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NATIONAL POWER CAPABILITIES

Perhaps no concept is more central to an understanding of foreign policy than that of power. Yet no concept has stirred up more controversy regarding what it means and how it ought to be measured. There is a general consensus that in terms of capabilities the United States is the most powerful state that has ever existed, yet we have seen it unable to prevail over small states like Cuba and North Vietnam; it was neutralized into seeming ineffectiveness in the Iranian hostage situation; and it has often had small, fledgling states snub its attempts to influence votes in the United Nations. The same might be said of the Soviet Union, which, despite its obvious power advantages, has had trouble prevailing in Afghanistan and in controlling the behavior of its neighboring satellite states of Poland and Rumania. But to be able to explain just how such circumstances can arise, it is first necessary to examine what is meant by this elusive term.

THE CONCEPT OF POWER

Power has generally been thought of as the capacity to control or influence the behavior of others. Much of the confusion with respect to this concept arises over the failure to distinguish between the

capacity to act and the actual exercise of power. A state may enjoy a number of tangible assets of power, such as a strong industrial base, a large population, advanced technology, and important resources; it may also rank high in various intangible factors of power, such as high morale, effective leadership, and high educational levels, yet be unable or unwilling to translate these components into actual influence. One researcher, for example, in estimating the differential between capability and influence during the period 1925–30, suggested that in terms of capabilities, the following rank order would be appropriate: (1) United States, (2) Germany, (3) Great Britain, (4) France, (5) Russia, (6) Italy, (7) Japan. But in terms of impact on the international system and the responses the state was able to evoke in seeking to change the behavior of other states, the rank order was: (1) France, (2) Great Britain, (3) Italy, (4) Germany, (5) Russia, (6) Japan, (7) United States.[1] On the other hand, leaders like Tito of Yugoslavia, Nasser of Egypt, and Nehru of India probably exerted far more influence than the limited capabilities of their respective states would justify.

Even in situations in which a state is clearly interested in exercising power, its capabilities are not always translated into influence. Several factors help explain this failure. In the first instance, power is a perceptual relationship. A state may have abundant capabilities that would allow it to prevail in most situations, but that capability must be perceived as both available and likely to be utilized before another actor will be influenced by it. Perceptions may often be in error as a result of a variety of blinders and communication problems, as shown in Chapter 2, but rightly or wrongly this is the information on which states will act in determining their responses. The consequence has been, according to an estimate by Quincy Wright, that states have miscalculated their own and others' power more than 50 percent of the time.[2]

Second, it should be noted that power is a relative and reciprocal relationship. A state may be able to exercise power over one state but not over another. One authority has suggested that there is a loss-of-power gradient, for a state finds it more difficult to influence states at

1. K. J. Holsti, *International Politics: A Framework for Analysis*, 3rd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), pp. 170–71.

2. Cited in Morton Berkowitz, P. G. Bock, and Vincent J. Fuccillo, *The Politics of American Foreign Policy* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977), p. 286.

greater geographic distance than those close at hand.[3] This may be partially an element of resolve, as a state is less concerned with marshaling all of its power in regions that are perceived as remote to its interests. This would certainly help explain the United States' failure in Vietnam. Power is also relative and reciprocal in the sense that in any influence situation each party has some impact on the other. Such is true of even the weakest states, which, if nothing else, can threaten collapse, thus providing a vacuum that a larger state's adversaries can penetrate.

Third, power tends to be issue oriented. A state may have power over another state on one issue but not with respect to others, for sources of power other than reward and punishment become operative. A state may be influenced because it sees a given request as legitimate. A nation that is perceived as an alliance leader is more likely to be seen as making an appropriate influence request than one that is not. But even in this instance an influence attempt by the alliance leader is likely to be more effective if it involves issues affecting the common defense than if it is concerned with economic or ideological issues, which may be viewed as beyond the scope of the alliance commitment. If a state perceives an act as threatening its domestic sovereign rights, it is likely to be highly resistant to influence efforts. A state that is perceived as having expertise or as able to serve as an appropriate role model will also enjoy greater influence than the mere measure of its national power capabilities would suggest.

Fourth, power is affected by one's expectations in relation to another state. The Soviet Union may actually benefit from expectations of a rather heavy-handed style. As a result, when it makes conciliatory moves it is more likely to get credit and a responsive reaction from other actors than the United States would if it made similar moves.[4] Concessions tend to be expected of the latter and therefore are more likely to be taken for granted.

Fifth, a discrepancy between national power capabilities and influence is likely to arise by virtue of the tendency of both decision

3. Kenneth E. Boulding, *Conflict and Defense: A General Theory* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962).

4. Frederick W. Frey, "The Perception of Power: A Developmental Perspective," paper delivered at the Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association, Los Angeles, 1980, p. 24.

makers and analysts to ascribe high power positions to nations that are perceived as more aggressive, rather than those that have the most significant national power capabilities. Both the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union, during their more assertive days in the 1950s and early 1960s, were generally seen as more significant and powerful than their capabilities at the time would have indicated.

The elusiveness of power can be seen in the fairly rapid changes in the power fortunes of states in the last few years. Take, for example, the rising power of the OPEC states and contrast it with the dramatic fall in the power fortunes of the highly energy-dependent states. The latter, particularly Japan and a number of highly industrialized European states, have been forced to tread a delicate line with respect to Middle Eastern issues, and several were even willing to abandon Israel in order to placate the oil-rich states of the Middle East. Domestic events can also unsettle the power position of a state, as in the case of the 1968 riots in France and the subsequent resignation of President de Gaulle.

Given these problems in conceptualizing power, it is small wonder that students of international relations have not been very successful in developing agreed-upon measures of power. Perhaps the most satisfying operational conceptualization has been that of Robert A. Dahl, who suggested that power is equal to the ability of A to get B to take action X minus the probability that B would take action X anyway.[5] Despite the logic of such a formula, no attempt has been made to apply it in analyzing influence attempts in international relations. The difficulties of measuring just what B would do in the absence of the influence attempt by A are almost insurmountable.

Following the lead of Harold Lasswell, who saw power as determining who got what, when, and how, Deutsch and Edinger have suggested measuring power in terms of ascertaining satisfaction with the final output of the foreign-policy process.[6] To do this they examined a range of foreign-policy issues confronting the Federal Republic of Germany. Various internal groups such as parties, pressure groups, and public opinion, along with external national actors, were rated on a three-point scale indicating relative satisfaction and dissatisfaction with each issue. For example, on the issue of the Paris Agreements of

5. Robert A. Dahl, "The Concept of Power," *Behavioral Science*, 2 (July 1957), 201–15.

6. Karl W. Deutsch and Lewis J. Edinger, *Germany Rejoins the Powers* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1959).

1955, which allowed the Federal Republic to become a member of the Western European Union and NATO, the German military was in high agreement, scoring a +3, whereas the Soviet Union was given a −3, indicating overwhelming opposition. Although high satisfaction with the results may suggest only followership rather than influence, the measure can be useful in indicating which actors have little power in influencing the outcome, since their scores tend to be negative.

Most efforts to measure power in the international system have focused on developing indicators of national power capabilities, including such tangible factors as population, industrial capability, and military budgets and forces. A. F. K. Organski and Wilhelm Fuchs gave considerable weight to population in their indexes of power, each of which consisted of only two or three items.[7] As a result, projective data collected in the early 1960s predicted that the People's Republic of China would become the most powerful actor in the world in the 1980s. Such is hardly the case, as the Chinese leadership itself admits to a status more equivalent to that of the developing world especially in terms of economic development. Giving too much weight to population overlooks the negative aspects of having too many mouths to feed, which impedes capital savings and economic growth.

The most popular indexes for industrialization and economic power are gross national product, energy consumption, and iron and steel production. Recent events, however, have demonstrated that high energy consumption can create power vulnerability, particularly if it requires extensive importation from abroad. Some analysts also include measures of modernization in their indexes of economic power. These might include such indicators as urbanization, technology, and a relatively small agricultural work force.

Most neglected in the construction of indexes of power are the so-called intangible factors. The label "intangible" is indicative of the feeling that such factors are difficult, if not impossible, to measure. The problem may not be insurmountable, for one might utilize measures of governmental stability or public support as measured by public-opinion polls to get some notion of morale. Leadership quality might be tapped in a similar fashion. However, what cannot always be ascer-

7. A. F. K. Organski, *World Politics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Knopf, 1968). Fuchs' work is discussed in Karl W. Deutsch, *The Analysis of International Relations*, 1st ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 23.

tained in advance is the degree to which a people will rally around a flag or a leader when attacked from the outside. It was hardly expected that the Soviet population would develop such unity in supporting its government as it did after the battle of Stalingrad. Some even speculated that the Ukranians and other non-Russians would defect to the invading Nazis. Morale was the factor that turned the war around.

The difficulty of measuring power can also be seen in attempts to assess relative military capabilities. Such efforts have often led to acrimonious debates over the question of whether the Soviet Union or the United States is ahead in the strategic arms race. The fact that the two powers emphasize different delivery systems makes the problem especially difficult, as the United States has preferred bombers and submarine-launched ballistic missiles, whereas the Soviets have emphasized intercontinental land-launched missiles. But how does the United States' lead in cruise missiles, MIRVed missiles, and the accuracy of its missiles affect the power equation? On the other hand, the Soviet Union has missiles that will each deliver a substantially heavier payload of nuclear destruction. Yet others will remind us that the Soviet Union must be concerned not only with adequate defense against the United States but also with defense against a hostile China—a threat that is not currently shared by the United States. And the debate goes on and on, complicating not only decisions about how large a military budget, and what kind, to adopt but also about how to determine military equivalence in the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks.

Measuring military capability is not much easier when it comes to nonnuclear weapons. Comparisons of overall defense budgets are misleading because of the differing budgetary procedures used in various states. Soviet military budgets have always been viewed as undervalued, since they exclude a number of budgetary items included in American defense budgets. Comparing numbers of troops is difficult because divisions within the Soviet Union are considerably smaller than those in the United States. Equivalence would require that the United States count reserve and National Guard troops in its force totals.[8] In addition, it must be remembered that an aggressor needs larger numbers than a defender does, since the former must normally

8. Edward N. Luttwak, "The Missing Dimension of U.S. Defense Policy: Force, Perceptions, and Power," in Donald C. Daniel, ed., *International Perceptions of the Superpower Military Balance* (New York: Praeger, 1978), p. 23.

operate with longer supply lines. One should also try to account for qualitative differences in conventional weapons.

Since power involves perception, some observers, such as Kissinger and Nixon, believe that the most important way to increase power is simply to increase aggregate military spending. As a result, they often seem less concerned about which specific military programs benefit but, rather, are interested primarily in communicating resolve. Soviet leaders also tend to think in terms of the overall military balance, defined as the "correlation of world forces," which includes factors like ideology. At present they appear to believe this correlation to be in their favor.

Despite the elusiveness and complexity of the concept of power, it remains central to the study of foreign-policy behavior. In the following sections we will examine how certain geopolitical capabilities might affect power, as well as the role played by military and economic capabilities. Efforts will be made to explain why, when, and where certain states are able to prevail over others in the international system and how relative power capabilities affect foreign-policy choices.

GEOPOLITICAL SOURCES OF POWER

Certain states enjoy national power capabilities by virtue of the geographic conditions they are endowed with or are able to obtain. States vary considerably in terms of the availability of resources, size, arable land, and location, all of which can influence the power of the state as well as the role it is able to play in the international system. The resources that a state enjoys influence its wealth as well as its ability to pursue an independent foreign policy. No state in today's complex industrial world has adequate resources to pursue a completely independent policy. Although the United States comes perhaps the closest of any state to being able to pursue a policy of autarchy, the oil crisis has underscored the vulnerability even of superpowers.

Occupying a large expanse of territory not only is likely to increase the probability that a state will enjoy more resources and arable land; it will also provide an opportunity to retreat in a war situation and then regroup and reverse an invasion, as the Russians did after the Napoleonic invasion in 1812 and the German invasion in 1941. Small

states do not have such an opportunity and can be conquered and occupied rapidly, as is shown by Hitler's invasion of the lowland countries of Europe. At the same time, a large area poses serious transportation problems, which make it difficult to integrate an efficient national economy. It has been suggested that Japan's highly successful economic development was possible because its population of a hundred million lives in a small area. This provided a sufficient domestic market for industrial products as well as a "densely meshed communications network that worked to heighten the efficiency of economic activities."[9]

The location of a state is also likely to affect both its power and its policies. Sea powers historically have been protected from invasion by the water surrounding them. Even the narrow British Channel provided some protection from Hitler during World War II. Although modern military technology, which allows destruction at great distances, has undermined the security of insular states, conquering and controlling such a state remains difficult to the extent that troops must be landed on its beaches.

The topography of a state also has power and security implications. Mountains traditionally have provided barriers to invasion. It is much simpler to move modernized armies through flat lands, and as a result, certain invasion routes, such as those through Poland or across the lowlands of Western Europe, have been popular. The Soviet Union became aware of the drawbacks of inhospitable terrain in its 1979 incursion into Afghanistan, and this situation helps explain some of the difficulties it has had in controlling that area.

A number of geopolitical writers have developed theories regarding the implications of the geographic setting of a state for its foreign policy. Among these is the British writer Sir Halford Mackinder, who suggested in a book published in 1919 that the critical element in world power was control of the heartland of the Eurasian continent, which consisted largely of the European part of the Soviet Union.[10] Control of the heartland would enable a state to dominate the world island consisting of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and this would lead to control of the

9. Michio Royama, "Environmental Factors and Japan in the 1970s," in Morton A. Kaplan and Kinhide Mushakoji, eds., *Japan, America, and the Future World Order* (New York: Free Press, 1976), p. 344.

10. Sir Halford Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Realities* (New York: Norton, 1962; first published in 1919).

entire world. By 1943, however, Mackinder had noted the frailty of his earlier dictum, suggesting that the North Atlantic region, through the use of air power, could balance the threat that might be posed by the Soviet Union after Germany was defeated.[11]

Explicitly rejecting the Mackinder thesis, a former Yale professor, Nicholas J. Spykman, suggested that control over the region is more likely to go to the rimland powers, such as Great Britain and Japan.[12] The primary limitations on the heartland's being able to assume a dominant position were seen to lie in the area's undesirable climate, its emphasis on agrarian productivity, and its general lack of resources.

Another early-twentieth-century American, Admiral Alfred T. Mahan, advocated expansion of sea power as the most useful approach to providing power and security for a state. He suggested that such an emphasis was particularly relevant for the United States, given its position on two oceans.[13] The United States' acquisition of the Philippines and other Pacific territories made increased naval power a virtual necessity. Britain, with its insular position, also would not require a large standing army and could therefore divert more of its resources to its naval capability. Modern-day disciples of Mahan are found in the Navy and among those who would prefer to see the United States emphasize submarine-launched ballistic missiles.

As a final illustration of geopolitical theory, one might note the work of Karl Haushofer, whose ideas were exploited by Adolph Hitler.[14] It was Haushofer who developed the notion of *lebensraum*, or the need for "living space." Borrowing from Social Darwinist ideas, he formulated the notion of an organic state that must expand or it would die. Although he influenced Nazi policy, it is probable that as a geopolitician he opposed Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union because of the Soviet advantage of defense in depth and its ability to relinquish space temporarily to gain time to regroup. Instead, Haushofer favored a combination of powers, consisting of the Soviet Union, Japan, China, and India, under German leadership.

11. Colin S. Gray, *The Geopolitics of the Nuclear Era* (New York: Crane and Russak, 1977), p. 34.

12. Nicholas J. Spykman, *The Geography of Peace* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1944), p. 43.

13. Alfred T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power in History, 1660–1783* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1918).

14. Andreas Dorpalen, *The World of General Haushofer* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1942, reprinted by Kennikat).

The most systematic research concerned with geographic variables has focused on the issue of boundaries. Territorial boundaries have long been viewed as an important factor in international conflict. Evan Luard went so far as to suggest that territorial disputes have been "perhaps the most important single cause of war between states in the last two or three centuries."[15] The prevalence of such conflicts can clearly be seen in the Middle East, in the continuing struggles over boundaries between Israel and its neighbors and in the 1980–81 border war between Iraq and Iran, in which the former sought to regain three small islands in the Persian Gulf that had been seized by Iran in 1971, as well as other territories that would give Iraq greater control over important waterways.

Statistical studies have shown that the states with the largest numbers of boundaries have tended to engage in the greatest number of conflicts. Research by Lewis F. Richardson revealed that, for 33 nations during the period 1820–1945, the number of frontiers shared with other countries was positively related to participation in wars with at least 7,000 war dead.[16] It has been suggested, however, that merely counting the number of boundaries shared is an inadequate measure of geographic contiguity, and that one should consider the length of the borders and the density of the population in order to determine interaction opportunities. When this approach was used, it was discovered that one could better predict the amount of violence even when utilizing Richardson's data.[17] Sharing borders with a larger number of states can also have a contagion effect on war, as studies utilizing data from the Correlates of War project in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have revealed.[18] Another study suggested that wars were more likely to widen if they began near the hub of Europe than if they started on the perimeters.[19] Contiguity also seemed to make a difference in terms of the likelihood that African states would intervene in liberation

15. Evan Luard, *Conflict and Peace in the Modern International System* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1968), p. 111.

16. Lewis F. Richardson, *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels* (New York: Quadrangle/The N.Y. Times, 1960), p. 176.

17. James Paul Wesley, "Frequency of Wars and Geographical Opportunity," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 6 (December 1962), 387–89.

18. Harvey Starr and Benjamin A. Most, "The Substance and Study of Borders in International Relations Research," *International Studies Quarterly*, 20 (December 1976), 581–620; Manus Midlarsky, *On War* (New York: Free Press, 1975).

19. Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War* (New York: Free Press, 1973), p. 232.

movements in other countries on the continent.[20] Penetration is obviously a simpler matter if the state borders on the target state.

In relating geographic proximity to conflict behavior, it would do well to heed the words of Bruce M. Russett, who wrote, "Except in some sense for border disputes, countries do not fight each other because they are physically close; they merely have the *opportunity* to fight because they are close. Proximity becomes the catalyst."[21] Given modern technology, geographic distances may even become less important in terms of defining opportunities for attack.

Although contiguity tends to facilitate conflict, a state that borders on a much larger country may actually gain power and security. This is particularly true if the neighboring state is a status quo power that does not threaten the smaller state's survival. Canada, unlike more remote states, can rest assured that the United States will come to its aid any time it is threatened from without. Its strategic location also makes it more likely that the United States will be more responsive to Canadian concerns than it would be to those of more distant allies.

Contiguity can also be important in terms of international political integration. A statistical study of integration conducted by Roger Cobb and Charles Elder found geographic contiguity to be related to high levels of international interaction.[22] States that border each other are also more likely to be allies. If the neighboring state is somewhat larger, neutrality, if not alignment, will generally be required.

The difficulties Pakistan had in generating unity between its eastern and western sectors may be explained in part by the fact that a thousand miles of Indian territory separated the two sections. The union collapsed in 1971 with the Bangladesh war. Similarly, the United Arab Republic, consisting of the noncontiguous states of Egypt, Syria, and Yemen, was short-lived; and recent efforts to unify Libya and Syria into a single political, economic, and military unit do not appear promising, particularly in view of the geographical distance between the two.

20. Vincent B. Khapoya, "The Politics of Decision: A Comparative Study of African Policy Toward Liberation Movements," University of Denver Social Science Foundation Monograph, 12 (1974–75).

21. Bruce M. Russett, *International Regions and the International System* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1967), p. 200. Emphasis in original.

22. Roger W. Cobb and Charles Elder, *International Community* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970).

States with good natural frontiers, such as Spain, France, and Britain, have generally been more stable and less threatened by border conflicts than states like those of Eastern Europe, Germany, and Austria.[23] It is therefore small wonder that states have been motivated to extend control to their natural frontiers, as in the case of France's efforts to expand to the Pyrenees, the Mediterranean, and the Rhine River. A common plea on the part of Israel has been that it needs to obtain defensible borders.

It is obvious that certain other geographic variables, such as raw materials, amount of arable land, and even climatological conditions, have an impact on foreign-policy choices. Their importance to foreign policy, however, lies in the contribution they can make to the military and economic power of a state, and it is to these issues that we now turn our attention.

MILITARY POWER

A well-known proposition holds that if you want peace you must prepare for war. An examination of rapidly increasing defense budgets throughout the world suggests that many decision makers have taken this axiom to heart. Between 1865 and 1965, for example, the proportion of the world product devoted to military expenditures rose from 2.6 percent to 6.8 percent. For the great powers the respective figures were 1 percent and 5.4 percent.[24] President Reagan's military budget requests totalled more than $188 billion for fiscal year 1982, and global military spending has now reached substantially above $500 billion.

In examining the role of military power as a determinant of foreign-policy behavior, it might be appropriate to begin our discussion with an analysis of the impact of nuclear weapons, which, according to some writers, may have revolutionized world politics. The acquisition of nuclear weapons may be somewhat of a mixed blessing for a nation. Without doubt, nuclear capability will enhance a state's position within its region and may even provide an entree to disarmament talks that are limited to nuclear powers. At the same time, it is unlikely that nuclear weapons will provide much leverage vis-à-vis the current nuclear states, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union, as Britain discovered at the time of its invasion of Suez in 1956. Greater arms sophistication, numbers, and ability to protect their nuclear weapons will tend to keep the superpowers in the forefront of the nuclear arms race; as a result, it would be foolish, if not impossible, to challenge that preeminence.

23. Robert G. Wesson, *State Systems* (New York: Free Press, 1978), p. 111.

24. Stanley Hoffmann, *Primacy of World Order* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978), p. 209.

There are, however, a number of serious negative implications for a state that chooses to develop nuclear weapons. Although it is unlikely that the larger nuclear powers would take action to destroy an incipient nuclear program, as was actually discussed with respect to China's nuclear program, the danger would always remain. There would also be an incentive for the superpower to withdraw its commitments from a newly nuclearized state, for a continuing relationship would only increase the probability that the superpower would be drawn into a nuclear war not of its choosing. Not only is the smaller nuclear power likely to lose whatever superpower support it may previously have enjoyed, but it will be confronted with considerable pressure from that superpower should it use its new capacity to threaten neighboring nonnuclear states. A nuclear guarantee would probably be made by a superpower to the threatened victim in such an instance.

Not only are the gains likely to be limited for a state choosing the nuclear option, but the costs are appreciable. Britain was unable to pursue an independent military policy despite its possession of a nuclear strike capability, and in the process it may have increased its dependence on the United States because of the tremendous cost of the British nuclear program and the attendant weakening of its civilian technological effort. The same might be said of France, which committed some 80 percent of its scientists to its nuclear effort, neglecting scientific and technological progress elsewhere.

Nuclear weapons may be of limited value to the superpowers as well. They raise the specter of nuclear annihilation, and since each side now has enough to destroy the other side several times over, the use of nuclear weapons in war becomes virtually unthinkable. There may even be some hesitancy on the part of decision makers to utilize conventional forces for fear that such action might escalate into a nuclear war.

The primary importance of nuclear weapons lies not so much in their utility as an instrument of war as in their ability to deter war. The relative peace that has prevailed in the postwar world may well attest to the deterrent efficacy of nuclear weapons. This, of course, does not

mean that the system may not break down; the risk of a nuclear war started by accident, miscalculation, irrationality, or fear remains a distinct possibility.

Such a prospect arose during the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, when nuclear war was closer than at any other time before or since. President Kennedy himself placed the odds of a nuclear war at better than one in three. Yet even in this instance it was probably not merely the threat of nuclear war that caused Khrushchev to back down. Rather, it had perhaps more to do with the asymmetry of interests between the two superpowers. Since Cuba and the missiles were so peripheral to Soviet interests and so much more central to American concerns, the outcome might have been predictable. Had the national interests of the two parties been more equivalent, the results may well have differed.

Although the acquisition of nuclear weapons may not have eliminated or even reduced the likelihood of war, it may have eliminated the option of a world empire. Any decision on the part of either superpower to utilize such weapons on a massive scale would probably lead to the annihilation of both. Yet conquest of the other superpower would probably be impossible without the use of nuclear weapons.

There has been some concern that as the strategic nuclear balance becomes less favorable to the United States, there will be an adverse impact on American foreign-policy objectives. If the balance of strategic forces should shift toward the Soviet Union, as some believe has already happened, it has been suggested that the Soviets will become more assertive in their foreign policy. Whatever restraint has been achieved to date is thought to be related to the clear military superiority of the United States. On the contrary, there is some evidence to suggest that the increased sense of Soviet military prominence has not led to an increase in risk taking.[25] The Soviet Union engaged in considerable risk-taking behavior during the Stalin period, despite the fact that the United States enjoyed an atomic monopoly until 1949 and considerable superiority for many years thereafter. Stalin sought to deny the efficacy of nuclear weapons by urging that such permanently operating factors as morale, command, and the quality and quantity of conventional forces were more important. In many respects Khrushchev appeared to behave more erratically and to be more willing to take risks than Leonid Brezhnev, yet the balance of forces has been

25. Hannes Adomeit, "Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behavior: From Confrontation to Coexistence," *Adelphi Papers*, 101 (Fall 1973).

far more favorable to the Soviet Union during Brezhnev's tenure. A Brookings study revealed that Moscow engaged more frequently in "coercive actions" in the late 1960s than it did in the mid-1970s, although it was only in the latter period that Soviet strategic nuclear strength had begun to approach that of the United States.[26] The same study, which analyzed the use of Soviet military forces to bolster Moscow's foreign-policy goals in some 190 instances since the end of World War II, also concluded that "the achievement of strategic parity with the United States gave the Kremlin greater confidence about making forward deployments and threatening military intervention in crises."[27] Moscow's efforts to resupply Egypt during the 1973 war in the Middle East, its military support of insurgents in Angola and the Horn of Africa, and even more emphatically, its incursion into Afghanistan are indicative of the Soviets' willingness to use force. At the same time, a study covering the period 1945–63 suggested that the Soviet Union has been willing to use large amounts of force only in situations in which it has viewed the crisis as being less risky.[28]

Despite a strategic balance that has become more favorable to the Soviet Union, an analysis of 215 incidents in which the United States used or threatened the use of force revealed that the outcomes have actually been more favorable to the United States when its military superiority was less extreme. Short-term outcomes were found to be positive for the United States in only 58 percent of the cases when the strategic balance was 100 to 1 or greater in favor of the United States, but this increased to 94 percent when the ratio decreased to less than 10 to 1. If only incidents in which the Soviet Union participated are examined, the respective success rates for the United States under the two conditions were 43 percent and 92 percent.[29]

Since a major function of military weapons, particularly in the nuclear age, has been to deter war, several studies have sought to ascertain how effective they have been in this regard. A study of eight postwar international crises revealed that as United States' strategic and/or

26. Stephen S. Kaplan, *Diplomacy of Power: Soviet Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington: D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1981), p. 53.

27. Ibid., p. 679.

28. Jan F. Triska et al., "Pattern and Level of Risk in Soviet Foreign Policy Making, 1945–63," Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University, 1965, mimeo.

29. Barry M. Blechman and Stephen S. Kaplan, *Force Without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1978), pp. 128–29. A favorable outcome was defined as one in which two-thirds of the American objectives were obtained.

tactical preparedness was perceived by the Soviets to have increased, their perception of American resolve also increased.[30] An examination of American influence attempts in fifteen major crises during the period 1946–75 in which both strategic nuclear and conventional force were threatened revealed that in nearly every instance a favorable outcome was achieved within a span of six months.[31] Success dropped to three-quarters of the fifteen cases during the longer span of three years, suggesting that the deterrent effectiveness of the nuclear threat declines over time.

Studies of successful deterrence during earlier historical periods have revealed that superior strength by itself is not sufficient to deter war. Such was the conclusion of a study that sampled twenty time periods in several cultures going back some two thousand years.[32] The study did suggest, however, that attention to the quality and mobility of armed forces can be effective in minimizing loss of territory even though it may not deter. That superior strength is an insufficient deterrent is also suggested by data collected for the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which revealed that in five out of nine wars initiated against the great powers, the nations attacked were appreciably stronger than those initiating the war.[33] Japan's attack on the far more powerful United States apparently has not been an isolated phenomenon.

Wayne Ferris, surveying the period 1850–1950, concluded that superior military power made war more likely. Power in this instance was measured by two indexes, one utilizing nine variables, the other six. In relating relative power to war indicators supplied by the Correlates of War project, Ferris noted that once an intense conflict was under way, power capabilities were not sufficient to prevent escalation to the level of military hostilities.[34] The study also suggested that a changing power relationship was associated with more intense conflict. Apparently uncertainty about relative power in a rapidly changing power structure induces efforts to test the power and resolve of the

30. David C. Schwartz, "Decision Theories and Crisis Behavior: An Empirical Study of Nuclear Deterrence in International Political Crises," *Orbis*, 11 (Summer 1967), 485.

31. Blechman and Kaplan, *Force Without War: U.S. Armed Forces as a Political Instrument*, pp. 99–100.

32. Raoul Naroll et al., *Military Deterrence in History* (Albany: State University of New York, 1974), p. 328.

33. Wayne Ferris, *The Power Capabilities of Nation-States* (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1973).

34. Ibid., p. 124.

other party or may create incentives for striking before a possible power imbalance becomes too intolerable. Geoffrey Blainey has suggested that agreement on the relative power balance is an important factor in peace. In his analysis of wars since 1700, he writes, "Wars usually end when the fighting nations *agree* on their relative strength, and wars usually begin when fighting nations *disagree* on their relative strength."[35] If this is true, it can be argued that since war is the most emphatic way to measure power, war itself can serve as a source of peace.

What is interesting from a deterrence perspective is the question of what characteristics were shared by the participants in crises that resulted in war, in contrast to those in which deterrence proved effective. Michael Mihalka investigated this question in connection with 264 military confrontations involving at least one European state as a participant during the period 1816–1970. Of these 264 cases, some 99 resulted in war.[36] By distinguishing great-power from non-great-power participants, Mihalka found that when the sole initiator was a great power the frequency of hostilities was only 33.6 percent, but when the great power was the target, the frequency increased to 87.5 percent. In other words, smaller powers are less likely to respond to attacks and are less able to deter a negative response when they take the initiative. The study also found that hostilities were less frequent when both parties were great powers than when neither was a great power. To the extent that great powers have been more restrained in pushing military confrontations to armed warfare, some evidence for the deterrent effect of mutual destructive capability is provided.

An examination of seventeen cases in which a larger state sought to deter an attack on a smaller state revealed that power superiority, either locally or strategically, was insufficient to prevent war.[37] A more credible deterrent in these cases was the existence of previous military cooperation and economic interdependence between the defender state and the small state. Potential attackers probably assumed that a defender would be more likely to come to the aid of the small state with which the defender shared economic and military links than one where such ties were lacking.

35. Blainey, *The Causes of War*, p. 122. Emphasis in original.

36. Michael Mihalka, "Hostilities in the European State System, 1816–1970," *Peace Science Society (International) Papers*, 26 (1976), 100–16.

37. Bruce M. Russett, "The Calculus of Deterrence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 7 (June 1963), 97–109.

Many writers have expressed the opinion that the existence of a power vacuum may be an invitation to intervention from the outside. There appears to be some evidence that the threat of intervention can be diminished if a state is able to present a strong military posture either through its own efforts or through aid from the outside. An examination of military interventions over the period 1948–67 revealed that as the power to resist intervention increased, the probability of intervention decreased.[38] Thus, increasing military spending or taking pains to communicate the threat of a hostile response does seem to have some deterrent value.

Should deterrence fail and direct military confrontation result, there arises a serious need to bring an end to hostilities. An appropriate procedure for doing so has been labeled "coercive diplomacy" in a study examining deterrent efforts in the cases of Laos in 1961, the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, and American involvement in Vietnam in 1965.[39] These case studies revealed that more than force is necessary for coercive diplomacy to be effective, as is shown in Table 7–1. The fact that all eight conditions were met in the Soviet threat to Laos and the Cuban missile crisis helps explain the reason for success in these two instances, in contrast to the failure in Vietnam, where only two conditions (motivation and usable military options) were satisfied.

It might be expected that the state with the superior power capabilities would most often be the victorious one should deterrence fail, but for a variety of reasons this has not been the case. The weaker state may be able to compensate for its limitations through superior strategy. Similarly, willingness to sacrifice and suffer may enable the weaker ultimately to prevail, as is illustrated, again, by the United States' involvement in Vietnam. The Vietnamese, fighting on their own soil, were far more predisposed to sacrifice and to accept damage than were the Americans, located thousands of miles away. Being on the defensive may also be to the ultimate advantage of the weaker state, for the aggressor will have to stretch its supply lines. Those who are concerned about the greater number of Warsaw Pact forces compared to those of NATO often overlook this basic truth when they raise the specter of a massive conventional strike in Western Europe.

38. Frederick S. Pearson, "Geographical Proximity and Foreign Military Intervention," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 18 (September 1974), 432–59.

39. Alexander George et al., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971).

TABLE 7-1. Presence of Conditions Favoring a Successful Outcome of Coercive Diplomacy in Three Crises

	Laos 1961	*Cuba 1962*	*Vietnam 1965*
1. Strength of United States motivation	+	+	+
2. Asymmetry of motivation favoring United States	+	+	
3. Clarity of American objectives	+	+	
4. Sense of urgency to achieve American objective	+	+	
5. Adequate domestic political support	+	+	
6. Usable military options	+	+	+
7. Opponent's fear of unacceptable escalation	+	+	
8. Clarity concerning the precise terms of settlement	+	+	

SOURCE: Alexander George et al., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), p. 227.

Since most indexes of power capability give considerable weight to existing forces, the potential power of the state that is able to mobilize significant resources either internally or externally through temporary alliances can frequently change the initial calculations. Obviously, the significance of actual forces depends on the sort of war being fought; if it is a quick, blitz-type war or a nuclear war, existing forces will be much more critical.

Cross-national data covering the period 1850–1966 reveal that the side possessing the greater power capabilities at the time of the initiation of hostilities was victorious more often than would be expected by chance, but there have been many instances in which this has not been the case.[40] The same study also revealed that a high disparity between the power of the contending sides guaranteed neither a shorter war nor a less devastating one, despite the possibility of bringing overwhelming force to bear on the situation.

Historical studies have also shown that states that initiate wars often fail to win them. Data from the Correlates of War project revealed that although some four-fifths of all wars occurring between 1815 and 1910 were won by the governments that started them, three-fifths of the wars fought between 1910 and 1965 have been *lost* by the initiating government.[41]

40. Ferris, *The Power Capabilities of Nation-States*, p. 115.

41. Karl W. Deutsch, "Peace Research: The Need, the Problem, and the Prospect," in Peter Jones, ed., *The International Yearbook of Foreign Policy Analysis*, vol. 2 (New York: Crane and Russak, 1975).

In deciding whether to exercise the military option, a state is concerned about whether the use of military force is likely to diminish its power base. Since the utilization of weapons leads to their destruction, it might seem on the surface that such use would weaken a state's power, perhaps making it more vulnerable to others. This is not necessarily the case, for the willingness to use weapons, as demonstrated by their actual employment, can have a deterrent value with respect to other potential conflicts. The use of force may enhance the credibility of subsequent threats to use force. It is also possible that the use of force may add power through the capture of important resources. If such resources are more valuable than the cost of using force, a net gain may accrue.

Wars have frequently failed to change power balances appreciably. An empirical analysis of power levels after major wars has revealed the tendency for the power distribution to return to its prewar levels.[42] This tendency persists because the power levels of winners and neutrals are usually affected only marginally by the conflicts. After a few years the effects of war are dissipated as the losers accelerate their recovery and resume their antebellum rate of growth.

ECONOMIC POWER

It has been suggested that since nuclear weapons are no longer as significant because the fear of nuclear annihilation limits their use, economic power has increased in importance. There may even be some concern about the use of conventional weapons as an instrument of foreign policy because of the fear that such use may escalate to nuclear war. The importance of economic power has also been enhanced by the increasing economic interdependence among states, as noted in the previous chapter. Economic instruments of power enable a state to reward or punish another state and thereby affect the latter's behavior. Perhaps the best illustration of economic reward is foreign aid.

Economic payoffs to influence behavior have been utilized throughout history. Rulers like those of ancient China demanded tribute from their vassals. According to one authority, "it was quite common in the eighteenth century to offer statesmen large gratuities in return for an alliance or the favorable conclusion of negotiations."[43] Yet the use of foreign aid as a continuing instrument of policy has been primarily a post-World War II phenomenon.

42. A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, "The Costs of Major Wars: The Phoenix Factor," *American Political Science Review*, 71 (December 1977), 1347–66.

The threat or actual withdrawal of economic assistance has been used on innumerable occasions in an effort to get one state to do another's bidding. In the late 1940s the United States threatened to cut off Marshall Plan aid to the Netherlands if the latter failed to make a settlement with Indonesian nationalists and relinquish its colonial control over the area. Not only did the United States withdraw economic support from Israel in an effort to get the latter to desist from its aggression in the Suez in 1956, but the Eisenhower administration went a step further the following year by threatening to stop American private investment and charitable support, which amounted to $100 million, if Israel did not evacuate the Gaza Strip.[44]

Beginning with the Arab oil boycott in 1973–74, the most powerful economic weapon has been oil. After the October war Arab leaders began to grasp the potential of oil for getting other states to accept their position regarding Arab–Israeli issues. The oil weapon has been instrumental in obtaining the necessary votes to force Israel out of the International Labor Organization, and has influenced the passage of various resolutions equating Zionism with racism. The leverage was so strong in the summer of 1980 that an anti-Zionist resolution was passed in the General Assembly with only seven negative votes.

Despite the extensive aid provided by Israel to African states during the 1960s, the Arab states were able to obtain a complete reversal of the African leaders' position toward Israel. Oil had become very important to the African states, as had the financial assistance that OPEC dollars provided.[45] Arab leaders also used their economic power vis-à-vis corporations by asserting that any corporation that did business with Israel would not be allowed to engage in business activities with the far more populous Arab states.

The use of trade as an instrument of reward and punishment is not limited to oil-producing states, by any means. Economic sanctions have

43. Wesson, *State Systems*, p. 121.

44. Trygve Mathisen, *The Functions of Small States* (Oslo, Norway: Universitetsforlaget, 1971), p. 218.

45. Victor T. Levine and Timothy W. Luke, *The Arab–African Connection: Political and Economic Realities* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1979).

been used to influence or punish a variety of states that have been viewed as violating generally accepted international norms. Such sanctions were imposed by the League of Nations on Italy in 1936 in protest of the latter's invasion of Ethiopia. The United Nations has sought to impose similar sanctions on Rhodesia and the Republic of South Africa. Other efforts of this sort have included the United States' attempts to impose economic restrictions upon Cuba and the more recent use of economic sanctions against the Soviet Union with respect to its 1979 invasion of Afghanistan, and against Iran in connection with the seizure of the American Embassy in Teheran.

Despite the prevalence of the use of economic sanctions as an instrument of influence, the results have hardly been satisfactory.[46] The League's efforts to affect the behavior of the aggressor were undermined by the decision of the United States, which was not a member of the League, to make up the shortfall by increasing its trade with Italy. Multinational corporations and other governments have minimized the impact of economic sanctions against such states as Rhodesia and South Africa. When the United States sought to apply economic sanctions against Cuba, Castro merely turned to the Soviet Union. The United States also found it difficult to obtain support among other nations for its 1979–80 economic boycotts of the Soviet Union and Iran.

The general ineffectiveness of economic sanctions has been verified in an examination of ten instances in which economic sanctions were applied during the period 1933–67. The findings suggest that further reductions in trade beyond the initial imposition of the sanction often were not contemplated, and that after two years trade tended to return to its previous levels whether or not the situation that had induced the sanction had been rectified.[47]

After surveying the relative ineffectiveness of trade boycotts as an instrument of economic pressure, one authority suggested that subtle economic weapons, such as reduction of investments, delay in delivering spare parts, snags in licensing, decreasing loans and grants, and refusal to refinance existing debts, tend to be more effective than trade boycotts in influencing the policies of other states.[48] The basic problem

46. See Harry R. Strack, *Sanctions: The Case of Rhodesia* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1978), and Donald L. Losman, *International Economic Sanctions: The Cases of Cuba, Israel, and Rhodesia* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1979).

47. Peter Walensteen, "Characteristics of Economic Sanctions," *Journal of Peace Research*, 5, no. 3 (1968), 248–67.

48. R. S. Olson, "Economic Coercion in World Politics," *World Politics*, 31 (July 1979), 471–94.

with the more extreme economic sanctions is that they tend to unify the targeted population, increasing its sense of nationalism and resistance.

Special difficulties arise for pluralistic states that attempt to use trade as a weapon, for often various governmental bureaucracies and interest groups are divided on the issue. Food was not exploited in September 1977 in several sensitive negotiations with the Soviet Union, for those involved in the negotiations discovered only by reading the newspapers that the Department of Agriculture had unilaterally agreed to sell seven million more tons of grain than were called for in United States–Soviet Union agreements.[49] Problems also arise from the fact that many private corporations are beyond the reach of their national governments. Subsidiaries of such companies may sell products that the parent company would be prevented from selling. It has been alleged that even during World War II some armaments were sold to Germany by American firms.

When it comes to bargaining on trade issues, the large developed state, despite its obvious supremacy in terms of economic clout, has not always been able to prevail. A study of twenty-five trade conflicts between the United States and Latin America concluded that the United States was not always the victor. Among these twenty-five conflicts Latin American states were viewed as victorious in seven cases, obtained a compromise in six, and were forced to make unrequited concessions or suffered the imposition of unilateral sanctions in the remaining twelve instances.[50]

Generally speaking, the less developed country will be more vulnerable to economic sanctions than the developed state. It will tend to lose more from trade disruption, since its economy is less diversified. If the state produces only one commodity, curtailing the export of that product could threaten economic ruin. The LDC lacks the opportunity, which is available to the more developed state, of decreasing its vulnerability by stockpiling or producing synthetic substitutes. The unavailability of marketing skills and the lack of diplomatic personnel capable of stimulating exports also makes the developing state more vulnerable to market disruptions. On the other hand, the vulnerability created by economic underdevelopment may make the state more resistant to bombardment and economic deprivation. It has been suggested

49. Samuel P. Huntington, "Trade Technology and Leverage: Economic Diplomacy," *Foreign Policy*, Fall 1978, p. 75.

50. John S. Odell, "Latin American Trade Negotiations with the United States," *International Organization*, 34 (Spring 1980), 207–28.

that a modern state like Belgium would have been less able to resist American pressure than Vietnam, since the economy of the former state can be readily disrupted by destroying or impeding part of the economy because the parts are so interdependent.[51] In advanced economies, where separate pieces of complex machines and other products are manufactured in many locations, dislocation of the transportation system or interference with the production of a single necessary item can shut down an entire industry.

The economic weapon that is most useful to developing states is nationalization. In the 1960s the Philippines was successful in using just such a threat to induce the United States to extend trade preferences.[52] In the previous chapter we noted a number of successful nationalization efforts in which the United States acquiesced without retaliating as the legal requirements of the Hickenlooper and Pelly amendments would seem to require. Governments as well as corporations, fearful of encouraging even more rampant nationalization, have simply been unwilling to press such issues.

THE EFFECTS OF SIZE ON BEHAVIOR

Whether one is speaking of military or economic power capabilities, it seems obvious that great powers behave differently than small powers on several dimensions. A number of studies have concluded that states with greater power capabilities tend to be more active in foreign policy.[53] This, of course, is a function of both more abundant resources and broader global interests. As part of this activity, powerful states have engaged in greater conflict behavior in the postwar era than less powerful ones.[54] During the period 1815–1965, more than half of the smaller powers (77 out of 144) were able to escape war entirely,

51. Franklin B. Weinstein, *Indonesian Foreign Policy and the Dilemma of Dependence* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1976), p. 27.

52. Joseph S. Nye, "Multinational Corporations in World Politics," *Foreign Affairs*, 53 (October 1974), 158.

53. Stephen A. Salmore and Charles F. Hermann, "The Effect of Size, Development, and Accountability on Foreign Policy," *Peace Research Society (International) Papers*, 14 (1970), 16–30; Maurice A. East, "Size and Foreign Policy Behavior," *World Politics*, 25 (July 1973), 556–76.

54. Rudolph J. Rummel, *National Attributes and Behavior* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1979), p. 13.

whereas the great powers participated in at least 19 of the 25 international wars that have occurred since 1914.[55]

Within alliance systems larger states have assumed a disproportionate share of the burden. A major part of the criticism leveled at the People's Republic of China by the Soviet Union in the late 1950s was that China was not adequately sharing in the burden of defense and that it should be grateful for the help it had received from the Soviet Union. Similarly, the United States has been critical of what it has seen as a relatively free ride for Japan and Germany, whose defense efforts have been substantially smaller than those of the United States.

Larger powers have also been found to vote more often than smaller ones in the United Nations, although small powers are more likely to favor multilateral organizations over bilateral ones.[56] A study of 388 mediation efforts during the period 1816–1960 revealed that mediation has been utilized more frequently in the affairs of lesser countries than in disputes among major powers.[57] To a certain extent this has probably been due to great-power efforts to force smaller powers that are engaged in conflicts to have their disputes mediated.

The foreign-policy instruments of large and small states also seem to differ. Large states enjoy superiority in terms of the ability to reward and punish other states. Small states are forced to confine themselves to diplomatic instruments such as protests and verbal persuasion. They are also more likely to use the withdrawal of diplomatic recognition as a tool to influence other members of the international system. Of 211 formal diplomatic ruptures initiated by 72 countries during the period 1945–70, more than 90 percent were found to involve new states or Latin American states.[58]

A study of military intervention by outside powers during the period 1948–67 found that the motivations for such incursions differed between major and minor powers. Interventions by major powers were generally related to strategic power balances, ideology, economic, dip-

55. Melvin Small and J. David Singer, "Patterns in International Warfare, 1816–1965," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 391 (September 1970), 151–52.

56. Helge Hveem, "Foreign Policy Opinion as a Function of International Position," *Cooperation and Conflict*, 7, no. 2 (1972), p. 70.

57. Edward P. Levine, "Mediation in International Politics," *Peace Research Society (International) Papers*, 18 (1971), 33.

58. P. J. Boyce, *Foreign Affairs for New States* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977), p. 162.

lomatic, and military interests; minor powers were concerned with regional disputes over territory, social grievances, regional ideology, or the security of border areas. Even when major and minor powers have participated jointly in a military intervention, the goals of the two types of states were seldom similar.[59]

Decisions on alignment appear to be affected by the relative power of a state. Strategies of alignment seem to be especially relevant for a small state threatened by outside powers. In forging such alliances small states appear not to align with each other but with larger powers. In a study of alliances during the period 1920–57, Bruce M. Russett found that, with the exception of several bilateral alliances among Eastern European states, there were few alliances among relative equals.[60] Instead, smaller states tended to be linked with the great powers. Among the few small-state alliances that have developed, according to Russett, few have shown much political or military integration.

It appears on the surface that it would be particularly useful for small states to join in a common alliance and in so doing become a force in world politics. Small states have demonstrated in the context of the United Nations General Assembly that with coalescence and cooperation they can dominate the voting outcome, particularly since each state, regardless of size, has an equal vote. Despite their voting power, such states have discovered that the resolutions they are able to pass are ineffective, for they have neither the financial nor the military power to support them.

An effective coalition of small states is difficult to achieve not only because of extensive competition among them but also because they are likely to find themselves opposed by groups of larger states that can thwart their objectives. In the 1950s the United States, under the stewardship of President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, looked askance at efforts of small states to go it alone or to attempt to pursue neutralist policies either individually or in concert.

There appears to be little consensus on whether or not it is in the best interests of a small state to align itself with a larger state for protection. Machiavelli, for example, suggested that there was little advantage for a small power in remaining neutral, for it risked the enmity of

59. Frederick S. Pearson and Robert Baumann, "Foreign Military Intervention by Large and Small Powers," *International Interactions*, 1 (October 1974), 277.

60. Bruce M. Russett, "An Empirical Typology of International Military Alliances," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 15 (May 1971), 262–89.

larger powers; moreover, if a war should occur, alignment would give it a share in the spoils.[61] Even if defeat were to come, one could expect more lenient treatment for the smaller ally. The utility of alignment for the small state is supported by a study undertaken by the Correlates of War project, which found on the basis of data for the period 1816–1970 that "smaller nations without alliance ties tend to be 'aggressed upon' more often."[62] Alignment with a larger state outside of its region is particularly important for a state that would otherwise be dominated by larger states within its region. Israel, threatened by its Arab neighbors, and Brazil, concerned about the dominance of its Spanish-speaking neighbors, have been particularly sensitive about their relations with the United States.

John W. Burton has taken the opposite position, suggesting that nonalignment is an advantageous policy for a small state.[63] Among the possible advantages that might be derived from nonalignment are the following: (1) it ensures freedom and independence; (2) the state can stay out of conflicts that are of little concern to itself; (3) alliances may exacerbate relations with neighbors that do not belong to the same alliance; (4) nonalignment lessens the pressure to divert scarce materials to military obligations; and (5) nonalignment may allow a state to obtain aid from both sides.

Robert Rothstein views nonalignment as relevant only if small states do not threaten to shift the balance of power and are willing to withdraw from active participation in foreign affairs.[64] In other words, the small power should be strategically irrelevant and politically nonprovocative.

Whatever the merits of small-state alignment policy, the tendency of small states to align with more powerful states has sometimes had a negative impact on global stability. A study of the behavior of five small neutral states during World War II noted:

> *Instead of moving to the side of the less powerful and thereby helping to restore the balance they [the small states] tended to*

61. Cited in Robert L. Rothstein, *The Weak in the World of the Strong* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), p. 33.

62. Cited in Michael D. Wallace, "Early Warning Indicators from the Correlates of War Project," in J. David Singer and Michael D. Wallace, eds., *To Augur Well* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1979), p. 23.

63. Ernest Lefever, "Nehru, Nasser, and Nkrumah on Neutralism," in Laurence Martin, ed., *Neutralism and Nonalignment* (New York: Praeger, 1962), p. 95.

64. Rothstein, *The Weak in the World of the Strong*, p. 32.

comply with the demand of the more powerful and thus accentuate any shifts in the balance of forces caused by changing fortunes of war or prospects of ultimate victory.[65]

In addition to affecting military strategy and alliance behavior, relative power capabilities have an impact on bargaining and negotiation. The relationship between national power capabilities and bargaining behavior is a particularly interesting one, given the recent concern with building bargaining chips and negotiating from strength. But will the existence of superior strength induce the adversary to the bargaining table and make it more accommodating, as the proponents of bargaining from strength assume?

A major problem arises when both sides believe that the proper condition for negotiation is a position of strength. Seldom will both perceive themselves to be in such a position at the same time. As a result, one or the other will refuse to participate until it achieves such a position. This is why interest in negotiation varies, depending upon which side is ahead in a war situation or believes it has achieved an important military breakthrough that momentarily places it in a preeminent position.

The notion of negotiation from strength has been particularly problematic from the standpoint of disarmament negotiations. A review of concession-making behavior in disarmament debates over the period 1945–60 revealed that the United States and the Soviet Union were more likely to make such concessions during periods in which they both had less confidence in their deterrent capabilities as measured by defense expenditures.[66] Since in a dyadic bargaining situation one side's strength is the other side's weakness, this may not occur very often. If either side feels itself to be in a position of clear superiority, there is little incentive to negotiate. The superior state becomes less concerned with searching for alternatives to the existing military system, while the weaker one fears such negotiations, believing that the dominant state will try to dictate the terms. The more likely response on the part of the weaker state is to increase its own military capabilities or look for allies, but not to seek security through disarmament. Serious negotiation on strategic arms limitation had to await the advent of nuclear parity in the 1970s.

65. Annette Baker Fox, *The Power of Small States: Diplomacy in World War II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), p. 187.

66. Lloyd Jensen, Military Capabilities and Bargaining Behavior," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 9 (June 1965), 155–63.

As states have sought to build weapons to use as bargaining chips (on the assumption that such weapons would help produce agreements favorable to themselves), arms have proliferated without corresponding reductions. During the SALT process itself, which began in 1969 and lasted through the signing of the SALT II Treaty a decade later, the number of deliverable strategic nuclear warheads quadrupled. Weapons systems such as the multiple independent re-entry vehicle (MIRV), the cruise missile, antiballistic missiles, and the Trident and MX missiles have all been advocated largely for their value as bargaining chips at one time or the other. But the history of disarmament negotiations has been such that, once a system is built, it is almost impossible to get rid of it through negotiation. Henry Kissinger himself had pressed the military to develop the cruise missile as a bargaining chip for the SALT talks; unfortunately, this chip could not be cashed, for, as Kissinger admitted, he "didn't realize the Pentagon would fall in love with cruise missiles."[67]

Despite the fact that the strategy of bargaining from a position of military strength often does not work, it is probably true that if agreement is desired, a state must make concessions to a more powerful adversary. Even Neville Chamberlain recognized this in defending the Munich agreement before the British Cabinet:

I hope . . . that my colleagues will not think that I am making any attempts to disguise the fact that, if we now possessed a superior force to Germany, we should probably be considering these proposals in a very different spirit. But we must look facts in the face.[68]

As the weak state confronts the strong state in a bargaining situation, it is by no means obvious that the latter will win. A survey of Soviet and Chinese relations toward the third world concluded that these two states "have made adjustments to the needs of third world countries more often than the latter's decisions have yielded to the

67. John W. Finney, "Cruise Missiles Provoke Conflict Within the Military as Well as with Soviets," New York Times, January 21, 1976, p. 30.

68. Cited in Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 78.

preferences of the Communist countries."[69] The litany of cases in which the United States has been unable to influence the behavior of smaller states hardly needs repeating. Iran and Cuba are but two of the more extreme cases.

A variety of factors help explain why the small state is often able to prevail over the large one, not the least of which is the ability of the small state to concentrate its energies on a single issue. The great power, given its global responsibilities, must deal with many foreign-policy issues concurrently. The issue that assumes primary importance for the small state may be of relative unimportance to a major power preoccupied with an extensive foreign policy agenda.

Second, the small state may be willing to take greater risks and pursue its goals doggedly since it has less to lose than the great power. In some respects a destitute state may be in the best bargaining position, for it has no place to go but up. Moreover, the collapse of such a state is often the last thing a great power would like to see happen, particularly if the great power perceives that the collapse might provide an open invitation to its major adversaries to fill the power vacuum. This became a major concern for the United States in its dealings with Iran over the hostage issue and in its reaction to the Iran-Iraqi war in 1980–81. The possible collapse of the Iranian government was viewed as opening the region to increased influence and control from the Soviet Union, which shares a common border with Iran.

Third, the small power may prevail because of its greater tolerance for sacrifices in a conflict situation. North Vietnam's long history of conflict, first with the French and then with the United States, made it resigned to death and destruction and thus perhaps more willing to suffer than its opponents were. The significance of such acceptance of suffering in a conflict situation is revealed in a study of forty wars that found that almost half were won by the party that lost more lives.[70] Few states, however, will hold out as long as Paraguay, which refused to surrender during the Lopez War of 1865–70 until it had lost some 80 percent of its population.

Fourth, the small state may benefit from a centralized decision-making structure when confronting a larger, pluralistic polity. This might enable the small state to search for allies in various sections of

69. Alvin Z. Rubinstein, "Observations," in Rubinstein, ed., *Soviet and Chinese Influence in the Third World* (New York: Praeger, 1975), p. 223.

70. Steven Rosen, "War Power and the Willingness to Suffer," in Bruce M. Russett, ed., *Peace, War, and Numbers* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1972), pp. 176–78.

the bureaucracy of the large state and thus perhaps influence the policy directed toward itself or even achieve a reversal of policies already enacted. A small and cohesive bureaucratic structure makes the small state less vulnerable to such penetration.

Fifth, to the extent that the small state enjoys some important natural resources that are in short supply, it may be able to influence larger states. But as pointed out earlier, there are limits to such power, for it requires the cooperation of other states that have extensive supplies of a given commodity to be successful.

Sixth, the small state may gain some leverage by threatening to align with the other side if satisfaction is not obtained. This threat tends to be more effective if the international system is bipolarized. The late Shah of Iran was successful in negotiating better arms deals with the United States because of his threats to approach Moscow if concessions were not forthcoming. The Shah's threat was credible because of his control over both domestic and foreign policy while in power.[71]

CONCLUSION

Power is an important yet elusive concept that plays a vital role in foreign-policy behavior. Much of the confusion over the concept lies in the failure to distinguish between the capacity to act and the actual exercise of power, for the two do not always go together. Capability does not always translate into influence, because perceptual factors may distort one's views of the capabilities and intentions of others. Power is also relative and reciprocal, and has varying effects on different issues, particularly because of the role played by legitimacy, expertise, and role models in affecting influence relationships. Expectations and the tendency to equate aggressiveness with power have led to further confusion between power and influence. As a result, measurement of power is particularly difficult; what is usually measured is national power capabilities.

States may derive some power advantages from their geopolitical position. On the whole, however, such factors tend to be limiting rather than determining, as far as foreign policy is concerned. In this age of nuclear missiles many observers regard geographic factors, particularly

71. Shahran Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 114.

location, as decreasing in importance. Nevertheless, boundaries continue to play an important role, at least in less developed regions.

Most critical in the modern age has been the role of military power. There is evidence suggesting that force has a deterrent value. But there appears to be little consensus on whether superior force makes peace more likely or less so.

Although economic power has become more important, given increased economic interdependence and the fear of nuclear war, the two major instruments of trade and aid have their limitations. Economic boycotts have generally been ineffective in influencing the behavior of other states, although oil boycotts have had some effect.

Relative power capabilities seem to make some difference in the foreign-policy choices of states. Large states have tended to be more active and to engage in more conflict than small states. The latter prefer multilateral forums to bilateral ones and utilize mediation more often. Alliances appear to be composed largely of powers of unequal size. Coalitions of small states have not been effective, nor has nonalignment been a viable option, unless the small state is willing to withdraw from world politics and to be nonprovocative in its foreign policy.

Power is important in bargaining and negotiation, although the strategy of bargaining from strength has tended to reduce the likelihood of agreement. Positions of power parity have been more conducive to agreement, despite evidence suggesting that under certain circumstances, small states may be able to prevail over large states in a bargaining relationship.

8 EXTERNAL AND SYSTEMIC DETERMINANTS

Our discussion so far has focused on factors that are largely internal to the nation-state. The exception has been national power capabilities, which have both an internal and an external component. In this chapter we shall explore the impact of external actors and the structure of the international system on the foreign-policy behavior of a state. In a sense, if there were no external determinants, there would be no foreign policy. In developing a foreign policy, a state is largely reacting to some condition or happening in its external environment. Those who subscribe to the rational-actor model (see Chapter 1) tend to regard this level of analysis as the only significant one.

Much of what is written about international relations is approached from this particular perspective, with little reference to many of the internal calculations already discussed. Despite the extensive use of this approach, there is comparatively little in the way of empirically verifiable work concerning the impact of external variables on foreign policy. The bulk of such research tends to be anecdotal and descriptive. The exception is the recent outpouring of research utilizing what has come to be known as the *event analysis* approach. This approach involves the coding of hundreds of moves, including such activities as threats, promises, protests, violence, and the like, in which states en-