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*Swings of American public opinion with respect to the Soviet Union and its actions are often attributed to the individual interested American's lack of enduring convictions. This paper finds that those fluctuations do not reflect so much the changes of minds of individuals but rather that at least three different segments of opinion makers and opinion groups gain ascendancy for different Soviet activities; that the noted swings are not of American opinions but of the predominance of a particular "belief system."*

## **PUBLIC OPINION AND SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY: COMPETING BELIEF SYSTEMS IN THE POLICY-MAKING PROCESS**

by

James N. Rosenau and Ole R. Holsti

For a variety of reasons, the central thrust of Soviet foreign policy has been the focus of debate in the United States ever since the 1917 revolution. It was Walter Lippmann who first called attention to the cyclical swings in American opinion toward the U.S.S.R., pointing out that several pronounced fluctuations occurred in the 1920s and 1930s, well before the favorable attitudes of the early 1940s gave way to the harsh ones of the late 1940s. And surely, given the way in which the premises of the cold war and the spirit of détente seem to vie constantly for cyclical predominance, the present era is no exception to Lippmann's observation.

Explanations of the fluctuations vary. Some analysts see them as

inherent in the functioning of a free society, especially one like the United States that expanded episodically across a continent,<sup>1</sup> while others discern aspects of the American character that are conducive to moody shifts back and forth between withdrawal from and intervention in world affairs.<sup>2</sup> And still others stress external factors, noting that each fluctuation was accompanied by a corresponding alteration in the conduct of Soviet foreign policy. Thus, for example, Stalin's purges in the 1930s, the lend-lease agreements, the Cuban missile crisis, and Brezhnev's advocacy of détente are but a few of the landmark developments that have precipitated swings in the tide of American opinion.

It would not be difficult, moreover, to discern innumerable ups and downs within each of the major swings, so sensitive does the public appear to be to the question of Soviet intentions. It is

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not atypical, for example, that such daily events as a report from Senators hosted at the Kremlin, the granting of permission to a few dissidents to emigrate, or the reiteration of an unwavering position toward Angola, appear to underlie movement on the fever chart of American attitudes toward the Soviet Union, or at least to provoke journalists, pundits, politicians, scholars, and other observers into looking for and commenting on the larger meaning of each new development.

Yet it seems too simple to explain the fluctuations on the fever chart in terms of national characteristics, shifts in Soviet behavior, or even an interaction between the two.

Doubtless many Americans are ambivalent toward the U.S.S.R., at once yearning for an accommodation among the superpowers and yet fearing expansionist impulses on the part of Soviet leaders. And undoubtedly, too, Soviet policymakers, being both ideologues and pragmatists, do shift back and forth between moving forward and retreating in world affairs as opportunities arise and recede. To explain the fluctuations as expressive of an ambivalent public that vacillates back and forth in response to the vacillations of Soviet policy, however, is to posit American opinion as endlessly in flux, lacking in leadership, stable only in its instability. In effect, the interactive-vacillations interpretation presumes that leaders of American opinion, nongovernmental as well as governmental, do not have structured attitudes toward the world and the U.S. role in it, that they are susceptible only to the most recent developments, somehow free of prior experiences and enduring convictions.

This perspective seems insufficient and misleading. It treats both leaders and citizens as spongelike creatures who know only how to absorb. Some Americans may not be particularly sophisticated about world affairs, and there is evidence that members of the mass

public are more likely to possess unstructured attitudes than are leaders.<sup>3</sup> But it seems doubtful whether the reactions of many in either the mass public or the leadership stratum to the Soviet Union are simply a consequence only of what the Soviets do or do not do, unrelated to any other orientations or values they may have. Whether the reactions are intense or cautious, cordial or hostile, they are embedded in a larger context that consists of memories of the past, of longstanding and deep-rooted values, and of complex attitudes towards constancy and change in human affairs, all of which serve as filters through which reactions to events and trends in the Soviet Union, as elsewhere in the world, pass and are invested with meanings.

We call these underlying attitudes and orientations "belief systems," by which we mean, following Converse, "a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence."<sup>4</sup> Our work on the coherence and durability of the foreign policy belief systems of leaders in all walks of American life, particularly in the recent, post-Vietnam period, reinforces the inclination to reject the interactive-vacillations explanation. We have found that leaders in every occupational group tend to adhere to one of three internally consistent and almost mutually exclusive belief systems, each of which places Soviet actions and U.S. policies of détente in a larger context and, accordingly, sets limits within which fluctuating reactions to the Russians can occur.<sup>5</sup> If members of the attentive and mass publics are normally inclined to follow the cues of those they view as their leaders on foreign policy issues (and we assume that they do<sup>6</sup>), and if our data on the cognitive processes of 2,282 American leaders are accurate (and their internal logic and consistency leads us to believe that they essentially are),<sup>7</sup> it seems highly

implausible that present and future fluctuations in American opinion toward the Soviet Union occur because lots of citizens are frequently and ambivalently changing their views about Soviet intentions. The prevailing belief systems are too functionally interdependent and too all-encompassing to permit casual shifts in opinion.

Thus the fluctuations of the fever chart have to be explained in another way, one that allows for the constraints on attitude change inherent in coherent belief systems. Such is the purpose of this paper: to probe for an understanding of U.S. orientations toward the Soviet Union that embraces both their constancies and their changes. To anticipate our reasoning, we focus on the political process in the United States and the ways in which it variously attaches salience to one or another conception of the Soviets held by different segments of the public. This line of reasoning leads us to the hypothesis that fluctuations on the fever chart derive from a shifting ascendancy of at least three very different segments of the leadership stratum, none of which is ambivalent in its attitudes toward the Soviet Union, but two of which are quiescent while the third is dominant as a result of Soviet policies that seem to affirm its premises. Viewed in this way, the fluctuations on the fever chart emerge not as vacillations of opinion, but as vacillations in the predominance of one or another belief system. In effect, the fever chart is conceived as a reflection of underlying regularities built into the processes of American politics rather than into the dynamics of attitude formation and maintenance.

**Belief Systems and Opinions.** We do not use belief systems and opinions as interchangeable concepts. The former refers to the broad and enduring values and perspectives through which one filters one's responses to stimuli in one's personal world as well as in the distant

worlds of politics at home and abroad. Opinions, on the other hand, refer to more limited and transitory phenomena. They are the responses to stimuli themselves, the immediate interpretations of events in the personal and political worlds that emerge from the filtering process to which belief systems subject the stimuli. In an important sense, therefore, opinions are the products of internalized belief systems as well as of external stimuli.

Being more fundamental and all-encompassing than opinions, belief systems do not change as readily as opinions. The empirical evidence that most individuals tend to keep the basic components of their belief systems intact by either ignoring or reinterpreting stimuli that might otherwise introduce discrepancies into the constraints that bind them together as a coherent, functionally interdependent whole is considerable.<sup>5</sup> This tendency toward cognitive balance is not, however, impervious to change or ambivalence. The more loosely the constraints of a belief system are bound together, the more is it susceptible to being unbalanced by new developments. Under these circumstances the functional interdependence of system components fails to filter the new development and either ambivalence or change may then ensue. On the other hand, normally foreign policy belief systems are tightly bound, or at least such has been found to be the case for the beliefs of the governmental and nongovernmental leaders who participate in the ongoing dialogue that gives the appearance of cyclical swings in opinion toward the Soviet Union. Indeed, there is a number of indicators that leaders tend to fall back on their belief systems most readily under conditions of uncertainty. Because the Soviets often engage in both aggressive and accommodative activities at any moment, uncertainty over their goals often arises and, accordingly, American leaders are normally inclined toward

reinforcing, rather than altering (or allowing for ambivalence in), their belief systems as they participate in public debates over foreign policy issues.<sup>9</sup> An accumulation of similar but disparate events in a short period of time can undermine prevailing belief systems, as they did during the winter of 1945-1946; alternatively, traumatic events on the order of a Pearl Harbor or a Vietnam may be required to induce a significant restructuring of foreign policy belief systems and, in the case of some leaders, even traumas of this kind may not be enough to foster an alteration of the prevailing balance.

If this is the case, it follows that the components of a foreign policy belief system from which leadership opinions toward the Soviet Union derive are not likely to undergo change very often. Particular Soviet actions on the world stage do not, in themselves, amount to traumatic events, so that ordinarily leaders are likely to be inclined to perceive and evaluate Russian foreign policy as they always have.

**The Flexibility of Three Belief Systems.** As previously indicated, our inquiry into the post-Vietnam foreign policy orientations of a broad sample of American leaders has led to the identification of three internally coherent, mutually exclusive, and (in effect) competitive belief systems relative to the U.S. role in the post-1975 world. We have labeled those who subscribe to the three belief systems as, respectively, the "Cold War Internationalists," the "Post-Cold War Internationalists," and "Neo-Isolationists." Lest these labels evoke obsolete values and associations, it must quickly be noted that each of the systems is quite elaborate and comprised of a number of interconnected components, ranging from conceptions of the structure of the international system to the role of military force to the relative importance of domestic

institutions.<sup>10</sup> However, their central emphases and the basic differences among them can be summarized along the lines set forth in Table I.<sup>11</sup> Here it can be seen that the three are divided in profound and pervasive ways. The gaps between any two of them are rooted in different notions about the structure of world affairs, the dynamics of conflict, and the effective limits of American power. It is obvious, too, that while attitudes toward the Soviet Union are critical components of each belief system, they are also embedded in and derived from a larger set of concerns. Or at least it is clear that both the Post-Cold War Internationalists and the Neo-Isolationists derive their views of Soviet goals and capabilities in the context of development and change, just as the Cold War Internationalists see Soviet aggressiveness and power as part of the more enduring features of world affairs.<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, the orientations of leaders toward change may be the most pervasive nutrient for the soil in which the three foreign policy belief systems are embedded and, as such, the prime source of differentiation among them. Where the Post-Cold War Internationalists and the Neo-Isolationists stress, each in their own way, that the socio-economic structure of the global system and the issues that sustain it have undergone substantial transformation, a loosening up of structure and a proliferation of issues, the Cold War Internationalists are more concerned about the changing military balance. For them the world is still bipolar in important respects and the main issues still revolve around the strategic competition of the superpowers. The demands of the Third World and the proliferation of economic issues are subordinate to the overriding dangers of East-West conflict. Accordingly, they emphasize that the Russians are expansionist, that the industrialization of the Soviet Union and its rise to superpower status has not had

**TABLE I—SUMMARY OF THREE FOREIGN POLICY BELIEF SYSTEMS CURRENTLY HELD BY AMERICAN LEADERS**

	<b>Cold War Internationalists</b>	<b>Post-Cold War Internationalists</b>	<b>Neo-Isolationists</b>
structure of the international system	bipolar	multipolar	multipolar
loci of primary problems	East-West issues	North-South as well as East-West issues	within the United States
sources of the main threats to the United States	the Soviet Union	poverty, inequitable distribution of resources, population pressures, and regional antagonisms in the Third World as well as the Soviet Union	decaying cities, inflation, unemployment, cultural decadence, environmental depredation, etc., at home
nature of conflict	zero sum	non-zero sum	non-zero sum
view of the Soviet Union	powerful and aggressive	militarily powerful but not awesome as they otherwise resemble a developing country-	powerful but beset with domestic problems and, thus, conservative
view of the U.S. role in the world	leader of the non-Communist world, protector of its integrity and values	selective leadership on key issues	U.S. capacity for leadership abroad highly limited and of doubtful desirability
bases of U.S. foreign policy	keep up with the Soviets militarily and respond to their efforts to extend their influence in the Third World	promote a multiplicity of economic and political institutions to facilitate movement toward world order and away from confrontation	keep foreign involvements and commitments to a minimum (i.e., primarily to Western Europe, Japan and Israel)

significant internal consequences other than increasing its military capabilities, that the perspectives with which successive generations of Soviet leaders approach their tasks and the domestic pressures with which they must contend have not demonstrated sufficient change to allow for a relaxation of American concerns. In its purest and most extreme form, the Cold War Internationalist belief system is thus founded on a presumption of constancy, of change in the context of continuities. Its adherents are inclined to be highly skeptical of accommodating actions on the part of the Soviets, viewing them instead as mere tactics, as planned deceptions, as lulling devices to hide a never-ending impulse to expand influence and control. Despite decades of economic development, a process which everywhere else in the world is acknowledged to be deeply unsettling and the source of enormous alterations in the conduct of life and the dynamics of policymaking, the Soviet system is posited as unswerving and undeviating in its outward thrusts.

If the Cold War Internationalists tend to focus on geopolitical factors, the Post-Cold War Internationalists and the Neo-Isolationists tend to emphasize socioeconomic change. They are inclined to view industrialization as a conservatizing dynamic that can lead in only one direction: the opening up of political institutions and the evolution of a benign stance toward the world. Disposed to ignore the inertia of social systems and to downplay the capacity of authoritarian systems to maintain strict controls, the Post-Cold War Internationalists and the Neo-Isolationists tend to see the rapid progress of the Soviet Union toward an industrial order as moving the U.S.S.R. toward liberalization at home and accommodation abroad. In their most extreme form, their belief systems are thus founded on a presumption of convergence, of change in a context of processes

whereby all industrial systems converge toward common values and institutions. Any Soviet movement toward détente is interpreted as a reflection of fundamental alterations, as a moderating of goals, as an affirmation of the underlying trend toward convergence. Contrariwise, any aggressive action on the part of the Soviets is seen as in the halting nature of social change, as merely a natural two-steps-forward-one-back process. And with successive generations of Soviet leaders thus seen as less and less threatening, the Post-Cold War Internationalists and the Neo-Isolationists are inclined to stress the multipolarity of the global system and to treat economic instabilities as central and not peripheral issues for American foreign policy. The Post-Cold War Internationalists see the changes inherent in multipolarity as requiring a special policy emphasis on new, nonmilitary strategies for working with the Third World, while the Neo-Isolationists view them as reducing the potential for U.S. influence in the world and thus requiring a readiness to cut commitments abroad.

In short, although each of the three belief systems acknowledge that change is at work in the international system, they are founded on different emphases on which changes are major and which are minor. Most notably for present purposes, they all agree that the Soviet Union has become a world class industrial nation and a military superpower, but interpreted through three quite different lenses, these changes take on very different meanings and yield very different policy prescriptions for the Cold War Internationalists, the Post-Cold War Internationalists, and the Neo-Isolationists.

A more specific example will perhaps illustrate the point. There is presently little disagreement among informed Americans that the Soviet Union has been engaged in a sizable buildup of strategic and conventional forces during the past decade and a half. But

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inferences about the motives behind expanding military budgets and, more specifically, their implications for the recently signed SALT II Treaty, are very much a matter of controversy. On the one hand, the Post-Cold War Internationalists and some Neo-Isolationists are often inclined to find comfort, paradoxically, in two quite different lines of reasoning: (1) the Soviets are non-rational when it comes to weapons acquisition (the arms buildup reflects "bureaucratic politics" within the U.S.S.R., or a semiparanoid fear of China, and thus is not a valid index of Soviet intentions toward the United States), but (2) they are so hyper-cautious and highly rational that they have no intention of unleashing their forces in a way that might ultimately lead to a nuclear holocaust. On the other hand, starting with the premise that weapons acquisition programs reflect a careful calculation of Soviet goals and ambitions, the Cold War Internationalists are more than slightly alarmed by the implications of the same "facts" about Soviet force structures and rates of change therein. Unlike those who subscribe to the other belief systems, they are prepared to jettison the proposition that the Soviet arms buildup has been an exercise in reaching parity with the United States, a goal that, once reached, would be self-terminating.

**Articulating Belief Systems in the Political Process.** To posit leaders as equipped with belief systems that render them resilient rather than spongelike in their reactions to fluctuations in Soviet behavior is not to account for how they handle the fluctuations themselves. The central tendency may be one in which leaders focus on those aspects of a fluctuation that reinforce their belief systems, but few are so impervious to unexpected and discrepant developments abroad that they fail to perceive or acknowledge them. Thus, leaving aside the few

who adhere to the polar extremes outlined above, the question arises of how leaders predisposed to perceive the Soviets as aggressive cope with Soviet accommodative actions designed to enhance détente and, contrariwise, how those who tend to see them as accommodative cope with the aggressive instances of Soviet behavior. Are the belief systems of leaders so thoroughly rigid as to reject such negations of their perspectives? Do they not experience any pause, any ambivalence, even if only momentarily so?

Our view is that most leaders in most walks of American life are not so ideological or so arrogant as to be totally certain of the righteousness of their views. The image of them as possessed of a hardcore, impenetrable shell is no more accurate than the one that posits them as spongelike. Among other things, people do not rise to the top in the United States without some flexibility, some capability for moving with the flow of events and suspending judgment until more information is in. A Post-Cold War Internationalist is no more likely to ignore hard evidence of a Soviet military buildup than is a Cold War Internationalist likely to dismiss offhandedly the more conciliatory gestures of a Brezhnev. Either may be dubious and suspicious, but successful leadership involves pausing to ponder whether discrepant behaviors signify unexpected and important alterations in conditions or situations. So, other things being equal, it does seem likely that most leaders will at least hesitate when confronted with Soviet negations of their belief systems.

Here is where we conceive of the political process as relevant. Our view is that under the circumstances where leaders are given pause by discrepant Soviet behavior, they stay out of extensive involvement in the ongoing debate until the next time a Soviet action coincides with their perspective and allows them to return to vigorous par-



ticipation in the dialogue, giving speeches, writing letters, or otherwise making statements that reaffirm their longstanding positions.

In other words, we conceive of belief systems as sufficiently flexible to allow for vacillations in the articulation of underlying attitudes toward the Soviet Union, but also as sufficiently rigid to inhibit casual changes in the attitudes themselves. Viewed in this way, the continuum of attitudes toward the Russians is not unidimensional. At the very least it is two-dimensional, ranging from hawk to dove, hard to soft, resistant to accommodative, or whatever the proper designations of the extremes may be, along one dimension, but doing so simultaneously with movement along a dimension ranging from quiescence to vocality, passivity to activity, or whatever may best indicate varying degrees of involvement in the political process. For any given leader or citizen, therefore, fluctuating opinions about the Soviet Union are more appropriately traced not as temperature on a metaphoric fever chart, but as waves on a voice print, moving up and down as well as back and forth.

The significance of this active-passive dimension should not be dismissed as mere tactics, as lying low or seizing the moment in response to shifts in the political climate, as stressing the underlying rigidity of belief systems rather than highlighting their capacity for adjustment. We see the ups and downs of the metaphoric voice print as a form of attitudinal change which, given our conception of the role of public opinion in the political process, is hardly less significant than the resistant-accommodative dimension. Attitude change need not occur only when one perspective is abandoned and another adopted to replace it. To suspend articulation or withhold comment is, for those in leadership roles at any rate, to substitute perspectives, to acknowledge doubt, to focus perceptions through different

lenses. The fact that leaders may subsequently renew articulation of the original perspective, citing intervening events as justifying the reiteration, does not necessarily mean that they are impervious to external stimuli and incapable of change. It can mean that they are especially sensitive to developments abroad and inclined to change, through voicing or silencing themselves, their basic postures toward them.

It should be noted, moreover, that movements from passivity to activity are not characteristic of attitudes toward all issues that persist across time. Union officials, agricultural leaders, and business executives characteristically use every available opportunity to express their positions on the bread-and-butter issues affecting their constituents. They are not given pause or otherwise inclined to refrain from seizing opportunities for articulation by developments in their respective fields. Wages have to be protected, farm prices supported, tariff levels adjusted, so that having and voicing an attitude on such issues is one and the same dimension. On the other hand, in the case of attitudes toward the Soviet Union, or toward any major issue or region of world politics, events and outcomes are more obscure and, aside from those leaders in the foreign policy field itself, the appropriate responses can thus be less clear-cut, thereby conducing to hesitation and the suppression of leadership activities without corresponding alterations in attitudinal direction.

Furthermore, the structure of most nongovernmental leadership positions and the loose, fluid, and open structure of the political process in the United States allows most leaders to hesitate, to blow hot and cold, insofar as the Soviet Union is concerned. Their constituencies expect them to speak out on wages, farm prices, tariffs, inflation, and the like; but, with few exceptions, there are no expectations that they articulate opinions about the Soviet Union. If

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they wanted to, most could probably stay in office for life without ever mentioning the Russians. That is, leaving aside politicians, a few corporate executives with business interests in Eastern Europe, journalists and educators, a preponderance of the nation's leaders need not fear for their positions if they periodically subside into silence on the Russians. Moreover, the political process permits alternating periods of hesitation and articulation. Opportunities for national leadership are not institutionalized in the United States so much as they are self-generated. Labor, business, agricultural, educational, and other leaders volunteer their opinions in interviews, speeches, letters, organizational meetings, and a variety of other contacts. They are invited to speak out or they do speak out and the mass media report their opinions; but in either event they can reject the opportunity, or accept it but not refer to the Soviet Union, if they feel themselves in a period where pause is indicated.

Assuming the three-way division of the leadership community in terms of mutually exclusive foreign policy belief systems, it follows that an understanding of the dynamics of public opinion relative to the Soviet Union is to be found in the conditions under which the adherents of each system are inclined to subside into passivity or be spurred into activity. Some of the conditions involve dynamics internal to the domestic political process, such as the proximity of the next Presidential election or a perceived need to bolster the coherence of the rank and file who comprise a leader's constituency. Primarily, however, the conditions that conduce to leadership activity and passivity involve the central tendencies of Soviet behavior at any moment in time. If the Soviets are in a period in which they accord primacy to efforts at establishing more cordial relations with the West, or if they only engage in one significant step expressive of détente, then the

Post-Cold War Internationalists are likely to be activated and to dominate the channels of communications with their opinions. Under these circumstances they will press for greater attention to world economic problems and the demands of the Third World, while the Cold War Internationalists and the Isolationists will lapse into relative silence in the absence of any major developments abroad that evoke their anxieties and/or justify their perspectives. If the Soviets enter a period in which a pronounced arms buildup is launched and aggressive pressure for influence in the Third World sustained,

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### BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



James N. Rosenau, Director of the Institute for Transnational Studies, Professor of Political Science, and Professor of International Relations at the University of Southern California has degrees from Bard

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the Cold War Internationalists are likely to enter the political arena with vigor and command the communications systems with their arguments for countermeasures and a more forceful exercise of power. Under these circumstances the Post-Cold War Internationalists and the Isolationists will tend to hold back their participation in the public debate, aware that events abroad can make a seeming mockery of their arguments and, accordingly, undermine their influence. If Soviet behavior enters a period in which it is simultaneously aggressive and accommodative, all three groups are likely to be activated, each finding incidents supportive of their concerns and justifying their speaking out. Under this circumstance, of course, the result is an overflowing communications system, a babble that borders on incoherence and confounds friend and foe alike.

If space permitted, it would not be difficult to identify how and through whom these shifting ascendancies occur. There are columnists, politicians, admirals, corporation executives, labor leaders, intellectuals, and a host of other

leaders who subscribe to each belief system and whose entries and exits into the political arena could be readily traced if time permitted. One need only mentally record the fluctuating pre-occupations of a Joseph Kraft, a Drew Middleton, a Senator Church, a Henry Kissinger, a General Keegan, A George Meany, or the lead editorials of *The New York Times* to obtain a vivid microscopic picture of the dynamics whereby the American public responds to the nation's prime adversary. Such a mental exercise would also provide a keen insight into how it is that American opinion appears to oscillate ambivalently relative to the Soviet Union even as it is solidly, perhaps rigidly, locked into fixed positions.

Thus far, of course, much of the foregoing is largely speculative. A great deal needs to be done to test the idea that the belief systems of opinion leaders consist of an active-passive as well as an aggressive-accommodative dimension. We hope to build into a forthcoming second stage of our leadership survey variables that will enable us to perform some of these tests.

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## NOTES

1. Cf. Frank L. Klingberg, "The Historical Alternation of Moods in American Foreign Policy," *World Politics*, January 1952, pp. 239-273.

2. See, for example, Gabriel A. Almond, *The American People and Foreign Policy* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950).

3. Philip E. Converse, "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in David Epter, ed., *Ideology and Discontent* (New York: Free Press, 1964), pp. 206-261.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 207.

5. Ole R. Holsti and James N. Rosenau, "Cold War Axioms in the Post-Vietnam Era," in Alexander L. George, et al., eds., *Change in the International System* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, forthcoming).

6. For an elaboration of how leaders and mass publics interact over foreign policy issues, see James N. Rosenau, *National Leadership and Foreign Policy. A Case Study in the Mobilization of Public Support* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963).

7. See Ole R. Holsti and James N. Rosenau, "Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders," *World Politics*, vol. XXXII (October 1979).

8. For evidence along these lines, see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

9. For an elaboration of how one leader, John Foster Dulles, interpreted the fluctuations of Soviet behavior in such a way as to preserve his belief system intact, see Ole R. Holsti, "The Belief System and National Images: A Case Study," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, v. VI, 1962, pp. 244-252.

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10. For an extensive presentation of all the variables used in our research instrument to compile the belief systems, see Ole R. Holsti and James N. Rosenau, "Vietnam, Consensus, and the Belief Systems of American Leaders," a paper originally presented at the Hendricks Symposium on American Politics and the World Order, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Neb., 6-7 October 1977, and subsequently abridged for publication (see footnote 7).

11. For a further discussion of these belief systems, see Ole R. Holsti, "The Three-Headed Eagle: The United States and System Change," *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. XXIII (September 1979). For evidence that the same belief systems exist among the public, see Michael Mandelbaum and William Schneider, "The New Internationalisms: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy," in Kenneth Oye, Donald Rothchild and Robert Lieber (eds.), *Eagle Entangled* (New York: Longman, 1979).

12. Stated differently, while all three groups indicated far more agreement (83 percent) with a questionnaire item that posited the Soviets as "generally expansionist" than with any of the other 111 items used to construct the belief systems, their differences on the other items were sufficiently pronounced to indicate that the relevance of the "expansionist" perception varies significantly in the three belief systems. It is at the core of the Cold War Internationalists' perspective; it is important but not central for the Post-Cold War Internationalists; and it is secondary for the Neo-Isolationists.

