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SOVIET DECISION-MAKING AND CRISIS

BEHAVIOR: CZECHOSLOVAKIA, 1968

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# DEDICATION

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To my grandmother, Ekaterina Nalbandova, for the inspiration.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Changes in the international arena often come slowly, yet the last thirty years have seen changes significant enough to alter the entire course of international events. Conflict has always brought pain and death, but recent advances in military technology and the advent of nuclear weaponry have made war potentially ever more devastating. Conflict management and avoidance have therefore become increasingly vital. The technological advances are as yet still under the control of nation-states, and it is the interaction of these which is of interest to the international analyst. The decision-making process of sovereign states has become subject to closer scrutiny than ever, in search of increased opportunities for peaceful resolution of conflict.

In this light, perhaps the most significant change of late has been the shift to a bipolar world, which commenced between World War I and II and culminated in the Cold War. The development of the United States as one of the two world powers has generated a considerable amount of study as to how American policy-making occurs, but the research done on the other half, the Soviet Union, has been far more limited. During the last few decades, the Soviet Union has developed "from the position of a strictly regional power--though one with substantial military capabilities and significant untapped potential to expand its role in the world--to a

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major actor in all areas of the international political, security, and economic system."[1] Relations between the United States and the Soviet Union are of prime importance to all people. These relations would be best managed in an atmosphere of trust. Although real trust may be too much to ask, a degree of understanding is not. Trust cannot flourish in an atmosphere of fear, whether borne of ignorance or of knowledge. It is the fear of the unknown with which this paper is mainly concerned. It is an attempt to shed light on how the Soviets arrive at their foreign policy decisions and how this process is affected by crisis-induced stress. There cannot be too much discussion of this topic, and indeed, there are at present numerous facets of t . area in need of further research.

There he often been a temptation to portray the Soviet Union as a monolith, with a single guiding principle behind its actions. This narrow outlook, frequently focusing on Bolshevik or Communist expansion, neglects the diversity of inputs which necessarily affect any major decision-maker. This outlook oversimplifies things in a hurried attempt to understand an issue that may forever remain somewhat elusive. David K. Shipler, quoting Stephen F. Cohen of Princeton University, suggests that among the misperceptions created by this oversimplification are the notions that,

> "the Soviet elite is utterly monolithic because all Communists think alike," that "every Soviet leader is strong," that "there is no real politics in the system--it is a kind of administrative despotism." This last perceptual problem stems partly from the public struggle between dissidents and the state, which creates an appearance of politics while the real politics, the jockeying among constituencies for resources and priorities, takes place behind the closed doors of Soviet officialdom.[2]

Scholars have begun to consider the diversity of inputs into the decisional process. The emergence of a bureaucratic-politics model of decision-making in the last few decades has signaled that "the trend has been away from single-factor explanations of Soviet foreign policy and

toward an integration of a multiplicity of factors. The question has been rephrased. No longer is it 'What factor is the key to the Russian enigma?' Now we ask 'What is the operational mix of the factors which influence Soviet policy?'[3] Analysis of the Soviet decision-making process focuses on the dispersal of power among the various interest groups that are represented on the ruling body, the Politburo. There appears to be a good deal of parochial politicking involved in Soviet debate on foreign affairs. It is very important to understand that there are certain similarities in the process whereby large bureaucracies arrive at major decisions. With this understanding, the other actors in the international arena may be better able to comprehend and even anticipate the directions of Soviet policy.

While this understanding is very useful in itself, it becomes a necessity in the tense environment of a crisis. When a nation's basic values are threatened, its ability to maintain a consistent and calm decisional procedure is impaired. The manner in which the information flow is affected and how the speed and efficiency of decisional groups (with all the considerations postulated by the bureaucratic-politics model) may shift under the heightened stress of a crisis will affect the ability of the nation-state to remain in control of its situation. When the premise of a bureaucratic-politics model of decision-making is placed within the parameters of risk and crisis behavior, it can be set against a documented event in an effort to test its explanatory and therefore predictive powers. The reform movement carried out by the Czechoslovak people and government in the spring of 1968 and the subsequent Soviet invasion in August of the same year present a suitable example. By applying these theories of Soviet behavior we are able to test the

potential of these same theories as tools for understanding future Soviet international behavior.

CHAPTER II

Humans try in various ways to change their environment. Sometimes the results are as planned; more often they are not. But in any case, man's decision-making process can be subjected to analysis. An understanding of the decision-making process can be of great use for an individual during interaction with others, as this will facilitate his own decision-making process.

When the importance of understanding the methods of another is magnified to consider the collective responsibilities of the nation state, it becomes all the more vital. As in any personal interactions, the interactions of nations with one another can only be aided by a degree of mutual understanding. When the procedures whereby a state reaches its decisions and the factors influencing these decisions are understood by the states with which it must interact, the states will be able to deal with one another more intelligently. This understanding will also decrease the fear of the unknown by shedding light on the underpinnings of another's policy-making.

An analysis of the decision-making process requires an understanding of the requisite tools needed to establish the guidelines of analysis. Arnold C. Horelick has shown these basic tools to be paradigms, theories and models. [1] A model, in his definition, is a cohesive set of ideas that form a coherent system. A theory is a more abstract structure

of assumptions and inferences of a generalized nature. Most basic of all is the paradigm, the fundamental block of assumptions upon which a theory is based. Theories are built on paradigms and may generate numerous models. According to Horelick, the lack of theories in the social sciences which enjoy the precision and quality of those in other core sciences forces most discussion of decision-making to take place on the level of the paradigm. He has furthermore defined two paradigms as central to the analysis of the decision-making process, the analytic and cybernetic paradigms.

Of the two paradigms, the analytic is the older one and therefore more thoroughly developed. Horelick has substituted the word analytic for rational, because the connotations of rational choices as those which produce the "best" results may not always mesh with the approximations of the decision-making models. Models incorporating this paradigm "involve a decision-maker acting to maximize his values given the constraints which he faces."[2] This assumes a series of calculations carried out in a very deliberate fashion. The decision-maker must first decide what different values or utility he places on the various possible states of the world. At the same time he must determine which options will lead to the end he most clearly prefers. This process must be repeated as new situations requiring decisions arise, and can be updated to deal with information feedback from previous decisions. In this methodical fashion the decision-maker presumably employs a form of cost-benefit analysis to achieve his objectives.

Analytic theory has had a good deal of success in explaining a number of different processes in different areas, such as microeconomics and mathematics. Particularly when applied to individual decision-making,

the analytical method provides a coherent theoretical structure. Yet a number of questions have arisen concerning the usefulness of this paradigm for studying the development of national policy. The central flaw is that one cannot successfully aggregate a group of individual decision-makers and consider the aggregation to be an accurate reflection of collective activity. A second problem is that to deal effectively with the mass of information and data required for decision-making on a national scale and to make all the calculations which such a formal methodology requires would be too difficult. This leads one to believe there must be less complicated methods for dealing with at least a certain portion of the decision-making.

The search for alternatives to the analytic paradigm and a resolution of the problems inherent in it gave rise to a newer and less developed idea, that of the cybernetic paradigm. Essentially, the cybernetic paradigm limits the range and purposive activity of the decision-maker. Rather than pursue a distinct outcome which has been calculated to be the best, the decision-maker sets in motion a set of standard operating procedures which will produce an outcome. A decision is fragmented into smaller decisions which can be dealt with individually by the appropriate group, with input limited to what is pertinent to that particular problem only. Rather than add together the rational calculations of several individual actors, the cybernetic paradigm assumes a final decision to be the collective product of a series of operational procedures.

This paradigm concerns itself with the parts of the process, while the analytic paradigm looks at the whole. As there is no need to establish a hierarchy of preferences, no need to calculate outcomes and

results of basic decisions, the cybernetic paradigm starts out on a fundamentally different footing than the analytic paradigm. The two paradigms compete with one another and yet are often linked into one, generally with features of the cybernetic system being imposed on the analytic system as constraints. The competition between the two seems beneficial, however, in that it generates alternate viewpoints on important decision processes. It is therefore very important that the distinctions between the two be maintained and even sharpened.

As noted earlier, the paradigm functions as the base upon which complete models for analysis may be developed. The cybernetic and analytic paradigms serve in an abstract fashion as the bases upon which more practical models can be formulated. These models serve as the framework for the day-to-day analysis of policy decision-making. There are three models at the most general level, which have been outlined by Graham Allison as the most basic models.[3] These include the Governmental (Bureaucratic)-Politics, Organizational-Process and Rational-Actor models. The bureaucratic-politics model has also recently developed what is essentially an offshoot of the standard bureaucratic model, thanks to the work of Karen Dawisha.[4] These two will be discussed in greater detail in subsequent pages. The rational-actor and organizational-process models, however, will receive a less intensive scrutiny, as they seem to have less to offer in Soviet foreign policy analysis than either the bureaucratic model or its offspring.

The rational-actor model is the oldest and most widely accepted of the models presented. It is essentially an ". . . attempt to explain international events by recounting the aims and calculations of nations or governments."[5] It implies purposive, planned actions aimed at achieving a

preconceived goal. The nation is given the attributes of a unitary actor seeking to maximize his potential for security and development according to a plan. There are four basic ideas which compose the rational-actor model and give it the cohesiveness necessary for its durability. First, each possible action will have a consequence, and this consequence must be ranked preferentially on a "utility" scale set up by the agent. This is the establishment of goals and objectives. Next the agent must lay out all the alternatives he is faced with. Following this branching-out procedure, the consequence of each alternative and variation on these alternatives must also be taken into account. The last activity for the agent is simply to pick the action which has the highest consequence rating in his utility scale. By following this step-by-step procedure the decision-maker will arrive at the most rational, i.e., "best" possible action to pursue.

The attraction of this model is the way it establishes a degree of consistency on something which is often beyond the capacity of the analyst or layman to control, the decisions of a sovereign. It is comforting to think that there are reasons for the things done and that they belong to some rational plan. In using this model the analyst puts himself in the shoes of the actor and determines what would seem to be or have been the most logical choices to make given the circumstances. In this way decisions can be determined to have made sense, and therefore be easier to deal with. For all the neatness of this solution, it remains flawed in some ways. The major problem is that it assumes an unrealistic degree of cohesive, purposive behavior on the part of the decision-maker. Things are rarely as deliberate and clean as this model would have one believe. A Soviet analyst observing the American political scene would find the

"drastic" policy changes of every new election term to be anything but rational and orderly. The rational-actor model does not take into account many of the various influences acting on the decision-making process, in large part because the inclusion of these things in the calculations involved in this model would make it prohibitively burdensome.

When considering the actions of a single human being, one may best consider them as choices made in an effort to maximize a goal. Yet this model does not transfer so easily to the actions of nations. When discussing a situation, we are quick to say "X's point of view is . . .". Nations are not, however, single entities with single points of view, a notion the rational-actor model does not take into account.

The organizational process occupies quite the other end of the spectrum. This process derives directly from the cybernetic paradigm; indeed it is the only truly cybernetic model of the four under review. An analyst observing decision-making using the organizational-process model would see rational decisions as the aggregate of numerous outputs from the numerous organizations which compose any government. The various units will act on the parts of a situation relevant to them according to a standard procedure. This is one of the core concepts of the model. Large groups of individuals require standard operating procedures if they are to be coordinated in any meaningful fashion. It is the acting out of these procedures which determines the actions we see as final decisions. These procedures are not necessarily directly controlled by the leader of an organization, but rather are disrupted by the interference of a leader. The longer a procedure is adopted as the standard method, the more resistant it is to change, though change may occur gradually in response to changes to the decision-making environment. In sum, organizational

process refers to the procedure whereby the many different organizations which compose a government execute a standard procedure resulting in a decision, not necessarily under the influence of any one leader or with any parochial designs in mind.

While the organizational process offers an entirely different perspective for the analysis of decision-making, there are as yet too many limitations on the model for it to be essential. It is a relatively new area of study, with more research done on it for the analysis of economic and corporate behavior than for political analysis. Perhaps the major difficulty in applying this process to a study of the Soviet Union is the lack of pertinent information. This model requires a great deal of information about the structure and methods of the various organizations, including budget estimates and personnel structures, which is largely unavailable in the Soviet context. We are therefore reduced to assumptions, with their inherent deficiencies. A further limitation is that this model is less useful than others for the study of crisis behavior. Standard operating procedures are subject to inordinate stresses during a crisis and may not prove reliable for the analysis of decision-making.

It would seem worthwhile at this point to reiterate that these models are not to be considered useless and fit merely to be cast aside. They do indeed offer insights into the actions of a nation and its decision-making process. It is simply that it would be beyond the scope of this work to try to accommodate all available models. The bureaucratic-politics model and the model developed by Karen Davisha seem to have the most to offer in the analysis of Soviet activity with which we

are concerned. Before beginning this analysis, however, some discussion of these two models is in order.

The bureaucratic-politics model as defined by Allison and developed by Jiri Valenta falls somewhere between the extremes of the rational-actor and organizational-processes models. It does not concern itself with one individual leader sitting atop a nation, nor with the multitude of organizations which constitute a government. Instead, the focus is on the group of leaders, the heads of the various organizations and groups, who together form the source of a nation's collective leadership. One is quick to say that this is not always the case, that leaders such as Stalin and Franco operated with a minimum of collectivity. This is easily conceded, except to add that governments of this type are not the norm, and that even these men presided over bureaucracies that were subject to politicking. The average government, then, formulates decisions that are the product of a process of "pulling and hauling" by the various groups that are its power sources.

This model is perhaps particularly well suited for analysis of Soviet politics. The senior decision-makers who comprise the Politburo and to a lesser extent the Central Committee, represent the leadership of numerous organizations responsible for running the Soviet state. The interests of these bosses are partly parochial, varying in intensity depending on the leader and the organization. When a decision is needed, the leader projects the view that will benefit his organization most. This is not to say that individual interests are more important to the leader than are national security interests. It can be assumed that all participants in the inner circle, the Politburo, are patriots who believe in their country and in its power. The way in which the individual

perceives things, however, and the way he interprets and reports information, may be colored by his organizational interests.

The layman might find the idea of having such major decisions decided by politicking to be highly distasteful, but such does seem to be the case. The struggles for influence which this model suggests are as much attempts to have one's views adopted in a competitive atmosphere as attempts to increase personal and organizational power. Since there are many contending organizations, most decisions come about as compromises that have been reached through extensive bargaining. In this sense, the bureaucratic-politics model is truly an example of a collective system at work. Allison cites as an example the attitude of the KGB to detente. Even this organization, one among many, experienced conflict between different factions with different points of view. The domestic branch was not interested in negotiations that would only make its job of internal control more difficult. At the same time, the foreign branch knew that many new opportunities would arise out of the increased contacts with the West.[6] This is but one example of the differing perspectives that would lead organizational leaders to back different policy choices. It is out of the "pulling and hauling" performed by these leaders that their collective decisions are reached.

The bureaucratic-politics model developed by Allison is intended for use in the analysis of any advanced industrialized society. This assumes similarities between these nations which Dr. Dawisha has some difficulty accepting. She suggests, in reference to Allison's use of the United States as a model, that "to extrapolate Soviet behaviour by reference to the American experience is to overlook factors unique to the USSR which have an important bearing on the universality of the

Bureaucratic Politics Model."[7] An alternate point of view concerning the extent of the universality of the bureaucratic-politics model has been put forward by Dr. Dawisha. She feels that in the context of the analysis of Soviet foreign policy there are too many incongruities with the American system upon which Allison bases his model to allow the bureaucratic-politics model to transcend borders so easily. There are numerous factors indigenous to the Soviet Union, such as, "the pervasive role of the Party in bureaucratic conflict, the influence of ideology in providing universal goals, the representation of a wide range of functional and expert opinion, and the diversity of channels of access to the decision-making process (which) all serve to undermine the applicability of the model."[8] To the extent that the bureaucratic system does operate in the Soviet Union, the model is a useful tool, but only in conjunction with methods which take all these other factors into account.

Despite these differences, Dawisha does use the bureaucratic-politics model as a basis for her methods. She allows for a greater number of influencing factors than others, including Allison and Valenta. However, these factors are used as a supplement rather than a refutation of the bureaucratic-politics model. The most distinctive feature of the way Dr. Dawisha looks at Soviet policy is her concern with those aspects of policy decisions that deal with crisis and crisis-induced stress. This focus necessarily limits the applicability of her methods, yet they are aptly suited for the purposes of this work. Using the bureaucratic model as a lens, I hope that through an analysis of the events of the Prague Spring of 1968 I may shed some light on Soviet policy formulation.

The Soviet attitude towards the Czech government of Alexander Dubcek during the crisis period of 1968 was never a fully cohesive or unanimous one. At various points throughout the crisis various groups and organizations within the Soviet government presented and supported various viewpoints. Yet to the outside world the Soviet Union appeared to be a purposeful agent relentlessly carrying out its will. The reality of the trading back and forth, the "pulling and hauling" which actually went on in the Politburo, was well hidden behind a facade of unity and decisiveness. It was only later, well after the fact, that the release of bits and pieces of information allowed a clearer picture to be formed. Our perceptions of the perspectives of the Soviet leaders still remain based on inference. It is mainly through the reports and diaries of Czech figures central to the events, along with the published speeches of Soviet leaders, that scholars such as Jiri Valenta have pieced together a picture of Soviet attitudes towards Czechoslovakia in 1968.'

The world the Soviet leadership faced in the period around the Prague Spring, the peaceful revolution in Czechoslovakia, was one of few certainties and many potential problems. Czechoslovakia was certainly not the focus of Soviet concern, until the middle months of 1968. Relations with the United States seemed in good order, with President Johnson

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expressing a strong interest in beginning SALT talks as soon as possible. The rift with China had widened, however, and concerns about this populous southern neighbor occupied Soviet minds more than all other foreign policy matters. At home, Breznnev was active in consolidating his own position as the dominant figure in Soviet politics and was consequently forced to step lightly. The attention paid to these events, "allowed the Czechoslovak reform program of democratization and serious infighting between members of the Czechoslovak ruling elite to go almost unnoticed by the Soviet leadership . . ." until the situation became critical.[2]

Unlike the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia had had experience with a form of representative government. According to Zdenek Mlynar, "Totalitarian dictatorship was an alien system imported from the USSR, whereas the domestic political traditions of the past fifty years lay mainly in the struggle to create a pluralist democracy."[3] Though the fervor and revolutionary zeal which characterized the Hungarian Revolution of 1956 was not so evident, there was sufficient support for the gradual transformation which was taking place. The gradual change expected by officials of the Czech party, such as Mlynar, was drastically accelerated by the ouster of President Novotny in January of 1968. The removal of a number of his supporters soon followed, as did the ascension of his major opponent, Alexander Dubcek. Novotny was not given the support he desired by the Soviets, who appeared satisfied with the credentials of Mr. Dubcek. Rather than submit to the prevailing opinion that he should go, Novotny and his supporters continued to fight. It was, however, the publication in April of 1968 of a summary statement on the reforms of socialism to be attempted by the Czechs, later famous as the Action Program, which ended the first major phase of the Prague Spring.

The crisis resumed during July 1968. A group of reformists drafted what became known as the Two Thousand Words Manifesto, a letter of concern for the security of the reform movement, signed by many athletes, entertainers and others. An upsurge in the activity of anti-reformists such as Kolder, Indra and V. Bilak moved the reformists to publish this manifesto in hopes of mobilizing popular opinion for their cause. At this point there was also a call for an Extraordinary Party Congress to elect a new government. The realization by the anti-reformists that they would likely lose their positions at this Congress, called for September 9, further spurred them to force a change or halt in the reform movement. The increasing militancy of the Czechs, the acceleration of economic and social reforms, and growing pressure from frightened anti-reformists all served to increase concern in the one country which could decisively settle the dispute, the Soviet Union.

During July, according to Valenta, the Soviet Politburo had also begun to split into two camps, the interventionists and noninterventionists. A number of individuals could at this point be clearly placed within one or the other group. Perhaps the most vocal of all Soviet interventionists was P. Ye. Shelest, First Secretary of the Ukrainian Central Committee. He feared the spread of the Czechoslovak reforms into the nearby Ukraine, which would greatly complicate his own position. Most heads of the westernmost republics such as Latvia and Estonia, as well as heads of the Central Committees of large cities with large concentrations of the intelligentsia, favored an end to the cancerous situation in the West. To a certain extent it can also be said that the military and the KGB were in favor of intervention, due to concerns for Warsaw Pact troop morale and the exposure of previous KGB

activity (the Slansky trial) in Czechoslovakia due to the removal of censorship. Another major pro-interventionist group was composed of Walter Ulbricht of East Germany and Wladyslaw Gomulka of Poland. They were seriously concerned for their positions, as the potential for similar occurrences in their own countries was great.

The formation of a coalition in favor of intervention stimulated the formation of a coalition opposed to intervention. This group in the Soviet Union was often more shadowy, with opinions changing as the situation developed. M.A. Suslov, Secretary of the Central Committee, was one of the non-interventionists. Whereas the interventionists tended to view the Czechoslovakian situation as zero-sum game with the winner gaining and the loser losing, the non-interventionists saw room for maneuver, for a peaceful solution of the conflict in which both sides would win. They felt the price of military action would be too high. Most of the policy-makers in this coalition were men like A.N. Kosygin, whose major responsibilities were in international affairs. They felt that the blow that intervention would give to Soviet prestige, particularly with the advent of detente, would be too great a price to pay for a situation they did not consider critical. Members of the Western Communist parties and, notably, Janos Kadar of Hungary, also preferred a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Neither of these groups were entirely clear-cut. Leaders drifted, vacillated or frequently remained neutral until forced to make a decision. Such was particularly the case with Brezhnev, who never clearly joined either side, preferring to mediate between the two. It was only at the very last moment that he came down in favor of intervention, at a time when it was practically inevitable. He was still involved in

consolidating his position, and was concerned not to alienate any one large group. Yet the battle for political control in Czechoslovakia closely mirrored the jockeying in the Soviet Union and was, essentially, "from the onset, not a product of ideological orthodoxy, but a direct and important aspect of the internal struggle in the Moscow power structure."[4] In both countries, there was as much concern with how a decision would affect each individual involved, as there was with the national and ideological effects of the decision.

One of the alternatives to invasion which was developed early on was a barrage of pressure on the Dubcek government to slow its reform process. This was fine with the interventionists, who merely saw it as a means of creating more support for their position by pointing out the faults of the reformist government. The anti-interventionists, on the other hand, saw this as an opportunity to avoid an invasion by convincing Dubcek to take control of the situation himself. A major tool in this psychological game was the presence of Soviet troops on Czech soil. Warsaw Pact troops in Czechoslovakia for exercises stayed well beyond their announced pull-back date, increasing the uncertainty over Soviet intentions. Also, on July 14 a summit was held in Warsaw, with the Czechs voluntarily not attending. The result of this summit was a joint letter sent to the Czechoslovak leadership warning that what was going on in Czechoslovakia was not to be considered purely a Czech concern, and was therefore subject to the "approval" of other socialist nations. The non-interventionists hoped that this would provide a sufficient warning to the Czechs.

The stalemate that seemed to be developing between the two coalitions in the Politburo caused the debate to widen as both sides

sought to expand their base. The Central Committee served this function during 1968, being seen as "an important device for generating consensus and support of controversial policies among key bureaucratic elites."[5] The meeting called for in July of 1968 was dominated by interventionists, yet most intriguing of all was that the major speakers were men associated with domestic policy, demonstrating the importance of domestic interests in foreign affairs.[6] Speaker after speaker condemned the Czech party for its lack of resolve, and many expressed concern with the effect of the Prague Spring on Soviet citizens. The session ended with a resolution supporting the Warsaw Letter, a demonstration of the "unity" of the Soviet government.

Soviet plans for using psychological and political pressure to force the hand of the Dubcek government worked, though not as desired by the Soviets. Instead of a crackdown on reform, Soviet actions caused "Dubcek and some of his supporters, after several months of indecisiveness, to act like leaders of an independent state and to defy the Soviet leadership."[7] The non-intervention coalition in the Kremlin suffered a defeat, while the position of the interventionists was strengthened. In Czechoslovakia, however, the unity thus inspired signalled the end of the antireformist coalition's ability to put up a fight. Another group now brought their influence into the fray. Western Communist parties sent representatives to Moscow to suggest that military action on the part of the Soviet Union would lead them to convene a separate conference of European Communist parties, thereby effecting a split with Moscow. This threat served to increase the anxieties of the non-interventionists, as most of them, including Suslov and Kosygin, were directly concerned with international affairs. The interventionists, men

like Shelest who were generally unconcerned by what the Western Communists might do, were not impressed with the threat. The non-interventionists managed to gain the upper hand for the moment, however, long enough to propose a last attempt to negotiate an end to the crisis.

The negotiations which took place at Cierna nad Tisou, a small town on the Czech-Soviet border, appeared to be a stop-gap measure initiated by the non-interventionists in hopes that the Czechs would be sufficiently cooperative to convince the interventionists that risky measures were not necessary. Convened July 29, the meeting lasted for four long days of very serious bargaining. All four of the coalitions, both sides in both countries, were represented in the bargaining committees. The Soviets sent a full delegation with a complete staff. This reflected the desire of the members to see for themselves what was happening in Czechoslovakia. Each side feared that the other side would manipulate the proceedings and the subsequent reporting of the proceedings so as to best suit their own needs. Perhaps the most forceful of characters was Shelest, who seemed to desire a break-off of negotiations. In this he succeeded when "Dubcek and other members of the CPC delegation had walked out of the meeting after P. Shelest had made shameless statements about the Czechoslovaks' alleged attempts to wrest the Carpatho-Ukraine from the Soviet Union and about Kriegel not being a fit negotiating partner because he was a 'Jew from Halic.' The Soviet politburo apologized, but the negotiations continued only in small groups."[8] The Soviet non-interventionists, and at this point also Brezhnev, were distressed by this breakdown and sought to renew the discussions. They found common ground with Dubcek in deciding to discuss Socialist unity and the allegiance of Czechoslovakia to the Warsaw Pact.

This issue strengthened the hand of the reformists and the non-interventionists, while neatly avoiding the thornier problem of domestic changes and their effects on other countries' domestic policy. This all came about during a six-nation conference at Bratislava on August 3.

The main function of the Bratislava Conference was to draft a joint declaration affirming the results of the Cierna meeting. The result was a vague, ambiguous document which could be interpreted to support the views of any of the participants. The Czechs did, however, allow the inclusion of many sentences which suggested they would toe the Soviet line more carefully in the future. Dubcek appears to have been attempting to reassure his allies that the Czechs were willing to cooperate with them. Many, however, saw the Bratislava Declaration as a sort of sell-out. Writing immediately after the conference, Professor I. Svitak echoed the popular sentiment when he noted that "at Cierna the Communists may have achieved self-determination for the party . . . in the eyes of the people they have gained considerably, because they allegedly succeeded in defending the sovereignty of the state. However, the unity of the nation which was created in the critical days has been radically shaken by the President's address to the nation after the Bratislava Declaration, so this unity has quickly disappeared in the wake of the declaration's disagreeable Munich phraseology."[9] The participants left the conference feeling as vague as the wording of the declaration. The momentum of the interventionists had been halted, but only very temporarily. It was now time for the Soviet leadership to withdraw and evaluate the outcome of the two meetings.

The meetings at Cierna and Bratislava, though not resulting in any concrete changes, had the effect of appearing to defuse the situation. While there was talk, there was hope that the issues could be resolved peacefully. This hope was not shared by all, however. The fears of the interventionists and the anxieties of the anti-reformists were not mollified by the vague promises received from the Czechs. There had been no agreement to reimpose censorship, a major problem for many Soviet bureaucrats responsible for ideological control. Since the removal of censorship, most of the underground literature carrying information on foreign affairs used the Czech press as its source. Underground printings of the speeches of Dubcek, Smyrkovsky and other reform leaders gave Soviet intellectuals access to the ideas involved in the Czech experiment with democratic socialism.[10] The increase in underground activity, plus the sensationalism of events like the trial of Ginzburg and Galanskov in the spring of 1968, only served to increase the vigor with which the bureaucrats attacked the Czechs. Men like S.P. Trapeznikov, head of the Department of Science and Education, feared the spread of the Czech reforms into all of Eastern Europe and the USSR. The promises made by the Czechs to stay loyal to the Warsaw Pact had very little impact on these men, whose concerns lay elsewhere. The armed forces, many in the KGB, and Gomulka and Ulbricht all contributed what they could to the interventionist cause in hopes of protecting their positions.

Though the recent conferences had served to moderate the situation, the rapid approach of September 9 served to heat it up. On September 9 a session of an extraordinary Party Congress was to be held, and it was widely known that nearly all the antireformists would lose their positions. The newly formed government would have the effect of

establishing the reformist policies of Dubcek and his supporters as the legitimate policy of the Czechoslovak nation. At that point it would be extremely difficult for Moscow to control the situation and this thorn in its side would become all the more firmly entrenched. The antireformists and interventionists combined to step up the pressure as much as possible, as the only hope for change now lay in convincing the Soviet Politburo that a counterrevolution by an unpopular government was underway in Czechoslovakia. To this end, according to Valenta, all sorts of misinformation and laundered information on the extent of the changes and on Dubcek's "narrow" base of support were created to be fed to the Politburo.

On August 12, eight days before the intervention, a report was issued by the antireformist-controlled information bureau of the Czechoslovak Central Committee. This paper, known as the Kaspar Report, was influential in convincing the Soviet Politburo of the increasingly dangerous situation in Czechoslovakia. The following day, a block of antireformists in the Czech Presidium decided to stop aiding in the preparation for the Party Congress. This had the dual purpose of slowing their political demise and giving the appearance that the Czechoslovak Presidium was coming apart. The one area where no successful argument could be made remained foreign policy. In truth the concern of the Soviet leadership was not that Czechoslovakia would leave the Pact or COMECON, rather that, " . . . it would continue to belong to these organizations and that unrestricted and uncontrolled reformism would infect the other members and perhaps in the long run, the Soviet Union itself."[11] This was the core issue for the interventionists. The Prague Spring represented an experiment with a potential for spreading rapidly. They recognized that

the reformist, somewhat decentralizing nature of this experiment endangered their control of events in their own domains and therefore ultimately threatened their own positions. It was this fear, accelerated by the advancing of the date of the Slovak Congress of August 26, which forced them to push for immediate action.

The decision to intervene seems to have been made on the 17th of August. Plans for this contingency had certainly been drawn up long before, yet it was only at the last minute that the final decision was made. As with most major Soviet policy decisions, the evidence available is sketchy at best, but what evidence there is available suggests that a renewal of the debate amongst the members of the Politburo was initiated from August 15 through the 17th. At this time, it became clear that the interventionists had managed to overcome the hesitations of the non-interventionists, and that Brezhnev had finally aligned with the former. One last attempt was made to reach a negotiated settlement when on the 17th Janos Kadar of Hungary met secretly with Dubcek. Dubcek chose to disregard Kadar's warnings as he did a warning letter sent by the Soviet Politburo on August 19. It is probable that at this point it was too late for Dubcek to affect the course of events anyway. Most of the Soviet decision-makers appear to have accepted the view that events in Czechoslovakia were reaching a critical stage, and were consequently swayed towards the interventionist side of the debate. On the 17th of August the decision was reached, and on the evening of August 20th, the tanks began to roll.

The forces which proved sufficient to sway the minds of the wavering Politburo members spelled the doom of Prague's experiment with humanizing socialism. Yet there had been opportunities for a different

outcome, had various leaders of the reformist and non-interventionist groups been better players of the game of bureaucratic politics. Dubcek in particular was too concerned with the progress of reform in his own country to spend the time necessary to get the Soviets to believe that the reforms really represented no threat to them. He did not make the effort to expand his ties with Brezhnev, who by most accounts favored Dubcek and often gave him the benefit of the doubt. The various officials had engaged in the "pulling and hauling" by which Valenta says major policy decisions are reached. Certain players proved better suited than others, with their viewpoints coming to represent the "unanimous" view of the decision-making bodies. The reasons these individuals had for pushing their viewpoints represent a mixture of ideological and national interests with more personal motives. The end result, however, was a belief that the Prague Spring represented too great a danger to be allowed to flourish, and was therefore cut off by the intervention of the Soviet military machine.

CHAPTER IV

An understanding of the process whereby a nation arrives at its foreign-policy decisions is essential to the development of a coherent policy by allied or adversarial nations. When this basic knowledge is expanded to include an understanding of the risk-taking propensities of the decision-makers, along with how decision-making is affected by crisis conditions, one is far better equipped for dealing with the subject nation in the international arena. In this nuclear age, a better understanding such as results from this knowledge becomes more of a necessity than a luxury.

People take risks every day, though often as not without making it a conscious procedure. Risk involves a judgement of probabilities, with the decision to take or to avoid the risk resulting from the comparison of probabilities with an individual utility function. When the risk proves "acceptable," the decision becomes action. The dictionary defines the verb "to risk" as "to expose to the chance of injury or loss."[1] This definition is insufficient for our needs as it does not account for probability theory. Hannes Adomeit nicely sums up the concept of international risk as "a degree of belief about the likelihood of a catastrophe in the relations of states."[2] The phrase "likelihood of catastrophe" implies a probability measurement. Kennedy is said to have claimed the odds for nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union during the

Cuban Missile Crisis to have been between one out of three and even. This is an example of the most straightforward of probability measurements. The judgements we make are rarely as conscious as that, involving more of an abstract "feeling" about the possibilities for certain events to occur.

Probability is only one of the factors which must be considered when discussing risk-theory. The value of achieving a certain goal, the utility function of the individual actor, must also be considered. These two ideas, probability and utility, imply a very conscious, rational process. Indeed, that is what is assumed for this study, as the usefulness of studying irrational risk-taking is limited. Calculated, rational risk-taking is "a conscious process. It is behaviour which weighs means for the achievement of ends."[3] Decision-makers collectively decide, in accordance with their traditions, goals, geopolitical and domestic political conditions and national power, what risks are worth taking to achieve specific ends. At the same time there may be frameworks within which the decision-maker must operate, such as alliances and treaties, which limit the choices and options from which the actor may choose. The confluence of all these factors, the measure of ends versus means, the status of the nation and the restrictions upon it, is the basis upon which decisions are reached.

When analyzing any nation's foreign policy behavior, it is of vital importance that one consider the history and traditions which form the environment that shaped its leaders and decision-makers. When one is determining the propensity of any one nation towards the taking of risks, the character of the decision-makers is central to the issue. Particularly when one is working within a bureaucratic-politics model that implies group participation, this method of historical observation gains

validity. Can anything be deduced from a glance at Russian history which would aid in this effort? Whereas a full-scale analysis of Russian and Soviet history is far beyond the scope of this work, some generalizations may be possible.

The ideas which make up the outlook of a society as a whole are the product of decades' worth of accumulated wisdom. Those who survive the rigors of life pass on their knowledge to the next generation in true Darwinian fashion. It is this storehouse of wisdom which forms the basis for the current outlook of any given leader. In Russia, where even as late as the 1900s nearly 80 percent of the population were peasants, fishermen, lumbermen, etc. the peasant tradition and relations with the land formed a large part of the national psyche.

Living off the land, one is subject to many forces outside one's control, the primary one being the weather. When the climate was such that one received at best three grains for every one sown, the taking of a chance on a new method or new crop might easily have resulted in a failed harvest, which often meant death. It was far easier to stick with the norm and pray for good luck. The peasants were at the mercy of more than the weather, though. Until the unification of the nation under the Moscovites, the rivalries among the various princes and princelings subjected countless peasants to the whims of leaders. Between 1228 and 1462 there were no fewer than 90 internal wars.[4] After the long years of war, the establishment of a degree of social order under the Muscovites must have been a great relief to the peasant footsoldiers. The long tradition of centralized rule has not been altered significantly, nor does there appear to be much interest in altering it.

This points up a major issue. The structured environment within which the Soviets live is maintained by the compliance of the populace. There are few indications that the ordinary citizen would have it any other way. The great American traditions of entrepreneurship with the risk-taking which this implies are American experiences and less common in Russia or the Soviet Union. Indeed, many of the Soviet emigres suffer from a pervasive sense of insecurity because of the relative lack of direct governmental guidance of their lives. While there are certainly a number of changes in the system which any Soviet citizen may be quite happy to see come about, the system meets, in its own crude way, the basic needs of the average citizen.

The mercurial agricultural climate, the dangers of a fragmented power structure, and the example of the suffering of a nation weaker than its opponents (Nazi Germany) are concepts that may serve to make the Soviet citizen prone to risk-aversion. A steady, fairly conservative approach is bound not so much to reap better results, as to prevent disaster. The collective nature of the society, which ostensibly spreads out the risk among all its members, may also serve to reinforce the avoidance of unnecessary risks. Perhaps history has taught the Russians and hence, the Soviets, that it is vital to prevent loss, and secondary to achieve gain.

All this is meant to support the proposition that the people formulating policy in the Soviet Union are not disposed toward taking unnecessary risks. Indeed, the Soviets are not about to take chances and risk defeat, as history has taught them that defeat carries an extremely severe penalty. It is of little surprise that the events of World War II are still the focus of so much attention in daily Soviet life. This does

not preclude the taking of risks, only the unprepared, unplanned chance which cannot be clearly controlled. This is the major feature of Soviet ventures: they are carefully thought out and prepared for, with all exigencies covered. Still mindful of the Russian proverb "'If you don't know the ford don't step into the river,' they do not plunge into contests blindly; they rarely gamble, unless they feel the odds are overwhelmingly in their favor."[5] When American forces were first heavily committed in Vietnam, the extent of American knowledge of the region was amazingly limited. There were few sources of information at the disposal of the Administration which detailed the cultural and socio-economic background of the region. This would be, to the Soviets, an unimaginable mistake which may well prove sufficient to stop them from making an approach.[6]

Having garnered all the knowledge necessary to insure their ability to handle the situation and prepare for all eventualities, the Soviets will then proceed into a risky situation. When the probabilities of success are high and the risks manageable and comparatively low, yes, risks will be taken. This is not to suggest, however, that caution will be thrown to the wind. The Soviets will engage in a sort of sequential analysis in which each phase in the development of an event is studied anew, with an eye towards a change in the balance between success and failure. The response of the opponent must be weighed for its degree of firmness and for what it reveals about the determination of the enemy. Things are done one step at a time. The next step depends largely on the reaction of the subject. Certain old axioms about "pushing to the limit" and "engage in pursuit" of an enemy who falters or shows signs of weakness still hold true, yet the admonition to "retreat before superior fire" holds equally true. When it is possible to avoid the use of force or at

least the use of Soviet force, this is very desirable. In many ways this policy resembles the actions of a defensive driver in a rush to get somewhere. If there is an opening, he will attempt it but if challenged too strongly, a retreat is in order. This retreat is another essential feature. A fallback position must be prepared in advance so as to avoid complete disgrace.[7] Opportunistic caution seems to be the major Soviet operational principle in the formulation of foreign policy.

Once a decision has been reached and a risk taken, there is always the chance that a crisis may develop. Such a situation may also come about as the result of forces beyond the control of a nation's decision-makers, but regardless of how a crisis has been arrived at, once developed it has a dramatic effect on the decision-making process. Risk theory remains a vital part of crisis theory, yet each also exists as a separate entity. Whereas risk is part of the decision-making process, crisis is an external factor influencing the process itself. Crisis theory therefore deserves as much attention as risk-taking theory, with special attention given to the interaction of the two.

Michael Brecher's definition of crisis appears to be well suited for consideration of foreign policy analysis, and is as follows:

> A crisis is a situation with three necessary and sufficient conditions, deriving from a change of its external or internal environment. All three conditions are perceptions held by the highest level decision-makers:
> 1. a threat to basic values, with a subsequent
> 2. high probability of involvement in military hostilities and the awareness of
> 3. finite time for response to the external value threat.[8]

This definition assumes crises in adversarial relations, as distinct from those crises which arise between allies. Having defined the concept of crisis, Brecher goes on to develop a four-stage model of international crisis behavior. The first stage involves the initial

trigger act which changes the environment and introduces stress into the situation. The change in environment need not represent a break in the flow of international behavior; it may be merely an intensification of existing but submerged hostilities. The stress introduced by this change constitutes Brecher's second phase. At this point the three conditions specified in the definition as value threats, war probability, and finite time come into play. Being faced with these conditions, decision-makers will use different mechanisms to cope with the crisis, the third phase. The process of receiving information, consulting with others, and delineating the alternatives will lead directly to the final phase, which is the implementation of the chosen line of action. This will result in feedback, which represents another environmental change, thereby completing the loop.[9] Our major concern here is with the effect of the second phase, stress, on the normal operations of the third phase, coping or decision-making.

Risk is present at every step of a crisis in greater or smaller amounts relative to the intensity of the crisis and the perceived threat to core values. It is therefore difficult to generalize on the crisis behavior of a nation abstracted from any one particular incident, without making crisis behavior appear to be another term for risk theory. The model for crisis behavior is a universal one, and is not intended to show different methods within different systems. Specific parts of the model can be pulled out and analyzed according to the methods various nations adopt under similar circumstances, such as how their various decision-making bodies are affected by stress. Yet the behavior of an entire nation in a crisis cannot be specified in any meaningful way as being very distinct from the behavior of any other nation. When discussing Soviet

crisis behavior, what one is then investigating are the effects of crisis-induced stress on the decision-making bodies of the Soviet Union and the subsequent interaction of the decision and feedback loop.

Karen Dawisha uses a format developed by Brecher for analysis of individual situations in her analysis of the Soviet decision to invade Czechoslovakia. This format breaks down the crisis into pre-crisis, crisis and post-crisis periods with emphasis on the decision-process changes which occur during each phase. The pre-crisis phase is characterized by an event that initiates a dramatic increase in the perception of threat to the decision-makers, leading into the crisis period, in which all three characteristics of a crisis situation become distinguishable. A dramatic decrease in the intensity of the situation, in particular a decline in perceived fears or time constraints, signals the onset of the post-crisis period.[10] This format is intended to aid in discerning " . . . the impact of changing stress (manifested in changes in perceptions of threat, time salience and the probability of war) on the decision makers' coping mechanisms and choices."[11] The manner in which information is processed and consultation occurs, which decisional forums are used and how alternatives are reached, is the key to understanding the effects of stress on decision making.

Though the situation in Czechoslovakia had been on the minds of Soviet leaders for some time, it was the decision to call a Bloc conference in Dresden which Dawisha considers to signal the beginning of the pre-crisis period. At the point when this decision was made on the 22nd of March 1968, it had become clear to the members of the Politburo that some form of action needed to be taken in order to contain the events developing in Prague. The composition of the Soviet delegation to the

meeting was notable only in its inclusion of P. Ye. Shelest, First Secretary of the Ukrainian Central Committee. Shelest had no foreign policy experience and was known as somewhat of a hard-liner. The results of the meeting were anything but hard-line from the Soviet perspective, however. Decisions were made to hold meetings on a Czech request for more loans and on integration of the Warsaw Pact high command, but most importantly the delegation came away from Dresden feeling that no further interference in Czech affairs would be required should the Prague leadership hold to its promises to assert control. These moderate positions were reached despite the already forceful efforts of the Poles and East Germans to reach a tougher position. The level of stress was low, as most Soviet leaders still felt the issue to be resolvable without direct Soviet intervention. This could not last, as pressure mounted for the Soviets to take charge of a situation which many leaders saw as rapidly getting out of control and endangering their positions.

The Czechoslovak party plenum, convened in April, forced the moderate Soviets to reconsider. Broad changes in the composition of the Czech leadership resulted in the impression that all the important positions would soon be in reformist hands. Only a few conservative members such as Bilak and Indra managed to retain their positions. The plenum also saw the adoption of the Action Program, which included what the Soviets perceived as dangerous reforms of censorship and electoral laws. The Soviet reaction was mixed. A speech by Grishin representing the hard-liners brought to the fore the phrase "brotherly mutual aid" and sounded ominous warnings about socialist unity. This was not the view of all members of the Politburo, as the fact that, " . . . such a major policy statement was made by a relatively junior Politburo member . . .

outside proper party organs . . . and published in Izvestia rather than Pravda suggests that the escalation of the crisis was not universally approved within party ranks."[12] The attacks on the Soviets in the uncensored Czech media combined with the reluctance of the Czech government to cooperate wi h Warsaw Pact exercises gave the hard-liners in the Soviet Politburo the edge, and a meeting in Moscow with the Prague leaders was immediately convened. This signalled the end of the pre-crisis and beginning of the crisis period.

The effects of the stress generated by the awareness of a situation that was potentially bad for the Soviet decision-makers was fairly limited. The period seems mainly to have set the foundation for the more drastic accumulation of stress which was soon to come. Czech reforms involving the dismissal of large numbers of Soviet operatives from the ranks of the bureaucracy forced the Soviets to turn elsewhere for the information they began increasingly to desire. The sources they turned to were mostly hard-liners, and there is evidence that the information they were fed was considerably slanted to support the views of the interventionists. The decisional forums at this stage were still fairly large, involving both the full Central Committee and the Politburo. A sub-group within the Politburo was forming, composed of Brezhnev, Suslov, Podgorny, Shelest and, at least nominally, Kosygin. This sub-group would become increasingly more active as the crisis escalated. Overall, however, the real test was still to come, and only the first signs of crisis could yet be discerned.

The general failure of the May 4 meeting to allay the fears of the Politburo can be seen as the point of escalation to a period of full crisis. The Politburo felt it necessary to step up the pressure on the

Prague government and began to engage in a form of psychological warfare to intimidate the Czech leadership. In addition to increased polemical attacks in the press, the Soviet military crossed into Czechoslovakia, ostensibly for Warsaw Pact maneuvers but timed so as to coincide with the convening of the Czech Central Committee plenum at the end of May. These actions were the limited reactions of a divided Politburo, and the vacillation between antagonism and conciliation was the outward sign of the inner debate. The crisis was not so intense as to force individuals to choose absolute positions, and many took advantage of this to remain uncommitted and await further developments. There were flurries of official visits, often by high-ranking Soviet officials trying to determine for themselves the nature of the Czech reform movement. These visits set the stage for the strategic meetings at the end of May which temporarily put the non-interventionists in the ascendancy. The Czech Communist Party plenum proceeded smoothly, reaffirming the pre-eminent position of the Party and the role of socialism in guiding any reforms. This reassertion of adherence to the principles of socialism, perhaps along with a Soviet desire to avoid antagonizing the United States with whom the Soviets were negotiating a treaty limiting nuclear weapons, encouraged a more reserved attitude in the Politburo.

June turned out to be relatively calm, with both sides of the debate in the Politburo adopting a wait-and-see attitude. The Czechs' tones were also moderated, with Dubcek lending his name to a letter by the Peoples Militia disavowing any responsibility for the inflammatory remarks of most of the Czech press. This was greatly welcomed in Moscow, which was itself in the midst of a serious debate over the rehabilitation of Stalin and the need for "greater intellectual vigilance." The newfound

freedom of the Czech press could only be viewed negatively in Moscow, and indeed throughout all the events of 1968 represented one of the great fears of the Soviet leaders. Total control of the populace was essential, and the Czech experiments represented a serious threat to control. This fear was proven valid most dramatically with the publication in Prague of the "2000 Words" on June 27.

The "2000 Words" document proved too much for the Soviets. Despite immediate condemnation by Dubcek, Cernik and Smrkovsky, the Soviets felt the situation to be rapidly getting out of hand. Reports by Czechoslovak conservatives such as Indra that "a counterrevolutionary situation was in the making, leading to anarchy . . . and the destruction of the state" did not help matters.[13] As July progressed, the situation had advanced to the point where anything relating to Czechoslovakia took precedence over concerns for detente or other major international events. It had reached a level of intensity sufficient to warrant the constant scrutiny of the Soviet Politburo, signalling that along with increased status came increased stress. Events during this period, the month of July, seemed to worsen daily for the Soviets. The Czechs' refusal to attend a Bloc meeting in Warsaw was something the Soviets found difficult to fathom. It upset the Soviet leadership greatly, as it represented a change in Czech attitude and decreased Moscow's ability to judge Czech actions. Fear of the unknown was now added.

Though the Politburo had begun to consider military intervention as early as May, by July it still felt that sufficient pressure could be brought to bear through other means. A meeting in Warsaw on the 18th of all the Bloc nations but Czechoslovakia and Rumania resulted in a strongly worded note called the Warsaw Letter. While it represented the harshest

warnings to date, the intent on the part of the Soviets was not only to warn Prague to mend its ways, but also to ensure that the actions most Politburo members felt were increasingly inevitable would be joint actions. Upon returning to Moscow the Politburo convened a plenum of the Central Committee, as usual, though the tone of its resolution was quite different from the post-Dresden plenum in April. This time Czechoslovakia was explicitly named and there was a call for action based on "proletarian internationalism." This was a legitimization of Politburo views, views which began to encompass fewer and fewer alternatives to military action as time went by. By the 21st of July the decision had been made to invade by August 26 (date of the Slovak Congress) unless the reform movement was effectively ended. This decision was made by the Politburo, but had evidently sprung from earlier decisions made at a most unusual Politburo-Presidium meeting. This would indicate that, "as the crisis escalated, the Politburo tended to increase the size of the decisional unit to ensure both fuller participation and shared responsibility."[14]

The severity of such a decision apparently stimulated the non-interventionists to make one last attempt at a negotiated settlement. The risks involved in an invasion, namely the possibility of resistance and the effect on relations with the West, were still great enough in the minds of some, such as Kosygin, to force the exhaustion of all alternatives before resorting to invasion. Meetings were held at Cierna nad Tisou on the 29th of July and in Bratislava on August 3, the first bilateral and the second multilateral. These negotiations took place in an atmosphere of faint hopes for some and resignation for most. They managed only to provide a calm before the storm. It was in the Bratislava resolution that Brezhnev enunciated what was to become, after its

application 17 days later, the "Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty." The period between Bratislava and the invasion was highlighted by the frantic efforts of the non-interventionists to change the attitudes of Dubcek. While the decision to invade was already being implemented, Dubcek appeared to have had no idea of what was about to happen. The letters of warning sent by Brezhnev and the Politburo evidently affected him little or not at all. Meanwhile, the crisis had reached its peak of intensity, and the commencement of the invasion on August 20 signaled the beginnings of the post-crisis period.

Throughout the crisis period a fairly large group of people had been involved in deliberations. Despite the inclusion of the Central Committee, the Presidium, and several key military figures, most major decisions were still left to the core group in the Politburo consisting of Brezhnev, Kosygin, Podgorny, Suslov and Shelest. The larger groups served mainly to aid in coalition building and responsibility sharing. There was also an ever increasing need for data as the situation intensified, with more input coming from expanded contacts with various consultative groups, most notably other East European leaders. These heightened activities began to wind down as the post-crisis period developed, but the failures within the system were most dramatically evident at that stage.

The invasion went off without a hitch, securing all major points with only minor resistance. During post-invasion attempts to reconstitute the Czech government in Moscow's own image, however, everything went to pieces. Moscow apparently believed that the reform movement in Czechoslovakia did not run deeply, and that people would be happy, if given a chance, to support a new, anti-reform government. This serious misjudgement resulted from the leadership's increased reliance on biased

sources for information. The attempt to form a new government failed, and the Soviets were forced to deal with the old. The speed with which Moscow executed an about-face and released the jailed leaders so as to negotiate with them suggests that the Politburo had no back-up plans in case its hoped-for government failed to materialize. This was due to both the lack of accurate information and the urgency associated with the decision to invade. These are prime examples of the negative effects of stress on the decision-making process.

The levels of crisis, and consequently of stress, changed dramatically throughout the events of 1968. There was no smooth progression from low to high levels, rather a series of peaks and valleys, denoting periods of calm among periods of alarm. The changes that can be noted in the decision-making process in Moscow can be attributed to these varying levels of stress. The perceived need for information grew constantly, with less attention being paid to the sources and potential biases of this information. The outside groups that provided the information also acted as independent consultative bodies, particularly the East Europeans and the military. Their role was constant, but did not increase significantly during the crisis. The same can be said of the major Soviet decisional forums. In fact, the role of most groups declined somewhat, as decisions became more centralized not only in the Politburo, but in the core group within that Politburo. This core group was responsible for most activities related to the crisis and used the other groups mainly as a tool for consensus-building. They were also a means for spreading the risks involved in formulating any decision.

The Soviets were in many ways reacting to circumstances when making decisions relating to Czechoslovakia. There was an element of risk

in most decisions, but because of the nature of the nations concerned, these risks were never particularly large. The initial risk was that of leaving the Czechs to their own designs, with the possible result that the reform bug would spread. This was the gravest threat perceived by the Soviets, and the entire crisis was an attempt to contain and, once the reform got out of hand, to nullify this threat. Other chances the Soviets took, particularly the invasion with the possibility of resistance and adverse foreign reaction, were carefully prepared for and deemed acceptable. Perceptions of time threats may have aided in the acceptance of these risks, but on the whole did not serve to radicalize the study of alternatives. To the extent that the situation in Czechoslovakia was a crisis, the effects of stress can be seen on the decision-making process. Yet overall, the system was able to absorb this stress, and with exceptions such as the post-invasion government fiasco, react successfully.

# CONCLUSION

The study of decision-making processes and of crisis behavior, and the interaction of the two, can provide the analyst with key insights into the working of any sovereign state. A number of different theories and paradigms have emerged for analysis, particularly in decision studies, forcing the observer to choose one or the other camp, though there is still a great deal of room for adjustment. Despite the recent resurgence of the analytical paradigm, with its concurrent unitary and rational-actor components, in the writings of scholars such as Kenneth Waltz and Richard Krasner, I believe that the best basis for the analysis undertaken in this work remains the bureaucratic-politics model with all its modifications. No one model is sufficient to encompass all aspects of foreign policy analysis. Having accepted one as a basis, however, others may be adopted as constraints on the original. Whereas the rational-actor model is too narrow in and of itself, it works well in forcing some precision on the more expansive bureaucratic-politics model. Within this model, the Davisha and Allison versions complement one another, and in conjunction with the study of crisis behavior serve as a suitable means for analysing Soviet policy in times of crisis.

The use of only one case study in support of a hypothesis limits the application of that hypothesis. Soviet activities involving Czechoslovakia in 1968 do not necessarily speak for Soviet activities

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elsewhere. However, the events in Poland of November 1981 to March 1982 show a striking similarity to the events of the Prague Spring. Fears of the directions which a broad-based reform movement would take led the Soviet Politburo under an ailing Brezhnev to twice begin mobilizations for an invasion of Poland. The success of Jaruzelski's crackdown obviated the need for armed intervention. This crackdown was successful in part because of the hyperawareness of the Poles and particularly of Jaruzelski of events in 1968 and the initiation of invasion preparations by the Soviets.[1]

Preliminary research by Richard D. Anderson Jr. suggests that much of the motivation for the handling of Poland by the Soviets could be linked directly to Politburo members' parochial interests. Just as in 1968, the Politburo split into pro- and anti- nterventionists. The pro-interventionists were led by "hard-line Party Ideologue Mikhail Suslov, supported by Defense Minister Dmitri Ustinov. Brezhnev himself led the argument against invasion, backed by Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko."[2] The decisions to mobilize troops in preparation for invasion were set-backs for Brezhnev, who was under steady political attack by Party Secretary Andrey Kirilenko. An invasion would have been a major set-back for Brezhnev's post-Afghanistan renewal of detente and would have highlighted his inability to control events in the Warsaw Bloc. Anderson suggests that Brezhnev went so far as to reshuffle the leadership of the Ground Forces of the Soviet Union (five of ten front-line positions were changed in two months) in order to prevent preparations from moving ahead too rapidly.[3] Brezhnev made further efforts by scheduling and publicizing visits with United States Foreign Relations Committee chair Senator Charles Percy, who he knew would strongly warn against invasion. Brezhnev

succeeded in preventing an invasion, largely because of the meliorative effects of a conservative victory at the July Polish Party Congress and the success of Jaruzelski's crackdown.

There are numerous differences between the recent events in Poland and earlier events in Czechoslovakia. A major factor preventing a Soviet invasion was the likelihood of massive resistance by the Poles, a fear much less in evidence in the deliberations concerning Czechoslovakia. The awareness of the Polish leadership of a serious potential for Soviet action, unlike the foggy naivete of Dubcek, helped appease the hard-liners in the Soviet Politburo. Most importantly, Brezhnev was able to maintain a sufficient anti-interventionist coalition, even if it was sometimes as small as one vote.[4] At this time the resemblances are striking, for all the aforementioned differences. As further study of these events is conducted and more information becomes available, perhaps Poland will emerge as a situation more resembling Czechoslovakia in 1969. It is from these similarities, and similarities which an be drawn from Yugoslavia in 1958, Hungary in 1956 and Afghanistan in 1979, that a general picture of Soviet decision-making and crisis behavior emerges.

The picture which we thus get is not one of a monolithic unit relentlessly pursuing its national strategic interests in a deliberate and systematic fashion. Though this would perhaps appear the more comforting viewpoint to the layman, it is not borne out by the evidence presented. Most Americans have some idea of the give and take which makes up their own political system; compromises between the various particular branches and special interests involved make headlines daily. There is a tendency, however, not to apply these same ideas when looking beyond one's own borders. This "us-and-them" mentality makes for hasty generalizations and

hasty reactions. One aspect of this work is to demonstrate that there are certain similarities inherent in any large bureaucracy which affect its decision-making process.

Time and again the middle road appears better than any extreme. This is particularly true for national decision-making analysis. On the continuum from rational actor to organizational process, totalitarianism to anarchy, the bureaucratic-politics model adopts a happy medium. It incorporates both the political muscle of the individual leader and the systemic forces beyond the control of any one person. A group of powerful individuals formulates policy on the basis not only of national, but also of parochial and traditional interests. This holds true not only for the American Secretary of State defending his authority vis-a-vis the National Security Advisor, but also the Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defense.

Within the context of the model, certain trends emerge concerning Soviet actions and risk-taking propensities under duress. As the decision-making body is a collective unit involved in a bargaining process, there is a tendency to expand the number of consultants during a crisis. This is as much a function of a political desire for a broader base of support for a particular viewpoint as it is a search for more inputs into the process. The central functional unit remains the Politburo. It may be constricted even further into a core group composed of the leaders of the various factions seeking support. The information that reaches this core group becomes a tool of the various sides, as all sides scramble for people and sources which will support their point of view. As traditional sources become less reliable in the heat of a crisis, there is more room for "new sources" which cannot be carefully

scrutinized. The sense of urgency which this implies, however, is not meant to suggest that hasty decisions are being made. The inherent caution of the leadership and its collective nature combine to insure that any decisions are the product of careful deliberations. There are no snap decisions; after lengthy and heated debate a decision is reached and implemented, and a reaction awaited.

The Soviet Union must be more fully understood in all its aspects if we are to deal with it successfully. Despite the apparently methodical approach which guides its every move, the real process is more complex. The common misconception of the Soviet Union as a unitary actor inexorably marching towards an absolute goal fails to take into account countless variables, including those similarities between the Soviet and American bureaucracies which do exist. Inflated rhetoric suggesting that the Soviet Union is the source of all evil only perpetuates these fallacies and is more dangerous than useful. While it must be remembered that the Soviets have an exaggerated sense of need for security and that this makes them particularly dangerous, considerations of Soviet perceptions and needs must not be treated in such a simplistic manner. The Soviet Union needs to be watched carefully, yet watching implies more than just looking; most important of all, it implies understanding.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter I

[1]Roger E. Kanet, Soviet Foreign Policy in the 1980's (New York: Praeger Publishing, 1982), p. 5.

[2]David K. Shipler, "The View from America," New York Times Magazine, November 10, 1985, p. 80.

[3]Jan F. Triska and David D. Finley, Soviet Foreign Policy (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), p. XVII.


Chapter II

[1]Arnold L. Horelick, The Study of Soviet Foreign Policy: Decision-Theory-Related Approaches (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1975), p. 9.

[2]Ibid., p. 11.

[3]Graham T. Allison, Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1971).

[4]Karen Dawisha, "The Limits of the Bureaucratic Politics Model: Observations on the Soviet Case," Studies in Comparative Communism 13 (Winter 1980).

[5]Allison, p. 10.

[6]Allison, p. 6.

[7]Dawisha, p. 303.

[8]Dawisha, p. 325.


Chapter III

[1]Jiri Valenta, Soviet Intervention in Czechoslovakia, 1968 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979).

[2]Sarah M. Terry, Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), p. 95.

[3]Zdenek Mlynar, Nightfrost in Prague, trans. Paul Wilson (New York: Karz Publishers, 1980), p. 81.

[4]Ibid., p. 161.

[5]Valenta, p. 59.

[6]Valenta, p. 60.

[7]Valenta, p. 65.

[8]Mlynar, p. 152.

[9]Ivan Svitak, The Czechoslovak Experiment 1968-69 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 144.

[10]Valenta, p. 98.

[11]Valenta, p. 136.

## Chapter IV

[1]Oxford Universal Dictionary, rev. ed. (1955), s.v. "to risk."

[2]Hannes Adomeit, Soviet Risk-Taking and Crisis Behavior (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), p. 17.

[3]Ibid., p. 12.

[4]John M. Joyce, "The Old Russian Legacy," Foreign Policy 55 (Summer 1984):138.

[5]Richard Pipes, "Operational Principles of Soviet Foreign Policy," Survey 19 (Spring 1973):46.

[6]Ibid., p. 51.

[7]Adomeit, pp. 317-25.

[8]Michael Brecher, Decisions in Crisis: Israel, 1967 and 1973 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 1.

[9]Ibid., p. 17.

[10]Ibid., pp. 22-25.

[11]Karen Dawisha, The Kremlin and the Prague Spring (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 13.

[12]Ibid., p. 62.

[13]Ibid., p. 168.

[14]Ibid., p. 225.

## Chapter V

[1]Thomas A. Sancton, "A Conditional Reprieve," Time, April 20, 1981.

Thomas A. Sancton, "From Russia with Suslov," Time, May 4, 1981.

Richard . Anderson, "Soviet Decision-Making and Poland," <u>Problems of Communism</u> 31 ( arch-April 1982).

[2]Sancton, "A Conditional Reprieve," p. 34.

[3]Anderson, p. 33.

[4]Sancton, "A Conditional Reprieve," p. 34.

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