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The World in Their Minds: Informaiton Processing, Cognition, and Perception

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through this volume that much academic writing on the same topic is thin soup or ideological puffery.

Professor Tismaneanu wrote presciently on the coming changes in Eastern Europe well before the 1989-1990 drama unfolded to public awareness. He and Professor Radu imply, at least, that Latin America may see additional countries pass into the Soviet-Cuban orbit even as Eastern Europe tries to shed the heaviest of the Marxist-Leninist mantle.

RUSSELL W. RAMSEY
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Vertzberger, Yaacov Y.I. *The World In Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decision Making*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 1990. 447pp. \$42.50

Diplomatic history has been described as a record of human error and fallibility. In this detailed study of one key aspect of the foreign policy-making process, Yaacov Vertzberger asserts that the incorrect evaluation of available information is a common factor in these failures. As a direct result, men and governments have made poor judgments that have resulted in failed policy, strategic surprise, and defeat in battle.

Although many books have been written about critical foreign policy decisions, few have attempted to provide an analytical framework applicable to all situations. Professor Vertzberger may be the first to attempt

it, having developed a detailed and intricate theoretical framework to support his premise. Taking full account of major sociological factors, the author has divided the information processing and the decisionmaking process into three broad stages: the information is gathered and interpreted; the alternatives are derived and evaluated; and one alternative is then decided upon and implemented. He then poses two basic questions by which he structures the remainder of his analysis: why have decision makers gone wrong so often though all the information was available to them for an appropriate analysis, and why do actors tend to repeat the same mistakes?

In answer to these provocative questions Vertzberger analyzes the information that is made available to the decision makers and their personalities and attitudes, along with the social and cultural pressures that exist within the groups that support them all in terms of the theoretical model he developed. To illustrate this, the author has drawn extensively on the many available accounts of both U.S. decisionmaking relating to its involvement in Vietnam, and of Israeli decisionmaking surrounding the Yom Kippur War.

These examples are the strength of the book. From a vast bibliography numbering over fifty pages, Vertzberger repeatedly asserts his premise through hundreds of detailed examples. From the explicit discussion of the groupthink prevalent in the inner circle of Lyndon Johnson's advisors and the Israeli political and military leaders in 1973, he has provided a clear and

convincing argument. In the process, Vertzberger has provided a road map for anyone seriously interested in understanding the inner workings of the U.S. or Israeli government, each during their most celebrated crises.

This is not a book for a quiet night by the fire, nor is it one that would interest the casual reader. *The World in Their Minds* is an important work that is intended for serious students of foreign policy and the individuals they serve. Although many readers may find the social science vocabulary cumbersome, the message of the book is clear and important. Those who make the decisions of government need clearly evaluated information. Those who provide that information should take the time to read this book.

WILLIAM F. HICKMAN
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Krepon, Michael et al. *Commercial Observation Satellites and International Security*. New York: St. Martin's, 1990. 230pp. \$45

Since the February 1986 launch of SPOT I by a multinational enterprise, high-quality images from space have been available to essentially anyone able to afford them. The Soviet Union has also entered the commercial satellite imagery field by offering to sell film imagery with five-meter maximum resolution, which is adequate to detect and identify urban areas, ships, many airfield facilities, bridges, and roads. Over the next decade, such imagery may

also be available from Japan, Brazil, Germany, China, Canada, and India. Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Libya, South Africa, South Korea, and Taiwan are already using information from commercial satellites for military purposes.

This book was a project of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The roles and implications of high-quality imagery available to any nation for purposes of international politics, international conflicts, and international cooperation are discussed knowledgeably and with penetrating insight. A number of changes will result for both the planning and conduct of cross-border incidents among Third World nations as space-based imagery becomes more readily accessible. The two dozen contributors to this book are prominent experts and have presented a well-balanced view of the technical and political-military issues. The role of the media as well as government and commercial uses of space imagery are addressed. The difficult art of photo-interpretation of commercial observation satellite imagery and the problem of training skilled interpreters are also discussed.

Many within the defense community may not be aware of the impact that commercial observation-satellite imagery will have on future security activities. This book will be a most valuable resource for them.

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