



Military Deterrence vs Foreign Interference: Record of the Cold War

I.A. Istomin

MGIMO University

Abstract: Academic literature is largely skeptical regarding the role of military deterrence in addressing low-level coercion. The stability-instability paradox suggests that increasing destructiveness of the armed forces (especially with the emergence of nuclear weapons) diminishes their utility in response to limited wars, proxy conflicts or economic sanctions. Recent debates often extend the same logic to foreign interference in internal affairs, as they position it as a supplement for forcible rivalries. This article seeks to advance understanding of the linkage between military deterrence and foreign interference in internal politics by exploring the record of the early Cold War starting from 1948 to the mid-1950s. The analysis attests that concern over the Soviet military capabilities had a major restraining effect on Washington. As a result, the US pursued more cautious activities against the Soviet Union in comparison to the campaigns targeting less capable states. This historical record reveals that interference is more amenable to military deterrence than other types of low-level coercion. It differs from them, as covert operations produce an existential danger to the political leaders of a target state, inciting overreaction on their behalf. Therefore, they create escalation risks when threatening a great power. Interference exacerbates confrontation even between adversaries that perceived each other as malign beforehand. Apart from signaling hostile intentions, it aggravates a sense of urgency on finding a response. Although military capabilities do not provide a direct solution to political threats, they serve as a repellent against potential subversive activities. These conclusions do not depend on the specific type of interference pursued by external agents. The findings of the article demonstrate that cross-domain deterrence is more prevalent than stability-instability paradox envisages.

Keywords: foreign interference in internal affairs, covert operations, military deterrence, nuclear weapons, Cold War, US, Soviet Union, Italy, Albania, Iran

UDC: 327, 321.8

Received: November 11, 2022

Accepted: December 01, 2022

John J. Mearsheimer, in his magisterial book on great power politics, claimed: “great powers inherently possess some offensive military capability, which gives them the wherewithal to hurt and possibly destroy each other. States are potentially dangerous to each other, although some states have more military might than others and are therefore more dangerous” (Mearsheimer 2001: 30). However, as the danger is mutual great powers tend to avoid potentially devastating clashes with each other. Therefore, major wars between them remain relatively rare throughout history (Braumoeller 2019).

As great powers seek other ways to coerce or undermine their peers, meddling in internal politics of an adversary constitutes a tempting alternative (Kastner, Wohlforth 2021). It promises acquisition of competitive advantage even without resorting to arms. Foreign interference sows discord weakening a target state and empowers local sympathizers, potentially turning a foe into a friend (Istomin 2022). In this regard, it complements a toolbox of non-forcible and indirect means applied in great power rivalries, which also includes economic sanctions and proxy conflicts.

How does military and especially nuclear deterrence affect this lower-level coercion? On the one hand, the logic of inadvertent escalation should put a limit even on non-forcible harassment (Wohlforth 2020). It imposes a risk of a military response to foreign interference in internal politics. On the other, the stability-instability paradox suggests that the rising costs of an all-out war elevate the threshold for resorting to arms (Liddell Hart 1960: 23; Snyder 1961: 226; 1965; Jervis 1984: 31, 1989: 19-22). Abundant military capabilities even incentivize non-forcible coercion, making armed responses to meddling highly doubtful.

Arbitration between these two perspectives became urgent for the debates on great power rivalries by the 2020s. Growing anxiety over foreign interference in internal politics largely neglect links to military deterrence, treating it as a lucrative alternative to forcible coercion¹. This approach allocates a narrow niche to military capabilities in strategic competition. The enormous destructive potential of nuclear weapons reduces their utility apart from protection against similar armaments of the other side. Nevertheless, some military analysts allocate have a profound and omnipresent role to nuclear weapons in great power rivalries².

¹ For example, the Russian Minister of Defense Sergey Shoigu suggested that interference pursued by the West “allows with minimum resources and limited use of one’s arms and armed forces to crush regional powers, advancing political and economic aims”. [Shoigu said that the likelihood is high that the geography of ‘color revolutions’ will expand]. *RIA Novosti*. 21.02.2017. URL: <https://ria.ru/20170221/1488497860.html> (accessed: 25.02.2023) (In Russian).

² The most prominent voice in this regard is Matthew Kroenig, see (Kroenig 2018).

This paper seeks to advance understanding of the linkage between military deterrence and foreign interference in internal politics by exploring the record of the early Cold War starting from 1948 to the mid-1950s. It examines how the concerns over formidable Soviet capabilities affected US covert operations against Moscow. It also compares the US efforts to undermine the Soviet regime with its activities targeting less capable states. Thus, it combines cross-temporal and cross-country comparisons to assess the potential linkage.

The analysis attests that concern over the Soviet military capabilities had a major restraining effect on Washington. Even when it held a monopoly on atomic weapons, the US still expressed anxiety over potential conventional military responses to their covert operations. As a result, Washington pursued lower-level activity against the Soviet Union in comparison to the campaigns targeting less capable states. However, the US did not fully renounce covert operations against the opposing superpower, revealing the limitations of a military deterrent.

This cautious balance survived changes in US administrations, demonstrating that it was not a product of individual idiosyncrasies of specific decision makers. Even Republican hardliners, who criticized Democratic predecessors, became cautious with the advancement of Soviet nuclear arsenal. Illustratively, Washington passed an opportunity to scale up its meddling despite the relative relaxation of internal security in the Soviet Union after the death of Stalin. Therefore, it is possible to designate the effect of military capabilities on foreign interference as that of partial deterrence.

The historical record of the early Cold War represents a hard case for the claim regarding constraining effects of military deterrence. The 1950s acquired designation as the “golden age” of covert operations. Therefore, the US wariness in targeting Moscow did not proceed from ethical aversion or incapacity to pursue it. Despite the loss of its monopoly on atomic weapons, Washington retained nuclear superiority throughout this period and even considered preventive strikes against its opponent (Betts 1987). Henceforth, the article points to the importance of overall military deterrence rather than purely nuclear balance.

Theorizing beyond the specific case, the article argues that interference invites greater escalation concerns than other types of non-forcible or indirect coercion. Unlike the alternatives, it directly challenges the national leadership of a target state, which increases the risks of overreaction on its behalf. An initiator faces a hard time proving to its target that meddling remains below the threshold of forcible response. As a result, foreign interference in internal politics contradicts preceding inferences on stability-instability paradox.

These findings contribute to the debates over the fungibility of various sources of power in international politics (Baldwin 1979, 1999). They affirm the utility of military capabilities beyond averting and responding to a direct armed attack. Henceforth, the article contributes to the ongoing exploration of the preconditions for cross-domain

deterrence (Cross-Domain Deterrence 2019). Despite reliance on historically remote record, its conclusions are applicable to the recent anxieties over interference as part of ongoing great power rivalries.

The following analysis proceeds in six sections. First, I examine the logic of stability-instability paradox, illuminating diminishing utility of increasingly destructive force. Second, I provide a theoretical explanation behind the escalatory potential of interference. Third, I describe the record of the US covert operations against Moscow. Fourth, I reveal the US anxieties about potential war with the Soviet Union and its constraining effects on confrontation. Fifth, I compare this record with cases of US interference targeting less capable states. Finally, I draw generalizable lessons from the study.

Promise and perils of military deterrence

Military deterrence (with a particular emphasis on nuclear weapons) constituted the primary subject of strategic studies since their inception⁴. This section examines the broader impact of military capabilities on great power rivalries. It highlights deficiencies in relying on nuclear weapons as a remedy against lower-level coercion, such as proxy conflicts or economic warfare. Moreover, it explores specific attributes of foreign interference in internal politics, which diminish the credibility of military deterrence in addressing this threat.

Armed forces traditionally constituted the ultimate arbiter in international politics. The rise in destructiveness of modern weapons throughout the 20th century incited interest towards its role in deterring rather than defeating an adversary. This emphasis became especially evident in debates over nuclear weapons, commonly viewed as a revolutionary invention in warfare (Mandelbaum 1981; Jervis 1989). A pioneer of strategic research Bernard Brodie argued, “Thus far the chief purpose of our military establishments has been to win wars. From now on its chief purpose must be to avert them. It can have almost no other useful purpose” (Brodie 1946: 76).

However, expectations regarding the pacifying effect of atomic and thermonuclear weapons invited qualifications. B.H. Liddell Hart claimed: “to the extent that the H-bomb reduces the likelihood of full-scale war, it increases the possibility of limited war pursued by widespread local aggression” (Liddell Hart 1960: 23)⁵. Glenn Snyder defined this dynamic as the stability-instability paradox (Snyder 1965). He noted that the very destructiveness of weapons reduces their applicability in great power rivalries. In competition between peers, nuclear capabilities nullify each other for most contingencies apart from safeguarding the state from full-scale military attack.

³ See, for example, (Jeffreys-Jones 2003: 81-99).

⁴ For the historical account of the discipline, see (Kaplan 1991).

⁵ Designation H-bomb refers to the thermonuclear weapon (otherwise known as hydrogen weapon).

The potential devastation of an all-out war between nuclear powers undermines the commitment to massive retaliation against secondary threats. Thus, effective deterrence requires additional options apart from the menace of nuclear annihilation to address lower-level coercion. During the Cold War, this urge encouraged strategies of flexible response, aspiring to dissuade an adversary from offensive actions by denial rather than by unacceptable punishment (Snyder 1961).

Meanwhile, nuclear weapons did not deter the Soviet Union and the US from facing each other in local conflicts across the global periphery⁶. Apart from supporting proxies, they engaged in direct hostilities although on a relatively small scale and with limited public awareness. Despite the intensity of bipolar confrontation, both sides effectively colluded in concealing these limited wars to prevent their escalation into a major clash (Carson 2018). The very fear of nuclear Armageddon enabled the sides to compete intensely in areas where the stakes remained marginal.

The logic of the stability-instability paradox extends beyond the domain of armed struggle. Apart from the incapacity of preventing limited warfare, nuclear deterrence proved largely futile vis-a-vis non-forcible coercion. For example, the US imposed tough economic restrictions against the USSR throughout the Cold War. Washington specifically tailored its sanctions to weaken Soviet military capabilities by imposing export control on sensitive technologies. These efforts suffered from allied disobedience and domestic pushback within the US, but not from concerns over armed retaliation by an adversary (Mastanduno 1985, 1988).

The narrow applicability of military deterrence corroborates neoliberal arguments regarding constraints on the fungibility of power in international politics (Keohane, Nye 1977; Baldwin 1979, 1999). Neoliberals claim that the ability of states to influence others is context specific, while capabilities are rarely interchangeable between issue areas. Thus, the stability-instability paradox emerges as a derivative from the broader challenge of projecting power across various domains. Armed capabilities provide insurance only against a narrow selection of threats and do not serve as the ultimate guarantor of national security.

Foreign interference in internal politics in many respects is inconducive to the success of military deterrence. It primarily proceeds through small scale covert operations, placing this type of coercion conventional warfare let alone nuclear retaliation on confrontation ladder. The initiator retains at least partial deniability regarding its activities, which complicates attribution of blame (Poznansky 2022). Its poor record weakens portrayal of interference as existential threat to the great power (O'Rourke 2021; Downes 2021; Istomin 2022).

⁶ Richard Betts indicated that the US in particular applied nuclear threats to acquire advantage in these contingencies, but accept that the impact of such coercion on an adversary is hard to access, see (Betts 1987).

The antecedent discussion revealed the deficiencies of military deterrence in restraining indirect and non-forcible coercion, including foreign interference in internal politics. It demonstrated that nuclear threats have limited practical utility against peers, due to the escalation risks. However, foreign interference differs from most other instruments of great power rivalry due to its focus on the authority structure of an adversary. Strategic consequences of such targeting require closer examination. The following section will explore concerns regarding escalation potential of interference.

Escalatory risks of foreign interference

The disparity between relatively small-scale covert operations and all-out armed struggle provides a misleading psychological comfort regarding the risks of escalation. This section examines the nature of foreign interference in greater detail, demonstrating its disproportionate effect on the leadership of a target state. Although military retaliation provides a poor remedy against the threats to internal politics, the sense of existential danger to the ruling elites raises the stakes of competition. For revealing these destabilizing consequences of interference, the section starts with clarification of the notion.

Despite an extensive debate over the causes and outcomes of interference, the available literature struggles to provide the definition of the term⁷. Like some other widely circulating concepts such as terrorism, it suffers from pejorative connotations promoted by political actors. They designate as interference radically different activities that appear hurtful and dangerous for them, but rarely acknowledge their own culpability in violating the sovereignty of others. This subjective use of interference rhetoric complicates efforts to employ the concept for analytical purposes.

The most elaborate definition belongs to Deon Geldenhuys, characterizing interference as “the calculated action of a state, a group of states, an international organization or some other international actor(s) to influence the political system of another state (including its structure of authority, its domestic policies and its political leaders) against its will by using various means of coercion (forcible or non-forcible) in pursuit of particular political objectives” (Geldenhuys 1998: 6). However, even this meticulous wording leaves significant gaps.

Despite its length, this definition provides little clarity beyond recognition of the coercive nature of interference and its aspiration to undermine sovereign authority from the outside. It opens a wide space for interpretation when applied to specific cases⁸. Attempts to replace the problematic notion by alternative terms ends up being

⁷ For the most prominent attempts to define it, see (Rosenau 1969; Vincent 1974; *Intervention in World Politics* 1986; Little 1987; Reus-Smit 2013). In much of the literature the terms “interference” and “intervention” appear interchangeably.

⁸ For example, the suggested definition does not clarify whose will it refers to. This creates a point of contention amidst the debate over popular vs. government sovereignty. For the account of the latter, see (Barkin, Cronin 1994; Weber 1995).

equally unsatisfying. Some of them, such as political (psychological) warfare or subversion, are even broader and less clear⁹. Others, like foreign imposed regime change (FIRC), are plainly misleading, with FIRC covering instances of leadership change without institutional transformations¹⁰.

This article treats interference as a combination of covert operations and propaganda applied intentionally by the outside power to undermine authority of the government, selection of political leadership and/or territorial integrity of the state through support of local opposition, separatist and dissident movements. This approach is narrower than the one suggested by Geldenhuys, excluding attempts to affect specific policies, activities of actors other than states and forcible interventions. However, it is broad enough to cover instances other than the Cold War, which enables generalizations beyond a single case.

Building upon Defensive Realist argument regarding discrimination between satisfied and greedy powers, William Wohlforth claimed that subversive activities constitute a strong signal to a target state of especially malign intentions of their initiator (Wohlforth 2020: 469). He concluded that such perception produces major escalation risks, unlike other types of coercion, due to the potential retaliation by such target state. However, this approach underestimates destabilizing effects of interference beyond signaling of intentions. It invites escalation even amidst preexisting beliefs regarding malevolence of an adversary.

The preceding definition discloses that the essential characteristic of interference, which distinguishes it from other forms of coercion, is its immediate focus on the authority structure within a target state. It explicitly targets the political leaders of an adversary. Moreover, the latter finds it difficult to redirect potential costs to some other groups within the country, the way they often do with suffering from war or economic pressure¹¹. Although, foreign interference remains a marginal threat to a state and especially a great power, it imposes disproportionate risks on the ruling elite by threatening its grip on power.

Political survival constitutes the primary interest of the leadership as it remains a precondition for achieving any other goals (De Mesquita, Smith et al. 2005). Therefore, targeted elites acquire strong incentives to overreact to foreign interference given the

⁹ Illustratively, Paul Blackstock argued that political warfare envisages “the aggressive use of a wide range of essential non-military tools of foreign policy”. He further outlined their scale from “overt political and economic pressure, aggressive action through international agencies such as the United Nations and its affiliated organizations, and the use of political parties, trade unions, and similar groups as “organizational weapons”; to such clandestine activities as political assassinations, and the training, arming, and disposition of spies, saboteurs, and guerrillas to carry on subversive or revolutionary and counter-revolutionary movements.” Blackstock also acknowledged that “these methods of political warfare have been accompanied by propaganda activities from straight news services and cultural relations programs to the most scurrilous forms of “black” or non-attributable propaganda and rumor-mongering.” See, (Blackstock 1964: 20-21).

¹⁰ See, (Werner 1996; Downes, Monten 2013; Downes, O'Rourke 2016).

¹¹ In this regard, even targeted economic sanctions designed to selectively affect the ruling elites, end up hurting primarily broad population. See, (Tostensen, Bull 2002; Peksen 2009; Drezner 2011; Escribà-Folch 2012; Targeted sanctions 2016; Park, Choi 2022).

heightened personal stakes. Even when other types of coercion position an adversary as similarly malevolent, they do not threaten an equal amount of harm. Thus, interference creates escalatory risks absent under economic sanctions, or even limited wars, which do not produce the same acute consequences for political leaders¹².

Military capabilities do not provide a direct response to the risks associated with covert operations and propaganda activities of outside powers. In fact, the all-out war creates preconditions for more aggressive interference (Wohlforth 2020: 470). Nevertheless, the initiator of interference needs to consider the potential desperation of the targeted leadership, turning the latter into a reckless adversary. It cannot rely on restraints caused by mutual vulnerability, as personal anxieties diminish the threshold for retaliation. The escalatory risks of interference restrict the potential scope of covert operations and propaganda targeting a great power in comparison with less militarily capable states.

The preceding analysis concludes that military deterrence is a more effective barrier against foreign interference relative to other types of coercion. Covert operations create an existential threat if not for a target state than for its leadership. The stability-instability paradox becomes less applicable in such circumstances as an adversary acquires greater appetite for escalation out of desperation. Therefore, foreign interference becomes a poor substitute for armed struggle. This theoretical logic implies that great powers face higher impediments when targeting peers relative to their allies or unaffiliated states.

US covert operations targeting the Soviet Union

The US policy towards the Soviet Union starting from the late 1940s provides a rich empirical record of interference among peers. The case provides favorable grounds for testing the theoretical argument as Washington retained overall preponderance over Moscow and remained largely out of reach of the Soviet armed forces. Nevertheless, its covert operations were cautious. This section explores the scope of the US activities providing preconditions for subsequent examination of its strategic deliberations.

The nature of political regimes played a major role in the inauguration of the Cold War¹³. Washington explicitly framed the threat posed by the Soviet Union with references to its domestic institutions and extended similar anxieties to its adversary. For example, the Long Telegram by George Kennan, which set the premise for the US

¹² Andrej Krickovic pointed to the contribution of internal threats to the security competition between states along with external threats. See, (Krickovic 2016). However, this article demonstrates that what he designates as internal threats is even more destabilizing comparing to external ones.

¹³ For the broader argument regarding the importance of ideological divisions in great power rivalries, see (Haas 2018).

strategy of containment, argued: “Soviet leaders are [by] driven necessities of their own past and present position to put forward a dogma which [...] outside world as evil, hostile and menacing”¹⁴.

Moreover, the US President Harry Truman claimed in an address to Congress on March 12, 1947: “...totalitarian regimes imposed on free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States.” He asserted: “...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”¹⁵. Thus, US officials in both private and public communications indicated motives for challenging the authority structure of the Soviet Union.

Henceforth, Washington set a machinery for addressing the source of its anxieties by conducting interference in internal politics of its adversary. The National Security Council in December 1947 approved the directive (NSC-4A) authorizing the Director of Central Intelligence to initiate and conduct “covert psychological operations designed to counteract Soviet and Soviet-inspired activities”¹⁶. In June 1948, the NSC replaced it by another directive (NSC-10/2), establishing an Office of Special Projects within the Central Intelligence Agency, which acquired responsibility for covert operations.¹⁷

These bureaucratic tools accompanied developments in US policy. In November 1948, the NSC produced a report outlining Washington’s approach for combating the Soviet Union (NSC-20/4). The document defined a set of aims for US policy, including encouraging the development “among the Russian peoples of attitudes which may help to modify current Soviet behavior and permit a revival of the national life of groups evidencing the ability and determination to achieve and maintain national independence.” In order to achieve this goal, the NSC advised the US to “place the maximum strain on the Soviet structure of power”¹⁸.

It was difficult to implement these recommendations as access of foreigners to the Soviet Union was narrow. Even agents with diplomatic cover faced difficulties operating in the country (Rositzke 1977). Under these circumstances, US activities proceeded along two main lines. First, they sought to mobilize exiles in the West, encour-

¹⁴ 861.00/2-2246: Telegram, The Chargé in the Soviet Union (Kennan) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, February 22, 1946—9 p.m., FRUS, 1946, Eastern Europe, The Soviet Union, Volume VI.

¹⁵ President Truman’s Message to Congress; March 12, 1947; Document 171; 80th Congress, 1st Session; Records of the United States House of Representatives; Record Group 233; National Archives.

¹⁶ Draft Directive to Director of Central Intelligence Hillenkoetter, Washington, December 17, 1947 (NSC-4A), FRUS, 1945–1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment.

¹⁷ National Security Council Directive on Office of Special Projects, Washington, June 18, 1948 (NSC-10/2), FRUS, 1945–1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment. The newly created unit was soon renamed into Office for Policy Coordination (OPC).

¹⁸ Report by the National Security Council on U.S. Objectives with Respect to the USSR To Counter Soviet Threats to U.S. Security, Washington, November 23, 1948 (NSC-20/4), FRUS, S/S-SNC Files: Lot 63D351: NSC 20 Series.

aging them to formulate an ideological and political alternative to the Soviet regime and treating them as an asset for propaganda. Second, they established contacts with separatists operating within the Soviet Union, primarily in Ukraine and the Baltic republics.

By the late 1940s, the Russian and Soviet émigré community comprised of multiple groups. The most prominent were the National Alliance of Russian Solidarists (Narodno-Trudovoj Soyuz, NTS), the Union for the Struggle for the Freedom of Russia (Soyuz borby za svobodu Rossii, SBSR), the Union of Struggle for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia (Soyuz Borby za Osvobozhdenie Narodov Rossii, SBONR), the Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia (Komitet za osvobozhdenie narodov Rossii, KONR), and the Russian National Movement (Russkoe Narodnoe Dvizhenie, RND)¹⁹.

Apart from the personal ambitions of their leaders, the disputes between these groups reflected generational divides as well as ideological differences. Some organizations (primarily KONR) were tainted by their association with the Nazis during the Second World War. Moreover, various Russian factions maintained uneasy relations with exile groups claiming to represent the ethnic minorities of the Soviet Union. The former remained committed to national unity, while the latter supported separatist causes. Finally, émigré organizations suspected each other of links to the Soviet security services.

Starting from the 1950, the CIA attempted mediation between these factions, bringing them under the umbrella of the American Committee on Liberation from Bolshevism. It also promoted the Institute for the Study of the USSR in Munich, which hired exiles to produce publications that criticized the Soviet system under the guise of academic credibility (O'Connell 1990). In 1953, the CIA employed émigrés to launch Radio Liberation (later renamed as Radio Liberty), producing subversive broadcasting for Soviet audiences²⁰. Nevertheless, US operatives became frustrated by the infighting between exiles.

The US links to separatist movements inside the Soviet Union dated back to the end of the Second World War²¹. Members of such groupings as the Ukrainian Supreme Liberation Council acquired shelter from the advancing Soviet troops in the Western occupation zones in Germany. They came into contact with US operatives either directly or through the Gehlen Organization with extensive connections among former Nazi collaborators²². Meanwhile, their associates engaged in an insurgency back in the Soviet Union.

¹⁹ For a more detailed account of the relations between exiles and the CIA, see (Mikkonen 2012; Tromly 2019).

²⁰ For the historical accounts of the Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty, see (Puddington 2000; Schwartz 2009; Cummings 2009).

²¹ For the detailed account of these ties, see (Burds 2001).

²² Reinhard Gehlen was the chief of the Wehrmacht intelligence in the Eastern Europe during the Second World War. After surrendering to the American troops in May 1945, he worked for the US, establishing a precursor for the subsequent West German intelligence agency, see (Critchfield 2003).

By the end of the 1940s, the US intensified its support for separatist operations, primarily in Western Ukraine. It delivered supplies to the insurgency via airdrops and parachuted couriers recruited from the exiles to coordinate activities on the ground (Kuzio 2012)²³. Nevertheless, Moscow managed to crush armed resistance by 1953, forcing the US to adopt less overt methods of interference. For example, it continued to promote the publishing of separatist and dissident literature²⁴. The CIA maintained relatively limited subversive activities throughout the following decades.

The US record indicates a significant gap between the tough rhetoric and the scope of interference. The strength of Soviet security countermeasures as well as the weakness and factionalism of anti-Soviet resistance created impediments for subversive activities. However, the limitations on covert operations also proceeded from Washington's anxieties regarding potential escalation risks. The following section will examine such constraints.

Escalation risks in US strategic calculations

Starting from the inauguration of the Cold War, the US viewed the Soviet Union as a formidable military power. This acknowledgement produced contradictory effects, as it both encouraged confrontation and imposed severe limits on the applicable coercion. Declassified documents reveal how the risks of the potential clash with Moscow shaped Washington's policies. Moreover, the rapid rise in Soviet capabilities amplified the gap between the tough rhetoric and practical activities.

Concerns over potential escalation with Moscow loomed large in the US decision-making. In 1948, Washington estimated that the Soviet forces could seize the whole of Continental Europe and the Near East. However, it did not treat a direct military clash as inevitable, given the expected strain on the Soviet power under this scenario. The US also envisaged a delay until Moscow became capable to seriously threaten the Western hemisphere, which could have lasted until 1955²⁵. Thus, it anticipated the Soviet attempts to extend its sphere of influence through political rather than military means.

Under this combination of apprehensive and optimistic assessments, the NSC 20/4 asserted that "We should endeavor to achieve our general objectives by methods short of war". It also recognized the risk of war-initiation due to the "U.S. miscalculation of Soviet reactions to measures which we might take"²⁶. This recognition incited

²³ For account of the insurgency on the Soviet territory see, also (Statiev 2010).

²⁴ See, for example, an overview of QRPLUMB operations (A Synopsis of QRPLUMB Operations 1946-Date. URL: https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/QRPLUMB%20%20VOL.%201_0001.pdf (accessed 25.02.2023).

²⁵ Report by the National Security Council on U.S. Objectives with Respect to the USSR To Counter Soviet Threats to U.S. Security, Washington, November 23, 1948 (NSC-20/4), FRUS, S/S-SNC Files: Lot 63D351: NSC 20 Series.

²⁶ Ibid.

Washington to tailor its activities against the Soviet Union in a way not to provoke an armed response. However, its doctrinal documents did not outline specific boundaries in this regard, due to the emphasis of US strategists on flexibility.

The Soviet atomic test in 1949 evoked a sense of urgency in Washington. In April 1950, the National Security Council adopted a report reassessing the Soviet threat and revising the US response to it. NSC-68 concluded that Moscow was on track to nuclear parity with the US by 1954, which elevated the risks of an all-out armed conflict. Although calling for a military build-up, the document reaffirmed that Washington should rely on measures short of war to curtail its adversary. It reflected an awareness of Soviet military capabilities and the devastating consequences of potential direct confrontation.

NSC-68 advocated aggressive interference against Moscow more than any preceding document. It stipulated promoting “a fundamental change in the nature of the Soviet system” as one of the US key objectives. The document also revealed that the containment policy pursued by Washington sought to “foster the seeds of destruction within the Soviet system.” It justified virtually any operation against Moscow, arguing that “the integrity of our system will not be jeopardized by any measures, covert or overt, violent or non-violent, which serve the purposes of frustrating the Kremlin design”²⁷.

Building upon these policy recommendations, the State Department inaugurated the TROY Project, enrolling leading academics into a secret group under the auspices of Harvard University and MIT. Its aim was to design innovative propaganda activities targeting Moscow²⁸. In February 1951, TROY scholars delivered a report with detailed recommendations regarding radio broadcasting, framing of messages, engagement with exiles and the use of balloons to disseminate propaganda leaflets. The members of the groups followed up with additional projects in subsequent years.

Nevertheless, aggressive proposals mostly remained on paper. Actual operations against the Soviet Union remained modest and became less aggressive with the dismantlement of the separatist insurgency in Ukraine in the early 1950s. As a result, the Republican party criticized the Truman administration for its lack of firmness in standing up to Moscow. President Dwight Eisenhower, who replaced Truman, promised a strong commitment to pursuing psychological warfare (Osgood 2000, 2006). He even placed a prominent hardliner, Allen Dulles, at the head of the CIA.

However, these changes did not produce intensification of subversive activities inside the Soviet Union. This situation persisted despite the death of Stalin in 1953, which created an opening for more aggressive interference. His demise launched an internal struggle for power within the Soviet elite, which the US could have tried to

²⁷ NSC 68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security, Washington, April 7, 1950.

²⁸ For the detailed account of the initiative, see (Needell 1993).

exploit. Even more importantly, it paved the way for relative relaxation of security arrangements and greater access to the USSR by foreigners (Rositzke 1977). Nonetheless, Washington decided to seek reconciliation with the new Soviet leadership rather than attempting to undermine it.

The US refrained from exploiting opportunities for covert operations, demonstrating its sensitivity to the risks of potential escalation. It feared that such activities would foster additional insecurity among Stalin's successors, encouraging them to overreact. The Hungarian crisis of 1956 reinforced these concerns as it demonstrated that the Soviets were committed to safeguard Communist rule with military force, not only on its own soil, but across the Eastern Europe. This led the US to further curtail covert operations against the Soviet camp, although it did not abandon them altogether (Mitrovich 2000).

Moreover, the introduction of intercontinental ballistic missiles starting from 1957 put US territory within the reach of Soviet nuclear weapons, increasing the threat of military retaliation. Although this new vulnerability did not prevent the two adversaries from intense brinkmanship in the following years, the restrained approach towards covert operations persisted. It contrasted with their greater appetite for risk in the early days of the Cold War, despite the increased skill and organizational capacity the US interference machinery had accumulated.

Therefore, the rise in the Soviet capabilities, especially in nuclear domain, elevated anxiety in the US. It intensified the quest for strategic instruments to undermine Moscow. However, increased sense of urgency and even heightened rhetoric did not translate into more aggressive subversive actions. To the contrary, Washington became increasingly cautious in its covert operations targeting the Soviet Union, due to the growing costs of potential armed escalation. This dynamic contradicted the logic of stability-instability paradox. It also distinguished the US policy toward Moscow from its attitude to less military capable states.

Other US covert operations in the early Cold War

The literature attributes the limited scope of US interference against the Soviet Union in the early Cold War to the lack of strategic coherence, interagency in-fighting, or the lack of experience in covert operations (Corke 2007; Lucas, Mistry 2009). Washington shifted between political containment, military deterrence, and roll-back responses to the Soviet threat. The National Security Council, State Department and CIA jostled responsibilities over political warfare. Moreover, the whole enterprise of interference was novel for the US government, involved in learning by doing.

However, these explanations poorly fit the record of US covert operations against less military capable states in the same period. Starting from 1948, Washington pursued a series of campaigns against Soviet allies, then non-aligned states and even countries in its own backyard. Despite significant variance across these instances, none of

them risked the same level of escalation as interference in the internal affairs of the Soviet Union. The following subsections comprise analysis for the three exemplary cases of covert operations targeting Italy, Albania, and Iran. Each of them relies on a vast secondary literature as well as declassified sources.

These states differed in terms of geography, type of political regime and preceding relationship with Washington. The tools applied by the US in each instance were different. The following cases also took place under different US administrations although within the overall timeframe of late 1940s – mid 1950s. While the strategic value of these three states varied, none of them occupied a place in US decision-making anywhere near to the Soviet Union. However, they all faced more aggressive covert operations than Moscow.

Building upon the vast academic literature and primary sources, the respective subsections will further substantiate the selection of cases. Then they will present the context of interferences, outline the US activities, and examine their consequences. They will also draw parallels with the subversive activities targeting the Soviet Union to reinforce the overall argument regarding the constraining effects of military capabilities on interference.

Italy

Italy emerged as the first training ground for the US experimentations in political warfare starting from 1947. Washington applied a broad set of measures aimed at swinging popular elections in favor of its proxy. Unlike some other instances, in Italy it combined clandestine measures with overt support. The extent of the US involvement proved its capacity to pursue complex covert operations at the start of the Cold War. Moreover, the success in Italy shaped subsequent deliberations on interference in Washington²⁹.

After the end of the Second World War, Italy experienced deep political divisions between Christian Democracy party (CD) oriented towards the US and Communists (PCI) aligned with the Soviet Union. The latter enjoyed broad popular support due to their role in the fight against Fascists. Nevertheless, Alcide De Gasperi, who chaired the CD, broke with the leftist parties in May 1947 and established a right-centrist government (Brogi 2018). His positions remained shaky in advance of parliamentary elections of 1948.

Initially, the US paid limited attention to Italy, given its weak industrial potential and peripheral geographic position. However, Washington reassessed its attitude with the inauguration of the containment policy, which required opposing Communism

²⁹ See, The inauguration of organized political warfare. Policy Planning Staff Memorandum. Washington, May 4, 1948. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1945–1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment.

at every point. The US suspected that if the PCI acquired majority in the elections and create a government, it would transfer Italy to the Soviet camp. It simultaneously feared that the potential loss of the Communists at the polls would incite their armed uprising³⁰.

Thus, the Truman administration launched a massive campaign in support of De Gasperi and his government. It channeled significant amounts of aid under the Marshall plan to Italy, making its assistance clearly visible. Washington diverted some of these funds to covertly finance CD electoral campaign and black propaganda against Communists. Moreover, it incentivized US citizens of the Italian origin to agitate in their historical homeland. The US mobilized the American trade-unions, as well as businesses and other non-governmental entities to promote ties with the Italian counterparts³¹.

These coordinated efforts produced the desired result as the CD achieved a crushing victory over the PCI and consolidated its control over Italy. The Communists lost much of their appeal as the population associated improved economic conditions with the US assistance. As a result, the risk of their armed uprising also diminished. Despite preceding concerns, the PCI accepted outcomes of the elections. Italy got tied to the Western camp. Furthermore, it emerged as one of the Founding Members of NATO in 1949.

Italy provided a more conducive environment for the foreign interference in comparison with the Soviet Union, as the US had a chance to project not only covert but also overt influence. The government led by De Gasperi actively colluded with the Truman administration (Mistry 2006). On its end, the US demonstrated eagerness to allocate significant resources in Italy, despite the low priority of this target in comparison with the Soviet Union. Thus, availability was a more significant driver of interference than strategic urgency.

In Italy, Washington pursued aggressive interference despite domestic infighting over strategy and bureaucratic divisions. This case reveals the US competences in complex covert operations early in the Cold War. Its freedom of maneuver proceeded from the virtual absence of escalation risks in Italy which distinguished this situation from subversive activities targeting the Soviet Union. Thus, this historical instance validates theoretical expectations proceeding from the constraining effects of military deterrence on interference.

³⁰ See, NSC 1/1: The Position of the United States with Respect to Italy. Report by the National Security Council. November 14, 1947. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, Western Europe, Volume III; NSC 1/3: Position of the United States with Respect to Italy in the Light of the Possibility of Communist Participation in the Government by Legal Means. Report by the National Security Council. Washington, March 8, 1948. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, Western Europe, Volume III.

³¹ For the account of the US activities, see (Miller 1983; Del Pero 2001; Mistry 2011).

Albania

Albanian case exemplifies the readiness of the US to pursue aggressive and prolonged interference in an unfavorable environment. The target state resembled in some respects the Soviet Union as it was a personalistic regime with strong security services and no space for political pluralism (Fevziu 2016). However, it was less dangerous due to the miniscule military and industrial potential. Henceforth, Washington used similar tools to the ones that it applied against Moscow, but on a grander scale.

Unlike Italy, Albania was a Soviet ally at the start of the Cold War³². The ruling Albanian Workers' Party (AWP) under the leadership of Enver Hoxha committed itself to Communism, pledging personal loyalty to Joseph Stalin. It prohibited political alternatives and initiated systematic repression against potential opponents. The surviving dissenters, including the deposed King Zog, fled to exile under the threat of physical elimination.

Washington did not devote much attention to Albania, which was a small and poor agrarian country³³. It only expressed concerns regarding its contribution to the potential basing of Soviet submarines in the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, the US viewed Albania as a lucrative target to practice subversive activities against Communist regimes, precisely due to its apparent weakness. Therefore, the US collaborated with the UK in promoting anti-regime insurgency by enrolling, training, and supplying Albanian exiles (Lulushi 2014).

Similarly to the Russian and Soviet emigres, these proxies remained divided by personal ambitions and ideological preferences. Starting from 1948, the US attempted to bring them under the umbrella of the National Committee for a Free Albania (NCFA). Washington also exploited Albanian troubled relations with neighbors to acquire assistance to its covert operations and propaganda activities from Italy, Greece and even Communist Yugoslavia.

Between 1949 and 1954, the CIA and MI-6 infiltrated several hundreds of paramilitaries through airdrops and sea landings. Despite the upbeat reporting, these efforts largely failed³⁴. Building upon the information from the Soviet agent in British intelligence, Albanian security services seized dispatched exiles before they could launch their activities. In late 1950, the US abandoned hopes on armed resistance, concentrating on propaganda (Long 2020). Nevertheless, around 300 paramilitaries got killed or captured in the context of its covert operation.

³² Initially, it oriented towards neighboring Yugoslavia, but rapidly changed its allegiances during Stalin-Tito split, see (Marku 2022).

³³ See, NIE-42: The Current Situation in Albania with Particular Reference to Greek, Yugoslav and Italian Interests. November 20, 1951. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951, Europe: Political and Economic Developments, Volume IV, Part 2.

³⁴ See, for example, Intelligence Operations Against Albania from Italy and Greece. May 3, 1949. CIA Declassified archives. URL: https://gjonmarkagjoni.files.wordpress.com/2017/09/obopus-bgfiend-vol-13-bgfiend-operations_0006-first-operation-in-feb-1949-validates-letter-of-9-feb-1949.pdf

Albanian case illustrates the US commitment to subversion of Communist regimes even in marginal states. Washington employed a combination of tools similar to the one used against Moscow, including exile organizations, paramilitary activities and radio propaganda. However, it applied them more aggressively in Albania comparing to the Soviet Union. Such assertiveness in a minor case relative to the wariness in targeting peer adversary underscores moderating effects of military deterrence.

Iran

Iran occupied an important place in the US policy early on, given the significance of its oil reserves and its location at the border with the USSR³⁵. In 1946, it emerged as an early hot spot between Washington and Moscow, when the latter delayed evacuation of its forces from the country despite preceding understanding³⁶. Thus, Iran occupied a high position in the US priorities than Albania or Italy, although hardly comparable with the Soviet Union.

The US involvement in the 1953 coup reveals its eagerness to target governments even without explicit ties to the Soviet Union and international Communism. It also demonstrates continuity in covert operations between the US administration, despite their public polemics. The case also proved highly consequential for the relations between Iran and the US in the following decades.

By the early 1950s, Iran was a constitutional monarchy, where Shah retained limited powers. The real authority sat within the government responsible to the majority in Majlis (Parliament). Iranian elections in 1951 brought to power National Front, led by widely popular Mohammad Mosaddegh. Mosaddegh ran his campaign on the promises to nationalize oil production, previously controlled by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. He became the new prime minister despite the discontent of the Shah (Kinzer 2008).

Once in office Mosaddegh consistently implemented his pledges on nationalization to the outrage of the UK. Although Washington initially positively assessed his rise, it became increasingly wary of the Iranian policies due to their effects on the strategic oil reserves. Its suspicions further intensified given reliance of Mosaddegh on the support by the pro-Soviet Tudeh party (Byrne 2004). As a result, the newly created Eisenhower administration joined the UK in plotting a coup against the Iranian government in 1953³⁷.

³⁵ NSC 54: Report of the National Security Council on the Position of the United States with Respect to Iran. July 21, 1949. Foreign Relations of the United States, 1949, The Near East, South Asia, and Africa, Volume VI.

³⁶ For the account of the crisis, see (Hess 1974; Hasanli 2006). The US also conducted an ongoing covert operation, aimed at limiting the Soviet influence in Iran, starting from 1948, see (Gasiorowski 2013).

³⁷ For the account of the plans for the operation, see the report of its CIA coordinator Donald N. Wilber prepared in 1954 (Wilber 2006).

Washington and London secured the assistance of the Shah, who sought to restore his authority. They also enrolled parts of the military under the leadership of General Fazlollah Zahedi. The US and UK promoted coordination and provided financial support for the coup. However, the attempt to arrest Mosaddegh and his key supporters on August 15 largely failed due to the leaks about the plot. Mass popular demonstrations in favor of the government undermined the initial plans of regime change.

Nevertheless, General Zahedi seized the initiative through instigation of a Communist uprising by Tudeh party loyalists. It provided a cover for the deployment of the armed forces, which restored order and arrested Mosaddegh. The Shah appointed Zahedi as the new prime minister. His government reversed nationalization of the Iranian oil industry. Moreover, the coup transformed Iran into a major US ally in the Middle East for the next quarter of the century³⁸.

The US interference in Iran exemplifies an instance of a covert operation triggered by mere implications of the government in ties with the Communists. Like with the Italian and Albanian cases, Washington did not face risks of military escalation in Iran, which encouraged it to orchestrate a coup. The change in the US administrations from Truman to Eisenhower did not diminish the appetite for interference. Illustratively, Washington launched such covert operation at the time when it restricted subversive activities targeting the Soviet Union.

Conclusions

This article examined the connection between armed capabilities of a state and foreign interference in its affairs. Much of the preceding literature, including the Realist writings on stability-instability paradox and Neoliberal critique on fungibility of power, suggests that military deterrence does not bring safeguards against non-forcible coercion or even encourage it. The preceding analysis demonstrated that interference differs in this regard from economic sanctions or limited warfare.

Unlike other types of coercion, interference produces an existential danger to the political leaders of a target state. Therefore, it creates escalation risks when threatening a military strong power. Interference exacerbates confrontation even between adversaries that perceived each other as malign beforehand. Apart from signaling hostile intentions, it aggravates a sense of urgency on finding a response. Although military capabilities do not provide a solution to political threats, they serve as a repellent against subversive activities.

The record of the early Cold War corroborates these theoretical claims. Although the Soviet Union represented the most significant strategic target for the US, it experienced relatively modest subversive activities in comparison with less capable states.

³⁸ For the detailed accounts of the coup, see (Kinzer 2008; Abrahamian 2013).

Washington explicitly stated concerns over potential escalation due to its own actions and, therefore, constrained interference against Moscow. Meanwhile, the US pursued more aggressive covert operations against minor states, which did not create comparable risks of armed confrontation.

Recent anxieties over foreign interference in domestic affairs emphasize the role of novel technologies and methods of meddling. Nevertheless, these changes are irrelevant to the destabilizing impact of covert operations on rivalries between major powers. The cases examined in this article covered various types of interference targeting different political regimes. They demonstrated that concerns over escalation risks have a more significant impact on the intensity of interference than other variables.

Meanwhile, the rise of non-governmental and semi-autonomous actors in international politics complicated management of interstate tensions after the Cold War. Military deterrence does not play a primary role in their calculations. Therefore, they face lower constraints in their subversive activities against major powers relative to peer competitors. Nevertheless, the desperate leadership of target states is unlikely to draw distinction between unauthorized voluntarism of activists and policies of their home states.

The findings of this article qualify preceding discussions on the promises and limitations of military power. They demonstrate that cross-domain deterrence is more prevalent than stability-instability paradox envisages. Moreover, they encourage re-assessment in preceding conclusions that covert operations appear successful mostly against small and weak states (O'Rourke 2018; Istomin 2022). Given the concerns regarding military response, the poor performance of interference targeting great powers can reflect the lack of trying rather than actual resilience of such targets.

About the author:

Igor A. Istomin – Candidate of Political Sciences, Acting Chair, Department of Applied International Political Analysis; Lead Research Fellow, Center for Advanced American Studies, Institute for International Studies, MIGMO University. Email: iaistomin@gmail.com

Conflict of interests:

The author declares the absence of conflict of interests.

Acknowledgements:

Research received support from the grant of the Russian Science Foundation No. № 22-18-00723, <https://rscf.ru/project/22-18-00723/>. The preliminary draft of the article was presented at the St. Petersburg Congress on International Studies, November 10, 2022. The author expresses his gratitude to Andrej Krickovic for his valuable comments and to Daria Zhabina for her assistance in preparation of the manuscript for submission.

УДК 327, 321.8

Поступила в редакцию 11.11.2022 г.

Принята к публикации: 01.12. 2022 г.

Военное сдерживание против иностранного вмешательства? Опыт Холодной войны

И.А. Истомин

[DOI 10.24833/2071-8160-2022-olf4](https://doi.org/10.24833/2071-8160-2022-olf4)

Московский государственный институт международных отношений (университет) МИД России

Резюме: В исследовательской литературе наблюдается серьёзный скепсис относительно роли военного сдерживания в противодействии невоенным и непрямым формам давления. Парадокс стабильности-нестабильности предполагает, что возрастание разрушительной мощи вооружённых сил (особенно с появлением ядерного оружия) снижает их полезность для предотвращения ограниченных войн, опосредованных конфликтов или экономических санкций. Растущие опасения относительно рисков иностранного вмешательства во внутреннюю политику в значительной степени опираются на ту же логику – они позиционируют такого рода операции как замену военного противоборства. В настоящей статье делается попытка углубить понимание связи между военно-политическим сдерживанием и иностранным вмешательством во внутренние дела на основе изучения опыта начала холодной войны с 1948 г. по середину 1950-х гг. Проведённый анализ свидетельствует, что опасения относительно советского военного потенциала оказали сдерживающее воздействие на политику США. Соединённые Штаты демонстрировали большую осторожность при проведении подрывных операций против СССР по сравнению с их кампаниями, направленными против более слабых в военном плане государств. Этот исторический опыт показывает, что военно-политическое сдерживание более успешно в ограничении вмешательства, чем других видов давления. В отличие от иных способов принуждения вмешательство порождает экзистенциальную опасность для политических лидеров государства-объекта, провоцируя исключительно жёсткий ответ с их стороны. В этой связи подрывные действия создают значительные риски эскалации, когда они предпринимаются против великой державы. Вмешательство обостряет противостояние даже между государствами, которые заранее уверены во враждебности друг друга. Хотя военный потенциал не предоставляет непосредственной защиты от подрывных действий, он существенно демотивирует потенциальных инициаторов вмешательства. Полученные выводы не связаны с конкретными формами вмешательства. Они указывают, что увязывание сдерживания в различных областях соперничества может быть более успешным, чем предполагает парадокс стабильности-нестабильности.

Ключевые слова: иностранное вмешательство во внутренние дела, подрывная деятельность, военно-политическое сдерживание, ядерное оружие, холодная война, США, СССР, Италия, Албания, Иран

Об авторе:

Игорь Александрович Истомирин – кандидат политических наук, и.о. заведующего Кафедрой прикладного анализа международных проблем; в.н.с. Центра перспективных американских исследований ИМИ МГИМО МИД России. 119454, Россия, Москва, проспект Вернадского 76. Email: iaistomin@gmail.com

Конфликт интересов:

Автор заявляет об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

Благодарности:

Исследование выполнено за счёт гранта Российского научного фонда № 22-18-00723, <https://rscf.ru/project/22-18-00723/>. Предварительный вариант исследования был представлен на сессии Санкт-Петербургского конгресса исследователей международных отношений 10 ноября 2022 г. Автор выражает признательность Андрею Кричковичу за ценные комментарии и Д.П. Жабину за помощь в подготовке рукописи к подаче.

References:

- Abrahamian E. 2013. *The Coup: 1953, the CIA, and the Roots of Modern US-Iranian Relations*. New York: The New Press. 304 p.
- Baldwin D.A. 1979. Power Analysis and World Politics: New Trends versus Old Tendencies. *World Politics*. 31(2). P. 161-194.
- Baldwin D.A. 1999. Force, Fungibility, and Influence. *Security Studies*. 8(4). P. 173-183.
- Barkin J.S., Cronin B. 1994. The State and The Nation: Changing Norms and The Rules of Sovereignty in International Relations. *International Organization*. 48(1). P. 107-130.
- Betts R.K. 1987. *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance*. Washington: Brookings Institution Press. 240 p.
- Blackstock P.W. 1964. *The Strategy of Subversion: Manipulating the Politics of Other Nations*. Chicago: Quadrangle books. 351 p.
- Braumoeller B.F. 2019. *Only the Dead: The Persistence of War in the Modern Age*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 344 p.
- Brodie B. 1946. *The Absolute Weapon*. New York: Harcourt Brace. 214 p.
- Broggi A. 2018. Ending Grand Alliance Politics in Western Europe: US Anti-Communism in France and Italy, 1944–7. *Journal of Contemporary History*. 53(1). P. 134-157. DOI: 10.1177/0022009416678919
- Burds J. 2001. The Early Cold War in Soviet West Ukraine, 1944–1948. *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*. 1505. 73 p. DOI: 10.5195/cbp.2001.116
- Byrne M. 2004. The Road to Intervention: Factors Influencing US Policy Toward Iran, 1945–1953. *Mohammad Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran*. Ed. by Gasiorowski M.J., Byrne M. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press. P. 201-226.
- Carson A. 2018. *Secret Wars: Covert Conflict in International Politics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 344 p. DOI: 10.2307/j.ctv346p45
- Corke S.J. 2007. *US Covert Operations and Cold War Strategy: Truman, Secret Warfare and the CIA, 1945-53*. New York: Routledge. 256 p. DOI: 10.4324/9780203016305
- Critchfield J.H. 2003. The Early History of the Gehlen Organization and Its Influence on the Development of a National Security System in the Federal Republic of Germany. *Secret Intelligence in the Twentieth Century*. Ed. by Bungert H., Heitmann J.G., Wala M. London: Routledge. P. 159-166. DOI: 10.4324/9780203498859

- Cross-Domain Deterrence: Strategy in an Era of Complexity*. 2019. Ed. by Gartzke E., Lindsay J.R. New York: Oxford University Press. 384 p. DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780190908645.001.0001
- Cummings R.H. 2009. *Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950–1989*. Jefferson: McFarland. 320 p.
- De Mesquita B.B., Smith A., Siverson R.M., Morrow J.D. 2005. *The Logic of Political Survival*. Cambridge: MIT Press. 550 p.
- Del Pero M. 2001. The United States and "Psychological Warfare" in Italy, 1948–1955. *The Journal of American History*. 87(4). P. 1304-1334. DOI: 10.2307/2674730
- Downes A.B. 2021. *Catastrophic Success: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Goes Wrong*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 424 p. DOI: 10.7591/cornell/9781501761140.001.0001
- Downes A.B., Monten J. 2013. Forced to Be Free? Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization. *International Security*. 37(4). P. 90-131. DOI: 10.1162/ISEC_a_00117
- Downes A.B., O'Rourke L.A. 2016. You Can't Always Get What You Want: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Seldom Improves Interstate Relations. *International Security*. 41(2). P. 43-89. DOI: 10.1162/ISEC_a_00256
- Drezner D.W. 2011. Sanctions Sometimes Smart: Targeted Sanctions in Theory and Practice. *International Studies Review*. 13(1). P. 96-108. DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-2486.2010.01001.x
- Escribà-Folch A. 2012. Authoritarian Responses to Foreign Pressure: Spending, Repression, and Sanctions. *Comparative Political Studies*. 45(6). P. 683-713. DOI: 10.1177/0010414011427883
- Fevzi B. 2016. *Enver Hoxha: The Iron Fist of Albania*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing. 312 p. DOI: 10.5040/9781350986268
- Gasiorowski M.J. 2013. The CIA's TPBEDAMN Operation and the 1953 Coup in Iran. *Journal of Cold War Studies*. 15(4). P. 4-24. DOI: 10.1162/jcws_a_00393
- Goldenhuis D. 1998. *Foreign Political Engagement: Remaking States in The Post-Cold War World*. London: Palgrave Macmillan London. 326 p.
- Haas M.L. 2018. *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789–1989*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 248 p. DOI: 10.1515/9781501732461
- Hasanli J. 2006. *At the Dawn of the Cold War: The Soviet-American Crisis Over Iranian Azerbaijan, 1941–1946*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. 424 p.
- Hess G.R. 1974. The Iranian Crisis of 1945-46 and the Cold War. *Political Science Quarterly*. 89(1). P. 117-146.
- Intervention in World Politics*. 1986. Ed. by H. Bull. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 198 p.
- Istomin I. 2022. How Not to Interfere in Another Country's Domestic Politics. *International Affairs*. 98(5). P. 1677-1694. DOI: 10.1093/ia/iiaa191
- Jeffreys-Jones R. 2003. *The CIA and American Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press. 368 p.
- Jervis R. 1984. *The Illogic of American Nuclear Strategy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 203 p.
- Jervis R. 1989. *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect of Armageddon*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 266 p.
- Kaplan F. 1991. *The Wizards of Armageddon*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 452 p.
- Kastner J., Wohlforth W.C. 2021. A Measure Short of War: The Return of Great-Power Subversion. *Foreign Affairs*. 100(4). P. 118-131.
- Keohane R.O., Nye J.S. 1977. *Power and Interdependence: World Politics in Transition*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 300 p.

- Kinzer S. 2008. *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons. 258 p.
- Krickovic A. 2016. Catalyzing Conflict: The Internal Dimension of the Security Dilemma. *Journal Of Global Security Studies*. 1(2). P. 111-126. DOI: 10.1093/jogss/ogw002
- Kroenig M. 2018. *The Logic of American Nuclear Strategy: Why Strategic Superiority Matters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 280 p. DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780190849184.001.0001
- Kuzio T. 2012. US Support for Ukraine's Liberation During the Cold War: A Study of Prolog Research and Publishing Corporation. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*. 45(1-2). P. 51-64. DOI: 10.1016/j.postcomstud.2012.02.007
- Liddell Hart B.H. 1960. *Deterrent or Defence: A Fresh Look at the West's Military Policy*. London: Stevens & Sons. 257 p.
- Little R. 1987. Revisiting Intervention: A Survey of Recent Developments. *Review of International Studies*. 13(1). P. 49-60.
- Long S. 2020. CIA-MI6 Psychological Warfare and the Subversion of Communist Albania in the Early Cold War. *Intelligence and National Security*. 35(6). P. 787-807. DOI: 10.1080/02684527.2020.1754711
- Lucas S., Mistry K. 2009. Illusions of Coherence: George F. Kennan, US Strategy and Political Warfare in the Early Cold War, 1946–1950. *Diplomatic History*. 33(1). P. 39-66. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-7709.2008.00746.x
- Lulushi A. 2014. *Operation Valuable Fiend: The CIA's First Paramilitary Strike Against the Iron Curtain*. New York: Arcade Publishing. 326 p.
- Mandelbaum M. 1981. *The Nuclear Revolution: International Politics Before and After Hiroshima*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 283 p.
- Marku Y. 2022. Shifting Alliances: Albania in the Early Cold War. *Journal of Cold War Studies*. 24(3). P. 80-115.
- Mastanduno M. 1985. Strategies of Economic Containment: US Trade Relations with the Soviet Union. *World Politics*. 37(4). P. 503-531. DOI: 10.1162/jcws_a_01074
- Mastanduno M. 1988. Trade As a Strategic Weapon: American and Alliance Export Control Policy in the Early Postwar Period. *International Organization*. 42(1). P. 121-150.
- Mearsheimer J.J. 2001. *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. New York: WW Norton & Company. 555 p.
- Mikkonen S. 2012. Exploiting the Exiles: Soviet Émigrés in US Cold War Strategy. *Journal of Cold War Studies*. 14(2). P. 98-127. DOI: 10.1162/JCWS_a_00222
- Miller J.E. 1983. Taking Off the Gloves: The United States and the Italian Elections of 1948. *Diplomatic History*. 7(1). P. 35-56. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-7709.1983.tb00381.x
- Mistry K. 2006. The Case for Political Warfare: Strategy, Organization and US Involvement in the 1948 Italian Election. *Cold War History*. 6(3). P. 301-329. DOI: 10.1080/14682740600795451
- Mistry K. 2011. Re-Thinking American Intervention in the 1948 Italian Election: Beyond a Success–Failure Dichotomy. *Modern Italy*. 16(2). P. 179-194. DOI: 10.1080/13532944.2011.557224
- Mitrovich G. 2000. *Undermining the Kremlin: America's Strategy to Subvert the Soviet Bloc, 1947–1956*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 256 p.
- Needell A.A. 1993. “Truth Is Our Weapon”: Project TROY, Political Warfare, and Government-Academic Relations in the National Security State. *Diplomatic History*. 17(3). P. 399-420. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-7709.1993.tb00588.x
- O'Connell C.T. 1990. The Munich Institute for the Study of the USSR: Origin And Social Composition. *The Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies*. 808. 46 p. DOI: 10.5195/cbp.1990.47

- O'Rourke L.A. 2018. *Covert Regime Change: America's Secret Cold War*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 330 p. DOI: 10.7591/cornell/9781501730658.001.0001
- Osgood K.A. 2000. Form Before Substance: Eisenhower's Commitment to Psychological Warfare and Negotiations with the Enemy. *Diplomatic History*. 24(3). P. 405-433. DOI: 10.1111/0145-2096.00225
- Osgood K.A. 2006. *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas. 520 p.
- Park J., Choi H.J. 2022. Are Smart Sanctions Smart Enough? An Inquiry into When Leaders Oppress Civilians Under UN Targeted Sanctions. *International Political Science Review*. 43(3). P. 433-449. DOI: 10.1177/0192512120931957
- Peksen D. 2009. Better or Worse? The Effect of Economic Sanctions on Human Rights. *Journal of Peace Research*. 46(1). P. 59-77. DOI: 10.1177/0022343308098404
- Poznansky M. 2022. Revisiting Plausible Deniability. *Journal of Strategic Studies*. 45(4). P. 511-533. DOI: 10.1080/01402390.2020.1734570
- Puddington A. 2000. *Broadcasting Freedom: The Cold War Triumph of Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty*. University Press of Kentucky. 408 p.
- Reus-Smit C. 2013. The Concept of Intervention. *Review of International Studies*. 39(5). P. 1057-1076. DOI: 10.1017/S0260210513000296
- Rosenau J.N. 1969. Intervention as a Scientific Concept. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. 13(2). P. 149-171. DOI: 10.1177/002200276901300201
- Rositzke H. 1977. *The CIA's Secret Operations: Espionage, Counterespionage, and Covert Action*. Boulder: Westview Press. 326 p.
- Schwartz L.H. 2009. The Early Years of Radio Liberty, 1953-60. *Political Warfare Against the Kremlin*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. P. 124-147. DOI: 10.1057/9780230236936
- Snyder G.H. 1961. *Deterrence and Defense*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 306 p.
- Snyder G.H. 1965. Balance of Power or Balance of Terror. *Balance of Power*. Ed. by P. Seabury. San Francisco: Chandler. P. 185-201.
- Statiev A. 2010. *The Soviet Counterinsurgency in The Western Borderlands*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 368 p. DOI: 10.1017/CBO9780511730399
- Targeted sanctions*. 2016. Ed. by Biersteker T.J., Eckert S.E., Tourinho M. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 405 p. DOI: 10.1017/CBO9781316460290
- Tostensen A., Bull B. 2002. Are Smart Sanctions Feasible? *World Politics*. 54(3). P. 373-403. DOI: 10.1353/wp.2002.0010
- Tromly B. 2019. *Cold War Exiles and the CIA: Plotting to Free Russia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 352 p. DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780198840404.001.0001
- Vincent R.J. 1974. *Nonintervention and International Order*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 474 p.
- Weber C. 1995. *Simulating Sovereignty: Intervention, the State, and Symbolic Exchange*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 164 p.
- Werner S. 1996. Absolute and Limited War: The Possibility of Foreign-Imposed Regime Change. *International Interactions*. 22(1). P. 67-88. DOI: 10.1080/03050629608434880
- Wilber D.N. 2006. *Regime Change in Iran: Overthrow of Premier Mossadeq of Iran, November 1952-August 1953*. Nottingham: Spokesman Books. 111 p.
- Wohlforth W.C. 2020. Realism and Great Power Subversion. *International Relations*. 34(4). P. 459-481. DOI: 10.1177/0047117820968858