INFORMATION TO USERS

While the most advanced technology has been used to photograph and reproduce this manuscript, the quality of the reproduction is heavily dependent upon the quality of the material submitted. For example:

- Manuscript pages may have indistinct print. In such cases, the best available copy has been filmed.
- Manuscripts may not always be complete. In such cases, a note will indicate that it is not possible to obtain missing pages.
- Copyrighted material may have been removed from the manuscript. In such cases, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, and charts) are photographed by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each oversize page is also filmed as one exposure and is available, for an additional charge, as a standard 35mm slide or as a 17"x 23" black and white photographic print.

Most photographs reproduce acceptably on positive microfilm or microfiche but lack the clarity on xerographic copies made from the microfilm. For an additional charge, 35mm slides of 6"x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations that cannot be reproduced satisfactorily by xerography.

Order Number 8716613

The national security adviser: policy change and crisis management

Honick, Amalia Fried, Ph.D.

THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY, 1987

U·M·I

300 N. Zeeb Rd.
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

THE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER: POLICY CHANGE AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

by

Amalia Fried Honick

A dissertation submitted to The Johns Hopkins University in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Baltimore, Maryland

1987

ABSTRACT

The President's assistant for national security affairs has a pivotal role in the development and conduct of U.S. foreign policy. That role has been especially important in the management of critical issues of foreign policy, which include both crisis situations and major shifts in the direction of policy. The participation of the national security adviser in these types of issues has had a substantial impact on the outcome of policy, although the record of that participation has been a mixed one.

Three case studies are presented to illustrate the limitations and possibilities inherent in the position for affecting foreign policy. These cases include Richard Nixon's China initiative, Jimmy Carter's attempts to cope with the Iranian crisis and the Lebanese conflict during the first Reagan administration. Each case represents a critical issue in foreign policy, involves problems that endured for several years and made a significant difference in each administration's overall record in foreign affairs.

Each case also represents a different policy outcome. The China opening was a decisive success while the protracted crisis in Iran created a deadlocked situation for the president. And Reagan, instead of protecting American interests, saw his policy result in failure.

Finally, the security advisers assumed very different roles in each of the three cases. As Nixon's NSC adviser, China showed

Henry Kissinger as a controlling national security assistant while Zbigniew Brzezinski acted more as a second secretary of state under Carter. The identity of the NSC adviser under Reagan has been, at best, non-specific, supporting a more transitory role.

The outcomes of these policies suggest that certain types of issues are better managed by the White House while others are more responsive to State Department direction. China rightfully came under the prerogative of Nixon and Kissinger, while the Iranian case should have remained within the domain of the White House. The experience in Lebanon and the need for a long-term resolution support more direct management by the State Department.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. George Liska and Dr. Francis Rourke of the Political Science Department at The Johns Hopkins University for their continued support throughout the research and writing of this doctoral thesis. From the outset, they have made themselves available in all aspects of this project and greatly helped in directing the development of this topic. I have had the benefit of their comments and suggestions and I particularly appreciate their assistance in the final stages of editing and rewriting.

I wish to thank Joy Pankoff of the Political Economy Department at Johns Hopkins for preparing the manuscript and express my appreciation for her availability and assistance.

I would also like to thank my husband for his enduring patience and my parents for their constant support throughout.

I, alone, remain responsible for the contents therein.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The president's assistant for national security affairs has been at the center of a continuing debate over the pursuit and practice of American foreign policy. For nearly four decades, the national security adviser's role has evolved and changed to such a degree that it bears little resemblance to the original idea of a National Security Council staff as it was first conceived under the National Security Act of 1947. The NSC was designed to meet the need for the integration of national security policy and to assist the president in conducting his foreign policy. McGeorge Bundy, as President Kennedy's first national security assistant, set a new precedent for the assistant's role by acting as a regular and important contributor to the substance of the president's foreign policy. The authority and power so apparent in recent years were first exercised by Henry Kissinger who, as Richard Nixon's NSC assistant, propelled the national security assistant's position into the most influential foreign policy role in the Nixon administration. The NSC staff function is at once a cause and reflection of the fact that the foreign policy process is far more political today than was once the case. This change has on occasion transformed the security adviser's role from that of policy adviser to policy advocate. The ramifications of this development are considerable for both the formation and implementation of foreign policy decisions.

The national security assistant has played a particularly important part in the management of critical issues of foreign policy, an intervention that has resulted in both successes and failures for modern presidents. Three cases of such critical issues will be examined in this thesis--the China initiative carried out under Nixon, Jimmy Carter's role in the Iranian revolution and the conduct of American policy toward the Lebanese conflict during the first Reagan administration. Each case illustrates the scope of the security assistant's involvement in handling a foreign policy and reveals the impact that the assistant's presence and performance had on the degree of success each president enjoyed in doing so.

Some aspects of the assistant's crisis role have been repeated from one administration to the next; others are unique to the circumstances surrounding the specific issues. But in each case, and in many others which are not presented here, the national security adviser has had an important part to play. Perspective can be gleaned from these episodes on the conduct of American policy both in the formative stages of policy planning as well as in its later implementation. The NSC assistant's participation in the consideration of major foreign policy issues has had both beneficial and damaging effects on the outcome of policy. But whether it is beneficial or damaging, the extent of the assistant's influence on the president's foreign policy during

a crisis rivals if not surpasses that of the other principal actors involved in the direction of national security policy in the United States.

The role of the national security adviser in the area of foreign affairs has been a major issue hanging over the management of every administration's foreign policy since World War II. As a member of the president's senior foreign policy team the security adviser is often alleged to have intruded upon the traditional prerogatives of the secretary of state and turned the operation of the foreign policy-making system into a struggle between the White House and the State Department. The emergence of the national security adviser is part of a larger problem--the growth of a White House staff that has expanded greatly in stature and influence since the early sixties when Kennedy set as a priority a small but strongly organized staff. The "premium" he and other presidents placed on presidential staffing has both confirmed the power of the president and indicated the limits on his operating capacities as chief executive. While movement toward concentrating power over foreign policy in the NSC adviser's position began in the Kennedy administration with the appointment of McGeorge Bundy to the NSC post, it reached its apex under Nixon who, together with Henry Kissinger, established the precedent that the national security adviser would be the principal architect of the president's foreign policy.

The problem of who makes foreign policy has been accentuated

by the fact that the NSC adviser has become involved in the complex substance of key foreign issues even while he is administering the organizational side of his job. He has become, as Zbigniew Brzezinski, former NSC adviser to Jimmy Carter, has observed, a "subjective" participant in what is supposed to be an objective process.[1] On the one hand he is expected to assist the president by channeling to him the views of the various agencies involved in foreign policy-making. This is the objective side of his job. At the same time, however, he is expected to advise the president on the best course of action for the chief executive to follow in foreign affairs. This is the subjective dimension of his work. The conflict between these two roles has long been at the center of attention in discussions of the activities of the NSC and its advisory staff.

The focus of concern in this thesis is on the subjective side of the NSC adviser's activities--the influence he has exercised over the president in shaping American foreign policy during recent administrations. In his memoirs, Henry Kissinger wrote that "every President since Kennedy seems to have trusted his White House aides more than his Cabinet."[2] No White House aide is in a stronger position to put his own imprint on presidential policies than the NSC adviser. His influence can be critical in the area of high-policy issues when the stakes are highest and the president stands to either lose or win in a big way. The national security assistant is almost always a highly visible and

influential advocate in the handling of these issues, and he is likely to have a pivotal role in their resolution. High-policy issues are critical decisions which pertain to vital matters in international affairs, ultimately determining the success and reputation of an administration's foreign policy. Because they impose so significantly on the larger capacities of U.S. foreign policy, they provide the NSC adviser with an opportunity to have a major impact on major policy changes or diplomatic breakthroughs in which the United States is involved.

The implications of the NSC assistant's role are thus discussed here in terms of the limitations and possibilities inherent in the position for influencing the development of foreign policy. Three cases are used to illustrate the varying ways and degrees to which the assistant has influenced the evolution of important areas of policy. The cases include: the China initiative and the breakthrough in Nixon's efforts to establish a new China policy; Jimmy Carter's attempts to cope with the Iranian crisis; and the Lebanese conflict, which was the first foreign policy crisis facing the Reagan administration. These cases have been selected because collectively they permit an appraisal of the security adviser's impact on critical foreign issues. First, each case represents a salient issue in foreign affairs and a critical juncture in the strategic direction of the president's policies. Each involved problems that endured for several years and became consuming issues for the president and

his senior staff. Finally, the handling of each case has made a significant difference in the administration's overall record in foreign affairs.

Second, the circumstances of each case were resolved differently, presenting three distinct policy outcomes. The China opening was a decisive success which received overwhelming support and praise, and was President Nixon's crowning foreign policy achievement. Jimmy Carter suffered a sharp drop in public support and a resounding defeat in his bid for reelection, most directly from the effects on Carter's presidential image of the protracted crisis in Iran. The Iranian revolution and, later, the fourteen-month standoff over the American hostages presented the administration with a no-win situation, where the most that could be done was to control, or minimize the losses. What came out of the whole tumultuous episode was a deadlocked situation, at which point there was little the administration could do that would make any meaningful difference. Reagan invested considerable resources--using tools of diplomacy, deploying military units and devising political initiatives--as part of the American response to the conflict in Lebanon. What Reagan tried to do was limit the impact of the Lebanese fighting on American interests in the Middle East peace process. But his approach was unsuccessful and, instead of protecting American interests, his policy resulted in failure. Not only did the civil strife in Lebanon continue unabated, but the prospects for reopening Arab-Israeli negotia-

tions waned against the Lebanese backdrop.

Third, the national security assistants had significantly different roles to play in each of the three cases. As a result of their individual relationships with the president and their organizational position vis-à-vis the rest of the foreign policy bureaucracy, the security adviser's capacity for bringing pressure to bear upon the policy process fluctuated. The well-orchestrated opening to China showed Kissinger as a controlling national security assistant, whose authority and prerogative placed emphasis publicly on the primacy of the NSC job. So expansive was his personal impact on policy that he appeared even imperious at times, as much to Nixon's displeasure as it was to Kissinger's satisfaction. Brzezinski might have tried to emulate the Kissinger model, but his part in the Iranian crisis put him more in direct competition with the State Department and its Secretary, Cyrus Vance. He was clearly an advocate of particular policy directions during the Iranian crisis, but could not prevail upon Carter to change the administration's course. As the situation eventually developed, the president had two secretaries of state with Brzezinski locked in dispute with Vance over Iranian policy. Because Ronald Reagan had three different national security assistants during his first term, interpretation of the NSC role in his administration has been anything but uniform. This has held particularly true in the Lebanese case, where each of the three assistants was involved in substantive discussions on

policy. The identity of the security adviser was, at best, non-specific, supporting a more transitory role in the process of foreign policy decision-making than was the case in previous administrations.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

[1]Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Deciding who Makes Foreign Policy," *New York Times Magazine*, September 18, 1983, p. 62.

[2]Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979).

CHAPTER II

PRESIDENTIAL STAFFING IN FOREIGN POLICY: THE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER

THE NSC STAFF FUNCTION

Before turning to the case studies, it is useful to examine the evolution of the national security council and the national security adviser's function, as it was conceived by the president, starting with Truman. The purpose is not to give an organizational history of the NSC, but rather to provide some background on the forces that have shaped the history of this office. The debate over staffing in American foreign policy is a relatively recent phenomenon, largely the result of the prominence the National Security Council has gained in the policy process since the early sixties. The NSC today bears little resemblance to the interdepartmental committee created during the reorganization of the American defense establishment during the late forties. It was originally designed to channel various policy options in foreign affairs from the departments to the president for his consideration. Under the National Security Act of 1947, the NSC was created "to advise the president with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security." The

NSC would make recommendations to the president based on "matters of common interest to the departments and agencies of the Government concerned with the national security," and the relationship between "the objectives, commitments, and risks of the United States ... to our actual and potential military power in the interest of national security." But since the early sixties, the NSC has moved from an advisory role to that of an advocate, and in the process has produced a staff whose presence in the White House has been a major source of contention with the State Department over the conduct of foreign policy. The President's assistant for national security affairs and his staff of professionally trained specialists have assumed key roles in the policy process. This intervention has been encouraged by the president himself, either by affirming the need for their participation or by default, as a result of failing to clearly state their function, thereby granting them a certain latitude in their behavior.

The organization of staff functions was a much simpler matter during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, when the secretary of state played a virtually unopposed role in the conduct of foreign policy and found few, if any, sources of competition either for the president's attention or on the substance of policy in the White House. The NSC also operated in a very different way from that which followed in later administrations. The importance of the Council did not lie in the activities of its

staffs as has been the case since the early Kennedy years, but in its more formal role as a forum for the discussion and deliberation of policy options among its statutory members, and any other government officials the president invited to participate in the meetings. The few staff members assigned to the Council performed basically administrative functions, and the special assistant for national security affairs, a new staff position created by Eisenhower in 1953, supervised the system of interagency policy-planning committees under the NSC. Under Eisenhower and his special assistant, Robert Cutler, the NSC was institutionalized into a comprehensive system of highly standardized procedures and a complex interdepartmental committee structure which included two new subsidiary organizations, the Planning Board and the Operations Coordinating Board.

One of the first changes instituted by John Kennedy upon assuming office was the dismantling of the Eisenhower NSC, or what has been described as the "deinstitutionalization" of the system. Acting on the recommendations of the Senate Select Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery, chaired by Senator Henry M. Jackson, whose purpose was to carry out the first full-scale review of the national security process since the passage of the National Security Act, Kennedy ordered the overhaul of the NSC system. In its review, the Jackson subcommittee had outlined two alternative uses of the NSC: the new president could use the Council either as "an intimate forum" to meet "with his chief advisers in search-

ing discussion and debate of a limited number of critical problems, or as "the apex of a comprehensive and highly institutionalized system for generating policy proposals and following through on presidentially approved decisions."[1] In keeping with the committee's own recommendation, Kennedy preferred a staff role to an institutional role for the NSC, and proceeded to appoint McGeorge Bundy to the position of special assistant. Kennedy's appointment of Bundy represented a first step towards streamlining the NSC staff and simplifying its procedures. In announcing his appointment, Kennedy, as the president-elect, explained: "I have asked Mr. Bundy to review with care existing staff organization and arrangements, and to simplify them wherever possible ... and that we may have a single, small, but strongly organized staff unit to assist me in obtaining advice from, and coordinating operations of, the government agencies concerned with national security affairs."[2] I. M. Destler has written that the NSC served as an "umbrella under which Kennedy was free to establish a strong Presidential foreign policy staff." Like Franklin Roosevelt, Kennedy centered his personal staff around "action-forcing processes," using a small core of senior advisers with relatively fixed assignments.[3]

As special assistant, Bundy became more than simply a facilitator of policy. With the president's full endorsement, he redefined the role of the national security adviser and in doing so, he set a precedent for his successors to the position. Beyond

managing a small and accomplished group of senior NSC staff members, all of whom had experience in foreign affairs, Bundy became a confidant and trusted personal adviser to the president who, together with the secretaries of state and defense, reguarly met with and advised the president on all aspects of national security policy. By transforming the role of the special assistant, Kennedy, together with Bundy and his staff, began to centralize control over foreign policy within the White House. This movement away from the State Department in the conduct of foreign policy was continued by Kennedy's successors, who took even more decisive steps in concentrating power within the White House.

But the new arrangement had costs as well as benefits to it. Many of the failures in our foreign policy since the Kennedy years have been "blamed" on the president's tendency to reject the traditional system of policymaking in favor of the counsel of a few trusted advisers who are free to act without the burdens of formalized planning procedures and staff relationships. The president's demand for action and the necessity of responding expeditiously to the growing number of critical global issues have made the presence of these White House staff people highly desirable from the president's point of view. In the process, however, the State Department, above all the Secretary of State, have been discredited in the eyes of the administration, not to mention before a much broader public.

Presidential impatience with the State Department is legendary. Kennedy apparently daydreamed of "establishing a secret office of thirty people or so to run foreign policy while maintaining the State Department as a facade in which people might contentedly carry papers from bureau to bureau."[4] And successive presidents have made their preferences for individual advisers in the White House publicly known. At one time considered "first among equals," the secretary of state has found himself in constant competition with the national security adviser for the president's attention and support. Most presidents, including Kennedy, have done little to reduce the friction between the NSC staff and the State Department. They have assumed office pledging not to repeat the mistakes of their predecessors. However, in spite of their intentions, the same problems have persisted.

Of course from the president's point of view, the fault lies with the State Department not the White House. The State Department has been neither quick nor willing to institute changes to meet the rapidly changing demands on presidential policy-making. So the president has had no other choice but to look to his White House staff for advice on foreign policy. The White House charges that the State Department has remained insular and parochial in its attitudes despite the sweeping changes which have been occurring in the nation and the world-at-large. A "curator mentality" which prevails at State has been partly responsible for the resistance to change.[5] Too much inbreeding results in a

department which gives priority to its own time-worn programs instead of broader policy issues. The tension between the careerists, or Foreign Service Officers, and the political appointees also contributes to the department's resistance to change. Laurence Silberman has suggested that the resentment of the careerists towards political authority at State reflects their resistance to any kind of political direction in U.S. foreign policy.[6] Presidential appointees, in turn, reject the expertise of the careerists. Interested in promoting themselves during their relatively short term at the State Department, they are likely to thwart the standard procedures and introduce programs having, at best, short-term objectives rather than far-sighted policies. The general mood of unresponsiveness within State is also related to the demands made on the Secretary in his efforts to protect and promote the interests of his staff. His responsibility towards his staff limits, to a degree, his flexibility on the issues, particularly when challenged by the national security adviser, who basically serves a single constituent, the president.

But the problems within the State Department are both cause and sympton of a more general incoherence in American foreign policy. Poor administration, resistance to change and the department's lack of initiative have not inspired the president's confidence in its capabilities. The often ponderous deliberation of issues and delays in action have created some skepticism about the

country's intentions, and the gaps in communication within State and contributed to some of the confusion and inconsistencies in American policies. But the apparent willingness of the president to forego formal procedures in policy-planning has, to some degree, contributed to the general malaise among the career staff people at State, who have little enough incentive from within the department, much less from outside, to assume an active role in that planning. The concentration of power within the White House staff over the conduct of foreign policy has substantially weakened the traditional functions of the State Department. And the problems created by the White House staff's role affect overall policy-making in terms of process, content and credibility.

THE OPENING UP OF THE POLICY PROCESS

The Role of Public Opinion

There is another factor which should not be overlooked, although it is not so much a source of the problem as it is an exacerbating element in the overall scheme of things. The changes in public opinion and public interest in foreign affairs have had a significant effect on policymakers in their efforts to balance all the variables which go into the making of American foreign policy. Public opinion has become a major concern for policy planners in their efforts to find a consensus on policy, ensure its implementation and protect both the president's interests and the broader national interest. Current levels of public consump-

tion and knowledge of foreign affairs are unmatched in our national experience. Until relatively recently, it was widely acknowledged that foreign affairs should be properly left to the experts, since the majority of Americans had neither the interest nor the inclination, not to mention the expertise, to participate in the conduct of policy. Domestic issues, on the other hand, have always been subject to public pressure. As something which "hits close to home," domestic policy has always engaged the public's participation and debate over the "rightness" or "wrongness" of individual programs. But why has there been such a dramatic shift in the nature of American public opinion in foreign affairs?

The war in Vietnam profoundly affected the political and social fabric of American society. As the great watershed in recent U.S. history, Vietnam ushered in a new era in our foreign relations. Wide segments of the public demanded "no more Vietnams," and various organizations lobbied vigorously against American intervention in future foreign conflicts. Fearful of the consequences of the over-extensions of the American military, these organizations mobilized public opinion against that possibility and, in doing so, created new demands on the president and his policy-planning staff.

The president has become only too watchful of the consequences of introducing policy measures which lack broad public

support, especially among special interest groups which have brought pressure to bear upon policy decisions in the past. Public opinion has played a significant part in the outcome of major debates on administration policies since the Vietnam war years. Gerald Ford, for example, attributed the defeat in Congress of his administration's plan to assist the Rhodesian government to a vocal public which exhorted the administration against interfering in that nation's internal affairs. Military assistance packages have also been subject to intensive public scrutiny, and conditions have been attached to these plans to mollify public apprehension over increased military expenditures to support American interests abroad. The Reagan administration's experience with the sale of AWACs to Saudi Arabia in 1981 was yet another lesson in the actual and potential repercussions of public pressure on U.S. policy.

The importance of the AWACs went beyond the terms of the sale itself. The administration's decision to sell these sophisticated radar plans to Saudi Arabia assumed new dimensions during the prolonged and much publicized debate over the sale. First, supporters of the president argued that failure to get the arms package passed in the Senate would be costly in terms of the president's stature and his ability to conduct foreign policy in the future. With the future of the arms sale in doubt, Reagan rested his prestige on the outcome of the Senate vote. Second, the sale of the planes would have had a significant impact on the Saudis'

future confidence in the United States. Third, not only was it critical to protect the president's position, but it became necessary as well to consider the broader U.S. military and geopolitical interests in the region. Rejection of the arms package would be damaging to those interests and to the nature of the American presence there. Fourth, the effect of the AWACs sale on the military strategic balance in the Middle East was the predominant concern of American-Jewish groups, which argued that the aircraft would be a destabilizing element in the region and present a grave threat to the defense of Israel's borders. Public debate on the AWACs did not create these issues, but it did underscore the broader effects of the arms sale on our policies and cause the administration to consider the consequences of the sale very closely. Pressure on the administration to attach some safeguards to ensure that the AWACs are not misused led to certain restrictions on Saudi employment of the aircraft. While this did little to assuage the fears of opponents of the sale, it did illustrate the administration's need to make concessions to the demands that public opinion can exert on policy decisions.

The American military presence abroad has had a decidedly disquieting effect on public opinion. Fearful of the prospect of "another Vietnam," there was a movement towards retrenchment in our foreign affairs in the wake of the American withdrawal from Southeast Asia. U.S. policymakers feared a return to isolationist, or neo-isolationist sentiments, which they perceived as

severely curbing, and even endangering, the protection of American interests abroad. But public clamoring for a retreat from international power politics was not solely attributed to the American experience in Vietnam. Vietnam has been the dominant factor in the reshaping of U.S. policy since the late sixties, but it has been accompanied by technological, political and economic developments which have also influenced the course of public opinion.

The decade of the sixties and early seventies produced turbulent changes in the American political culture which created new expectations for the nation's future. It was a period of domestic turmoil where a new and younger generation of Americans, angered by the apparent unconcern for the socio-economic and political inequities that exist in the United States, challenged the traditional values and mores which they argued had sustained these injustices. They challenged the political leadership to establish new priorities, primarily by concentrating the nation's resources on restoring domestic order rather than further buttressing the American military. This posture urged a more inward-looking policy, intent on redressing domestic problems. There was broad support for an introspective outlook that would encourage the expenditure of funds on social and economic programs, and focus national attention on domestic needs and not on power politics abroad.

The technological sophistication of modern weaponry with its tremendous destructive capabilities is another major force which

has increased the role of public opinion in foreign policy. Frightened by the prospects of a nuclear confrontation, and mindful of the increasing risks of a nuclear accident, public pressures against nuclear proliferation have been gathering steam which have reached beyond the college campuses. The unreality of a "limited nuclear war" has challenged some of the tenets of our nuclear strategy, and has been extended to the continuing race for nuclear superiority, which has remained a priority issue for President Reagan. The financial burden of building and protecting the nuclear stockpile has also met with greater resistance as the senselessness of nuclear war has gained wider acceptance.

A growing number of Americans also began to question the safety of missile emplacements in the United States that might affect their own vulnerability to a nuclear attack. Public protest against nuclear proliferation reached a climax in 1982 with the movement for a nuclear freeze which swept across the nation. The Reagan administration was temporarily stalled in its efforts to initiate arms reduction talks with the Soviets and, in a defensive move, lobbied vigorously against efforts in the Congress to impose a freeze. The president, however, could not ignore the pressure of the movement as both he and his advisers publicly addressed concerns and spoke of pursuing parity rather than superiority in nuclear weapons. A nuclear freeze was out of the question as far as the Reagan administration was concerned, but it did set in motion renewed efforts to procure a new arms

control agreement, possibly in the form of a SALT II treaty. Administration plans to develop new weapons for waging a nuclear war have been hampered by the freeze advocates and defense planners find themselves more limited in mapping out the nation's nuclear strategy in the face of the growing challenge to the president's authority. The long-term effects of the movement to freeze the production of nuclear weapons at their current levels are uncertain. But their short-term impact have fostered greater responsiveness by the president to the public's mood on critical issues of foreign policy.

Political Dimensions

These developments have collectively transformed the national security process. Many of the long-established patterns and routines of national security decision-making have been altered, and the traditional relationships within the foreign affairs community in Washington have been redefined as a result of increased public participation in policy matters. The most significant and far-reaching effect of the role of public opinion on foreign policy has been the gradual "opening up" of the policy process. Public pressure for greater receptivity and sensitivity on the part of policymakers have caused a gradual relaxation of the limitations on who or what may influence the course of policy. These pressures, combined with the complexities of global politics and the weaknesses in the government apparatus, have introduced new elements into the policy process.

First, and most importantly, the secrecy in which policy deliberations have been traditionally conducted has been challenged by the public's insistence upon being informed of major decisions. Such disclosures, however, have been met with a certain amount of resistance by the president and his advisers because of national security considerations. But despite this resistance, the public has become privy to facts and figures in policy debates which were formally available only to the "insiders."

Second, the circle of "insiders" working on national security has been broadened to include government officials who had not previously been regular participants in the foreign policy-making process. Representatives from the Commerce, Energy and Treasury Departments, for example, have become more prominent in policy discussions which touch on issues relevant to their departmental responsibilities. Their expertise is needed both to improve the responsiveness of the government to growing public concerns over social and economic issues which cross national boundaries and to address the emerging trends in the international system which have made new demands on the traditional military/strategic thinking among American policymakers. An entirely new set of global problems surfaced during the past 10 to 15 years which could not be accommodated by the existing policy organization in Washington. Global economic problems, energy crises, growing pressures from Third World countries and the erosion of the postwar consensus

have added new dimensions to the perspective of policymakers, not the least of which is a growing appreciation of the significance of non-military factors in U.S. policymaking.

A third element is the increasing political nature of the foreign policy process. Politics, in the traditional sense, has always been present in the inner councils of decision-making, but it has been basically confined to interpersonal or interdepartmental rivalries. The interplay between politics and foreign policy in recent years, however, has gone far beyond the inner workings of the policy process. The sensitivity of the president and his staff to the public mood and its specific concerns has modified the more conventional political nature of the formulation and implementation of policy. American public opinion has forced certain key domestic issues to have significant bearing on the outcome of policy, thereby heightening the awareness among policymakers of the relationship between domestic political factors and the course of the nation's foreign policy. The "opening up" of the policy process to new elements of public pressure has, therefore, made policymakers more likely to take domestic political considerations into account in making policy. As a result, they have had to become more politically attuned to domestic political currents which, in turn, has had a major impact on their role as advisers to the President, whose own political fortunes must be looked after when policy advice is being given.

The cumulative effect of the "opening up" of the policymaking

process has been greater fluidity in the organization and administration of foreign policy. But concurrent with this has been the emergence of greater uncertainty, confusion over who is in charge and disparities in the purpose and goals of certain key policies. These are the major drawbacks to a system which is based on fewer formal procedures for the organization and implementation of policy, and greater flexibility in terms of staff relationships. The role of the national security adviser, as it has evolved since McGeorge Bundy's term in that position, has introduced a new element into what had formerly been an orderly, and relatively fixed set of relationships between the president, members of his Cabinet who advise him on foreign policy and their subordinates, largely in State and Defense. To be sure, every president, as far back as Woodrow Wilson, cultivated a personal relationship with one or two members of his personal staff in the White House with whom he would consult regularly on foreign issues. But the national security assistant, in his present capacity as confidant and foremost advocate of the president's policies, does not "fit," in a conventional sense, as a teamplayer in this established organization for conducting foreign policy.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT, NSC AND THE CONDUCT OF POLICY

Up to this point, the effects of greater fluidity in the policy-making process have centered on the administrative, or staffing side of foreign policy. Little attention has been paid to the effect of procedural change on the operation and management

of the agencies, themselves. This is not to suggest, however, that the government bureaucracies have escaped the pressures which have faced the individual policymakers. The State Department continues to be citicized for its failure to institute changes which would improve its performance. There have been several major attempts in the past to overhaul State, and almost every president since Kennedy has promised change in the conduct of the department's day-to-day affairs. But efforts to streamline the department's activities, promote closer contact with the president and give greater control to the secretary by reducing the foreign policy roles of agencies with competing interests have not been successful. Part of the reason for this is the continued resistance to change within the State Department, combined with the difficulty of instituting change in procedures that have been in practice for many years. But perhaps more important, given the prevailing political conditions, is the relative ease with which the president can modify the role of individual advisers to suit his own needs. As far as the president's interests are concerned, it is far easier to elevate the position of the national security adviser in the White House than to attempt some far-reaching change within the State Department. While political observers might point out the longer-term potential benefits of organizational change, the president is more interested in what is likely to be politically expedient and quicker as well for the goals of his administration as the president's timetable is different from

that of the department's. From the vantage point of the Oval Office, the national security adviser, free from institutional constraints, is in a position to advance these goals, although at the probable risk of antagonizing other foreign policy organizations within the government.

The function of the NSC assistant and his staff in any administration is left completely to the discretion of the president. It is the president's prerogative to adjust the internal organization and the role of the NSC to accommodate his own personal preferences. The large turnover in staff, the changeability of its internal organization and the multifaceted role of the NSC adviser have inspired neither the confidence nor the trust of the rest of the foreign affairs bureaucracy. Wary, and even suspicious, of the intentions of the national security adviser, foreign policy officials have urged each president to downgrade that position in the interest of producing a more orderly and compatible working relationship between the White House and the State Department. But the president, notwithstanding his pledge to support the secretary's authority in foreign affairs, has continued to depend on his NSC assistant for the conduct of policy. The major exception to this practice occurred during Henry Kissinger's tenure as Secretary of State where, by force of his personality and skillful bureaucratic maneuverings, he commanded the full attention of the president. During Nixon's second term, Kissinger was in charge of both the State Department

and the national security council, so his authority at State went unchallenged. Members of the NSC staff continued to participate directly in the formulation of policy, especially during the October 1973 Middle East war when Kissinger called on Middle East specialists at the NSC to assist in the handling of that crisis. Under Gerald Ford, however, Kissinger occupied the senior position, leaving administrative and organizational tasks to the president's assistant for national security affairs, Brent Scowcroft, who was also his former deputy at the council. Kissinger's predominance, on the one hand, would neither permit nor tolerate a national security assistant who followed the example he, himself, set during the the first Nixon administration. Nor, on the other hand, did Scowcroft perceive of his new role in terms other than that of a facilitator of policy. Fortunately for both, one might add, their temperaments suited their conceptions of both their own, and the other's roles. But this has been the exception to the otherwise continuing struggle for control between the State Department and the national security council. Kissinger's dominion at State created other sources of bureaucratic conflict, but the NSC staff remained basically outside the contest for power.

The NSC Assistant and Presidential Foreign Policy

What is the president's own interest will sometimes, but not always, coincide with what is understood to be in the national interest. Of course, the president's preference for centering

control over foreign policy in the hands of his NSC adviser is understandable. The intense desire to make his own imprint on the course of the nation's foreign policy compels the president to act in a way which is consistent with these goals, even at the greater risk of alienating the time-worn foreign affairs establishment into which he had entered upon assuming office. But most presidents are willing to take this risk in order to realize their own hopes and ambitions. The president, however, cannot act completely alone. He may be able to side-step or even circumvent the normal channels of communication among the principal policymakers, but he cannot reasonably expect to take any major steps without the support, or at least the knowledge of one of his senior advisers. Under these circumstances, the president often finds that his assistant for national security affairs is in the best position to advance these policy goals. Unencumbered by the responsibilities and pressures of heading a large bureaucracy, not to mention the specific limitations imposed by the individual department's operations, the national security adviser offers the president the flexibility he both seeks and needs to carry out his initiatives in policy matters. One of the president's major concerns in this regard is the propitious implementation of these policies, something which no president has come to expect from the dawdling bureaucracy without considerable pushing and prodding from the White House. Although the potential damage of disregarding the traditional procedures for policy implementation may be

great, the president's commitment to his program outweighs the possible risks he may incur in the process. The independence of the national security adviser from any institutional obligations, other than those he has to the president, provides the president with a very attractive alternative providing he is willing to invest a great deal of responsibility and influence into that staff position. But it is also up to the president, once he has done so, to carefully define the limits of that influence to insure that his assistant not overstep his responsibilities. The consequences of the latter were amply demonstrated in the case of Henry Kissinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski. These considerations aside, the president has found it politically propitious to collaborate with his national security assistant in the interest of promoting and expediting specific policy ideas.

A second advantage for the president is the physical location of the NSC staff adviser in the White House. The national security council was incorporated into the Executive Office of the President in August 1949, although what this accomplished, in effect, was to formalize a de facto situation. Nevertheless, the Council's staff role evolved within the White House which allowed it to become a source of potential influence virtually unmatched by any other foreign policy official in the government. Proximity to the Oval Office has always been a crucial factor in determining the relative influence of the members in the president's coterie of advisers. McGeorge Bundy appreciated its significance when he

moved from the old Executive Office building over to the basement in the West Wing of the White House so he could have direct access to the president. The president has also understood the importance of accessibility, never more so than during a crisis when time is running out, his options become more limited and the number of people who are privy to the day-to-day unfolding of events has been sharply reduced. There are practical advantages to having his national security assistant just down the hall or a few floors below. His ready availability may offer the president some respite from the intense pressures of the moment, and provide a much needed outlet for the president to vent his anger and frustration in complete confidentiality. And from the NSC adviser and his staff the president needs "protection, buffers, temporary relief from pressures of small issues when he steals time to think about the big ones."[7] Moreover, his proximity to the Oval Office may favorably dispose the president to keep the adviser abreast of sensitive developments which he might otherwise not disclose to members of his advisory staff. Finally, the uncomplicated communication channels between the president and his assistant should not be overlooked in considering the relative advantages of being situated directly in the White House.

These advantages extend to the NSC staff members, as well, who are in the White House for the specific purpose of assisting the president in his foreign policy. Among the council's staff, the president has at his disposal a largely experienced group of

trained experts in areas ranging from regional specialties to economics, arms control and defense-related matters, technological issues and international communications. In general, they comprise a younger group of policy professionals than many of their counterparts at the State Department. They are typically bright and hard-working, and come prepared to take the initiative and introduce new ideas into the president's policy program. With virtually no carry-over in the council staff from one administration to the next, the president does not have to deal with the problems of split loyalties. The NSC staff has no independent source of power which further protects the president against efforts by the staff to engage in one-upmanship in the conduct of foreign policy. But it remains entirely up to the president to ensure against this occurring. If managed properly, the NSC staff can contribute to the attainment of the president's policy goals.

Finally, the fact that the national security adviser is not subject to Senate confirmation gives him a decided advantage over the Secretary of State as far as the president's own interests are concerned. This issue was brought before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in April 1980 in its consideration of an amendment proposed the year before to establish by statute that the positions of both the assistant and deputy assistant to the president for national security affairs require the advice and consent of the Senate. In his opening statement, Senator Percy expressed the committee's concern that the national security

adviser, who acts as a principal spokesman in foreign policy matters, continues to remain immune from congressional inquiry. But his immunity from congressional inquiry is precisely the reason that presidents have taken such care to promote the role of the national security assistant within their coterie of foreign policy advisers. Unlike the secretary, who must appear before the Congress to seek support for, or respond to criticisms of the administration's policies, the assistant is answerable only to the president. It then remains the president's responsibility to defend the assistant's performance publicly. In spite of the fact that he has had to do so with greater frequency in recent years as a result of increased public criticism of the national security adviser's preemption of the secretary's role and the general confusion in policy-making, the president has not been deterred from assigning to his assistant responsibility for critical issues in foreign policy.

Some of the testimony before the Senate committee which opposed the proposed amendment acknowledged the importance of the adviser's role in providing confidential advice to the president as well as the president's need to have a personal and confidential staff of his own choosing. There is little question that these privileges have been abused, or misused, by the president and his assistant alike. But, given the statutory guidelines and his nonaccountability to anyone but the president, the national security adviser's role remains resistent to attempted changes

from outside the White House. From the president's point of view, the potential advantages of the adviser's role still outweigh the liabilities which its influence may incur on the broader policy-making scene. One might argue, in fact, that the adviser's usefulness has grown with the higher levels of public interest and participation in policy matters. The increased public involvement in foreign policy-making has forced both the president and the Secretary of State to defend the administration's policies in public. By assuming a role as apologist for the president's policies, the secretary has lost some ground to the national security adviser, who theoretically is not expected to answer to public criticism. Although Brzezinski, for example, did assume what has probably been the most public role of any assistant to date, he was not made to accept the responsibility for Carter's errors and misjudgements. (Nor, one might add, was he so inclined). The Secretary, on the other hand, is put in the awkward position of having to endure criticism which might be justifiably and rightfully directed towards the White House. And, in the process, he may do damage to his own credibility while indirectly enhancing or, at the very least, protecting the standing of the national security adviser in the administration.

The implications of the president's preference for his national security adviser are far-reaching in his efforts to put together an effective and enduring policy program. The president's goals in foreign policy can be placed into two very general

categories. All presidents emphasize their unflinching commitment to the broad national goals of safeguarding the nation against the threat of war, protecting the national interest, ensuring the inviolability of the nation's borders and strengthening the resilience of the national economy to both internal and external shocks. These goals embrace the universal values of peace and territorial security, and are pursued by all sovereign nations, recognizing, of course, that different means are employed to these ends.

The second group consists of more narrowly defined policies which reflect the personal and partisan ambitions of individual presidents. The aspirations of each and every president, certainly since Theodore Roosevelt, to make his own personal imprint on foreign policy have encouraged the pursuit of specific issues and policies which in the years to come will always be identified with his administration. Taken from this perspective, however, these policies evoke some cynicism in ascertaining the real motivations behind the president's decisions. Nixon, in his pronouncement of the so-called Nixon Doctrine, no doubt understood the political realities both at home and abroad which necessitated some kind of public recognition by the White House of the limitations of American power and the need to reorder the nation's priorities. But Nixon also scored political points by announcing that the United States can no longer be expected to assume the burdens which are rightfully those of its allies. The political

climate at the time was ripe for such a policy statement, although its real intentions and proposed results remained nebulous. Because of the greater likelihood that political overtones will accompany these types of policy goals, the president has found it both politically expeditious and personally gratifying to work together with his national security adviser toward their implementation.

But, at the same time, the president must accept the risks as well as limitations he will incur in his handling of policy matters as a result of his dependence on his NSC adviser. The task of discerning the behavior patterns of the State Department and the national security council in specific policy areas is made somewhat more manageable by loosely dividing presidential goals into these two very broad, but by no means mutually exclusive categories. There is naturally a considerable amount of overlap between these goals which, at least in conceptual terms, transcend political, or partisan considerations and those which are replete with political implications. Nevertheless, they are useful as a means of comparing the Secretary and the president's assistant for national security affairs in their respective roles as advisers to the president, their relationships with the rest of the policy-making community and their substantive contribution to policy matters, specifically in crisis situations. With these qualifications in mind, it is possible to discuss the nature and scope of their efforts to help the president cope with his policy

agenda and the bearing these efforts have on the outcome of policy decisions.

National Security Adviser Versus Secretary of State

Since the early sixties, the Secretary of State and the assistant to the president for national security affairs have assumed fairly distinct responsibilities in the conduct of foreign policy. Some of the reasons for this development were raised in the discussion earlier of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the secretary and the NSC adviser in meeting the president's needs. The secretary, in his traditional role as the president's spokesman on foreign policy, has echoed presidential rhetoric on U.S. foreign relations, which has generally emphasized so-called "national" goals. The national security adviser, in contrast, has become much more useful in assisting the president on the details of policy issues which go far beyond the goals of world peace, territorial security and national defense. As the representative of the broad presidential goals, the secretary's public statements are generally devoid of political overtones or partisan sentiments. Instead, they tend to emphasize the importance of broad public support for the president's policies irrespective of special interests or political bias. This has particularly been the case during crisis situations when the public is urged to show unequivocal support for the president's actions since divisiveness, for whatever reasons it arises, may deal a severe blow to the president's ability to successfully

negotiate a resolution of the crisis.

Under these circumstances, however, the NSC adviser is likely to be busy working behind-the-scenes to ensure not only that the nation's interests are protected during negotiations, but to see to it that the presidential stakes are protected, as well. The president's stakes in a particular issue or foreign crisis may encompass such disparate factors as internal bureaucratic struggles for control over decision-making, the prospects for his reelection, obligations owed to his political party, public opinion polls and special interest groups. Nor will the president's own interests in the outcome of a policy debate or crisis always reflect what may be determined to be in the nation's best interests. The potential conflict here is a partial, but certainly not an unimportant, explanation for much of the confusion and contradictions in American foreign policy. But it also makes the job of the national security adviser even more crucial as far as the president's own interests are concerned. The secretary, considering his obligations to his staff at State, to the Congress, to foreign statesmen and to the American public, occupies too vulnerable a position in the administration to satisfy the president's need for advice and counsel which is sensitive to political interests both in and outside the White House. It is much "safer" from the president's point of view to have the secretary act as his public advocate, while encouraging a more "political" role for the NSC adviser which removes him from

the limelight. This is not to suggest, of course, that the secretary does not become involved in "backroom" negotiations or politically-motivated decisions. Nor does it totally exclude the president's assistant from making public statements which reiterate the administration's overall goals on a particular issue or development. But there are problems attached to each of these scenarios which the president does his best to avoid. Either of these situations could erode the secretary's credibility, complicate the role of the national security adviser in policy-making and confuse the president's objectives in his foreign policy.

As much as this division of responsibility may assist the president in achieving his own policy goals, the implications it bears have affected the conduct as well as content of policy on several critical levels. First, the State Department and national security council approach foreign policy from two different perspectives. The long historical tradition of the State Department has encouraged its career staff to pursue long-term policy goals in foreign affairs. In pursuing this approach, the department has been generally inclined to reach beyond the interests of each individual administration in the hope of establishing and serving what are perceived to be the broader national objectives. Imagine, for example, the potential impact on policy if the State Department adopted as its own the specific interests of each and every administration. In view of the fact that since 1961 Reagan has been the only president to serve two terms in office while two

did not even serve one full term in the White House, the department's policies would have become totally chaotic had they been closely linked with the particular interests of each administration. As burdensome as the career staff has been in repeated efforts to reorganize and revitalize State, it has also enabled the department to preserve some measure of continuity in American foreign policy.

The national security council, on the other hand, lacks the traditions which have allowed the State Department to rise above the more narrowly defined concerns and motives of individual presidents. Created to meet the immediate needs of the president, the NSC staff seeks what might be considered immediate solutions to foreign problems. These solutions may or may not encompass long-term considerations, but their long-range prospects are not the predominant concerns in the minds of these policy-makers. Publicly, of course, the council's staff's proposals are presented as serving the nation's best interests. Privately, however, the insiders remain preoccupied with protecting the specific goals of the current administration which have become increasingly identified with political considerations. Practically speaking, this attitude translates into policies whose objectives reflect the short-term, or more pressing interests of the president and his White House staff. Concerned with advancing and protecting the president's stake in the outcome of policy deliberations, the national security adviser may tend to adopt the president's own

outlook without taking into proper account historical and cultural issues, not to mention the future prospects for the current policies.

The traditions which have maintained the continuity in the State Department's thinking have also produced a fairly unyielding position among the ranks at State as far as the substance of that thinking is concerned. Despite the rapidly changing nature and tenor of global politics over the past ten or fifteen years, the State Department has persisted in framing many issues, particularly the most critical ones, in East-West terms, continuing to pit the United States against the Soviet Union in an unending struggle for supremacy. In adopting this thinking, the department, in effect, continues to view foreign developments through balance of power politics. This attitude, in turn, assumes constant conditions in the international system. But conditions presumed to be lasting have not always endured the systemic changes since the early seventies. But the State Department has been slow, and even reluctant to recognize the import of these changes on the traditional theories of international politics. Its perspective on U.S. foreign relations, therefore, offers a rather narrow interpretation of American foreign interests. This is not to deny, however, that U.S. and Soviet interests continue to clash in every region of the world. But the department's world view does not always reflect current global trends, which have made greater demands on the nation's policymaking system than at

any time previously.

As far as the national security council is concerned, however, the brief tenure of most of its staffers and their obligations to the president as members of the White House staff make it unlikely that this kind of long-range thinking will prevail within its ranks. It is important to the president that his national security assistant not adopt a limited, or limiting approach to policy. The NSC adviser certainly comes into the White House with his own biases and ideological propensities, but he is expected to temper these attitudes in accommodating the president's own intentions. He and his staff, therefore, have adopted what can be described as a more issue-oriented approach to foreign policy, as opposed to the State Department's reliance on a world view which attempts to "fit" policy developments into a fixed model of global politics. This issue-oriented approach generally reflects the pragmatic nature of the staff's conduct of foreign policy. It also assists policymakers in recognizing the salience of issues which are often forgotten or ignored by those intent on framing every major development in terms of American and Soviet rival interests. Most of the foreign crises since the early sixties, for example, have involved prominent regional issues which have held the key to any successful resolution of that crisis. The Middle East offers the best illustration of this point. The continuing difficulties in that region go far beyond

the issues of the Arab-Israeli conflict, although that, in itself, has stirred up considerable emotions on other issues which are not always directly related to it.

To be sure, this approach to policy-making is not without its drawbacks. A major drawback to an issue-oriented approach has been the tendency to "jump" from one issue to the next as situations arise which command the attention of the national security adviser and his staff. This is an unwelcome, but almost inevitable, consequence of adopting short-term perspectives on policy. But, on the other hand, by pursuing this course, the president's NSC staff is often in a better position to advise him on some of the finer points of the situation at hand which might be overlooked by their counterparts at the State Department. There is something to be said for the department's long-term perspective which could provide continuity and predictability to the nation's policies, although this is one aspect of its functioning which the president tends to overlook or simple bypass.

A third major difference in the handling of policy matters is the time factor, where the State Department is often unable to act as quickly or as decisively as the national security adviser and his staff. The explanation for this disparity is partially found in the factors described earlier, such as the relative size of the State Department and the national security council staff, the background and experience, as well as the "state of mind" of the respective staff members, the specific responsibilities and

obligations of the secretary and the president's assistant as well as the president's own perceptions and the relationship he has with each of his two key advisers. The president's dependence on quick, decisive and competent advice in a crisis makes it incumbent upon his advisers at the NSC and State to calculate the time factor into the deliberations. Hasty actions can be very costly, but it is up to the staff at the NSC and at State to ensure that they are based on a sound and thorough evaluation of the many different variables involved. Both the NSC and State staff members have demonstrated comparable skill in quickly organizing special task forces for negotiating the crisis. But the group organized by the Council members, or under the auspices of the NSC has usually been favored by the president because of the advantages offered by its presence within the White House. While the president may, on the one hand, find it both easier and more immediately rewarding to depend on the advice of his White House staff, he may, on the other hand, belatedly discover that the State Department's team of experts has greater understanding of the larger dimensions of the crisis, and its advice has greater applicability to related matters. As noted earlier, the council's staff tends to view policy developments pragmatically, or in terms of their short-term consequences, while the careerists at State take into account long-range considerations which may have a greater effect on broader issues of American foreign policy.

Foreign Crises and Critical Policy Issues

The general conduct of foreign policy by the State Department and the national security council is well documented in their respective handling of crisis situations. Their different approaches to handling policy will be quite evident in the cases presented in the following chapters. Critical issues of foreign policy are particularly instructive in demonstrating how well the policy-making machinery works under unanticipated and often unprecedented conditions. The pressures under which the president and his staff operate demand that they employ highly delicate negotiating techniques in order to contain the dimensions of the crisis and hasten its resolution. The inherent dangers in a crisis situation, especially in an era where nuclear weapons have become so widely accessible, present the ultimate "test," or challenge to the capabilities of policymakers. Because failure, in all likelihood, would spell disastrous consequences, foreign policy-makers are under a special challenge to function effectively during a crisis, and any weakness in the policy machinery will be more starkly revealed at this time than in more normal circumstances.

The significance of critical foreign developments, however, goes beyond the impact they have on the performance of the foreign affairs bureaucracy. There are at least three factors which make discussion of critical issues of foreign policy important in this examination of the respective roles of the State Department and

NSC in the formulation and implementation of American foreign policy. First, the prominence and frequency with which crises have occurred since the late forties, and especially since the early sixties as the international community has expanded deserve the attention of national leaders and their governments. Every president since Truman has been confronted with more than one, and usually with several crises during his term in office. In some cases, their prevalence has significantly detracted from the president's overall efforts to ensure the implementation of his own policy goals. Not only do crises command the full resources of the White House and government agencies with a stake in their outcome, but they distract attention from what are otherwise pressing foreign policy issues. Jimmy Carter became a very frustrated man during his last year in office as a result of the stalemate in both Iran and Afghanistan which, in effect, precluded his involvement in other timely issues which he hoped would lend prestige to his presidency, not to mention his bid for a second term. But he left the White House feeling bitter and cheated by what had transpired since the fall and winter of 1979. Kennedy, during his less than three years in office, faced three crises: the abortive Bay of Pigs invasion, the Berlin crisis and the Cuban missile crisis. But he, unlike Carter, regained his prestige after the Bay of Pigs debacle by his handling of the missile crisis. Nevertheless, these cases demonstrate the point that the frequency with which crises have occurred during the past

twenty years has required the president to concentrate on these unexpected emergencies at the expense of pursuing those issues which he is dedicated to solving.

A second consideration is the link between a critical issue and long-term, or recurring foreign policy issues. Every crisis since the threats by insurgent forces to democratic governments in Europe during the late forties has been part of a much larger issue. There has rarely, if ever, been a case where an emergency abroad has not involved some broader considerations, such as the balance of power in the Far East during the Korean war, American military policy and defense strategy in the Persian Gulf during the hostage crisis, and the future of the Soviet Eastern European bloc and relations between members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact nations during the recent crisis in Poland. Nor have any of these crises been approached without bearing in mind at some point the broader ramifications of immediate developments. Although policy-makers approach a critical issue of foreign policy from a very different perspective than they would a continuing policy issue, such as relations within the Atlantic Alliance, the way they handle a crisis throws light on their thinking on long-term policy issues.

The significance of crises as part of a much larger issue or problem leads to the third factor, which is that they have often been responsible for, or triggered major shifts in American foreign policy. The crisis, alone, has not always been the

driving force behind major policy changes. But, together with other factors such as presidential intent, public opinion and the political conditions in the area or region involved, a foreign crisis may significantly affect the future course of America's actions. The Iranian hostage crisis is a case in point. One of the consequences of the prolonged crisis, as well as the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, was a major review of American military policy in the Persian Gulf. As a result of the continuing stalemate and potential threat it created to American interests in the Middle East, Carter was far more willing than at any time previously to contemplate a demonstration of American military strength in the gulf area. Carter had already begun to adopt a new and tougher rhetorical style prior to the embassy takeover in November 1979, but the rhetoric was not fully supported by concrete actions. The military and defense experts planning a new strategy for protecting the nation's interests, especially in politically volatile areas, were charged with a more urgent and pressing responsibility in response to the crisis in Iran. American policy makers were now concerned not only with the opportunities for Soviet infiltration into the region, but more generally and more immediately with demonstrating the president's intention to act deliberately and expeditiously to protect the nation's interests with its vast military capability. The administration's concern about other nations' perceptions of America's willingness to protect its own interests and those of

its allies concentrated all efforts toward this end. In this case, the hostage crisis hastened the review of American military and defense policy which, to some degree, was already underway as a result of attacks from the political right, which charged that the Carter administration was too "soft" in its foreign policy. With these charges coming on the eve of the national primaries, the administration found itself on the defensive and launched new efforts to dispel popular notions regarding its weaknesses.

The contemporary state of international politics make it highly probable, if not inevitable, that any foreign crisis will have a significant impact on the course of an individual nation's foreign policy. It is even more likely that the crisis will affect the future actions of several nations' foreign relations considering how complex and interdependent most global issues have become over the past two decades. International issues encompass so many different nuances and subtleties that any attempt to separate economic from political, or political from military issues will only serve to weaken national policies and ultimately defeat the broader purpose of preserving some modicum of regional or global order. The constant possibility that a crisis may involve the use of nuclear weapons also opens each and every nation to danger, whether or not it is directly involved. The dimensions of foreign crises, therefore, extend to the larger issues in American foreign policy. Their potential impact on America's foreign relations is reason enough to explore the nature of

foreign crises in terms of a White House-centered foreign policy directed by the president's assistant for national security affairs.

The chapters that follow present three case studies that illuminate the role that the national security advisor may play during a foreign policy crisis. These case studies focus on individual policy issues, but they may present an overview of the foreign policy system in recent administrations and the hierarchy of relationships various presidents devised for handling foreign policy problems. The focus here is on the NSC staff's role as an advisor to the president rather than on its organizational activities. Chapter 3 examines the diplomatic breakthrough in U.S.-Chinese relations under the Nixon administration as the personal achievement of the president and his national security assistant, whose control over the process prevented other senior officials from becoming involved or even being aware of what was going on. The NSC assistant's commanding role in this case resulted in a clear policy achievement. It contrasts with the second case presented in Chapter 4 of the Iranian crisis and the way in which it was handled by the White House and the State Department. Here dissonance rather than consensus appeared to characterize the Carter administration's approach to the deteriorating conditions in Iran. Under these circumstances, the Secretary of State and the national security adviser clashed over the practicality of each other's approach.

Chapter 5 presents a third case of foreign policy management, this time with events in Lebanon controlling the response of the Reagan administration to developments there. The American response was a reaction to the fighting in Lebanon taken on a piecemeal basis as warranted by the prevailing conditions. The NSC assistant's role was less certain than in the other cases and eventually was overshadowed by a confrontation between the Secretaries of State and Defense over the direction of U.S. policy in the region.

The concluding chapter which follows the three case studies examines the limitations and possibilities of the NSC assistant's role on the content of policy as suggested by each case. The strengths and weaknesses of the NSC adviser as a source of counsel to the president on critical issues of foreign policy are considered in terms of the challenges and requirements each case presents to the president. The role of the security assistant and the balance between the NSC and the State Department therefore depend substantially on the specific nature of the issues involved.

FOOTNOTES

[1]U.S. Congress, Senate. Committee on Government Operations.

[2]*The New York Times*, December, 1960.

[3]I. M. Destler, *Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy: The Politics of Organizational Reform* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 100.

[4]Richard E. Neustadt, "Approaches to Staffing the President: Notes on FDR and JFK," *American Political Science Review* (December 1983), p. 861.

[5]Destler, op. cit., p. 158.

[6]Laurence Silberman, "Toward Presidential Control of the State Department," *Foreign Affairs* (Spring 1979).

[7]Richard F. Neustadt, "Staffing the Presidency: The Role of White House Agencies," *U.S. Senate, Administration of National Security*, Subcommittee on National Security and International Operations (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 133.

CHAPTER III

NIXON AND THE CHINA INITIATIVE

Foreign affairs was the centerpiece of the Nixon Presidency. Richard Nixon believed his reputation would rest on the course of America's foreign relations under his administration, and he conducted a personal diplomacy to achieve bargaining advantage and leverage. He wanted to set the United States on a new course in its foreign relations and promised that his policies would help build a "structure of peace" which would effect changes in the global balance of power. Foreign affairs was Nixon's forte and he believed that foreign policy would be the most enduring contribution of his administration. Nixon advocated a more flexible approach to American diplomacy to bring about an "era of negotiation." As he spoke these words, Nixon had foremost in mind the improvement in relations with the Communist world together with ending the war in Vietnam. Although Nixon fixed his priorities early in his administration, there was no identifiable framework for the direction of his policies or any strong philosophical underpinnings for his strategy. Nixon perceived the world in balance-of-power terms, and the use of power--especially military power--was a constant element in his policies. He concentrated on superpower relationships in order to achieve a new global balance--a realpolitik approach that became an essential part of Nixon's diplomacy.

Nixon's approach to foreign policy was governed by the effects of Vietnam on America's foreign outlook and position in the world. The vast drain of the war shook public confidence in the government and raised doubts about America's leadership in other parts of the world. The national debate over the principles of American foreign policy growing out of the protracted conflict in Vietnam produced additional doubts about the future of America's involvement in international affairs. At the center of the debate was the use of American power, especially in armed interventions, to protect its vital interests and America's commitments throughout the world. Had the United States overextended itself only to expose its vulnerability to local insurgents? And did the realization of new international realities spell a policy of retrenchment, or a new military posture for the United States which emphasized the values of regional or local self-reliance among the smaller powers? The prospects of a change in the basic direction of America's foreign relations provided an opportunity to develop a post-Vietnam policy. But public disaffection with the war and the breakdown in the foreign policy consensus posed the greatest challenge to Nixon's policies. Faced with the prospect that public opposition to the war would become a major burden on his administration, Nixon affirmed a new flexible diplomacy which would apply American power more selectively and limit American commitments abroad. The intended reduction of America's role as a military power was the object of the Nixon

Doctrine, which rested on the conviction that the United States had been carrying too much of the burden of maintaining world peace. Nixon did not want to make any more commitments unless they were required by our own vital interests, and he wanted a new Asian policy to ensure that there would be no more Vietnams. This new policy of limited involvement sought to define the framework for America's role in Asia after the Vietnam war ended and introduce a new flexibility in America's foreign relations in general. There were real limits to America's political, economic and military power in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, and Nixon's policies tried to determine America's role in a rapidly changing world. But even as he tried to diminish America's role as the world's policeman, Nixon's strategy affirmed the efficacy of America's power and the continued preponderance of the United States in political-military affairs. It also established the salience of America's leadership in maintaining world order and emphasized the U.S. role in achieving a global ***modus vivendi***.[1] The apparent incongruity between these presumptions and the principles of the Nixon Doctrine illustrated how the exigencies of the war in Vietnam influenced the President's conduct of foreign policy. Nixon expected his greatest achievements to be in the area of foreign affairs, but Vietnam and its attendant domestic pressures threatened to upset his foreign agenda. In the face of this challenge, Nixon retreated to the privacy of the Oval Office to map out the strategies which marked a conspicuous change in

America's posture towards the communist world. Nixon felt more secure in this arrangement, which all but eliminated the likelihood of news leaks, and he advocated carrying out a secret diplomacy to achieve his policy objectives. By the middle of his first year, secrecy in the formulation of policy became the *modus operandi* of the new President and the solution to the mounting challenges to his administration's policies.

Organization of the Nixon NSC

From the outset of his administration, Nixon was determined to run foreign policy from the White House. He was distrustful of the Washington buraucracy and believed that the President must run foreign affairs with the support of a centralized staff at the White House. The first and most important change in the structure of foreign policy under Nixon was the reorganization of the machinery of the National Security Council and its supporting committees. The NSC system was formally established in National Security Decision Memorandum 2, which revitalized the NSC and gave it a preeminent role in national security planning. This memorandum indicated that the Council would be the principal forum for the consideration of policy issues in which the President is required to make decisions. Signed by Nixon on January 19 and issued shortly after the inauguration on January 20, it centralized control over foreign policy in the White House and expanded the role of the NSC. Nixon wanted a systematic structure which, in addition to coordinating foreign and defense policy,

could also develop real policy options for him to consider before making decisions. He invited Henry Kissinger to put his views about the most effective structure of government into a memo during their first meeting following the Presidential election, which took place at his postelection headquarters in the Pierre Hotel in New York on November 25. This encounter was preliminary to Nixon's proposal to make Kissinger his National Security Assistant two days later.

Kissinger's reorganization plan introduced major changes in the White House and the reorganization of national security procedures which became the basis for NSDM 2. Kissinger created new units within the NSC to control the flow of information and clarify policy options for the President. He reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of previous systems and argued that flexibility must be combined with formality to make certain that clear policy choices reach the top. This would be accomplished by establishing a structure of subcommittees which would encourage debate of various positions and solicit the separate views and recommendations of all interested agencies. Above all, he deemed it essential to establish Presidential authority and provide a structure to enhance his leadership. A series of supporting NSC committees and groups were organized to facilitate the handling of operational problems within the context of the NSC system and the principal national security issues. The Senior Review Group, chaired by Kissinger, monitored the flow of papers from six Inter-

departmental Groups (IGs) and some ad hoc groups responsible for special policy areas were created under Kissinger's chairmanship. These ad hoc groups, which included the Washington Special Actions Group (WSAG), a top-level operations center for crisis and emergencies, the Verification Panel, which set policy on arms control, and the Forty Committee, which authorized undercover intelligence activities, had potentially greater influence on the foreign policy process than any other structure at the Council. As part of the reorganization and strengthening of the NSC staff, Kissinger replaced the Senior Interdepartmental Group (SIG), which was established in 1967 and chaired by the Under Secretary of State in order to review the options to be presented to the NSC and to follow up on decisions reached, with six Interdepartmental Groups headed by Assistant Secretaries of State.

Unlike President Johnson, who intended to consolidate the State Department's role in the conduct of foreign policy through the SIG system, Kissinger wanted the IGs to coordinate the national security studies specifically assigned to them. (There were six IGs: for Europe, the Far East, the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and politico-military affairs). In addition to the Interdepartmental Groups, the State Department's role in the new NSC system would be established through the participation of the Secretary of State and Under Secretary in the NSC Review Group and in the newly-constituted Under Secretaries Committee. But what the new plan for the reorganization of the national security

machinery effectively did was undermine the State Department, leaving it unequal representation in the new structure. Kissinger's reorganization proposal ended the Department's domination of the national security process and assured that the State Department was no longer in charge of foreign policy.

William Rogers challenged the reorganization plan and objected to the plans to abolish the SIG system which, under State Department chairmanship, functioned as a "clearinghouse" for all NSC business.[2] While in reality, the SIG idea did not work under the Johnson administration, and decisions were made outside the SIG structure, Rogers wanted the State Department to continue to control the staffing of the interdepartmental machinery. Rogers struggled to defend the preeminence of the State Department and his resistance touched off a contest over control of the NSC during the last weeks of the transition period. Kissinger defended his proposals to the President-elect who had already endorsed them at a December 28 meeting in Key Biscayne at which Kissinger's plan was discussed. The outcome of the debate gave Kissinger his first major victory over Rogers and sealed the fate of the State Department.[3] It also marked the beginning of a continuing debate between the Secretary of State and national security adviser over the handling of the nation's foreign policy.[4]

Kissinger's recommendation to install a national security apparatus within the White House satisfied Nixon's request for a more effective structure which would provide for an orderly

examination of American foreign policy. NSDM 2 restructured the NSC system and designated the NSC as the principal forum for consideration of national security policy issues requiring Presidential decision. Because Nixon planned to dominate foreign policy, his choice of a national security adviser was crucial to him. The importance of the position was made evident by Nixon's decision to announce Kissinger's appointment to the NSC post before making known his choice for Secretary of State. Nixon formally announced Kissinger's appointment at a press conference on December 2 at the Pierre. He offered no hint at that time of the substantive changes he was contemplating in the conduct of his foreign policy or of his views on the function of the national security adviser, except to say that he would have primarily planning functions. He said he intended to name a strong Secretary of State and created the impression that Kissinger would be advising the President on the broader issues, leaving the day-to-day conduct of foreign policy to the Secretary of State. But Nixon's plans to institute bureaucratic changes which would consolidate White House control over foreign policy precluded the primacy of the Secretary of State in the policy process. Added to this were Nixon's feelings of distrust and resentment towards the State Department which he believed had no loyalty to him and had mistreated him in the past.[5]

Just as Nixon carefully selected Kissinger to elevate the post of national security adviser, the appointment of William

Rogers seemed calculated to assure a subordinate role for the State Department. The prerequisite of a Secretary of State is the complete confidence of the President, but that confidence had been absent between Nixon and Rogers from the very beginning of the new administration. Rogers' relative inexperience and lack of expertise in foreign affairs made him something less than an authority in that area, while Nixon's low regard for the State Department and its "recalcitrant bureaucracy" did little to inspire confidence in his choice for Secretary.[6] Furthermore, their personal friendship, which went back more than twenty years, seemed to have little positive influence on their present relationship. In any case, it did not appear to make Rogers' task of establishing his credibility any easier in a government where loyalty to the President was at a premium. It was apparent that power and prestige in the new administration belonged to those who had been long-time associates of the President and early supoorters of Nixon's political career.

There was no question about Rogers' loyalty to the President, but the issue of his credibility damaged Rogers' prestige and position in the diplomatic community and raised doubts about his capacity to influence policy decisions in Washington. Rogers may have understood that under the new setup foreign policy would run from the White House, but without a mandate to carry out foreign policy abroad, he was virtually powerless. The Middle East was the one major area of policy Rogers was "allowed" to run without

White House interference, although Nixon and Kissinger undercut Rogers here, as well, by not giving full support to what became known as the Rogers Plan.[7] Kissinger, acting with Nixon's assent, had effectively removed Rogers and the State Department from substantive policymaking, and Rogers, by all appearances, came to terms with his designated role. At the very least, he had made the decision not to challenge the President openly.

By inauguration day, Kissinger had set in motion the machinery that would make him the most influential NSC adviser ever. He set out to establish his control over most aspects of foreign policymaking, and in a short time dominated the system as he, and not the Secretary of State, became identified as the actual architect of policy. Rogers' compliance made it easier for Kissinger to take charge of foreign policy, but it was Nixon's determination to lead foreign policy himself which turned the NSC job into the key foreign policy post at the White House. From the very beginning, Kissinger had more power than any of his predecessors. The first three Presidential directives on the reorganization of the national security machinery--NSDM-1, NSDM-2 and NSDM-3--placed power in Kissinger's hands over both foreign and defense policy. Together, they had the intended effect of removing the bureaucracy from the policymaking process by consolidating power over national security policy in the White House. Kissinger shared Nixon's contempt for the Washington bureaucracy and excluded the State Department from important decisions by

circumventing the routine operations of the Department. The methods he used to isolate the State Department helped the President to achieve control over the bureaucracy. They also gave Kissinger a near-monopoly on Nixon's thinking which put him in a position of unparalleled influence in the recent experience of the national security assistant.

The extent to which Kissinger dominated policymaking positions was based on Nixon's decision to control foreign policy through his national security adviser, but it was Kissinger who provided the details of the NSC operation and transformed the NSC staff into a "power center" by instituting an elaborate system staffed by an impressive group of foreign policy professionals who worked exclusively for Kissinger.[8] Recruited by Kissinger to help in an overhaul of American foreign policy, the NSC staff's work encroached on the traditional territory of the State Department. Accused of creating a mini-State Department within the revamped NSC structure, Kissinger would defend the new NSC approach as the President's idea. He tried to downplay his own role and officially gave credit to the President for making the decisions. Kissinger, himself, writes that he was "influential but not dominant" until the end of 1970 when his role increased as Nixon began to bypass the bureaucracy and make decisions outside the system.[9] Yet, as Bernard and Marvin Kalb point out, Kissinger seemed to know almost instinctively that he would be able to control bureaucracy.[10] Kissinger was also a master at using the power he was

handed to make himself indispensable to the President, which underscored the extent of his dependence on the President for exercising his control of foreign policy. But the resentment which came with the knowledge that he derived his power from the President did not interfere in any significant way with their broad diplomatic strategies. Nixon, who as the grand strategist presented the overall view, needed Kissinger to put his ideas into practice. Kissinger made the recommendations which would institutionalize the changes Nixon wanted to make in the national security process. Their approach to policy resembled each other very closely and their similar world views led them to similar conclusions, although not always for the same reasons.[11] The basic compatibility in their conception of power and understanding of the international system and of America's changing role in the world combined to produce major breakthroughs in U.S. foreign policy. But these new policies were increasingly made outside the formal decisionmaking process and under a system of personal and secret diplomacy by Nixon and Kissinger.

As a result, the various policy options coming up through the NSC were overlooked in favor of private conversations and specific negotiations by the President and national security adviser. As a source of recommendations on a wide range of policy issues, the NSC staff came to realize that Kissinger, whose support they wanted and needed, was busy concentrating power and access to the president in his own hands. Feeling increasingly removed from the

policymaking process, and finding it difficult to make contact with Kissinger, the initial enthusiasm among the NSC staff members about the opportunity to change the direction of American foreign policy waned, with the exception of those few staffers who were included in the private deliberations going on at the White House. The NSC structure was used more before Kissinger became so influential, and Kissinger, instead of carrying out the NSC job of coordinating foreign policy, became a highly visible policy advocate and prominent policymaker. Through a close partnership with the President, Kissinger was able to put into practice his own ideas and philosophy, and engineer some of the most dramatic turnabouts in U.S. policy.

Policy Outlook: Approach to China

Kissinger's trip to Peking in July 1971 marked a great breakthrough in Nixon's efforts to establish a new China policy. The announcement by Nixon on July 15, two days following Kissinger's return, that secret talks had taken place between Kissinger and Chou En-Lai and that a Presidential visit to China would take place received nearly unanimous public approval and endorsement. It was a major policy coup for Nixon and the high point of his Presidency. The opening to China was the culminating achievement of a carefully executed policy to open the door to a normalization of relations with mainland China after more than twenty years of hostility between the U.S. and the People's Republic of China. There was more than a trace of irony in the scenario

being written in the White House whereby Nixon, whose long record of anti-communism was well known, actively orchestrated a shift in political direction toward an accommodation with the Chinese. In what proved to be a prophetic observation long before Nixon became President, the journalist Edgar Snow suggested that Chinese leaders preferred to deal with a conservative administration feeling that any understandings reached would be more lasting than if made with a liberal administration negotiating without domestic political support.[12] A China initiative would be a historic event under any administration. That it was Nixon who became the first American President to visit China and accomplish what his Democratic predecessors were unable to do turned his performance into an extraordinary personal triumph for the President. His journey to China also made him appear as "a man of peace" at a time when his policies in Vietnam were coming under increasing attack.[13] It was an unparalleled diplomatic feat in the post-1945 period and it marked the beginning of a new attitude within the United States toward China.

China was an abiding interest of the President's from the first days of his administration. Nixon had made reassessing China policy an "initial aim" of his administration and, from the beginning, planned to aim American diplomacy in the direction of an opening to mainland China.[14] The Nixonian aim of establishing a "meaningful dialogue" with the Chinese was the preliminary to an opening in U.S.-China relations and signalled a readiness to deal

with the government in Peking. Through a new approach to China, Nixon wanted to change the politics of confrontation, which was manifest in the U.S. policy of containment and isolation of China, and initiate an evolving process of accommodation and diplomatic alternatives. It was time, as Nixon argued in *Foreign Affairs* in October, 1967, for American policy to "come ... to grips with the reality of China."[15] He also saw many possibilities inherent in a new China policy primarily affecting triangular diplomacy and the opportunity for peace. Nixon was prepared to push hard on the issue of a rapprochement with the Chinese and privately hoped that an historic breakthrough in the American-Chinese relationship would materialize during his administration.

Nixon's views, however, were not shared by Kissinger at the time he entered the government in January, 1969. By his own admission, Kissinger said China had not figured prominently in his own writings.[16] Nor had he seriously considered the question of an American-Chinese rapprochement before his appointment as Nixon's national security adviser. Kissinger spent most of his time in SALT and Vietnam when he first joined the administration, and continued to perceive international security issues primarily in terms of the United States and the Soviet Union. He was also busy with the upcoming Presidential visit to Western Europe and did not see China becoming a pressing issue for several years. Kissinger went along with Nixon's opening moves to China but it was Nixon who was the conceptual architect of his administration's

China policy and made the decision to carry out expanded relations with Peking. During the first six months of 1969 Nixon moved faster on the China question than Kissinger, and it was left to Kissinger to work out the tactics for the President's initiatives. At this point, Kissinger was not yet committed to the President's approach, but the events of 1969 along the Sino-Soviet border convinced him otherwise, and by late summer 1969 he acknowledged the opportunities presented in an active China policy. Over the course of the next two years, climaxing in his secret trip to Peking, Kissinger became closely identified with the President's China policy and carried out the negotiations and diplomacy with great success. So well did he carry out his assignment, that by the time Nixon went on his historic journey to China, Kissinger, and not Nixon, was seen as the key figure in a rapprochement with China.[17]

Before he became committed to Nixon's theory of an American-Chinese rapprochement, Kissinger perceived China in the context of the Sino-Soviet rift and the continuing threat of armed confrontation along their shared border. As tension mounted between Moscow and Peking and the border clashes threatened to escalate into a wider conflict, Kissinger saw China as a threat to the Soviet Union. He assumed China precipitated these border clashes and tended to think that China was more likely to attack Russia than the other way around. Because he assumed that China precipitated these attacks, Kissinger believed that the Chinese also threatened

the new Asian order he hoped would follow the end of the Vietnam war.[18] Unlike Nixon, who realized the strategic and military possibilities of playing the "China card" from the beginning, Kissinger thought that using the Chinese to influence the Soviets was a dangerous game and too risky to fit his own designs for global order and stability. Kissinger was not opposed to the principle of improving relations with Peking, but he did not think the timing was right for Nixon's opening moves. There were more urgent matters to focus on, and the deepening Sino-Soviet rift would more likely frustrate than assist American efforts. Kissinger, in fact, did address the China issue shortly before the Presidential election, when he worked with Nelson Rockefeller on a speech Rockefeller gave on U.S.-Soviet relations. (At a time, Kissinger--a longtime friend and associate of the former governor--was acting as Rockefeller's foreign policy adviser during his bid for the Presidency). In what was a major campaign address, Rockefeller spoke of the need for improving relations with both the Soviet Union and China and said he would begin a dialogue with the Chinese. But it would be more than a year before Kissinger would make this approach his own. If Kissinger's initial skepticism was, indeed, based at least in part on the timing of Nixon's actions, the stepped up activity along the Sino-Soviet border in the spring and summer of 1969 made an opening to China more compelling for Kissinger. New evidence late that summer that the Russians, and not the Chinese, were instigating the mounting

tension along the border suddenly made the Soviet Union a greater threat than China was thought to be. Intelligence reports of a Soviet military buildup near China's borders and plans for preemptive air strikes against Chinese nuclear installations made a Soviet attack more likely than an attack on Russia by the Chinese. Kissinger began to see that there were "two sides" to the Sino-Soviet conflict and the threat of the Soviet border buildup could also mean that there was room for bargaining with the Chinese that would serve the interests of both the U.S. and China.

There were many China-watchers who had been saying for years that it was time for the U.S. to consider a move toward China. One group of scholars from Harvard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology sent a memo to Nixon during the transition period asking him to consider breaking U.S. ties to Taipei and inviting the PRC into the United Nations. One China specialist, Alan S. Whiting, a former director of the State Department's Office of Research and Analysis for the Far East who was then teaching at the University of Michigan, met with Kissinger in late August, 1969 to discuss the Sino-Soviet dispute. Whiting, one of the few outside experts consulted by Kissinger, discussed the possibilities for a rapprochement coming out of the events along the border areas, and his informed analysis made it evident that the recent developments represented an historic opportunity for reconciling American and Chinese interests. Kissinger makes no mention of his

talk with Whiting in his memoirs, although he did admit the influence of Whiting on his own thinking about China years later.[19] Whatever reservations or uncertainty he might have had in the beginning, Kissinger never gave any indication that it was he who followed Nixon's lead on China. The only exceptions Kissinger took to the new policy which he mentions in his memoirs were that he thought the administration's early ideas about rapprochement were little more than "nebulous theories," and that he was "skeptical" of the opening events in the U.S. approach, a skepticism shared by Nixon, according to Kissinger. Otherwise, Kissinger says there was a "marginal" difference in his own and the President's perspectives.[20] This was true enough by the fall, with Nixon and Kissinger busy trying to speed up the Chinese timetable, but it was still Nixon who was first to see the potential in a new era of reconciliation with the Chinese.

Nixon was committed to the principle of an American-Chinese rapprochement even before he came to the White House. On several previous occasions Nixon had expressed his views on China and gave hints of his willingness to go to China. In August 1968, according to the Associated Press, Nixon said he might visit China "if they would give me a visa,"[21] and just after he received his party's nomination, Nixon admonished that "we must not forget China" and urged that the U.S. seek opportunities to talk with the Chinese as well as the Russians.[22] He shocked a disbelieving staff at the Hotel Pierre in late 1968 when word got out that he

wanted to recognize China.[23]

And in November, during their first meeting at the Pierre, Nixon mentioned to Kissinger his concern about the need to reexamine America's policy toward China. Nixon's plans for beginning a new relationship with Communist China were first raised in the October 1967 *Foreign Affairs* article which sounded the theme that a new relationship between the United States and China was essential to building a lasting peace in Asia. The article stressed the importance of Asia to the U.S. and the world, looking ahead to the post-Vietnam period, but it is primarily remembered for stating as an aim of U.S. policy the end of the long isolation of China. It was a bold statement of the political realities not only in Asia, but also in the global strategic balance among the major nuclear powers by the late sixties. Coming, as it did, in the midst of an intensifying debate over the war in Vietnam and very chilly relations with Moscow and Peking, Nixon's analysis was especially noteworthy because it indicated a new pragmatism in an area of foreign policy which had been previously dominated by ideological rivalries and an unremitting dogmatism. It showed Nixon as a pragmatist, which had been evidenced several years earlier when, as Vice President, he tried to get a visa to Peking. It was very much apparent during a trip to Asia in the spring of 1967--one of four world tours Nixon planned that spring--when Nixon sounded out Asian leaders on the future in U.S.-Chinese relations.

He found, in his travels, a growing concern about China among the Asian nations and a greater readiness to accept that some change in America's policy toward China was necessary. At the same time, Nixon considered Chiang Kai-shek's pledge to invade the mainland as "unrealistic" in view of China's massive power and his own "pragmatic analysis" of the political climate in Asia.[24] Against the background of the Sino-Soviet confrontation, the Vietnam war and China's nuclear threat, Nixon believed the U.S. could influence events to contain the Communist challenge and pressure China toward a solution of its own domestic problems. Then, according to this scenario, a serious dialogue with China would be considered. Nixon continued these discussions in Indonesia in visits with Suharto and the American Ambassador, Marshall Green, who recalls that he and Nixon spoke for a long time about China.[25] Nixon presented his conclusions in the *Foreign Affairs* article and summarized the most salient issues affecting the regional power balances. His recommendations for American policy set long-range goals which later became the focus of his own China policy by seeking to use the U.S.-Chinese-Soviet triangle to advance the normalization of relations with the People's Republic.

Nixon's changing view of the Sino-Soviet rivalry was central to his China policy. He still saw the Soviet Union as his major adversary, but he also saw that he could use Peking as his weapon to exploit the Sino-Soviet conflict to gain leverage over the

Soviet Union. This approach established a three-power relationship which put the United States in the position to negotiate separately with the Soviets and Chinese in order to further its own interests. By pressuring the Soviet Union with a Sino-American rapprochement, China could be used as a counterthreat to the Russians, and the prospect of a Washington-Peking summit would give Moscow additional reason to show more flexibility in its diplomacy. It was a strategy based on balancing rival claims with America's own interests, and the Nixon-Kissinger triangular diplomacy tipped the balance of power to Washington's advantage. "The road led through Peking," was how one high-ranking official at the State Department advised the President on the issue of American overtures to the Chinese.[26] There were also expectations that the opening to China would aid in a settlement of the war in Vietnam, reflecting a growing belief in Washington that the way out of Vietnam was through Peking and not Hanoi.

As events in Indochina created new battleground for rivalry between Moscow and Peking, tactics were being devised by Nixon and Kissinger to bring political pressure from both Russia and China to bear on the North Vietnamese. The rapprochement would benefit both the United States and China in their battles with the Soviet Union and there were strategic advantages for each in playing the other off the Soviets. For the record, however, Nixon denied that he was playing the "China card" in order to gain maximum advantage for America's interests, and he emphasized that the U.S. opening

toward China was not directed against the Soviet Union. Both the President and Kissinger denied that the improvement in American-Chinese relations would have anything to do with exerting leverage on the Soviet Union, and then reiterated that the U.S. took no sides in the Sino-Soviet dispute. They also tried to keep Vietnam out of triangular politics and dismissed any suggestion that they expected to settle the war in Indochina in Peking. The official administration line emphasized the importance of ending the diplomatic isolation of China and improving communications between the U.S. and the PRC. It stressed that the United States, looking to the future, had to find a way to open a dialogue with the Chinese, "entirely on the merits of that relationship."[27]

The Tactics of Rapprochement

Nixon had made a strategic decision to seek rapprochement with the Chinese. He effectively used triangular diplomacy to begin the process of normalizing relations between the U.S. and China to establish a new two-way process in Sino-American relations and eventually to shape a new power system in Asia. It was an approach which gave Nixon geopolitical leverage to use in dealing with the Communist powers and gave China and the Soviet Union a stake in better relations with the U.S. There were important domestic and foreign policy reasons for the rapprochement, but Nixon also had more material reasons for going ahead on China, and he chose the right moment to play the China card based on personal and political considerations.

There were several important aspects of a new China policy which suited Nixon's personal style and political temperament. He had both the political instincts and personal resolve to push for a change in U.S. policy, and he was shrewd enough to understand the opportunity he had in a move toward China. He also had a conservative political base which would protect him against a right-wing backlash. Moreover, his long record of being a staunch anti-Communist would protect him against charges of being "soft on Communism." A changing American mood helped Nixon piece together the elements of his diplomatic initiative and gauge the impact his policy would have on world public opinion. The record of Sino-American relations actually worked to Nixon's advantage. Because there had been no diplomatic dealings between Washington and Peking for at least two decades, Nixon journeyed to China with few preconceptions or expectations. There were obvious risks in going to China which centered on the political fallout of his visit on the Taiwan issue. But the circumstances under which he planned his visit combined with his purposefulness in engaging the Chinese in discussions were encouraging signs of a mutual willingness to negotiate.

The symbolism of an opening to China was clearly not lost on Nixon. The live broadcast of the historic Nixon-Chou handshake dramatized the breakthrough as the world watched. It mattered less how it was done or who made it happen than that it was Nixon who became the first American President to visit China. Nixon

also used his visit to recoup credibility to his presidency, which had been damaged by Vietnam. The fact that China policy could be conducted in secrecy and then announced with great surprise played into Nixon's sense of the dramatic. It was also a policy which gave Nixon control over the logistics without becoming involved in bureaucratic proceedings. The policy, as conceived by Nixon, was highly personalized and needed little help from the bureaucracy for its implementation. Nixon deftly maximized the elements of drama and surpise in his China policy and formalized a design for rapprochement which was suited to his political personality and personal proclivity for secrecy. Combined, they worked to Nixon's advantage and contributed to the image of "the lonely, controlling politician in Nixon."[28]

How Nixon and Kissinger were able to move the United States toward a diplomatic rapprochement with the People's Republic of China was exemplary of the *modus operandi* they favored in the conduct of foreign policy. The breakthrough in the policy two and-a-half years into Nixon's first term was significant against the record of bitter conflict, and told a great deal about the depth of the President's commitment to a new approach toward China. In pursuit of this policy, Nixon and Kissinger began by sending signals to the Chinese indicating their desire for an improved relationship. These signals were then turned into a system for more direct diplomacy intended to establish more formal channels of communication with the Chinese leadership and

eventually to open a dialogue with Chou En-lai. China's receptivity to America's overtures was interpreted in Washington as a readiness not only to continue the indirect exchanges which had been established between the two capitals, but also to prepare the way for face-to-face meetings between American and Chinese leaders. The ultimate goal, of course, was a Presidential trip to the PRC. What was critical to these dealings was keeping up the momentum on both sides. U.S. efforts were met with obstacles and disappointments several times, especially at the beginning, but the political and strategic circumstances combined to produce a mutually sustained effort toward normalizing relations.

To carry out the new policy, Nixon and Kissinger approached America's relationship with China on several different levels. Each of these levels was used selectively for a specific purpose at timely intervals in the accommodation process. They were also used by the principals to suit their own individual styles and personal priorities related to the broader policy. The President's policy was based on five different approaches toward the Chinese. No one approach was exclusive of any other, and several were applied at the same time, although Nixon did have a strong predilection toward covert procedures. Still, the approaches were all related and designed to correspond to one another. From the initial queries into the U.S.-Chinese relationship, Nixon depended on these different methods to carry out his policy. They were:

(1) Public pronouncements of the President's interest in

improving American-Chinese relations in speeches, press conferences and interviews. References to the administration's interest would be made by the President as well as several other high government officials including Kissinger, Rogers and the Undersecretary of State, Elliot Richardson.

(2) Officially commissioned government reports about China, which covered all aspects of America's policy and the relationship of triangular politics to the PRC. These "in-house" studies were prepared largely by NSC staffers together with the experts at the State Department.

(3) Specific measures taken to ease the restrictions on diplomatic dealings, trade issues and cultural and scientific exchanges. These became the first tangible outward signs of American willingness to replace the emnity which existed with a trend toward accommodation. They also became part of the gradual process of educating the American public about contemporary China and prepared the nation for an anticipated turnabout in relations with Peking.

(4) The use of secret negotiations and diplomatic backchannels to communicate with the Chinese. These were conducted through intermediaries without, in some cases, the knowledge and, in almost all cases, the participation of administration officials who were otherwise involved in the more "public" aspect of the new China policy. The most sensitive and material aspects of Nixon's policy were conducted through these secret channels. They were

the prevailing methods in the President's and Kissinger's dealings, and caused more resentment within bureaucratic circles than any of the other methods.

(5) The use of the media to dramatize the President's achievements and the symbolism of his historic policy changes. These methods not only outlined the process by which China policy was made and carried out, but they also made very clear who was or was not included in the planning that was taking place in the Oval Office. The tactics used by Nixon and Kissinger included bureaucratic maneuvering and political machinations designed to keep the rest of the bureaucracy out of White House policy and to make certain that they would be the ones to negotiate rapprochement.

Public pronouncements of a new attitude toward China represented an official--i.e., a Presidential view--and, as such, were read closely by the Chinese. The President's public comments did not consistently present a positive, forward-looking approach to the prospect of improving relations with Communist China but, at the very least, they indicated that the matter was on the President's foreign policy agenda and contained hints that there was room for flexibility provided that certain conditions were met. This theme was sounded in the remarks by other senior officials on China and related matters during the first year of the Nixon administration. These statements served a dual purpose as far as Nixon's own motives were concerned: first, they were intended to signal China's leaders that there was interest in Washington in

starting up a dialogue with Peking and relaxing some of the former stringent restrictions on communication channels; and, second, Nixon wanted to sound out the Chinese to gauge what their reaction would be to a conciliatory initiative. This aspect of the China strategy was presided over by the President to the extent that it was on his cue that other officials addressed the China issue and expressed the optimism that the President wanted to communicate to the leadership in Peking.

Outside of Nixon's own declarations, public statements were handled almost entirely by State Department officials, specifically by Secretary Rogers, Under Secretary Richardson and a few of the Assistant Secretaries. Kissinger did not make any public comments at all about China until after he returned from his secret visit to Peking. Nixon's own thoughts were expressed at his news conference, in off-the-cuff comments and in his major public addresses, including the presentation of an annual report on foreign policy, an innovation of the Nixon Presidency which was Kissinger's idea. The general tenor of the official statements was one of reserve and caution, including some tough words for the Chinese after they cancelled the Warsaw meeting scheduled for February, but there was an undercurrent of optimism about the future prospects for American-Chinese relations. American officials clearly placed the burden on the Chinese to respond to the American overtures.

One tactic the administration used to demonstrate its good

will was the announcement of specific unilateral steps to ease restrictions in certain areas of trade and travel which did not require China's agreement. It emphasized that China would no longer be isolated and should take its proper place in the international community, and the fact that it had not was its own doing, and the fault of the intransigent attitude it continued to express toward American initiatives. Thus willingness to make the first move was not, however, the attitude expressed during Nixon's first news conference on January 27 when he suggested that the U.S. was waiting for the Chinese to make the first moves: "Until some changes occur on their side ... I see no immediate prospect of any change in our policy."[29]

In addition to approaching China in a spirit of cooperation, the administration publicly disclaimed that the United States would exploit in any way the Sino-Soviet dispute to its own advantage or take sides; the official line continued to be that the U.S. wanted to continue a dialogue with both the Soviet Union and China. The President summed up these steps in his first foreign policy report to the Congress, "U.S. Foreign Policy for the 1970's: A New Strategy for Peace." In fact, however, following the increasing number of border incidents during the spring and summer of 1969, there were warnings by the U.S. that it would resist Soviet aggression in Asia and veiled references that the U.S. was taking China's side against the Soviets. At a news conference on April 7, Rogers took exception to the Soviets' case

against the Chinese, which contended that they were at fault when, in fact, Rogers said they were not.[30]

A warning against a preemptive attack on China by the Soviet Union was sounded in Elliot Richardson's remarks before a meeting of the American Political Science Association in New York on September 5. He repeated that the U.S. did not want to become involved in the "ideological differences" between the Soviet Union and China, but "We could not fail to be deeply concerned ... with an escalation of this quarrel into a massive breach of international peace and security."[31] Just one month earlier, on August 8, Rogers delivered a major speech in Canberra, Australia before the National Press Club, during the President's world tour, declaring the U.S. desire to improve relations with China. It sent an important signal to the Chinese, and was the most outspoken speech up to that time on the months of efforts to show a more conciliatory attitude toward the PRC. Nixon, in fact, had been advised, mostly by the State Department, that he had to make some kind of overt gesture toward China during his trip through Asia that summer.[32]

The Assistant Secretary, Marshall Green, was one of those who had made a case for a China opening to Nixon on several occasions. Green went on his own tour of Asia as the Assistant-Secretary designate in March 1969, during which he presented Nixon's view to Asian leaders on, among other issues, the China question. He had cleared his working paper with the President before he left,

and recounts an incident which was a sign of developments to come in the political and bureaucratic battle between the White House and the State Department. As Nixon was reading the paper that Green and his colleagues at State had prepared for Green's trip, Kissinger walked in. He was handed the paper by Nixon and, after looking at it, returned it "in a rather surly way." Green saw right away that he had made what in Kissinger's mind was an error in going directly to the President. Later, Richardson told Green he had committed "a tactical error of the first magnitude."[33]

At this point, Kissinger was still working on consolidating his power and was not involved in developing China policy as he would be by the end of the year. He was not involved in the public presentation of the administration's policy, which appeared to be orchestrated by the State Department. What Nixon had planned for Kissinger would be much more sensitive politically and ultimately of much greater import than the achievements of the public side of the President's China policy.

There was additional evidence of Nixon's abiding interest in China in the fact that three major policy reviews were authorized during his first six months in office. The request for a policy study dealing with China was part of a more comprehensive and detailed review that Nixon and Kissinger decided should be conducted before any new decisions were made concerning U.S. foreign policy. The real purpose of the National Security Study Memoranda, however, remained a secret to those who worked on

preparing these reports until Nixon announced in July 1971 that he would visit China. Until that time, it was unclear what the President planned to do with the contents of the NSSMs. In fact, the attention on China during the early months also came in response to a proposal by Peking to resume the American-Chinese ambassadorial talks in Warsaw, which had been suspended on January 8, 1968.

The Chinese notified the Johnson administration on November 26, three weeks after the Presidential election, that they wanted to resume diplomatic contacts, and proposed that the two sides meet formally on February 20, 1969. The Chinese offer, which had surprised the Johnson people, was accepted three days later with President-elect Nixon's agreement to go ahead with the diplomatic talks. Nixon, enthusiastic about the Chinese proposal, started to make his own plans for maximizing the opportunity he saw in resumption of the Warsaw talks. Kissinger was not as enthusiastic as Nixon about any type of quick opening--the decision to accept China's offer was Nixon's alone--but the China specialists on his staff and at the State Department were interested, and they set to work on the requisite policy studies.

Nixon issued a request for the first interagency study on China in the beginning of February 1969. Acting through Kissinger, he ordered the NSC staff to prepare the report, which was marked NSSM-14, and fixed the beginning of the Nixon administration's meticulously planned effort to establish the basis for re-

lations with Peking. Coming, as it did, partly in response to a new outward-looking approach in Peking, it was the first major study on China and became the working paper for the developing new policy. It was a comprehensive report and reviewed possible options for the U.S., including a move toward a two-China policy, maintaining support for the Nationalist government while working toward a better understanding with the People's Republic. NSSM-14 was followed by a request for a study on "Trade with Communist China" on March 28, and designated NSSM-35. It was prepared under the direction of John Holdridge, Kissinger's expert on China, together with the cooperation of the State Department. Secretary Elliot Richardson had earlier sent a memorandum to Kissinger outlining proposals for lifting certain restrictions on trade. A study of the Sino-Soviet rivalry was requested on July 3, and NSSM-63, "Sino-Soviet Relations," was completed four months later, providing an expansive analysis of the elements and interests in the Sino-American relationship. NSSM-106, a policy study of China, was completed on November 19, 1970. The idea behind these policy reviews was to convey the idea within the government that the administration was interested in probing the possibilities of a rapprochement with the Chinese without giving any publicity to this fact. This sentiment was conveyed by the President in a memo to Kissinger on February 1, 1969, before the first NSSM was ordered. In it Nixon emphasized the importance of keeping these initiatives hidden from the public view.[34]

The request for NSSMs on major and substantive issues on China also pointed to the NSSM system as offering options to the President and providing a basis for specific decisions, at least at the beginning of his China policy. It was also suited to Nixon's present needs, which were to explore the possibilities of a new China policy and assess their potential impact on the rest of U.S. policy. More importantly, because each NSC study was controlled and coordinated by Kissinger, it meant that Kissinger was in charge of putting together, behind the scenes, the outlines of a new strategy. It also meant that Kissinger would be responsible in the months ahead for filling in the details and working out the tactics of the broader policy. The new China policy would be as much Kissinger's as it was Nixon's.

Both the White House and the State Department were involved in the lifting of restrictions affecting trade, travel and diplomatic talks between the U.S. and China. The State Department took more initiative in this area of dealings with China compared to its role in other aspects of China policy, but it also came up against stiff resistance from the White House on issues affecting diplomatic talks. Kissinger had, for the most part, left the issues involving trade, travel and cultural exchanges to the State Department, while he concentrated on working out the details of resuming diplomatic discussions with the Chinese.

The State Department challenged the efforts of the President and Kissinger to delegate responsibilities in matters of

diplomacy--the Warsaw talks being under the auspices of State--and keep officials from State from supervising the proceedings in Warsaw, with the talks scheduled to resume on January 20, 1970. Nixon remained in the background on these matters while Kissinger parried with officials at State. And when State turned to protest the decision, it was Kissinger whom they ran up against at the White House. This point of conflict was a major reason Nixon and Kissinger used secret methods for communicating with the Chinese, an approach which allowed them to remain in charge of the most crucial aspects of the evolving policy.

In the area of trade, NSSM-35 established the basis for modifying some of the trade controls against China. NSSM-35 was prepared under the joint effort of the NSC staff and the State Department with Richardson acting as the liaison between the State Department and the White House.[35] A few weeks before work on NSSM-35 began, Richardson had sent a memo to Kissinger outlining proposed changes in trade with the PRC. Richardson played an important role because it was with him, and not Rogers, that Kissinger felt comfortable discussing issues. Richardson was not a rival to Kissinger and their temperaments were more compatible than were Kissinger's and Rogers'. Kissinger and Richardson established the ritual early on of meeting regularly over lunch to review foreign policy. A special working group was also set up at the State Department with representatives from Treasury and Commerce to review the political implications and international rami-

fications as well as the methods and timing of an announcement easing trade controls. Treasury and Commerce had traditionally opposed trade with China, but once the White House ordered a study, they went along with it. NSSM-35 proposed several measures in the areas of economics and trade and suggested that the first step to take would be permission for American travelers to spend up to one hundred dollars on goods coming from China.

While it was not a major change, it was the first positive step taken in China policy since the Korean War and the symbolic significance was very great. The proposed changes in NSSM-35 which the President decided to enact were signed into effect on July 21. In addition to the provision on buying Chinese products, the step was taken to broaden the categories of Americans whose passports may be automatically validated for travel in China to include members of Congress, journalists, teachers, students, scientists and representatives of the American Red Cross.

Other steps taken during the course of 1969 were: the decision on December 19 to permit the foreign subsidiaries of American firms to trade in nonstrategic goods with China; the suspension of naval patrols in the Taiwan Strait on November 7; and an announcement on December 15 that all nuclear weapons on Okinawa would be removed by the end of the year. On June 10, 1971, the United States lifted the trade and payments embargo in effect toward the PRC since 1949, and on February 14, shortly before the President left for China, the U.S. made all commodi-

ties that were available for sale to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe also available to the PRC. These were all unilateral acts by the United States, taken to demonstrate to China and the world that it was serious in its intentions to reach for an accommodation and begin the lengthy process of normalized relations with the PRC.

The Practice of Secret Diplomacy

The resumption of the Warsaw talks was the focus of administration efforts between the fall 1969 and spring 1970. After the Chinese called off the February 20, 1969 meeting, apparently because of the growing schism between political factions within China which acted as a restraint on Chou En-Lai's diplomatic activities--there was virtually no movement on reopening the talks. After several failed attempts by Kissinger to communicate instructions to the U.S. Ambassador to Poland, Walter Stoessel, to propose the resumption of the talks to the top-ranking China envoy, he and Nixon summoned Stoessel to the White House for a meeting on September 9. They told him to talk to the Chinese chargé d'affaires, which Stoessel ultimately succeeded in doing on December 9 during a reception sponsored by the Yugoslav Embassy in Warsaw.

Stoessel communicated to China's chargé, Lei Yang, that the U.S. wanted to begin "serious talks" with China, and he was received by Lei at the Chinese Embassy on December 12--a meeting which was kept secret--where he proposed that the Warsaw talks be

resumed. Stoessel and Lei agreed to meet again soon to discuss the American proposal and talked again on January 8, this time at the American embassy, where they established that formal ambassadorial meetings would reopen on January 20 at the Chinese embassy. The arrangements remained secret until the first formal meeting actually took place.

As it turned out, Nixon and Kissinger had somewhat different ideas about the January 20 meeting than the State Department's Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, which had the job of drafting the guidelines for Stoessel's meeting with the Chinese. The White House and State Department both drew up instructions for Stoessel, but the tenor and substance of their individual directives pointed to differences not only in their separate approaches to China but also in the understanding of the purpose of renewing the talks. The State Department was unaware of the conciliatory attitude expressed in messages between the U.S. and China the previous year and continued to operate on the assumption that normalization was still a distant goal which would require the removal of major obstacles--namely, the Taiwan issue--before major strides could be made.

The signals received by the Chinese from the White House, however, indicated a very different outlook and placed the Warsaw talks in a new light. One of the issues which divided the White House and State Department in the preparation for the talks was a proposal--originating in Washington--to send an American emissary

to Peking to conduct detailed talks there, an idea which, when first put forth, was agreed to by both the White House and State. But as the second meeting approached State Department officials began to rethink the propriety of actually holding talks in Peking. From their perspective, things were moving a little too quickly, and they were not yet prepared to go ahead with separate talks in China itself. As it turned out, there were no more formal meetings held after February 20. A dispute over this matter made it impossible to schedule another Warsaw meeting in March, and the announcement on April 3 that the Deputy Premier of Taiwan would visit the United States ended any chance for a resumption of the talks in April.

Furthermore, the Chinese cancelled a meeting set for May 20 because of the U.S. invasion of Cambodia and by this time, secret diplomatic channels were already well established and in regular use by the President and Kissinger in sending messages between the U.S. and China. The resumption of the Warsaw talks brought real hope to the process of normalized relations with China, but it also caused a tug-of-war between the White House and State Department over their conduct and substance. Assistant Secretary Marshall Green was concerned that the United States, in the excitement and urgency of making headway on the issue of improving relations, might give up too much in return for too little. It was this concern which caused State Department officials to doubt the intent behind an American representative negotiating in

Peking, in addition to uneasiness that such a step would altogether remove the department from the talks, a prospect consistent with Kissinger's intention to keep the State Department out of the planning for China. By this time, Kissinger had already lost patience with what he saw as bureaucratic impediments to a more speedy and comprehensive approach to China, and he worked out secret arrangements for going ahead with the President's policy.

What was most important in the expansion of U.S. relations with China was the secrecy imposed on the conduct of diplomacy. Secrecy and surprise were fundamental to Nixon's and Kissinger's handling of the China question and the movement towards normalization, and the use of secrecy was believed to be the key to a breakthrough. Nixon was able to use surprise largely because he used secrecy in the conduct of foreign policy.[36] His resolve to exert control over foreign policy and diplomatic processes made it easier to implement a policy based on secrecy, and suited the White House strategy of selectively informing others of official or, as in the case of China policy, unofficial government-to-government contacts.[37] Because the National Security Adviser's position was protected by the doctrine of executive privilege from testifying before Congress and because he served only a single constituency, the President, Kissinger were able to act as a secret operative for the President. Kissinger managed to manipulate State Department officials and successfully bypass them in the secret conduct of great power diplomacy. Secret manuever-

ing reduced the possibility of leaks, which made it possible for the Chinese to do their business under diplomatic cover, and offered bureaucratic advantage[38] to the NSC staff in the control of diplomatic and military communications.

The system of backchannel messages and the establishment of a new communications network particularly suited Kissinger's style of diplomacy and allowed him to take personal control of the big issues. Rogers was said to have a "general idea" of what was going on--i.e., he was aware of the conduct of secret diplomacy on China--but he was left uninformed of the details and arrangements worked out in private communications between the Americans and Chinese as they were carried out by third parties in France, Romania and Pakistan. Ultimately, it was Kissinger who was the point man in Washington, receiving and analyzing secret messages between Washington and Peking. As such, and as one of the only other persons in the government besides the President who was aware of this private system of backchannel communication, he was poised in the singular position of advising Nixon on how to interpret, respond to and anticipate the Chinese messages as they evolved into concrete proposals.

The importance of this approach is underscored by the fact that these methods were being used from the very beginning, concurrently with overtures made on various other levels. Not only did the Chinese see open signs of U.S. readiness to reverse the old antagonism in public pronouncements and specific economic and

trade modifications, but the coordination of covert efforts to propel the process forward was the most substantial and forthcoming evidence of the President's intentions. His real intent would remain secret until July 15, 1971, but it was a strategy that he and Kissinger agreed was the only way towards a reconciliation.

Three private channels were set up which made it possible for Nixon to make contact with the Chinese leadership without having direct dealings with them. The first, with the French, was established during Nixon's visit to Paris on March 1, 1969 where he and President deGaulle discussed the importance of China. Because , France had diplomatic relations with Peking, Nixon thought Paris would be the best place to open secret channels of communication between the U.S. and China. It was reportedly deGaulle who offered to communicate America's interest in a new relationship to the Chinese through France's Ambassador to China. Despite the fact that this channel achieved only modest results, it marked the beginning of top-secret, high-level diplomacy in China and established the preferred method of operation as far as Nixon and Kissinger were concerned.

The second secret link was established during a trip to Pakistan by Secretary Rogers in May 1969 where he met with Pakistan's President Yahya Khan and, in discussing the question of China, inquired about Pakistan helping the U.S. establish secret diplomatic contacts with the Chinese. Rogers asked Yahya Khan to

pass on to Peking the serious intentions of the United States in its approach to China. The matter of secret diplomacy was raised again by Nixon during his visit to Pakistan in August, where he spoke at length with Yahya Khan about American relations with China and asked him to convey his feelings to the Chinese at the highest level. It was during the same trip around the world that Nixon traveled to Bucharest and informed President Ceausescu that the U.S. was seriously interested in improving relations with the PRC. Nixon told Ceausescu he rejected the continued isolation of China, and he indicated that it was U.S. policy to have good relations with both the Soviet Union and China.

Nixon's trip to Romania was an open signal to the State Department of U.S. willingness to move towards a relaxation of tensions with Eastern Europe. That Nixon had singled out Ceausescu, who had displayed greater independence than other socialist leaders in his foreign policy was significant. Moreover, Romania was a country which kept open communications to China, so Nixon's visit provided a clue that the time might be right to move ahead on China.[39] The State Department did not, in fact, know that the President had raised the question of China with Ceausescu. Nixon's choice of Romania and Pakistan to serve as secret diplomatic channels dated back to the fact that Ceausescu and Agha Hilaly, who was later to be the Pakistani Ambassador to the U.S. had been very cordial to him when he traveled to these countries as a private citizen.

But the Romanian channel did not work fast enough for Nixon and Kissinger, and there was some question about keeping the messages secret from Moscow, so it was Pakistan which became the principal go-between between Washington and Peking. According to Kissinger, he set up a backchannel to Peking via Pakistan after he and Nixon returned to Washington that summer. He called on Agha Hilaly to establish a secure channel and stressed, as Nixon did earlier, that messages should be delivered to the Chinese only at the highest official levels. Hilaly personally delivered Chinese messages to Kissinger at the White House and relayed them back to Chinese diplomats via Pakistan's Foreign Secretary, Sultan Khan, who was the only other Pakistani official besides President Yahya who was aware of this system. The U.S.-Chinese exchange, which led up to the selection of Kissinger as the first high-level ranking American emissary to visit Peking for the purpose of discussing the Sino-American relationship with Chinese leaders, took place primarily within the Pakistani channel between November 1970 and May 1971. The additional fact that a message Kissinger sent back through Romania in January responding to a reference by Chou to a Presidential visit was oral and not typed, unlike the procedure Nixon and Kissinger had established in these exchanges previously where notes would be typed, "indicated a slight preference" for the Pakistani channel.[40]

Nixon and Kissinger were prepared to accept the Chinese invitation which was conveyed through President Yahya in November,

but they held back until they worked out with the Chinese an acceptable agenda which would not limit discussions to Taiwan. At the same time, they signalled to the Chinese that they did not want the Taiwan question to hold up high-level talks in Peking by mentioning that on the issue of the U.S. military presence in Taiwan, "the policy of the United States Government is to reduce its military presence in the region of East Asia and the Pacific as tensions in this area diminish."[41] There was some discussion between Nixon and Kissinger about who to send to Peking for these initial talks, which would take place in secrecy at the U.S.' request, but the choice of Kissinger seemed all but assured by virtue of his understanding of the policy and his familiarity with the President's thinking about a new relationship with the PRC. Privy to policy details and presidential priorities also made Kissinger the logical choice for handling the preliminary arrangements for Nixon's upcoming visit and, as Kissinger himself points out, as national security assistant he was "most subject" to the President's control among all the possible choices."[42] Rogers was not a suitable choice as far as either Nixon or Kissinger were concerned--Kissinger, for personal reasons; Nixon, for political reasons.

From Nixon's vantage point, sending Rogers to Peking would make it seem as if the State Department launched a new China policy while he, whose initiative it was to reevaluate American policy, would receive something less than the credit that was his

due. It was this concern which continued to make Nixon wary of Kissinger and made him consider keeping Kissinger's trip to China a secret until after his own presidential trip, thereby leaving Kissinger out of the public limelight. The meticulously planned and carefully maneuvered secret procedures to establish the conditions for face-to-face formal talks with the Chinese amounted to a personal triumph for Nixon, diminished only by Kissinger's own stunning successes in China which made him something of a celebrity with the press and the public in general. Nixon resented the increased attention Kissinger received from the public and his success with the press, but he needed Kissinger even more now as the increasing pressures of Vietnam and Watergate honed in on him, threatening to erode the personal and political gains he had made through his China initiative.

The Politics of Rapprochement

Nixon's journey to Peking was the ultimate presidential experience in terms of media coverage, public relations and symbolic movement. Elaborate preparations were made and fastidious attention paid to each detail to transform this event into a dramatic moment in the historical record. The Nixon visit made headlines around the world and it succeeded by using, in the words of one who covered these historic events, "prime time in China" to dramatize the spectacular nature of the trip.[43] There was a perceptible rise in Nixon's popularity after his visit--the Gallup poll showed a 56% approval rating, the highest in fourteen

months--with extensive television and press coverage of his "journey for peace." There was extensive media coverage of the Presidential party through negotiations, public events and sightseeing as the world watched Nixon turn around twenty-two years of hostility during "the week that changed the world."

It was the friendship between the People's Republic and the U.S. which filled the nightly news coming from China, and symbols of a new relationship centered on generalities. The President spoke expansively about common interests and a world of peace and justice to his Chinese hosts and to the world, but there was little indication of what was really going on and what the President actually did accomplish. The communique issued jointly at the end of Nixon's visit did not provide any more information about the rounds of talks taking place between the two countries. The President's visit was long on appearances and good will, but divulged virtually no news about the private meetings which remained cloaked in secrecy. The reporting relied, as the President intended it, on the historic meeting and the sense of the dramatic, but remained "inscrutable"[44] in substance and meaning. Under these conditions, there was little else for the media people to do but to resort to "China watching"[45] in interpreting the events of February 17-24.

The diplomatic arrangements in China during Nixon's trip indicated, in the order of priorities, three different levels of meetings to discuss the issues. There were daily sessions between

Nixon and Chou En-Lai where they reviewed the fundamental issues and made explicit the "de facto cooperation" which had developed since Kissinger's first trip to China.[46] Besides the principals, participants in these meetings included Kissinger and two members of his NSC staff who had traveled with him on his secret visit to Peking, Winston Lord and John Holdridge. Kissinger and Deputy Foreign Minister Chiao-Kuan-hua worked separately to implement the decisions reached between Nixon and Chou and work them into a communique to be issued before the end of Nixon's visit. Rogers worked at a secondary level with China's Foreign Minister, Chi Peng-Fei, on specific bilateral arrangements concerning trade, travel and tourism, and was otherwise excluded from the negotiating teams involved in the preparation and drafting of what came to be called the Shanghai Communique. Rogers' presence during the President's trip was clearly subordinate to that of Kissinger. He was neither proximate to the restricted sessions between Nixon and Chou nor had he been invited to the Mao-Nixon meeting which took place on the first day of Nixon's visit.

State was not represented at the meeting with Mao which, according to Kissinger, was at the express request of Nixon, who had told him prior to leaving for China that Rogers and Assistant Secretary Marshall Green were to be busy elsewhere at the time of the anticipated meeting. Kissinger was later contrite about not inviting Rogers to come, a decision which he says was "fundamentally unworthy" of the Secretary.[47] One of the lesser important

aspects of the presidential visit, but which did not go unnoticed, were the accommodation provided for the American delegation which called attention to the gulf between the White House and the State Department in Peking, as it existed in Washington. Rogers was physically separated from Nixon and Kissinger, who shared one of the guest residences within the Forbidden City, while the Secretary and his colleagues were housed in a second guest house, and during the President's stay in Hangchow, Rogers was given a floor in the hotel further away from the presidential entourage than was Kissinger who, in dealings with the Chinese, remained at Nixon's side throughout the visit.

The most troublesome issue in the China opening concerned Taiwan and it was the most difficult issue in the preparation of the Shanghai Communique. It was also the extreme sensitivity of the issue, itself, which compelled both sides to walk gently around it without appearing to capitulate to the other side's demands. As pivotal as the Taiwan issue was to the prospects for the normalization of relations, the paramount importance of the new relationship led both sides to show considerable flexibility, indicating a willingness to put the issue aside for the present, while neither side had to compromise its basic principles. The question of seating representations of the People's Republic in China in the United Nations was resolved before Nixon's trip with the decision by the White House not to hold back any longer the strong tide in the U.N. toward seating Peking.

It was clear that movement toward Peking must mean movement away from Taipei, but the terms of diplomatic arrangement were held off until some time following the Nixon-Chou meeting. What the Taiwan issue did force was an ordering of priorities in Sino-American relations which made possible, first, Kissinger's secret trip, and then Nixon's own visit and the presentation of the Shanghai Communique. The Chinese invitation to Nixon to visit Peking demonstrated the highest priority that China's leadership was giving to a new friendship with the U.S. The seating of China in the U.N. in the fall of 1971 in place of the Nationalists marked an important gain in its efforts to gain international acceptance. It was also important to clearing the way for the President's visit which followed four months later.

During the months of secret diplomacy, Nixon and Kissinger made clear through intermediary parties that Taiwan would not hold up a new relationship and that there would be some kind of formulation of a one-China policy by the U.S. When, in the fall of 1970, a majority in the U.N. General Assembly voted for the first time that the Peking government was entitled to the Chinese seat, the inevitability of China actually being seated was all but certain. The vote still fell short of the two-thirds majority it needed for approval, but the majority vote did not augur well for a formula for dual representation toward which the U.S.--specifically, the State Department--was working. It seemed increasingly likely that Peking would prevail and it was that reality, combined

with the gains made on the diplomatic front in American relations with Peking, which led Nixon to decide to delay a speech Rogers was planning to deliver to advance a dual-representation position publicly after Kissinger returned from his secret trip.

Because the talks with Chou had gone well and Chou did not indicate undue concern over the issue of membership in the U.N., Nixon authorized Rogers to propose a dual-representation formula. It was clear to Nixon and Kissinger that the concept of a two-China policy was unworkable, but they were prepared for the sake of diplomatic appearances to go ahead with the State Department's approach. Rogers' statement came on August 2, but by September 22, when the U.S. lost a crucial procedural vote which put the Albanian Resolution for seating Peking ahead of the U.S. resolution for dual representation, Nixon and Kissinger were prepared to accept the inevitable loss of Taiwan's seat by the next scheduled U.N. vote on Chinese representation later in the fall. Their reaction to the progression of events in the U.N. was not shared by the State Department, whose policy was intended to save Taipei's seat, although Chou had indicated to Kissinger he would not accept dual representation in any form. The vote came on October 25, during Kissinger's second trip to China, which caused some to blame the outcome of the vote on Kissinger's presence in Peking at the time.

The evidence points to a deliberate decision by the President and Kissinger to extend Kissinger's stay to coincide with the U.N.

debate and vote, thereby sending an unmistakable signal to the Chinese, to the State Department and to the rest of the U.N. membership of the "double-edged"[48] character of American policy. The decision also underscored the division between the White House and State Department and the command of the President and Kissinger on China policy, particularly because the issue of China representation had been under State Department purview. By the fall of 1971, the issue of the U.N. seat was practically over even before the final vote began. Kissinger and Chou had reached a tacit understanding on Chinese representation in October which included the agreement to hold off on the announcement of the date of Nixon's trip until after the General Assembly's vote.

Most of the controversial points of the text of the Shanghai Communique had been settled during Kissinger's visit in October, but the Taiwan issue was difficult and required more time to resolve the conflicting approaches. A formula had been devised during the October meeting which allowed each side to state its own position, but there was still a gulf between the two governments on points which involved American interests, a military withdrawal from Taiwan and the future of a peaceful settlement. Kissinger and Ch'iao Kua-hua were required to complete the final draft by the time of Nixon's departure for Hangchow on the morning of February 26. On the following day, the Presidential party would travel to Shanghai where the communique would be formally issued.

The revisions negotiated by Kissinger and Ch'iao produced a slightly modified version of the original draft of the communique, which acknowledged the concept of one China without supporting the claims of either Taipei or Peking. The final draft tied the final withdrawal of American forces in Taiwan to the premise of a peaceful settlement, a formula which satisfied the American side by promising, without actually establishing a date, a progressive withdrawal while the Chinese were comfortable with the affirmation of a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan question and reduction of tensions in the Far East by both sides.

In drafting the final communique, Kissinger essentially bypassed the State Department, much as he had in conducting secret diplomacy and using backchannel communications to communicate with the government in Peking. Kissinger would send Rogers part of the agreement as they were being worked on for his review and comments, but the first time Rogers saw the final communique draft in its entirety was on the plane traveling from Peking to Hangchow. Although the State Department was never formally included in negotiations on the terms of the communique, Kissinger did recruit an old China hand at the department, Albert Jenkins, to secretly work on a draft communique for the February summit. Jenkins, who was Director for Asian Communist Affairs, asked two other State Department Asia experts to assist him on this assignment, the details of which were not known to Rogers or to Assistant Secretary Green, whose particular province the com-

munique should have been. Green, himself was first shown the final draft by Rogers after their arrival in Hangchow.

Nixon and Kissinger, who had traveled to Hangchow with the satisfaction of knowing that the communique was worked out and ready for publication, were not prepared for the objections Rogers and Green raised to various portions of the final draft. As Kissinger saw them, the revisions they insisted on were minor changes and hardly worth the trouble they caused in this eleventh-hour crisis. Nixon's own reaction was more extreme as he fumed over what he saw as State Department interference in matters which were already resolved. But in Assistant Secretary Green's view, he said Rogers' objections were considerably more substantive, even crucial, and he singled out one particularly "glaring error" which he believed made the U.S. position untenable. What troubled Green was the failure to mention Taiwan in the section of the document stating that the U.S. continued to stand behind its security treaties with Korea, Japan, SEATO and ANZUS. The fact that Taiwan did not receive specific mention especially concerned Green because it was to be his job after the summit to visit the allies and brief them on the communique, and he saw that the omission would be brought up wherever he went.

Green recalls the difficulty and frustration he experienced in trying to get the President to rectify the situation. At one point, Green was passing Kissinger in the airport on the way to Shanghai from Hangchow when Kissinger asked him why he was trying

to undermine the President's mission by raising all these minor points. When Green became agitated, Kissinger told him to calm down and said they would work it out. What Kissinger did was get the Chinese to agree to remove the paragraph about alliances and he would agree to say nothing about the U.S. relationship with the Republic of China at the press briefing planned for the Nixon-Chou communique in Shanghai before the President's departure from China. Instead, the President's annual foreign policy report would enunciate the U.S. commitment to Taiwan and emphasize that it would remain unchanged. These modifications were less the State Department's achievement of altering parts of the final agreement than they were exemplary of the total control Kissinger had over the negotiating process and completion of the draft, all at the expense of the department's standing, prestige and expertise in these matters.

It mattered little to the President and Kissinger, or to the Chinese, for that matter, that the Secretary of State was perfunctorily excluded from the most sensitive and critical aspects of the U.S.-Chinese talks. Kissinger was the key to negotiating a workable agreement, and he was so regarded by the Chinese. His role in the China opening would not have been possible without Nixon's support and the President's initiative in turning around Sino-American relations, but neither would Nixon have been as greatly successful as he was without the assistance and counsel of his security adviser.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1]*Retreat From Empire: The First Nixon Administration* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), Robert E. Osgood, "Introduction: The Nixon Doctrine and Strategy," p. 4.

[2]Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1979), p. 45.

[3]Seymour M. Hersh, *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House* (New York: Summit Books, 1983), p. 25.

[4]Kissinger, op. cit., p. 47.

[5]Ibid., p. 11.

[6]Richard Nixon, *RN* (New York: Grosset and Dunlop), p. 339.

[7]Barry Rubin, *Secrets of State: The State Department and the Struggle Over U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 164.

[8]Ibid., p. 140.

[9]Kissinger, op. cit., p. 48.

[10]Marvin Kalb and Bernard Kalb, *Kissinger* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974), p. 91.

[11]John G. Stoessinger, *Henry Kissinger: The Anguish of Power* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1976), pp. 45-46.

[12]Richard A. Falk, *What's Wrong with Henry Kissinger's Foreign Policy*, Policy Memorandum No. 39, Center for International Studies, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Studies (Princeton University, July 1974), p. 28.

[13]Tad Szulc, *The Illusion of Peace: Foreign Policy in the Nixon Years* (New York: The Viking Press, 1978), p. 529.

[14]*U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changing World*, ed., Alan M. Jones, Jr. (New York: David McKay Company, Inc., 1973), Alan M. Jones, Jr., "Nixon and the World," p. 29.

[15]Richard Nixon, "Asia After Viet Nam," *Foreign Affairs* (October 1967), p. 121.

[16]Kissinger, op. cit., p. 164.

[17]Bruce Mazlish, *Kissinger: The European Mind in American Policy* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976), p. 246.

[18]Kissinger, op. cit., p.

[19]Kalb and Kalb, op. cit., p. 227.

[20]Kissinger, op. cit., p. 164.

[21]Hersh, op. cit., p. 351.

[22]Cited in Hersh, op. cit.; Stanley Karnow, *Mao and China* (Viking, 1972), p. 493.

[23]Hersh. op. cit., p. 352.

[24]Nixon, op. cit., *RN*, p. 252.

[25]Interview with Marshall Green, December 17, 1985, Washington, D.C.

[26]Ibid.

[27]*U.S. Department of State Bulletin* (March 20, 1972), p. 340.

[28]Roger Morris, *Uncertain Greatness: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), p. 240.

[29]*U.S Department of State Bulletin* (February 17, 1969), p. 141.

[30]*U.S. Department of State Bulletin* (April 28, 1968), p. 361.

[31]Kissinger, op. cit., p. 184.

[32]Szulc, op. cit., p. 116.

[33]Interview with Marshall Green, op. cit.

[34]Kissinger, op. cit., p. 169.

[35]Szulc, op. cit., p. 114.

[36]*Retreat From Empire*, op. cit.; Francis E. Rourke, "The Domestic Scene: The President Ascendent," pp. 85-86.

[37]Morris, op. cit., p. 66.

[39]I. M. Destler, Leslie H. Gelb, and Anthony Lake, *Our Own Worst Enemy: the Unmaking of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985), p. 252.

[39]Interview with Elliot Richardson, February 12, 1986, Washington, D.C.

[40]Kissinger, op. cit., p. 704.

[41]Ibid., p. 702.

[42]Ibid., p. 717.

[43]John Chancellor, "Who Produced the China Show?," *Foreign Policy* (Summer 1972), p. 88.

[44]Ibid., p. 95.

[45]Stanley Karnow, "Playing Second Fiddle to the Tube," *Foreign Policy* (Summer 1972), pp. 96-97.

[46]Kissinger, op. cit., p. 1070.

[47]Ibid., p. 1057.

[48]Kalb and Kalb, op. cit., p. 254.

CHAPTER IV

CARTER HELD HOSTAGE: THE IRANIAN CRISIS

The fourteen-month ordeal of the American hostages in Iran was the final undoing of the Carter Presidency. The humiliating circumstances in the capture of the fifty-four Americans on November 4, 1979 and continuing frustration in efforts to negotiate their release shook public confidence in the administration, and Carter believes that it cost him the election. Following many months of falsely raised hopes and expectations, combined with the administration's efforts on behalf of "near-breakthroughs" and "missed opportunities," the nation decided it had endured long enough. The specter of the President struggling to wrest control of the situation from the Iranians struck a raw nerve in the American psyche.

Iran was in turmoil, still reeling from the economic and political losses sustained as a result of the revolution. Despite the political instability caused by rifts between rival political factions, the Iranians managed to remain in control over the protracted negotiations which ultimately led to the release of the hostages. The Iranians' success in keeping the United States on the defensive left Carter in an exposed position. Unable to shift the burden for breaking the stalemate onto the Iranians, Carter allowed both himself and his administration to appear vulnerable to the threats and bombastic rhetoric coming from Tehran. The cumulative effect of the humiliation endured at the hands of the

Iranians was a redoubling of the doubts and suspicions concerning the President's natural abilities to take command of our foreign policy and, above all, assure the safe return of the hostages.

The hostage crisis loomed larger than any other foreign or domestic issue during Jimmy Carter's last year in office. The constant reminders of the fate of the hostages weighed heavily on the nation's conscience as a siege mentality took hold of the administration. We had become, to quote Pierre Salinger, "a nation held hostage."[1]

ORIGINS OF THE CRISIS

The crisis began in the fall of 1979, when relations between the U.S. and Iran had deteriorated to perhaps their lowest point since the start of the Iranian revolution one year earlier. On October 21, 1979, President Carter made the final and, as it turned out, fateful decision to allow the Shah to come to the United States for medical treatment. Two weeks later, the U.S. embassy compound in Tehran was stormed by hundreds of Iranian rebels loyal to the Ayatollah Khomeini, and the Americans were taken hostage. The debate over admitting the Shah exposed the real dilemmas the administration had to face as far as the future of its relations with Tehran was concerned. These dilemmas became evident by spring 1978, by which time the undercurrent of political activity against the Shah, long discernible among the Sh'ia Moslems in the cities of Qom and Tabriz, was rapidly approaching a feverish pitch in its campaign against the abuses

and excesses of the Pahlavis. The ambivalence in Carter's policy during the eighteen months which followed hastened and further complicated the deteriorating state of affairs between the U.S. and Iran. Following the November attack on the U.S. embassy, the hostages became the focal point of the crisis, although the full significance of the crisis reached far beyond their fate.

U.S. Delayed Response

The Carter administration was slow to recognize the imminent crisis in Iran until the fall of 1978, by which time the White House was receiving messages from its ambassador in Tehran indicating that the Shah's situation had become desperate. Despite the growing dissension within the political opposition, there were widespread demonstrations and acts of violence against the Shah, which led to a crumbling of his authority. Carter did not make an early response to these developments in Iran. U.S. intelligence, which reported no cause for serious concern during the summer and was predicting political continuity in Iran as late as the fall of 1978, gave a false sense of security to the President and his senior policy advisers who wanted to believe that the situation in Iran was not as serious as was being reported. In two separate meetings with the Shah during 1977, Carter had pledged to continue in the tradition of friendship and cooperation with Iran. His administration was committed to ensuring stability in Iran, a nation Carter once called "an island of stability in one of the more troubled areas of the world."[2]

Carter was aware of the political unrest among the religious leadership, the students and the growing middle class when he met the Shah for the first time in Washington in November 1977, and spoke to him about the potential problems he faced with the opposition. He suggested to the Shah that the protection of the rights of the members of dissident groups might help alleviate the problems, but did not press the issue when it was evident the Shah believed his policies were justified. Prior to his trip to Washington, the Shah, somewhat nervously, had anticipated difficulties with the new administration because of the emphasis it placed on human rights in its foreign relations. Carter's concern about human rights practices in Iran, however, did not compromise the long-standing U.S. commitment to the Shah. Nor did he end the collaboration between the CIA and SAVAK on intelligence-gathering which involved American security interests in the region, despite SAVAK's record of human rights abuse.

U.S. Stake in Iran

The administration was fully aware of the pivotal role Iran, under the Shah, played in the region and the stake the U.S. had in maintaining political stability in Iran. The political volatility in Iran threatened to change the balance of power in the region by increasing the vulnerability of the oilfields, creating conditions which invite Communist infiltration and the installation of a government antithetical to Western interests. This was the scenario envisaged by the administration during the fall and

winter of 1978 and into the early months of 1979.

It remained basically unchanged throughout the hostage crisis, although the administration went to considerable lengths to mask these deeper fears concerning the future of Iran and of American interests in the Gulf region in the greater interest of breaking the impasse in negotiations. In fact, it was the hostage issue which caused the administration to confront the realities of the revolution for the first time since the opposition openly challenged the Shah in early 1978. The administration was no more willing to accept the revolution than it had been a few months earlier, but now it had to find some way of working with the new leadership, albeit through intermediaries, to secure first the safety, and then the release of the hostages. But by that time the administration had missed any opportunity it might have had earlier to contact the political opposition. Now it was too late for that. The Iranians had nothing to gain by talking to the Americans. They were holding in their hands the ultimate trump card--fifty-four Americans held captive in their own embassy in Tehran.

Differences Over President's Approach

Critics of the administration's policies during the revolution have faulted Carter for not engaging responsible political leaders in the government, in the opposition and in the military in direct talks concerning the political future of Iran. The administration's decision to avoid such contacts, particularly

with exiled opposition leaders in Paris, all but precluded the possibility of opening a dialogue with the revolutionary government which eventually replaced the faltering provisional "leadership" of Shaphour Bakhtiar. The issue of talking with the opposition was one of several key controversies within the administration concerning the Iranian situation.

Controversy over this matter, and over several other issues, quickly shaped up as a contest between the White House and the State Department over the direction of the President's policy toward Iran. This contest was more evident during the demise of the Shah's regime, his eventual departure from Iran and the brief tenure of the Bakhtiar government than it was during the hostage crisis, when the predominant concern was the release of the captive Americans. The tensions between the White House and State Department were also partially eased during the hostage situation by a greater effort by Carter to assume a leadership role during the crisis, an aspect of his Presidency which was noticeably absent during the revolution in Iran when important decisions concerning the future of U.S.-Iranian relations needed to be made. These decisions were never made, and the absence of Presidential leadership under these circumstances, combined with the internal policy struggles within the United States, left the administration quite helpless as it watched the Shah meet his ignominious end.

A DIPLOMACY AT CROSS-PURPOSES

Brzezinski's " Embassy"

During this period of political turmoil in Iran, Carter's regard for the Shah's predicament was, at best, unclear. Ambassador Sullivan, in recounting his experiences in Iran, describes the cross-signals he was receiving from Washington which made it increasingly difficult for him to discern the official attitude of the administration towards developments in Iran. It was unclear where his instructions were coming from and, indeed, what those instructions were. He encountered situations in Iran where at times he was unable to assure or advise the Shah of the U.S. position, not knowing himself the intentions of the administration. It also did not take very long before Sullivan concluded that the administration was bypassing him in its efforts to convey its messages to the Shah. Based on his own observations, his reading of the dispatches sent to him and the cool reception his own communications to Washington received, as well as conversations with various Iranian and American envoys, Sullivan deduced that Zbigniew Brzezinski, the President's National Security Adviser, was in charge of American policy toward Iran, and that he was trying very hard to circumvent the official channels of communication. Early indications of Brzezniski's influence over Iranian policy emerged in a conversation Sullivan had with Ardeshir Zahedi, Iran's ambassador to the U.S., following his return from Washington in the early fall of 1978.

Zahedi described how Brzezinski, having summoned him to the White House, had asked him to urge the Shah to take stronger action to defend his regime, while President Carter advised Zahedi, despite his protestations that he could not leave his post in Washington, that his primary duty at this time was to return to Tehran and "stiffen the Shah's spine."[3] Zahedi also reported to Sullivan that the U.S. government seemed to encourage him to speak to Brzezinski on a regular basis, thereby circumventing further the normal channels of communication with Ambassador Sullivan. Brzezinski, in effect, had established his own "embassy" in Washington in the person of Zahedi.[4] It is significant in this connection that the Shah warned Sullivan to advise his superiors in Washington not to pay attention to Zahedi since he did not understand the current situation in Iran.[5] The Shah's warning further underscored Sullivan's own impression that the policymakers in Washington were confused over how to assess and respond to events in Iran, and that Brzezinski was increasingly in control.

The increasing numbers of visitors from the United States to Iran in either official or quasi-official capacities for the purpose of conveying messages to the Shah gave Sullivan additional reason to believe he was being deliberately preempted in his duties. These emissaries assured the Shah of continued U.S. support and encouraged him to take more forceful measures to protect his interests. They were briefed by Brzezinski, whose idea it was to organize these diplomatic "missions." After

Senator Robert Byrd returned from a visit with the Shah, he gave Brzezinski a report which suggested that the Shah was inclined to take action to defend himself but was being inhibited by the confusing signals he was receiving from the State Department and the U.S. embassy. When Sullivan told Brzezinski of his reservations about these missions, he was advised to mind his own business.

By-Passing the State Department

Not only did Brzezinski purposefully bypass Sullivan, who, he decided, was in impediment to U.S. interests in Iran, but Secretary of State Vance was unaware that Brzezinski had carried on back-channel communications without the knowledge of anyone in the State Department. Vance learned of Brzezinski's own direct channels to Tehran through Zahedi in December from George Ball, who was conducting his own review of the situation in Iran at the invitation of the administration. Carter, having been present at one of Brzezinski's meetings with Zahedi, obviously knew that Brzezinski had met and spoken with the Iranian Ambassador. Did he realize, however, that Brzezinski not only continued to talk with Zahedi, but that he did so fully intending to cut Sullivan off from his private line of communications between the White House and Tehran? Brzezinski was confronted by Vance in Carter's presence but, when asked by the President, denied that he was communicating directly with the Iranians. After Carter asked to see copies of all communications between the White House and Tehran,

Vance reported that Brzezinski's private communications stopped.

Brzezinski's efforts to influence the course of administration policy by circumventing the normal channels of communication not only effectively removed the State Department and the American Ambassador from this aspect of White House communications with the Shah but, more critical to the success or failure of that policy, confused the Iranian leadership over the future direction of American policy. The Iranians were receiving conflicting advice from the embassy, the State Department and the White House which reflected differing interpretations of the events transpiring in Iran as well as internal disagreements over what to do about them.

This episode, which left Vance upset and Sullivan uncertain about his standing in the Washington community, was instructive of the divisions within the bureaucracy. These issues divided policy officials at the White House, the State Department, the Department of Defense and the CIA and, with the President undecided over what to do, pulled him in basically two different directions. The debate over Iranian policy took into consideration U.S. priorities in Iran and in the Persian Gulf oil region, ways to promote political stability in Iran, and the U.S. attitude towards the Shah, whose authority was rapidly crumbling under the pressure from the opposition. The essence of the policy disagreements had to do with understanding the political realities in Iran. Because the risks were so great, the stakes were high and a great deal was left hanging in the balance, dependent upon the ultimate resolu-

tion of the turmoil in Iran. The debate over Iran produced a rift between the White House and State Department which, with no success in mediating the differences between Brzezinski and Vance, left the United States with virtually no policy on Iran.

In retrospect, it has been widely acknowledged that the United States was too slow to recognize the signs of trouble brewing in Iran. Some of the responsibility for failing to stay closely attuned to developments in Iran lies with the short-sightedness in intelligence reporting, in which summaries from the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the State Department lacked insight into the events which they were reporting to the White House. The American Embassy in Tehran was also slow to understand the significance of developments and Ambassador Sullivan, who only later realized the fate awaiting the Shah, continued to send back to Washington positive reports about the Shah's strength. In addition, many of the Middle East specialists were preoccupied with the Camp David negotiations, while Brzezinski worked on the task of normalizing relations with Peking, and Vance labored over the SALT II negotiations as well as the Camp David agreements. The strong resistance within the bureaucracy to the idea that the Shah might be losing his grip on power existed not only during the pre-revolutionary period in Iran, but prevailed as well within some levels of the government even after the dam broke and the U.S. had to act quickly to cope with the new situation.

"THE BRZEZINSKI FACTOR"

Resistance to the Shah's abdication of the throne was heard primarily from Brzezinski, who predicated this thinking on protecting what he perceived as the central interest of the United States in Iran, making sure Iran would continue to safeguard U.S. and Western interests in the oil-rich region.[6] Brzezinski firmly thought that the United States should act decisively to bolster the Shah's position and not concede anything to the opposition forces in Iran. As the situation went from bad to worse, he advocated a military solution as the only way to avoid a complete collapse of the regime. A military solution to subdue the opposition was not, however, what officials at the State Department had in mind. Their interpretation of the events in the early fall was that the Shah's position had become considerably more vulnerable to the opposition, which was gaining sufficient strength and momentum to eventually force the Shah to relinquish his autocratic control.

The highly volatile political situation required some kind of alternate government to the traditional authority of the Shah. By mid-November, most advisers at the State Department, following the lead of Ambassador Sullivan, advocated some kind of accommodation with the opposition for the purpose of forming a coalition government. Brzezinski had little regard for these views and thought State was "soft" on a military solution to the crisis.[7] His perception of the unwillingness of State to send a clear and unam-

biguous signal of support to the Shah could be interpreted as the Department giving up on the Shah. Brzezinski blamed this situation on some of "the lower echelons at State"--he singles out Henry Precht, the head of the Iran Desk--whose dislike of the Shah made them anxious to strip him of power altogether.[8] The differences between the handling of this aspect of the Iranian situation and the cooperative spirit which had prevailed at the Camp David negotiations--although some of the same people were involved in both--was noted by Vance who, in his memoirs, acknowledged an estrangement between the White House and some of his advisers.[9]

The conspicuous role of the National Security Adviser in Iranian policy was evident in what one senior participant has called "the Brzezinski factor."[10] Brzezinski has since made his views very clear on the Iranian crisis, the errors made in U.S. policy towards Iran and the actions which, if taken, might well have effected a different outcome, one more sympathetic to U.S. interests. Nor does he conceal his disdain for the short-sightedness of the State Department and the failings in our political intelligence during this period. His specific complaints about State concern the absence of long-range discussions on Iran, the preoccupation among officials at the Department with the evacuation of Americans from Iran and the lack of sufficient information on opposition forces.[11] He also thought that Vance, Deputy Secretary Warren Christopher and Under Secretary David Newsom were

more interested in the advancement of democratic forces in Iran than in protecting the U.S. geopolitical interests in the Gulf region.[12] Doubtful of the Department's willingness to stand behind the Shah in early November to reassure him of the administration's unequivocal support and encourage more forceful action, Brzezinski was anxious to change this thinking in the government.

The President's unsettled attitude towards developments in Iran gave Brzezinski the opportunity he wanted to take charge and make certain that control over the Iranian crisis remained in the White House. His private conversation with Ambassador Zahedi was a thinly vieled effort to assure White House influence over developments, as were his arrangements for the "diplomatic missions" to the Shah already described. Brzezinski also used the NSC Special Coordination Committee (SCC) which, in addition to arms control and intelligence policy issues, was responsible for crisis management, to coordinate U.S. policy. As chairman of the SCC, Brzezinski had positioned himself to dominate the policy process, much to the displeasure of Vance and his colleagues at State. The SCC would continue to play an important role during the hostage situation, meeting daily for several weeks late in 1979 and several times a week thereafter. Finally, Brzezinski also appealed directly to the President and informed him of shortcomings in the government in efforts to properly assess Iranian developments. It was Brzezinski's intention to use his leverage at the White House to compensate for those weaknesses in

American policy.

Adjustment of NSC Job

Brzezinski credits Carter's intent to be an active President and take personal command of the foreign policymaking process for enhancing his role as national security adviser.[13] His public remarks on the proper role of the national security adviser after leaving Washington resembled more closely his real conception of that role instead of the more modest assessment he gave upon his appointment to the position and during the early days of the Carter administration. Even before he officially began, Brzezinski said his job would be to "facilitate" Presidential decisions and coordinate the national security apparatus, and that he recognized that the Secretary of State would be the President's principal adviser on foreign affairs. With the inevitable comparisons he faced with Henry Kissinger, his predecessor in the Nixon White House, Brzezinski was careful to dispel any notions that he would seek to dominate the policy process. More recently, he has spoken publicly about the desirability of an activist President working with the national security adviser to formulate foreign policy, in the process replacing the more traditional role of the State Department.

In an interview with *The Washington Quarterly* in late 1982, Brzezinski discussed his views: "Under ideal circumstances I think that the system would work best if ... an actively involved President of the Nixon, Carter, Kennedy type provided both

strategic and tactical direction ... this then meant that the practical coordination and the definition of the strategic direction would originate from his assistant for national security affairs, who would then tightly coordinate and control the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of Joint Chiefs, and the Director of Central Intelligence as a team, with them knowing that he was doing so on the president's behalf."[14] In Brzezinski's estimation, primacy over foreign policy clearly belonged in the NSC. Consistent with this thinking, Brzezinski coveted the role of becoming the principal adviser to the President on foreign policy.

Carter's interest in affirming White House control over foreign policy supported an active policy role for his national security adviser, and coincided with Brzezinski's own ambitions. The organization of the NSC also reflected Carter's desire for a simple system which would be responsive to his personal control. Carter rejected Brzezinski's first NSC plan which was loosely patterned after the Kissinger model in favor of a simplified structure where the committees were reduced to two sets: (1) the Policy Review Committee (PRC), policy committees chaired by Cabinet Secretaries; and (2) the Special Coordination Committee (SCC), interagency coordinating committees, to be chaired by Brzezinski. Carter's regard for the national security adviser's role was also made evident by his decision to make the assistant into a cabinet member for the first time. He had a high regard

for the innovative thinking and spirited discussion among Brzezinski's competent staff of policy professionals and academic advisers.

Brzezinski understood that his position in the administration depended entirely on his relationship with the President. He knew the importance of having, and letting others know that he had the support and confidence of the President. To help secure his position in the White House, Brzezinski sought to maximize his access to the President and his participation in foreign policy issues. He did so by taking the following steps: (1) Brzezinski insisted on delivering the President's daily intelligence briefing himself every morning; (2) he introduced a weekly NSC report which was sent to the President for his information and comments; (3) he established the SCC under his chairmanship, which gave him considerable control over policy matters; and (4) he introduced new procedures at the NSC which would help improve his staff's coordination of the State and Defense Departments. The President's Daily Brief and the weekly NSC report provided Brzezinski with a totally personal and private means of influencing the President's thinking on a host of issues related to the organization, formulation and implementation of American foreign policy.

In addition, the Daily Brief gave Brzezinski the distinction of having the first scheduled appointment with the President each day. In the course of his briefing, Brzezinski would not only provide the President with intelligence information, but alert him

as well to his daily schedule of meetings and appointments, matters which he thought required his immediate attention and future problems concerning our national security. Incorporating news on a wide range of developments affecting foreign policy into the intelligence briefings on a regular basis gave Brzezinski a well-timed opportunity to influence the President's decisions. The potential he had in this capacity for effecting change in Carter's agenda gave him unequaled influence over the President. And his daily visits to the Oval Office gave Brzezinski the high visibility he wanted to assure his standing with Carter.

The streamlined committee structure in the Carter NSC conformed with Carter's desire for simplicity, his preference for a strong adviser in the White House to coordinate interagency matters and for department secretaries to actively lead and develop sound departmental policies. According to this scheme, it was entirely appropriate that Brzezinski chair the Special Coordination Committee and the appropriate department secretary chair the Policy Review Committee, which dealt with foreign policy, defense and international economic issues. The functional distribution of responsibility between the PRC and SCC, however, allowed Brzezinski to control the key levers under the new system, namely SALT, which gave him major input into U.S.-Soviet relations, and crisis management.[15]

Finally, Brzezinski instituted new procedures which tightened NSC supervision over national security policymaking. First, all

major cables with policy implications had to be cleared with the appropriate NSC staff members before being sent out. Because major policy decisions are sometimes made by cables, the NSC held considerable leverage over the making and implementation of policy. Second, Brzezinski tightly controlled the CIA Director's access to the President, and all CIA reporting to the President had to go through Brzezinski. This maneuvering effectively prevented Stansfield Turner from exerting any influence over the President by delegating to himself the responsibility for carrying the daily intelligence briefing to Carter. Third, Brzezinski's deputy, David Aaron, chaired the mini-SCCs, assistant secretary-level meetings chaired by an NSC official, and also participated in PRC meetings to ensure correct implementation of the President's instructions. Brzezinski also supervised Presidential speeches on foreign policy and the Council was made responsible for clearing foreign travel of Cabinet members. These oversight measures allowed Brzezinski to influence the substance as well as application of the President's foreign policy. They also allowed him to consolidate control over foreign policy in the White House, which critics charge was at considerable cost to the broader goals of national security policy.

Uneasy Coexistence With Vance

The real casualty of Brzezinski's practices was Cyrus Vance. Vance came to Washington pleased with Carter's expression of "team spirit" among his advisers but, where Vance was a team player,

Brzezinski was not. The "collegial" style of policymaking at the NSC and the "corporate" approach to decisionmaking among the President's Cabinet and White House staff, which were going to distinguish the Carter Presidency, were noticeably absent between Brzezinski and Vance. Vance's major complaint concerned Brzezinski's increasingly visible public role as policy spokesman, a role which Vance made clear to Carter from the beginning belonged to him. He was primarily concerned that Brzezinski's public statements, which now differed more frequently from his own, were creating serious impediments to the President's policies. He objected to Brzezinski's press interviews and anonymous "backgrounders" to journalists although he, personally, shunned all this publicity. Nor was he any more inclined to "educate" the American public about foreign policy, a task Carter hoped Vance would accept as Secretary of State. Carter defended Brzezinski's public statements and assured Vance that in almost all cases Brzezinski spoke with his approval and in agreement with his own policies.[16] He saw that Brzezinski was both willing to do what Vance was not and, more important, able to do what the Secretary could not do with equal ease and proficiency. He therefore, neither discouraged nor dissuaded Brzezinski from stepping into the role of Presidential policy spokesman. Carter, not particularly responsive to Vance's protests, concluded that, "The underlying State Department objection was that Brzezinski had spoken at all."[17]

Brzezinski managed to keep a relatively low profile during Carter's first year, taking a backstage role to Vance, who was more visible as the President's personal envoy and negotiator. During these early months, Carter tried to keep the roles played by Brzezinski and Vance distinct and separate. Brzezinski's role was more conceptual, managing day-to-day national security affairs for the President and directing policy studies, as compared to Vance's more operational role as the President's principal foreign policy adviser. By his own account, however, Carter turned to Brzezinski early in his administration for creativity and initiative in policy matters, both of which he found to be lacking within the bureaucratic ranks at the State Department.[18] Carter admired Brzezinski's intellect, evident from the early days of their association at the Trilateral Commission, and regarded him as a first-rate thinker. He was somewhat less impressed with the caution and restraint typical of State's practices, which were mirrored in Vance's own attitude and demeanor.

Unlike Brzezinski, who was receptive to Carter's encouragement of innovative ideas, Vance preferred a more steady course, prepared to introduce change, but only after careful deliberation. To Brzezinski's way of thinking, this "lawyerly" approach to the policy process created a tendency in Vance and in his deputy, Warren Christopher, to "litigate issues endlessly."[19] They were likely, as a result, to become mired down in the details and complexities of specific issues without reaching a satisfactory

resolution. Brzezinski also thought that by allowing Vance to make his own appointments Carter further undercut the effectiveness of State's contribution to foreign policy. Not only did Brzezinski not expect the President to receive the kind of realistic and hard-nosed advice he needed to balance his own idealism, but he did not think Carter had the kind of effective personal and political control over the high-ranking officials that he might have had had the appointments been his own choice.[20]

Not content to remain as manager of the policy process, Brzezinski became a partisan advocate of policy by Carter's second year in the White House. Brzezinski, after all, had been Jimmy Carter's most influential adviser on foreign policy throughout the campaign and transition period. He was largely responsible for shaping Carter's views on world affairs and for providing the framework for U.S. foreign policy in the new administration. Carter's receptiveness to Brzezinski's thinking gave him the opportunity he sought to influence and shape foreign policy; in essence, set the tone of the administration in its foreign relations. As far as he was concerned, the objective was to centralize control over foreign policy in the White House, where it would rest in the hands of the President and his national security adviser. This kind of thinking and conduct assured the potential for conflict, which was never far from the surface in Brzezinski's and Vance's case. By the second half of the Carter presidency, the strain and tension in NSC-State relations thwarted

the prospects for progress in foreign policy. This state of policy affairs was more clearly demonstrated in the U.S. response to the demise of the Shah's Iran and the ensuing crisis in U.S.-Iranian relations.

DISSENTING VOICES IN FOREIGN POLICY

Debate over the U.S. response continued throughout the Iranian revolution and its chaotic aftermath without any satisfactory resolution. There were basically two competing approaches to the Iranian situation among the policy experts in the administration--the "hang tough" approach, upheld by Brzezinski and James Schlesinger, which wanted to assure the U.S. advantage over the Soviet Union,[21] and a moderated diplomatic approach, favored by Secretary Vance, his deputy, Warren Christopher and the Undersecretary, David Newsom. In their view, it was overly simplistic to weigh our interests in Iran solely in terms of the U.S.-Soviet rivalry. Vance, in sharp contrast to Brzezinski, did not think the U.S. could do very much to determine the outcome of the crisis. Unlike the prevailing thinking in the White House, he saw the crisis as essentially a social and religious problem. Nonetheless, Vance argued for a restrained but steady approach in Iran to encourage negotiations between all the contending parties in the hope of promoting a more democratic governing body. These diverging "schools" of policy pit the NSC against the State Department in what became an irreconcilable breach in the Vance-Brzezinski stewardship of foreign affairs.

These conflicting viewpoints remained very much in evidence throughout the revolutionary and post-revolutionary periods in Iran. During this time, the highly volatile political situation in Iran presented the administration with critical choices which would have broad and lasting repercussions for U.S. interests in the region. There were six key issues which engaged the administration in an endless debate over the nature of our central interest in Iran: (1) the use or non-use of military power to force the hand of the Shah over his opposition; (2) the question of entering into negotiations with the opposition in Iran in order to reach a compromise solution; (3) what to do after the Shah left Iran--how to define the role of the military in governing the country; (4) as the situation grew desperate, and Khomeini's return was imminent, questions about initiating contact with Iranian political exiles, notably Khomeini, himself; (5) what to do after Khomeini's arrival in Iran; and (6) the debate over admitting the Shah to the United States, which was the last major policy dispute concerning the Shah and Iran prior to the taking of the American hostages. Differences between Vance and Brzezinski persisted through each one of these issues, creating an untenable situation for the President who remained uncertain about his priorities in these matters.

White House vs. State Department: A Military Solution

Where Carter was indecisive, wavering when presented with

alternative choices, Brzezinski was resolute and unyielding in his beliefs. From the very beginning, Brzezinski placed a much stronger emphasis than Carter on the use of power to protect the national interest. Vance, like Carter, preferred to explore alternative measures, and was far more reserved about the use of power in foreign policy. Brzezinski did not agree, and encouraged the Shah to use the military to put down the opposition. In the early fall 1978, he called the Shah to tell him to do what he felt he must to restore his authority, telling him, in effect, to use any methods he needed to save himself. He assured the Shah he had the complete support of the President.[22] Brzezinski was convinced that the political survival of the Shah was of greatest importance, and was prepared to justify stronger measures to protect his regime. He, in essence, came to see a military solution in Iran as the only way to avoid a complete collapse of the government.

But the State Department did not agree and, in a paper prepared for an urgent meeting of the Special Coordination Committee called for November 2 to decide on the U.S. response to the Shah's worsening situation, recommended a series of concessions by the Shah to mollify his opposition. Some of Vance's assistants at State made a strong case against U.S. support for a military government, arguing that the Iranian military had been discredited by recent events in Iran and had shown no capacity to govern. Vance was less concerned than Brzezinski that the U.S. be

perceived as weak if the Shah abdicated his throne and was in favor of distancing the U.S. from the Shah. Ambassador Sullivan, reporting from Iran, was equally opposed to a military solution. Brzezinski, as a result, concluded that the State Department had given up on the Shah and was prepared to accept the consequences of a coalition government which, as far as he was concerned, would be a fatal error in U.S. policy. When the Shah finally did announce on November 6 that a military government would be installed, Brzezinski admitted to feeling "greatly relieved."[23]

The military government the Shah installed under General Azhari acted as a caretaker government, intended to keep a potentially explosive situation under control until a better solution could be found. But General Azhari had neither the credibility nor the authority to help the Shah regain his own authority. The Shah, in fact, was now more vulnerable than ever, still searching for a practicable solution. The debate continued in Washington over the choices facing the Shah and the options available to the President, deepening the rift between the White House and State Department, which became wider as the crisis grew more desperate. One of Brzezinski's chief concerns during these final months was any suggestion by American officials that the U.S. did not expect the Shah to survive. He was adamant about assuring the Shah that the U.S. remained steadfast in its support, and he continued to press for measures which would help the Shah save Iran, favoring the military option. Brzezinski grew more critical of State's

handling of the rapidly disintegrating situation fearing the wrong messages were being conveyed to the Shah. He felt those fears were confirmed in a cable Sullivan sent to Washington on November 9, recommending future U.S. policy in Iran. Entitled, "Thinking the unthinkable," Sullivan speculated as to what might happen if the Shah were to leave Iran.

In an effort to avert a bloody aftermath between the warring factions, he suggested that the U.S. try for an accommodation between the military and religious groups, leaving the decision on the nature of the successor governing body up to their joint leadership. Sullivan reports he never received an answer to this cable. Brzezinski was troubled that Vance and his assistants were misleading the Shah and objected to the short-sightedness of the Department's analysis of developments in Iran. As a result he sharpened his efforts to remain in control of Iranian policy. Recognizing that the Shah's days were numbered, Brzezinski now argued in favor of the military option, with or without the Shah, as the best chance for avoiding a total and bloody collapse of the country.

The Shah's decision to opt for a military government in the late fall was far from settling the debate over whether to use the military to save Iran. The debate continued throughout the later periods of the crisis and became more difficult as fewer options remained available. Time was rapidly closing in on the Shah who, by the end of December, had lost virtually the last vestiges of

power. Seeking to avert the most dire consequences that further inaction would cause, the Shah asked Shaphour Bakhtiar, a leader of the National Front, to establish a new civilian government to replace General Azhari. In the transition to a new Iran without the Shah, Vance believed that a civilian government which had the support of the military had the only potential under the circumstances to guide the country toward a new regime. Vance concurred with Brzezinski on the importance of preserving the cohesion and integrity of the armed forces but was steadfastly opposed to the iron fist option.

But Brzezinski was no more pleased with the prospect of a Bakhtiar government. He remained convinced that the Shah, despite his decision to form a civilian government, was still willing to consider a military solution as a last resort. His own insistence on the feasibility of a military solution was partly based on the procrastination of the Shah and the military. Aware that he would soon have to leave Iran, the Shah was stalling, struggling to keep his options open. Brzezinski pressed for a military government to quash the revolution and to prevent the opposition forces from moving into controlling positions. The imminent departure of the Shah raised the stakes in Iran and lent a sense of urgency to Brzezinski's case for a military government. Brzezinski pressed his case at a meeting of the SCC on January 4, which had been quickly convened to discuss Ambassador Sullivan's cable received one day earlier in which he concluded that American interests

required that the Shah leave immediately. Sullivan advised that the Shah would do so only if he had at least the private support of the President.

The urgency of his message was underscored by his prediction that if the President either delayed or decided against such an expression of support, the administration could anticipate a military coup within a few days. There was some discussion among the President and his advisers about the advisability of communicating U.S. support for his decision to leave, but the fact that the U.S. did advise the Shah to leave in the interest of preserving stability in Iran marked a departure in the administration's policy which, until now, had resisted suggesting that it urge the Shah to go. The message cabled to the Shah remained discreet, advising him of the U.S. concurrence with the desirability of his leaving, but without actually asking him to leave. This decision still left the administration with a highly unpredictable and explosive situation in Iran. With the Shah's departure now a virtual certainty, the U.S. focused its efforts on ensuring the survival of a civilian government. Bakhtiar needed to have the support of a unified Iranian military, but how to encourage that support without directly intervening in that country's internal affairs became a central issue at the SCC meeting.

The Huyser Mission

The decision was subsequently made to send a senior military official, General Robert Huyser, deputy to Alexander Haig, who was

supreme allied commander in Europe, to work directly with the Iranian military leadership. Huyser's official order was to assist in maintaining the integrity of the armed forces, strengthen the resolve of the military leaders and assist in maintaining the integrity of the armed forces. At the same time, Ambassador Sullivan received what he called "terse instructions," telling him that U.S. policy was to support the Bakhtiar government without reservation and to assist its survival.[24] Recalling the Huyser mission, Carter said he and Defense Secretary Brown decided the U.S. needed a representative in Tehran to keep the U.S. informed about the state of the Iranian military, something Sullivan did not provide for adequately. The instructions from Washington were firm despite Sullivan's objections to the rationale and purpose of Huyser's trip. Sullivan expressed serious doubt about the Bakhtiar government and the decision to transfer the loyalty of the military to Bakhtiar. He feared the consequence would be a "destructive confrontation" between the armed forces and the revolutionaries which would mean the disintegration of the armed forces and the collapse of Iran.[25]

The message Huyser carried to Tehran assured the Iranian military of U.S. support and requested that they stay behind and guarantee a close U.S.-Iranian relationship with the new government. There was general agreement in Washington on the strategy of keeping the Iranian military intact, but different opinions about the ultimate role of the military. Huyser's instructions

contained a provision to prepare the Iranian military for a coup--"option C," or the military option--but the decision to implement it depended on the capacity of the military and U.S. determination. It was Huyser's job to evaluate that capacity and determine the desirability of military action. Brzezinski was outspoken in his advocacy of a military coup and thought the cable Huyser delivered to the armed forces should have encouraged the military to stage a coup. He was concerned that anything less than a clear-cut commitment to Iran might be interpreted as U.S. disengagement and could be damaging to U.S. interests. Brown, Schlesinger and Duncan--it was Duncan who suggested that General Huyser be selected to go to Iran--concurred with Brzezinski on the larger issue of the military coup and agreed on the strategy of giving the Iranian military the signal to act.

Strong military action was not predetermined, but neither was the military encouraged to stand idly by if the situation deteriorated. These advisers endorsed the military's readiness to act and agreed that it be endorsed by the President. Vance, Christopher and Mondale wanted it made clear to the Iranian military that the U.S. would give no such support. Vance understood the need for contingency plans if the government were on the verge of collapse, but was opposed to a coup. Moreover, both he and Sullivan disputed the proposition that the military could effectively assert itself. Vance agreed with Sullivan who advised that the confusion within the military and the uncertain loyalties

of the generals made contacts between the military and Islamic leaders a workable solution.

It was important not to do anything which could be interpreted by the military as a signal to move. Vance and the others wanted to broaden the political base and include members of the religious opposition in the Bakhtiar government. They believed that some kind of an accommodation between the military and Khomeini could give them common ground during the political transition and, at the same time, relieve the pressure on the military for a coup attempt. But the White House was less sanguine about the practicability of negotiations. Carter neither endorsed nor rejected the diplomatic and military alternatives, but instead stalled for time in the hope that the military would stand behind Bakhtiar to assure a strong and stable government. Brzezinski, however, was not prepared to gamble on Bakhtiar's political fortunes and tried to get General Huyser to push the military towards a coup. He was aware there were divided opinions on the ability of the Iranian military to act, but weighed these against the longer-range costs to U.S. strategic interests if the military failed to act. His main objection to the diplomatic approach preferred by Vance and the U.S. Ambassador was its failure to consider the consequences of a political compromise to those interests.

He protested on the grounds that their approach would undermine confidence in the U.S., as well as produce disastrous inter-

national consequences for the United States. He was therefore encouraged by Huyser's reports on the state of military readiness. Brzezinski thought that Huyser's presence in Tehran, as the American liaison, would keep the military option open and that the planning for this option would discourage Khomeini from returning. But Huyser also held firmly to the line that the military must first give Bakhtiar a chance to form an effective government, although he was advised by Secretary Brown, "that we not imply to the military that there would never be a basis for strong military action, or that any civilian government would be better than a military coup."[26] Brzezinski relayed this message to Brown because he did not want Huyser to interpret his instructions as meaning the U.S. was committed to any kind of civilian government. (Huyser communicated directly by secure telephone with Brown, who submitted reports of their conversations to the President through Brzezinski.)

Walking this narrow line between preventing a coup attempt on the Bakhtiar government and encouraging military readiness to take strong action if necessary would prevent a succession of civilian governments but also allow Brzezinski to keep open the possibility of military action. Huyser was to continue to advise the military on contingency planning while keeping Brzezinski apprised of the state of military readiness which included conflicting reports of military morale and physical capability. In his first major assessment on January 9, Huyser informed Brown that the military

was not prepared for a coup attempt at that time, one week before the Shah's planned departure on January 16. As the date of the Shah's departure approached, Huyser reported that the military was becoming restless and leaning towards a coup to coincide with the Shah's departure, although there were reports that each day 500-1000 members of the military were moving over to the religious and political opposition, if not in person then in their sympathies.[27] In a telephone conversation on January 15 between Brown, General David Jones, Brzezinski and Huyser, Huyser told them that the military had been working on a plan for several days in the event that the Bakhtiar government falls.

The Shah's departure on January 16 caused even greater anxiety over Khomeini's return, causing the military to intensify their efforts in planning and preparing for action, anticipating greater readiness to act in a week's time. On January 22, Huyser reported by cable that the imminent return of Khomeini would likely lead to Bakhtiar's fall and expressed doubts about the military's ability to administer the country if they seized power. Despite these doubts, he advised several days later that Khomeini's return would be the moment to make a military move. These inconsistencies were as indicative of the chaos unleashed by the forces of the revolution as they were of the internal policy divisions in Washington. Caught in the middle as he was, Huyser was Brzezinski's pipeline to the Iranian military although he was inclined to share Sullivan's view that negotiations between the

religious and military factions might be useful. The rapidly changing political realities in Tehran made plain to him the direction of the revolution. He informed the Washington group of these views together with his "professional" assessment of the state of military planning.

The reaction in Washington was predictable and intensified the debate over U.S. options in this final phase of the Iranian revolution. A joint message from Sullivan and Huyser on January 22 asking for a reexamination of U.S. policy in view of the threat of Khomeini's return produced even sharper disagreement. Fearful of the consequences of the struggle between the anti-Communist forces in Iran, the army and the clergy, they requested that their instructions be changed to permit the possibility of a coalition between the military and religious factions. They also advised Brown that Bakhtiar was prepared to confront Khomeini on his return to Iran and arrest him, which presented the administration with the question whether they would encourage Bakhtiar to go through with his plan.

In meetings on the issue Brzezinski argued, as he did earlier, that the U.S. not do anything which could be interpreted by supporters of either Bakhtiar or Khomeini as a sign of waning confidence in Bakhtiar's government or of a U.S. retreat from Iran. He was sufficiently convinced of the consequences of an American disengagement, or the perception thereof, to urge giving Bakhtiar the go-ahead to act on his proposal. Despite Sullivan's

firm belief that any attempt to block Khomeini's return or arrest him on arrival would finish off Bakhtiar, such strong action on his part might be the incentive the army needed to make "option C" a viable alternative. Bakhtiar did not go through with his plan, but Brzezinski's attitude underscored his persistent efforts to keep the opposition out of power at almost any cost.

Brzezinski proposed to make these efforts known to the Iranian military through General Huyser who had established direct and regular contacts with the army. With the future of Iran hanging in the balance during these critical weeks surrounding the Shah's departure and the prospective return of Khomeini, Brzezinski saw the Huyser mission as the administration's last chance to avert a revolutionary government under the leadership of the radical religious elements. Looking back, the January 3 decision to send General Huyser to Iran appears to have been a desperate last effort to save Iran from the tightening grip of the revolution. That there were conflicting interpretations of Huyser's purpose among American officials in Washington and Tehran gave indication of the anomaly of his presence in Iran. Representing the last hopes the administration had of holding back the revolutionary forces, Huyser left carrying a responsibility that was unequal to either his position or authority.

As Joseph Kraft correctly observed, Huyser lacked the political authority he needed to speak for the President, whom, Kraft goes on to suggest, he most likely had never met."[28] Huyser's

assignment was also intended to convey Carter's displeasure with the U.S. Ambassador who no longer had the confidence of the President. Instead, he had earned his enmity by more frequent and sharper disagreements over U.S. policy, capped by a strongly worded telegram to the President on January 10 reproaching Carter for his decision not to initiate contact with Khomeini. Carter reacted strongly in kind and told Vance he wanted Sullivan out of Iran, but was dissuaded, albeit reluctantly, by the Secretary of State. After this episode, Carter said he began to rely primarily on Huyser's assessments and praised him for his stability and competence. But Huyser's judgments were also influenced by his background, which included earlier service in Iran where he became known to many of the senior Iranian generals, his instructions, which advised him to assure the military of U.S. support, and Brzezinski's repeated calls for some kind of preemptive action by the Iranian military.

The expectation that Huyser would offer a professional and impartial approach was clearly misguided and indicated how ill-advised the decision to send Huyser to Iran was in the first place. The Huyser mission was no substitute for a clear policy which Carter did not have in Iran, nor could it compensate for the President's indecisiveness. The President was left with virtually no policy on the eve of the Shah's departure. The Huyser mission thus represented the U.S. response to this critical moment in Iran's history and in the relationship between the U.S. and Iran.

Although there had been a general, if loosely arranged, agreement on the terms of Huyser's selection and his instructions, the Huyser mission came to represent different things to the officials who made the decision to send Huyser to Iran. Huyser left Iran shortly after Khomeini returned on February 1, and arrived in Washington to find a continuing discussion on the status of the Iranian armed forces now faced with the prospect of a Khomeini government.

Three options were discussed at a meeting of the SCC on Sunday, February 11, with officials present from State, Defense, the Joint Chiefs, the CIA and NSC. First, to urge the military to seek accommodation with Mehdi Bazargan, Khomeini's choice as the likely successor to Bakhtiar; second, that the military work to remain united and submit to the new government; and third, to encourage the military, providing it had the will and capacity, to take control of the situation. Warren Christopher, representing the State Department's view, said that the military was not sufficiently united to stand on its own and that it was advisable for the army to stay together and defend the new government. Frank Carlucci, the Deputy Director of the CIA, suggested that the military tell Khomeini it would back him up, but only with specific guarantees which would give it some leverage. While he realized how much greater the risks had become, Brzezinski continued to hold out for direct action by the military, providing "option C" was still thought to be viable at this point.

What he sought to prevent at almost any cost was the disintegration of the armed forces at the hands of a Khomeini government. The end of an independent autonomous military would signal the final capitulation to the revolution and seal the fate of the generals whose loyalties to the Shah would mean their certain execution by the new regime.

Critics of Brzezinski's approach allege that he should have realized that the military would act only on the direct orders of the Shah. But the Shah was unable and unwilling on his own to exercise the iron fist and take strong military action to restablish order in the country, since he refused to be the cause of more bloodshed. He remained immobile in the face of the revolutionary movement and desperate for what he was certain was an American plan to help him survive the challenge. But he waited in vain for there was no sign of an American initiative to save him. The policy of waiting for a politically acceptable moment to support action by the Iranian military was counterproductive, since that time would never come. Huyser, in effect, was put in a position to defend two opposite viewpoints: to prevent a coup, on the one hand, as long as Bakhtiar had a chance of success and to prepare a coup, on the other, so there would be a "military safety net" if the situation deteriorated.

The confusion this approach created in Washington and Tehran represented ultimately a defeat for U.S. policy, for by the time Huyser returned to the U.S., Khomeini's triumph was inevitable.

This period during which debate over policy focused on the feasibility of military action and prospects for negotiations with the opposition showed Brzezinski as clearly having the upper-hand among the White House staff and Cabinet officials involved in these meetings and decisions. The considerable control Brzezinski had over the administration's approach to Iran did not always mean that his own objectives became those of the President, but his influence with the President did divert Carter from policies Brzezinski vigorously opposed. Consequently, Brzezinski was able to influence U.S. policy and steer the President away from recommendations to pursue negotiations with the opposition, bring together the military and religious groups and initiate direct communication with Khomeini. In the end, Brzezinski did not secure the President's consent to a military coup which, it might be argued, disputes the notion of Brzezinski's authority in Iranian affairs during these critical months.

His presumption that some kind of military action was necessary to keep the revolutionaries out of power once it became evident that the Bakhtiar government would in all likelihood fall from power was, after all, upper-most in Brzezinski's approach to the crisis. There are, however, several important aspects of the American response which support the claim of Brzezinski's influence. First, the prolonged stay of General Huyser in Iran--whose "mission" was originally planned as a three-day visit--allowed Brzezinski to keep the military option open. He communi-

cated constantly with Huyser for the purpose of monitoring and encouraging the willingness and capability of the Iranian army to stage a coup. Brzezinski felt strongly that Huyser's continuing presence sent a signal to the Iranian generals of U.S. support for the military and for the security of Iran. So important did he deem Huyser's presence that he twice tried to keep him in Iran against the wishes and better judgment of Ambassador Sullivan and Huyser himself.

Brzezinski was able to rescind the instructions that Huyser leave despite the fact that the general had been threatened with assassination. He also voiced the single objection that was made at a February 3 meeting to a request directly from Huyser that he be authorized to leave, and he instructed Huyser's deputy, General Philip C. Gast, to continue in his place. But Brzezinski was no more successful in convincing Carter of the necessity for military action during Bakhtiar's last days than he was on the eve of the Shah's departure from Iran. Carter's disapproval, however, did not deter Brzezinski from advising Iran's armed forces by way of General Huyser to prepare to take firm action when the right moment arrived. These actions did create the impression, at least as far as the Iranian military was concerned, that the U.S. was willing to sanction the use of military force to restore order in Iran. That impression served Brzezinski's purpose well, for it gave him the leverage he wanted, but not without costly results to the credibility of the President and U.S. policy in Iran.

Argument Against a Coalition Government

Despite strong arguments by the U.S. ambassador and senior officials at the State Department that the U.S. support a coalition government in Iran, Brzezinski and his supporters, primarily Secretary Brown and his deputy, Charles Duncan and, for a briefer period, Energy Secretary James Schlesinger, persuaded the President that it was not a practicable solution. At the time a coalition was proposed, the Shah was groping for ways to save himself and his throne from the revolutionary assault. Brzezinski felt strongly that it was the responsibility and obligation of the United States to the Shah to help him regain effective authority and assure that the military remain intact. To do otherwise would undermine American security interests in the region and threaten the loss of confidence in the U.S. to stand by and protect its allies.

Brzezinski's first priority was to forestall any attempt by the Soviet Union to take advantage of the political turmoil in Iran to facilitate its own strategic interests in the Gulf region. To that end, he pressed for a public demonstration of U.S. support for the Shah and consistency in our statements and actions. He feared that anything else would be an open invitation for Soviet involvement. And a coalition would be just the sign of eroding American support the Soviets were waiting for and would doubtless try to exploit. Brzezinski was blunt and direct in his response to those who endorsed an accommodation with the opposition. He

was as intent on keeping the Shah on his throne as he was on blocking any kind of political accommodation that would install a coalition. His unwillingness to accommodate any of the Shah's political or religious enemies became most pronounced during the internal policy debate over initiating direct contact with Khomeini in the weeks before his planned return to Iran.

Abortive Attempt at Contact with Revolutionaries

The controversy surrounding this overture was a third aspect of the U.S. response to the crisis which established Brzezinski's predominant presence with the group which deliberated on Iran or, at the very least, with the President. After arrangements had been finalized to open a direct channel to Khomeini in Paris, Brzezinski reportedly succeeded in convincing the President to change his mind at the last minute. The principal proponent of establishing contact with Khomeini, Ambassador Sullivan, was caught short by this unexpected development and urged that the decision be rescinded and the mission restored.

The trip was canceled on January 5; Theodore Eliot, a retired senior officer in the Foreign Service who was selected to be the U.S. emissary, was to have left for Paris the following day. In response to his request, Sullivan was advised that the decision to cancel the Eliot mission was based on a unanimous recommendation to the President by all his advisers. Sullivan thought the President's decision was in "irretrievable error" and remained skeptical of the explanation for the cancellation.[29] The issue of

initiating direct contact with Khomeini came up during the allied four-power summit meeting in Guadeloupe in early January. Sullivan had discussed the idea of initiating talks with Khomeini earlier with Vance, who agreed and passed on the recommendation to the President in Guadeloupe. Sullivan's interest in the talks was to assure that the armed forces remain strong and effective for the purpose of preserving the territorial integrity of Iran. He had been advised by members of the opposition that they were willing to protect the military when the Shah left, and Sullivan was concerned that Khomeini, on his return, might challenge these arrangements.

Learning of Sullivan's intentions, Brzezinski sought to gain time first, by making sure that the Shah approved such an initiative, which he did, and second, by requesting that the final decision be postponed until the President's return to Washington. Discussion was resumed on January 10 at a meeting with Carter, Mondale, Vance, Brown, Brzezinski's deputy David Aaron and Brzezinski, at which Vance and Brzezinski took up opposing sides. Brzezinski's primary objection to making contact with Khomeini was the signal it would give to the Bakhtiar regime and to the military, which he believed could be brought around to support Bakhtiar. He also protested on the grounds that such a plan would leak, that the Ayatollah was not going to be influenced by a conversation with an American emissary and that the American public would not understand such an initiative.

The Bakhtiar solution was invoked by Brzezinski in each of these three cases as the primary reason for endorsing a military solution and rejecting a coalition government and direct talks with Khomeini. But there was little reason to presume that Bakhtiar would succeed primarily because of the tenuous status of the military and its assailability by the opposition forces. There is, in fact, a report that Brzezinski was advised by a CIA analyst who predicted that the armed forces would collapse shortly after the Shah left. Why then did Brzezinski use Bakhtiar to either support or rebuff certain policy initiatives? One interpretation, suggestive of the extent to which Brzezinski's own authority depended on the President, is that the real reason for Brzezinski's support of Bakhtiar was his knowledge that the Bakhtiar solution was the only one the President would endorse.

If this was true, it still served Brzezinski's purposes since a military solution for the purpose of restoring order in the country would help protect the Bakhtiar regime. Without the backing of the military, Brzezinski argued, Bakhtiar had no chance of resisting the opposition. Consistent with this interpretation, Brzezinski emphasized his concern to the President that initiating dealings with Khomeini would demoralize the top military leadership and promote a breakdown of military unity. The Shah shared this apprehension about the status of the military, but he voiced no objection to the Eliot mission, believing it was part of some grand national scheme the U.S. had designed to save his

country. He seemed prepared to make personal sacrifices for a larger goal and was alarmed to learn that the mission had been cancelled. If Sullivan's assessment did indeed reflect the Shah's thinking, there was an incongruity in Carter's concern that efforts to reach an understanding with Khomeini would create the perception that we had abandoned the Shah. After meeting with his advisers, Carter rejected Vance's recommendation and decided to make contact with Khomeini through a French intermediary instead.

Each of these three aspects of U.S. policy in Iran share three points in common: first, consideration of a specific proposal quickly turned into a dispute between the White House and the State Department; second, there were communication failures --or the willful disregard of the cable traffic--between Washington and the U.S. Embassy in Tehran; and, third, in a showdown between Vance and Brzezinski, Brzezinski gained the upper hand and was able to make his mark on U.S. policy. These conditions were both a manifestation and consequence of Presidential indecision, personal and bureaucratic rivalries and ideological differences whose impact was most significant in interpreting the succession of events in Iran.

With Vance and Brzezinski on opposing sides on each of these issues, the deliberation of policy was transformed into a two-sided debate which had the effect of forcing a choice where there should have been more room for compromise. The President

generally did not choose sides, but that was not so much in the interest of seeking a middle ground as it was to withhold a commitment to a single policy. He was also less concerned about having to defend any particular approach than he was about having to make a choice at all. The positions Carter did encourage were often too vague, sometimes mistimed or inappropriate for the pressures of the moment. He shared the concern of those who urged strong action to preserve the integrity and influence of the Shah, but was not willing to go so far as to endorse a military solution. There were half-way measures which he did authorize, one example being General Huyser's mission to Iran, but they offered little in the way of solutions to the threats by the militant opposition. He also assured the Iranian military of U.S. support without demonstrating justifiable cause to convince the generals of American intentions. Nor did Carter give any indication, as far as those close to the Shah could tell, of his private misgivings about the Shah's plans to remain as long as he had reason to believe he had the confidence of the President.

The evidence indicates that it was Brzezinski who was most committed to keeping the Shah in Iran, and it was he who encouraged Carter to publicly affirm his backing of the Shah. This did not mean that Carter was any less concerned about the fate of the Shah, but he did not share equally Brzezinski's conviction that the choices were obvious--either the U.S. would pledge its support to the Shah and the country's armed forces or

it would face a radical government run by the Islamic fundamentalists. But the fact is that Brzezinski's conclusions cast U.S. policy in the stark and bold terms in which he perceived the circumstances in Iran. He renounced policy recommendations which he thought challenged or compromised these facts in some way, determined to remove any hint of concessions to the opposition. The premium he placed on protecting U.S. prestige and cultivating its image of strength and resolve made Brzezinski unyielding in objecting to plans which he believed would damage American strategic interests and standing. That, he warned, would be the ultimate outcome of the policies which Ambassador Sullivan, Vance and his colleagues at the State Department were advocating in their efforts to reach an acceptable level of accommodation with the opposition.

In a quick succession of events, Khomeini returned, Bakhtiar was replaced by Mehdi Bazargan and renewed levels of internal political feuding left the new government exposed to the challenges from its detractors. For a brief time after Khomeini's return, Brzezinski solicited expert military advice on whether "option C" was still viable at this point. But the extent to which the situation in Iran was out of control and events outpaced American deliberations ended any further consideration of using military force to protect Bakhtiar and impose some measure of order in that country. The errors in judgment, internal policy disputes and the lack of clarity and purpose in the U.S. response

to events in Iran had left the President with virtually no policy at all. The moderate course he tried to pursue during these chaotic months effectively removed from U.S. policy any kind of influence it might have had to assist the government forces. There was little the U.S. could do now as it watched Khomeini consolidate his position and concentrate on establishing an Islamic regime.

Khomeini's return and the creation of a revolutionary government effectively severed all ties between the U.S. and Iran. Diplomatic personnel remained at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran where their responsibilities were restricted to administrative business. But events in Iran, which had dominated the administration's foreign policy agenda for more than fifteen months, were now beyond the scope of American policymakers whose activities in Iran were banned by the new leadership. There would be no cause for U.S. involvement in Iranian affairs until Americans were taken hostage by militant extremists on November 4. The hostage crisis only reinforced the image of failure in Carter's foreign policy and was a humiliating conclusion to the administration's experience in Iran.

HOSTAGE CRISIS

The attack on the American embassy and the seizure of its employees as hostages did not create the tension between the White House and State Department that was so apparent during the Shah's downfall and the revolutionary offensive less than one year

earlier. There were not many confrontations between Vance and Brzezinski during this period when the overriding objective was to guarantee the safety of the hostages and successfully negotiate for their release. Those confrontations which did materialize were for the most part limited to a specific issue and did not occasion the kind of protracted quarreling which was characteristic of the earlier phase. Nor did these disputes have a comparable impact on the internal policy debate and the final determination of U.S. policy.

The Military Option

The most pointed issue between the Secretary of State and the National Security Adviser during the period of the Americans' captivity concerned the decision to launch the rescue mission in April, the planning for which had been developed over the preceding months. Vance was the sole dissenter among the President's advisers to the rescue mission, remaining strongly opposed to taking any kind of military action against the Iranians. By the time Carter had decided to seriously consider a rescue operation, he was more determined to take strong action than he had been earlier in order to break the deadlock he had reached in negotiations with the Iranians. He was not, as a consequence, receptive to Vance's objections, although Vance's opposition prompted Carter to call a special meeting of the NSC on April 15 in order that Vance be given the chance to present his views after the Secretary of State learned that a final decision had been

reached to go forward with the rescue operation at a meeting four days earlier which he did not attend.

Vance was not present at the April 11 NSC meeting having left for a brief rest in Florida and, after learning of the meeting, sent Warren Christopher to attend as Acting Secretary of State. Whether or not this decisive meeting was convened to coincide with Vance's absence becomes less significant in light of the fact that no matter how strongly Vance felt about the proposed rescue mission Carter believed the time had come to act and was determined to see it through. The fact that Carter agreed with Brzezinski on the practicability of the rescue operation and the implications of planning for some kind of military action did not represent a "victory" for Brzezinski in the same way that some of the earlier disputes over Iran indicated his capacity for "winning," or at least prevailing over key policy disputes. Because there were American lives at stake, there was little room left for either interpretation or speculation on the Iranians' motives and intentions. In planning for a rescue mission the core issue was whether or not the U.S. would use force to free the captive Americans.

Participating in this decision were the President, Mondale, Vance, Brown, Turner, Jones, Powell and Brzezinski. A near-consensus emerged on the issues a short time after the group began deliberations on the options, which included use of military force. Military planning had been conducted by a smaller and

secret group, involving only Brown, Jones, Turner and Brzezinski, which had been meeting since almost immediately after the hostages were taken on November 4. At a meeting on March 22 at Camp David, at which General Jones gave Carter the first comprehensive and full briefing on the proposed rescue mission, Vance went on record as opposed to any military actions against the Iranians. He based his objections on the grounds that military action would risk the lives of the hostages, who remained unharmed and in imminent danger, as well as jeopardize U.S. interests in the Persian Gulf. Carter left the meeting encouraged by the updated plans for a rescue mission but deferred final judgment until further consideration of the alternative options which, by this point, were basically not workable. He continued to press American demands on the Iranian leaders, emphasizing that time was running out for negotiating a resolution to the crisis. But continued disappointments on the political and diplomatic fronts coupled with the encouraging reports by the military on the feasibility of a rescue mission convinced Carter to act and finalize the rescue plans. Not even the knowledge that Vance's resignation would follow the rescue operation deterred Carter, who launched the operation with the full confidence and support of the military leadership.

Politics, Diplomacy and Crisis-Management

But Carter's decision to go ahead did not indicate any major shift in U.S. policy in Iran except that it did sanction the use

of force but only in this one instance. Carter was no more willing to use military force to pressure the Iranians into releasing the hostages before the rescue attempt than he was after it was aborted. Nor did he assume a more aggressive or tougher posture in dealing with the Iranians. Instead, he resumed his campaign for reelection, having assured the American public that the situation in Iran was under control. Throughout the hostage crisis, Carter's approach emphasized the paramount importance of caution in dealing with the Iranian leadership. The abortive rescue operation was one of the few instances during the fourteen-month ordeal where the President agreed to assume the offensive and bear down upon the revolutionary government. A decision was made at the outset of the crisis to maintain a nonprovocative posture toward Iran, using both quiet diplomacy and international pressure to free the hostages. As soon as the embassy was seized a special task force was set up at the State Department headed by Harold H. Saunders, Assistant Secretary of State for Near East and South Asian Affairs, to monitor the Iranian crisis and advise the President of developments there.

The SCC, under Brzezinski's chairmanship, also worked to coordinate the American response, and there was general agreement on specific measures involving the hostages, which included diplomatic efforts, political maneuvering and application of economic sanctions. The disagreements which did surface within the SCC concerned two issues: whether the U.S. should encourage

the Shah to leave the U.S. and the extent and character of preparations for military action. Vance, together with Mondale, prevailed on the President to change his mind on the first issue, but were less convincing on the second, where Carter approved several recommendations concerning maneuvers of military materiel and expressed support for the continued development of military options by General Jones, Brown and Brzezinski. After his initial refusal to force the Shah out of the U.S., Carter eventually agreed that the U.S. would be better off if the Shah left. This thinking appalled Brzezinski, whose concern for national credibility dictated that the Shah once admitted to the U.S. be permitted to stay.

The ultimate fate of the Shah, however, was not determined by either the President, his National Security Adviser or the Secretary of State. Hamilton Jordan and Lloyd Cutler, the President's special counsel, arranged for the Shah's exile in Panama in quiet talks with the Panamanians. Whether the Shah remained in the U.S. mattered little to the Iranians in any event, since they were only interested in returning the Shah to Iran. The resolution of this issue was therefore of less consequence, as far as U.S. interests were concerned, than the earlier discussion over whether the Shah be allowed to enter the U.S. at all. Military contingencies had more far-reaching implications with a great deal more at stake and far greater risks involved. The military options under consideration were three different types:

retaliatory actions if Americans were killed, a rescue operation and a military response which focused on oil fields in southwestern Iran.

There were disagreements over the advisability and feasibility of military actions, but the issue did not become a major source of conflict among the President's military, political and diplomatic advisors, as it did during the debate over a military coup nearly one year earlier. The President became directly involved in the talk of military options during the week after the hostages were taken and warned the Iranians of retaliatory action if the Americans were put on trial. Carter continued to pursue "the political path" throughout the winter, hoping to pressure the Iranians into releasing the hostages with a series of escalating sanctions while secret negotiations were being conducted through several intermediaries. By early spring 1980, he was ready to consider taking some kind of overt military action after all efforts to negotiate had proved unsuccessful. Brzezinski had pressed for consideration of military action much earlier, emphasizing the importance of demonstrating American resolve. He urged Carter to reassess the U.S. overall strategy and concentrate on the larger strategic issues and to support his own recommendations. He also gave the President a copy of a December 1 memo from Defense Secretary Brown, in which Brown also said that conditions warranted serious consideration of some military options.

Brzezinski's concern that the U.S. approach to the hostage crisis was becoming "routinized" was partly behind his recommendation that the U.S. reconsider its options.[30] As the first big test of Carter's Presidency, he advised a firm and tough approach as proof of U.S. determination to protect its strategic interests and defend its high principles. Vance's paramount concern was to bring the hostages out safely, and he remained convinced to the end that negotiations were the only way to secure their release. Vance also advised Carter against breaking diplomatic relations immediately, believing it would impair communications with Iran and possibly endanger the hostages. There was basic agreement within the government on the initial American response and the actions taken to bring pressure on the Iranians.

Beginning with the diplomatic efforts to contact Khomeini as soon as the hostages were taken, there was a series of escalating sanctions to impose increasingly heavy political and economic costs to Iran. Vance and Brzezinski did not disagree on this basic strategy, but differed primarily on the use of diplomacy and negotiations in the handling of the crisis. To Brzezinski, who advised stronger measures against the Iranians, negotiations and the precautions and discretion they required would extend the standoff between Washington and Tehran indefinitely. A more decisive maneuver, in contrast to continued talks, would compel the Iranians to respond in kind--a riskier move, but one which would force the Iranians to react to the demands of the United

States. But these differences did not noticeably influence the direction of the President's approach, at least during the earlier period of the Americans' capativity. Carter and his advisers quickly came to see that the hostages were to be used as pawns in the power struggle in Iran, a fact which figured importantly in the efforts to free them. The two-track policy which Carter pursued from the beginning of the crisis--opening communication channels and applying international pressure to isolate Iran from the international community--was not challenged; and, except for the single attempt to free the hostages using military action in April, continued through the final months when their release was ultimately negotiated with the help of the Algerians, who served as intermediaries.

Intermediaries in Diplomacy

The U.S. government also used intermediaries to conduct secret negotiations with the Iranians over a long period of time, beginning in January 1980. Few officials in the government had any knowledge of this activity and even fewer were involved in its arrangements. Secret negotiations with high Iranian officials were carefully planned under the direction of Vance, Saunders, Jordan and Cutler with the help of a French lawyer, Christian Brouguet and an Argentine businessman, Hector Villalon, both with connections and interests in Iran. These secret negotiations were more notable for expanding and keeping open communication channels with the Iranians than for aiding in the release of the hostages.

What they did accomplish was to arrange for meetings between American and high Iranian officials to discuss the hostage situation, when otherwise none might have occurred, and to establish the basis for further discussions.

Brzezinski was clearly aware of these negotiations and knew of Bourguet's and Villalon's involvement, but he had no real role in this aspect of the diplomatic efforts. It was Vance, together with Saunders, who did assume an active and prominent role in these negotiations and were in regular contact with Bourguet and Villalon. That Vance rather than Brzezinski became involved in these secret talks did not hold any special significance. Perhaps it confirmed Brzezinski's attitude toward negotiations or simply reflected the traditional role of the Secretary of State in the conduct of diplomatic negotiations. There were several other attempts to communicate with the Iranians through third parties, some at the initiative of the U.S., others by the third parties themselves. But they were for the most part short-lived and in many cases spurned by the Iranians.

The U.S. never regained the initiative during the hostage crisis, leaving itself open to the threats, ultimatums and especially the whims of Iranian officials, who themselves did not know what to do with the hostages. This was a major failure in U.S. policy, one which was rooted in a host of political, strategic, military and historical factors. Whether or not the hostage situation could have been avoided was less the issue than

the lack of some kind of preemptive or defensive action earlier to keep the situation from becoming critical. Once the Americans were seized, there were few actions open for the administration. The risks of using force were too great and the odds stacked too strongly against any kind of armed assault to take a chance on the lives of the Americans being held, and diplomacy held little promise for a timely end to the crisis. The result was to keep the U.S. on the defensive while Tehran continued its relentless verbal attacks and stiffened its demands for an end to the crisis.

It was at an Iranian initiative that a final round of meetings was arranged in the late fall 1980 which ultimately led to the hostages' release on January 22. So exposed was the U.S. during this period that a primary concern was not to incite the Iranians unnecessarily. The discretion and restraint so evident in the American response contrasted sharply with the response during the revolution which was far less measured and controlled. The U.S. suffered a major loss when the Shah was forced to leave Iran finally in January 1979 which was damaging to its strategic interests in the highly vulnerable and immensely vital Gulf region. The balance of power shifted abruptly, threatening the interests of the U.S. in the politico-military and economic importance of the region. The hostage crisis was more costly in terms of the perception of America's strength and will, affecting the morale, the credibility and the tenacity of U.S. foreign policy than it was in strictly military and strategic terms.

Together, they represent a bitter defeat for the U.S. and an unmitigated loss for its foreign policy.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

[1]Adapted from the title of Pierre Salinger, *America Held Hostage: The Secret Negotiations* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1981).

[2]Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith* (New York: Bantom Books, 1982).

[3]William H. Sullivan, *Mission to Iran* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1981), p. 171.

[4]William H. Sullivan, "Dateline Iran: The Road not Taken," *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1980), p. 178.

[5]Ibid., p. 179.

[6]Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983), pp. 344-45.

[7]Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), p. 328.

[8]Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 355.

[9]Vance, op. cit., p. 328.

[10]William Sullivan, *Foreign Policy*, op. cit., p. 183.

[11]Brzezinski, op. cit., pp. 344-45.

[12]Ibid., pp. 344-45.

[13]Ibid., p. 17.

[14]"The Best National Security System: A Conversation with Zbigniew Brzezinski," *The Washington Quarterly* (Winter, 1982), p. 74.

[15]Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 63.

[16]Carter, op. cit.

[17]Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 42.

[18]Carter, op. cit.

[19]Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 366.

[20]Ibid., p. 13.

[21]Morton Kondracke, "High Noon," *The New Republic*, February 3, 1979, p. 12.

[22]Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 365.

[23]Ibid., p. 366.

[24]Sullivan, *Foreign Policy*, op. cit., p. 184.

[25]Ibid., p. 184.

[26]Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 383.

[27]Ibid., p. 384.

[28]Joseph Kraft, *The Washington Post*.

[29]Sullivan, *Mission to Iran*, op. cit.

[30]Brzezinski, op. cit., p. 484.

CHAPTER V

THE LEBANESE CONFLICT IN THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

A major theme of Ronald Reagan's Presidency was restoring leadership to American foreign policy. The "break with the past"[1] that was promised during the campaign applied to foreign as well as domestic affairs. It was based on the notion of America's moral superiority and pressed for the return of strength and resolution to American foreign policy. An early priority of the new administration was structural change in the management of the foreign policy decision-making process so that the national security adviser's role would be diminished and the primacy of the Secretary of State restored. The earlier conflicts between the White House and State Department made Reagan believe that "Cabinet Government" would make it possible for the administration to speak with one voice in foreign policy.

Reagan looked upon the Cabinet as a sort of "board of directors" that would develop issues for his consideration. To minimize internal disputes, Reagan elevated his Cabinet to a prominent advisory role and convened almost forty meetings of his full Cabinet, the five Cabinet councils--which were subgroups of the Reagan Cabinet--and the NSC before he reached even the middle of his first year. The objective of this system was to resolve internal differences and present a public image of a unified

administration team. But the unified voice he sought in foreign policy would be no more easily attainable in his administration than it was in prior administrations. From the councils of the White House and the State Department there was a capaphony of feuding and dissenting voices on foreign policy issues that was amplified by the even more bitter disputes over turf.

ORGANIZATION OF FOREIGN POLICY PROCESS

NSC Job Downgraded

Reagan had wanted to reduce the national security adviser's role long before he came into office. He expected that by elevating the secretary of state and limiting the national security adviser and his staff to a coordinating function, he would have the support of the rest of the national security community. But, instead, the feuding persisted and even expanded to involve conflict between the White House staff and the Secretary of Defense. Matters were not helped by evidence of the relative passivity Reagan demonstrated in foreign affairs, creating a vacuum into which stepped alternatively, or often simultaneously, the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense and the national security assistant. In the end, Reagan ended up with a policy process even more muddled than that of his predecessors.

A complicating factor were the frequent changes in personnel which created sudden breaks in the line of command and interrupted the development of policy. Before the end of his first term, Reagan would have three different national security advisers, two

within the first year, and two Secretaries of State. A little over a year into his second term, Reagan would appoint his fourth NSC assistant. The succession of NSC assistants not only reflected badly on the President, but seemed to be an admission of error by the Reagan team for downgrading the NSC position. Richard Allen, Reagan's first national security adviser, was assigned a clear-cut staff function with orders to maintain a low profile and stay out of the day-to-day conduct of diplomacy and policy. Unlike his predecessors in recent administrations, Allen did not report directly to the President, but to the presidential counselor, Edwin Meese.

Meese, by restructuring the hierarchy of power, kept Allen out of the inner circle. Allen, on the other hand, was denied unimpeded access to the President, and he appeared to lose the battle almost before it began. Access to the President is the *sine qua non* of influence for the national security adviser. With his weak presidential connection from the start, Allen faced a lonely struggle to hold his own in the protracted, visible infighting within the foreign policy circles. Adding to the problem of access was the issue of physical proximity to the President, which has been deemed critical to the standing of the security adviser. Meese was now settled in the West Wing of the White House, in an office formerly assigned to the President's national security assistant, and Allen was given an office in the basement. He was now physically removed from the President. The

concept of "Cabinet government" was discredited by this type of concentration of power within the White House in the offices of a troika consisting of Meese, Chief of Staff James A. Baker and Deputy Chief of Staff Michael K. Deaver. Instead of government by consensus, this political "troika" imposed a system of staff domination on the NSC process, reducing NSC staff members to a level of functionaries rather than participants in the policy process. This structure of power left the NSC staff demoralized and uncertain of its role. Unlike past NSC staffers, Allen's aides were not in charge of key interagency committees dealing with major policy crises, so there was no real coordination to ensure that the agencies worked out their options properly.

Added to these problems was a reputation of professional and academic mediocrity, which was compounded by controversy about Allen's intellectual competence and questionable practices throughout his career in politics. His discretion also became an issue when two of his aides caused a stir both within and outside the government with their hard-line ideological comments which were publicized and embarrassed the administration with the stridency of their attacks on the Soviet Union. What these incidents also indicated was the less than complete authority Allen had over his NSC staff members. One of the first initiatives Allen's successor pushed was a procedure that would require prior clearance from the NSC for public statements on foreign affairs by senior White House officials. It was one of

several steps William Clark took as the new security adviser to expand the personal influence of the NSC adviser to put the White House in control of the foreign policy apparatus.

Pattern of White House-State Department Friction

Allen got off to a bad start at the NSC, made worse by the intermittent feuding with the Secretary of State. As Reagan's choice to head the State Department, Alexander Haig made an adversary out of Allen in the State-NSC struggle for influence from the start. The friction involved personalities more than policies, and exposed the shortcomings in the institutional arrangement which sharpened the potential for conflict inherent in the relationship between the Secretary of State and the national security adviser. Instead of curtailing the NSC role, the new system meant that Allen would keep anything but a lower profile.

Haig's own confrontation style was a large factor in these conflicts and he acted as if he were already in control of the process. His style and methods turned potential strengths into liabilities and the exposure of the foreign policy struggle damaged Haig's prestige and standing with the White House. His most ambitious play for power came in a twenty-page organizational memo to Reagan on Inauguration Day that would put the State Department clearly in charge of foreign policy. It outlined an executive order that would strengthen Haig's primacy and reduce some of the authority White House advisers had utilized in the past. By placing most authority in his own hands, Haig intended

to be "the vicar" of foreign policy. This draft of National Security Decision Memorandum 1 (NSDM 1), which was to be the presidential decision memo establishing the structure of foreign policy, would formalize the lines of authority and make clear that Haig was the general manager and principal spokesman on foreign affairs under the President.

Haig's memo was presented to Meese who, in the presence of Allen and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, effectively tabled it. Haig's mistake was in seeking a written guarantee of his preeminence.[1] His attempts to take the lead were unacceptable to the White House and his ambitions were frustrated by presidential aides who saw themselves as keepers of the President's prestige in the face of any challenge from within. Referred facetiously by White House aides as "CINCWORLD," or commander-in-chief of the world, Haig's combative methods and strong rhetoric provoked a showdown over power and prerogative with the senior staffers. Reagan's team at the White House reacted to Haig's public bursts of frustration by concentrating more authority for the conduct of foreign policy in their own hands. The decision to make Vice President George Bush the head of the administration's crisis management team was a signal to Haig that he was being put into his place by the White House inner circle. The significance of Bush's assignment was overplayed and exaggerated, but it did give Meese and Baker more power in running the machinery of government from the White House. In spite of establishing a reputation for

being in charge as well as the best prepared and most experienced bureaucratic operator, Haig lost out to the insider team of Meese, Baker and Deaver.

The conflict between Haig and Weinberger reflected the institutional interests each represented as well as personal views on specific policy issues. Weinberger's actions did not make things any easier for Haig. He contributed to the confusion in foreign policy by pursuing his own line and letting the Defense Department act as a second State Department. Weinberger was a Reagan intimate from the President's California days, having served him then as state finance director, and he was confident of his relationship with the President. His personal relationship with Reagan meant he was able to get the President's ear when Haig could not and was faced with fewer constraints in making defense decisions than Haig was on the diplomatic side. As a member of the Reagan inner circle, Weinberger felt free to improvise his own foreign policy agenda, but caused problems when his own policies were not consistent with Haig's priorities in dealing with defense issues with a high political content. His sometime tendency to "shoot from the hip" resulted in some controversial and disquieting circumstances involving Haig. Moreover, as a close personal friend of the President, Weinberger was able to avoid criticism.[2]

One month into the new administration, for example, Weinberger made an announcement at a press conference that the

administration might go ahead with the production and deployment of the neutron warhead, embarrassing Haig, who had been trying to reassure the rest of NATO that no decision would be made without consulting the allies. Similar problems arose some months later when Weinberger openly contradicted Haig on the issue of the use of nuclear weapons in Europe. Weinberger denied that there was "anything remotely resembling" a plan which Haig had said did exist to use nuclear weapons in a crisis to warn the Soviet Union. There were more disagreements on issues involving the opening of strategic arms limitation talks, the imposition of martial law in Poland and the proposed sale of AWAC planes to Saudi Arabia. They rarely agreed on developments in the Middle East and wrestled over important issues including the subject of Israel's militarism and American arms sales to moderate Arab nations. The President did nothing to reduce the conflict, nor did he try to impose a more coherent view on the policy process which would at least keep him from having to choose sides in each case.

The appointment of George Shultz as Secretary of State in June 1982, succeeding Haig whose resignation came at the end of eighteen months of almost constant bitter clashes with the White House, reduced the tension between the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense only briefly. The different personalities of Shultz and Weinberger were factors in the feuds over policy as well as procedural issues, as the tensions followed the organizational line established by Haig and Weinberger previously. Unique

to their relationship, however, were personal factors which, interacting with the policy process, created even more confusion in an administration where there was a lack of clear direction from the White House. Theirs was a professional relationship, established during the time Shultz and Weinberger first worked together in the Nixon administration, which was not always harmonious, imbued, as it was, with a competitive edge. The best the administration could do under the circumstances was paper over the differences, despite efforts to mediate some of their disagreements.[3]

Shultz's appointment had a more salutary effect on White House-State Department relations. He was selected not so much for his expertise in foreign affairs as for his capabilities as a mediator and conciliator in personal and policy matters. These qualities had not been much in evidence in Haig, whose behavior stood in such contrast to the flexibility that Shultz brought to the Cabinet and NSC meeting. Shultz sought to end the conflict between the State Department and the President's White House advisers by stressing consensus instead of confrontation. Unlike Haig, Shultz was a team player and became part of the Reagan inner circle. He also quickly established his own team at the State Department, bringing in two of his colleagues, Kenneth Dam, as Deputy Secretary of State and W. Allen Wallis, as Under Secretary for Economic Affairs. Shultz was compatible with the President and was careful not to publicly contradict or contravene the

President on the substance of policy. The new Secretary also found he worked well with William Clark, who had moved from the number two post at the State Department over to the NSC at the beginning of 1982.

As counterparts in the foreign policy-making organization, Shultz and Clark represented a good working balance of the President's interests and the institutional incentives of the State Department and NSC, respectively. This arrangement helped restore some order to the Reagan system and stability to the administration's foreign policy. Reagan became a more active player and was drawn into the conduct of national security affairs. Both Shultz and Clark shared the credit for Reagan's increased interest and activity. Shultz was brought in partly to help sort out the President's foreign policy problems, and Clark was a longtime Presidential confidant and was devoted, in his own words, to putting the President "back in the saddle." He was for whatever served the President's interests, and opposed to whatever did not.

Clark's role was more personal than ideological, based on his total loyalty to the President dating back to their California days together. One explanation, in fact, for his initial appointment as Deputy Secretary of State--an anomaly, considering Clark's professed inexperience and ignorance of foreign affairs--was to keep an eye on Haig and hold him to the administration's line. Clark actually served loyally, and his move to the NSC was seen as

an advantage for the Secretary, who now had an ally at the White House in Clark. In his new job, Clark was able to help Haig for a while, but politics and policy collided to produce new signs of the old White House-State Department rivalry. By the spring of 1982, Clark had asserted himself and moved to take charge of the foreign policy machinery. There soon emerged a pattern of friction between Haig and Clark.

Where Clark had once played a central role in building White House support for many State Department policies against the hard-line views of Weinberger, he now joined the Reagan intimates who attacked Haig's pragmatic policies and supported a policy of cracking down on the Soviet Union. It was Reagan's hard-line policies which created difficulties between Clark and Shultz, whose personal and political interests steered them apart on the issues. The divisions within the administration on defense matters, arms control and Central America, for example, led Shultz and Clark to team up with different sides; Shultz, with James Baker, embodied the pragmatic viewpoint, while Clark represented the conservative side. A key element was Clark's commitment to defending the President's philosophy, which guaranteed a hard-line approach to communism and Soviet influence in the world. As one of the administration's more forceful advocates, Clark's movements had cast "a deep shadow" over the State Department and the Secretary's position.

While there appeared to be some moderation in the original

views of the Reagan team by the end of the second year, the ideologues were in control a year later, with Clark championing the President's cause. The differences between Clark and Shultz did not revolve around the operational conflicts Clark had with Haig, but were ideological rather than political factors. It meant a sharp line was drawn between the "moderates" and "hard-liners" in the administration during this period accompanied by extreme shifts of opinion on policy issues. Clark was succeeded by his deputy, Robert C. McFarlane, in October, 1983, who was a compromise candidate between the right-wing's choice, U.N. Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, who was a Clark ally, and the pragmatists' choice, James Baker. McFarlane was an unlikely choice for turning the NSC position into the center of authority on foreign policy, but by the end of the administration's first term, he had begun to emerge as a policy leader.[5] His influence grew steadily by virtue of his insider status, a closer relationship with the President and his broad foreign policy experience. His ascendance at times rivaled, but did not subvert, Shultz's standing.

Shultz's position with the President was strong and secure, and by this point he had established himself as the most influential of the foreign policy advisers--an elder statesman, rising above the operational and political lines in the conduct of policy. The McFarlane appointment helped restore some balance to the national security process, since he removed the major points

of conflict between advisers in the White House and the NSC staff. But the rate of turnover among the top foreign policy advisers over the past two and-a-half years seriously impeded the development of orderly decision-making processes. Changing the NSC leadership had little if anything to do with the question of the direction of American foreign policy. There was still no one to coordinate the day-to-day policy decisions and improve communication within the government.

Unlike Kissinger or Brzezinski, there was no one in the Reagan administration to develop broader themes in foreign policy and conceptualize the intellectual underpinnings of its actions. The Reagan foreign policy team was not able to work out an overall foreign policy framework and, as was often the case, rhetoric took the place of policy. There was an unusually high number of personality conflicts in this administration as well as highly visible conflict over individual and institutional authority. What this meant for the broader framework of decisionmaking was that policies were, at best, short-lived and based on short-term, strategic interests instead of long-term concerns, which partly explain the inconsistencies in the Reagan policies. The system also created national security decisions with a high political content,[6] reinforcing the influence the President's political advisers had on the policy process. Translating Reagan's philosophy into a coherent policy framework was blocked not only by ideological debates, which were not as divisive as they had

been in earlier administrations, but also by procedural and operational pressures on the key participants. Moderating his doctrinaire views helped to define his policies more clearly, but it brought him no closer to a clear strategy identifying his approach to America's foreign relations.

LEBANON AS A TEST CASE

What eluded President Reagan for most of his first term in office was any kind of significant achievement in foreign policy. Not until the October 1983 invasion of Grenada did Reagan have the evidence he needed to claim a success for his administration in the area of foreign policy, even though that success was not a concrete diplomatic achievement. The significance of the American military action on this tiny Caribbean island was overplayed at the time, but recognized as a substantial lift to the administration's morale and standing when its foreign policy was otherwise uncertain and confused. Events in the Middle East leading up to the crisis in Lebanon confounded the President's fumbling attempts to design a coherent strategy consistent with America's interests in the region.

The deteriorating situation within Lebanon and the escalating hostilities between the Israelis, Syrians and the PLO produced the first crisis for the new administration, which was quite unprepared for a confrontation which would challenge the very basis of America's dealings in the Middle East. The deep historical roots of the enmities which existed between the feuding

parties and the vast complexities of the political configuration in Lebanon made it very difficult for the administration to respond readily. There were no clear guidelines or viable policy options for the U.S. to follow in the crisis in Lebanon, making it less likely that Washington would succeed at diplomacy in a conflict threatening a showdown between the major powers in the region. The apparent inadequacy of the President's response would increasingly weigh on his administration as the crisis endured, leaving the American role in the conflict so uncertain that it became just another obstacle to moderating the highly charged political conditions in the Middle East.

As a test case for Reagan and his system of managing foreign policy, the Lebanese crisis caught him substantially off-guard. That is not to say that the June 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon was unexpected--it was, in fact, viewed as inevitable by observers of the events in the region--but the administration was no better equipped to react than it would have been had the Israeli attack been without precedent or apparent cause. Whether it was because the President believed he could pressure Begin into staying out of Lebanon or expected that the U.S., through diplomacy, could help mediate between the parties to avert a head-on confrontation, the administration's reaction was not adequately informed, failing to take into fuller account the likely consequences of the fighting in Lebanon. Facing the first foreign policy crisis of his administration, Reagan would now have to chart a more aggressive

diplomatic strategy that would begin to define his policy.

Part of Reagan's problem was that there was no overall framework of the administration's policies. This was partly related to the structure of the decisionmaking process in foreign policy which did little to reduce bureaucratic rivalries, but it was also a consequence of the President's failure to design an agenda which would order his priorities and set the future course of his administration. As the first crisis, Lebanon would be a test of Presidential prerogative and the working of the bureaucracy, making it necessary to make an unpleasant and unwanted choice between exerting long-term restraint on Israel or ultimately acquiescing in Israel's military movements. It created a dilemma which Reagan would no sooner find a solution to than he could commit himself to a clearly articulated long-term strategy. The handling of the Lebanese crisis had broad ramifications for the status of the talks on Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank and Gaza areas, which had been stalled for some time and now put on indefinite hold while the fighting continued in Lebanon. It also affected the security of the Persian Gulf region, which was the focus of the administration's approach to the Middle East during the early months of 1981 and the future of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

There could be no progress on these critical issues until the situation in Lebanon was brought under control and some semblance of stability restored. These realities meant additional pressure

on the United States to work out some kind of negotiated settlement, separating the combatants long enough to revive the search for an Israeli-Arab peace formula. But events in Lebanon, more than anything else held back American strategy and set back plans for a diplomatic initiative in the Middle East. Instead of building a basis for new peace negotiations, based in the Camp David framework, the Middle East policy-makers were busy trying to limit the negative effect of the Lebanese conflict on America's interests in the region.

SALIENT MIDDLE EAST ISSUES

Strategic Issues

There were two aspects to the Middle East issue taken up by the administration from the start. The first was the strategic situation in the Persian Gulf region which came largely as a result of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan. Concern over a deterioration in American security interests in the Middle East and Persian Gulf was behind an anti-Soviet strategy to counter the Soviet influence in the region. Reagan spoke early on about an American military presence in the Middle East for the purpose of keeping the Soviet Union from risking a confrontation with the U.S.[7] Pointing to the threat of Soviet expansionism, Secretary of State Haig sought some regional military collaboration to unite the Arabs and Israel against future Soviet aggression. Haig described the arrangement as a "consensus of strategic concerns" and hoped that as many countries as possible would see it in their

interests to cooperate with the U.S.

This approach was consistent with the Reagan ideology in East-West issues, and the "strategic consensus" worked along with the emphasis on increasing America's military power. As a basis of defense of the area, the idea of a strategic consensus was not new. Organizing defense of the Middle East against the Soviet threat has been a theme of American policy since the fifties,[8] with the formation of military alliances against the Soviet Union. The U.S. was not a direct participant, but it was the initiative of the Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, that led to a treaty protecting the northern tier of the Middle East. Haig would look for his strategic consensus mainly in the southern tier, linking together Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Oman and drawing them into a loose relationship with the U.S. that would provide a structure for the rapid deployment of American troops to the Gulf region.

The Saudis would be the key to Haig's strategy. The objective was to establish a strategic understanding with the Saudis, and through them with other pro-Western, or moderate Arabs. But Haig overestimated the extent to which the Arab nations would be alarmed by a Soviet threat. The differences in perceptions of the Soviet Union and Middle East politics were underscored by the remarks of the Saudi Foreign Minister at the end of Haig's tour of the Middle East in April. Despite Haig's satisfaction with the trip, Prince Saud al-Faisal said that while

the U.S. and Saudi Arabia share the same "overall direction and perception" on a number of issues, the Saudis believed that Israel, not the Soviet Union, was the main cause of instability in the region. And his comments echoed those of Jordan's King Hussein and other Jordanian officials who met with Haig. The Saudi reaction established the limits for the administration's course, which would also be constricted by the unpredictability of events in the Middle East and the policies and decisions of other nations in the region. The administration's strategy to ensure the security of the Persian Gulf was frustrated from the start, and there would be little prospect for progress on America's security interests without the development of a broader negotiating strategy for the region.

Middle East Peace Process

A second part of the Middle East issue was American diplomacy on the Arab-Israeli question of Palestinian autonomy. The Camp David process has provided for the establishment of autonomy for the Palestinians, but negotiations had been stalled for more than a year. Resumption of the negotiations were now a secondary matter for the new administration, while it concentrated on, as Haig called them, the larger strategic realities of the region. Haig resisted the entreaties of the Begin government to take the lead in breaking the impasse on the Palestinian negotiations, and ignored the requests of the Near East Bureau of the State Department for progress on the issue of Palestinian rights. Haig

was in no hurry to become involved in the complexities of the autonomy talks, deciding it would be better in any case to wait until after the Israeli elections at the end of June.

In the spring of 1981, the Labor Party was expected to defeat Begin's governing Likud, which would probably make it easier for the U.S. to deal with the Israelis. With little chance of a breakthrough until after the elections, Haig said he did not want to resume the talks prematurely. He was also aware that the autonomy talks would be an obstacle to strategic consensus and the aims of the U.S. in the Middle East. Complicating matters, as far as the Israelis were concerned, was an arms package for the Saudis that was part of the policy to protect Western security interests in the region. The proposal to sell Saudi Arabia advanced military equipment, including aerial surveillance aircraft such as AWACs, was seen in Washington as an important deal to get the Saudis to help the U.S coordinate the defense of the Gulf region. But what Washington underestimated was the likely impact of the Saudi arms deal and the plans for strategic cooperation between the U.S. and the Saudis on the Israeli government and on U.S.-Israel relations. Putting the peace process on hold, in the meantime, underscored the inherent difficulties in the Arab-Israeli dispute and had the effect of making the Israelis even more resistant to the idea of an American accommodation with the moderate Arab regimes in the region. By concentrating so single-mindedly on an anti-Soviet strategy and downgrading the

Palestinian issue, the administration was changing the American military relationship with Saudi Arabia and Israel and the overall military balance in the Middle East. But the outbreak of hostilities in Lebanon led to a crisis situation which became the administration's first international crisis and caused a basic change in attitude, forcing American policy to concentrate once again on restoring order in the Middle East.

The fighting in Lebanon and mounting regional tensions which threatened a wider conflict between Israel and Syria renewed America's commitment to the Middle East peace process. Faced with regional quarrels which obstructed Washington's larger aims, the U.S. redirected its negotiating efforts on regional issues and local interests which had more to do with the political stability in the area than with superpower rivalries. Events in Lebanon stirred up the deeply rooted rivalries and historic animosities in the Middle East between nationalist, religious and political elements. The U.S. began to use all its leverage to keep them from spilling over into the turmoil of the Iran-Iraq war and the bloodshed in Beirut. The Lebanese crisis was seen as part of the broader crisis in the Middle East, but a solution in Lebanon was also not possible without broader progress in the Arab-Israeli dispute.

The future of Lebanon was linked to the Middle East peace process, but the administration's policies continued to lag behind its diplomacy, while a deepening involvement in the conflict

narrowed U.S. options and concentrated America's diplomatic efforts on narrow and limited objectives. A wider and more enduring strategy was required, and a comprehensive approach to the problem in the Middle East would incorporate into American policy the interaction between events in Lebanon with the larger issues in the Arab-Israeli disputes. By not paying closer attention to Middle East politics and the policies and decisions of the individual countries, whose aims were shaped by the unfolding events in Lebanon, U.S. policy became a series of ad hoc measures which had little more perspective than the achievement of immediate results. This approach was the substitute for a clear-sighted and far-reaching strategy for restoring order and stability in Lebanon in the context of the realities in the Middle East.

THE ADMINISTRATION'S STRATEGY

U.S. policy was partly at the mercy of events in Lebanon resulting from the intrusion of outside as well as internal political forces already beyond the control of the Lebanese government. It also illustrated underlying problems in the U.S. foreign policy process and the persistence of internal conflict among decision makers. The shortcomings in the organizational framework underlined institutional conflicts over turf, and structural shifts in the policy system. Despite Reagan's intentions to make the Secretary of State the chief foreign policy spokesman, the frequent shifts of power among rival government

departments and the constant movement of top officials within and outside the bureaucracy blocked efforts to concentrate authority in the Secretary's hands.

The changeability of these bureaucratic relationships with no "intrinsic" structure of authority[9] meant that no one official in the government had the authority to sustain a leadership role in the policy process. Unlike the experience of the Nixon and Carter administrations, the conflict between the State Department and the NSC was no longer the main bureaucratic struggle over foreign policy. Influence shifted when the issue changed, illustrating what Zbigniew Brzezinski has called "parcelization,"[10] or the division of institutional and individual responsibility for policy areas depending on the specific issue. As a result, responsibility was split unevenly among agencies involved in national security policy, leaving them to take turns in determining the long-term consensus on U.S. policies. The effects of this untenable system could be seen in the content and conduct of U.S. policy in Lebanon, a course driven by the politics and policy in foreign policymaking.

The U.S. response to the Lebanese crisis was concentrated along three main courses of action. There was a diplomatic approach, based on the appointment of special Middle East envoys who worked to negotiate a solution to the fighting; a military approach, which was centered around the deployment of U.S. marines to Lebanon to serve as part of a multinational peacekeeping force,

but who ultimately undertook a combat role; and a political approach, encompassed in the Reagan peace initiative presented in September 1982, the President's Middle East plan which was predominantly a proposal for settling the Palestinian problem. Each of these policy paths contained elements of the other two, but originated primarily in the terms described. There were a number of other important aspects of America's policy in Lebanon, but they played more of a supporting role to these three basic initiatives.

The framework for the Reagan plan differed from the context in which the diplomatic and military proposals were developed in one important respect--the peace plan was not directly connected to events in Lebanon in its conception. The timing of the President's speech outlining the details of his proposed "fresh start" in the Middle East peace negotiations was linked to developments in the region, specifically to circumstances in Israel, but the idea of moving toward an overall approach to solving the Palestinian issue had been expressed from the early days of the administration, when planning for a major Presidential initiative in the Middle East got under way.[11] Because its terms were not calculated on conditions of the fighting in Lebanon, Reagan's plan was relatively immune to the mounting pressures which impinged substantially on American diplomacy and the Marines' mission in the conflict.

As the U.S. became mired down in the complexities of the

Lebanese war, the administration became less certain of its role in the conflict and met with growing public pressure to justify its presence and involvement. There arose substantial disagreements over policy and growing discontinuity and inconsistencies in the U.S. approach, the result of quick, but ill-conceived responses to developments far beyond its reach. A policy based on miscalculations of American interests in the region and false assumptions about the other side's intentions was headed for certain failure, taking along with it a foreign policy system constrained by major internal conflicts, interagency competition and procedural problems, which left no practicable means for adjusting policy to reality.

I. Diplomatic Approach

The first serious outbreak of fighting in Lebanon between Lebanese Christian militiamen and Syrian troops after the Civil War ended in a cease-fire in 1976 occurred early in April 1981 in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley and along the so-called Green line that divides Beirut between Christian and Moslem sectors. As the fighting intensified, it expanded into southern Lebanon and began to engage Lebanese Moslems and leftist militia forces allied with Palestinian guerrillas. Israeli military activity also increased, as Israel sent planes to defend Christian forces against the Syrians in central Lebanon and stepped up air attacks on Palestinian strongholds in the South.

The situation heated up toward the end of April when Israel

shot down two Syrian helicopters and the Syrians moved surface-to-air missiles known as SAM-6's into Lebanon in violation of what was an apparent implicit understanding between Israel and Syria reached in 1976 which established a "red line" beyond which Syrian action would not be allowed in a designated area north of the Litani River, which was in southern Lebanon. A team working round-the-clock on the Lebanese crisis was set up in the State Department Operations Center when it appeared that Israel and Syria were headed for a showdown, and Reagan decided to send veteran diplomat Philip C. Habib to the Middle East to help defuse tensions over Lebanon. The U.S. objective was to gain some time for diplomacy to produce a solution. Beyond that, Habib tried to establish a cease-fire and truce that would restore the fragile equilibrium in Lebanon.

At the minimum, the Habib mission was able to avert a confrontation in the Middle East between Israel and Syria. He was able to keep the Israelis from using force to get the Syrian missiles out of Lebanon, and both Begin and Syria's Hafez Assad were willing to give Habib more time to resolve the crisis. But in other respects the fighting in Lebanon intensified, particularly between rival political and religious factions and between Israel and the PLO and the first Israeli raids on Beirut since 1974. Syria continued to move military equipment into Lebanon, including additional antiaircraft missile batteries just over the Lebanese-Syrian frontier in Syria. Adding to the

tensions was the large number of U.S. and Soviet warships in the eastern Meditteranean and the possibility that a wider conflict could bring the Soviet Union into a more active role in the region.

The Israelis and Palestinians agreed separately to a cease-fire along the Israeli-Lebanese border in late July, the result of U.S. as well as Saudi and U.N. diplomacy (neither the U.S. nor Israel could talk directly with the PLO). Washington now turned its attention to the internal conflicts, which were tearing Lebanon apart, and in the next phase of negotiations, Habib's role was expanded to try to help resolve the political strife which portended the outbreak of civil war.

Philip Habib was the first of what would turn out to be five special Middle East envoys sent to the region during different periods of the Lebanese crisis.[12] These missions began in the spring of 1981, when the missile crisis threatened a wider war, and endured for three years until finally in March 1984, the last of the U.S. marines withdrew from Lebanon. Each of the diplomatic missions concentrated on different aspects of a widening conflict, seeking some common ground for establishing a working framework for the negotiations.

The individual negotiators represented the prevailing administration views as policy-makers in Washington and struggled to find a formula to restore order in Lebanon. Overall, the U.S. worked to contain the violence in Lebanon, but the strategy was

weakened by the underlying realities and complex circumstances surrounding disputes in the Middle East. The volatility of the Lebanese situation meant that the objectives of diplomacy depended on the most recent turn of events. Despite the efforts of the negotiators to manage the conflict, the fighting continued to ferment, creating ever more tumult in an already untenable balance of forces within Lebanon. The administration's policy held on to a limited objective during the first phase of negotiations over the crisis brewing in Lebanon. Habib's presence in the Middle East did not signal an expansion of the U.S. role in the Lebanese conflict.

The feeling in Washington, in fact, was to stay away from becoming entangled in the unpredictable unfolding of events in the region, and concentrate--once the initial crisis had passed--on forging an anti-Soviet strategic consensus and, beyond that, on broader matters involving Arab-Israeli polemics. But, whether intending to or not, the administration became caught up in the complexities of Middle East politics and in recriminations from both sides over U.S. arms sales policy. These affected Washington's ability to influence events in the region and its need to protect its credibility and prestige. But the U.S. could not control forces within the region which were the product of historical and strategic circumstances, although they would have a direct impact on American policies and slow down diplomatic efforts in Lebanon. The escalation of hostilities in the Middle

East intensified debate on pending sales of F-16 fighter jets to Israel and the proposed sale of AWACs early warning planes to Saudi Arabia. Deteriorating conditions in Lebanon had already upset Secretary Haig's initial strategy in the Middle East, and now confrontation over the AWACs issue and strains in the U.S.-Israeli relationship provoked by the destruction of an Iraqi atomic reactor by Israel in early June and bombing raids on PLO targets in Beirut rendered U.S. involvement more complicated and consuming than it was ever intended to be. The administration now had to defend its approach to the Saudis and revise the formula under which the U.S. would send the F-16 jets to Israel. These developments forced Middle East planners to have a very different agenda from the one they had anticipated. Instead of establishing a basis for Middle East diplomacy, they were dealing with the issues on a piecemeal basis without any agreement on the U.S. role in the Mideast.

Phase One: Israel, Syria and SAM Missiles

The first phase of the Lebanese crisis was contained within the parameters of the Israeli-Syrian contest over the SAM missiles and the escalating attacks between Israel and the PLO strongholds in southern Lebanon. The dilemma of internecine rivalries in Lebanon would not impinge on the outcome of the crisis for at least a year and-a-half, when they would become a formidable obstacle and burden to a settlement of the fighting. The limited reaches of the crisis made it easier to deal with the situation

than it would be when the course of events deteriorated sharply and American involvement increased dramatically. The crisis forced the administration to consider whether to exert restraint on Israel from settling matters with its Arab neighbors by force, especially when Begin warned he would use military means to remove the Syrian missiles if diplomacy failed.

The issue of military activity became more serious with the Israeli attack on the Iraqi reactor and the escalation of air attacks and ground assaults on guerrilla bases in Lebanese territory. There were suggestions that Israel violated its weapons agreement with the U.S. by using American-provided weapons in raids against Arab targets, but the diplomatic strategy of the White House and State Department was to call for military restraint by both sides and place a lid on public criticism of Begin. The effect of the Israeli raids was to complicate the administration's efforts to act as an "honest broker"[13] in negotiating a cease-fire with the Arabs and jeopardize American interests in the region.

Moreover, they produced divided opinions within the government which became publicized despite the official administration policy of avoiding public recriminations over Israel's actions. There were recommendations for stronger action against Israel from some high administration officials, including Defense Secretary Weinberger, who wanted the administration to make clear that Washington did not condone the raids. Deputy

Secretary of State William Clark agreed with Weinberger on pursuing a firmer line against Israel, whose public statements criticizing the government's approach were discounted by the White House as merely personal views and not official policy. Weinberger and Clark spoke out against Begin even more harshly after the Beirut bombing which, Clark reproved, had "embarrassed and disappointed" the administration.

The use of Israel's military power in the missile stand-off with Syria could also make the difference in Habib's mission to the Middle East. To cut the losses it sustained when it failed to restrain Israel, the administration suspended delivery of shipments of F-16 aircraft to Israel. But this response fell far short of the kind of arms embargo invoked by Congress in the past[14] and signaled Washington's desire to avoid a confrontation with Israel at a time when Israeli cooperation was essential to the administration's Middle East diplomacy. Although the President's aides were unanimous in favor of deferring deliveries, there apparently was no serious consideration given to cutting off aid to Israel. The debate over arms shipments to Israel was less a salient policy decision affecting the U.S.-Israeli relationship than it was a short-lived measure to reassure the moderate Arab nations of America's credibility in the region.

In any case, these developments did not bring the administration any closer to an overall framework for its policies in the Middle East. Habib's mediation efforts assured an active role for

the U.S. in future Middle East diplomacy, but without agreement on any specific course. The events in Lebanon meant that the Reagan administration, which had tried to avoid involvement in the Middle East conflict could no longer put off entry into the Arab-Israeli diplomatic fray. A new Mideast envoy was named in February 1982 to dramatize the administration's commitment to the peace process--the Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, Richard Fairbanks--but there was no specific plan for resuming the autonomy talks within a framework that held out any prospect for progress. The U.S. sent conflicting signals of its interests to Israel and the Arabs, pursuing an approach which attempted to accommodate everyone's interests, but ended up subverting American diplomacy in the Camp David process. The failure of the Saudi "peace plan" initiative and the strengthening of hard-line views on Israel and on the Arab side dimmed prospects of the Camp David negotiations, while strains in U.S.-Israeli relations weakened diplomatic alternatives to continued provocations.

Into this situation came renewed warnings of a military showdown in Lebanon. Habib resumed talks aimed at maintaining a shaky cease-fire in southern Lebanon in February 1982 at a time of growing speculation about a possible Israeli attack. Earlier, Israel's Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon, said Israel would take military action against Syrian missiles in Lebanon and against a heavy weapons build-up by the PLO unless U.S. diplomacy produced

results. By the spring of 1982, an invasion by Israel seemed inevitable, with Begin and Sharon waiting only for the appropriate opportunity to strike Palestinian positions and possibly immobilize the Syrian forces, too.

The cease-fire Habib negotiated in the summer of 1981 had bought enough time only for the storm over Lebanon to gather. American diplomacy was running out of time as Israel seemed poised to carry out a major military attack. Operation "Peace for Galillee," as the Israelis named the invasion of Lebanon, created a new balance of power and opened major political opportunities in the Middle East. The prospects for peace depended on the U.S. and the role it would play in negotiations for a settlement of the crisis in Lebanon. Talks on Lebanon had to be coordinated with broader considerations of Middle East policy. This put Philip Habib in the position of having to balance short-term possibilities for ending the crisis with the requirements for a long-term political solution for Lebanon.

Until now the Reagan administration has not taken initiatives in its Middle East diplomacy, but the political situation in Lebanon had put the U.S. more deeply into the role of mediator than had been anticipated or intended. The new power realities which followed the Israeli military operation in Lebanon emphasized the strength of the American position in the Middle East and the relatively favorable position of the U.S. in Mideast diplomacy. The opportunity to move the Middle East toward peace

gave the U.S. more leverage in the area, but also more responsibility for whatever happened.[15] Opportunity also meant there were higher risks, and as much as there was to gain in this phase of Mideast diplomacy, there was even more to lose if the U.S. could not hold onto the intiative.

Israel's purpose at the outset of its intervention in Lebanon was to secure southern Lebanon by pushing the Palestinians northward to a distance of twenty-five miles from the Israeli border and place their artillery beyond the range of Israeli territory. It was expected that the operation would last no more than three or four days and Israel said it would not attack Syrian forces unless they attacked first. This was quickly achieved, but Israeli military units continued to advance up the coast toward Beirut and, after destroying the SAM-6 sites on both sides of the Lebanese-Syrian border and downing twenty-three Syrian MIG's in fierce air battles, pushed toward the Beirut-Damascus highway. The Israeli invasion now appeared to have a much bigger scope and there was growing apprehension about the broad engagement of Syrian forces in battle.

The Israelis were poised to strike at Beirut less than one week after moving into Lebanon, and force the removal of the political and military leadership of the PLO from Beirut. By cutting off the last exit or entry route for guerrilla forces in Beirut, the Israelis suceeded in trapping the PLO in the Lebanese capital and cutting off Syrian forces. In these circumstances,

the U.S. tried to negotiate an end to the fighting, arrange for the PLO to leave Beirut peacefully and organize a multinational peacekeeping force. Begin also wanted a reduction in the 25,000-man Syrian force in Lebanon--the Syrian mandate as a peacekeeping force was given after Syria entered Lebanon in 1976 to end the civil war between the Christians and Moslems.

Begin also insisted on a long-term solution to protect Israel from attacks from Lebanese territory before he would agree to the withdrawal of all foreign troops, including Israeli and Syrian forces. Habib began negotiations leading to the disarmament of the PLO and, through shuttle diplomacy between Israel and Lebanon, tried to buy time for diplomacy to work. The reality of the impasse in Beirut caused the administration to move away from an opportunity it saw for a broad political settlement in the Middle East and concentrate instead on narrower objectives. It decided to depend on Habib's negotiating efforts to create a new political order in Lebanon free of Syrian and PLO influence in order to hasten Israeli and Syrian withdrawal.

The United States had four main goals in trying to end the Lebanese conflict which established the framework for American diplomacy in the crisis: (1) the deployment of the Lebanese Army in and around Beirut; (2) an end to the armed PLO presence in and around Beirut; (3) the withdrawal of forces in and around Beirut; and (4) the redeployment of all foreign forces in the Beirut area. The most immediate objective was the peaceful departure of the PLO

from Beirut, a requisite step before negotiating the withdrawal of Israeli and Syrian forces and strengthening the Lebanese government.

It was Habib's job to help overcome the initial reluctance in Arab capitals to cooperate with any plan to evacuate the PLO for fear this might appear as cooperation with Israel. Habib's strategy was to use the "shock" of the Israeli invasion to force the PLO to leave Beirut,[16] but he was required to use intermediaries to carry out this mission because the policy of the administration has been to refuse to deal directly with the PLO. Habib was given considerable latitude in these negotiations which he needed for the fast-breaking situation in Lebanon. He has been a "prime shaper" of policy in the Lebanese crisis[17] and was given more authority than was usual for American diplomats to negotiate the interests of the U.S. He negotiated within the broad guidelines he worked out with Haig and approved by the President. This did not mean he always saw eye-to-eye with Haig on the details, or even on the larger underlying issues affecting U.S.-Israeli relations.

There were differences in outlook early on in the crisis between Habib and Haig, but it was exemplary of Habib's influence as a negotiator that the President followed his advice all along. Habib and his team essentially worked out the mechanics of the PLO withdrawal, and he is credited with formulating the proposal to send American troops to Lebanon to oversee the pullout. The

acceptance of Habib's plan for deployment of a multinational peacekeeping force in Lebanon by the Israeli and Lebanese Cabinet appeared to clear the way in negotiations for the Palestinian withdrawal from West Beirut. With the end of the Beirut siege, focus then turned to the Bekaa Valley, where 25,000 Syrian soldiers and PLO guerrillas remained.

Second Phase: Siege of Beirut

Habib also played a leading role in the diplomatic talks which succeeded in devising a plan to end the ten-week siege of the Lebanese capital. By virtue of his vast diplomatic experience and his relationship with President Reagan, he had the situation in hand and, to the extent that circumstances allowed him, could take the lead in settling the crisis. Habib's primary contact in the negotiations was with the former Muslim Prime Minister Saab Salam, who had become the main Lebanese mediator and acted as the key intermediary between Habib and PLO leader, Yasir Arafat. These negotiations took place within the framework of a Lebanese Council of National Salvation, made up of rival Christian and Moslem factions, where the PLO proposals were discussed and then presented by Habib to Israel and the U.S. The purpose of these talks was to work out an acceptable agreement for disarming the PLO and arranging its withdrawal from Beirut.

The strategy Habib employed to hasten the process put pressure on the PLO leadership by telling the Saudis, who acted as intermediaries in these diplomatic exchanges, that the U.S. could

not guarantee that Israel would not invade West Beirut and that the only way to prevent an attack was to end the PLO's military presence. Habib, however, reported that the Saudis were receiving conflicting messages from the U.S. which indicated that the United States had obtained Israel's agreement to withdraw its forces three miles from Beirut, which presumably meant that the threat of an Israeli attack had dissipated. Reports from the Saudis were that William Clark, the national security adviser, had so advised the Saudi Ambassador in Washington. Haig also believed that the strategy of "psychological pressure"[18] was undercut by Vice President Bush and Defense Secretary Weinberger who, in their travels to Riyadh in mid-July as members of the official American delegation to the funeral of King Khalib of Saudi Arabia, had reportedly criticized Israel for its actions in southern Lebanon.

Evidence that the administration had been negotiating for a settlement along two diplomatic lines indicated that the White House and State Department were sending different signals to the Saudis, Lebanese and, indirectly, the PLO about the Lebanese situation. The view that there were two channels of communication with diverging approaches was accepted by State but disputed by the White House. By the end of June, Habib's initiative appeared to be the clear focus of diplomatic activity in Beirut, but not without Haig alleging that the conflicting signals sent by Weinberger and Clark had "destroyed" the opportunity for a quick end to the crisis.[19]

This incident illustrated the continued divisions among the President's advisers on the Lebanese crisis, with the President getting conflicting advice from Haig, Weinberger and Clark. Just as Israel's earlier military actions against the Iraqi nuclear reactor and Palestinian positions in and around Beirut brought out into the open the differences which existed between these top officials, the Israeli attack on West Beirut intensified them. Consistent with his approach to U.S.-Israeli relations, as he expressed it on previous occasions, Haig was primarily concerned that the administration not publicly criticize Israel, believing it would be counterproductive to do so and make Begin even more instransigent. He said the administration wanted an Israeli withdrawal, but that it would be better to try to make the best of the situation by seeking a long-term solution in Lebanon that required Israel's good will.

Weinberger and Clark rejected this "soft" public approach to Begin advocating, instead, a public rebuke. Weinberger also said it was incorrect to assume Haig was speaking for the administration. Weinberger was most outspoken in his opposition to Israel's military moves and renounced the use of military force in order to work out a diplomatic solution in the Middle East. In the strongest criticism by an administration official of the Israel action, Weinberger said Begin should have limited his action to diplomacy and not used force in Lebanon. Haig had his own differences with Habib as well, and Habib sometimes found himself

a factor in the feuding between the White House and State Department. Habib, for example, was approached by White House officials at one point, and asked to make sure that all his communications were received by Clark at the NSC. There were suspicions that some of Habib's messages were being intercepted by the Secretary of State.

On the broader policy issues, Habib and Haig differed on how to treat Israel and, as the Israelis tried to keep tensions high in Beirut, Habib wanted to pursue a tougher line with Begin. Although Habib was a strong supporter of Israel, he was also quick to blame Israel for most of the breakdowns in the Lebanese cease-fires. Haig's resignation on June 25 magnified these differences over the Lebanon crisis, although his departure was not a direct result of the conduct of Middle East policy. The reason for his decision had more to do with his larger concern that others were interfering in his ability to manage foreign affairs and undercutting his policies. Concerned about the drift of policy and how policy was being made, Haig charged that policy was shifting from the course he and Reagan had charted at the beginning of the administration. Haig's tenure at State had been contentious from the start, as disputes over power and policy and differences in ideology and temperament figuring prominently in his demise.

While the Middle East may have been the final undoing for Haig, it capped months of political and personal struggles between

the White House and State Department. Haig's resignation came in the middle of the crisis, and while the President gave him the authority to manage the Lebanese situation until George Shultz had been confirmed by the Senate, he did not have the personal influence with Reagan to follow through on his strategy. Before he left Washington for good, Haig worked fervently on a plan which would commit American troops to the international peacekeeping force to enter Beirut after the PLO withdrawal and help remove all foreign troops from the country and reestablish Lebanon's sovereignty.

The multinational peacekeeping force was the key to the plan finally approved by Israel and Lebanon in August, but not before the administration's attitude changed and Reagan adopted a firmer line toward Israeli military actions in Lebanon. With the Israeli move into West Beirut, Habib reported to the President that he was finding it almost impossible to negotiate an agreement on a Palestinian withdrawal, and advised Reagan to get tougher with Israel. A key element of Habib's strategy in shaping the final agreement was his skill in keeping both the Israelis and Palestinians guessing whether or not Habib could deliver on his warnings and succeeding, in the end, by keeping each party from challenging his hand.[20] There were potentially grave risks to the separate interests of Israel and the PLO by spurning the Habib plan--the Israelis were uncertain of the administration's reaction if they went any further militarily while the Palestinian were

advised that the U.S. might not be able to restrain the Israelis next time--and there were critical factors in their willingness to accept the U.S. peace plan.

Third Phase: Withdrawal of Foreign Troops

The third stage of American diplomacy in Lebanon tried to accomplish what had remained an elusive goal in Habib's earlier efforts-- a general agreement on withdrawal of all foreign forces, with the U.S. negotiating an acceptable timetable and security considerations. Assisting Habib in these negotiations was Morris Draper, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, who had been with Habib throughout the Beirut talks on a PLO pullout. By the end of the year, Draper was running the American mediation effort in Lebanon and Habib's role as special envoy was expanded to include both Lebanon and Palestinian autonomy talks. This last phase was also the most prolonged and protracted in the extension of American diplomacy to control the Lebanese crisis, coming to a conclusion with the May 17, 1983 Israeli-Lebanese withdrawal accord and capping eleven months of war and talks in Lebanon.

As the culminating achievement of U.S. diplomacy in Lebanon, however, the agreement fell sharply short of expectations and exposed the short-comings in the American approach and the real limits of U.S. diplomacy, which were in greater evidence during this final phase of negotiations than in any of the other previous attempts. The earliest efforts to avert a confrontation in

Lebanon over the Syrian missiles in the Bekaa Valley succeeded only in buying time for future talks. They depicted the U.S. as an arbiter in the Middle East crisis, but forced to operate within the constraints of pressures which were predominant in the area. The negotiated pullout of Palestinians and Syrian fighters from Beirut prevailed over the indigenous circumstances inside Lebanon and outside pressures from Syria, and represented what might be described as the high point of U.S. diplomacy in the crisis.

The end of the organized fighting created new realities in the Middle East and short-term opportunities for changing the balance of forces in the region. To outside observers and those close to the day-to-day handling of the crisis on the American side, the U.S. now had the initiative to take advantage of what they saw as new opportunities for peace. The new political situation in Lebanon provided some leverage for the U.S. and a chance to turn Syrian losses into a gain for U.S. interests in the area at the expense of Moscow's efforts to invest in Syria as part of the Soviet bid for power in the region. But the U.S. wrongly assumed that Israel would withdraw quickly in return for security arrangements in southern Lebanon and miscalculated the willingness as well as capacity of moderate Arabs to pressure Syria and the remaining PLO forces to leave. And in negotiating the Israeli-Lebanese accord, the American diplomatic team was so preoccupied with the mechanics of working out the details of the withdrawal agreement that it overlooked domestic developments

inside Lebanon, and it was the civil strife which eventually doomed any prospects the accord might have held for reaching an enduring resolution of the crisis.

The initiative for negotiating the accord passed from Draper and his staff to Secretary of State George Shultz by the end of April, when Shultz finally agreed to personally mediate the dispute which continued to block diplomatic efforts to establish a basis for agreement between the two sides. Shultz had long resisted handling this aspect of the negotiations himself, primarily for the reason that he did not want to put his prestige and credibility on the line without some assurance that he would achieve tangible success in his mission. He did succeed in overcoming the remaining issues, but what the Israelis described as a "peace treaty" between their country and Lebanon never went into effect when the conditions for its implementation, agreement by Syria and the PLO to withdraw their forces in the same period the Lebanese and Israeli officials had agreed to, was not met. The Lebanon accord was a personal success for Shultz, but it was not the solution to the underlying problems in the region.

The agreement began to unravel soon after it was accepted in Israel and Lebanon with the Israeli decision to unilaterally pull back from the Beirut area and the outbreak of civil war in the Shuf mountains following Israeli's actions, with the Christian-led Lebanese Army and Phalangists on one side and the Syrian-backed Druse on the other. At the same time, the American military

presence in Lebanon was stepped up and the United States, instead of mediating the differences, was becoming a military antagonist,[21] intensifying the factional warfare in Lebanon and further polarizing the Middle East conflict. American diplomacy had run its course as did the approach based on the deployment of U.S. policy in Lebanon. From the late spring 1983 until the withdrawal of the U.S. marines in March, 1984, the administration was enmeshed in the escalating hostilities in and around Beirut which inextricably brought the marines into the depths of the conflict. The most obvious shortcoming in these circumstances was the failure to coordinate the diplomatic and political sides of U.S. policy with the military aspects of America's involvement in Lebanon.

There would still be two more special envoys sent to the Middle East to work out some end to the impasse over bringing about the withdrawal of all foreign troops months after the Lebanese-Israeli accord was reached. Robert McFarlane, the deputy to NSC adviser William Clark, replaced Habib as chief Lebanon negotiator in the summer of 1983[22] and was, in turn, replaced by Donald Rumsfeld when McFarlane succeeded Clark at the NSC in November. In their efforts to break the impasse, McFarlane's and Rumsfeld's missions both included meetings with leaders in the Middle East in an effort to foster a political settlement in Lebanon. McFarlane's appointment seemed to suggest that the initiative for handling the Lebanese situation had now passed from the State Department to the White House, indicating the desire

within the White House to control events on the diplomatic side in Lebanon.[23]

But American influence and leverage could no longer support diplomatic talks over the spreading pandemonium of Lebanese politics. Nor could the U.S. role help bring about some form of political reconciliation in Lebanon. The capacity of the United States to affect change in the Lebanese situation was also impeded by the continued stalemate in the larger Middle East conflict. American leverage in this conflict was reduced as a result of its inability to act as an arbitrator between Israel and the Arabs and its failure to get Israel to freeze settlements and withdraw from Lebanon. Negotiating under these conditions, McFarlane's and Rumsfeld's presence in the Middle East had considerably less impact on events there than Habib's earlier role. The shift to White House control that McFarlane's selection as special envoy appeared tc suggest was less significant in the handling of diplomatic matters than it was in formulating the strategy underlying the deployment of American marines in Lebanon.

II. Military Approach

Military operations in Lebanon produced the most heated disputes within the councils of foreign policy decision-making in Washington. The question of what the U.S. should do in Lebanon generated a strong policy debate over the use of force to back up the U.S. position as conditions in the area deteriorated. The U.S. was confronted with a serious setback to its policies in the

Middle East, and a critical decision had to be made on the use of military force in the service of diplomacy. This period of the administration's Middle East policy saw the prospects for peace grow dimmer as the risk of war became commensurately greater. The stakes for the U.S. had risen sharply as the diplomatic impasse hardened, leaving choices for the policymakers which produced sharp reactions on either side of the policy struggle.

The lines of battle within the administration were drawn up between Secretary of State Shultz on the one side, who favored the use of force to back up America's obligations, and Defense Secretary Weinberger on the other, who opposed it. Shultz had an ally in NSC assistant McFarlane, and Weinberger in CIA director William Casey. But the dispute centered on the divergent tactics of Shultz and Weinberger towards military commitment and the bolstering of diplomatic efforts with a show of military muscle. As a confrontation between the State Department and Pentagon, the Shultz-Weinberger feud offered an interesting switch in what had become established institutional perspectives within each governmental department. Shultz, the nation's number one diplomat, was advocating more assertive military actions, while Weinberger, the defender of the U.S. military services, expressed deep reservations about their place in the hostilities within and along the Lebanese borders. Their feuding shaped up as the most enduring bureaucratic conflict in the making of the administration's first-term policy in the Middle East.

President Reagan sent U.S. marines into Lebanon twice in 1982. The conditions of their deployment on each of the two occasions changed markedly, notwithstanding the fact that only five weeks had lapsed between the date of their initial arrival on August 20 and their return, after having been withdrawn, in late September. The conditions in Lebanon were so volatile that American policymakers had no means to anticipate, much less predict, what new pressures would be brought to bear on U.S. interests there. The decision to send the Marines into Lebanon for the first time was not a factor of military policy as much as it was a function of the political-diplomatic objective of the U.S. to end the Lebanese conflict. What was most notable about the commitment of U.S. troops to the multinational peacemaking force was that it established the precedent of an American military presence in the area of the crisis.

The marines arrived with conditions and terms set by the President that were designed, in part, to assuage fears of American military entanglement overseas--a vestige of the memory of the American experience in Vietnam--as well as make it clear that the marines would stay only as long as it was necessary to carry out the limited purpose of its mission. The function of the troops as part of the multinational force would be to separate Palestinian from Israeli forces in West Beirut, let the Palestinian fighters leave, and allow the Lebanese Army to eventually take over. U.S. forces entered Beirut after the

Palestinian evacuation was underway in concert with the Italian MNF contingent and the remainder of the French force. Approximately 800 marines from the Sixth Fleet were deployed in what the President said was a "carefully limited noncombatant role." The forces were not to engage in combat but could exercise the right of self-defense and were armed with light infantry weapons.

The agreement between the U.S. government and the Government of Lebanon established that the marines would depart Lebanon no later than thirty days after arrival; they left on September 10, sixteen days after landing. By the time the marines were sent back in September, the political circumstances in Lebanon had rapidly deteriorated and stood on the brink of a new crisis. On September 14, Lebanon's President Bashir Gemayel was assassinated and Israeli forces were moved into West Beirut. Two days later, Lebanese Christian forces entered two main Palestinian refugee camps, at Sabra and Shatila, and over a period of three days massacred hundreds of Palestinians in the camps. The succession of events indicated a breakdown of order which threatened the outbreak of wide-scale fighting, necessitating a separation of the belligerents. The marines were called back in, but this time with no established timetable and no deadlines for withdrawal. This time the marines would carry heavier weapons and have authority to use force to break up clashes among Lebanese factions.

At first, Reagan said the marines would remain until Syrian and Israeli forces withdrew from Lebanon. The conditions of the

marines' departure then became the establishment of the Lebanese government's authority in Beirut. In any case, on the eve of the marines' return to Lebanon, Reagan said he could not establish any kind of timetable involved in their redeployment. The sending of American marines this time around, under conditions considerably more uncertain and decidedly more risky than they had been one month earlier, was met with more reluctance in Congress and growing uneasiness across the American public. And with the difficulty the new Lebanese President, Amin Gemayel, faced in establishing control over Christian military forces and establishing the authority of the central government, there was no easy end in sight for the return of the American contingent of the peacekeeping force. Gemayel's repeated emphasis on the need of outside forces and willingness of the administration to back him up suggested an indefinite stay for the marines.

Seen against the environment surrounding these developments, the purpose, duration and conditions of the marines' second tour of duty in Lebanon stood in contrast to their first mission. The arrival of the marines in Beirut for the second time with no fixed conditions or limits on their engagement doomed their mission to failure from the start. Their mission was open-ended and therefore even more vulnerable to the exigencies of the civil strife inside Lebanon, increasingly becoming a target of the hostilities. Not only did American policymakers overestimate the willingness of the Syrians to withdraw, but they gravely mis-

calculated the strength of the Lebanese Army, which was critical to the goal of unifying the country under the Lebanese Government. But it was not, in fact, a plan to restore Lebanese sovereignty or rebuild the Lebanese Army that brought the marines back. It was rather the guilt, according to officials in the State and Defense departments at the time, over the massacre of hundreds of Palestinian civilians in the refugee camps which, had they remained through the duration of their original thirty-day mandate, might have been prevented.[24]

The United States had promised to safeguard the refugee camps when the marines were sent over the first time. But after the PLO withdrawal the marines also left. Their return, however, led to extended political and military commitments to President Gemayel, stressing the American link with the Gemayel government. The U.S. assumed primary responsibility for equipping and training the Lebanese Army as part of the broadly conceived program to rebuild the army into an effective force. Joint economic and military committees were formed as a basis for policy coordination and as a show of force and political will against the Syrians. This policy turned out to be not only misguided in its approach to the Gemayel regime, but based on unsupported assumptions as well as incomplete information on Lebanese strength.

First, the task of rebuilding the army turned out to be much bigger than the U.S. had anticipated. Not only did the Lebanese Army have half as many troops as appeared in the original

estimates, which were worked out by American military officers, but low morale and weak leadership within the ranks of the troops further encumbered U.S. efforts in training the Army to occupy all of Lebanon once the foreign forces left. By concentrating on building up the Lebanese army as a symbol of national unity, the U.S. created unwarranted expectations of its own and the army's capacity to turn around circumstances prevailing in Beirut and in disputed regions in the Shuf and Bekaa Valley during the summer of 1982. The U.S. had its prestige and credibility riding on this formula for a solution in Lebanon. What made the administration's approach less tenable was the strategic decision to throw its support behind the legitimacy of the Lebanese government, backing it increasingly with American military instruments and sounding the rhetoric of the U.S. stake in Lebanon.

The Lebanese scene would not support the legitimacy of Gemayel's government, and the U.S., which made a commitment to protect Lebanon's sovereignty, overplayed the importance of Lebanon to its strategic interests and its global credibility. What the administration found it was doing, in reality, was defending the marines' continued presence there. And the longer they stayed, the more the President believed in the legitimacy of America's commitments. In the end, the effects of America's failure took a heavy toll on the lives of the marines and thwarted American aims in the Middle East.

The marines' position had become unsupportable against the

dangers of escalation, and the risk of a military exchange involving the Americans was more distinct by the late summer. On August 29, two marines were killed when their position near the Beirut International Airport was hit and caught in cross-fire between the Lebanese Army and Moslem militiamen. Although the response from Washington indicated no change in the American peacekeeping role, the U.S. was being drawn directly into the conflict. Without acknowledging America's growing military involvement, the administration authorized the marines to fire back in self-defense, including the use of naval and air power in support of the Lebanese Army. The President augmented U.S. naval support forces offshore to bolster the marines' own means of self-defense.

Hostilities escalated dramatically during the fall with Americans more frequently the targets of attacks. The most explosive action against the U.S. was the October 23 truck bombing of marine headequarters, resulting in the deaths of more than 230 servicemen. There was a simultaneous attack on French paratrooper barracks. An additional 200 marines arrived in Beirut on October 31, increasing the American contingent to 2000 men. The most serious escalation on the American side came in December when U.S. planes hit Syrian gun positions in Lebanon. The first air strike came in response to Syrian anti-aircraft attacks against American reconnaissance planes, but U.S. air strikes which followed were meant as a warning to Syria to pull out of Lebanon or face

increasing military pressure by the United States and Israel.

The resurgence of Syria as a political and military force in the conflict sharply raised the stakes of America's deepening involvement, but more threatening was the risk Syria's actions ran for enlarging the conflict. As its military capabilities were expanded, the result of Soviet largesse, Syria maneuvered to face down the United States and Israel, leaving the marines caught in the middle of the fighting. By the end of the year, Syria had become the most dangerous challenge to the U.S., threatening a wider war and upsetting the fragile balance of forces in the Middle East. The Syrian factor was the subject of NSDM 11, signed by Reagan on October 29, which concluded that unless the U.S., Israel and the Lebanese government raised the stakes in Lebanon, the Syrians would not withdraw, making less likely the prospects for the marines' own exit from Beirut. By the end of the year, the U.S. wanted to cut its losses in Lebanon, although differences persisted within the administration over the means to accomplish that objective.

By the fall, U.S. strategy had changed the status of the marines from their nonspecific standing as peacekeepers to a combat role in the Lebanese conflict. Broadening the possible military involvement of the marines beyond their original role was part of the administration's strategy to raise the stakes for all factions caught up in the fighting. It also left the marines' position more vulnerable to attack, thereby increasing the risks

of their own entanglement in the hostilities. How to handle the escalation of the fighting without damaging American interests became a critical policy question and a divisive issue for the Secretaries of State and Defense. Differences and tensions between Shultz and Weinberger had set them apart on issues of foreign policy and national security on previous occasions, but the Lebanese situation illustrated the anomalies of American military involvement in Lebanon.

In the case of the marines in Beirut, Shultz, the diplomat turned strategist, advocated the use of force in support of U.S. interests, while the military side resisted this approach and Weinberger advised the President to pull the marines out. To Shultz's way of thinking, it was irresolute for the U.S. to retreat in the face of the most serious challenge to its interests in the region. Based on the use of military force in support of diplomacy, Shultz's approach would "take on" Syria and pressure President Assad into accepting an American-sponsored solution. Weinberger's interpretation of events inside Lebanon led him to argue that escalation of force would inevitably increase the risk of a war with Syria. The issue of military escalation took priority in the aftermath of the bombing of the marines' compound in October when the matter of retaliation was discussed. Until that point, American military activity had been limited both in scope and degree. The marines were assigned a wider role in September when the administration sanctioned assistance to

European peace forces, but still limited to circumstances in which their forces were attacked in a way that endangered the American troops. The marines still had no military mission, although their position was increasingly described in military-strategic terms.

There was more confusion in the President's policy in the closing months of 1983, as Reagan continued to emphasize America's stake in Lebanon and support for the Gemayel government but began to look for ways to end the U.S. military presence, reversing himself, in effect, on a key element in American strategy to help unify Lebanon and bring about the withdrawal of Israeli and Syrian forces. Reagan did not easily relent to growing pressure to withdraw the marines. Instead, he played for time to build support for his policy of standing firm with the forces there. Even after the devastating attack on the marines Reagan warned that the marines' presence was necessary to keep Lebanon out of the grip of the Soviet Union or its "surrogates."

Despite the impending collapse of the army, bringing down with it the Gemayel government, the administration remained committed to propping up the Gemayel regime. By this point, that was being done more by a show of military muscle than diplomacy. Reagan also faced eroding domestic support for his decision to keep the marines in Lebanon--although there was a modest rise in public approval of the President's performance following the October attack--as support was building in Congress for a reassessment of U.S. policy and a majority of the American public

now wanted the marines out.[25]

Through the months of deteriorating conditions in the internal Lebanese conflict, Shultz prevailed upon the President to stay the course in his policy toward Lebanon and continued to advise against a premature withdrawal. Shultz had an ally in McFarlane at the NSC, who backed the strategy of relying on force to achieve political aims. The importance of giving psychological and military backing to Gemayel's government supported Shultz's and McFarlane's approach, while Weinberger was known to have been critical of the use of marines for essentially diplomatic purposes. The strategy turned out to be ill-advised and resulted in a policy failure for the United States, where so much had been invested in terms of political and military support, with regional implications for U.S. interests. In the end, Reagan went along with Weinberger on pulling the marines out, calling participation in the international force no "longer necessary or appropriate" to meet U.S. goals in Lebanon. But the fact remained that the marines' presence was extended and prolonged on the recommendations of the Secretary of State, who was firm on keeping the marines there as a symbol of national resolve. Notwithstanding the outcome of the President's policy, it was Shultz who, in the final and most perilous phase of the Lebanese conflict, was the formulator of the policy toward Lebanon and spokesman for the marines' mission there.

III. A Political Framework

American military involvement in the Lebanese crisis drew U.S. Middle East policy away from the Arab-Israeli conflict. The centerpiece of Reagan's policy in the Middle East was his peace plan of September, 1982, but the dramatic events in Lebanon during September moved the focus from the peace process to the impending crisis in Beirut. By spring 1983, the progress of talks in Lebanon became the indicator of Middle East diplomacy while the Reagan plan faltered and expired. The peace plan was supposed to give President Reagan the political initiative in the Middle East and marked a more aggressive attitude of the administration toward negotiations on Palestinian autonomy and issues of peace and war. The peace plan emphasized a "new realism" in Arab-Israeli relations, which required a more conciliatory approach by Israel toward the Arabs and Arab recognition of Israel's right to exist. Intended to renew the peace process based on the Camp David framework and U.S. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, the Reagan plan called for a self-governing Palestinian authority on the West Bank and Gaza in "association" with Jordan.

On the question of the final status of the West Bank and Gaza, the President stated as his position that neither Israeli sovereignty nor an independent Palestinian state would contribute to an enduring peace. Concerned over Israel's continued settlement activity, Reagan also called for an immediate freeze on Jewish settlements. A key element of the administration's

strategy was to get King Hussein to go along with the plan before Israel was even informed of the President's Mideast initiative. The proposals brought the Palestinian issue back to center stage and the American course would rely on the opportunities which developed in the aftermath of the Lebanon crisis for progress on the major political debate between Israel and the Arabs. By shifting the focus of American policy from the war in Lebanon to the central issues in the Israeli-Arab dispute, the administration would try to stem the tide against events in Lebanon from overtaking the peace process.

The Reagan plan would adjust the focus of American policy beyond Lebanon and on a wider and more lasting peace in the Middle East. The Arab League, meeting in Fez, Morocco in September came up with its own proposals for a Middle East peace plan and a solution to the Palestinian issue--creation of an independent Palestinian state. Different as the two plans were for a Mideast peace, they both focused on political methods to instigate change. With increasing hostilities in the Middle East, Reagan's initiative demonstrated that results were still achievable within Camp David. The timing of the president's proposal was also linked to the weakened state of Syria and the PLO in the aftermath of Israel's invasion of Lebanon, and it emphasized the importance of the U.S. in facilitating a settlement. The U.S. was an essential third party in the Middle East peace effort and the President's initiative was a move toward resolution of the

Palestinian problem which was fundamental to the Lebanon war. The plan grew out of early efforts in the administration to establish a major Presidential peace initiative in the Middle East. It was prepared by the experts from the State Department's Near East Bureau and its Policy Planning Group as well as the NSC's Middle East staff and carried out with the advice primarily of Secretary Shultz.

Shultz conducted a month-long review of American policy in the Middle East with experts from inside and outside the government just after he replaced Haig as Secretary in mid-July. The White House was now prepared to put out a comprehensive peace plan and it would be up to Shultz to determine the relative emphasis of the plan's provisions. Shultz, whose sensitivity to the Palestinian problem as the central issue of the Middle East was made clear during his confirmation hearings, was prepared to have the President impose a settlement as a follow-up to the Camp David accords. But stalemated conflict and diplomatic intertia ultimately deadlocked the prospect of political progress, and Jordan's flat refusal to participate in the negotiations deferred the implementation of the peace plan indefinitely. There were periodic attempts during the lulls in the Lebanese fighting to revive the Reagan initiative but the U.S. could not offer the Arabs what they wanted and had less leverage on Israel to elicit any guarantees regarding its policy toward the occupied areas.

By the beginning of 1984, the war in Lebanon had abated and the marines formally started their pullback to ships offshore on February 21, 1984. At the time, Reagan left open the possibility of the marines' return, but the administration was no longer actively involved in producing a formula for a political settlement in Lebanon. Special envoy Donald Rumsfeld would not return to the Middle East nor would he be replaced and it would now be up the Arabs to work out a settlement. The President also said the marines' mission was not over, but the U.S. turned down a request by Gemayel at the end of February for increased use of American naval and air power in direct support of his Government. Gemayel was now resigned to work out a political formula with the Syrians and in exchange for the withdrawal of objections by Muslim factions to his presidency, Gemayel repudiated the May 1983 Israeli-Lebanese security accord. No sooner were the marines withdrawn that the domestic debate began on the failure of U.S. policy. There was a general feeling of relief at home that the marines were coming out, ending a spiraling cycle of violence against American forces and leaving the political entanglements of the Lebanon problem to the Lebanese themselves to work out. This turnabout represented an abrupt change of policy against the experience of American commitments to the Gemayel government, but the decision to leave Lebanon was less improbable when the U.S. military could no longer defend itself from hostile militias.

The venture into Lebanon had no clear outcome or design. It

was the embodiment, rather, of a succession of reactions to the crisis in Lebanon, more instinctive than controlled, and more interested in immediate results than in the development of a long-term approach to the problems there. The course of U.S. involvement was partly caught up in the vacillating events in Lebanon, but the extension of the American commitment to the Gemayel government, with the support of diplomatic, military and political means was the result of the balance of political and bureaucratic pressures within the policy-making process. Because there was no structure of authority and there were frequent shifts of influence among agencies and individual policymakers, the President's policy was not based on any type of consistent strategy or long-range vision. The purpose was lost in the complexity of events and compromised by the absence of a clear line of command and the persistence of internal conflict within his government.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

[1]Laurence I. Barrett, *Gambling with History: Ronald Reagan in the White House* (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), p. 200.

[2]Tad Szulc, "The Vicar Vanquished," *Foreign Policy* (Summer 1981), p. 179.

[3]For more details on the personal side of the Shultz-Weinberger relationship, see Phillip Taubman, "The Shultz-Weinberger Feud," *New York Times Magazine* (April 14, 1983), p. 51ff.

[4]Steven Weisman, "The Influence of William Clark," *The New York Times Magazine* (August 14, 1983), p. 17.

[5]Leslie H. Gelb, "Taking Charge: The Rising Power of National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane," *The New York Times Magazine* (May 25, 1985), p. 20ff.

[6]Leslie H. Gelb, "Foreign Policy System: Criticized by U.S. Aides," *The New York Times* (October 19, 1981), p. 8.

[7]Reagan made this remark during the first of a series of informal news conferences planned for the rest of the first year.

[8]John C. Campbell, "The Middle East: A House of Containment Built on Shifting Sands," American and the World 1981 (*Foreign Affairs*).

[9]Barry Rubin, *Secrets of State: The State Department and the Struggle Over U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 217.

[10]Zbigniew Brzezinski, "Deciding Who Makes Foreign Policy," *The New York Times Magazine* (September 18, 1983), p. 58.

[11]Interview with Lawrence Eagleburger, July 23, 1986.

[12]The five envoys included Philip Habib, Richard Fairbanks, Morris Draper, Robert McFarlane and Donald Rumsfeld.

[13]Terence Smith, "A Setback for U.S.," *The New York Times Magazine* (July, 1981), p. 4.

[14]Congress invoked an arms embargo against Turkey in 1975 for its use of American equipment in its invasion of Cyprus the year before.

[15]Leslie H. Gelb, "Next Move in Mideast," *The New York Times* (August 19, 1982), p. 4.

[16]Alexander M. Haig, *Caveat: Realism, Reagan, and Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1984), p. 342.

[17]Leslie H. Gelb, "Habib Expands Role in Shaping Lebanon Policy," *The New York Times* (July 23, 1982), p. 1.

[18]Haig, op. cit., p. 347.

[19]Ibid., p. 344.

[20]Leslie H. Gelb, "Being Patient Brings Habib Final Victory," *The New York Times* (August 22, 1982), p. 16.

[21]Zbigniew Brzezinski, "America's Mideast Policy is in Shambles," *The New York Times* (October 9, 1983), p. 19.

[22]A major reason for Habib's leaving apparently was Syria's refusal to receive him in recent months.

[23]Rubin, op. cit., p. 217.

[24]Joel Brinkley, "Marine Mission in Beirut: Misjudgments Emerging," *The New York Times* (January 21, 1983), p. 10.

[25]According to an ABC News Poll in January 1984, 59% of Americans wanted the marines withdrawn.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

In light of the possible range of responses a president has in dealing with a foreign crisis, the choice can be stated in the following terms which reflect the inherent conflict in the State Department-NSC relationship: at what level in a crisis is it advisable to rely on institutional expertise on the issues as compared to the need for the president to assume full responsibility based on his own educated judgments of the issues. What needs to be determined in this approach is the degree of crisis the issue involves. As a result of its history, bureacuratic traditions and organizational experience, the State Department is in a position to provide information and expertise on matters where the White House--the President, his NSC adviser and his staff of senior advisers--may be more inclined to rely on their own judgment. Stated another way, the choice can also be put in terms of institutional expertise on the one hand, and presidential readiness to take risks on the other.

A judgment also has to be made on the nature of the issue. Is the issue one which requires a thorough review and discussion of its hazards or is it sufficient to rely on White House discretion. Here the balance between the NSC and the State Department is highly significant in shaping the President's response. How this matter is resolved depends to an important extent on the people and the nature of the issues involved. Each foreign policy

crisis requires a different type of response.

The Nixon-Kissinger initiative in China had relatively few risks attached to it. The formula for going ahead with this policy which had as its chief concern keeping the operation under complete cover helped to reduce the risks and ultimately preempt any kind of later attempt to change or challenge what the president and his security assistant had already accomplished. In addition to being relatively risk-free, the China opening was well-handled from an operational point of view. On the operational side, Nixon and Kissinger succeeded in keeping the anticipated breakthrough in U.S.-Chinese relations hidden. In this case, Kissinger's abilities met the requirements on both counts of successful policy-making and made possible what Nixon had only envisioned.

The situation was quite different in the Iranian case. Unlike the China question, there was no obviously good solution to the Iranian situation. The differences between the NSC adviser and Secretary of State pulled policy in competing directions. What made a choice even more difficult was that on the face of things, both policies appeared valid. There was no "right" way to go in responding to the revolution in Iran. Perhaps a better approach would have been to determine whether or not the revolution was a genuine one or whether it was one that would simply result in riotous conditions in Iran without significant consequence. Accepting that the revolution was, indeed, deep-

rooted and aimed against the existing political and social conditions, there was little the United States could do to moderate these circumstances or hope for some kind of reversal or restraint among the revolutionary elements. Regardless of how much information the State Department people might have had on the crisis and the available options for dealing with it, the conditions in Iran indicated that there was a point beyond which no assistance or counsel by the administration would have had any kind of important impact on the course of events there.

The situation in Iran presented a range of political and social extremes which was anything but conducive to an approach which concentrated on developing options for the administration. There were also important differences among the key policy-makers in Washington in determining what, in fact, was feasible under the existing conditions in Iran. Finally, since the revolution was almost certain to run its course--and in a fashion that was certain to damage American interests there--there was even less the United States could hope to do in trying to control events there.

Lebanon was less a case in extremes than Iran was. There were serious operational gaps in the president's system for managing foreign policy, but the administration failed on the conceptual level as well. From the outset of the difficulties in Lebanon it should have been recognized in Washington that the Lebanese fighting did not constitute an issue affecting the vital

interests of the U.S. American options were accordingly limited and it would have been prudent to leave open the widest possible discretion as to the course of American policy. More attention should have been directed at getting the required expertise to handle the issues in a proper and professional manner. Unlike Iran, where the risks were very high and it would have been impossible to get some kind of a bureaucratic consensus on how the U.S. should deal with the militant forces, the Lebanon case had medium-level stakes and a more limited range of risks and options making it more necessary to have expert advice on what the president should do. This means that the State Department, and not the NSC staff, should have been given primary responsibility for formulating the administration's response to events in that area of the Middle East making it then incumbent upon the White House to compel State to define the issues more clearly and provide a balanced assessment of the feasibility of American policies there.

The Lebanese case emphasizes the fact that there are limitations on the NSC assistant's role which the president ought to be prepared to take into account. The fact is that the national security assistant may not always provide the president with the kind of resources he needs in managing a crisis. Depending on the nature of the crisis--how critical the matter really is, the qualitative nature of the crisis and the kind of response it elicits from the U.S.--a more informed judgment can be

made in deciding who or what agency of the foreign affairs bureaucracy should be responsible for its management and possible resolution. The President has not always been well-served by his security assistant during a crisis, and perhaps a better understanding of the nature of the problems he is dealing with will improve the choices he and his senior foreign policy advisers make in determining who has responsibility for certain critical issues of policy.

During the recent experiences of the president in foreign policy the national security assistant, as a senior policy adviser, has brought greater flexibility into current policy operations. As a prime mover of the President's foreign policy, the national security adviser has preempted or undercut other senior presidential advisers, becoming a spokesman on policy issues for the administration. The assistant's role has made it easier for the president to circumvent regular bureaucratic channels, facilitating his control over the formulation of policy. This practice gives the president greater latitude for making policy himself, removing him from the constraints of institutional conflicts which tend to slow up the decision-making process and threaten short-run presidential interests. But centralizing White House authority has its own costs for both the organizational and operational sides of foreign policy-making. These costs are not always immediately recognized because their effects bear upon the long-run need for consistency and continuity of foreign policy.

Because the advantages of presidential ascendancy in foreign policy-making are quick to emerge, it is easy to overlook the value of the other foreign policy institutions which the President needs over the longer run to make his foreign policy effective.[1]

The active engagement of the national security adviser in the area of foreign policy has pluralized control over operations and planning in the policy process. As an alternative center for policy-making, the NSC staff role has displaced other policy organizations in the nation's policy structure, accentuating the personal views and style of the President and his NSC adviser and downgrading the institutional role of the national bureaucracy. At times, however, NSC advisers have created a great deal of confusion as to who was in charge of American foreign policy.[2] As a result, administrations frequently did not meet widespread expectations at home and abroad of consistency and unity in foreign policy. By weakening the organization of the foreign policy apparatus, these division have compounded the problem of leadership and the lack of direction from the White House. The inevitability of conflict has widened the gap between the President and the bureaucracy and drawn battle lines between the ideological and political concerns of presidential policy and the long-term perspectives that the departmental bureaucracies commonly have. The divergent views pull policy in conflicting directions and presidents soon turn away from "departmental parochialism"[3] which they find too constraining and make the

national security assistant "executive manager" of foreign policy.[4]

The national security adviser has been a leading figure with a large measure of authority over policy. The role has been expanded and formalized, giving the security adviser the leverage to influence policy from positions of greater strength. But there has been little consistency in the adviser's impact on the development and execution of national security policy during recent administrations. The role of the national security adviser has not been handed over from one presidency to another.[5] As the security assistant is so much an extension of the President, his authority is also personal in nature, pointing to the importance of the President's political style and his own approach to foreign policy in determining the assistant's role. The argument is made that the Secretary of State-NSC adviser rivalry is predominantly the result of a conflict of personalities, but it is the instruments of foreign policy which establish the parameters of conflict within the system. What has occurred since the Nixon-Kissinger days has been the institutionalization of the NSC within the national security organizational structure.

Nixon, Kissinger and China Policy

While presidents have traditionally turned to the State Department for advice on foreign policy at the beginning of each administration, Nixon was not as obliging with his own Secretary

State, William Rogers. Rogers' subordinate status was integral to Nixon's and Kissinger's goal of controlling the bureaucracy and down-grading the role of cabinet departments in national policy-making. Concentrating control over foreign policy in the White House gave Nixon personal mastery over the system, but before his first term was over, the mastery seemed more Kissinger's than his own. Kissinger's monopoly of authority was more than Nixon was ready to abide, although it was Nixon himself who made it possible for Kissinger to act as spokesman, diplomat and primary policy adviser on foreign affairs all at the same time. It was Kissinger's capacity to exert control over policy decisions which prompted Nixon to try and set the boundaries of Kissinger's performance as his national security assistant.

One way to determine the extent of Kissinger's impact on the China initiative is to speculate how his opportunities would have been different had he been trying to carry through the policy in a different capacity--for example, from a position either in the State or Defense Department instead of in his role as the President's chief assistant. Considering how highly personalized and individualized Nixon's and Kissinger's control over the China policy was, there were exacting conditions which had to be sustained over an extended period of time in order to make their approach work. In this case, regular bureaucratic procedures would have compromised the unyielding secrecy upon which the ultimate success of the policy depended. The level of secrecy

required to initiate diplomatic contacts with the Chinese also served Nixon's personal preference for confidentiality in the conduct of foreign affairs. On the policy side, secrecy also permitted Nixon and Kissinger to present the opening to China as a fait accompli, which avoided the all but certain controversy their approach would have otherwise stirred within and outside of the government; on the personal side, the element of surprise was key to Nixon's strategy of making the China breakthrough his own triumph. To these ends, Kissinger's part was critical as far as access, maneuverability and flexibility were concerned.

While the original idea and broad outlines of a rapprochement with China were Nixon's the details and mechanics of carrying out the policy were left to Kissinger. His mandate as national security assistant gave him the authority to act in the President's behalf and the prerogative to use his skills and craft to implement the China policy. The idea was Nixon's but the tactics were Kissinger's to work out and carry through. Because of the extent to which the achievement of the President's designs depended on Kissinger's solo performance in the sensitive negotiations, initially through intermediaries and then directly with Premier Chou, the outcome of all the maneuvering rested almost entirely on his ability to inspire China's confidence and its recognition of his capacity to speak for the President.

The political and personal advantages of his NSC position gave Kissinger license to enter into negotiations using unortho-

dox methods which stretched the standards of diplomatic conduct to improbable limits and ran counter to the principles of governmental accountability. His intentions remained secretive and his movements were inscrutable even to veteran China watchers. The unique circumstances in the China case--which included the fact that there were no American reporters in China who would otherwise race to divulge the news of an impending breakthrough--succeeded in keeping a lid on his activities despite the scope and magnitude of his venture. Standard bureaucratic procedures would have prevented Kissinger from pursuing his negotiations from a position in the executive departments. Not only would the secrecy have been breached, but the unconventional methods Kissinger devised to execute his strategy would have been exposed and denounced as a usurpation of power on his part. The options available to Kissinger as security adviser would have been impeded by the requirements of proper organizational procedure within the national security apparatus. Without the flexibility he enjoyed as Nixon's NSC assistant, Kissinger would not have been able to work out the mechanics of the China initiative.

Of course Kissinger's power also had its limits. As much as he had the authority to negotiate with the Chinese on the president's behalf, Kissinger had to be mindful not to overstep the bounds of his relationship with Nixon. He could not overshadow the president in a critical issue of foreign policy without risking a serious breach in that relationship which was

decisive to Kissinger's mandate as NSC adviser. The influence Kissinger had on the administration's China policy was so extensive that it became harder to separate his offficial responsibility from his personal achievements. But to acknowledge his own personal contribution to the policy's success, and to do so publicly would detract from Nixon's own triumph and the identification of the China breakthrough as his own. Kissinger was not altogether successful in avoiding this pitfall.

Given his ability to dominate the foreign policy system, Kissinger was in a position to create a working balance between the President's expectations and his own potential impact on critical policy issues. It meant learning to subordinate some part of his personal ambition to presidential designs and keeping a public profile commensurate with the requirements of his position. It was Kissinger's job to make Nixon look good and help booster his image and secure his reputation as a world leader by doing the detail work and clearing the way for the success of his policies. Considering the mandate he was given, it meant an adjustment on Kissinger's part in keeping within the required bounds of his relationship with the president and maintaining a public profile commensurate with the requirements of his position. It was Kissinger's job to make Nixon look good and help bolster his image and secure his reputation as a world leader by doing the detail work and clearing the way for the success of his policies.

The White House, State Department and the Revolution in Iran

The handling of events in Iran under Carter underscored the frustration Zbigniew Brzezinski felt as he struggled to alter the administration's policy in the face of sweeping changes in Tehran. Brzezinski's formula for salvaging the pieces of the Shah's regime in order to turn back the revolutionary challenge was based on an unyielding commitment to preserving American interests in Iran and the gulf area. The force of his commitment, however, was not equally shared among senior policy officials in Washington. An apparent readiness in some parts of the government to reduce the strength of the U.S. presence in the region was anathema to Brzezinski who rejected the notion that such a course would ultimately serve the national interest.

Brzezinski's interpretation of the developments in Iran took on an anti-Soviet posture which emphasized the global dimensions of the crisis in terms of the geopolitics of East-West relations. As he saw it, what the U.S. stood to lose in Iran with the end of the Shah's reign would be counted as a corresponding gain for the Soviets. Brzezinski's approach was therefore to preserve the status quo in Iran as long as possible and, failing that, to at least forestall a major political upheaval which would be certain to threaten American interests there. But anti-Soviet gestures

were not enough for the State Department which had to deal with the more immediate ramifications of the Shah's now rapid demise. Brzezinski faulted State for not anticipating the consequences of the revolution for the future of American policy in the area, blaming the department's shortsightedness for inadequacies in the administration's response to the crisis. Where Brzezinski's approach was based on protecting American strategic commitments at almost any cost against the escalating forces of social and political upheaval, the State Department's reaction to the course of events in Iran was based on the realization that there were few realistic policy options available.

The thinking at State therefore focused on a policy that would not eliminate those in Iran who would be most likely to be our allies once the Shah had fallen. There was no single policy line at State; in fact, there were differences between the Secretary of State and his colleagues in the department. These differences, however, had more to do with the degree of change in the U.S. policy position towards the Shah than with the need for policy change. The disagreement over policy prevailed between the NSC staff and the State Department and was embodied in the dominant personality of Brzezinski and his refusal to back down from his position. The dispute centered on the issue of intervention and the U.S. policy of support for the Shah.

The divisions were not clearly drawn along White House-State Department lines, but the prevailing view at State was that

support for the Shah was misguided and counterproductive. This scenario required major adjustments in U.S. policy which recognized the collapse of the Shah's government and the mounting dissension taking place in Iran. The recommended changes in American policy would seek some means of accommodation with the secular political opposition for the purpose of forming a coalition government. This approach was seen as necessary to checking the ideological and political upheaval which threatened the radical transformation of the political culture and society there.

The great strategic importance of Iran was less a factor in this approach than it was in the view of those who endorsed a policy of active intervention to promote an outcome favorable to U.S. interests there. In keeping with a policy that supported military action to protect American interests in the region, Brzezinski strongly resisted all efforts made to contact the Khomeini forces. Against the expert advice of military and diplomatic counselors, Brzezinski tried to foil the revolutionary challenge by keeping open the possibility of military action even as late as December 1978-January 1979, when the transformation of Iran was all but complete. In February, Khomeini would establish an Islamic government in Tehran and bring the revolution around full circle.

In deciding how to deal with the crisis Carter was presented with two fundamentally disparate approaches advanced by his

national security adviser and secretary of state. Their individual interpretations of events in Iran left Brzezinski and Vance with different priorities in formulating a comprehensive policy for the President to apply to the area. These priorities emphasized the basic incompatibility in their views toward the revolution and its implications for Iran's future. In the debate over alternative strategies Vance's position somewhat offset the force of Brzezinski's arguments, but it was more difficult for the secretary to do anything about the private channels Brzezinski promoted to undercut the official government response to the Iranian situation. This strategy not only further confused the already muddled position of the administration, but it also underlined the split between Brzezinski and Vance by establishing Brzezinski as the contact in Washington for those still loyal to the Shah and not ready to hand over power to the opposition without a fight. What Brzezinski did, in effect, was use his position and influence to counteract the opposition in parts of the government to U.S. intervention in support of the Shah. He did so by seeking out his own sources in Iran as well as making himself accessible as the point of contact within the administration for those who were looking for an alternative to the course of U.S. policy.

Among the issues Carter had to deal with as a result of the White House-State Department feud over Iran was the appearance of two public spokesmen for the president's policy. What Carter was

faced with was a policy situation which supported, in effect, two secretaries of state who fundamentally disagreed on what the administration's policy should be on Iran. Policy feuds among decision-makers are inevitable, but the working relationship between Brzezinski and Vance was greatly strained by a situation in which they were basically competing for the same job. Carter showed little initiative in working to alleviate the strain this situation imposed on his own relationship with Vance as well as on the foreign policy-making process. Instead of choosing between competing counsels on Iran, Carter followed neither Brzezinski's nor Vance's recommendations. He was no more prepared to take forceful action to restore the Shah to power than he was receptive to the idea of reaching out to opposition forces. In the end, Carter's actions or inaction, as his position could be more accurately described, came about almost as if by default. Being put in a position of having to choose between his NSC adviser and secretary of state may well have had the effect of further polarizing his administration where discord over Iran was already more than apparent within the policy councils of the White House, State Department and Department of Defense. Due to the personalities and positions involved, there was substantially more at stake in making a choice here than there would be in a situation among lower-ranking officials with less visible profiles and less open dispute over authority in the conduct of policy.

In addition to acting as a restraint on the president in

shaping foreign policy, an administration possessing what amounted to a second secretary of state in the guise of the national security adviser made it difficult for either insiders or outsiders to know who was in a position to influence the substance of policy decisions. Determining just where that authority was situated had important implications in the continuing attempts to establish contacts within their respective governments by American and Iranian officials alike. The creation of private channels of communication was central to Brzezinski's strategy in Iran and he depended on these contacts to suggest that the U.S. could take decisive action to help put down the opposition.

But Brzezinski was not the only one to seek out his own sources. According to a personal account by a principal member of the NSC staff during the Iranian revolution, "... virtually every individual and every office that was affected by events in Iran developed a network of private sources ...."[8] Competing channels of information within the administration underscored the importance of clearly distinguishing between the national security adviser's responsibilities and the prerogatives of the Secretary of State. In this case, as Brzezinski presumed to act as the principal adviser to Carter, he sent a message to the Iranians which created the impression that he not only spoke for the President, but that the President also agreed with his position. The fact that Brzezinski had a close working relationship with Carter and was seen as his confidant on policy matters only served

to confirm this impression. What occurred as a result was unneeded confusion over the President's position which was itself very ill-defined. Other consequences extended quite beyond the immediate issues of the revolution and would profoundly affect the course of U.S. policy in the months and years following the Shah's fall from power. Events in Iran suggested that there was little the U.S. could have done to hold back the revolutionary forces, but the way in which the administration's response was handled among the policy-makers in Washington added significantly to the burdens the President would have to bear in dealing with the revolutionary government.

The War in Lebanon: A Foreign Policy in Disarray

The U.S. experience in Lebanon highlighted the weakest aspect of the foreign policy-making system in the Reagan administration. The NSC staff role changed so many times that it sometimes left the office in an untenable position. It alternated between periods of purposeful conduct in carrying through foreign policy initiations and intervals of indiscriminate manipulation of the politics inherent in the policy-making process. The NSC adviser, as a result, could not be counted on to provide regularity or predictability in the administration's policies toward Lebanon. Largely because of the rapid succession of national security assistants over the course of Reagan's first term, the adviser's role lacked continuity in character and function. These

circumstances could not support a clearly identified role for the national security adviser whose participation in policy decisions on Lebanon reflected the variable nature of the position.

Not only did the appointment of four different NSC advisers in less than five years point up the indeterminate characteristics of the assistant's role, but the ambiguity in the president's practice of foreign policy meant that his security aides had few guidelines on which to rely in organizing their staff. Complicating the situation further were the problems Reagan had with his first Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, the self-proclaimed "vicar" of American foreign policy. The tensions which had been escalating between the White House and State Department were relieved somewhat with George Shultz's appointment to succeed Haig as Secretary in June 1982, but Shultz would soon have his own differences with the NSC assistants--first with Clark, and later McFarlane.

A conflict between presidential authority and departmental responsibilities would cause divisiveness to reappear even with a reshuffling of personnel designed to improve the White House-State Department working relationship. Shultz also had differences with Defense Secretary Weinberger over critical issues of national security policy, including the course of American involvement in the Lebanese conflict. The feuding between Shultz and Weinberger over the issue of the American marines in Lebanon, for example, contributed more to the impression of uncertainty and confusion in

U.S. policy than did the relationship between Shultz and the NSC adviser. The bureaucratic arrangements that existed were only marginally important to the development of policy options toward Lebanon. The president tried to work out a three-part approach to the crisis in Lebanon but there was no operative structure or mechanism in the government to integrate the different elements of diplomatic, political or military policy into a strategy for peace in the region. There was no strategy--policy just seemed to happen on premises which were inscrutable. Therein lay the fundamental failing in the American response to Lebanon. Administration officials and foreign policy experts in the government could neither state with certainty or conviction the actual objectives of U.S. policy nor identify those interests which were held up as the justification for American involvement there.

The debates over the NSC staff role suggest that there are advantages in having a national security adviser with a non-specific role provided that certain conditions are present. The experience of the security assistant acting in lieu of the president on major foreign policy decisions underscores the importance of presidential leadership with respect to achieving consistency in policy but also in establishing the limitations of the NSC role both in the process and practice of foreign policy. Irresolution on the President's part is the surest way for an assistant with the requisite capability and will to propel his

position to the height of influence in the organizational set-up over national security matters. Presidential leadership anchors America's global policies to an operational style of diplomacy based on personal control of the major issues. While this approach places more of the burden for making the decision on the president by moving him to rely primarily on his own resources in carrying out policy, it also helps to alleviate the pressures which dilute and fragment policy decisions when the process succumbs to the competing instruments for foreign policy management. The policies which would emanate from these surrounding conditions would then more clearly be identified as representing the President's own priorities, minimizing uncertainty or second-guessing over the authority behind these decisions.

Leadership has to be inherent in the Secretary of State's presence, as well, making him the most influential single policymaker in the diplomatic and operational aspects of foreign policy deliberations. Personal goals would necessarily be subordinate to institutional goals making the secretary the primary presidential foreign policy "baron" in charge of organizational management and the development of formal policy processes.[9] This scenario would keep politics and ideology separate from the prerogatives of standing departments and organizational processes and encourage the development of objective analysis as a basis for foreign policy decisions. This

would contrast with the White House "courtiers" who,[10] by responding to the personal and political needs of the President, become political counselors who then short-circuit the broader policy process. Strong executive leadership could act as the restraint on the possible misuse of power and authority by members of the White House foreign policy staff.

But neither of these conditions of leadership was available to offset the destabilizing elements in the NSC staff relationship within the institutions and processes in the Reagan administration. To work effectively they had to be sustained over a period of time long enough to affect the proper bureaucratic balance between the White House and State Department. But the marked changeability in this administration prevented any kind of enduring foundation for the formulation of policy, particularly in the Middle East where the expectations for the course of U.S. policy in the Lebanese situation had little connection with the decision-making procedures in Washington. Based on what seemed to be the generally unsupportable evidence of U.S. interests there, this policy pointed up the mercurial aspects of the principals' performance in this crisis.

The non-specific character of the security adviser's role in the administration's reaction to Lebanon had the effect of expanding the possibilities for power plays among the principal figures in the foreign policy process. With the partial exception of Richard Allen, Reagan's first NSC adviser, the records for

those in the NSC position indicated inadequacy either in foreign policy experience or in organizational enterprise, suggesting a background unequal to the demands of acting as the President's security assistant. Even Allen, who had been one of three senior advisers responsible for foreign affairs during the Reagan transition and Reagan's longtime adviser on foreign policy, was clearly not in the tradition of his most illustrious predecessors in the job, either Kissinger or Brzezinski. Clark was a "self-proclaimed foreign-policy novice"[11] and McFarlane, who did have government experience in national security issues, was nevertheless seen as a loyal staff member--a "consummate bureaucrat"[12]--when he was designated to succeed Clark at the NSC. That Clark and McFarlane became influential foreign policy figures in the administration had less to do with their expertise or convictions than with their skills at managing the chain of command in the decision-making process so as to ensure the responsiveness of the policy process to the President's political and policy needs. They functioned, in effect, as instruments for maneuvering through the intricacies of institutional relationships and bureaucratic processes.

The effect was to imbue their offices with partisan and ideological overtones, identifying them as political managers for the president. This aspect of the assistant's role goes beyond the subjective side of the NSC staff function as a policy adviser making choices and influencing the president's decisions.

Experience has shown how a non-specific role for the national security assistant leaves the assistant more exposed to the partisan or political influences within the system for foreign policy decision-making. This is not to say that an NSC assistant who is a strategic thinker or a leading force in conceptualizing the president's policy would be able or likely to head off these pressures, but firmly grounding the office on the policy side would at least reduce the possibility that the nature of the job would be defined by more personal or ideological considerations.

Reagan's policies toward Lebanon were less directly affected by what his security assistants advised on the issues of the conflict than by what their actions entailed for the organization of foreign policy. The character of the national security adviser in the Reagan administration was not the only cause of divisiveness and disorder in the more formal consideration of American policy interests in Lebanon but the changeable nature of the position turned it into a destabilizing element in the larger scheme of bureaucratic procedures and institutional arrangements in the practice of foreign policy. A more clearly defined role with a greater sense of continuity in both style and substance and the appointment of experienced specialists in foreign affairs might have, at a minimum, eliminated some of the floundering that was only too apparent in the administration's approach to Lebanon. In the short-run, the impact of the NSC staff on the president's Lebanon policy was most evident in the unsupportable structure of

the bureaucratic relationships within the foreign policymaking system. The weaknesses in the system become manifest over the longer term, as does the tenuous influence of the national security assistant in a less than well-marked role.

Success and Failure in Handling Critical Foreign Policy Issues

There were specific elements in each of the three cases which were consistent with and supported the institutional response to the issues. Factors which identified both cases of failed policies found their inverse to hold true in the successful policy towards China. There were three basic factors to consider in each case that were critical to the formation and application of the separate policies. These included the element of control over events both within the United States and the foreign country in question, a plan of action for achieving an objective or purposeful planning for a shared purpose and precipitating conditions for turning events into critical questions of policy for American presidents.

What makes the breakthrough in American-Chinese relations stand out as an example of presidential leadership was the control that Nixon and Kissinger could exercise over the fate of that initiative. The control was most evident on the policy side in Washington where the president and his national security adviser exercised unrivaled mastery over each of the steps which were carefully plotted out to facilitate and make attainable the

ultimate goal of reopening a dialogue with the People's Republic. Nixon and Kissinger could not control what went on behind the closed doors in Peking but they did have a margin of maneuverability to the extent that the politics of superpower relationships--playing one great power off another--could affect the thinking in China.

This type of influence over the events could not be duplicated in either the Iran case or the crisis in Lebanon. The United States had virtually nothing to do with the progression of events in either country which led to the deterioration in political conditions and the collapse of order in both capitals. These circumstances put the U.S. in a position of having to react rather than initiate an innovative approach to quelling the crisis. That the situation in both Iran and Lebanon was largely beyond the American capacity to bear upon the internal developments there made it somewhat more difficult for policymakers in Washington to respond with a planned course of action already in mind. These conditions were exacerbated by the disorganization in the structure of foreign policy within each administration. Structural problems predated each of these two foreign crises, but faced with the dilemmas they posed the president and his advisers were ill-equipped to deal with them.

Second, the ability to exert control on the policy process depends largely on a plan of action having a well-articulated and attainable purpose. Plans for a China initiative were assisted

through the preparation of reports by China specialists who were otherwise kept in the dark as to the real purpose of their assignments. How this plan was to be carried out had to be filled in as the President and Kissinger went along, but once they pledged themselves to a new China policy they did not waver in their commitment to the goals of this policy. Planning, or the absence of it, was probably the most glaring weakness of both the Carter and Reagan administration in their handling of developments in Iran and Lebanon. Even after the nature of the difficulties in each country became evident there was no uniform strategy which could be counted on to carry American policies through their duration.

The third element, precipitating conditions, entailed both the aspects of control and planning but could be dealt with more readily if the proper background work had been done so that government officials would be in a better position to anticipate if not the exact nature of the underlying problems, then at least the prospects for trouble under certain prevailing conditions. This kind of preparation is usually the responsibility of middle-ranking staff members in government departments but often turned aside by those higher up in the chain of command who prefer to rely on alternate sources of information which also carry a greater risk of misinformation or misinterpretation.

These are not conditions which can be fixed or corrected by any one individual, although the first step is to allow presiden-

tial leadership to shape the government's response. The national security assistant has a certain flexibility and maneuverability which is not available to either the Secretary of State or Secretary of Defense, but conditions have to be appropriate for employing the possibilities which exist within their official functions.

What has made the national security assistant an asset to presidential decision-making has been the adaptability inherent in the position which gives presidents the opportunity to use the assistant's advisory role in a manner which is best suited to the agenda for his administration's foreign policy. Much has been said and written of the assistant's becoming whatever the president decides will work best with his own style of conducting foreign policy. From this perspective the assistant's possibilities are great depending on how they are used by the president and integrated into his system for foreign policy decisions. The many advantages of the NSC staff function have been cited but they have also been criticized for fostering the possibility of misusing or over-extending the adviser's role in the policy process.

The possibilities are considerable but will work at an optimal level only under certain other conditions which, recent experience has shown, are unavailable or inaccessible for a number of reasons ranging from the politics of bureaucratic relationships to the partisan nature of foreign policymaking to the problem of presidential resolve. Even under more favorable conditions, as

they existed for example in the Nixon-Kissinger approach to China, there are considerable limitations in the NSC adviser's role which have not been as readily apparent as the opportunities therein, but which are becoming increasingly less realized. The limitations can turn the security adviser's role into a more questionable position, particularly when they are not realized or anticipated within the individual administrations. Trying to use the assistant to accomplish one thing while, in the process, these efforts will impair other aspects of the President's policies can put the entire process in greater jeopardy.

The different roles of the security adviser in the conduct of policy underscore the importance of understanding the different contingencies each of the roles entails. Misunderstanding the exigencies of these conditions will not, in most cases, become the downfall of the President's policy when considered together with the other failings and weaknesses in the system for making foreign policy which have become increasingly more apparent. The importance of using the NSC assistant's role more carefully in the handling of critical issues and with greater understanding of the limitations involved holds out greater possibility for promoting the management of these foreign policy issues.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

[1]I. M. Destler, "National Security Management: What Presidents have Wrought," *Political Science Quarterly* (Winter 1980-81), p. 575.

[2]Barry Rubin, *Secrets of State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 253.

[3]Leslie H. Gelb, "Why Not the State Department?," *The Washington Quarterly* (Autumn 1980), pp. 34-35.

[4]Ibid., p. 32.

[5]Rubin, op. cit., p. 253.

[6]"Brzezinski on National Security Advisers," *New York Times* (January 6, 1982), p. 19.

[7]Gelb, op. cit., p. 36. This is one recommendation Gelb makes to leave the President more flexibility within the policy-making system.

[8]Gary Sick, *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter With Iron* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), p. 78.

[9]I. M. Destler, Leslie H. Gelb, Anthony Lake, *Our Own Worst Enemy: The Unmaking of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), pp. 166-168.

[10]Ibid., pp. 167-68.

[11]Steven R. Weisman, "The Influence of William Clark," *New York Times Magazine* (August 14, 1983), p. 17.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acheson, Dean. "The Eclipse of the State Department," Foreign Affairs (July 1971), pp. 593-606.

Alter, Jonathan. "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Bureaucrat," The Washington Monthly (March 1981), pp. 14-204.

Attwood, William. "The Labyrinth in Foggy Bottom," Atlantic Monthly (February 1967), pp. 45-50.

Barrett, Laurence I. Gambling with History, Reagan in the White House. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.

"The Best National Security System: A Conversation with Zbigniew Brzezinski," The Washington Quarterly (Winter 1982), pp. 3-40.

Bill, James A., "Iran and the Crisis of '78," Foreign Affairs, America and the World 1979, pp. 323-342.

Bonafede, Dom. "Brzezinski-Stepping Out of His Backstage Role," National Journal, October 15, 1977, pp. 1596-1601.

Brzezinski, Zbigniew. Power and Principle: Memoirs of the National Security Adviser, 1977-1981. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983.

_____. "U.S. Foreign Policy: The Search for Focus," Foreign Affairs (July 1973), pp. 708-727.

Campbell, John Franklin. The Foreign Affairs Fudge Factory. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1971.

_____. "What is to be Done?," Foreign Affairs (October 1970), pp. 81-99.

Cannon, Lou. Reagan. New York: Putnam's Sons, 1982.

Carey, William D. "Presidential Stafing in the Sixties and Seventies," Public Administration Review (September/October 1969), pp. 450-458.

Carter, Jimmy. Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President. New York: Bantam Books, 1982.

Chancellor, John. "Prime Time in China," Foreign Policy (Summer 1972), pp. 88-95.

Clough, Ralph. "Musing on Nixon's Peking Visit," Foreign Policy

(Fall 1971), pp. 130-137.

Cottam, Richard. "Goodbye to America's Shah," **Foreign Policy** (Spring 1979), pp. 3-14.

Department State Bulletin.

Destler, I. M., "Can One Man Do?," **Foreign Policy** (Winter 1971-72),pp. 28-40.

_____. "National Security Adviser to U.S. Presidents: Some Lessons from Thirty Years," **World Politics** (January 1977), pp. 143-176.

_____. "National Security Management: What Presidents Have Wrought," **Political Science Quarterly** (Winter 1980-1981), pp. 573-588.

_____. **Presidents, Bureaucrats, and Foreign Policy: The Politics of Organizational Reform.** Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972.

Destler, I. M., Leslie H. Gelb and Anthony Lake. **Our Own Worst Enemy: The Unmaking of American Foreign Policy.** New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984.

Evans, Rowland, Jr. and Robert D. Novak. **Nixon in the White House: The Frustration of Power.** New York: Random House, 1971.

Falk, Richard. "Khomeini's Promise," **Foreign Policy** (Spring 1979), pp. 28-34.

Falk, Stanley L., "The National Security Council Under Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy," **Political Science Quarterly** (September 1964), pp. 403-434.

Fox, Douglas M. **The Politics of U.S. Foreign Policy Making.** Pacific Palisades, Calif.: Goodyear Publishing Company, Inc., 1971.

Frankel, Charles. **High on Foggy Bottom.** New York: Harper and Row, 1969.

Gelb, Leslie H. and Morton H. Halperin. "Henry Kissinger: Nixon's Sherpa in the Ascent to the Summit," **Harper's** (November 1971), pp. 28-30.

George, Alexander L. "The Case for Multiple Advicacy in Making Foreign Policy," **American Political Science Review** (September 1972).

Haig, Alexander M., Jr. **Caveat: Realism, Reagan and Foreign Policy** (New York: Macmillan, 1984).

Halperin, Morton H. **Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy.** Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1974.

_____. "The President and the Military," **Foreign Affairs** (January 1972).

_____. "Why Bureaucrats Play Games," **Foreign Policy** (May 1971), pp. 70-90.

Halperin, Morton H. and Arnold Kanter, eds. **Readings in American Foreign Policy.** Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1973.

Harrison, Michael. "Reagan's World," Summer 1981, pp. 3-16.

Hersh, Seymour M. **The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House.** New York: Summit Books, 1973.

Hilsman, Roger. **The Politics of Policy Making in Defense and Foreign Affairs.** New York: Harper and Row, 1971.

Holbrooke, Richard. "The Machine that Fails," **Foreign Policy** (Winter 1970-71).

Jackson, Senator Henry M. **The National Security Council: Jackson Subcommittee Papers on Policy Making at the Presidential Level.** New York: Praeger, 1965.

Johnson, Robert H. "The National Security Council: The Relevance of its Past to its Future," **Orbis** (Fall 1969).

Jones, Alan M., Jr., ed. **U.S. Foreign Policy in a Changing World: The Nixon Administration, 1969-1973.** New York: David Mc Kay Company, Inc., 1973.

Jordan, Hamilton. **Crisis: The Last Year of the Carter Presidency.** New York: Putnam's Sons, 1982.

Kalb, Marvin and Bernard Kalb. **Kissinger.** Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1974.

Kirschten, Dick. "Beyond the Vance-Brzezinski Clash Lurks in National Security Council Under Fire," **National Journal,** May 17, 1980, pp. 814-18.

Kissinger, Henry A. **American Foreign Policy.** New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1974.

_____. "Domestic Structure and Foreign Policy," **Daedalus** (Spring 1966).

_____. **White House Years.** Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1979.

Knight, Andrew. "Ronald Reagan's Watershed Year?," **Foreign Affairs**, America and the World, 1983, pp. 489-510.

Kolodziej, Edward A. "The National Security Council," **Public Administration Review** (November/December 1969), pp. 573-585.

Krasner, Stephen. "Are Bureaucracies Important?," **Foreign Policy** (Summer 1972).

Lay, James S. "National Security Council's Role in the U.S. Security and Peace Program," **World Affairs** (1952).

Leacacos, John P. **Fires in the In-Basket.** New York: The World Publishing Company, 1968.

_____. "Kissinger's Apparat," **Foreign Policy** (Winter 1971-72), pp. 3-27.

Ledeen, Michael and William Lewis. "Carter and the Fall of the Shah: The Inside Story," **The Washington Quarterly** (Spring 1980), pp. 3-40.

_____. **Debacle: The American Failure in Iran.** New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981.

Mazlish, Bruce. **Kissinger: The European Mind in American Policy.** New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1976.

Melbourne, Roy M. "The Operations Side of Foreign Policy," **Orbis** (Summer 1971), pp. 544-60.

Morris, Roger. **Uncertain Greatness: Henry Kissinger and American Foreign Policy.** New York: Harper and Row, 1977.

Neustadt, Richard E. "Approaches to Staffing the Presidency: Notes on FDR and JFK," **American Political Science Quarterly** (December 1963), pp. 855-863.

_____. **Presidential Power.** New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1960.

The New Republic.

The New York Times.

Nixon, Richard. **RN: The Memoirs of Richard Nixon.** New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1978.

Oksenberg, Michael. "The Strategies of Peking," **Foreign Affairs** (October 1971), pp. 15-29.

Paolucci, Henry. "Carter's Kissinger," **National Review**, October 1, 1976, pp. 1054-60.

Price, Don K., ed. **The Secretary of State.** Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960.

Quandt, William B. "The Middle East Crises," **Foreign Affairs**, American and the World 1979, pp. 540-562.

Retreat From Empire? The First Nixon Administration. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973.

Rockman, Bert A. "America's Departments of State: Irregular and Regular Syndromes of Policy Making," **American Political Science Review** (December 1981), pp. 911-929.

Rodman, Peter W. "The Hostage Crisis: How Not to Negotiate," **The Washington Quarterly** (Summer 1981), pp. 9-24.

Rourke, Francis E. **Bureaucracy and Foreign Policy.** Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972.

_____. **Bureaucracy, Politics, and Public Policy.** Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976.

Rubin, Barry M. **Paved With Good Intentions: The American Experience and Iran.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.

_____. **Secrets of State: The State Department and the Struggle Over U.S. Foreign Policy.** New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Sale, Richard. "Carter and Iran: From Idealism to Disaster," **The Washington Quarterly** (Autumn 1980), pp. 75-87.

Salinger, Pierre. **America Held Hostage: The Secret Negotiations.** Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1981.

Schoenbaum, David. "Passing the Buck(s)," **Foreign Policy** (Spring 1979), pp. 14-20.

Sick, Gary. **All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran.** New York: Penguin Books, 1986.

Souers, Sidney W. "Policy Formulation for National Security," **American Political Science Review** (June 1949).

Stoessinger, John G. **Henry Kissinger: The Anguish of Power.** New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1976.

Sullivan, William A. **Mission to Iran.** New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1981.

Szulc, Tad. **The Illusion of Power: Foreign Policy in the Nixon Years.** New York: The Viking Press, 1978.

_____. "The Vicar Vanquished," **Foreign Policy** (Summer 1981), pp. 173-186.

Thayer, Frederick C. "Presidential Policy Processes and 'New Administration': A Search for Revised Paradigms," **Public Administration Review** (September/October 1971), pp. 552-561.

Thomson, James C., Jr. "Watching the China-Watchers," **Foreign Policy** (Fall 1971), pp. 138-147.

U.S. Congress, Senate. Committee on Government Operations. **Organizing for National Security.**

_____. **Administration of National Security.**

_____. **Conduct of National Security Policy.**

Vance, Cyrus. **Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy.** New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983.

The Washington Post.

Watts, William, Ralph N. Clough and Robert B. Oxnam. **The United States and China: American Perceptions and Future Alternatives.** Washington, D.C.: Potomac Associates, 1977.

Interviews

Interview with Morton Abramowitz, April 2, 1986.

Interview with Lawrence Eagleburger, July 23, 1986.

Interview with Elliot Richardson, February 12, 1986.

Interview with Marshall Green, December 19, 1985.

Interview with Helmut Sonnenfeldt, August 1985.

VITA

Amalia Fried Honick was born on August 18, 1955 in New York City. She received a B.A. **cum laude** from Barnard College in 1976. She came to The Johns Hopkins University in the Fall of 1976 for graduate study in political science and received a University Fellowship in 1977. She was the recipient of a Moody Grant from the Lyndon Baines Johnson Foundation in the fall of 1981 while working as a research assistant in Washington. She taught in the Department of Politics and Public Policy at Goucher College in the Spring of 1987.