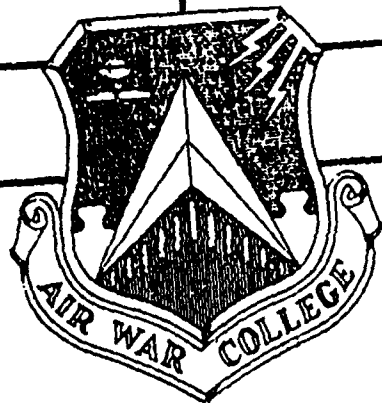AD-A249 626

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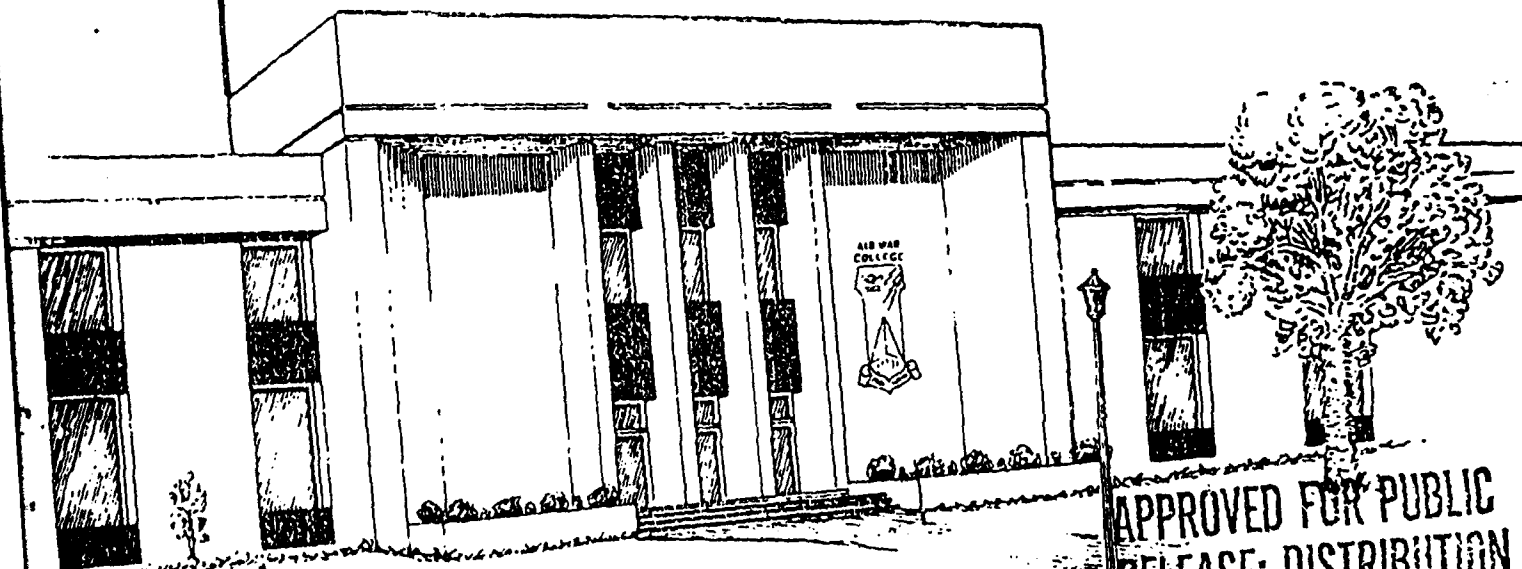STRATEGIC WARNING--STRATEGIC MYTH?

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STRATEGIC WARNING: STRATEGIC MYTH?

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Strategic Warning: Strategic Myth?

INTRODUCTION

Amidst the euphoria of the "fall" of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War came a realization that strategic warning of a Soviet or Warsaw Pact attack on Western Europe had increased from tens of hours or a few days to weeks or even months. However, not everyone was quite as optimistic. Arguing against the position that the new longer warning scenarios would obviate the need for rapid response airlift, Commander-in-Chief of USTRANSCOM, General H.T. Johnson stated, " I'm not sure we will have the warning...Warning time in itself is uninteresting unless you make a decision [to mobilize]. Historically, we have not reacted to warning." (17:164) Having "enough" strategic warning is meaningless if the political decision makers who receive this warning do not (or cannot) respond within the warning time. Thus, these so-called "intelligence failures" are frequently, in fact, a lack of political decisions or failure to execute a meaningful response. According to a former Air Force Chief of Staff, this results in the military response time often being zero.

Drawing upon historical examples from Pearl Harbor to the recent Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, this paper will address the validity of this assertion. It will first review the nature of warning and the impediments to collecting, analyzing and communicating to national decision makers the various indicators which constitute warning. The paper will then look at the process and challenges to national leaders, once the warning is

communicated to these decision makers who must determine not only

whether or not to respond to the warning, but at what level and at

what cost. The paper will review possible responses to warning of

an impending crisis, including the need to assess the potential

political, economic, and military costs of a prompt US response.

The paper will conclude with some recommendations as to how in

future crises the United States might better be able to respond at

an acceptable cost to the inherent ambiguity of warning. The

paper will seek to avoid any lengthy discussion of the utility of

active deception in denying an adversary indications or warning of

ones intentions. Much literature already exists on the subject.

The only deception addressed in the paper is the self-deception of

the intelligence analysts and decision makers which results in a

lack of warning. In fact, self-deception has been called by some

"the single most important cause of warning failure." (11:42)

THE NATURE OF STRATEGIC WARNING

> "Warning is the key to the entire defense
> problem. Our expectations concerning the warning we
> shall get in the event of enemy attack largely
> determine the kinds of defenses we decide to spend our
> money on, and how much they are worth."
> -- Bernard Brodie (4:____)

As Bernard Brodie points out in Strategy for the Missile

Age, warning of an enemy attack plays a crucial role in our

national defense. (4:184) Unlike intelligence other estimates

or forecasts, warning implies a decision to take action to

prevent, or at least lessen, the impact of the event which is

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the subject of the warning. (1:182) Most definitions of warning address it in terms of either the amount of time until the possible enemy attack or in terms of the objective of the attack. In his definitive and oft-cited book, Surprise Attack: Lessons for Defense Planning, Richard K. Betts breaks "warning" into three phases: political, strategic and tactical. Increasing tensions which raise the possibility that deterrence could fail in the coming days or months lead to political warning. Whereas, strategic warning comes from "indications that the enemy is mobilizing and deploying forces in dispositions consistent with a plan to attack," usually over a period of weeks, but possibly in a few days. Finally, tactical warning is "the detection of initial movements of the attack itself, before combat is joined." (2:4-5) Thus the temporal dimension of warning refers to the time available to respond before an expected enemy attack may begin. Strategic warning is used when an attack is assessed as likely and usually within a period of at least several hours to days, weeks, or longer. Tactical warning is when an attack is imminent (minutes away) or already underway. (8:32)

Warning is also described in terms of the adversary's objective in initiating an attack. Knorr and Morgan point out that the term "strategic" does not refer solely to attacks involving nuclear weapons or the super powers, but in terms of "the purpose of the attack and its context, not the nature of the actors or weapons." (14:1-2) In other words, strategic

warning is warning of an attack designed by the government of an adversary to be a crucial step in achieving its strategic national objectives vis-a-vis the opponent. Whereas, tactical warning could be construed as warning of concepts or practices for winning a battle instead of winning the war.

Strategic warning has also been described as having the following characteristics:

a.   Predictions of a single enemy action, "dichotomized between the probability of its occurrence and its non-occurrence.

b.   A "step-change" from the status quo.

c.   Having "significant disutility" for the recipient of the strategic warning, if the warning goes unheeded.

d.   The intended recipients can respond to the warning to reduce the probability of the occurrence, or to ameliorate the consequences if the event does occur.

e.   The chances of the response being successful are in part dependent on the length of time between the warning and the event.

f.   Whether or not the event will actually occur depends ultimately on the actions (or reactions) of the adversary. (5:171)

These characteristics offered by Steve Chan should be kept in mind in the following discussion of the warning collection, analysis, and communications process, as well as the role of the decision makers in developing an effective response to the

warning.

IMPEDIMENTS TO PROVIDING ADEQUATE WARNING

>"Critics of intelligence estimation,
understandably frustrated by error, nevertheless
frequently tend to underestimate the difficulties
analysts face. Interpreting information and making
judgments are no easy matters, and estimation and
evaluation are particularly difficult in an uncertain
and complex world where evidence is almost always
ambiguous and any decision involves serious
consequences. Hindsight often confers considerable
wisdom..."

>-- Janice Gross Stein (19:148)

From the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 to the
recent Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the US Intelligence Community
has taken some "bad raps" for not providing adequate warning
of these "surprise" attacks. The postmortems of these alleged
failures usually focus on three aspects of the warning process:
collection, analysis, and communication of the warning.

Collection

One of the potential drawbacks to today's improved
intelligence collection systems is the vast amount of data
which can be collected, but must be screened prior to being
analyzed.   As Roberta Wohlstetter writes in her authoritative
analysis of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Pearl Harbor: Warning
and Decision, "We failed to anticipate Pearl Harbor not for
want of relevant materials, but because of a plethora of
irrelevant ones...It is much easier after the event to sort the
relevant from the irrelevant signals.   After the event, of
course, a signal is always crystal clear." (22:387)

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The sheer volume of potentially useful information could conceivably overload the system and create what Mrs. Wohlstetter has termed noise--a "background of irrelevant or inconsistent signals, signs pointing in the wrong directions, that tend always to obscure the signs pointing in the right way." (23:691) This noise can be created intentionally by an adversary to make the job of finding the "right" signal more difficult. We may create the problem ourselves with our desire to collect as much information as possible about a crisis situation or potential adversary. Unfortunately, the advances in data collection have not been matched with similar progress in processing and analyzing the information. (18:379) This problem may also be compounded by an adversary who has initiated a deliberate deception program to mask his real intentions. Further, the increased US emphasis on high tech collection systems, coupled with decrease over the past 15 years in our Human Intelligence (HUMINT) capability, could result in an overdependence and overconfidence in the reliability of these advanced systems' ability to "sound the alarm."

Analysis

Still, it is the task of the intelligence agencies to provide the warning and the requisite analysis. National decision makers are preoccupied with other tasks and have neither the time nor the specific experience, or perhaps in some cases the competence, to make use of it. (3:101) Of

course, this can lead the policy makers to second guess the analysis in light of their "big picture", or worse yet, get into micro-managing the raw data. This is not unlike President Johnson and Secretary of Defense McNamara picking not only targets for airstrikes in Vietnam, but assigning weapons loads as well. Yet, the intelligence analysis will usually reflect to some degree the commitment the decision makers have previously made to goals, objectives, values, and resources of intelligence. (5:178) If the intelligence professionals are overly dominated by the decision makers; however, they may become "prisoners" of the decision maker's dogma, images, and preconceptions. For example, when Israeli Lieutenant Siman-Tov's 1 October 1973 report, showing the Egyptians were about to attack, was squelched by a senior intelligence because it conflicted with the "official conception" of how a war would begin. (18:353-54) The intelligence professional, then, must convince the decision maker of the validity and urgency of the warning.

The daunting role of intelligence remains "to extract certainty from uncertainty and to facilitate coherent decisions in an incoherent environment." (3:102) But, in trying to write an honest and accurate report, the analyst often has no choice but to be ambivalent. (2:221) The absolute objectivity of the analysis may also be somewhat diluted by the fact that the final assessment is often the product of an interagency bureaucratic compromise. Efforts to eliminate much of the

ambiguity can pose a danger of oversimplification as subtle, but potentially meaningful nuances in the analysis are stripped away to achieve an agreed-upon "community " position.

Intelligence analysts frequently approach their work with a set of expectations of likely patterns of (enemy) behavior. (14:461) Based upon years of analytical experience and their understanding of an adversary's objectives, strategy, and doctrine, analysts will feel confident of their ability to determine the purpose behind the observed events and predict the opponent's next move. In a Soviet scenario this means we are asking our analysts to anticipate decisions that have yet to be made in the Kremlin. (10:10) Often an analyst may try to fit his observations into a preconceived model, based upon his experience and assumptions. The danger of this "mirror imaging" is that what may be correct about oneself, may not necessarily be correct when applied to the enemy. (18:363)

Another impediment to the analysis process is that frequently the intelligence professional is unaware of the desired outcome envisaged by the policy makers. Thus, in trying to second guess the outcome, they spend, and arguably waste, much time and effort preparing additional information on other possible policy contingencies. In the process they create more information and reports than the already overloaded policy maker and his staff can possibly assimilate.

Communication

Once the collection and analysis process has developed the

indications that would result in a decision to issue a warning, the actual warning message must be passed up the line. The purpose of issuing a warning is to give policy makers a chance to avoid or minimize the chance of the event occurring, or if all else fails, to reduce its impact. (5:173) Unfortunately, sometimes, for a number of reasons the "word" just doesn't get through to the people who really need to know.

In the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, an initial HUMINT sighting of one of the missiles was reported on September 12, but the report didn't reach the national level until September 21. Likewise, the tactical warning of the initiation of Operation Barbarossa in 1941 went to Moscow by routine (and written) communication channels for security reasons, rather than by an immediate, albeit less secure, telephone call. (2:85)

The US national warning system is certainly much improved over the Soviet system of 1941. Today the intelligence community maintains a network of "watch officers" at the various agencies who regularly confer by secure telephone about potential trouble spots. (21:D22) This National Operations and Intelligence Watch Officers Network (NOIWON) allows the watch officers to teleconference between the operations centers at CIA, DIA, NSA, State Department, JCS/J-3, and the White House Situation Room. (1:192) Betts raises some interesting questions in this regard, such as: How many watch officers want to "get the President out of bed" with what may be a false

alarm?, and how many false alarms will a President tolerate before the intelligence agency loses its credibility? (2:225) In Korea in 1950, top US officials who believed Chinese intervention was imminent deferred to each other about who should inform the President. (3:17) This problem may still exist today. Remarkably, on the day before the Arab attack in October 1973, due to the lateness of the hour Secretary of State Kissinger's staff chose not to inform him of the last minute Israeli decision to mobilize. (3:77)

Another potential problem in getting the warning to those that need it is what is often referred to as the "green door syndrome." Bernard Brodie warned that "limiting vital information to a few highly-placed persons who do not have the time to think about it can prove an excessive price to pay for security." (4:186) For example, besides the President, only nine other top level officials in the US government were on the regular distribution list for MAGIC, the high sensitive, intercepted and decoded Japanese diplomatic messages. The ambassador to Japan was not one of the chosen few. (3:45) Even though President Roosevelt was on the top of the access list, he had trouble getting direct access to the MAGIC intercepts in the final weeks before the Japanese attack. (2:101) More recently, the ill-fated Desert One hostage rescue attempt may have been more successful had it not been so compartmentalized. (12:264)

During Desert Storm significant progress was apparently

made in getting intelligence information to the combat units without compromising sensitive intelligence sources and methods. Hopefully, this will set a precedent for the future and help reduce the impediment of the "green door syndrome" by leaving the "green door" somewhat ajar.

THE CHALLENGES OF DECISION MAKING AND COSTS OF INDECISIVENESS

> "Statesmen periodically find themselves
> caught in situations they did not anticipate, where
> the consequences of having failed to do so are quite
> nasty."
>
> -- Knorr and Morgan (15:_____)

Once the warning is successfully passed from the intelligence community to the national policy makers, a whole new ball game begins with new players, new ground rules, and new challenges. The players include the President and his key national security advisors and senior officials, each with their own personalities, experiences, priorities, perceptions, strengths and limitations. Each of these personalities has a varying degree of influence on the ensuing discussions and assessments which are part of the national security decision making process. It is during this process that a number of concerns and considerations can become challenges, if not impediments, to our capability to determine and execute an effective response within the available warning time.

The Decision Makers

The personalities and experiences of the primary national security policy players can have a significant influence on how

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they respond to a potential crisis. The success of the recent US response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait may in part be due to the previous association of several key players within the Ford Administration. At that time George Bush was Director of the CIA, Dick Cheney was White House Chief of Staff, Brent Scowcroft served as National Security Advisor, Colin Powell was a White House Fellow, and Jim Baker was Ford's 1976 campaign manager. This shared experience, coupled with President Bush's extensive foreign policy background as US Ambassador to the United Nations and to China, as well as his strong preference for close personal alliances, probably avoided potentially debilitating personality clashes as the sustained pressures to find a solution to the Gulf Crisis increased. Seldom in the past fifty years has there been an administration where the infighting between key players didn't consume the energy, efficiency, and focus of the participants.

Even with the best team-players, however, when faced with ambiguity will operate from preconceived expectations and perceptions, based upon their individual experience and learning. Human limitations, stress, and fatigue in crisis can also affect how well a policy maker will function as the pressure builds to develop a meaningful response within available warning time.

Personal Influence on Decisions

Personal beliefs in one's own political system, previous experience and learning, and international history can all

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influence how a decision maker will respond to warning. (10:164) Ironically, the response may have little or nothing to do with the evidence to which it is associated. For example, when North Korea invaded South Korea in 1951, President Truman sought to draw a parallel with the Japanese invasion of Manchuria. The personal experiences of the key leaders in past similar cases can also influence the response; much as in developing the US response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, virtually all involved could not help but recall the mistakes of Vietnam.

It seems the more committed one is with a particular course of action, the more likely he is to try select facts which support his solution at the expense of finding the next possible solution. (20:158n) One can usually find some evidence to support any prediction (3:221).

Decision makers tend to try to fit incoming information into their existing theories and images. (10:150) Even with solid indications of enemy preparations for attack, policy makers may interpret these as merely a bluff to extract political concessions. This was the initial US interpretation of Chinese intentions in Korea in 1950, of the Arabs in October 1973, and of Iraq in August 1990.

Other issues and concerns on the minds of the policy makers at the time they receive the information can easily affect their perceptions in response to the warning. For example, while much of the information that would have provided

warning of the attack on Pearl Harbor was available to the people in Washington who could do something about it. Most of the policy makers were preoccupied with the situation in Europe and the Atlantic. More recently, as Saddam Hussein was preparing to invade Kuwait, much more attention was devoted to the impending reunification of Germany, the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact, and the upcoming Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) agreement.

Frequently, indicators of an impending attack may be dismissed by decision makers because of their view that an attack just doesn't make sense. "As long as the intention to attack seems irrational, and the enemy is believed to be rational, the victim state's decision makers will seek other explanations for the changes in indications of enemy capabilities." (3:20) Prior to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor the US was too preoccupied with the "obvious" potential threats, such as an attack in the South Pacific, and neglected to take action to hedge against the "improbable" (but actual) Japanese course of action. (3:xxii)

National security makers have little time to read, ponder, and digest the volume of incoming information. They are deluged over their stands, each with their own inherent biases, preoccupations, preferences, and purposes. As given the military points from the intelligence warnings and brief to interpret. Within so much incoming information, the decision makers are subject to information overload.

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In time of crisis they may have a difficult time separating their preconceived expectations and perceptions from facts and unbiased judgements based upon the available facts. In fact, the greater the ambiguity of the warning, the greater the impact of the preconceptions. (2:220) Thus they may resort to analogies or "mirror imaging" the enemy intentions with past events in their experience.

False alarms or the "cry wolf" syndrome can also affect the policy makers' ability to come up with a timely and appropriate response to warning. Once a warning is received. everyday a suspected threat does not materialize dulls sensitivity to the reality of the danger. By October 1973 the Israelis were experiencing "alert fatigue" from the number of false alarms of an imminent Arab attack and failed to mobilize in late September in spite of growing indications of the real Arab attack. (3:72)

Impediments to Responsive Decisions

Beyond the influence of experience and the resultant preconceived expectations and perceptions there are several other impediments which can directly influence the ability of the political decision makers to develop a response within the available warning time. These include the need to consider a variety of options and the related desires for more information and for more time to make a decision.

To conduct a proper analysis before making a decision, one normally evaluates a number of options. This evaluation

process should consider a range of options, including a worst case scenario to bound the problem. But, as Knorr reminds us, "There are always more contingencies than the defender has resources to pay for." (15:237)

To find the right signal amidst the omnipresent noise, Roberta Wohlstetter suggests, "...one needs not only an ear, but a variety of hypotheses that generate observation." (22:56) In other words, the decision maker should consider a range of options, realizing that evidence consistent with their theories may also be consistent with other views. (13:158) Of course the danger in this regard is that the more options are considered, the more time will be spent working through them. Thus, the challenge remains to come up with the right answer before you have all the information or analysis you would like, and certainly before it is too late.

In 1941 war with Japan was imminent, yet we seemed oblivious to the fact that it might begin with an air attack on the US fleet at Pearl Harbor. (4:245) As a result of Pearl Harbor and other more recent experiences, policy makers tend to want just a little more information and just a little more time before making their decision as they try to determine not whether enemy will attack, but where, when, and how.

As long as there is some warning, decision makers will be tempted to wait for more information. The critical, and probably unanswerable, question then becomes how much more information may become available and how long can they continue

to wait before making a decision to respond. On occasion leaders may consider the intelligence estimate or warning useless unless it provides "the answer." (2:221)

There is also a hope that given more time, a diplomatic, economic, or other less costly, nonmilitary response will diffuse the situation and restore deterrence. This often results in a desire of the decision makers to wait just a little longer in the hopes that during the intervening period the enemy intentions will become clearer or the appropriate response will become more apparent. Even on the day before the Arabs attacked Israel in 1973, the Israeli army told the Cabinet that "Arab resort to war would yield further indicators not yet detected. (3:107)

Only when policy makers are convinced that deterrence has failed and their worst fears are about to be realized will they make the tough decisions, assume the inherent political, economic and military costs, and accept the risk of further destabilizing what everyone hopes is merely a threatening but manageable international crisis. (16:11)

Costs and Risks of Response

Before determining how we want to respond to warning we must first determine what we want to accomplish by our response. This requires that we define our objective; consider the potential risks and costs, including the risk of escalating the crisis; determine the level of our response; and finally, decide when and who will execute the response.

The objective of most past and future responses is probably to diffuse or otherwise prevent the potential crisis and satisfy our national security objectives without having to resort to the use of military force. However, if this is deemed "too little, too late", we might have to resort to stronger diplomatic efforts, economic sanctions, an increased military presence or show of force, or even a limited conventional military action to avoid a prolonged conflict. Finally, if deterrence, and all else, fails and a shooting war does start, our objective should be to rapidly terminate the conflict on the most acceptable terms without having to resort to all-out nuclear war. (1:181-82)

In assessing the risks and costs of potential responses, there is no "free lunch" response to warning . Anything policy makers decide to do in response to warning carries with it costs and risks. Thus national leaders must not only determine the various political, economic, and military costs, but also when and to what extent to make the response which will incur the costs. In 1950 the US did not believe our intelligence "because it would have been very inconvenient...we would have to do something about it...In the end it was much more inconvenient [and costly] not to have believed." (9:108n)

One of the most immediate concerns is the fear of escalating the crisis. The mere act of "posturing" in response to the warning may become a self-fulfilling prophecy (2:224) Even though, according to some estimates, there were scores of

indicators that the Nazis were about to invade Russia in June 1941, Operation Barbarossa was a clear success for Hitler. This is largely because Stalin chose not to take any action, such as calling up his reserves, which might provoke the Germans until all diplomatic efforts had been exhausted. (3:38) Similarly, amidst numerous indications that the Soviets clearly had the ability, if not the intent, to invade Czechoslovakia in August 1968, the US and NATO chose not to do anything which would provide the Soviets with an excuse to crack down on Dubcek. (3:85)

Some of the most apparent costs of a military response to warning are the costs imposed upon the military itself. Increased readiness at a heightened stage of alert not only limits the size of the force, but over time in an extended crisis, degrades the operational capability by inflicting wear and tear on the equipment and fatigue on the personnel. (3:23) It is quite unlikely that we will even again have a situation like the Desert Shield in which we will have the luxury of six months to deploy forces, get all of equipment operationally ready, and do live fire training in theater before engaging the enemy. Had Saddam Hussein made continued feints to the Saudi border, much as Alexander the Great did before crossing the river against Porus at the Battle of Hydaspes, he might have extracted a greater toll on the operational readiness and eventual combat effectiveness of the US and coalition forces.

Efforts to maintain a high degree of surveillance can also

be costly. While the US might have considered around-the-clock airborne ocean reconnaissance from Pearl Harbor, the attack may not have taken place. However, we probably could not have afforded such extensive coverage against such an "unlikely" threat.

Another military cost is increased when troops and equipment committed to deterring one potential crisis in one region are redeployed from that area to the area of another developing crisis. This happened during both the Korean War and again in the Gulf Crisis when resources intended to support NATO were redeployed from their deterrent role in Europe to fight a "hot" war. Similarly, when the Soviets invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968, the US military response, if it had been part of a selected response, was limited due to the amount of our military capability that was already tied-up in the war in Vietnam.

Not only do such redeployments extract a price on our military capability, they also cost us politically. Until most recently, virtually any time the US has done anything that even gives an impression that we are taking anything away from our commitment to NATO, our friends in the alliance get very nervous about the strength of that commitment.

There is also some domestic political cost involved in deciding to deploy a substantial US force or to mobilize the reserves and national guard. This sensitivity was reflected in Desert Shield when an "unnamed senior administration official"

announced on August 9, 1990, that 50,000 troops would be deployed to the Persian Gulf. Fearing the "lowballing" of our actual commitment reminiscent of Vietnam, an aide to a senior Pentagon official allegedly "leaked" the true estimate of 250,000 to the Associated Press. (24:279)

The US response to warning can also impose political costs internationally. In formulating the US response to the Gulf Crisis the US had to "spend" considerable and continuing political capital to gain support for the UN resolutions and to build and maintain the coalition.

In conjunction with military and political cost of a response to warning are the more apparent economic costs. Planning to respond to "worst case" scenarios usually also means planning to the most costly option. A response which is viewed by the enemy as seriously threatening his vital interests may lead to escalation or even a more costly arms race. The costs of a military response may be significant: and contrary to the best intentioned allied promises of support, burden sharing doesn't always work as promised, leaving the US to absorb the costs of the response. Thus, responses should be optimized to minimize costs, yet maximize the desired effect.

All of these aforementioned considerations work to limit the amount of time the military commander has to implement the authorized response. As a result he has little or no time to maximize his readiness.

Lessons Learned

Much of the discussion to this point has been negative, concentrating on why the intelligence community may not have provided warning or, more likely, why national decision makers may have failed to respond. This may seem to be an unbalanced presentation, since little is written here, or elsewhere, about intelligence warning successes. This is probably because sound intelligence and the proper use of it by national decision makers ideally will cause an adversary to change or even cancel his intended course of action which originally prompted the warning (7:41) Just as intelligence has never detected a <u>successful</u> enemy deception effort, the number of surprise attacks successfully predicted is a short list of what Cohen and Gooch call "non-events" (7:41) For example, if US intelligence had issued sufficient warning of the planned attack on Pearl Harbor and the Japanese were aware of the warning, they might have called of the attack. But, then, the intelligence community would find it hard to rebut charges of "a misconstrual of Japanese intentions." (18:378) Likewise, if the US or one of the Arab members of the Gulf Cooperation Council had made a "successful" demarche' to Saddam Hussein prior to August 2, perhaps the US intelligence community would have been criticized for "crying wolf" on July 25 when they estimated the likelihood of Iraq invading Kuwait at better than 50%, or on August 1 when they warned unequivocally that invasion was "virtually imminent." (21:D22) In other words,

what is really a success is interpreted as having been "wrong." Thus, the challenge for the intelligence community, the national decision makers, and the military leadership who will have to execute any military response to strategic warning is to fully exploit whatever warning does become available to ensure future "surprise" attacks remain non-events. The ultimate question then is: how to do just that?

Recommendations for US National/Military Strategy in Future

Ideally, the first thing we would like to do to improve our ability to respond to warning would be to reduce the ambiguity of the warning we receive. Unfortunately, this is probably an unrealistic desire since the enemy will probably use all forms of deception to **increase** the ambiguity on our part. As Bernard Brodie so sagely put it, "Only if the enemy is very clumsy or very stupid or both will he signal well in advance his intention to attack." (4:183) Thus, we should probably look for ways to improve the political decision making process.

While it would be naive to think that the personalities and experiences of the President and his key foreign policy advisors will not be the key determinant determining response to future warning of crisis, there are a few things that might be considered to improve decision making process. One of the first initiatives at the national level (if it is not already being done) would be to develop contingency plans similar to the JCS deliberate planning process in which some number of

crisis scenarios were presented along with a full spectrum of possible political, economic, psychological, as well as military responses. Such an effort could be supported by long-term intelligence estimates and analysis, accompanied by long-term national security policy planning and objectives. This would not be intended as a "cookbook" for crisis management, but could help facilitate the decision making process.

Bernard Brodie suggested that we must not only know how to get the information we need for warning, but we also need to know what to do with it when the information comes in. (4:190) This could be accomplished by building a closer day-to-day working relationship between intelligence and the operators at the tactical and operational level, and between the intelligence professionals and policy makers at the strategic level.

Another initiative at the national decision making level would be to develop a mechanism to consider a number of options to counter natural tendency to respond based upon preconceived expectations and perceptions. One way to do this would be to actively seek out a minority opinion or devil's advocate from outside the policy making inner circle, much as Director of Central Intelligence George Bush used the "Team B" in 1976 to assess the National Intelligence Estimates from an alternative point of view. There is some danger however in using a nominal devil's advocate from within the organization in that he

probably won't convey the conviction or in-depth understanding of the minority (and probably unpopular) view as well as a true believer. This approach of providing your own devil's advocate has been compared to playing chess against yourself. (12:269) The more the policy maker's conceptual framework is exposed to criticism and evaluation of others (including intelligence professionals), the greater the opportunity for decreasing his misconceptions and improving the basis of foreign policy decisions. (20:162)

A final area for possible improvement is in the military's ability to respond when directed. Most of these recommendations could also decrease the ultimate costs of response. First, plans should take into consideration the possibility of a surprise attack, or at least the strong possibility of a delay in the political decision. Unfortunately, in 1973 the Director of Israeli Military Intelligence "guaranteed" that his department would provide sufficient warning of an all out attack and this became the foundation of the Israeli Defense Force plans. On October 6, he couldn't and didn't, but the Egyptians did,...and without the promised warning, the Israelis did not have time to mobilize. (18:352) Yet some US contingency plans seem to be based upon artificial assumptions about warning time. In one plan in particular, which shall remain unidentified for security reasons, it appears the estimate of warning time was determined by how long it would take the CINC to get his forces

deployed and ready to fight, rather than on any realistic estimate of how much time he could expect from warning to decision to execute.

Along with more response time, if at all possible, military leaders should be given more authority to make preliminary preparations for a possible response in anticipation of the decision makers' direction. There is some danger that such "leaning forward in the foxhole" could, if detected by the enemy, further intensify or provoke the crisis. On the other hand it might provide just enough additional time to execute a proper and timely response. According to a senior commander whose forces were intimately involved in Operation Just Cause, the response time for Just Cause was a mere 50 hours from notification to execution.

While much of the foregoing may be wishful thinking, perhaps the real key to responding to an impending crisis is to build a military contingency force with the capability to respond within the expected short warning time. The future response force presently being proposed for the Persian Gulf region provides an promising model.

The US, even with the aid of our "rich" allies, could not afford another operation on the scale of Desert Shield/Desert Storm anytime soon. But we do need to maintain a worldwide system of alliances which will allow us a prompt forward, or at least "over the horizon", air and sea presence in time of crisis. This presence could be supplemented by recurring

exercises in the region which could also demonstrate the deployability of the contingency force. Betts suggests, in time of crisis, it may be more important to deploy a few battalions as a "trip wire" within a few days, than to deploy several decisions within a few weeks. (3:265) Prepositioned supplies, both onshore and at sea would reduce some of the demand for heavy sealift from the US in a crisis. With the impending loss of the Air Force range at Zaragosa, Spain, perhaps an alternate range could be established in the Persian Gulf region, allowing additional, and continuing, US combat presence.

Finally, we need to continue to strongly support improved Indications and Warning (I&W) systems with the capability to correlate a variety of seemingly disparate indicators, so we are better able to know what is about to happen. Some have argued that increased ability to detect preparations for an attack are relatively more important than additional increments of force and command survivability. (6:23) We also need robust C3 systems so we can communicate with and control the forces who will invariably be asked to implement the policy makers decision. Since as in the past, we will probably have to execute with little or no response time.

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