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The Internal-External Dichotomy: A Theoretical Approach to Foreign Policy Decision-Making

Michael John Tierney
College of William & Mary - Arts & Sciences

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**THE INTERNAL-EXTERNAL DICHOTOMY:
A Theoretical Approach to Foreign Policy Decision-making**

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Government
The College of William and Mary in Virginia

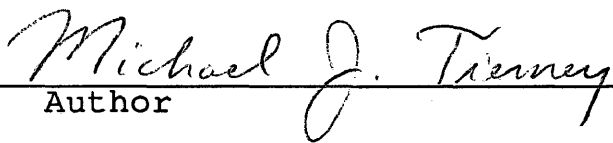
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Michael J. Tierney
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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the Degree of

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Author

Approved, September 1988



David Dessler



Clayton Clemens



Ronald Rapoport

For Mom and Dad. Thank You.

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**THE INTERNAL-EXTERNAL DICHOTOMY:
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ABSTRACT

In this study the author formulates and applies a decision-making model which attempts to uncover the role of justification in the policy process. When discussing the importance of justification in the policy process the author distinguishes between the "internal" and "external" realms. The internal realm is a theoretical category which describes social interactions within the highest levels of government (discussions within the N.S.C. and the cabinet). The external realm describes politics outside the inner circle; this involves the press, the public and an attentive international audience. The concerns of policy makers, and their explanations of policy, change depending on the realm in which they are justifying a given policy.

Chapter One outlines the theoretical framework of the model and reviews some of the relevant literature in the field. Chapter Two focuses on the causes of divergence between internal and external justifications and employs the decision to implement the Truman Doctrine in 1947 as a case study. Chapter Three offers a more subtle application of the model and discusses qualitative types of divergence--the decision to commit combat troops in Vietnam serves as the second case study.

All the examples offered in the paper deal with American foreign policy decisions; however, the model is not limited to this avenue of analysis. As the author shows, this approach has far-reaching implications for international relations, definitions of political power and decision-making theory.

THE INTERNAL-EXTERNAL DICHOTOMY:

A Theoretical Approach to Foreign Policy Decision-making

INTRODUCTION

When political leaders, advisors, and bureaucrats formulate a policy, they inevitably justify it or offer reasons why the state ought to pursue that policy rather than another. This process of justification takes place in at least two spheres of activity: the "internal" realm and the "external" realm. During the policy making process, reasons supporting a particular course of action are typically discussed and debated among upper level decision-makers behind closed doors. The reasons offered in such a forum to support a ratified action will be considered the "internal justification." The executive may justify and explain the policy to those beyond the inner circle of decision-makers using the same or dissimilar arguments as those expressed in the internal justification. In any case, the justification offered to the public, press and the international community will be called the "external justification." This frequently overlooked distinction becomes important when the political leader, analyst, or researcher tries to understand, predict, or explain the actions of a state in international relations.

Often the executive will find it politically expedient to cultivate a divergence between the internal and external justifications for a policy. It is clear that for purposes of presentation, a government may find its interests best served when the external justification is different from the internal one. For example, country **A** may decide to bomb country **B** for the purpose of killing the leader of **B**. **A** may then find it beneficial to justify the policy to the press, the public, and the international community as retaliation for past attacks on the citizens and property of country **A** and for the purpose of deterring future attacks by **B** on **A**. Whether country **B** actually attacked **A**'s citizens and property will affect the acceptability of the external justification; however, it does not alter the rationale for diverging from the internal justification. Policy-makers are aware that the internal justification may appear less acceptable to the domestic population or the international community than the external justification.

While there are a number of possible reasons for a government to maintain different internal and external justifications for a policy, this study will emphasize the perceived need of states to perpetuate a divergence because of an attentive international audience. States

pursue their interests within an increasingly interdependent world where the actions of one state often affect the interests of another. For this reason allies and adversaries of any given state will be attuned to the actions and words of that state. Naturally, the most important and powerful nations have the greatest influence on a large number of other states. Therefore, the most powerful will be the most closely watched and thus have the greatest incentive to cultivate a certain image,¹ whether as steadfast ally, cooperative international trade partner, resolute adversary, or even irrational madman.²

¹Robert Jervis discusses the importance of perceptions in International Relations as they affect the ability of states to successfully pursue their objectives claiming, "Throughout history and especially for the great powers since 1945, states have often cared about specific issues less for their intrinsic value than for the conclusions they felt others would draw from the way they dealt with them." Robert Jervis, The Logic of Images in International Relations (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1970), 7.

²While the United States has rarely played the part of irrational madman, the Eisenhower administration's espoused military doctrine which relied heavily on asymmetrical responses to Soviet provocation could be viewed as such. An American nuclear strike in response to a limited conventional attack might be seen as irrational in the sense that the potential benefits of such a strike would be less than the likely costs. (i.e. war, or later even nuclear retaliation by the Soviet Union.) However, by giving the appearance of irrationality, it was hoped Moscow would be less willing to embark on military adventures that threatened the interests of the West. Obviously, the presentation of oneself as irrational madman

This paper deals almost entirely with U.S. foreign policy decisions. The raw data on "internal justifications" was more fully documented and readily available in U.S. government documents and memoirs than in those of any other country, making the material well suited for this study. The topic is best covered not by using one or two full length case studies but a number of shorter ones from a variety of different administrations and issue areas. This method is preferred because it helps demonstrate the regularity of divergence conditioned by the international system and the structure of governmental institutions in the United States rather than the personal outlook or deceitful character of a few individuals.³

By describing various foreign policy decisions in terms of the internal-external dichotomy one can hope to accomplish three things. First, and most obviously, one is offered a new perspective on the actual process of

may be completely rational. For a discussion of asymmetry and "brinkmanship" see John Lewis Gaddis, Strategies of Containment (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 150-151.

³The study concentrates on what Waltz terms "second and third levels of analysis," of explanations of events focussing on the nature of the state and the international system respectively. See Kenneth N. Waltz, Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), esp. chpts 1-3.

decision-making. By approaching foreign policy decision-making in this way, one is forced to ask more probing questions about the forces and interests that drive this dynamic process. Second, the study has broader implications for international relations. A misunderstanding of power defined strictly in terms of military, economic, demographic and geographic assets has led many observers to inaccurate and inadequate explanations of events in international relations. This examination casts doubt on narrow definitions of power and shows that the perceived need of states to project a particular image in the world affects the decision-making process to a greater degree than is usually assumed. Third, in the process of studying various cases the very theoretical framework being applied is tested, revised and polished. The author's most lofty hopes would be realized if this paper clarified or extended useful theoretical approaches to international politics (or decision-making processes) so other research projects might benefit from such work in the future.

CHAPTER I: JUSTIFICATION IN THE POLICY PROCESS

The Internal/External Dichotomy

A justification is a reason or set of reasons offered to an audience to show there are adequate grounds to support and pursue some action. A justification may or may not represent the actual cause of some action or policy. It merely has to offer a well-warranted reason for the action. For example, country **A** could do **X** for reason **Y** and then justify **X** for reason **Z**. The purpose of a justification is to make some action acceptable to a given audience. Naturally, as one's audience changes, the justification for the same action may have to change to ensure the action remains acceptable.

When the executive branch of the U.S. government adopts a particular policy, it usually presents the policy to the public and explains the policy's purpose. It is in this realm of press conferences and public speeches that we find the "external justification," which many observers have otherwise called "the official line." Sometimes there is no immediate justification accompanying the initiation of the policy--for example, when the action is covert--but in these cases an external justification usually emerges after the fact. The

"internal justification" is a reason or set of reasons offered within the executive branch behind closed doors--most often in the National Security Council (N.S.C.), National Security Planning Group (N.S.P.G.) or some similar forum. The internal justification is usually a more causally efficacious reason in explaining a policy than the external justification; however, as we will discuss in detail later, it would be a mistake to consider the internal justification the a priori "real reason" for the adoption of some policy.¹

Paul Anderson claims "the constraints imposed by justification and precedent do not depend upon public statements accurately portraying private beliefs." He accurately concludes there is "a socially defined distinction between legitimate and illegitimate justificatory arguments."² While Anderson is discussing public statements by political leaders, there is no reason to

¹The framework focussing on and the distinction between internal and external justifications was first made by David Dessler in "Structural Origins of Major War," (Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1987). While our use of the terms is slightly modified, there is considerable overlap between Dessler's use of the terms and the manner in which they are used in this study.

²Paul Anderson, "Justifications and Precedents as Constraints in Foreign Policy Decision-Making," American Journal of Political Science (November 1981): 741, 745.

think that justificatory statements supporting some recommendation within the inner realm are not subject to similar constraints. Therefore, one can expand the notion of "illegitimate and legitimate" arguments and claim: Policy-makers justify actions or recommendations in a manner they believe will be acceptable to a given audience.

External Justification

Decision-makers and political leaders justify policies and potential policies through moral arguments, legal arguments, ideological arguments or in terms of the national interest.³ In the external realm, the legal, moral and ideological arguments are often emphasized to cultivate a certain image of the state or government

³It is rare that a policy-maker would ever justify some course of action in terms of his or her own personal interest since this would likely be an unacceptable type of justification to any audience that we are discussing here. Imagine a Vice President standing up in an N.S.C. meeting or at a press conference saying, "I advocate that U.S. foreign policy should support the anti-Sandinista forces in Nicaragua because I own stock in a company whose assets were frozen after the revolution." Even if that were the way he felt, he would be much more likely to argue that the policy should be adopted for reasons more palatable to his audience. This example demonstrates the potential difference between what actually motivates action and the justification given for that action (whether in the internal or external realms). For more detailed discussion of this point see Anderson, 745.

justifying its policy. The United States policy toward the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua has been justified for years in a manner that stresses the moral and ideological facets of American policy. In his televised address to the nation on May 9, 1984, President Reagan explained U.S. policy toward Central America and asked the American people and Congress to support administration policy there.⁴ He asserted the U.S. goal was "to promote democracy and economic well being" in the region. After briefly describing U.S. interests in the region in terms of trade, the Panama Canal, and the geographic proximity to the United States, Reagan embarked on an extended criticism of the "Sandinista reign of terror." The particular policies that the President was defending were economic and military aid for the democratic governments in the region and military assistance to the "freedom fighters" in Nicaragua. Reagan concluded, "The United States must continue to support both the elected Government of El Salvador and the democratic aspirations of the Nicaraguan people." He went on to explain that the contras were the force representing the democratic aspirations of the Nicaraguan people. The full force of the

⁴For a text of President Reagan's speech see "U.S. Interests in Central America," Department of State Bulletin, June 1984, 22-26.

moral and ideological aspects of the external justification surfaced as the President made a pointed pitch for public support of his policies.

If the Soviet Union can aid and abet subversion in our hemisphere, then the United States has a legal right and a moral duty to help resist it. It would be profoundly immoral to let peace-loving friends depending on our help be overwhelmed by brute force if we have any capacity to prevent it."⁵

A number of more recent policy statements by the Reagan administration show more clearly that external justifications are characterized by an emphasis on moral and ideological arguments. (It will be shown later that internal justifications reflect a greater concern for national interests). During a news conference on February 24, 1988, President Reagan spoke on U.S. policy in Central America. Roughly 80 percent of the speech concerned the plight of the "people of Nicaragua" and the need for democracy in that country.⁶ In ideologically charged rhetoric Reagan repeatedly referred to the contras as "the democratic resistance" and "freedom fight-

⁵Ibid., 25.

⁶The author performed an unscientific content analysis of the text of the speech to determine that 4/5 of the speech was concerned with moral arguments for U.S. policy. For a copy of the speech see "News Conference of February 24," Department of State Bulletin, May 1988, 9-12.

ers." After lauding the progress of the other governments in Central America, Reagan concluded, "One country, Nicaragua, with its communist regime, remains a threat to this democratic tide in the region."⁷

President Reagan's statement was seconded by Secretary of State George Shultz two weeks later in a speech before the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations of the House Appropriations Committee. Like his boss, Secretary Shultz focussed on the "brutality of the communists" and the need for Congress and the American people to reaffirm "our commitment to forces fighting for peace and freedom" in Nicaragua.⁸ By reinforcing the President's views, Shultz strengthened the hand of the administration when it faced opposition in Nicaragua and in Congress. To display disagreement in the external realm would appear as a sign of a lack of resolve.

The appearance of unity within the government is an important aspect of the external justification. Usually, there is a single theme running throughout all external discussions of a given policy by administration sources. A government needs to maintain the appearance of unity on

⁷Ibid., 11.

⁸For a copy of Shultz's address before Congress see "Meeting Our Foreign Policy Goals," Department of State Bulletin, May 1988, 12-13.

major foreign policy issues if it is to be taken seriously by other states. A lack of unity may damage the ability of the government to effectively carry out its policies. A good example of the difficulties arising from open disagreement was the debate between Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, which inhibited the effectiveness of the Carter administration's foreign policy. In June 1978 Carter tried to clearly explain U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union, which at that time appeared ambiguous because of the public disagreement between the President's two leading advisors on the issue. Vance emphasized the need for detente, regional settlements, and arms control, while Brzezinski supported a harder line toward Moscow. The two most important administration spokesmen on foreign affairs, other than the president, were sending radically different signals to the Kremlin and to America's allies.⁹ Consequently, it was a widely held view that the administration did not establish a consensus or have a clear policy on a number of the most important issues involving the foreign policy of the

⁹Former White House speech writer for President Carter, James Fallows, discusses the problems of a public split in administration ranks in "The Passionless Presidency," in Behind The Scenes in American Government, ed. Peter Woll (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1983), 172-173.

United States. President Carter went to great lengths to quell rumors of disunity; at one time he went so far as to make a speech for the express purpose of establishing a unified official line.¹⁰ If the international audience is unsure about the commitment and resolve of the American government toward its stated policies, allies may be less willing to lend support and adversaries may be emboldened. For this reason, any leading member of the executive who opposes some policy in the internal debate is nevertheless expected to support and justify the policy in terms that are consistent with the official line.

More recently, potential disunity within an administration--which threatened to damage the effectiveness of policy--was averted by the Reagan administration when

¹⁰In 1978 President Carter delivered a speech on U.S.-Soviet relations at the Naval Academy's graduation exercises. According to White House spokesmen, Carter decided to draft the speech himself "to erase the impression that his administration was deeply divided on national security policy." Robert C. Kaiser and Walter Pinkus, "Carter as Speechwriter: Limiting Split." Washington Post, June 8 1978, A18. The address failed to remedy the public perception of disunity; in fact, as the front page headline in the next day's paper indicated, the differences between various elements of the administration were actually accentuated. See Murrey Marder, "Two Different Speeches," Washington Post, June 8 1978, A1, and A20. Apparently a memo written by Vance served as the basis for the first two pages while Brzezinski's Cold War rhetoric was reflected in the remainder of the speech.

it maintained an unambiguous line on its controversial Strategic Defense Initiative (S.D.I.). Shortly after President Reagan presented his vision of a ballistic missile defense system to the American people in March 1983, there was speculation that S.D.I. was to be used as a bargaining chip in arms control negotiations with the Soviet Union. Specifically, a number of mid-level bureaucrats in the State Department and the Defense Department who were involved in the A.B.M. Treaty negotiations favored S.D.I. only as an inducement to the Kremlin--a goody to be given away. However, in response to this type of speculation and rumor, the administration's leading policy makers indicated their official unwavering support for the program, which was heralded as a step that would increase the stability of the strategic balance by enhancing deterrence while seeking a permanent solution to the problem of nuclear war. The pro-S.D.I. arguments offered by most officials were more subtle than the defensive shield imagined by President Reagan, but they did not contradict him on the U.S. commitment to eventual deployment. It is almost certain that not all these administration spokesmen felt this was the best reason to proceed with S.D.I. or that the U.S. should adopt the policy at all. But the adherence to and ap-

parent acceptance of the single external justification gave the policy added weight and political utility.

(Since everyone seemed serious about an effort to deploy a B.M.D. system, it really did make the Soviets sit up and take notice.)

Because the open collegial system which operates in the United States is not conducive to the type of focus and consensus needed in foreign affairs, U.S. administrations are acutely aware of the danger posed by apparent disharmony within the government. Observers often reflect on the role of Congress in the American political system when explaining the patch work nature of U.S. foreign policy outputs. Ralph Dahrendorf suggests, "In the United States, quite contrary to its Constitutional assumptions, there is no simple notion of 'the executive'; parts of Congress are involved in the great consensus."¹¹

Repeated cases of Congressional involvement in the foreign policy consensus can be seen in the Reagan administration's Central American program. The executive's policy was watered down by Congress on the issue of

¹¹Ralph Dahrendorf, "On the Governability of Democracies," in Comparative Politics, ed. Roy C. Macridis and Bernard D. Brown (Chicago: The Dorsey Press, 1986), 390.

military aid to the contras, which was supposed to pressure the Sandinistas toward democratic reforms.¹² Experts in the N.S.C., the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency calculated that the U.S.-backed contras would need certain resources to achieve certain objectives. (The Reagan administration, not the bureaucratic specialists, defined the objectives.) The administration requested money (100,000 dollars) from the legislature--as it must for any program--to aid the contras. In March 1986 Congress appropriated the funds with the stipulation that the money be used only for non-combat purposes. According to administration sources, this amendment undercut the effectiveness of U.S. policy in Nicaragua. It certainly sent contradictory signals to American allies in the region who had been promised military support. Whether one agrees with the policy or not, the example demonstrates how carefully planned

¹²The real reason for and the internal justification for contra aid is a contentious point. Some observers, like Congressman Edward Boland and journalist Bob Woodward, insist the purpose of creating and supporting the resistance forces in Nicaragua was to overthrow the Nicaraguan government. The intricacies of the internal justification for this issue will be discussed in detail later. See Bob Woodward, Veil: The Secret Wars of the C.I.A. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), 134-136, 175. See also the text of the "Boland Amendment." Continuing Resolution for Appropriations, United States Statutes at Large, 96, sec. 793 (Nicaragua and Honduras), 1865 (21 December 1982).

policies of the executive can be altered so the appearance of unity is destroyed.

A headache facing all American Presidents is the appearance of disunity as a result of the plethora of would-be Secretaries of State. The most recent leading American diplomat, Speaker of the House James Wright, decided to enter negotiations with Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega in November 1987 after the Reagan administration consistently refused to do so. The difference between the administration's hard line toward the Sandinistas and the direct negotiations in Washington between the Nicaraguan leader and a highly visible member of the United States Congress was construed as contradictory American policy. The Reagan administration complained that Wright's actions threatened to undercut the U.S. position of strength relative to the Sandinistas and its commitment to the contras.¹³

Some observers feel the costs of disunity are so great that institutional changes should be made to encourage coherence in foreign policy. George Kennan, former head of the State Department's Policy Planning Staff (P.P.S.), has argued repeatedly for constitutional

¹³John Goshko, "Reagan Hits Wright on Peace Talks," Washington Post, 17 November 1987, A22.

reform "which would give us a parliamentary system more nearly like that which exists in England." He insists "that Congress should leave the executors of policy unmolested so that they may consistently apply their expert knowledge in ways they have learned to know are wise."¹⁴

Finally, legal, as well as moral and ideological claims are an important part of the external justification of policy. It would be highly irregular for a decision-maker to argue for a certain policy on the basis of international law in the internal realm. While he may be concerned with enhancing the state's appearance as a law abiding member of the international order, it is unlikely a decision-maker would support a policy simply because it conformed to or upheld a non-domestic legal code. However, the use of international law and treaty commitments to explain policies in the external realm appears to lend a degree of legitimacy to policy and is therefore used frequently in public statements. In July 1981 administration spokesmen before the Subcommittee on International Security Affairs defended the U.S. policy of military aid and arms transfers to friendly govern-

¹⁴George F. Kennan, American Diplomacy: 1900-1950 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 73, 94.

ments in Central and South America. "We are committed both by longstanding policy and by the Rio Treaty, to join with our Latin American allies in 'mutual assistance and common defense of the American republics.'"¹⁵

The external justification is the alleged real reason for action.¹⁶ It is relatively clear and easy to define. In fact the State Department, which is responsible for the formulation and explanation of U.S. foreign policy, releases official statements on most major policy issues. Often these official statements are explained and elaborated in press conferences, speeches, or The Department of State Bulletin. The internal justification is often less coherent and much harder to define than the external justification. Some of the characteristics of the internal justification are outlined below; however, the complex relationship between the internal and external realms is more fully elaborated in later case studies.

¹⁵For a partial transcript of the testimony before the subcommittee on International Security Affairs see "U.S. Arms Transfers Policy Toward Latin America," Department of State Bulletin, December 1981, 72.

¹⁶Dessler, 161.

Internal Justification

As in the external realm, justifications in the internal realm are characterized by arguments of national interest, ideology, legality and morality. However, unlike the external realm, there is a premium in the internal realm on weighing interests rather than subordinating policy to universal values, international legal codes or ideological considerations. During discussions within the N.S.C., a participant might suggest that the policy of the United States toward Nicaragua should be to support the anti-Sandinista resistance forces there. In an attempt to convince other members of the N.S.C., the advocate of this action might support his stance by claiming such an option enhances the physical security of the United States. This would be a justification based on "national interests." On the other hand, he may argue for the same policy by claiming, as many have, that it is the moral obligation of the United States' government to support those forces in the world struggling for democracy and freedom so that all persons may enjoy their inalienable rights. Often the two arguments are interwoven and presented so they appear mutually reinforcing. In this example, the advocate would claim that because democratic forms of government are less likely to

threaten the United States than authoritarian governments, the U.S. ought to support the democratic forces in that country. In this way, the moral argument becomes an argument of national interest. If the preceding policy recommendation is accepted by the executive branch, the arguments offered above may become part of the internal justification for the policy. However, this does not imply that any argument offered in favor of the policy is part of the internal justification. To define the internal justification as a general theoretical category is considerably more difficult than pinpointing the external justification, which is offered in its entirety in written and spoken form. Because of the manner in which policy is made, it would be incorrect to expect a single, coherent internal justification similar in form to the external one. The ambiguity of the internal realm is, in part, a consequence of the policy process.

A central problem in determining the internal justification for any policy or defining what constitutes an internal justification in general arises from the complexities of the policy process itself. To imagine policy-making as an exercise in which fully planned and justified policy options are chosen from a pool of such

options is highly misleading.¹⁷ And yet, the presentation of the final policy with its comprehensive explanations gives the impression that the state could have chosen policy **A**, **B**, or **C**, whichever seemed best suited to achieve the purpose of furthering its national interests. This view assumes that governments act as their external justifications attempt to make them appear to act--with unity of purpose and with unanimous agreement on the means and ends to be employed. In other words, it assumes the state is a unitary rational actor. In this view the state is viewed as a single person who relates means to ends in the most efficient way possible given finite information. Viotti and Kauppi explain the rational unitary-actor assumption: "The state speaks with one voice. . . . Given particular goals, states consider feasible alternatives to achieve these goals in the light of their existing capabilities. . . . decision-makers

¹⁷A number of theorists and even some political leaders have viewed the policy process in this way. For example, Jimmy Carter once referred to his job as "one big multiple choice exam." As Bueno de Mesquita explains, ". . . each person rates alternatives as more or less desirable and chooses his or her most preferred alternative. . . . decision-makers calculate the costs and benefits of the alternatives open to them and choose the one that seems to yield the greatest advantage." Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, Forecasting Political Events (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 19.

strive to achieve the best possible decision."¹⁸ Even if Bueno de Mesquita is correct and people do make decisions on the basis of maximizing expected utility, there is still no reason to assume state decisions are made in a unitary fashion or that the output will reflect such focus and coherence.

Instead of completely "rational" policies that might be like those expected from a single individual, most policies are the result of considerable compromise and revision. As Graham T. Allison explains,

Government behavior can thus be understood . . . as outcomes of bargaining games. . . . The bureaucratic politics model sees no unitary actor but rather many actors as players, who focus not on a single strategic issue but on many diverse intranational problems as well, in terms of no consistent set of strategic objectives but rather according to various conceptions of national, organizational, and personal goals, making government decisions not by rational choice but by the pulling and hauling that is politics.¹⁹

Coherent policy options and comprehensive plans are quickly compromised and watered down by questioners and detractors when they enter the process characterized by

¹⁸Paul Viotti and Mark Kauppi, International Relations Theory: Realism, Pluralism, Globalism (London: Macmillan, 1987), 32-33.

¹⁹Graham T. Allison, "Bureaucratic Politics," in Bureaucratic Power in National Politics, ed. Francis E. Rourke (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1978), 182.

discussion and debate. The final product rarely resembles the **A**, **B**, or **C** put forth by any one participant, but is instead an agglomeration or some combination of **A**, **B**, and **C**.²⁰

While Congress plays a role in the policy process, internal justification is usually the product of bargaining and compromise within the executive branch. The most important "pulling and hauling" in the internal realm takes place at the upper levels of the executive branch in cabinet level meetings and, on questions of foreign policy, in the National Security Council.

The N.S.C. was established by the National Security Act of 1947. Its statutory members are the President, Vice President, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense. Since the Eisenhower administration, presidents have regularly called on various other department heads and advisors to sit on the N.S.C. Thus, the Director of Central Intelligence, the National Security Advisor, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are now de facto members of the N.S.C. All the members (with the possible exception of the National Security Advisor) are

²⁰According to Allison, "What the nation does is sometimes the result of the triumph of one group over others. More often, however, different groups pulling in different directions yield a resultant distinct from what anyone intended. Ibid., 183.

beholden to some institutional or electoral constituency. In their capacity as advisors to the president, all these individuals approach policy questions with certain interests and outlooks shaped by their responsibilities as department heads or elected officials.²¹ Therefore, an agreement on what policy option maximizes the national interest is unlikely; and even if all the assembled members calculate the national interest in the same manner, there is no guarantee that institutional interests or personal biases will not be calculated as equally important. Since the policy process is characterized by a number of participants with different outlooks and different interests,²² the outputs of a state are not the result of unitary rational choice as defined above.²³

²¹In their investigation of the Iran/contra affair, the Tower Commission judged the N.S.C. in much the same way Allison had. They held the N.S.C. is ". . . biased toward reaching consensus among these principals rather than developing options for Presidential decision." The Tower Commission Report (New York: Bantam Books Inc. and Times Books Inc., 1987), 12. For more complete discussion see 6-15.

²²Thomas E. Cronin estimates there are ". . . more than fifty federal departments, agencies, and committees involved in some way in the administration or evaluation of U.S. foreign policy." The State of the Presidency (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1975), 193.

²³For a discussion of the effect of various organizational interests on the policy process see Morton Halpern, Bureaucratic Politics and U.S. Foreign Policy (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1974); Graham T. Allison, Essence of a Decision: Explaining the

Of course, formal meetings of the N.S.C., N.S.P.G., P.P.S. or special committees formed to plan or implement foreign policy are not the only source of internal debate and justification. All levels of the executive branch communicate with one another through memos and reports that circulate within and among the White House, American embassies over seas, Congressional committees and the various bureaucracies. Informal meetings and conversations undoubtedly help define policies and justifications; but they are the most difficult to study. Given the complexities and numerous inputs in the foreign policy process, one can appreciate the difficulty in determining the internal justification for any policy. Nevertheless, one needs some criteria for determining what constitutes an internal justification.

A set of reasons becomes part of the internal justification if it appears the elaboration of those reasons significantly affects the direction or composition of the policy chosen. One can judge this by frequent appearance of the same argument in the official record, such as internal memoranda and minutes of meetings, and to a lesser degree in memoirs, letters and diaries of the

participants. One can also determine the effect of any view or justification on policy by knowing which participants in the policy process possess the most influence on the issue. For example, if the President and the Secretary of State both argue for a policy and justify it with **X**, while an assistant Undersecretary of Defense justifies the same policy with **Y**, one can conclude that **X** is more important in shaping the chosen option and in causing its adoption as U.S. policy. In this case, if **X** and **Y** are mutually exclusive, then **Y** will not be considered part of the internal justification. If **X** and **Y** are not exclusive, then **Y** might help comprise the internal justification, but considerations expressed in **X** will be paramount. There are exceptions to the rules which define these theoretical categories, but as explained later, the categories are nevertheless useful in understanding policy decisions.

Determining the relative importance of various actors in the policy process is not always a simple task. The confusion following the public exposure of the Iran-contra affair demonstrates the difficulty of uncovering and defining the internal justification. In this case a number of leading administration officials, notably Secretary of State George Shultz and Defense Secretary

Caspar Weinberger, opposed the plan of dealing with a state known to support terrorist movements. President Reagan, who was in close contact with the families of hostages in the Middle East, was most concerned about the welfare of those Americans in captivity. National Security Advisor Robert McFarlane saw the operation as a way to open channels of communication with moderate elements inside the Iranian government. For McFarlane the deal provided an opportunity for a strategic opening through improved American-Iranian relations. Finally, Oliver North and later Admiral John Poindexter supported the action for all the reasons outlined above; but as their testimony at Congressional hearings clearly showed, both embraced the plan primarily as a means to skirt legal constraints placed on the administration's program of support for the contras.

Because the President chose to proceed with the policy based on X, one might expect the internal justification elaborated by him to be paramount. However, the nature of the operation was such that Col. North had hands-on control. Consequently, while Reagan's X may have given the policy its initial acceptance, the results of the operation indicates it was carried out with North's concerns in mind. It is not surprising then,

that North's primary objective of supplying the contras was largely achieved by the operation. On the other hand, the administration made minimal gains in its efforts to obtain the release of hostages by dealing with the Iranians.²⁴

If the variety of objectives and justifications given for the Iran-contra operation are not confusing enough, there is an additional problem involving the apparent lack of knowledge on the part of key administration officials. None of the bodies created to investigate the issue have been able to definitively determine who knew about important aspects of the operation. The apparent ignorance of key issues extended all the way up to the President. Fitting events into the categories outlined above is difficult just two years after the revelation of the policy; and as the wealth of material written on the subject suggests, there may always be disagreement on what the internal justification for the administration's policy was.²⁵

²⁴The United States gave military supplies to the Iranians on four occasions, each time with the expectation of obtaining the release of one or more hostages. After all transactions had been completed, only two hostages were released and both those at much higher cost than originally promised.

²⁵A combination of sources gives the broadest picture concerning the internal dynamics of the Iran-contra initiative. See The Tower Commission Report; The Nation-

Unlike the abstract framework outlined above, the internal and external realms are sometimes not completely distinct, especially in an open political system such as that which operates in the United States. Frequently members of Congress, allied governments and private interest groups penetrate the internal realm, making the theoretical categories actually more porous than their stated parameters indicate. As the Iran-contra example demonstrates, the criteria which define the stated theoretical categories are not necessarily accurate descriptions of reality. Other historical cases reinforce this discrepancy between theory and practice.

During discussions at the White House in early 1965, leading members of Congress were invited to participate in the policy process and were privy to what must be considered the internal justification for the decision to commit ground combat forces in Vietnam.²⁶ In a slightly different way the barrier between the internal and external realms was breached during the Reagan administration's initial decision to provide aid to the contras in

al Security Archive's report, The Chronology: Account of Secret Military Assistance to Iran (New York: Warner Books, 1987); and Woodward, 412-503.

²⁶A more detailed study of this point will be made in Chapter Three.

the early 1980's. In this instance the administration was forced by law to inform Congressional intelligence oversight committees of ongoing covert operations. Committee members were exposed to at least a part of the internal justification for the policy which created and sustained an anti-communist guerrilla force in Central America. The Reagan administration informed the committees that the rationale for such a policy was the interdiction of military supplies entering El Salvador. However, because some members correctly suspected ulterior motives of the administration, such as the destabilization and eventual overthrow of the regime in Managua, the pledge of silence was broken and they leaked the operation to the press. The oversight committees were designed to give Congress an insider's view of the policy process, but only a very weak influence on actual policy formulation.²⁷ When members thought they were not being offered the actual internal justification, which

²⁷What influence the committees do have stems from their "expected reaction" to a policy which is taken into account by the executive. The committees do not normally participate in the process by offering policy options as the executive branch players might.

the administration feared might appear unacceptable, they leaked.²⁸

While the internal-external model employs an artificial taxonomy which often simplifies aspects of the decision-making process, its categories are nevertheless useful as analytical tools. This framework offers three benefits to the observer of foreign affairs. First, it offers a system of classificatory terms with which one can uniformly define numerous events and cases over a broad range of issue areas. While each case is made up of particular details, the internal-external paradigm makes them comprehensible by revealing details as recurring phenomena in the policy process. Even though the internal and external realms may overlap in individual cases, the dichotomy offers an exhaustive classificatory scheme through which one can approach questions of justification.

²⁸One reason for the hesitancy on the part of the executive branch to fully elaborate the internal justification is conditioned by a suspicion that the Congressional committees leak information obtained in closed hearings. See The Tower Commission Report, 98. This same concern was voiced in 1965 by National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy when he warned Johnson, "It is quite possible the (private) message to the Congress, once the President has determined our position, would be a message to the public." As quoted in George Kahin's, Intervention: How America Became Involved In Vietnam (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 369.

Second, the distinction between internal and external justificatory realms and the accompanying limits of each encourage the author and the reader to probe for "real" reasons and the essence of decisions. Too often, foreign policy analysts draw conclusions and support arguments based on public proclamations of governments. By highlighting the internal-external dichotomy and keeping in mind the audiences of particular justifications, one will be less likely to search for the causes of policy in contrived presentations. This does not suggest that actual causes of policy can not be found in external justifications, but only that the analyst must be skeptical and attempt to find explanations consistent with the perceived interests of the state and the policymakers.

Third, there may be a relationship between a divergence (or convergence) and the success, coherence, or acceptability of a policy. For example, it may be that under certain conditions the existence of a divergence will increase the likelihood that a policy is successful (or vice-versa). To determine this, future research must have a comprehensive and exhaustive scheme through which to define and classify raw data. If some correlation becomes apparent, its existence would likely be of some

interest to policy makers as well as analysts.

Given this preliminary understanding of the definitions and categories to be used in this study, it will be helpful to apply theory to actual decisions. In the application of theory a number of causes and various types of divergence between internal and external justification will emerge. By developing the relationship between the internal and external realms, the utility of the dichotomy for analysts, historians and policy-makers becomes evident.

CHAPTER II: CAUSES OF DIVERGENCE

The executive may encourage a difference between the internal and external justifications of a policy for a number of reasons. Some of the most obvious incentives for a divergence are the need to maintain ideological consistency, to score domestic political victories (or prevent defeats), to secure the support of Congress and the public, or to signal foreign allies and adversaries. By examining historical cases it will become clear how various considerations of the executive motivate divergences between justificatory arguments in the external and internal realms.

The Period of Creation

The formative years of America's post-war foreign policy are highly instructive for any examination of the internal-external dichotomy. The global power vacuum left by the destruction of Japan and Germany and the severe weakening of the European colonial powers opened the door for the most materially rich and powerful nation in the world, the United States, to play the leading role in determining the shape of the post-war world. Of all the major powers, only the United States emerged from the war with sufficient economic and military strength to

successfully organize a global recovery. The Truman administration sought to consolidate America's new position as world leader, but this would require major commitments of money and material to foreign countries. Because of isolationist traditions and a fiscally conservative Congress, the administration's foreign policy goals faced substantial domestic impediments. By 1947 America was completing a post-war reduction in its armed forces and defense budget; gaining public and Congressional support for even relatively small foreign aid packages proved politically troublesome. For example, in 1946 it took six months to get a British reconstruction loan through Congress and then only after vicious debate. Reluctance on the part of the legislature to extend aid to Britain was surprising, given the closeness of the Anglo-American relationship developed during the war, the losses suffered by the British and the relative popularity of Britain with the American public.¹

¹For a discussion of the politics of the loan see Robert J. Donovan, Conflict and Crisis (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1977), 281. See also H.B. Price, The Marshall Plan and Its Meaning (Ithica, New York: Cornell University Press, 1955), 71-74. Former Secretary of State Dean Acheson described the attitude of the legislators toward European aid in early 1947 as "one of hardly suppressed skepticism." Dean Acheson, Present at the Creation (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1969), 221.

Britain's retreat from Greece, India, and the Middle East in early 1947 signalled its inability to continue to play the role of world policeman. Therefore, the Truman administration determined major economic and military aid programs would be necessary to ensure political stability and economic recovery in those areas of the world vital to America's interests. The single most important step which set the United States on a course for world leadership--and which also paved the way for the Marshall Plan and the formation of the Atlantic Alliance--was the decision to provide Greece and Turkey with economic, administrative and military aid sufficient to maintain their governments.² Soon after he asked Congress to fund this program, the President's message became widely acclaimed as the "Truman Doctrine."

Throughout 1946 Greece and Turkey became focal points in the escalating war of words and ideas between the Soviet Union and the Western powers. The Greek

²According to Joseph M. Jones of the Office of Public Affairs and a participant in the policy discussions, "All. . . were aware that a major turning point in American history was taking place." Cited in Acheson, 220. See also Louis J. Halle, who interprets the Truman Doctrine as "a new and definitive formulation of America's place and policy in the world." The Cold War as History (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 109-112.

government was losing control of the country in its civil war against Soviet supported insurgents. Turkey was repeatedly threatened by its Russian neighbor to the North; in August, 1946, Moscow demanded basing rights in the Bosphorus. By early 1947 Britain's own economic woes made it increasingly difficult to ensure the continued existence of the Greek government or to maintain its own 40,000 troops in that country. In February Britain's Ambassador in Washington delivered a message to the State Department indicating his government's intention to cease economic aid and recall its military personnel from Greece and Turkey in six weeks. The British abdicated with the hope that the United States would assume the burden in Turkey and Greece.

Internal Rationale for Greek-Turkish Aid

The decision to aid Greece and Turkey was shaped, in part, by a larger struggle developing between the superpowers. After the enthusiastic adoption of George Kennan's "Long Telegram" by official Washington in early 1946, foreign policy deliberations were infused with the need to contain the Soviet Union. The extension of Soviet power was assumed to be facilitated not just by the advance of the Red Army but by communist parties

operating outside Moscow's orbit. For this reason many of the internal justifications for the decision to aid Greece and Turkey were implicit in the adoption of the policy. This becomes frighteningly clear when reviewing accounts of the decision-making process during this period. The discussion and debate surrounding the policy in the internal realm focussed on time-tables and capabilities rather than reasons for adopting the policy. Few questioned whether it should be adopted at all.³ The central questions were 'how,' 'when,' and 'with what,' rather than 'why.'⁴ As soon as the British informed the

³George Kennan claimed to be part of a committee assigned "the task of recommending whether to respond affirmatively at all to the problem posed for us by the British withdrawal, or whether to leave the Greeks and Turks to their own devices." However, the chairman of the committee, Loy Henderson, and the acting Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, insist that question had been decided the day after the British note was received. As far as Acheson and Henderson were concerned the primary purpose of the committee was "to make suggestions as to how it (the decision to aid Greece and Turkey) should be explained and justified to other governmental departments, to Congress (whose action would obviously be necessary to give it effect), and to the public." See George F. Kennan, Memoirs: 1925-1950 (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967), 313-314; and Acheson, 217-219.

⁴Acheson, who was acting Secretary of State while General George Marshall attended the foreign ministers meeting in Moscow, assigned State Department analysts to determine "(1) facts as seen by the United States representatives; (2) funds and personnel currently available; (3) funds and personnel needed;" and only fourth, "significance of an independent Greece and Turkey to Western Europe." The assumption built into this list was that American interests were intimately related to political

United States of its intention to withdraw, Truman and his advisors unanimously agreed on the necessity to provide Greece and Turkey with aid.⁵ Nevertheless, while the internal justifications were neither explicit nor were they the central focus of the internal discussions on the issue, they did exist.

The maintenance of a certain type of world order was viewed as the primary interest motivating the decision to aid Greece and Turkey. This meant that American decision-makers adopted policies that would: (1) promote global peace and stability and (2) Encourage global economic recovery. These goals were thought to be mutually reinforcing since global peace and stability would naturally benefit the growth and recovery of the world economy. In essence, this meant keeping the industrialized Western countries unified, something which had not been achieved in the inter-war period. A related con-

and economic vitality in Western Europe. Ibid., 217-219.

⁵When the administration realized that only the United States had the capability to prevent a collapse of the Greek government and ensure that Turkey not "become an untenable outpost in a sea of Communism," it earnestly assumed that responsibility. It is almost as if the mere existence of a vacuum was an incentive for the strongest power to fill it. Harry S. Truman, Years of Trial and Hope (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1956), 100. See also Donovan, 279.

sideration of decision-makers had, by 1947, become almost a cliché'. The "lessons of Munich" and the folly of appeasement had become operational guidelines for the conduct of U.S. policy. Truman, Acheson, Marshall and even parts of the professional bureaucracy were quick to substitute Stalin for Hitler and the Soviet Union for Nazi Germany.⁶

The specific reasons offered in the internal realm to preserve Greek and Turkish independence in the face of Soviet pressure all related to the broader issues discussed above. While no one seriously raised the possibility of a Soviet invasion of Greece, Turkey or Western Europe, there was concern that these areas might be "lost by default." Marshall used this phrase repeatedly when explaining the potentially adverse effects of American indolence in this and comparable cases.⁷

⁶In 1945 Undersecretary of State Joseph Grew may have been the first within the administration to draw the parallel when he claimed the Soviet Union "will constitute, in the future, as grave a threat to us as did the axis." Cited in Hugh Thomas, Armed Truce: The Beginnings of the Cold War, 1945-46 (New York: Atheneum, 1987), 137-138. In a letter to his wife one day after his famous speech to Congress of March 12, Truman wrote he had known at Potsdam "that there is no difference between totalitarian or police states, call them what you will, Nazi, Fascist, Communist, or Argentine Republics." Donovan, 285.

⁷"Statement by the Secretary of State," Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, Vol. 5, 60-62.

Similarly, historian Herbert Feis explains it was not invasion, but political and military blackmail through which the Soviets could achieve their goals in Turkey. "American and British officials became nervous lest the Turks cave in and accede to Russian demands." To prevent a Kremlin-inspired Turko-Russian settlement, the American administration agreed with its counterpart in London that aid from the United States was needed as an unambiguous show of support.⁸ George Kennan expressed the same view in broader terms. Kennan, who by 1947 was the head of the State Department's newly created Policy Planning Staff (P.P.S.), claimed the Soviet threat existed primarily in a political form; consequently, as long as the countries of Western Europe remained economically and politically vibrant, communism would make no significant inroads. Were the United States to abandon Europe, however, allowing its economic position to continue to deteriorate, the resulting chaos and destruction would be a breeding ground for communism. In that case, suggested Kennan, forces loyal to Moscow could score political victories and the governments of those countries might be

⁸Herbert Feis, From Trust to Terror (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1970), 178-183.

forced to deal with the Soviet Union on unfavorable terms.⁹

A number of Truman's top advisors agreed that the U.S. should aid Greece and Turkey because a failure to act could have substantial negative repercussions on political stability in Europe and the state of order in the world.¹⁰ Specifically, they argued that those democratic forces in Italy and France under pressure from domestic communist parties would suffer a considerable psychological blow were Greece allowed to fall to the communists. While their own material conditions and security would not be threatened by the collapse of the Greek government, Kennan claimed "it was hard to overestimate, in those days of uncertainty and economic difficulty, the cumulative effect of sensational political events."¹¹

⁹Kennan, 317, 351.

¹⁰In a March 1947 memorandum to Acheson, Undersecretary of State William Clayton urged that 5 billion dollars be appropriated to help the devastated non-communist countries. "The United States must take world leadership and quickly," he said, "to avert world disaster." As cited in Donovan, 283.

¹¹As Kennan explained in a lecture at the National War College, "it is the shadows rather than the substance of things that moves the hearts, and sway the deeds of statesmen." Kennan, 318, 330-331, 351. For similar arguments by other participants in the policy process see Timothy P. Ireland, Creating the Entangling Alliance (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 1981), 25-26; and John

The fate of other nations in the Middle East was of considerable importance to American plans since oil from Iran, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab states would likely fuel any European economic recovery. Therefore, anything that threatened the flow of oil from the Middle East to Europe, such as the isolation of Turkey, the fall of Greece or the control of Iran by Soviet sponsored forces, was a grave concern of the administration in 1947.¹²

The importance of economic reconstruction was uncontested in the internal realm. There was consensus that an obvious national interest was at stake. The productive capacity of the United States had doubled during World War II. If the rest of the world, especially Western Europe, did not recover economically, there was a real danger that America would slip back into another depression. As Barton Bernstein explains, "American democracy and prosperity at home depended upon an expanding world economy and the extension of democracy

L. Gaddis, Strategies of Containment (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 35.

¹²For a discussion of the importance placed on American and European access to Middle Eastern oil during this period see Ireland, 51; Steven Spiegel, The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 30-35, 47; and "Cafferey to Marshall," Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, Vol. III, 711.

abroad."¹³ Bernstein's explanation echoes the rationale found in a number of internal memoranda from the period. Clayton explicitly advocated the Greek-Turkish aid program and later the Marshall Plan on the grounds that the continuing deterioration of the West European economy would have a "disastrous" effect on the American economy. The specific results of European economic collapse would be "Markets for our surplus product gone, unemployment, depression, a heavily unbalanced budget on the background of a mountainous war debt." The Ad Hoc Committee of the State-War-Navy Departments (S.W.N.C.C.), created in February 1947 to study the logistics and requirements of assistance to Greece and Turkey and later to all of Europe, reached similar conclusions.¹⁴

External Justification: The "Hard Sell"

While leading members of the administration were convinced that the threat to American economic and security interests in Greece and Turkey was sufficient to

¹³Barton J. Bernstein, "Walter Lippmann and the Early Cold War," in Cold War Critics, ed. Thomas G. Patterson (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), 30.

¹⁴"The Director of the P.P.S. to the Under Secretary of State," Foreign Relations of the United States, 1947, Vol. III, The British Commonwealth, Europe (Washington: USGPO, 1972), 229-232.

warrant an annual aid package of over 400 million dollars, they were not at all sure that Congress or the American public would agree. If the public and the fiscally cautious Congress were not convinced of a severe and imminent threat, they might be reluctant to support the administration's proposed policy. Truman, Acheson and White House Staff Assistant Clark Clifford all felt that the complex and often cynical arguments offered in the internal realm--involving balance of power, spheres of influence and expanding world trade--would do little to convince legislators to allocate funds for or unite the country behind the aid program.¹⁵ In fact, the administration made a conscious effort to "sell" the policy to the Congress and the American people.¹⁶

Without the appearance of an imminent ideological and military threat it is unclear whether Greek-Turkish aid (or the Marshall Plan) would have passed Congress. With this in mind, the administration employed a language

¹⁵For a detailed illustration of this point see David S. McLellan, Dean Acheson: The State Department Years (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1976), 116-122; also Ireland, 25-26.

¹⁶According to Joseph Jones, who was involved in preparing Truman's famous speech to Congress, participants in drafting sessions offered observations starting: "The only way we can sell the public on our new policy is. . ." As cited in Halle, 119.

of immediate crisis to move its programs through Congress and allay public criticism.¹⁷ It also drew public comparisons between the Soviet occupation of East European countries and the largely domestic political opposition in Greece and other European countries. In an attempt to present an image "clearer than truth" to its external audience, the administration overstated the severity of the Soviet military threat and marketed the policy as part of a global ideological struggle.

On March 12, 1947, Truman spoke before a joint session of Congress. He explained that during World War II Germany and Japan attempted to impose their way of life on other nations and then implied the Soviet Union was now doing the same. He then continued:

We shall not realize our objectives . . . unless we are willing to help free peoples to maintain their free institutions and their national integrity against aggressive movements that seek to impose upon them totalitarian regimes. . . . The peoples of a number of countries of the world have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will. The Government of the United States has made frequent protests against coercion and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta agreement, in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria.

¹⁷Athan Theoharis, "The Rhetoric of Politics: Foreign Policy, Internal Security and Domestic Politics in the Truman Administration," in Politics and Policies of the Truman Administration, ed. Barton J. Bernstein (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 214-217.

Truman then came to the controversial core of his address: "I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."¹⁸

The "outside pressures" to which Truman referred were undoubtedly allusions to the Soviet Union and its proxy forces abetting the Greek guerrillas from Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. By highlighting the possibility of Soviet military adventures in Europe, Truman opened a floodgate of alarmist pronouncements, speeches, and public studies which called attention to the apparent military edge which the Soviet Union maintained over the West in Europe. Two years later such efforts greatly facilitated the formation of the NATO Alliance.¹⁹

The fact that the Soviet Union had a quantitative superiority over Western forces stationed in Central Europe is not disputed; however, there was a discrepancy between the intentions and capabilities of the Soviet Union as reported by American and British intelligence

¹⁸As cited in Donovan, 284.

¹⁹If one of the primary goals of the administration was to avoid the divisions within the capitalist world that existed during the inter-war period, the perception of a Soviet threat and the subsequent formation of NATO did much to facilitate that goal.

agencies and the picture painted by the administration for public consumption. The Soviet Union simply was not willing or able to fight a major land war in Europe during this period. Most intelligence coming into Washington insisted the Soviets sought to avoid a major conflict at almost all costs for at least 10 to 15 years after World War II.²⁰ The State Department and the Moscow Embassy concurred that the Soviet Union had no intention of achieving its goals through direct military invasion of the West. In fact, after establishing the inferiority of Russian military strength, the Division of Research and Intelligence suggested "if a dispute in an existing area of conflict should definitely threaten war, the USSR would, during the period of its inferior war potential, back down before permitting the matter to come to a test of arms."²¹

²⁰For a review of such intelligence reports documenting the relative weakness of the Soviet economy and military capability see Office of Strategic Studies, "Memorandum for the President: Problems and Objectives of U.S. Policy," May 1945, in Declassified Documents (Washington D.C.: USGPO, 1981) microfiche # 007622, 2; U.K. Joint Intelligence Sub-Committee, "Soviet Interests, Intentions, and Capabilities" (London: August 1947), 1-3, 5, 7, Personal xerox copy; Central Intelligence Group, "Memorandum for the President," Oct. 30 1946 in, Declassified Documents (Washington D.C.: USGPO, 1982) microfiche # 000549.

²¹Department of State, "The Soviet Internal Situation," Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949, Vol. V (Washington: USGPO, 1972), 623-627. Even as late as

While the administration was not accurately representing the strength and intentions of the Soviet Union as its experts in the executive branch perceived them, it was presenting an image that would ensure its foreign policy goals the greatest chance of success. This consideration lay at the heart of the divergence between the internal and external justifications for Truman's Greek-Turkish policy.

Besides magnifying the Soviet threat and defining it in military terms, the Truman administration emphasized the ideological roots of the conflict between the Soviet Union and the "free world." The discussions concerning economic recovery and political blackmail so central to the internal justification were either muted or absent in the external justification. A number of foreign policy experts and political insiders noticed the grandiose and universal language used by the President in his address to Congress was unlike that used behind closed doors.

1949 when the Cold War was in full swing the Moscow Embassy repeatedly reported Russia was in no position to enter into hostilities with the West. According to Ambassador Kirk, "while sudden unanticipated Soviet progress in the atomic field might possibly advance the date on which they would be prepared to accept or initiate hostilities, such date would by no means be 'in the near future.'" Department of State, "Memo from Ambassador Kirk to Washington," Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949, Vol. V (Washington: USGPO, 1972), 658.

Marshall, Kennan, and Charles Bohlen were well aware of the internal justifications for the policy and, on the basis of such rationale, agreed the U.S. should assume Britain's role in Greece and Turkey. But while they all supported the policy, none had the opportunity to participate in the drafting of the President's speech, which was produced by the State Department's public relations office with help from Acheson, Clifford, Jones, the S.W.N.C.C. and of course Truman.²²

Kennan advanced two criticisms of the external justification offered in Truman's historic speech. First, Truman's language suggested the criterion used to determine whether or not the U.S. should offer aid to Greece and Turkey was "proof of the existence of a threat 'of subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure.'" Besides the fact that this was not--and in Kennan's opinion should not have been--a central factor in the decision to offer aid in this case, it left open

²²Kennan was invited to see the message a day before the final draft was sent to the White House. By that time his objections to the "sweeping language" of the speech were too late since "no one wanted to repeat the agony of collective drafting." Kennan, 315. Bohlen was accompanying Marshall to the Foreign Ministers meeting in Moscow, so neither of them knew the content of the Truman Doctrine until they received a copy of the speech during a stopover in Paris.

the question of whether the United States would give aid on that novel basis in the future. Second, Kennan held:

I would also take exception to the repeated suggestions, in the text of that message, that what we were concerned to defend in Greece was the democratic quality of the country's institutions. . . . It was unwise to suggest that this, too, was an essential criterion.²³

The Truman administration knew quite well it was not coming to the aid of "democratic forces" in Greece and Turkey but anti-communist and, in the case of Turkey, anti-Russian forces. Kennan was less concerned that such cynical considerations of power politics would be unpalatable to the American public.²⁴ Years later Kennan observed in Americans a "persistent urge to seek universal formulae or doctrines in which to clothe and justify particular actions."²⁵

The State Department draft which Kennan criticized was sent to the White House on the 7th of March. There, Clifford and George Elsey were supposed to work it into a speech. Upon seeing the draft, Elsey, who was aware of the internal justification for the aid program, reacted

²³Kennan, 321-322.

²⁴A number of observers have documented the reactionary nature of the Greek royalist forces in power after 1946. See Thomas, 384; Feis, 176. The Turkish Monarchy lacked even the veneer of a democratic political system.

²⁵Kennan, 322.

much as Kennan had. In a memorandum to Clifford, Eelsey said: "There has been no overt action in the immediate past by the USSR which serves as an adequate pretext for such an 'All-out' speech." Reflecting his grasp of the subtle arguments which had justified the policy in the internal realm, Eelsey continued, "The situation in Greece is relatively 'abstract;' there have been other instances--Iran for example--where the occasion more adequately justified such a speech."²⁶

Bohlen and Marshall were equally alarmed by the tone of Truman's address. Upon receiving a copy of the speech in Paris Bohlen said, "it seemed to General Marshall and to me that there was a little too much flamboyant anti-Communism in the speech." But upon cabling his reservations back to Washington Marshall "received a reply that in the considered opinion of the executive branch, including the President, the Senate would not approve the doctrine without the emphasis on the Communist danger."²⁷

Little in the internal debates, or the "Washington consensus" discussed previously, prepared these analysts and statesmen for the sweeping ideological oratory

²⁶Donovan, 282.

²⁷Charles E. Bohlen, Witness to History: 1929-1969, (W.W. Norton and Company, 1973), 261.

through which Truman justified the Greek-Turkish aid program to the American public and Congress. As far as the critics of the external justification were concerned--especially Kennan and Bohlen, who were the resident experts on the Soviet Union and thus keenly aware of its weaknesses--the speech was a distortion of reality. All the critics of the external justification readily acknowledged the need for the United States to play an active role in the economic and political recovery of Western Europe and those states on the periphery of the Soviet sphere of influence. The potential costs of not acting forcefully would be the loss of these areas by default or the Finlandization of them through psychological and political pressure applied by Moscow. However, Acheson, Truman, and his domestic political advisors were not sure this argument--or similar ones involving global economic recovery and the continued existence of world order--would be sufficient to sway a stingy Congress or a population leery of foreign aid programs. The internal arguments smacked of unsavory power politics. Therefore, the administration intentionally created a divergence between internal and external justifications. The external audience would have to be given certain types of reasons if the policy were to have a good chance of

success. In this case the need to satisfy a domestic political audience conditioned a divergence between the justifications in the two realms.²⁸

The tone of crisis in Truman's speech was largely due to the perceived need to gain Congressional support for his Greek-Turkish policy and, to a lesser extent, for future aid to Western Europe. However, Clifford later recalled an additional reason for the strident rhetoric. "We wanted to send a signal to Stalin."²⁹ Presumably, Clifford felt that such a forceful act accompanied by strong words would restrain future Soviet adventures in areas where U.S. interests were involved. While domestic political impediments to Truman's policy were the primary cause of a divergence in this case, the consideration raised by Clifford would prove to be a significant cause of divergence in a number of historic issue areas, including the Berlin crises, U.S. entry into the Vietnam War, and the Cuban Missile Crisis.

²⁸For a condensed version of the internal/external justification for the Greek-Turkish aid policy see table in Appendix A.

²⁹Donovan, 283.

The Need to Signal an International Audience

It is not a cliché to suggest the world is becoming a smaller place. Since World War II, the global population has more than doubled; technological advances have made intercontinental travel a matter of hours rather than weeks; the entire world is linked by television and satellite communications; the underdeveloped countries are desperately seeking education and technological assets from the industrialized nations; and the West has become dependent on the third world for its natural resources. Because of increased interdependence, the political, economic and military decisions made by any state or group of states often have a direct impact on the welfare of a large number of other countries. For this reason, very few state actions go unnoticed by the international community. Therefore, political leaders and advisors must make decisions and justify them with the knowledge that they have an attentive audience. Raymond Cohen concludes that since governmental figures and their policies will be scrutinized, "all outward directed behavior is the product of careful delibera-

tion."³⁰ Policies are purposely chosen and justified for their effect on the attentive audience. Cohen points out that since all behavior is considered purposeful in international relations, observers attach meanings to all actions and words.

When the United States sent 15,000 troops to Honduras for "training exercises" in the Spring of 1988, it was not simply an attempt to sharpen the military skills of its armed forces. For two months preceding the maneuvers the Nicaraguan army had increased its number of penetrations across the Honduran border in skirmishes with the contras. The American training exercises were intended to show Managua that the U.S. noticed the incursions and might take action to prevent them or retaliate with some other military means. The Sandinistas correctly interpreted the signal and the border violations decreased. The geographic proximity and heightened readiness of a large contingent of American troops served as a clear warning to the Sandinistas. Even if the U.S. had intended no warning and was merely training military personnel, the Sandinistas would have interpreted the maneuvers as a signal because of an assumption of inten-

³⁰Raymond Cohen, Theater of Power: The Art of Diplomatic Signalling (New York: Longman, 1987), 3.

tionality.³¹ As discussed previously, all action in international relations is thought by the audience to be a deliberate attempt to communicate. In the context of Central America in early 1988, policy makers in Washington must have noticed that the Sandinistas would interpret the action as a warning.

Those states with the greatest political, military, and economic strength generally have the greatest influence on a large number of other states. Therefore, the big powers will be the most closely watched and thus have the greatest incentive to cultivate a certain reputation. The United States has been the most closely watched country since 1945 and American political leaders have made policy with this fact in mind.

However, the mere existence of an attentive international audience does not provide an incentive to formulate policies and justify them in ways that will satisfy the audience. American policy makers are concerned with

³¹According to Cohen "Contemporary observers can never be absolutely certain of others' real intentions. Hence they have to assume that actors do indeed intend the ostensible meanings of their acts. Since all actors know (or quickly learn) that all public acts, except those self evidently accidental or inadvertent, may be considered significant, the assumption tends to become a self-fulfilling prophecy." Furthermore "the assumption of intentionality is observed to be a working convention among diplomats and national security officers." Ibid, 20.

the perceptions of the international audience (and shape their justifications accordingly) because those perceptions affect the ability of the United States to achieve its goals and pursue its interests. Others' perceptions of a nation matter and should be included in any attempt to measure a state's influence or power.

Reputation as a Factor of State Power

The realist school of thought in international relations focusses on power as the most important element determining interstate relations. The assumption of the primacy of power has been the focus of much debate in the field; unfortunately, the debate has been overshadowed by a persistence among both critics and advocates of the realist tradition to view power as a quantifiable asset based primarily on economic and military strength.³²

³²While a number of realists assert general definitions of power which could account for a broad spectrum of variables, once put into practice material components of power are often represented out of all proportion to their actual significance in determining events. Paul Kennedy pays lip service to "cultural variables" and "international reputation" but when it comes to applying theory, power for Kennedy is determined by a state's economic base, military strength, geographic size and location, and population. Paul Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers (New York: Random House, 1987), . See also Bernstein's analysis of Walter Lippmann's material understanding of "balance of power considerations." Bernstein, 47.

Perhaps because these components of state power are the most easily measured and compared, analysts on both sides of the debate assume they are the most important elements in any power equation.

A crude critique of realism became popular after America's failure in Vietnam. Realism's critics claimed that a focus on power relations failed to predict and still fails to explain the American defeat in Vietnam. The critics correctly claim the United States possessed many times the economic, military, and geopolitical power of North Vietnam. Therefore, concludes the argument, any analysis employing power relations as the singular explanatory force in interstate affairs would fail to predict the outcome which is now history. Such explanations fail to grasp the subtlety of power relations in interstate affairs. An examination of the power relations operating during the Vietnam War would be remiss were it not to define the limits within which each state could wield its power. The United States faced significant military and political constraints on its power, some self-imposed and some imposed by states other than North Vietnam.³³

³³The Johnson administration was constrained by the expected negative reaction of the American people to an all-out war in Vietnam. More significantly, the administration felt itself restrained by the Soviet Union and

Another factor that must be included in any discussion of power is the role a state's reputation plays in shaping international expectations and attitudes. A state's ability to operate effectively and achieve its goals in an interdependent world is intimately linked to the perceptions that others have of the state. Decision-makers act on the assumption that the long-term effects of an action may aid or hinder that state in its future relations with other states. According to Robert Keohane "a good reputation is like a capital asset: it will make it easier to enter future international agreements, at lower costs."³⁴ A traditional realist, Hans Morganthau, states the problem in the negative sense when he claims that nations which fail to observe treaties may experience a net loss "in the long run, since a nation that has the reputation for reneging on its commercial obliga-

communist China, whose potential presence in Vietnam negated the possibility of an invasion of the North. Any direct confrontation between the U.S. and either China or the Soviet Union was ruled out as potentially too costly. This consideration undoubtedly contributed to the outcome of the war.

³⁴Robert Keohane, After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 105-106.

tions will find it hard to conclude commercial treaties beneficial to itself."³⁵

While both Keohane and Morgenthau are discussing questions of international trade, the same dynamic is at work in the security realm. States seek to establish certain reputations not as ends in themselves, but because they are instrumentally useful for the state pursuing its interests. Accordingly, nations do not act as crude act utilitarians. There may be instances where some policy will bring short-term gains, but in the long run, the costs of that action will outweigh whatever gains are made in the isolated instance. As long as political leaders and other policy makers act as if they believe their actions have long-term consequences on the status--and therefore the ability to achieve goals--of their state, they may not act to maximize immediate utility at the expense of reputation.

There appears to be a widely held belief among policy makers that the stakes in any conflictual interstate relationship are often much more subtle than a material balance of power model might suggest. Robert Tucker claims "specific conflicts of interest will be

³⁵Hans J. Morgenthau, Politics Among Nations, fourth edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948/1967), 283.

invested with a significance they would not otherwise have."³⁶ Quite simply, situations arise where states devote lives, resources, and energy out of all proportion to the immediate material gains that could be achieved through such actions. In 1961 the Soviet Union challenged the American position in West Berlin. While the city added little to the West economically and was an indefensible military liability 100 miles inside the German Democratic Republic, the United States risked global war and significant political capital in defense of the American position in West Berlin. According to President Kennedy, West Berlin had

become, as never before, the great testing place of Western courage and will, a focal point where our solemn commitments. . . and Soviet ambitions now meet in basic confrontation. . . If we do not meet our commitments in Berlin, where will we later stand?³⁷

In the Cuban missile crisis, which came one year later, policy makers in Washington were as concerned about the international reputation of the U.S. as much as they were about gaining or losing a strategic advantage. During the policy debates of October 1961 Kennedy down played

³⁶Robert Osgood and Robert Tucker, Force, Order, and Justice (Balt:Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 201.

³⁷Ibid.

the military significance of the missiles in Cuba, "it doesn't make any difference if you get blown up by an ICBM flying from the Soviet Union or one that was ninety miles away."³⁸ When Presidential Counsel Ted Sorensen summed up the views of Ex Comm after the first two days of deliberations he wrote:

It is generally agreed that these missiles, even when fully operational, do not significantly alter the balance of power. . . Nevertheless it is generally agreed that the United States cannot tolerate the known presence of offensive nuclear weapons in a country ninety miles from our shore, if our courage and commitments are ever to be believed by either allies or adversaries.³⁹

Had the United States backed down in Berlin or allowed Soviet missiles to be publicly deployed in Cuba, the administration believed the U.S. would have suffered a grave blow to its reputation as a great power and certainly would have lost influence with both its allies and its adversaries in future crises. The allies, it was argued, would lose confidence in American commitments and

³⁸Richard Neustadt and Ernest May, Thinking in Time (N.Y.: the Free Press, 1986), 9.

³⁹Ibid, 9. The policy to "quarantine" Cuba brought the U.S. and the Soviet Union as close to war as they have been in the 40 years since 1945. Interestingly, the external justification for that policy stressed the military threat posed by the missiles in Cuba. The internal justification expressed the concerns of an ego contest.

its adversaries might view the U.S. as a paper tiger that could be intimidated. An apparent loss of power would bring more challenges and increase the likelihood of future crises. It would not matter that the actual military and economic capabilities of the United States were still preeminent and largely unchanged; America would have lost influence in the world.

Only war offers a final accounting of state power. The outcome of any confrontation short of war will be determined by the perceptions that actors have of each other. If country **X** and Country **Y** believe **Y** is more powerful than **X**, then Country **Y** is in practice more powerful. Naturally, the material capabilities of **Y** will go some way in determining both countries' perceptions of **Y**'s power, but the politically relevant factor is the belief--whether well founded or not--that **Y** is stronger.

Perceptions and reputations have become increasingly important in determining events in international affairs over the past 40 years. Besides the obvious technological improvements in communication, the strategic nuclear arsenals of the great powers have made all-out global war unthinkable. Since state power can no longer be determined through war, the subjective understanding of analysts and political leaders will determine actions and

reactions in interstate affairs. Policy makers can no longer resort to a final accounting of power relations by choosing to go to war. The improbability of war has emphasized the importance of a state's reputation in determining its ability to achieve its objectives. Therefore, political leaders in the United States have gone to great lengths to protect or bolster the state's reputation. The case study in Chapter Three illustrates this point better than any theoretical discussion of the concern for reputation maintenance in determining a state's foreign policy. The consideration of the state's reputation helps to explain the perceived U.S. interest, eventual entry, and the difficulty of withdrawal from the Vietnam War.

CHAPTER III: TYPES OF DIVERGENCE

A divergence between internal and external justifications may be caused by a number of different factors and may appear in a variety of forms. Examination of particular cases reveals the various ways in which divergence can manifest itself. Until now, "divergence" has been used to describe instances where the content of the internal and external justifications was not the same. Truman and his advisors said one thing behind closed doors and something entirely different to the public and Congress. This type of divergence is the easiest to identify and will be called a "simple" divergence. Another type of divergence is evident in cases where the same justifications are given in the internal and external realms, but the emphasis on particular reasons for the policy is different in the two forums. This type of qualitative divergence existed at the time the U.S. government decided to deploy ground combat forces in Vietnam. In this case little or nothing was being withheld from the external audiences; instead, the same material was being presented in a different way.¹

¹This study is concerned with similarities or differences in justificatory arguments; therefore, when it is said that nothing was being withheld from the public this does not refer to the inaccurate reporting of body counts or "successful" pacification efforts. The Johnson

Vietnam: A "Divergence of Order"

As illustrated in Chapter One, the set of reasons which comprise a justification can be hierarchically ranked in order of importance. When the order of particular reasons for a policy is obviously different in the internal and external realms, there exists a "divergence of order." This type of divergence is evident in the Johnson administration's policy toward Vietnam in 1964-1965. The internal justification for deployment of ground combat troops focused on the position of the United States as a superpower in the world. However, while the external justification contained the considerations which drove the internal debate, it stressed the American obligation to preserve the right of the people of the Republic of Vietnam to remain "independent and free from communist tyranny." This discussion of the internal and external justifications for the U.S. policy to commit combat troops demonstrates how a divergence can

administration did confront a "credibility gap" due to its rosy predictions which seemed to contradict televised reports of the war, especially after the Tet offensive in 1968. However, the arguments which the administration used as rationale for its entry into the war were roughly the same in the internal and external realms.

exist while the content of the justifications in both realms is roughly the same.²

By 1964 the position of the American backed regime in Saigon had reached a critical stage. After the assassination of Diem, a series of inefficient military juntas and dictatorial governments failed to put down the National Liberation Front (N.L.F.) insurgency or effectively address the underlying political problems facing the country. In an attempt to bolster the confidence of its allies in the South, the United States embarked on a bombing campaign that was ostensibly started in response to North Vietnamese attacks on U.S. warships.³ However, at the behest of McGeorge Bundy, Assistant Secretary of Defense John McNaughton, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (J.C.S.), the "tit for tat" bombing raids soon became a program of gradually intensified "sustained reprisals"

²While official pronouncements on U.S. policy in Vietnam contained virtually all the accepted arguments presented behind closed doors, (the internal justification) the reverse was not true. Many internal discussions and memorandums made no reference to moral and ideological arguments which were a staple of the external justification.

³For a discussion of the alleged attacks on the U.S.S. Maddox and Turner Joy in the Tonkin Gulf which preceded U.S. reprisals see George C. Herring, America's Longest War (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986), 116-129.

against targets in the North.⁴ The bombing raids, while highly destructive, did little to improve the political situation in South Vietnam. When it appeared the Saigon regime might not survive without direct American military intervention, American policy makers initiated what was until then the most intense internal policy debate on American strategy and objectives in South East Asia.

Internal Justification: Supremacy of National Credibility

After the decision to deploy two battalions of U.S. Marines to protect the airbase at DaNang in early 1965, a series of increasing pressures pushed President Johnson toward the decision to commit significant numbers of American troops to the war effort. At first General William Westmoreland and the Joint Chiefs were the principal advocates of intervention; however, between February and July of 1965, almost all the President's leading advisors advocated direct U.S. entry into the land war. Even Ambassador Maxwell Taylor, who initially advocated a compromise "enclave strategy," soon fell in

⁴Lyndon B. Johnson, The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969 (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 127-128.

line.⁵ Only Undersecretary of State George Ball and Johnson's personal advisor, Clark Clifford, insisted a commitment of troops would be a mistake. Ball expressed concern that the adoption of Westmoreland's proposals, which called for the introduction of 150,000 American troops, would lead to a "protracted war involving an open-ended commitment of U.S. forces, mounting U.S. casualties, no assurances of a satisfactory solution, and a serious danger of escalation." He concluded that after such a large and visible commitment to the continued existence of South Vietnam, "Our involvement will be so great that we cannot--without national humiliation--stop short of achieving our complete objectives."⁶ In presenting his objections to a troop deployment, Ball vocal-

⁵Taylor's enclave strategy effectively left the land war to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (A.R.V.N.), while the U.S. troops stayed within a 50 mile radius of the airfields and strategic positions they were assigned to protect. This cautious approach was abandoned in mid-1965 after a fact finding mission led Defense Secretary Robert McNamara to agree with Westmoreland that U.S. forces should "take the war to the enemy." For details see Bruce Palmer's, The 25 Year War (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), 41-42.

⁶"Ball to Johnson," July 1, 1965, Pentagon Papers, Sheehan ed. (New York: New York Times Publishing, 1972), 449-454. In a more poetic moment, Ball restated his concerns, "Once on the tiger's back, we cannot be sure of picking the place to dismount." George W. Ball, The Past Has Another Pattern (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1982), 380.

ized the crucial consideration on which the issue would be decided--namely, the effect of deployment or withdrawal on the validity of U.S. commitments around the world.

Most of the participants involved in the policy debates of 1964-1965 agreed with Ball that the United States should be fundamentally concerned with maintaining a certain image and avoiding national humiliation. Damage to U.S. credibility was the crucial cost to be managed.⁷ The reputation of the United States as a resolute adversary and a loyal ally was viewed as the foundation for world order.⁸ If the U.S. decided to commit ground forces it would be serving notice that the stakes in Vietnam were paramount. Therefore, as America became more directly involved, the importance of Vietnam grew out of all proportion to its physical and strategic

⁷Unlike most contemporary critics of the war, Ball (and his colleagues) was less concerned that American lives, property, and strategic assets and moral virtue would be lost in Vietnam than he was that U.S. prestige would be damaged--and hence America's position as a superpower in the world.

⁸The "central lesson of our time" was learned at Munich according to Johnson. Appeasement of aggressive states was viewed as an invitation to more aggression and a major impediment to world order. Kathleen J. Turner, Lyndon Johnson's Dual War: Vietnam and the Press. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 3, 23-24, 51-53.

position in the world. Washington focused on the United States perceptions of itself and more importantly, on the international community's perceptions of U.S. actions.

While Vietnam had little strategic, economic, or even cultural value to the United States, Johnson and his advisors were convinced that allowing the Saigon regime to fall would weaken American influence and encourage disorder throughout the world.⁹ If the United States pulled out of Vietnam in 1965, Johnson warned, "it might as well give up everywhere else--pull out of Berlin, Japan, South America."¹⁰ The overriding concern was not the loss of Vietnam itself, but the effect a successful revolution might have on world order. The United States, as the economic and political giant of the free world had a clear interest in maintaining global stability so it could normalize relations with the Soviet Union and continue to lead the expansion of the world market. If any state had a stake in the institutionalization of the status quo it was the United States. The long-range

⁹In describing U.S. interests and objectives in Vietnam Palmer claims "South Vietnam was not vital to the United States." However by 1965 "our credibility world-wide" became "an important U.S. interest." Vietnam would test American credibility. Palmer, 28.

¹⁰Herring, 141. The administration felt that the way it responded to "communist provocations" in Vietnam would have "profound consequences everywhere." Ibid., 115.

intelligence estimates coming into Washington during 1964-1965 warned "revolution and disorder" had become "epidemic" within the developing countries. The C.I.A. believed there was a greater chance the superpowers would be drawn, possibly against their will, into direct confrontation if such third world conflicts continued unchecked.¹¹

The American Cold War obsession with containing communism and preventing the spread of revolutionary movements was conditioned by a U.S. consensus originally elaborated in NSC-68 and strengthened by the American experience in Korea. In the case of Vietnam the long-term consensus became codified--and American policy implicitly sanctioned by the bi-partisan foreign policy establishment--when Johnson in July 1965 consulted a panel of "wise men." The group consisted largely of former statesmen, advisors, and military men whose task was to consider the U.S. position in Vietnam and make recommendations directly to the President. One of the questions the panel was asked to address was: "To what

¹¹C.I.A., "Trends In the World Situation," June 9, 1964, Declassified Documents Quarterly Catalog, microfiche 00075, 251A. It was assumed that a U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam would threaten global stability by giving a green light to every would be nationalist revolutionary in the developing world.

extent would a communist takeover in South Vietnam, in the face of the U.S. commitment, affect U.S. credibility and standing in holding on to key areas such as Northeast Asia, the Philippines, India, and even Europe?" William Bundy describes the panel's response as "clear and unmistakable." The wise men agreed with the administration that the stakes were "very high indeed." If the regime in Saigon was not bolstered, "deGaulle would then find many takers for his argument that the U.S. could not be counted on to defend Europe." The panel also agreed "that Vietnam was a test case for 'wars of national liberation' and that a U.S. defeat would lead to widespread questioning whether U.S. commitments could be relied on." According to Bundy, "The panel thought that standing firm in Vietnam was of very great importance to American interests and to the independence of many nations and areas."¹²

Every President from Truman to Johnson had made repeated public statements in support of the non-communist political forces in Vietnam which, after the Geneva Accords of 1954, were located exclusively below the 17th parallel. Eisenhower and Dulles legally com-

¹²George Kahin, Intervention: How America Became Involved In Vietnam (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1986), 360-361.

mitted the U.S. to the defense of South Vietnam through the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). Kennedy increased military and economic aid to the Saigon regime. Shortly after taking over from Kennedy in November 1963, Johnson assured Congress that America would uphold its commitments "from South Vietnam to West Berlin."¹³ The consensus within the administration held that the reputation of the United States rested on the fulfillment of these promises.¹⁴ The administration considered the costs of abandoning South Vietnam--measured in terms of damage

¹³Kathleen J. Turner, Lyndon Johnson's Dual War: Vietnam and the Press (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 53-54. As early as May 1961 Johnson's concern with Vietnam rested on a belief that the perception other states held of the U.S. was a fundamental factor in determining American power and influence. Upon return from a trip to South East Asia, then Vice President Johnson reported to President Kennedy, "The alternative to aiding the countries of that region was to throw in the towel...and pull our defenses back to San Francisco. . . . (W)e would say to the world. . .that we don't live up to treaties and don't stand by our friends." "Johnson to Kennedy," May 23, 1961, Pentagon Papers, Vol.II, Gravel Edition (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), 58-59.

¹⁴All the leading members of the administration were heavily conditioned by the "lessons of World War II." In a meeting of the N.S.C. General Wheeler insisted the cost of appeasement would be a wider war. "If we walk out of this one, we will just have to face others." At the same meeting former ambassador to the Republic of Vietnam, Henry Cabot Lodge, invoked the analogy viewed with almost religious reverence by official Washington. He argued there was an increased chance of global war "if we don't go in. Can't we see the similarity to our own indolence at Munich." Kahin, 378.

to its reputation--as greater than the costs of going to war.

Johnson and his advisors were quite specific in their concerns about how U.S. influence--and as a result its material interests--would be adversely affected by a failure to commit troops in Vietnam. The explicit U.S. promise to ensure the independence of South Vietnam was thought to focus world attention on the credibility of the strongest nation in the world. America's adversaries in Moscow, Peking, and numerous nationalist movements would supposedly interpret the U.S. response in Vietnam as a deliberate signal. The majority view assumed American allies would be reassured and her adversaries would be more cautious if the U.S. stood firm. Given the steadily worsening situation in the South, this meant sending combat troops.

McGeorge Bundy stressed the importance of increasing U.S. forces in Vietnam as it related to "boosting the morale" of anti-communist forces in the South. General Earl Wheeler agreed, stating, "our additional forces will stave off a deteriorating situation." Admiral David McDonald argued against the critics of intervention, insisting "our allies will lose faith in us" if we do not "pour in more men." He was most concerned with the

policy's beneficial effects on other countries in South East Asia such as Thailand, Burma, and the Philippines.¹⁵

More often participants argued America's adversaries would be emboldened by a U.S. withdrawal. In a meeting at the White House in July, 1965, Secretary of State Dean Rusk insisted, "It is more important to convince the communist leadership of this (that the U.S. would honor its commitments through military intervention) than to worry about the opinion of non-communist countries." McNamara agreed with Rusk when the Secretary of State said, "If the communist world finds out we will not pursue our commitments to the end, I don't know where they will stay there hand."¹⁶ While some of the military participants in the policy debates mentioned the need to win the war in Vietnam, it is clear that some within the administration felt all that was needed to achieve the goal of reputation maintenance was a visible effort. All the principals thought a military victory was desirable, but some, notably McNaughton and McNamara from the Defense Department, did not view it as necessary to achieve the primary internal objective. In a memo to the President on July 20, 1965, McNamara argued for a

¹⁵Kahin, 310, 380-381.

¹⁶Ibid., 377.

"prompt and substantial" increase in the number of American troops operating in South Vietnam and claimed his recommendation would "offer a good chance of producing a favorable settlement in the longer run; at the same time it would imply a commitment to see a fighting war clear through at considerable cost and casualties and material."¹⁷ McNamara's argument rested on the assumption that to fight a war and incur all the concomitant costs was itself the strongest signal a nation could send to bolster the credibility of its spoken word. By Herring's account, "Even if the United States could not hold South Vietnam, Assistant Secretary of Defense John McNaughton argued, it would appear stronger to allies and adversaries alike if it 'kept slugging away' rather than meekly accepting defeat."¹⁸ In this view the outcome of the war was of secondary importance; what was needed to signal the world that the United States would keep its promises was a huge effort and the loss of American lives.

Ball, the administration's principal critic, never disagreed with what the establishment claimed was at stake in Vietnam: America's reputation as a resolute

¹⁷Ibid., 363.

¹⁸Herring, 128-129.

world power. He simply felt that the risks of losing a war to a group of guerrillas was potentially more damaging to America's reputation than reneging on a commitment to save a government that lacked legitimacy in the eyes of its own people and that would surely fall without U.S. help. Unlike subsequent critics, Ball did not oppose the troop deployments (or the war in general) on moral grounds, but with respect to minimizing the damage to U.S. national interests--which were intimately linked with the image other states held of America.

The following is a selected account of the discussions which took place in the White House in late July 1965 as recalled by President Johnson's aid Jack Valenti. Ball was clearly in agreement with the ends to be achieved--or avoided--in Vietnam, even though his policy recommendation differed from the consensus.

Secretary McNamara had recently proposed the deployment of 100,000 troops and most of the principals in the discussion supported the plan. Johnson was still searching for alternatives and Ball was acknowledged as the official devil's advocate.

President: But, George, is there another course in the national interest, some course that is better than the one McNamara proposes? We know it is dangerous and perilous, but the big question is, can it be avoided?

Ball: If we get bogged down, our cost might be substantially greater. The pressures to create a larger war would be irresistible. The qualifications I have are not due to the fact that I think we are in a bad moral position.

President: Tell me then, what other road can I go?

Ball: Take what precautions we can, Mr. President. Take our losses, let their government fall apart, negotiate, discuss, knowing full well there will be a probable take-over by the Communists.

President: . . . Are you able to outline your doubts? Can you offer another course of action? I think it's desirable to hear you out, truly hear you out, then I can determine if your suggestions are sound and ready to be followed, which I am prepared to do if I am convinced.

Ball: Yes, Mr. President. I think I can present to you the least bad of two courses. What I would present is a course that is costly, but can be limited to short-term costs. . . . I am concerned about world opinion. If we could win in a year's time, and win decisively, world opinion would be alright. However, if the war is long and protracted, as I believe it will be, then we will suffer because the world's greatest power cannot defeat guerrillas. . . . I think a long, protracted war will disclose our weakness, not our strength. (Ball goes on to explain his concerns as they relate to the perceptions of U.S. allies in Taiwan, South Korea, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Japan.)

President: But George, wouldn't all these countries say that Uncle Sam was a paper tiger, wouldn't we lose credibility breaking the word of three presidents, if we did as you have proposed? It would seem to be an irreparable blow. But I gather you don't think so.

Ball: No, sir. The worse blow would be that the mightiest power on earth is unable to defeat a handful of guerrillas.

President: Then you are not basically troubled by what the world would say about our pulling out?

Ball: If we were actively helping a country with a stable viable government, it would be a vastly different story. Western Europeans look upon us as if we got ourselves into an imprudent situation.¹⁹

While Ball criticized the policy recommendations of the majority, he did not disagree with the justification for the policy. As the record shows, Ball was in complete agreement with the expressed purpose of the policy.

The most parsimonious articulation of the internal rationale that guided debate on the administration's Vietnam policy is found in a March 1965 memorandum from McNaughton to McNamara. There McNaughton weighted U.S. objectives in Vietnam as: "70% to preserve our national honor as a guarantor (and the reciprocal: to avoid a show-case success for Communist 'wars of liberation'), 20% to keep SVN (and their adjacent) territory free from hostile expansive hands, 10% To permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life." McNaughton's list of U.S. objectives is reflected in the official record

¹⁹Jack Valenti, A Very Human President (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1975), 328-335.

where, as discussed previously, the overriding concern among all the principals was the reputation of the United States. In the conclusion of the same memo, McNaughton echoed the concerns that were the focus of the policy debate in the internal realm.

It is essential--however badly SEA (Southeast Asia) may go over the next 1-3 years--that the U.S. emerge as a "good doctor." We must have kept promises, been tough, taken risks, gotten bloodied and hurt the enemy very badly. We must avoid harmful appearances which will affect judgments by, and provide pretexts to, other nations regarding how the U.S. will behave in future cases of particular interest to those nations--regarding U.S. policy, power, resolve and competence to deal with their problems.²⁰

External Justification: Moral and Legal Preeminence

The emphasis on reputation maintenance in the internal realm lies in stark contrast to the alleged importance of various reasons given for the administration's policy in the external realm. In fact, the order in which particular reasons for the Vietnam policy were presented in public pronouncements were often reversed from their positions in the internal justification. While McNaughton stressed America's future credibility as 70% responsible for the need to pursue a policy of inter-

²⁰As cited in Kahin, 313, 357.

vention, policy statements from 1964 to 1966 painted quite a different picture. In March 1964 McNamara explained U.S. objectives and interests to the public in reverse order to those later elaborated by "the person on whom McNamara depended most in developing his approach to Vietnam," John McNaughton.²¹ According to the Secretary of Defense:

The U.S. role in South Vietnam, then, is **first**, and most importantly, to answer the call of the South Vietnamese, a member nation of our free-world family, to help them save their country for themselves; **second**, to help prevent the strategic danger which would exist if communism absorbed Southeast Asia's people and resources; and **third**, to prove in the Vietnamese test case that the free-world can cope with communist 'wars of liberation' as we have coped successfully with communist aggression at other levels.²²

Johnson's most famous public address on the conflict in Vietnam came on April 7, 1965, and has since become known as "The Johns Hopkins Speech." Many analysts have correctly pointed out that the internal justification for the administration's policy was extensively elaborated here in the external realm. Using language and logic

²¹Ibid., 356.

²²In the original, the words "first, second, and third" were italicized. Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, "United States Policy In Vietnam," for text of speech see Pentagon Papers, Vol.III, Gravel Edition (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), 712-715.

reminiscent of McNamara's memos, the President informed 60 million American television viewers that world order depended on the credibility of the American commitment to South Vietnam. However, while the external justification incorporated the substance of arguments made behind closed doors at the White House, these considerations were subordinated to moral reasons for the policy.²³ The first quarter of Johnson's speech contained themes such as "the principles for which our ancestors fought," "peace" and the "unparalleled brutality" of the war started and perpetuated by "aggression from the North."

²³"Text of the President's Address on U.S. Policy in Vietnam," New York Times, April 8 1965, 16. For Johnson's discussion of the importance of Vietnam as a place where America must prove the value of its promises to allies and adversaries see paragraphs 17-18, 21-31, 34. This explanation was not restricted to the President's speech. In an interview on August 9 1965 Secretary of State Rusk discussed publicly what was at that time the central internal justification for escalation. "The fact is that we know we have a commitment. The South Vietnamese know we have a commitment. The Communist world knows we have a commitment. The rest of the world knows it. Now, this means that the integrity of the American commitment is at the heart of the problem. I believe that the integrity of the American commitment is the principal structure of peace throughout the world. Now, if our allies or, more particularly, if our adversaries should discover that the American commitment is not worth anything, then the world would face dangers of which we have not yet dreamed. And so it is important for us to make good on that American commitment to South Viet-Nam." Secretary of State Dean Rusk, "Political and Military Aspects of U.S. Policy in Vietnam," Pentagon Papers, Vol.IV, Gravel Edition (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), 636.

In the sixteenth paragraph Johnson asks, "Why are we in South Vietnam?" He then answers: "We are there because we have a promise to keep. Since 1954 every American President has offered support to the people of South Vietnam." However, before any mention of the prudential costs of not keeping promises--the subject which dominated discussions in the internal realm--Johnson posited the Kantian imperative that "to dishonor that pledge, to abandon this small and brave nation to its enemies, and to the terror that must follow would be an unforgivable wrong." Immediately following this moral argument for escalation, Johnson gave the secondary argument, which in the internal realm was preeminent. "We are **also** there to strengthen world order. Around the globe, from Berlin to Thailand, are people whose well-being rests in part on the belief that they can count on us if they are attacked."²⁴

²⁴Johnson, "Text of Address." (emphasis added) The divergence between internal and external justifications in this case appears to be less than in some of the other cases we have looked at. Because of the subtle and qualitative nature of this "divergence of order" one might assume there was no divergence. In this case the illusion is perpetuated by analysts who comment and record with only limited information. A demonstration of the fact that analysts often neglect the first quarter of Johnson's speech is evidenced by the fact that in most accounts only the "domino theory" and passages about "the appetite of aggression is never satisfied" get significant attention. The editors of the Pentagon Papers deleted the first 12 paragraphs of Johnson's speech. See

Following the President's speech, leading administration policy-makers made specific reference to the order of reasons for U.S. intervention. Inevitably government spokesmen emphasized legal and moral commitments in the external realm and only referred to credibility or world order as they related to "secondary objectives" of U.S. policy.²⁵ The administration structured its external justification in a manner designed to influence specific audiences.

The administration's concern with the reaction of states in the international community to U.S. policy in Vietnam is reflected more in the actions chosen by the United States--since actions would be understood as specific signals--rather than in the justification that accompanied those actions. However, there were instances where U.S. actions were supplemented with statements specifically designed to encourage support for the United

"Pattern for Peace in Southeast Asia," Pentagon Papers, Vol.III, Gravel Edition, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), 730-731.

²⁵Specific citations of the administration's inverted priorities can be found in most official statements from 1964-1966. See Department of State Bulletin form the period. For edited versions of major public pronouncements by principals other than the President and the Secretary of State see the Pentagon Papers, Vol.III, 707-743 and Vol.IV, 626-682 in sections entitled "Justification of the War--Public Statements."

States in the international community. In an attempt to dispel charges alleging the U.S. was unwilling to negotiate a peace settlement, Johnson halted the air raids on the north in the much publicized "bombing pause." The pause was accompanied by a series of points which outlined an American negotiating position. A number of analysts as well as participants have suggested that the public statements provided by the administration did not accurately represent the intentions of the U.S. government, but were designed to disarm international critics before the planned escalation of the air war against the North. In a memorandum to President Johnson, McNamara suggested the United States should publicly call for negotiations in order "to cement the support for U.S. policy by the U.S. public, allies and friends, and to keep international opposition to a manageable level." McNamara recognized the initiatives would be rebuffed by North Vietnam but argued "they nevertheless should be made." This would put the U.S. in a more favorable position when hostilities resumed.²⁶

²⁶As cited in Kahin, 329-331, 355-356. For a discussion of the international propaganda motives behind the administration's external justification see Herring, 134-135; and Valenti, 221-227.

The American public was an important audience for the Johnson administration and, to some degree, the need for support among the American people conditioned the divergence of order. As suggested in Chapter One, external justifications tend to stress moral, ideological, and legal reasons for policy rather than reasons of national interest. By invoking these types of arguments it was thought the general public would be more likely to support the policies of the administration. The external justification did explain policy to a great degree using moral and ideological themes. These justifications became increasingly unacceptable to the American public as the war progressed. Television coverage of the "moral crusade" praised by the administration left many Americans doubting whether the war was not immoral. Johnson launched a public relations campaign to gain support for his policies. In fact, in just four and a half years the President himself addressed the United States public over 200 times on the subject of Vietnam.²⁷ However, while the external justification was meant to lend legitimacy to and gain public support for U.S. policy, the length of the war and the extensive media coverage it received eroded widespread public support.

²⁷Turner, 1.

Another factor conditioning a divergence of order was an accurate belief that the average man could not be emotionally moved by esoteric theories of deterrence or diatribes about the importance of perceptions in international politics. Because of this belief, the primary internal arguments became "secondary considerations" in the external realm. While some critics attacked the intellectual presuppositions of the domino effect, most people were simply unmoved by the ethereal arguments of cause and effect.²⁸ Just months before the fateful decision of July 1965 which put the U.S. on an irreversible course, Vice President Hubert Humphrey warned Johnson, "American wars have to be politically understandable by the American public. There has to be a cogent, convincing case if we are to enjoy sustained public support."²⁹

²⁸According to Raymond Cohen, "The language of geopolitics makes little sense to the general public. Abstractions have to be given concrete form so that they can be grasped and related to. . . . For the professional there is 'nothing personal' in it all. they are simply acting, as duty obliges them to, as fiduciary agents of the state, just as a lawyer acts dispassionately in the best interests of his client. But for the public there has to be something personal in the carnage and the suffering. Only by personalizing it all, therefore, can the community affect the perceptions and actions of its members in the directions its interest require." Raymond Cohen, Theater of Power (New York: Longman, 1987), 26.

²⁹Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 87.

Humphrey understood the importance of a comprehensible and acceptable external justification in a country like the United States. In World War II the American people perceived the United States as rescuing the free world from an evil aggressor. Moreover, deep cultural, historical and economic ties existed between Western Europe and the United States and there was an unambiguous enemy in Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan. The Vietnam conflict and the justifications for American policy were much more subtle than in 1942. Vietnam was not a "war to end all wars."³⁰ After the moral and legal justifications had been questioned, the administration lacked a clear and easily understandable justification for its policies. The secondary considerations expressed in the external justification could not motivate Americans to make the sacrifices they did in 1942-1945 when things seemed much clearer.³¹

³⁰Turner suggests that the lack of a comprehensible and acceptable justification for America's involvement in Vietnam led to a decrease in public support. According to Turner, the Tet offensive of 1968 exposed the administration to questions that were not answered in a manner that could sustain the support of the public. Turner, 234-238.

³¹George Kennan views with distaste the American penchant "to attribute a universal significance to decisions we have already found it necessary, for limited and parochial reasons, to take. It was not enough for us, when circumstances forced us into World War I, to hold in view the specific reasons for our entry: our war

effort had to be clothed in the form of an effort to make the **world** (nothing less) 'safe for democracy.' It was not enough for us, in World War II, that the Japanese attacked us at Pearl Harbor and that both Japanese and German governments declared war on us: we did not feel comfortable until we had wrapped our military effort in the wholly universalistic--and largely meaningless--generalities of the Atlantic Charter." Kennan, 322-323. For a condensed version of the internal and external justifications of the decision to commit ground combat troops in Vietnam, see table in Appendix **B**.

CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION

The examination of the Greek-Turkish question and the U.S. entry into Vietnam have hopefully clarified the internal-external paradigm and elaborated the role of justification in the policy process. A brief summary of the categories used in this model and some of their implications for future research is in order.

In the foreign policy process justifications often change as the audience changes. External justifications are usually directed toward the press, the public, and specific segments of the international community; for this reason, they frequently contain moral, legal and ideological arguments to a greater extent than internal justifications. Internal justifications are harder to pinpoint because of the ambiguity of their form and their inaccessibility in the public domain. Observers of international relations are likely to disagree on what elements of the policy debate comprise the internal justification and which are the most significant in shaping the policy. Internal justifications frequently stress arguments based on the "national interest," employ subtle definitions of power, and are presented in an

arcane language that is incomprehensible to a wider audience.¹

This examination of justification offered detailed examination of two causes of divergence. First, the Greek-Turkish aid policy demonstrated a divergence conditioned by a need to gain domestic political support for the Truman administration's foreign policy. Second, the Vietnam policy of the Johnson administration demonstrated a divergence caused, in large part, by a perceived need to signal international friends and foes of the credibility of the American commitment to its allies. Another factor that might induce a divergence between internal and external justifications is the need to maintain ideological consistency. A number of specialists on Soviet foreign policy have indicated a divergence exists between the external rhetoric involving "socialist bro-

¹While the arcane language and rationale of Johnson's advisors was noted, a better example of an issue area where all but specialists are excluded from the policy debate is that of strategic nuclear doctrine. Intricate deterrence theories are not accessible to a large audience. For more detail on the exclusive language of nuclear deterrence see Carol Cohn, "Nuclear Language and How we Learned to Pat the Bomb," Bulletin of Atomic Scientists (June 1988), 17-24; and Michael Tierney, "The Language of Deterrence," The College of William and Mary, 1986

therhood" and "commitment to world revolution" and the extremely pragmatic policies practiced by the Soviets.²

The types of divergence spelled out in the preceding pages were of two types. The simple divergence, represented by the Greek-Turkish aid policy, had internal and external justifications with different arguments contained in each. The qualitative divergence or divergence of order, which appeared during the debate over the American role in Vietnam, allowed for similar material in the two realms but the presentation of the material was such that a divergence did exist. It is difficult to compare the two types of divergence in a quantitative or graphical sense, but one suspects that the gap between internal and external justifications would probably be greater in the case of a simple divergence.

While the internal-external model employs an artificial taxonomy which often simplifies aspects of the decision-making process, its categories are nevertheless

²Soviet policy in China in 1927, Spain in the late 1930's, and the ultimate abandonment of ideology in 1939 represented by the Soviet pact with fascist Germany indicate a divergence probably existed. However, since very few people are privy to the justifications offered in the Kremlin, the internal-external scheme is probably not well suited to examine these questions. American Cold War rhetoric might offer good opportunities for an examination of the role of ideology as a cause of divergence.

useful as analytical tools. This framework offers several benefits to the observer of foreign policy decision-making and international relations. First, it offers a system of classificatory terms with which one can uniformly define numerous events and cases over a broad range of issue areas. It is a theoretical coat rack. Second, the distinction between the two realms encourage the author and the reader to search for the "real reasons" for a given policy. It also alerts the attentive observer that neither the internal nor the external justification is necessarily the "real reason." Third, after uncovering a number of internal justifications for particular policies, one is struck by the nature of power as understood by policy makers. The policy makers may be wrong about their subtle definitions of power, but to determine this one would have to do significantly more research. The internal-external model provides a good foundation for approaching the question of whether such "psychological" elements of power are indeed as significant as the participants in the Vietnam case would indicate.³

³It may be the case that Johnson and his advisors were correct in their assumption that other countries were concerned with the U.S. reaction to a challenge in Vietnam. However, this does not necessarily mean the administration acted correctly. Even if reputation and perceptions are an important variable in the power equa-

While this study has concentrated on divergence between internal and external justifications, it is entirely possible for a convergence to exist. However, the evidence of divergence in a large number of policy decisions examined prior to the writing of this thesis was striking. Evidence of divergence existed not only in the case studies provided here but in the Berlin crises, the Cuban missile crisis, and the Iran-contra affair.

The theoretical skeleton provided here is a prerequisite to more significant conclusions about the results of a divergence or a convergence for the success, coherence, or acceptability of a policy. What follows from the fact that a divergence exists? Crystal clear correlations should not be expected; if they existed, someone would have noticed by now. However, if general conclusions could be contextualized without getting too specific or descriptive, they could be helpful to policy makers and political leaders as well as aspiring academicians.

tion, the administration could have (and most would agree it did) miscalculated. It is hard to believe the U.S. would have suffered more in the long-run by pulling out of Vietnam in 1965 despite the damage to its reputation as a global power and a good ally.

Internal Justification

Audience: Professional bureaucracy, White House Staff, N.S.C., Selected diplomats

American interests are served through world order, spheres of influence, and expanding world trade.

The U.S. should commit funds and support to Greece and Turkey because:

The loss of Greece and Turkey by default might encourage the political neutralization of Western Europe and political instability throughout the world.

A failure to commit is a green light to similar revolutionary movements elsewhere.

A failure to commit might, in an indirect way, lead to the economic collapse of Western Europe.

The program will be a forerunner to a wider aid program covering all of Western Europe.

Principal Cause of Divergence--> Congressional/domestic reluctance to support foreign aid programs.

*Secondary Cause of Divergence--> Signal to the Soviet Union that the U.S. was getting tough. Signal to democratic forces in western Europe that the U.S. would help them in reconstruction efforts.

External Justification

Audience: Congress, American public

America stands for freedom of choice and against aggressive forces in the world. America is a moral leader.

The U.S. should commit funds and support to Greece and Turkey because:

There is an imminent communist military threat to Western Europe (as well as Greece and Turkey).

It is the moral obligation of the United States to support democratic forces in Greece and Turkey (and elsewhere in the world if need be) against internal and external aggression.

There is an ongoing global struggle between the forces of good and evil. This policy puts the United States on the moral high ground.

VIETNAM INTERVENTION POLICY

Internal Justification

Audience: N.S.C., former policy makers, selected Congressional leaders

Belief among policy makers that an attentive international audience viewed the American response in Vietnam as a test case for future security crises.

Reasons U.S. should commit ground combat forces to Vietnam (listed in order of importance):

1. To maintain American credibility as a nation which keeps its promises.
2. To maintain the independence of Vietnam. While South Vietnam in itself had little strategic or economic value for the U.S., South East Asia was of considerable importance.
3. To improve the freedom and maintain the integrity of the people of South Vietnam who have little tradition of democracy but nevertheless must want it.

External Justification

Audience: American allies throughout the world, Soviet Union, China, nationalist movements in the third world, American Public

The United States should support those forces in the world fighting for freedom. American steadfastness in this case will serve that goal in the future.

Reasons U.S. should commit ground combat forces to Vietnam (listed in order of importance):

1. To aid the people of South Vietnam who are valiantly struggling to establish democratic institutions in the face of aggression from the communist north.
2. To maintain the independence of the Republic of Vietnam, which is the "keystone" in the dike containing communism in South East Asia.
3. To maintain credibility.

*Principal Cause of Divergence of Order:-->The importance of credibility and power politics in the internal realm was "unsavory," and certainly nothing one could wave the flag about.

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VITA

Michael John Tierney

Born in Pensacola, Florida, August 12, 1964. Graduated from Potomac Senior High School in Woodbridge, Virginia, June 1983. B.A., College of William and Mary 1987. Entered College of William and Mary in August 1987 as M.A. candidate in the Department of Government with a concentration in international relations. As of December 1988, author was continuing academic pursuits at the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Arms Control and National Security Program.