

Chapter 2

The Prevention of World War III: A Psychological Perspective

2.1 Introduction

I will start with a Jewish proverb and then will come to a Jewish story.¹ First the proverb: an insincere peace is better than a sincere war.²

I believe that there is currently an insincere peace between the super powers. For good reasons, they do not trust each other, and they are justified in doubting the other's peaceful intentions. There may be a few morally righteous extremists who would prefer the simplicity and clarity of a sincere war to an insincere peace, but most of us are prepared to accept the ambiguity and complexity of an insincere peace. We are aware that a sincere war involving the superpowers is likely to end up as a nuclear holocaust in which the survivors might well envy the dead.

It seems unlikely, however, that an insincere, hostile peace will long endure. To put it bluntly, it seems to be driving the governments of the superpowers 'NUTS'; NUTS is an acronym (Nuclear Utilization Target Selection) used by Keeny and Panofsky "to characterize the various doctrines that seek to use nuclear weapons against specific targets in a complex of nuclear war—fighting situations intended to be limited, as well as the management over an extended period of a general nuclear war between the superpowers" (1981–82: 289). It is crazy for the United States and the USSR each to be spending hundreds of billions of dollars on nuclear weapons systems with the illusion that it will be possible to 'prevail' over the other side in a nuclear war.

My Jewish story concerns a rabbi who was asked by a married couple to help resolve a dispute. The rabbi, deciding to see each spouse separately, first saw the wife and, after listening to her for some time, commented to her as she was leaving:

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² Adapted from "Preventing World War III: A Psychological Perspective," *Political Psychology* 3, no. 1 (1983): 3–31. Those who need to be convinced of the disastrous and horrifying consequences of nuclear war should read Jonathan Schell's *The Fate of the Earth* (1982).

“You are right.” Then, he saw the husband, heard his side, and, as he was leaving, told him: “You are right.” The rabbi’s wife, who had secretly been listening in the next room, confronted the rabbi and upbraided him: “How could you tell them both that they are right when they disagree so strongly?” The rabbi shrugged and said to his wife: “You are right, too.”

As the rabbi observed to the married couple, so it can be said of the superpowers: each is correct in thinking that the other is hostile, provocative, and dangerous to peace. The relations between them are pathological, and such malignant relations characteristically enmesh the participants in a web of interactions and defensive maneuvers that, instead of improving their situation, make both feel less secure, more vulnerable, and more burdened.

I believe it is important to recognize that the superpowers are involved in a pernicious social process that, given the existence of nuclear weapons, is too dangerous to continue. Perfectly sane and intelligent people, once caught up in such a process, may engage in actions that would seem to them rational and necessary but would be identified by a detached observer as contributing to the perpetuation and intensification of a vicious cycle.

You have seen this happen among married couples or in parent-adolescent relationships: decent, intelligent, rational people trap themselves in a vicious process that leads to outcomes—hostility, estrangement, violence—no one wants.

Therefore, I also believe that this can happen with nations. Sane, decent, intelligent people—leaders of the superpowers—have allowed their nations to become involved in a pathological process that is relentlessly driving them to actions and reactions that are steadily increasing the chances of a nuclear holocaust—an outcome no one wants. As I have indicated, in such a social process both sides are right in believing the other is hostile, malevolent, and intent on harm. The interactions and attitudes provide ample justification for such a belief.

I call such a social process—which is increasingly dangerous and costly and from which the participants see no way of extricating themselves without becoming vulnerable to an unacceptable loss in a value central to their self-identities or self-esteem—a malignant one.

In what follows, I want to sketch the general characteristics of such a process to indicate how the superpowers seem enmeshed in one and to suggest some ideas for getting out of it.

2.2 Characteristics of the Malignant Social Process

A number of key elements contribute to the development and perpetuation of a malignant process. They include (1) an anarchic social situation, (2) a win-lose or competitive orientation, (3) inner conflicts (within each of the parties) that express themselves through external conflict, (4) cognitive rigidity, (5) misjudgments and misperceptions, (6) unwitting commitments, (7) self-fulfilling prophecies,

(8) vicious escalating spirals, and (9) a gamesmanship orientation that turns the conflict away from issues of what in real life is being won or lost to an abstract conflict over images of power.

Although this discussion centers on the superpowers, my description of the malignant process can, I believe, be applied to the Arab-Israeli conflict and many other protracted, destructive conflicts.

2.2.1 *The Anarchic Social Situation*

There is a kind of situation that does not allow the possibility of rational behavior so long as the conditions for social order or mutual trust do not exist. I believe the current security dilemmas facing the superpowers partially result from their being in such a situation.

A characteristic symptom of such nonrational situations is that an attempt on the part of an individual or nation to increase its own welfare or security without regard to the security or welfare of others is self-defeating.

Consider for example the United States' decision to develop and test the hydrogen bomb in the effort to maintain military superiority over the USSR rather than to work for an agreement to ban testing of the H-bomb, thus preventing a spiraling arms race involving this monstrous weapon (Bundy 1982). This U.S. decision led the Soviet Union to attempt to catch up. Soon both superpowers were stockpiling H-bombs in a nuclear arms race that still continues in different forms.

U.S. leaders believed that if the Soviets had been the first to develop the H-bomb, they would have tested it and sought to reap the advantages of doing so. They were probably right. Both sides are aware of the temptations for each to increase security "by getting ahead." The fear of "falling behind" as well as the temptation to "get ahead" lead to a pattern of interactions that increases insecurity for both sides. Such situations, which are captured by the Prisoners' Dilemma game, have been extensively studied by myself (Deutsch 1958, 1973) and other social scientists (see Alker/Hurwitz 1981, for a comprehensive discussion).

When confronted with such social dilemmas, the only way an individual or nation can avoid being trapped in mutually reinforcing, self-defeating cycles is to attempt to change the situation so a basis of social order or mutual trust can be developed.

Comprehension of the nature of the situation we are in suggests that *mutual security* rather than national security should be our objective. The basic military axiom for both the East and the West should be that only those *military actions that increase the military security of both sides should be taken; military actions that give military superiority to one side or the other should be avoided*. The military forces of both sides should be viewed as having the common primary aim of preventing either side from starting a deliberate or accidental war.

Awareness of this common aim could be implemented by regular meetings of military leaders from East and West, the establishment of a continuing joint

technical group of experts to work together to formulate disarmament and inspection plans, the establishment of mixed military units on each other's territory, and so on.

The key point we must recognize is that if military inferiority is dangerous, so is military 'superiority'; it is dangerous for either side to feel *tempted* or *frightened* into military action. Neither the United States nor the USSR should want its weapons *or* those of the other side to be vulnerable to a first strike. Similarly, neither side should want the other side to be in a situation where its command, control, and communications systems have become so ineffective that the decision to use nuclear weapons will be in the hands of individual uncontrolled units.

2.2.2 *Competitive Orientations*

A malignant social process usually begins with a conflict that leads the parties to perceive their differences as the kind that create a situation in which one side will win and the other will lose. There will be a tendency, then, for perpetuation and escalation of the conflict. These are some of the characteristics of a competitive conflict process (see Chap. 5):

1. Communication between the parties is unreliable and impoverished. Either available communication channels and opportunities are not utilized or are used to try to mislead or intimidate. Little confidence is placed in information obtained directly from the other party; espionage and other circuitous means of obtaining information are relied upon. The poor communication enhances the possibility of error and misinformation of the sort likely to reinforce preexisting orientations and expectations. Thus, the ability of one party to notice and respond to shifts away from a win-lose orientation by the other party becomes impaired.
2. The conflict stimulates the view that the solution can only be imposed by one side or the other through superior force, deceptions, or cleverness. The enhancement of one's own and the minimization of the other's power become objectives. The attempt by each party to create or maintain a power difference favorable to its own side tends to expand the scope of the conflict from a focus on the immediate issue to a conflict over the power to impose one's preference upon the other.
3. The competitive conflict leads to a suspicious, hostile attitude that increases sensitivity to differences and threats while minimizing awareness of similarities. This, in turn, makes the usually accepted norms of conduct and morality less applicable. It permits behavior that would be considered outrageous if directed toward someone like oneself. Since neither side is likely to grant moral superiority to the other, the conflict is likely to escalate as one side or the other engages in behavior morally outrageous to the other.

I have written extensively (Deutsch 1969, 1973, 1980, 1982) about the diverse conditions leading people to define a situation with a mixture of cooperative and competitive features as a win-lose or competitive situation rather than as a cooperative one. Much of this can be summarized by what I have termed Deutsch's crude law of social relations: the characteristic processes and effects elicited by any given type of social relation tend also to induce that type of social relation (if introduced into the social relation before its character has been strongly determined).

In terms of competition, my crude hypothesis would indicate that competition induces and is induced by the use of tactics of coercion, threat, or deception; attempts to enhance the power differences between oneself and the other; poor communication; minimization of awareness of similarities in values and increased sensitivity to opposed interests; suspicious and hostile attitudes; the importance, rigidity, and size of the issues in conflict; and so on.

In contrast, cooperation induces and is induced by perceived similarity in beliefs and attitudes, readiness to be helpful, openness in communication, trusting and friendly attitudes, sensitivity to common interests and de-emphasis of opposed interests, orientation toward enhancing mutual power rather than power differences, and so on.

What is the nature of the conflict between the superpowers? Is it inherently a cutthroat, win-lose struggle? Public statements of the leaders of the two nations define the conflict as a confrontation of mutually irreconcilable ideologies, and it is apparent that basic ideological differences do exist. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that neither the United States nor the USSR closely resembles its ideological ideal. Neither Karl Marx nor Adam Smith would recognize his offspring.

Let us examine the central notions of each ideology. The key phrase of the American ethos is "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The vision is of the lone, self-reliant, enterprising individual who has escaped from the restraints of an oppressive community so as to be free to pursue his destiny in an environment that offers ever-expanding opportunity to those who are fittest.

The starting point of the communist ethos is the view that the human being is a social animal whose nature is determined by the way people are related to one another in their productive activities in any given community. The vision is of social beings free to cooperate with one another toward common objectives because they jointly own the means of production and share the rewards of their collective labor.

There is no need to detail here how far short of its ideal each system has fallen, nor to describe the many similarities in values and practices that characterize these complex modern industrialized societies. One might even suggest that many—but certainly not all—of the dissimilarities that strike the casual observer are differences that are due to variations in affluence and national character rather than to ideological distinctiveness.

In fact, neither ideology is more than an emphasis, a partial view of the total picture. Each side looks at the elephant from a different vantage point and, of

course, describes it as two different beasts. However, this much can be said about the beast (the relation of individual to society and between individual liberty and social justice): it is a complex animal that has different needs and characteristics at different stages of its development and in different environments. It is a poorly understood beast, and only careful, objective study from all vantage points will give us insight into its care and nurture.

But it is already evident that the beast needs both of its sides to function effectively. It needs individuals who are free to make their personal views and needs known, people who are neither conforming automatons nor slavish followers, and it also needs a community that enables men to recognize their interrelatedness and to cooperate with one another in producing the social conditions that foster the development of creative, responsible people.

I suggest that neither the Marxist ideology nor the American ideology is consistent enough or operational enough to be proved or disproved by empirical test. Nor is either specific enough to be a guide to action in the day-to-day decisions that shape the course of history.

I have stressed the fact that ideologies are vague. Vagueness permits diverse aspirations and changing practices to be accommodated under the same ideological umbrella. There are two important implications to be drawn. First, it is useless to try to refute an ideology. Moreover, since an ideology often serves important integrative functions, the attempt to refute it is likely to elicit defensiveness and hostility. Like old soldiers, ideologies never die; they are best left to fade away. Second, the vagueness of ideologies permits redefinitions of who is 'friend' or 'foe.' There is ample room in the myth systems of both the United States and the Soviet Union (or China) to find a basis of amicable relations.

The resurgence of the cold war has intensified our perception of ideological differences between East and West. Now, however, in light of internal conflicts within both East and West, (the Sino-Soviet break and the trade disagreements among the nations in the Western Alliance are only the more obvious cases), we have an opportunity to revise our images of the nature of the so-called struggle between communism and freedom. We have more basis for recognizing that the ideological dispute is only the manifest rationalization of other less noble motives on both sides.

As Freud pointed out, the manifest life of the mind—what men know or pretend to know and say about the motives for their behavior—is often merely a socially acceptable rationalization of their unrecognized or latent motives. I suggest that the intensity of the ideological struggle has primarily reflected an anachronistic power struggle between two continental superpowers that have defined their prestige and security in terms of world leadership. The emergence of a power struggle between the United States and Russia was predicted by Alexis de Tocqueville in 1835 and by many others long before Russia adopted a communist ideology. It is much easier for Soviet leaders to rationalize an attempt to control and repress the popularly supported Solidarity movement in Poland by thinking of it and calling it a tool of American imperialism than to admit a crude attempt to maintain Soviet domination. Similarly, it is much easier for the United States to rationalize its support for corrupt dictatorial

governments in Latin America, Africa, and Asia in terms of a defense against communism rather than to consider it an attempt to maintain our world power.

As Milburn et al. (1982: 19) point out, there are curious mirror-image aspects in the views of leading Soviet and American analysts. Pipes (1976) and Conquest (1979) on the American side have positions analogous to those of Suslov and Romanov on the Soviet side:

All believe that the leadership of their major adversary is monolithic and that there are essentially no differences among members of the ruling class of their opponents.... Those on the ideological right in both countries argue for the obstinate, stubborn, immutability of their imperialistic opposite number: you just cannot deal with these people; you cannot influence them or produce change in the way they think and act. Negotiation with them is likely to prove a waste of time and, besides, they cannot be trusted. (Milburn et al. 1982: 19).

As I have suggested earlier, both superpowers are correct in thinking that the other side is attempting to increase its relative power, and it is natural that those on each side most caught up in the competitive power struggle come to have views that are mirror images of one another. This is the inevitable result of a competitive power struggle.

Traditionally, the quest for world power has been closely bound to strivings for national security, economic dominance, and international prestige or influence. The quest has commonly taken the form of an attempt to establish military supremacy over major competitors. It is increasingly recognized that the drive for military dominance in the age of missiles and hydrogen bombs is dangerously anachronistic. So too, crude economic imperialism—Western or Eastern style—no longer provides as much opportunity for economic gain as does a concentration upon scientific research and development. However, the quest for international power and influence is a reasonable one for all societies. In a later section, I shall discuss the development of fair rules for competition for power and influence.

2.2.3 Inner Conflicts

Although competition is a necessary condition for malignant conflict, it is not a sufficient one. Malignant conflict persists because internal needs require the competitive process between the conflicting parties.

There are many kinds of internal needs for which a hostile external relationship can be an outlet.

- It may provide an acceptable excuse for internal problems; the problems can be held out as caused by the adversary or by the need to defend against the adversary.
- It may provide a distraction so internal problems appear less salient.
- It can provide an opportunity to express pent-up hostility arising from internal conflict through combat with the external adversary.

- It may enable one to project disapproved aspects of oneself (which are not consciously recognized) onto the adversary and to attack them through attack on the adversary.
- It may permit important parts of one's self—including attitude, skills, and defenses developed during conflictual relations in one's formative stages—to be expressed and valued because the relations with the present adversary resemble earlier conflictual relations; and so on.

When an external conflict serves internal needs, it may be difficult to give it up until other means of satisfying these needs are developed. There is little doubt that the conflict between the superpowers has served important internal functions for the ruling establishments in the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Soviet establishment has been able to justify the continuation of its autocratic form of government, the Russian domination of the other nationalities in the Soviet Union, the control of the nations of Eastern Europe, and the subordination of Communist parties in other countries—all in terms of its struggle against “the dark forces of imperialism.”

The U.S. establishment has been able to justify intervention in other countries (under the guise of support for anticommunism) to promote the interests of American business, support the continuation and growth of the military-industrial complex, rationalize governmental secrecy so that many important decisions are made without the possibility of informed public discussion of the issues, and inhibit the development of significant and sustained political opposition to the policies of the national security establishment.

It seems clear that an external enemy, or ‘devil,’ has served many useful functions for those in power in both the Soviet Union and the United States. However, there is growing recognition by important elements within each superpower that the increasing dangers and costs of the arms race may begin to dwarf the gains from having a superpower as an external devil.

2.2.4 Cognitive Rigidity

Malignant conflict is fostered by cognitive rigidity, which leads to becoming set in positions because of inability to envisage alternatives. An oversimplified black-and-white view of issues in a dispute contributes to the rigidity. So does the high level of tension that may be generated by an intense conflict. The excessive tension leads to a constriction of thought, impairing capability for conceiving of new alternatives and options. To the extent that parties in a conflict rigidly set themselves in their initial positions, they are unable to explore the range of potentially available solutions, among which might be one that satisfies the interests of both sides. In contrast, cognitive openness and flexibility facilitate a creative search for alternatives that may be mutually satisfying, with the initial opposed positions evaporating as new concordant options emerge.

Although the views of knowledgeable American scholars on the Soviet Union may be sophisticated and the same may also be true for Soviet scholars who specialize in American studies, there is little reason to think this is true of the policymakers of the superpowers. They appear to have developed conceptions of the other power that reflect ideological indoctrinations they were exposed to in their earlier years. They have not traveled to the other superpower nor have they had informal contacts with counterparts in the other nation. In short, they have had little opportunity to learn that the other does not neatly fit the rigid stereotypes developed in their younger years. This is an important defect in the experience of the leaders of the superpowers and should be remedied through systematic attempts to cultivate such experiences.

2.2.5 Misjudgments and Misperceptions

Impoverished communication, hostile attitudes, and oversensitivity to differences—typical effects of competition—lead to distorted views that may intensify and perpetuate conflict; other distortions commonly occur in the course of interaction. Elsewhere (Deutsch 1962b, 1965), I have described some of the common sources of misperception in interactional situations. Many of these misperceptions function to transform a conflict into a competitive struggle—even if the conflict did not emerge from a competitive relationship.

Let me illustrate with the implications of a simple psychological principle. The perception of any act is determined by both the perception of the act itself and the context within which it occurs. The context of a social act often is not obvious, whereupon we tend to assume a familiar context—one that seems likely in terms of our own past experience. Since both the present situation and the past experience of actor and perceiver may be rather different, it is not surprising that the two will interpret the same act quite differently. Misunderstandings of this sort are very likely, of course, when actor and perceiver come from different cultural backgrounds and are not fully informed about these differences. A period of rapid social change also makes such misunderstandings widespread as the gap between past and present widens.

Given the fact that the ability to place oneself in another's shoes is notoriously underemployed by and underdeveloped in most people, and also given the impairment of this ability by stress and inadequate information, it is to be expected that certain typical biases will emerge in the perceptions of actions during conflict.

Thus, since most people are more strongly motivated to hold a positive view of themselves than to hold such a view of others, a bias toward perceiving one's own behavior as being the more benevolent and legitimate is not surprising. This is a simple restatement of a well-demonstrated psychological truth, namely, that the evaluation of an act is affected by the evaluation of its source—and the source is part of the context of behavior. Research has shown, for example, that American students are likely to rate more favorably an action of the United States directed

toward the Soviet Union than the same action directed by the Soviet Union toward the United States. We are likely to view American espionage activities in the Soviet Union as more benevolent than similar activities by Soviet agents in the United States.

If each side in a conflict tends to perceive its own motives and behavior as the more benevolent and legitimate, it is evident that the conflict will intensify. If A perceives its actions as a benevolent, legitimate way of interfering with actions that B has no right to engage in, A will be surprised by the intensity of B's hostile response and will have to escalate its counteraction to negate B's response. But how else is B likely to act if it perceives its own actions as well motivated? And how unlikely is it not to respond to A's escalation with counter escalation if it is capable of doing so?

To the extent that there is a biased perception of benevolence and legitimacy, one could also expect that there will be a parallel bias in what is considered to be an equitable agreement for resolving conflict. Should not differential legitimacy be differentially rewarded? The biased perception of what is a fair compromise makes agreement more difficult and thus extends conflict.

Another consequence of the biased perception of benevolence and legitimacy is reflected in the asymmetries between trust and suspicion and between cooperation and competition. Trust, when violated, is more likely to turn into suspicion than negated suspicion is to turn into trust. Similarly, it is easier to move from cooperation to competition than in the other direction.

There are, of course, other types of processes leading to misperceptions and misjudgments (see Jervis 1976, for an excellent discussion). In addition to distortions arising from pressures for self-consistency and dissonance reduction (which are discussed below), intensification of conflict may induce stress and tension beyond a moderate optimal level, and this over-activation, in turn, may lead to an impairment of perceptual and cognitive processes in several ways. It may reduce the range of perceived alternatives; it may reduce the time perspective in such a way as to cause a focus on the immediate rather than the overall consequences of the perceived alternatives; it may polarize thought so that precepts will tend to take on a simplistic black-or-white, for-or-against, good-or-evil cast; it may lead to stereotyped response; it may increase the susceptibility to fear- or hope-inciting rumors; it may increase defensiveness; it may increase the pressures for social conformity.

In effect, excessive tension reduces the intellectual resources available for discovering new ways of coping with a problem or new ideas for resolving a conflict. Intensification of conflict is the likely result, as simplistic thinking and polarization of thought push the participants to view their alternatives as being limited to victory or defeat.

There are three basic ways to reduce the misjudgments and misperceptions that typically occur during the course of conflict. They are not mutually exclusive, and if possible all should be used.

One method entails making explicit the assumptions and evidence that underlie one's perceptions and judgments. Then one would examine how likely these were to have been influenced by any of the common sources of misperception and

misjudgment and how reliable and valid they would be considered by an objective outsider—as in a court of law, for example.

A second method entails bringing in outsiders to see whether their judgments and perceptions of the situation are in agreement or disagreement with one's own. They may have different vantage points, different sources of information, and more objectivity, which would enable them to recognize errors of judgment and misperceptions developing from enmeshment in the conflict. The outsiders should have the independence to ensure that they are free to form their own views and the stature to be able to communicate them so that they will be heard.

When the nature of the conflict is such that the employment of objective outsiders is not feasible, the use of internal devil's advocates has been recommended (George 1972; Janis 1972) as a way of challenging the assumptions and evidence underlying one's perceptions and judgments. Here, too, it is important that the devil's advocates be sufficiently independent and prestigious to present hard challenges to conventional views in a way that cannot be ignored.

Finally, there are agreements that can be made with one's adversary to reduce the chances of malignant misjudgment and misperceptions during conflict. Such agreements could promote continuing informal contacts among international affairs and military specialists on both sides. They could provide for regular feedback of each side's interpretations of the other's communications. They could enable each side to present its viewpoints on television and in the mass media of the other side on a regular basis. They could provide for role-reversal enactments, where each side is required to state the position of the other side to the other side's complete satisfaction before either side advocates its own position (Rapoport 1960).

None of the foregoing procedures would be certain to eliminate all misperceptions and misjudgments during conflict. Yet, in combination, they might substantially reduce them and, in consequence, decrease the risks that conflict would escalate because of poor communication and misunderstandings. As the superpowers increasingly place themselves in the position where their leaders and strategic advisers may feel they must launch their nuclear-tipped missiles within minutes after being informed that the other side has initiated nuclear attack, the importance of not misinterpreting the other's behaviors and intentions is increasingly urgent.

2.2.6 Unwitting Commitments

In a malignant social process, the parties not only become overcommitted to rigid positions, but also become committed, unwittingly, to the beliefs, defenses, and investments involved in carrying out their conflictual activities. The conflict, then, is maintained and perpetuated by the commitments and investments given rise to by the malignant conflict process itself.

Consider, for example, the belief by leaders of the American government that the Soviet Union would destroy us militarily if it could. This leads to actions, such as intensifying military buildup, which, in turn, produce an increased psychological

commitment to the belief. For example, with a decision to build the MX missile, doubts about the beliefs that support the decision will be reduced in a psychological process of dissonance reduction. Within limits, the more costly the actions you take based on your beliefs, the greater the need to reduce any prior-to-action doubts that you may have had about your beliefs (Festinger 1957). Jervis has an excellent, detailed discussion with many illustrations from international conflict of how the need to reduce cognitive dissonance will “introduce an unintended and unfortunate continuity in policy” (1976: 405).

One of the characteristics of a pathological defense mechanism is that it is perpetuated by its failures rather than by its successes in protecting security. An individual might, for example, attempt to defend himself from feeling like a failure by not really trying, attributing failure to lack of effort rather than lack of ability. The result is that the person does not succeed and does not quell anxieties and doubts about the ability to succeed. As a consequence, when again faced with a situation of being anxious about failing, the individual will resort to the same defense of not trying; it provides temporary relief of anxiety even as it perpetuates the need for the defense, since the individual has cut himself off from the possibility of success.

So too, the defenses that emerge during the course of conflict can perpetuate themselves and the conflict. Thus, suppose the Soviet Union, because it is suspicious of the United States and its intentions toward the Soviet bloc, defends itself by limiting the amount of dissidence that can be expressed in Poland and other Eastern European nations. The repression of dissidence does not permit grievances to be expressed and makes it less likely that the necessary socioeconomic changes to reduce discontent will occur. As a consequence, discontent and dissidence may grow, and there will be a need for the continued use of the defense of repression.

Parties to a conflict, frequently, get committed to perpetuating the conflict by the investments they have made in conducting the conflict. Thus, for example, in explaining his opposition to an American proposal shortly before Pearl Harbor, Prime Minister Tojo said that the demand that Japan withdraw its troops from China was unacceptable (as quoted in Jervis 1976: 398):

We sent a large force of one million men (to China) and it has cost us well over 100,000 dead and wounded, (the grief of) their bereaved families, hardships for four years, and a national expenditure of several tens of billions of yen. We must by all means get satisfactory results from this.

Similarly, there is considerable evidence to suggest that those who have acquired power, profit, prestige, jobs, knowledge, or skills during the course of conflict may feel threatened by the diminution or ending of conflict. Both the Soviet and the U.S. military-industrial complexes have developed vested interests in the cold war; it justifies large military budgets, gives them positions of power and prestige, and makes their skills and knowledge useful. They have good reason to be apprehensive about an “outbreak of peace” that would make them obsolete, deprive them of power and status, and make them lose financially. Under such conditions, it is quite natural to accentuate those perspectives and aspects of reality that justify the continuation of an arms race.

These understandable fears have to be dealt with constructively, or else they may produce defensive adherence to the views that justify a war. I suggest that we must carefully plan to anticipate the psychological difficulties in the transition to a peaceful world; otherwise the resistance to such a transition may be overwhelming.

As a basic strategy to overcome some of these difficulties, I would recommend that we consider a policy of overcompensating those who otherwise might be adversely affected by the change. We want to alter the nature of their psychological investment from military pursuits to peaceful pursuits.

2.2.7 Self-fulfilling Prophecies

Merton, in his classic paper “The Self-fulfilling Prophecy” (1957), has pointed out that distortions are often perpetuated because they may evoke new behavior that makes the originally *false* conception come true. The specious validity of the self-fulfilling prophecy perpetuates a reign of error. The prophet will cite the actual course of events as proof that he was right from the very beginning.

The dynamics of the self-fulfilling prophecy help to explain individual pathology—for example, the anxious student who, afraid he might fail, worries so much that he cannot study, with the consequence that he does fail. It also contributes to our understanding of social pathology—for example, how prejudice and discrimination against blacks keep them in a position that seems to justify the prejudice and discrimination.

So, too, in international relations. If the policymakers of East and West believe that war is likely and either side attempts to increase its military security vis-a-vis the other, the other side’s response will justify the initial move. The dynamics of an arms race has the inherent quality of “*folie a deux*,” wherein the self-fulfilling prophecies mutually reinforce one another. As a result, both sides are right to think that the other is provocative, dangerous, and malevolent. Each side, however, is blind to how its own policies and behavior have contributed to the development of the other’s hostility. If each superpower could recognize its own part in maintaining the malignant relations, it could lead to a reduction of mutual recrimination and an increase in mutual problem solving.

2.2.8 Vicious Escalating Spirals

In recent years, a number of social psychologists have concerned themselves with understanding the conditions under which people become entrapped in a self-perpetuating cycle of escalating commitment (Teger 1980; Rubin 1981; Levi 1981).

Decision makers sometimes face the problem of deciding whether to persist in a failing, costly course of action; they must choose between, on the one hand, changing their course of action so as to cut their losses and, on the other hand, continuing to invest in the hope of reaching their goal.

Ariel Levi (1981) has developed a model of the factors affecting decision making when such a dilemma has to be faced. The model implies that the tendency to escalate commitments after failure should be greatest when the decision maker (1) evaluates his losses thus far as very negative, (2) considers that further losses will not make his position much worse than the losses already suffered, and (3) believes that the previous failures do not reduce the chances of success of an increased commitment of resources.

From Levi's model, it can be predicted that decision makers who see themselves as highly accountable to others for their decisions are likely to be cautious before losses have occurred but increasingly ready to take risks as losses increase. Also, since gains or losses are evaluated from a reference point, the greater the losses are perceived to be from this reference point, the greater will be the decision maker's tendency to escalate his commitment. In addition, if the decision maker attributes the previous losses to changeable factors, escalation of commitments is likely.

Levi's model is based, in part, upon Kahneman and Tversky's (1979) prospect theory, which seeks to explain why decision makers systematically violate the basic tenets of rational, economic decision making. One of their basic assumptions is that people undervalue outcomes that are merely probable in comparison with outcomes that are obtainable with certainty. This certainty effect means that a gambler facing the prospect of a sure loss of a smaller amount if he stops now and an uncertain loss of a larger amount if he continues to gamble is apt to choose to take the risk of increasing his losses.

The superpowers appear to be trapped in an escalating commitment to an arms race that is rapidly increasing the risk of an accidental nuclear war. As Arthur M. Cox has pointed out:

Most of the new nuclear weapons will have a capability for a first strike because they can reach their targets with such speed, accuracy and power. When they are deployed, both sides will be on hair-trigger alert, especially at times of political crisis. These weapons will be able to destroy nuclear command, control and communications systems, both human and mechanical. Those systems are vulnerable and subject to error. The United States in 1979 and 1980 had three nuclear-war alerts caused by false alarms from computer error. Fortunately, for this planet, we could survive such false alarms because there was time to ascertain the error before a command to launch was given.

In the future there will not be time.

In June, 1980, Fred C. Ikle, the present Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, wrote an article in the Washington Post entitled "The Growing Risk of War by Accident." He said: "The more we rely on launch on warning (or, for that matter, the more the Soviets do) the greater the risk of accidental nuclear war.... The crux of the matter is that the more important it becomes to launch on warning, the more dangerous it will be. The tightening noose around our neck is the requirement for speed. The more certain one wants to be that our missile forces (or Soviet missile forces) could be launched within minutes and under all circumstances, the more one has to practice the system and to loosen the safeguards" (New York Times, May 27, 1982).

We are progressively tightening the noose around our necks out of the increasing fears that each side is creating by its development of nuclear weapons that have a first-strike capability. The notion that each side must be prepared to "launch on

warning” is the culmination of the escalating, competitive “game of strategy” being played by the superpowers in which each side has initiated moves to improve its strategic position without adequate recognition of how the other would be forced to respond and without positive concern for what would happen to the strategic position of the other.

2.2.9 Gamesmanship

What is so psychologically seductive about nuclear weapons and hypothetical nuclear war scenarios that strategists and decision makers in both superpowers are drawn to them like moths to a flame? There are so many dimensions of power—economic, political, cultural, scientific, sports, educational, and so on—in which the struggle between the superpowers could be played out. What is the special fascination to playing the international power game with nuclear weapons?

I speculate that two key psychological features make the nuclear game a supergame: it has a tremendous emotional kick for those with strong power drives, and it is a very tidy, abstract game.

It has a tremendous emotional kick for several reasons: the stakes are high (the fate of the earth is at risk), decisions have to be made quickly (there is no time for indecisiveness), and the use of nuclear weapons is inherently an aggressive action.

For those with strong power drives, being in a position of nuclear superiority can be seen as a sure way to dominate and control others, whereas being in a position of nuclear inferiority can be seen as a sure way to be dominated and humiliated by others. In the eyes of those driven by power, nuclear weapons are the purest and most concentrated form of power that exists. As Barnett (1972) has pointed out, the national security managers and our governing class are educated and selected in a way that ensures that many will have strong power drives and a conception of human life that leads them to believe that, unless one controls and dominates, one will be controlled and dominated.

In order to be a competent participant in nuclear war games, one must be steel-like and unflinching in resolve not to allow the other side to prevail no matter how catastrophic the consequences. Maccoby (1976) has suggested that the “gamesman” differs from the “jungle fighter.” The latter’s lust for power is passionate and open, and the domination he seeks is personal and concrete. In contrast, the gamesman’s power drive is more depersonalized. His game of power is played coolly, analytically, and with emotional detachment. As Maccoby says:

He is energized to compete not because he wants to build an empire, not for riches, but rather for fame, glory, the exhilaration of running his team and of gaining victories. His main goal is to be known as a winner, and his deepest fear is to be labeled a loser, (p. 100)

Maccoby further describes gamesmen in these terms:

Imaginative gamesmen tend to create a new reality, less limiting than normal, everyday reality. Like many adolescents, they seem to crave a more romantic, fast-paced, semi

fantasy life, and this need puts them in danger of losing touch with reality and of unconsciously lying. The most successful gamesmen keep this need under control and are able to distinguish between the game and reality, but even so, in boring meetings they sometimes imagine that they are really somewhere else—at a briefing for an air-bombing mission, or in a hideout where the detested manager who is speaking is really a Mafia chieftain whom the gamesman will someday rub out.... At their worst moments gamesmen are unrealistic, manipulative, and compulsive workaholics. Their hyped-up activity hides doubt about who they are and where they are going. Their ability to escape allows them to avoid unpleasant realities. When they let down, they are faced with feelings that make them feel powerless. The most compulsive players must be “turned on,” energized by competitive pressures. Deprived of challenge at work, they are bored and slightly depressed. Life is meaningless outside the game, and they tend to sit around watching TV or drinking too much. But once the game is on, once they feel they are in the Super Bowl or one-on-one against another star, they come to life, think hard, and are cool. (pp. 108–109)

The abstract character of nuclear war scenarios appeals to the talented, imaginative gamesmen, who are the leading strategic analysts in the national security establishments of the United States and the USSR. The game is exciting and competitive, calling for the use of inventive thought, cool, analytic ability, and emotional toughness. It has little of the messiness of war games involving real soldiers, battlefield commanders, rain, mud, and pestilence. It is basically an abstract, impersonal, computerized game, involving nuclear weapons with strategists on each side trying to outsmart the other.

To play the game, each side has to make assumptions about how its own weapons (and its command, control, and communications systems) will operate in various hypothetical future nuclear war scenarios, as well as how the other side's will operate. There is, of course, very little basis in actual experience for making accurate, reliable, or valid assumptions about these matters, since none of these weapons or systems has been tested or employed in circumstances even remotely resembling the situation of any imaginable nuclear war.

However, for the nuclear game to be played and for scenarios to be developed, assumptions about these matters have to be made. Once these assumptions have been made and have, by consensus, been accepted within one side's strategic group, they become psychologically 'real' and are treated as "hard facts" no matter how dubious their grounding in actual realities.

These "psychological realities" and dubious "hard facts" are then used as a basis for further decisions in the strategic game of preparing for the eventuality of nuclear war. The decisions may entail potential expenditures of hundreds of billions of dollars for new nuclear weapons—as, for instance, on the MX missile and the B-1 bomber—which will require the strategic gamesmen on the other side to respond (also based on their "psychological realities" and dubious "hard facts") in a way that will prevent them from 'losing' the nuclear war game.

This alluring, involving, imaginative game is played in an abstracted, unreal world in which the real costs of playing (extravagant damage being done to the economic systems of the superpowers and the world) and the real horrors of nuclear war are not faced. There is a continuing need to make these costs and horrors "psychologically real" to the people and decision makers of the superpowers as well

as a continuing necessity to challenge the dubious “hard facts” underlying the “psychological realities” of the strategic gamesmen on both sides.

Let me summarize my presentation so far. I believe the United States and the Soviet Union are entrapped in a malignant social process giving rise to a web of interactions and defensive maneuvers, which, instead of improving their situations, make them both feel less secure, more vulnerable, more burdened, and a threat to each other and to the world at large. This malignant social process is fostered and maintained by anachronistic competition for world leadership; security dilemmas created for both superpowers by competitive orientations and the lack of a strong world community; cognitive rigidities arising from archaic, oversimplified, black-and-white, mutually antagonistic ideologies; misperceptions, unwitting commitments, self-fulfilling prophecies, and vicious escalating spirals that typically arise during the course of competitive conflict; gamesmanship orientations to security dilemmas, which turn a conflict from what in real life is being won or lost to an abstract conflict over images of power in which nuclear missiles become the pawns for enacting the game of power; and by internal problems and conflicts within each of the superpowers that can be managed more easily because of external conflicts.

2.3 Reducing the Danger

What can be done to reverse this malignant social process? How can we begin to reduce the dangers resulting from the military gamesmanship and security dilemmas of the superpowers? Let me turn to the latter question first.

I shall outline a number of proposals, none original. They are based upon what I consider to be common sense rather than specialized knowledge of military affairs or international relations, although I have informed myself as best I could in these areas. These matters are too important to be considered only by specialists.

1. “The truly revolutionary nature of nuclear weapons as instruments of war” (Keeny and Panofsky 1981–82: 287) suggests that the United States and the USSR should quickly come to an agreement banning the first use of nuclear weapons and should, as part of this accord, jointly agree to punitive actions to deter any other nation’s first use of nuclear weapons. Such an agreement between the superpowers should be presented to the United Nations for discussion and ratification.

The United States and the nations in Western Europe appear to be concerned, however, that a no-first-use agreement would place their nonnuclear military forces at a disadvantage in case the military forces of the Soviet bloc were to attack Western Europe (although there is considerable dispute among ‘experts’ as to whether this is the case). Thus, the no-first-use agreement should be preceded by a nonaggression pact between the Soviet bloc and NATO nations (including France) and should come into effect only after five years during

which time unilateral or bilateral changes could be made to bring the opposing conventional military forces into balance.

Almost all experts appear to agree that a limited nuclear war involving the superpowers is very likely to turn into an all-out nuclear war (for example, Bundy et al. 1982). Hence, it is imperative to establish strong barriers against the use of any nuclear weapons by the superpowers. But the Western powers seem reluctant to agree on no first use because of the 'superiority' of the conventional forces of the Soviet bloc. A five year period to right the balance of conventional forces either by increasing the strength of the Western forces or by decreasing the military forces of the Soviet bloc, or both, should be sufficient, especially if it is buttressed by a nonaggression pact. Western Europe has more material and population resources than the Soviet bloc. There is no reason why it should feel unable to defend itself against a conventional attack.

As a matter of highest priority, we should not continue to dillydally about a no-first-use agreement. It not only could deter use of nuclear weapons by nations in the second and third worlds but also could pave the way for a substantial reduction in the number of nuclear weapons deployed and stockpiled by the superpowers.

2. Immediately following the signing of a no-first-use agreement, representatives from NATO and the Soviet bloc should meet continuously to seek verifiable agreements that would (a) eliminate all short-range and intermediate-range nuclear missiles including all missiles in Western Europe and all missiles in the Soviet bloc that could not reach the United States; (b) reduce conventional armaments in the Soviet bloc and the NATO bloc, particularly those weapons that have little value for defense, and reduce the possibility of surprise attack; (c) create a demilitarized zone in Central Europe that would separate the military forces of the Soviet bloc and NATO by a militarily significant amount of space.
3. The United States and the USSR should each unilaterally and through agreement seek to increase the stability of nuclear deterrence by removing those nuclear weapons from their arsenals that are vulnerable to a first strike, by renouncing use of "launch on warning," and by agreeing to a verifiable freeze on further deployment, research, development, and testing of nuclear weapons. After the freeze, a verifiable reduction to a small number of strategic weapons on each side should take place; the total of both sides should be significantly less than the number that could trigger a "nuclear winter" if the weapons were used.
4. The United States and the USSR should establish joint working groups that would collaborate (a) to reduce the risks of accidental nuclear war or war due to misunderstanding, and (b) to foster the development of effective defenses against nuclear weapons. Both sides should want to tip the nuclear balance strongly toward defense. This can only be done through cooperative scientific and technological work on defense (so that one side does not acquire the possibility of a successful defense against the other's nuclear weapons while the other remains vulnerable to an attack) and a drastic elimination of weapons (so that an effective defense becomes feasible). As the nuclear balance shifts strongly toward defense, it should be possible to move toward nuclear disarmament.

5. Since the Middle East is so volatile, the United States should seek to become independent of oil supplied from the Middle East as rapidly as possible. The development of alternative sources of energy—shale oil, coal, solar power, geothermal, and so forth—should be fostered by governmental policy. The United States should not be in the position of having to intervene militarily in the Middle East in order to preserve a supply of energy for itself or its allies.

A bold and courageous American leadership would take a risk for peace.

It would announce its determination to end the crazy arms race. It would offer to agree to a package of no first use of nuclear weapons, a nonaggression pact between the NATO and the Warsaw Pact nations, and a substantial reduction and equalization of the opposing conventional forces in Europe.

At the same time, the United States would initiate a “Graduated Reciprocation in Tension Reduction” (GRIT) process (Osgood 1959, 1962). We would state our determination to end the nuclear arms race and would announce an across-the-board unilateral reduction of, for example, 10 % of our existing nuclear weapons, inviting the USSR and other nations to verify that so many nuclear weapons in each category were being destroyed. We would request the USSR to reciprocate in a similar fashion.

I believe our superfluity of nuclear weapons is such that we could afford to make several rounds of unilateral cuts, even if the Soviets did not initially reciprocate, without losing our capacity to retaliate against any nuclear attack so that destruction of the Soviet society would still be assured. Such repeated unilateral initiations, if sincere in intent and execution, would place the Soviet Union under the strongest pressure to reciprocate. We could replace the arms race with a peace race.

2.4 Undoing the Malignant Social Process

Although some of the dangers of living in a mad nuclear world can be controlled by arms control and disarmament agreements, the reality is that we cannot put the genie back into the bottle; the possibility of making hydrogen bombs, nuclear missiles, and other weapons of mass destruction will continue to exist—*forever*. This is why we must seek to remove the malignancy from relations between the superpowers and develop sufficiently cooperative relations among all major powers to make a major war unlikely.

Great Britain and France both possess hydrogen bombs and missiles, and we in the United States are not unduly disturbed by this reality because our relations with these countries are sufficiently cooperative. Also, there are many more nuclear missiles in the western part of the United States than in the eastern part; nevertheless, as an easterner, I am not anxious about this disparity. We are part of one nation and the weapons are not controlled by individual states but by a government representing all states, and there appears to be little likelihood of another Civil War.

How do we undo the malignant social process in which the superpowers are enmeshed? The first step is to heighten everyone’s consciousness of how crazy the

process is and to make people aware of both its very real dangers and enormous economic costs. The people of the United States, the Soviet Union, and the rest of the world should be encouraged to recognize the craziness of the process and to denounce it as unacceptably dangerous and costly to humanity. It is difficult to induce a therapeutic change in a pathological process until the pathology is recognized as such and seen to be unacceptably harmful.

The second step is to focus on the underlying dynamics that foster and maintain the pathology. In my earlier description of the key features of a malignant social process, I sketched the dynamics in general terms. Here, I want to highlight two features that are central to the pathological relations between the superpowers: the security dilemma and their competitive orientations.

The security dilemma stems from the development of nuclear weapons that have made the world a more uncertain, dangerous, and anxious place and have revolutionized the nature of war. They have outmoded the concepts of “military victory,” “military supremacy,” and “nuclear superiority” as pertinent to the relations between the superpowers and made the anachronistic pursuit of such goals endangering to self as well as to others.

The danger and resulting anxiety push policymakers in the superpowers to use what has been a good defense against danger and anxiety in the past: increase power vis-a-vis the adversary. But this previously successful defense against insecurity now does the opposite: it increases insecurity. Overcoming this underlying pathological dynamic requires the recognition that the old defense is inappropriate to the new, revolutionary situation caused by nuclear weapons.

As I have indicated earlier, the old notion of “national security” must be replaced by the new notion of “mutual security” if the superpowers are to break out of this malignant social process. It is difficult to give up old, well-established beliefs even when they have become dysfunctional until the new beliefs have been implemented and seen to work. We must begin to implement the idea of mutual security and give it a chance to work.

As for competitive orientation, it is evident that the superpowers have such an orientation toward their conflicts, and this makes it difficult for them to handle their security dilemma cooperatively and constructively. But must their conflicts for power and prestige be conducted as cut throat affairs or can fair rules for competition be developed? Is it possible to develop a cooperative framework to support adherence to fair rules?

2.5 Fair Rules for Competition

A contest is considered to be fair if the conditions and rules are such that no contestant is systematically advantaged or disadvantaged in relation to other contestants. All have equal rights and opportunities, and all are in the same category—more or less matched in characteristics relevant to the contest’s outcome.

Thus, it is manifestly unfair if the *rules* are such that the international contest permits noncommunist nations to become converted to communism or to join an alliance with the Soviet Union, but do not permit communist nations or allies to be converted to the noncommunist side.

Similarly, rules that would outlaw the establishment of a communist nation in the Western Hemisphere but not give a parallel right to the Soviet Union in its sphere of control hardly would be fair. Rules that put smaller, weaker nations—Cuba or Hungary—in a one-to-one contest with larger, powerful nations are not likely to lead to outcomes that are viewed as legitimate by the smaller nations.

The major international arena for rivalry between the big powers today is made up of the underdeveloped countries of Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. The competition for these ‘prizes’ is mixed with arms and military confrontations. The danger of continued armed sparring in such places as Cuba, South Vietnam, Angola, and the Middle East is that misjudgment or despair may lead to escalation of armed conflict. We have lived through several close calls. It is time to rely on more than nerve and luck to avert disaster. I suggest that we take the initiative to propose fair rules in the competition for the unaligned countries. As Amitai Etzioni (1962) has pointed out, a set of rules would include such principles as the following:

1. No nonaligned country would be allowed to have military ties with other countries, particularly not with any major power.
2. No foreign troops, bases, or arms would be permitted to remain in or to enter the nonaligned country. Foreign arms would be prohibited to rebels and governments alike in nonaligned countries.
3. United Nations observer forces consisting largely of personnel from non-aligned countries and equipped with the necessary scientific equipment and facilities (flashlights, infrared instruments, helicopters, aerial photographs, lie detectors, and the like) to check the borders, ports, airfields, roads, and railroads would be deployed at the request of any of the major powers or by the secretary general of the United Nations. Costs would be allocated so as to reduce the incentive to create repeated false alarms.
4. A United Nations research and development staff would be established to keep informed about the development of new observational techniques and equipment.
5. Violations of the arms embargo—once certified as such by an appropriate U.N. tribunal—would set in motion a cease-and-desist order aimed at the sender of arms or troops and a disarm order aimed at the receiver. Obedience to these orders would be checked by the U.N. observer force. Lack of compliance would result in sanctions appropriate to the nature of the violations—for example, trade and communications embargo, blockade, sending of armed forces into the nonaligned country.

Suppose such rules could be established: what effects might be expected? Clearly, the revolutionary ferment in Asia, Africa, and Latin America would not disappear, nor would communist governments be unlikely to take power in some

countries. These rules would not have prevented Castro from overthrowing Batista in Cuba. However, I suggest that the critical issue is not whether local communists or their sympathizers can achieve power in a given country without external military aid but rather whether, after achieving power, they retain it because of foreign military aid and whether they become a base for military aid to communists in other countries.

Let us look at the issue of communism and the underdeveloped countries more directly. I suggest that a communist government in an underdeveloped country presents no threat to us so long as it remains militarily unaligned. Such a government may be a tragedy to its people, but we would be fulfilling our moral responsibility if we were to develop and enforce rules that could prevent outside military aid from foreclosing the possibility that the people will overthrow a government that is obnoxious to them. A communist government that stays in power with the acquiescence of its people may be distasteful to us, and we may not want to help it stay in power, particularly if it is a terrorist government. But we can hardly claim the right to obliterate it. We do not intervene against such right-wing terrorist governments as those in Haiti, Paraguay, and Guatemala.

The underdeveloped countries face incredibly difficult problems. The revolution of rising expectations has created aspirations that cannot be fulfilled in the foreseeable future without massive aid from the richer nations. Even with massive aid, it will be a long and slow process before most underdeveloped countries reach an economic, educational, and technological level that will put them within reach of standards of living found in modern industrialized nations.

The Soviet Union cannot afford to give massive economic aid to many underdeveloped communist nations. They cannot support many Cubas. Although we can afford to give much more aid than the Soviet Union and, in fact, much more than we do, our own capacities are not limitless. In both cases, capacities could be considerably enhanced, as would those of recipients, if we could agree to keep arms and armed forces outside the reach of underdeveloped areas. Too much of present assistance is in the form of military aid, and too much of the production of underdeveloped countries is being channeled into military expenditure.

How would the United States make out in a competition for the free vote of the underdeveloped countries of the world? Would we do better than the Soviet Union, Communist China, France? I do not know, but if we cannot do well in a free competition, perhaps we might consider the possibility that something is wrong with us and revise many of our conceptions and ways of relating to other nations.

We start off with many advantages. We have unsurpassed and even unused resources to draw upon. We can turn out more food and more material goods than any other nation. We have a democratic tradition and the reputation of being the land of opportunity. The names of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt are revered almost universally.

We also start out with disadvantages. We have identified ourselves with the status quo, with governments that are unwilling to institute economic and political reforms necessary to make them responsive to popular aspirations. Also, populations of most underdeveloped countries are nonwhite, and unfortunately, we have

not yet overcome the pervasive practices of racial discrimination and segregation in our country. We are making progress, but the progress is slow. It seems evident that, unless we can achieve much more rapid and substantial progress in eliminating racism at home, these barriers will obstruct us abroad.

It also seems apparent that if we are going to be effective in the underdeveloped countries, our aid has to be directed toward those governments that are attempting to increase national productivity and improve the lot of their populations. Aid to governments that are ineffective or to tyrannical rulers will not help the position of the United States in the international competition for prestige and influence. Too often our aid has gone to just such countries. Would not our position in Latin America be somewhat better than it is now if Trujillo's accomplices, Stroessner's henchmen, and Batista's militia had not been armed with guns supplied by us?

The proposal I have made for the military neutralization of the underdeveloped countries has many technical problems that I have ignored; for example, the nature and composition of observer forces, the composition and functioning of the tribunal, the kinds of sanctions that might produce effective compliance. I assume that the major technical problems center about the need to reduce the likelihood that the rules can be violated to give any side an insuperable advantage. Without going into this issue in detail, I think it can be seen that any given violation is not likely to have catastrophic consequences for the military security of the superpowers. And even if an underdeveloped country is subverted or taken over as a result of violations, this is hardly likely to be disastrous. Moreover, violations are hardly likely to be undetected; they are apt to become evident before they substantially threaten security.

In other words, an agreement on fair rules for competition does not require a great deal of trust. However, it does require governments peddling arms to other countries to give up this form of trade. Currently, the arms business amounts to about \$25–35 billion a year, of which NATO countries originate somewhere over 50 % of the export volume and the Warsaw Pact countries about 40 % (Sivard 1981). It is a very profitable trade. So is dope peddling. The Western bloc and the Soviet bloc should agree to end arms peddling; it is an even more destructive form of trade than drug peddling.

2.6 Developing a Cooperative Framework

Acceptance of fair rules for competition means an abandonment of cutthroat rivalry. It implies a change in one's conception of the adversary from an enemy to a fellow contestant. Then the conflict changes character. The rules, which limit forms of conflict, bind the contestants together in terms of common interest. However, common interest in the rules is not, by itself, likely to prevail against the debilitating effects of inevitable misunderstandings and disputes associated with any rule system. The tie between the contestants must be strengthened by enhancing their community or cooperative interests.

How can this be done? The key to development of cooperation can be stated very simply. It is *the provision of repeated and varied opportunities for mutually beneficial interactions*. In relation to the Soviet Union, we have done some of this but obviously not enough.

Our reluctance to trade with the Soviets and our unsuccessful attempts to get our allies to limit trade with them indicate an underlying view that hampers attempts to strengthen cooperative bonds: the view that anything that helps them hurts us. Clearly, it helps them if their control over their nuclear missiles is such as to prevent accidental firings. But does this harm us? Clearly, it helps them if their children have available the Sabin polio vaccine. But does this harm us?

George F. Kennan in 1964 stated something that seems just as pertinent today (especially with the prospective change in Soviet leadership):

It is not too much to say that the entire [Communist] bloc is caught today in a great crisis of indecision over the basic question of the proper attitude of a Communist country toward non-Communist ones. The question is whether to think of the world in terms of an irreconcilable and deadly struggle between all that calls itself Communist and all that does not, a struggle bound to end in the relatively near future with the total destruction of one or both, or to recognize that the world socialist cause can be advanced by more complicated, more gradual, less dramatic, and less immediate forms, not necessitating any effort to destroy all that is not Communist within our time, and even permitting in the meanwhile reasonably extensive and profitable and durable relations with individual non-Communist countries. (1964: 13–14)

None of us will fail to note that a parallel question tortures public opinion and governments in the West. There can be little doubt that our answer to the question of whether communist and noncommunist countries can exist together peacefully will be an important influence in determining how the communists answer it. If we continue to maintain the quixotic notion that the communist governments of Eastern Europe, Cuba, China, and, for that matter, the Soviet Union are likely to disappear in some violent internal convulsion, will we influence them to choose the less belligerent answer? Or will they be better influenced by a policy that accepts the reality of the communist governments and adopts the view that we are willing to participate in any and all forms of mutually beneficial interactions, including normal diplomatic contacts, cultural and scientific exchanges, trade, and so on.

Which policy provides a more promising prospect of a relaxation of the severity of the communist regimes and a weakening of the barriers that separate their peoples from contact with the outside world? Which policy is more likely to promote the growing individualism and diversity among the communist nations? The answers are obvious. Yet so many seem frightened by the idea of cooperation with the communists; the very phrase sounds subversive.

Many equate appeasement with cooperation. They seem to feel that the only credible stance toward someone who might have hostile intentions is a self-righteous, belligerent counter hostility. There is, of course, an alternative stance: one of firmness and friendliness. It is possible to communicate both a firm, unwavering resolve not to allow oneself to be abused, intimidated, or made defenseless *and* a

willingness to get along peacefully and to cooperate for mutual benefit. In other words, willingness to cooperate does not imply willingness to be abused.

Firmness in contrast to belligerence is not provocative, and thus, while aborting development of vicious spirals, it does not abort development of cooperation. It is, of course, difficult to resist the temptation to respond with belligerence to the belligerent provocations of some communist nations. It requires a good deal of self-confidence to feel no need to demonstrate that one is “man enough” to be tough or that one is not ‘chicken.’ It is just this kind of firm, nonbelligerent, self-confident, friendly attitude that appears to be most effective in reforming aggressive delinquents and that our research (Deutsch 1973) suggests is most effective in inducing cooperation.

Can we adopt such an attitude? Our defensiveness is rather high, suggesting that we do not feel confident of ourselves. Our defensiveness comes from two sources. First, we have too high a level of aspiration. Throughout most of our history, we have been in the uniquely fortunate position of having had pretty much our own way in foreign affairs. Initially, this was due to our powerful isolated position in the Americas. Since World War II we have been, moreover, the leading world power. We face a loss of status. It seems evident that we cannot remain in our former unique position. We can no longer be isolated from the physical danger of a major war, nor can we remain the only powerful nation. We have to adjust our aspirations to changing realities or suffer constant frustration.

The second root of our national defensiveness is lack of confidence in our ability to maintain ourselves as a thriving, attractive society that can cope effectively with its own internal problems. The fact is that we have not been coping well with economic growth, unemployment, civil rights, the education of our children, the rebuilding of our cities, and the care of our aged.

Conflict is more likely to take the form of lively controversy rather than deadly quarrel when the disputants respect themselves as well as each other. The process of reforming another, of inducing an opponent to adhere to fair rules of competition, often requires self-reform. The achievement of a sincere peace will require a sincere, sustained effort by both sides.

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