce the positions of others, some powers should be exercised only at the cost of other powers.

Frequent exercise of the veto might arouse congressional antagonism, and favorable treatment of foreign policy can come at the cost of compromise on domestic issues.

In this vein, another commonly neglected dimension in the conception of power is that of time. If power is basically a relationship or situation that has duration, the duration of the situation or relationship should be incorporated in passing judgment of the power: power of a short duration is less in size than power of a longer duration. It was demonstrated that presidential power is something that fluctuates even within the same Presidency in relation with the Congress, the bureaucracy, and the people. The overall judgment on presidential power should take into account this equation of power:

$$\text{Power} = (\text{Domain}) \times (\text{Weight}) \times (\text{Scope}) \times (\text{Duration})$$

..... (1)

Presidents, historically, have been relatively short-timers, with the notable exception of Franklin Roosevelt. In spite of the common notion about the advantage of incumbents in re-elections, presidential duration in power was on the average shorter than that of an influential Senator or Congressman. During the cold war period, the vulnerability seemed to have increased rather than decreased, as illustrated by the political fates of Truman, Johnson, and Nixon, each of whom stopped short of the limitation of two consecutive terms in office. If the pattern persists, the



short duration is not merely a factor in presidential power, but may also become a possible element of instability in the framework of national policy.

This point challenges the popular notion that power begets power. Analytically, if there is some absolute limit in presidential power, the above equation can be expressed as another equation that shows the relation between duration and other dimensions of power. That is, the equation becomes:

$$\text{Duration} = \frac{\text{Power (Maximum)}}{(\text{Weight}) \times (\text{Scope}) \times (\text{Domain})} \dots (2)$$

The implication is that if the maximum power is expressed as a fixed value, duration of power is an inverse function of the increase in domain, scope, and weight of power. The inherent difficulties in determining the absolute limit of power should not obscure this theoretical implication.

The constitutional provision on the limitation of presidential tenure is based on this simple equation of power.

Traditional distrust of executive power, as embodied in the separation of the power principle in governmental organization, provides an absolute limit in presidential power, though the limit is somewhat flexible depending on the configuration of various factors.

In actual political process, it is quite possible to suggest that given the limit of time, attention, energy, and other resources, few Presidents can fully exercise all of their powers on all issues. One complicating

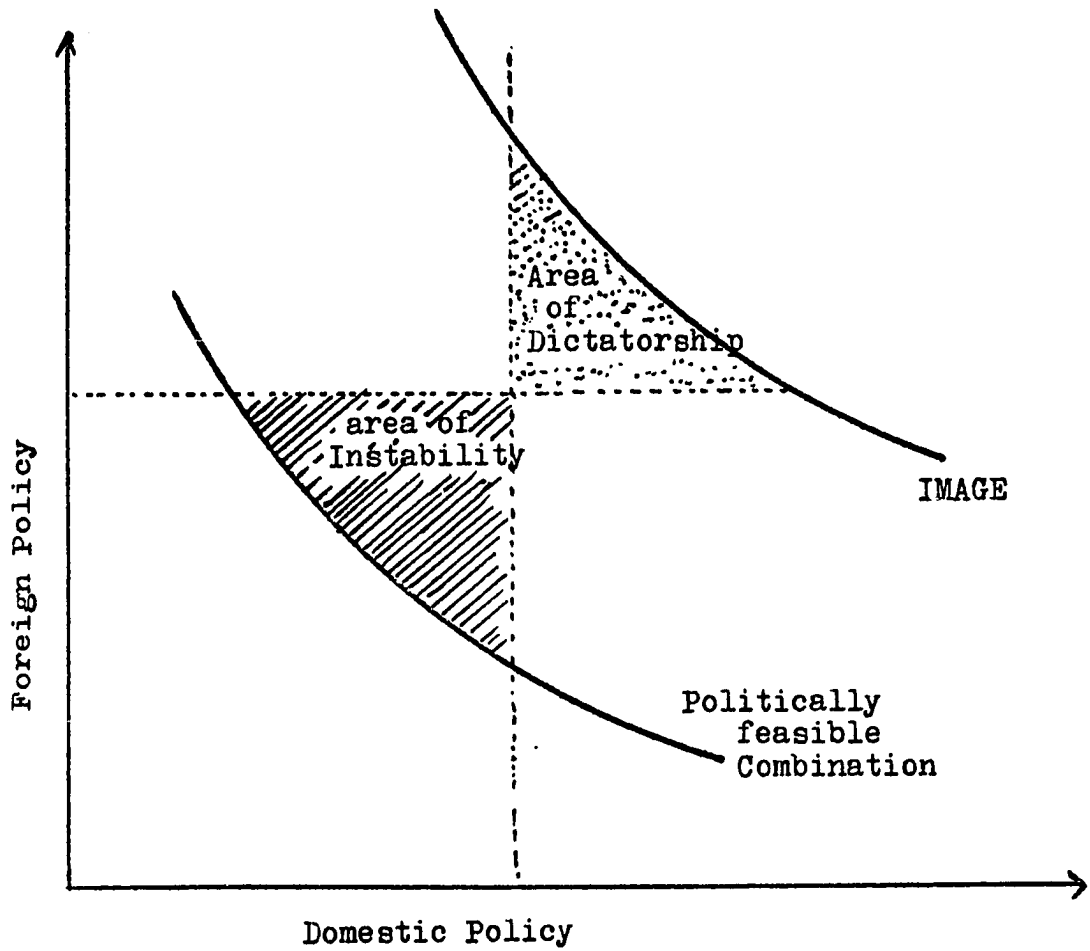
situation is the negative relation among different resources of power. It is not rare that choice of one course of action precludes the option of other measures.

(Figure 9.1 here)

The situation is illustrated in Figure 9.1, which shows the maximum potential power in each issue area and the politically feasible combination, when the resource is limited. The line  $F_1$  indicates the feasible combination of power resources, whereas  $F_2$  indicates the maximum political power, in each issue area, which is possible if the President concentrates his full resources of power on that issue area. The shaded area indicates the gap between actual power and the algebraic sum of maximum potential in each area.

This analytic pitfall is often accompanied by another conceptual pitfall, stemming from a false perception: even a sophisticated analysis does not easily differentiate the personal power of the President and the power of the institution. For instance budgetary allocation is the product of a complex interaction of diverse forces operative in the national policy process. The imagined line is indicated in the figure as  $F_2$ . It is not surprising that the might of the nation, and the power of the government is easily equated with presidential power. It is in this connection that the gap between personalization and institutionalization, bureaucratization, and nationalization provides a mixed blessing to the President. In spite of differences in

Figure 9.1  
Power and Resources



personalities, parties, and political situations, the gap is a plausible explanation for the gradual erosion of support for Presidents.

The analysis still holds even when the power is defined as a capacity to achieve desired goals. In this case, the gap is between the goals envisaged in each issue area and the goals that can be achieved as a sum. What one can achieve in one area can come only at the cost of some loss in another area. In actual policy-making, it seems that power in one area does not reinforce that in another area. When one issue is solved, a new problem arises.

This at least explains the fact that President Truman was a failure in the domestic policy area in comparison with a relatively good performance in foreign policy. On the other hand, President Johnson's achievement in domestic legislation and programs was overshadowed by failure in foreign affairs.

It was pointed out earlier that a President can be punished for whatever failures he makes. The conspicuous position and the symbolic role make the President extremely vulnerable to the failure of policy. Absolute criteria applied to each area of policy in punishing the President creates a gap between what a President can achieve and what a President is expected to achieve. Often the image of "textbook Presidency," in which the President was described as the most powerful man in the world, perhaps reinforces the popular belief or expectation about the ability of the

President to solve national problems.<sup>4</sup> This view amounts to suggesting that good performance in one area does not help a President, whereas failure can only hurt him.

This analysis does not imply that the President is merely a "scape-goat" or symbol. One is more concerned with consequences.<sup>5</sup> If we assume that a President wants to avoid punishment instead of seeking achievement, then the policy-making process will always be a patchwork remedy for a possible failure. That is, desire to avoid failure (and desire to avoid punishment) will be an important factor in characterizing the policy-process. Particularly, the short-time perspective built into the system by frequent elections and the President's short-tenure reinforces this situation. Rather than providing bold innovations and anticipation of likely events, policy-making is apt to become adjustment of the problems that occur at the moment.

Cold war Presidents have been operating under extreme risk, that is, a factor that limits the size of power.

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<sup>4</sup>Thomas Cronin, "The Textbook Presidency," in Charles Peters and John Rothchild, eds., Inside the System (New York: Praeger, 1973); and James Barber, "Resonances: Presidential Style and Public Mood," unpublished manuscript, 1971, Yale University.

<sup>5</sup>For a general theoretical discussion and empirical application in cross-national context, see Bruce Russett and William Monson, "Bureaucracy and Polyarchy as Predictors of Performance: A Cross-National Study," Comparative Political Studies (April, 1975), in press.

The cold war, by requiring a high degree of consensus, paradoxically exposed the risk of Presidents to failure of performance. Conservatives as well as liberals demanded that the President's role be the "manager of national security," the "manager of peace," and the "manager of prosperity," not to mention the call for popular leadership to "educate" the public.<sup>6</sup> All of these roles exceed the resources of one man. However many "Presidencies" may be described, there is only one President. One doubts that Richard Neustadt, who acutely realized the difficulty of exercising presidential power in the pluralist setting of the policy processes was not too optimistic about the possibility of personal control.<sup>7</sup>

The above analytic pitfall often stems from the common measure of power we use. Actual power is often measured by observing who wins and who loses. Because this measure is possible only if there is a conflict or disagreement, the vast area of consensus or agreement is obscured in the measurement process. When there is a widespread consensus, it does not actually matter, in terms of policy outcome, who makes the decisions. Support given on the basis of this perceived consensus of opinion does not

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<sup>6</sup>Clinton Rossiter, The American Presidency (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc. 1960).

<sup>7</sup>Richard Neustadt, Presidential Power (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960).

actually fit the mechanistic notion of power. Increased support is gained by the similarities of opinion or policy. The analysis in earlier chapters has shown that Presidents were supported when their positions reflected the consensus of the nation. Even though the causal linkage is neither direct nor visible, presidential priorities and Vietnam policies tended to reflect the comparable shifts in public mood. The underlying dynamics is more social than political, in the sense that the President, by being socialized into his role as a national leader, tends to reflect the change in national mood.

#### Role Conflict between National and Party Interests

The point about the paradox of presidential power is somewhat overstated as a matter of emphasis. One important factor to be considered is the politicizing process resulting from partisan competition. One important fact is that during the cold war period the two parties came close to each other in domestic and foreign policy. It may be true that both both parties were concerned with achieving full employment and avoiding inflation. This creates a dilemma for a President between his role as a party leader and his role as a national leader, because it is difficult to achieve both full employment and price stability. Furthermore, there is an increasing awareness that foreign commitment conflicts with domestic goals.

The problem is basically the conflict of roles when a party leader is elevated to the position of national leader. It is frequently pointed out that the American people do not want to see the President in partisan terms.<sup>8</sup> If a President assumes the role of a partisan leader, it is argued, he is likely to lose public support, because his image as a symbol of unity and national strength is blurred. For example, the extreme popularity of President Eisenhower is explained by his stance of "above the politics," in addition to his personal charms. The dilemma arises because the stance of a national leader may alienate his partisans in Congress, whose support is essential for legislative action of presidential programs. The analysis presented in Chapter 4 basically supported this notion by establishing the negative impact of popularity on approval of legislative programs.

(Figure 9.2 here)

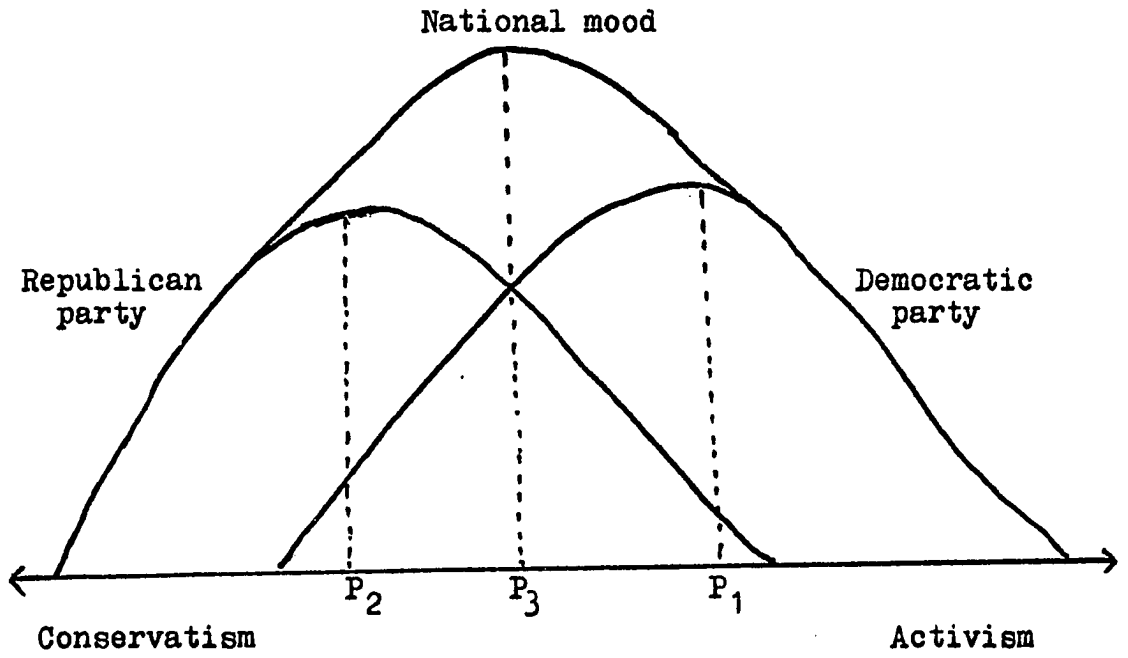
The tripartite relations between the President, the party, and the nation can be illustrated in order to make some additional points that are commonly ignored. Figure 9.2 shows the most likely distribution of policy attitudes on the activism-conservatism continuum.  $P_1$ ,  $P_2$ , and  $P_3$

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<sup>8</sup> Elmer Cornwell, Jr., Presidential Leadership of Public Opinion (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), 300-302; and Erwin Hargrove, "Popular Leadership in the Anglo-American Democracies," in Lewis Edinger, ed., Political Leadership in Industrialized Societies, 189.



Figure 9.2  
The President and his party



represent the modal opinions of the Democratic party, the Republican party, and the nation, respectively. Presidential policy is the most likely to lie between the modal value of his party and that of the nation as a whole. The optimal point of choice that will maximize national support of a President will depend upon differences between the parties as well as his stance within the party. Existence of the independents will not complicate the picture greatly, because it will simply increase the pressure toward the choice in favor of modal values of the nation as a whole. Even though the two parties do not sharply divide themselves along ideological lines, they differ always in terms of the priorities they customarily assign to major national problems and the specific governmental measures taken.

The important thing is the relative strength of partisan and national elements in the national mood. When the two parties are not sharply polarized, it is advantageous to the President to take a national stance. On the other hand, when there is a sharp difference between the two parties, the President is likely to side with his party for political or other reasons.

It is not at all clear whether there is any regularity in the shift of the context of the partisan and national elements. During the cold war period, the partisan element was, on the whole, less strong than it had previously been, as demonstrated by the failure of Presidents Eisenhower and Nixon to carry their party in congressional elections in

spite of their own electoral landslides in 1956 and 1972. The notion that the party in power is rejected for policy failure does not explain why the President is rejected more often than is the party. Nor can it be attributed to personal fortunes alone. Some built-in conflict of roles between President and Congress should be taken into account. In addition to the overall dominance of the Democratic party during the period, impact of personalization and nationalization is the only explanation.

Given the relative overall unity and consensus during the cold war period, it is tempting for a President to emphasize this consensual element in the nation. It is in this vein that a President is presumably pushed to move in the direction of foreign policy, after he is frustrated in the domestic area.<sup>9</sup> There seems to be some element of truth in this suggestion, because the President could rely on a wider base of support on defense and foreign policy than domestic issues. A President is well aware of the fact that American Presidents who expanded the role of the country are judged great by future historians. It is not at all surprising, then, that Presidents are tempted to play active roles in world politics for personal as well as political reasons.

Even if there is a grain of truth in this argument, it

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<sup>9</sup>Richard Barnet, Roots of War (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1972), 93.

seems that the electoral and partisan process provides sufficient control against this possibility by electing a man of moderate outlook and average ability in the White House. For instance, neither Goldwater nor McGovern were "national" enough to be elected to the office. Both candidates were good enough to win party nominations only because of polarized positions within each party.

The election in 1972 clearly illustrates the case in point. The two candidates differed greatly in most of the important foreign policy issues: general stance toward the world, reliance on military and nuclear strength, defense expenditures, and the role of Congress and public opinion in the determination of foreign policy.<sup>10</sup> McGovern, representing the modal element of liberal position within his party, was strong enough to win the first nomination but failed to enlist national support. President Nixon tried to reflect more closely the national outlook and position by emphasizing the continuity of his policy with those of earlier Presidents. With the war in Vietnam still going on, it seems that the American electorate was reluctant to change to a national leader who advocated sharp departure from past policy. The favorable judgment by the nation given to foreign policy of Richard Nixon exemplifies this point.

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<sup>10</sup> Alan Jones, ed. United States Foreign Policy in a Changing World (New York: David McKay Co., 1973), 13-25.

## End of Presidential Era?

The paradox of power and the role conflict analyzed above combine to explain historical dynamics of presidential leadership. In an attempt to clarify the theoretical problem of presidential leadership, it will be useful to analyze the long-term trends of conditioning factors, from the vantage point of the early Seventies.

The basic historical process can be understood as part of the erosion of the familiar features of the cold war. The fact that the public and the nation openly challenged the supremacy of the President in foreign policy indicates the reduced sense of threat emanating from the international environment. The challenge to a wide range of assumptions as to what underlay cold war foreign policy cannot be imagined without recognizing the reduced sense of threat or relief. A reduced sense of threat and efforts to negotiate made it more difficult to justify the urgency that had been associated with allocation of national resources to military purposes.

The reordering of national priorities is reflected in the federal budgets as well as in the presidential priorities presented in the State of the Union messages. Even though it is difficult to say which came first, it is still important that they occurred simultaneously. First of all, this changed priority corresponds to the public attitude on reduced defense spending as well as to searching questions

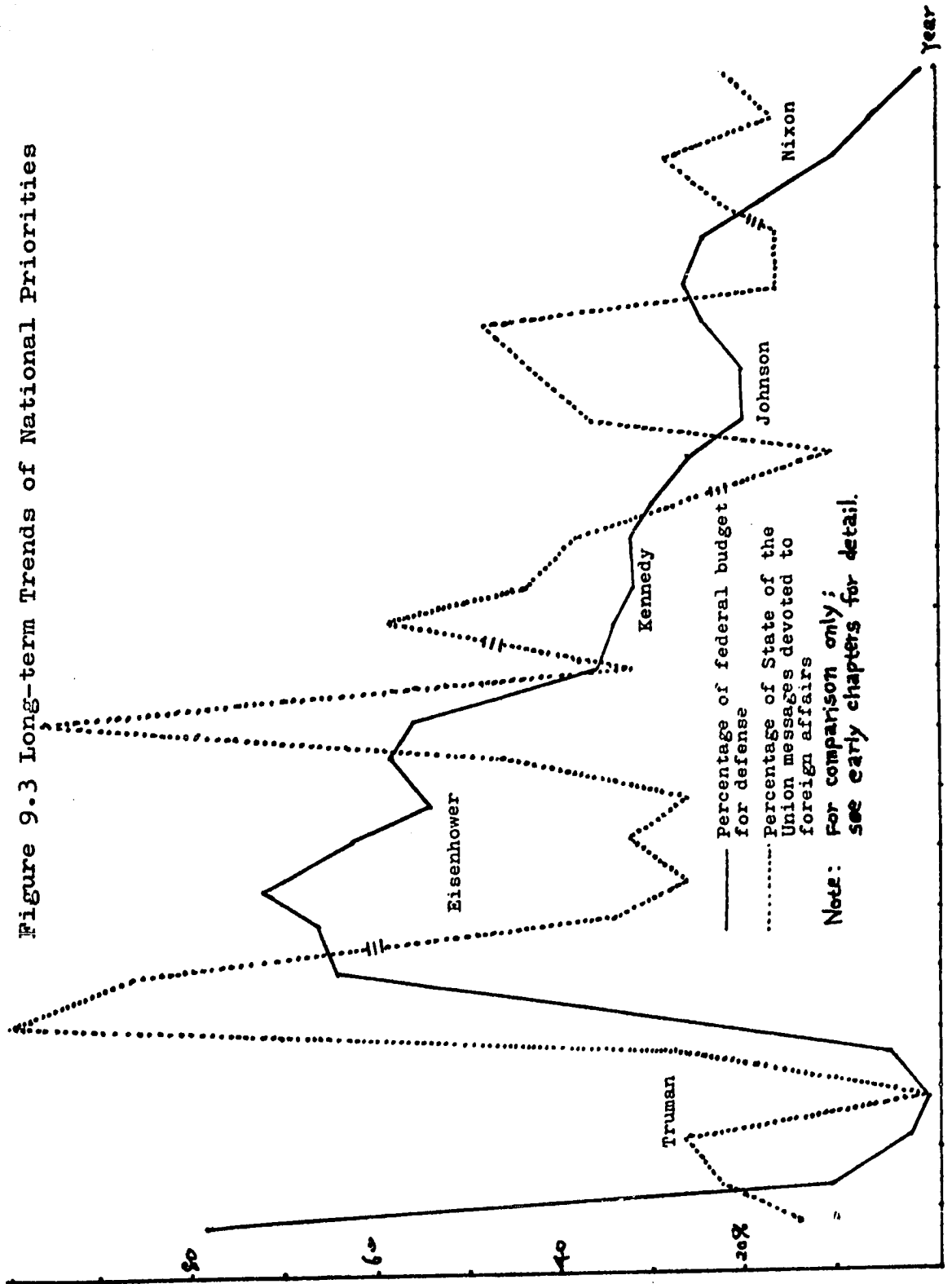
on many of the cold war institutions that included the military establishment and the Central Intelligence Agency. Even though the Presidency was more than a mere cold war institution to the American people, it is hard to deny that the expansion of the institutions was clearly associated with the need to cope with cold war exigencies. The deep reservations about presidential power and many cold war practices is reflected in the declining significance of defense expenditures in presidential priorities. Considerably greater emphasis is placed on domestic processes and priorities.

Under such circumstances, there will be a reduced reliance on military strength and military reactions. Accordingly, military advice is likely to assume less significance, thus bringing about the lowered profile of the military bureaucracy within the decision-making circles in Washington as well as in areas abroad. As Figure 9.3 indicates, the share of defense expenditures in the federal budget has declined significantly ever since the peak during the Korean war. Despite the notable differences in shape of the variables, the figure clearly shows the downward trend of the importance of the military posture and the priority attached to foreign policy in presidential verbal behavior.

(Figure 9.3 here)

The reduced priority attached to foreign policy and reduced posture of the country accompanied the long-term

Figure 9.3 Long-term Trends of National Priorities



erosion of support for the President. The presidential popularity measure is plotted together with the level of congressional support of the President's legislative programs in Figure 9.4 to show that the trend has been visible. Presidential popularity shows a peak during the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations and continued to decline as a general trend. This indicates that the popular mood toward the President has some historical root that cannot be easily attributed to presidential personalities. Despite different fluctuations of the lines, there is some parallel in the general contour. Particularly, each line indicates a general decline of support for the President since the later part of the Sixties.

(Figure 9.4 here)

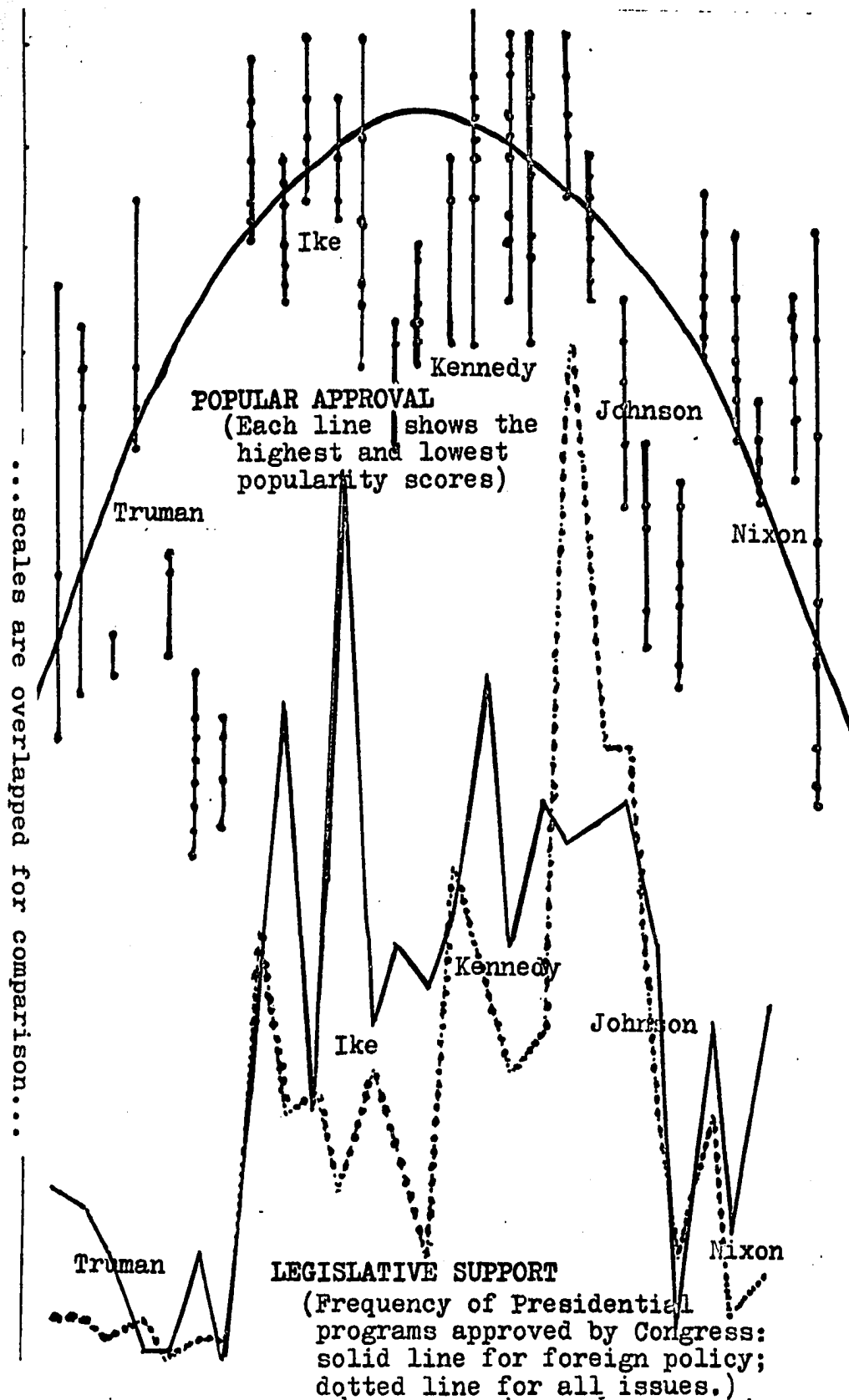
This assertion that public support was eroding in a long-term cycle is supported by the long-term behavior of "foreign policy salience" and "press attention" to the Presidents, as shown in Figure 9.5. As a reminder, the measure of foreign salience is the percentage of the Gallup Poll responses which name the foreign and defense issues as the "most important problem facing the country." The measure of press attention is the frequency of presidential news with photographic illustration of the President in the New York Times.

(Figure 9.5 here)

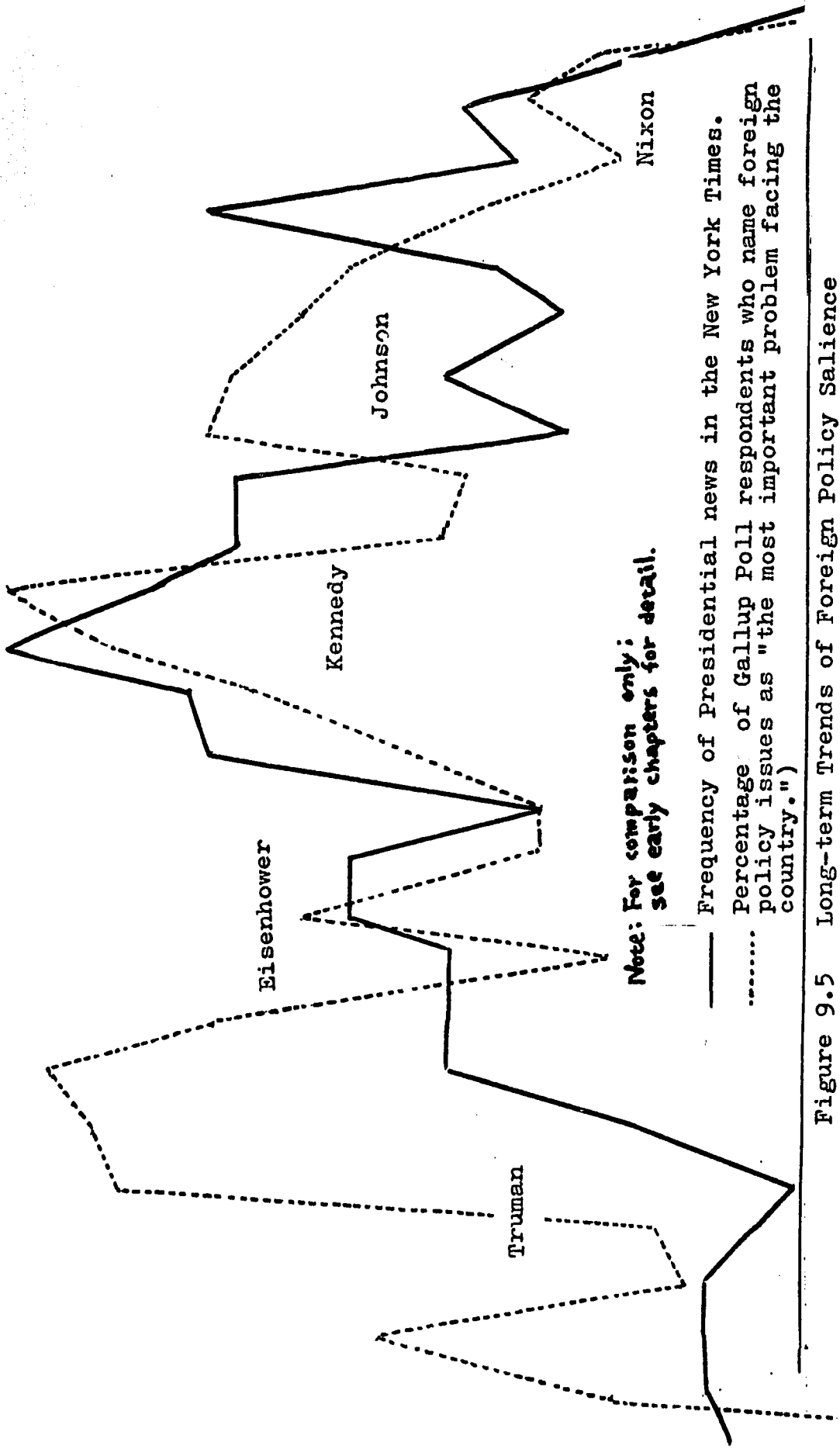
The relaxation of international tension seemed to have resulted in a downward trend in press attention to Presidents



Figure 9.4. Long-term Trends of Popular Support  
(1945-1972)



Note: for comparison only. Units of measurement are different.



**Note: For comparison only; see early chapters for detail.**

— Frequency of Presidential news in the New York Times.  
 ..... Percentage of Gallup Poll respondents who name foreign policy issues as "the most important problem facing the country."

Figure 9.5 Long-term Trends of Foreign Policy Salience and Press Attention to Presidents, 1946-1973

since President Kennedy. In spite of some intense activities by Presidents Johnson and Nixon, press attention took a bell-shape curve over time, indicating that the national mood had come around a circle since the Truman Presidency. Even though there is <sup>some correlation between</sup> the level of presidential activities and the level of press attention to them, press attention declined sharply, somewhat independently of presidential activities. This suggests that there is a limit in presidential power to draw national attention. It is still open to dispute as to what extent the New York Times reflected the prevailing mood of the journalistic community or the nation as a whole. Yet graphed over time, Figure 9.5 shows that the shape of "press attention to a President corresponds closely with the shape of the Gallup Poll Index of foreign issue salience.

The parallel is particularly striking, because the unit of measurement is different. While the index of foreign policy salience is a percentage figure, the index of press attention to President is the absolute frequency. Given the influence of the press attention to presidential popularity, as analyzed in Chapter 8, the popularity itself is likely to take a similar shape in a rough contour. This graphic analysis makes it quite clear that public support, press attention to a President, and foreign issue salience took a round turn from Truman to Nixon as a general pattern, supporting the notion that these variables stem from the same underlying dynamics of national mood in the long run.

It was also demonstrated that the foreign policy salience has a direct impact on congressional support of presidential legislative programs.

Further evidence in support of basic change in national mood is revealed by the trend of public opinion on presidential authority. The first revealing fact is that pollsters seldom asked the "presidential power" question except during the Presidencies of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Truman, and Nixon. Questions on President Nixon's authority mushroomed since 1970 to such an extent that their total almost equals the entire number found during the terms of all five of the preceding Presidents. The nation tended to agree that the power of the Presidency has grown in recent years while the power of Congress has declined.

Before Nixon's Presidency, the median of public approval for a variety of questions on presidential powers fell to 27 percent, if each issue is treated with the equal weight. Since 1970, median approval on a number of Nixon's actions involving Constitutional authority issues was 37 percent, fluctuating greatly. In April 1973, the Gallup Poll found that an all-time low of 13 percent of the respondents would approve of Nixon taking "further military action in South Asia without a vote of approval by Congress."<sup>11</sup>

Almost all of the questions on Democratic Presidents

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<sup>11</sup> Hazel Erskine, "The Polls: Presidential Power," Public Opinion Quarterly (Autumn, 1975), 488-503.

concentrated on Roosevelt, and those asked during Republican terms pertained chiefly to Richard Nixon. Not surprisingly, Democrats tended to be more permissive on Nixon's powers than were Republicans over thirty years ago with F. Roosevelt's. Only one in ten Republicans supported F. Roosevelt's authority, though over half of the Democrats frequently supported the power initiatives made by Republican Nixon. Utilizing median approval as a rough index, the following figures contrast opinions of voters of each party while a Republican or a Democratic President was in the White House.

(Table 9.1 here)

No comparable questions were asked by the national survey organizations during the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. Yet the above data compared very well with the result of Roberta Sigel's study in 1965.<sup>12</sup> Sigel sought to measure the citizen's view of the role the President should play in contrast to the role of Congress and the role of the electorate in the political system, and asked the respondent to imagine a case in which the President felt troops should be sent to some trouble spots abroad in spite of popular opposition. Seventy five percent felt that the President should send troops in spite of public

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<sup>12</sup>Roberta Sigel, "Image of the American Presidency," Midwest Journal of Political Science, 5 (February, 1966) 123-137.

Table 9.1  
Median Approval of Presidential Power

Questions asked during the terms of	Republican Voters	Democratic Voters	Number of questions involved
Republican Presidents	55 %	37 %	12
Democratic Presidents	11 %	38 %	8

\* Source: Hazel Erskine, "The Polls: Presidential Power," Public Opinion Quarterly Autumn, 1973, p.489

opposition: only 21 percent felt he should subordinate his view to opinion in the country. This data suggests that the American public was very permissive toward presidential authority until the United States got massively involved in the war. The point is that there was a significant shift in public attitudes toward presidential authority.

This comparison renders support to the notion that the declining importance of foreign policy interacts with the support given to a President. The declining attention to presidential activities or declining importance of foreign policy problems do not of themselves constitute isolationism. Nevertheless, the loss of attention interacts closely with the priority given to domestic affairs and problems. If one further assumes that lack of attention persists for a while, then it might have the same consequences as an isolationist mood.

Several obvious mistakes and heavy human and material costs notwithstanding, it is possible to say that the cold war was on the whole successfully overcome by the nation. Consequently, presidential leadership tends to lose its significance and appeal. The erosion of the cold war is closely related to the problem of the erosion of support for presidential leadership. Even the intense public relations activities of President Nixon did not draw the attention of the American people. In spite of the common notion that his foreign policy activities and summit con-

ferences were at the focus of nation's interest, the data show that he had to cope with a consistent downswing of national attention.

This brief analysis suggests that the Presidents, by the very fact of being responsive to the needs and mood of the nation, are bound to lose their grip on the American people. When there is no overriding national problem, there is no need for presidential leadership. This feeling is likely to be increasingly reflected in academic writings or textbooks. Presidential leadership then, as an operational political belief, is likely to lose ground in national politics. If the present trend continues, then there will probably be periods of weak Presidencies. The process was already set in motion during the first Nixon administration. By any standards, President Nixon was a weak President rather than strong. The question that remains is what are the likely problems that plague the nation, which will have a significant impact on the pattern of presidential leadership.

#### Political Economy of Presidential Leadership

One important point to make is that the shift of relationships did not occur all of a sudden. It is fair to ask what underlies such a long-term pattern of change.

The primary emphasis in this research has been on



domestic economic conditions as the important conditioning factors of presidential leadership. We have demonstrated with specific data that variations of exercise of power or policy output among and within presidential terms is somewhat responsive to the change and problems of economic conditions. The analysis suggests that presidential degree of freedom in foreign affairs will largely depend upon domestic economic performance. If it is subject to further analysis, it is possible to predict the degree of public support for a President from the information of aggregate economic indicators and measures taken by government. Furthermore, public worry about economic conditions will affect the foreign policy activism. A generation of public support of foreign policy activism was possible under the conditions of sustained economic prosperity and stability. On the other hand, foreign intervention created serious economic problems that will require radical departures from post World War II pattern within the context of the cold war.

To clarify the point, it is important to summarize the most plausible explanation on the dynamic interaction between the economic policy of each party and the national problem-solving process. That is, the sequence will go like this:

- (1) a Democratic President comes to power when the dominant problem is unemployment or sluggish economic growth;
- (2) active economic policy and expansion of government

- will result in the pressure of inflation or economic instability, and the dominant national problem will become the control of inflation;
- (3) the electorate will turn away from the Democratic President, in its desire for stability and elect a Republican President;
  - (4) the Republican party will try to control the rate of inflation, this will result in unemployment;
  - (5) the Republicans will be punished for unemployment, and be forced to give way to Democratic party leadership.

This cycle may occur on a short-term basis, that is, every fourth or eighth year, due to the electoral system. But the change may involve a long-term shift that might last for a generation or so. One important point to make is that the short-term cycle occurs not only within a long-term cycle, but also the short-term cycle transforms the long-term cycle, when the operation of short-term dynamics reaches a breaking point. The widespread perception is that economic resources reached the limit, transforming the basic operation of the system by changing the relationships among variables, not simply changing the value of each variable. For example, the theory that defense comes free because it solves unemployment is discredited by more and more people.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Bruce Russett, What Price Vigilance? (New Haven: Yale University, 1970).

The change of such "contextual knowledge" explains the changed position of liberals on many defense and foreign policy issues.<sup>14</sup> Liberals of yesterday become the most ardent proponent of defense cuts, because they correctly perceive and realize that there are no slack resources in the economy. The resources are not only limited, but also it is a widespread perception that the economy cannot expand any longer without some concurrent inflation and unemployment. Consequently presidential power cannot be free from the domestic conflict over the fixed size of the national pie. What is good for the President is not necessarily good for the country.

It is possible to suggest that the limit in presidential power was reached around 1970. Nixon's Presidency, in spite of striking differences in personalities, party, policy orientation, and international circumstances, shared many characteristics of domestic political environment with Truman. To name a few: (1) both Presidents suffered from a lack of public support not only in level of popularity, but also in terms of the wide margin of fluctuation within a short period of time, (2) both received relatively better public judgment of their conduct of foreign policy than in the domestic area, (3) both were post-war or war Presi-

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<sup>14</sup>Wayne Moyer, "House Voting on Defense: An Ideological Explanation," in Russett and Stepan, eds., Military Force and American Society, 106-142.

dents, (4) both had to cope with the problem of concurrent inflation and unemployment, (5) both were under public pressure to give domestic issues priority, and (6) both suffered from opposing party majority in Congress. In addition to the above characteristics, it would be useful to add that (1) defense expenditures in 1970 were as low as those in 1948, in terms of GNP; (2) national priorities fit the post-war pattern. If there is one significant difference, it is the following: Truman started with domestic promise and ended up in a great decision to commit the nation to a major war; Nixon started with foreign affairs, but ended up with major domestic problems.

It was pointed out earlier that Nixon's rating would have eroded downward on the basis of public economic worries alone. After a short period of energy crisis, inflation tended to be the nation's top concern. Although it was the Watergate affair that ultimately led to his resignation, economic conditions invariably interacted with the public's declining confidence in his administration.

Yet the significance of the economic problems that followed the war in Vietnam are not adequately analyzed nor well understood. Part of the reason is the tendency of economists to treat the war period as an exception or something beyond explanation. Without conceptual tools, the significance of the problem is easily discounted. Table 9.2 lists the summary statistics of the economic environment during the five Presidencies since Truman, along with the

measures of public support and importance of foreign policy issues among the population.

(Table 9.2 here)

The data clearly show that the Nixon administration was the first since the Truman administration that was troubled by concurrent deterioration of inflation and unemployment. Accordingly, the early Seventies may have been the first time since World War II when economic anxieties dominated debate on the recurrent questions of how much is enough. With no American war in Vietnam, and with no great crisis or tension in the world, economic constraints seem to be felt acutely. On the other hand, foreign policy issues cannot be felt as critically as they were before, given the importance of the domestic economic situation.

One important point to make here is that most other countries are accustomed to trimming perceived defense requirements to fit actual economic resources. The United States was just affluent enough over a generation to avoid the brunt of an economic squeeze. There was certainly considerable shift of priority between guns and butter in the period. Yet the nature of the problem now is not that of priority, but the problem of the required magnitude of that priority choice in the Seventies.

The suggestion made here is that the United States is probably dealing with the start of a new, long historical period, not just a temporary interruption of post-war routine of politico-economic cycles. If this view has any valid

Table 9.2  
Economic Environment of Five Presidents  
(standard deviation in parentheses)

	% Change of Real Personal Income	Price Change	Unemp- loyment	Foreign Issue Saliency	Public Support
Truman	2.04 (4.88)	5.38 (5.99)	3.96 (1.19)	40.91 (19.22)	45.60 (18.12)
Eisenhower	3.34 (2.93)	1.46 (1.37)	5.19 (1.00)	43.80 (12.14)	65.00 (6.79)
Kennedy	4.33 (1.46)	1.18 (0.28)	5.76 (0.61)	46.30 (14.08)	71.50 (6.20)
Johnson	5.14 (1.53)	3.33 (1.30)	3.86 (0.42)	50.90 (7.94)	55.40 (10.18)
Nixon (1st term)	3.17 (2.31)	4.96 (1.55)	5.35 (0.58)	36.10 (9.45)	51.45 (9.69)
Mean	3.43 (3.37)	3.35 (3.75)	4.65 (2.00)	42.52 (13.86)	57.60 (14.38)
Cases	348	348	348	55	201
F	9.60	28.73	57.57	3.47	28.73

ground, the approach to foreign and defense policy-making has extra significance under the stringent economic conditions. Neither economically nor militarily can the United States afford to make the same mistakes which affluence and strategic superiority have allowed.

It is fashionable to say that the world is becoming more pluralistic. It is doubtful, however, that the kind of pluralism existing in the world is in any way comparable to the kind of pluralism characterizing American society. Certainly the perceived menace from mutual destruction and spread of nuclear weapons is so great that the principal national and bloc leaders are increasingly pressed in the direction of habits of restraint and cooperation. Yet with no overpowering supranational institutions, incentive to increasing concert of action and policy would not create by itself political and economic integration or a peaceful world. The world is more likely to be fragmented than pluralistic for years to come.

Given this general trend in the world, the United States is likely to be increasingly divided between the two parties on major policy, which necessarily involves the solution of domestic economic problems. This does not suggest that the United States is returning to the old isolationism or an outright rejection of its role in the interdependent world. The point is that while the international problems are being domesticated, a profound pessi-

mism over economic conditions may grow to a point where an overall consensus demands effective political action, on the basis of a widespread mood that "something should be done." Until that time, no President will be able to enlist enough support, given the decline of confidence in the institution, as inferred from the loss of attention to the President in recent years.

The analysis reported here is partial, in the sense that the theoretical analysis will require a thorough investigation of historical processes on the basis of a more refined model and data, which will ultimately require an interdisciplinary effort for further study. Therefore, the points advanced in this chapter are not "proven" in the strict sense. With this qualification, however, it is possible to suggest that the political process is likely to drift for a while, until the significance of the economic problem is fully realized and the two institutions of government are in the hand of the same party, probably in 1976. Even then, it will take a few more years to arrive at a national consensus for a need to take action on structural effects of the economic system.

As the burden of inflation and unemployment falls largely on the less privileged segments of the society, liberal forces will grow to gain stronghold, readjusting party programs and policy step by step. A piecemeal approach to the economic problem will aggravate the situation, with a



resulting demand for redistribution coming increasingly to the forefront. With no prospect of the total size of the national economy expanding, partisan differences are likely to be intensified. It seems that what is required are some basic reform measures comparable to the New Deal. One need not point out that the income gap within the nation has been increasing in recent years.<sup>15</sup>

It might well be said that the rudimentary stage of a new era has already begun. The changed security environment will require less global involvement and less economic resources, as the number of actors in the international arena multiplies. It is possible to argue that foreign policy does not require as much emotional support of the public as it did during the cold war period, when heavy national sacrifice was necessary. This leads to the point that smaller numbers of elites will be involved in the formulation and conduct of foreign policy, simply because the complexity of the international arena requires an experienced hand and does not draw nor require national focus of attention.

On the other hand, international economic problems, which tend to be relevant to the domestic economy are likely to increase in importance in the future. Growing congressional assertiveness is an inevitable course, because all of the economic problems require "legislative" solution. Problems of trade, investment, resources development and

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<sup>15</sup>The share of income of the lowest fifth has declined

international monetary stability will require extensive congressional participation and action. These problems, while requiring a continuity in policy over long period of time and careful design for a successful result, will not attract understanding of the general public or the Congress as a whole, because these matters are traditionally an arena of interest group politics, in addition to the fact that the overall design became highly technical.

A concurrent development is the likelihood of the rise of the gubernatorial office, as domestic matters assume primacy. Even though the trend is not apparent, with the notable exception of the loss of Senator Fulbright, it might be true that the next decade is characterized by the importance of governors as a pool of presidential candidates. When domestic policies assume partisan character, there might be increasing emphasis on the combination of legislative and executive skills in domestic programs.

All of these trends are still a matter of hypothesis which only the passage of time can validate. The point that deserves emphasis is that the President, no matter who he may be, is likely to cope with an adverse political environment, until conditions are ripe, overwhelmingly, for programmatic direction. Such change in a pluralistic system

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from 5.7 percent to 5.6 percent in 1969, and to 5.5 percent in 1970. Even though the size of change is small, it is significant because the equalizing trend of the postwar period might have been reversed. Statistical Abstract, 330.

takes a long time before national consensus is achieved. At this juncture, it is worthwhile to note the the point made by Justice Douglas in his concurring opinion on presidential power in 1951.

We pay a price for our system of checks and balances, for the distribution of power among the three branches of government. It is a price that today may seem exorbitant to many. Today a kindly President uses the seizure power to effect a wage increase and to keep the steel furnaces in production. Yet tomorrow another President might use the same power to prevent a wage increase, to curb trade unionists, to regiment labor as oppressively as industry thinks it has been regimented by this seizure. 16

If one takes seriously the nature of the problem in the economic system, one might well read his point in reverse. It will be as dangerous to downgrade the Presidency as it was to upgrade the President with a short-term perspective. By limiting the power of the President in making his choices, the nation might have to pay a higher price, which hindsight only will show. Even though the overall evaluation of American Presidents is positive in terms of national problem-solving, the point remains that the President has many theoretical problems that deserve serious academic attention. Beyond recurring institutional remedies, a clear understanding of the complexity and nature of the problem is mandatory at this time. Any theory or

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<sup>16</sup>As quoted in Duane Lockard, Perverted Priorities in American Politics (New York: Macmillan Co., 1971), 238. The case is Youngstown Sheet and Tube Vs. Sawyer, 343, U.S. 579 (1952).

idea formulated during the Seventies is likely to govern the mind of the nation for decades to come.

The major thrust of this chapter can be compared with the point made by V. O. Key, Jr. ten years ago. Responding to the melancholy hypothesis that democracies tend toward decay, under the hostile international environment, he concluded that if the American system erodes in its democratic ethos, it is not the fault of the public.<sup>17</sup> His ethical position can be applied to leaders at the helm of the nation. Leaders do not corrupt themselves; if they are corrupt, they have been corrupted. It is not personality, nor the party, which characterizes the Presidency; it is the political system, which has required presidential leadership for the solving of pressing national problems. It is not a simple irony that the President, by being responsive to the needs of the nation, and effective in the solution of national problems, should yield to leaders who are more suitable for a new problem that arises. Until the current domestic problems are solved, the United States is not likely to increase its role in the world over that of the cold war period. Will this be far too distant in time to deserve consideration?

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<sup>17</sup> V. O. Key, Jr., Public Opinion and American Democracy (New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1964), 556-558.

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