

EISENHOWER'S PURSUIT OF STRATEGY: THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLES ON STRATEGIC DECISION MAKERS

A Monograph

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ABSTRACT

EISENHOWER'S PURSUIT OF STRATEGY: THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLES ON STRATEGIC DECISION MAKERS, by LTC Geoffrey C. De Tingo, United States Army, 69 pages.

Eisenhower preferred to build consensus for his military and national strategies by using multiple communication techniques to convey his intent. If consensus was not achieved, though, and his intent was not carried out he would aggressively move to eliminate the source of friction. This monograph will analyze four case studies to demonstrate that it is critically important for subordinates and peers to understand the influence of leadership styles on strategic decision makers. It will also argue that the consequences for not understanding strategic decision makers can mean the difference between individual, organizational or national success or failure.

The four case studies will highlight the leadership styles that Eisenhower used when he pursued a strategy and how those leadership styles influenced his decision-making. The first case study is Eisenhower's fight to control Allied strategic bombers to support Operation Overlord in 1944. Second is his fight to develop, implement and defend his New Look National Security Strategy in 1953. Third is how Eisenhower defended his administration's Middle East foreign policy and finally his strategy to seek a peaceful solution to the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956.

Three frameworks are used in the construction of each case study. The first framework explains the reasons why Eisenhower pursued his strategies, how he would communicate his intent and then put together a team to help build towards a favorable consensus. The second shows how some of Eisenhower's key subordinates and peers resisted his intent and in cases would either actively deceive him or attempt to subvert his strategy. The final framework demonstrates the actions Eisenhower took to eliminate those sources of friction and threats.

This monograph contains four principal conclusions to help subordinates and peers succeed by identifying and understanding the influence of leadership styles on strategic decision makers. Eisenhower believed strongly in the reasons behind his strategies, which provided the motivation to aggressively pursue their implementation. Second is his preference for a team and consensus building approach to strategy development. Third is that Eisenhower used multiple means and methods to communicate his intent and the importance of his strategies. The final conclusion is that if subordinate or peer did not support his strategy he would continue to try and persuade them to his view but if they did not see his vision he would move to eliminate the threat to his strategy.

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INTRODUCTION

To be successful, the strategic leader must remain a perpetual student of the environment and remain constantly engaged in the process of adapting to that environment.

—The United Army War College Strategic Leadership Primer

At dawn on 5 November 1956 British Prime Minister Anthony Eden gave the order for British Paratroopers to launch an attack to seize control of the Egyptian occupied Suez Canal Zone.¹ President Eisenhower communicated to Eden that he wanted a peaceful end to the crisis through diplomatic consensus because he felt that the use of force would threaten America's Middle East strategy.² For the President, Eden's deception was the final straw in a series of incidents over competing interests in the region between the United States and Britain. Eisenhower made the decision to apply diplomatic and fiscal pressure to force Eden to withdraw British troops.³ Eden had ample opportunity to view Eisenhower's leadership style when he was the British Foreign Secretary during World War II and Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister during Eisenhower's first term.⁴ Eden's actions demonstrate that it is critically important, whether you are a subordinate or a fellow head of state, to understand that leadership styles do influence a strategic leader's decisions. Had Eden understood Eisenhower he could potentially have prevented the Suez debacle, prolonged Britain's thin veneer as a super power and avoided his own resignation in January 1957.⁵

¹D. R. Thorpe, *Eden* (London: Chatto & Windus, 2003), 528-529.

²Peter G. Boyle, *The Eisenhower-Eden Correspondence 1955-1957* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 156-157.

³David A. Nichols, *Eisenhower 1956* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011), 251-254.

⁴Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (New York: DaCapo Press, 1948), 249-251.

⁵David Carleton, *Anthony Eden* (London: Allen Lane Penguin Books LTD, 1981), 464-465.

When Eisenhower decided on a major strategy he aggressively pursued it by using a combination of leadership styles until it was successfully implemented. He would build teams around him and work towards developing consensus in favor of the strategy.⁶ He personally engaged along multiple echelons to ensure success by using different methods to communicate his intent and the importance behind the strategy.⁷ He would identify the sources of friction and threats and focus his efforts on achieving their support. If, though, those subordinates or peers did not give their support or actively fought him his famous temper would be triggered and he would take the necessary steps to eliminate the friction as threats.⁸

Eisenhower recognized that personalities could derail a strategy. He understood that leadership styles influenced decision-making and that personality management was important to the process whether you were that strategic leader or his subordinate or peer. As the Army Chief of Staff in 1946 he wrote to Maxwell Taylor, the Superintendent of West Point, recommending a class be taught that would “awaken the majority of Cadets to the necessity of handling human problems on a human basis would do much to improve leadership.”⁹ Ronald Heifetz, co-founder of the Center for Public Leadership at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, writes; “Attention is the currency of leadership. Getting people to pay attention to tough issues

⁶Dale R. Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency; Civil-Military Relations From FDR to George W. Bush* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 87.

⁷Fred I. Greenstein, *The Hidden-Hand Presidency; Eisenhower as Leader* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 70-72.

⁸Nathan Fishman, William D. Pederson, and Mark J. Rozell, *George Washington Foundation of Presidential Leadership and Character* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2001), 79-84.

⁹Fred I. Greenstein, *Leadership in the Modern Presidency* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), 95.

rather than diversions is the heart of strategy.”¹⁰ Eisenhower spent a considerable amount of time, effort and personal energy communicating the importance of his strategies to his subordinates and peers.¹¹ The level of attention and support they gave to his intent usually determined their success.¹²

This monograph will highlight Eisenhower as the strategic decision maker and use four case studies to show that their level of understanding of his leadership style and support of his strategies determined the success or failure of his subordinates and peers. The first case study discusses General Eisenhower’s fight against the Allied strategic air commanders and British politicians for control of their strategic bombers to support the D-Day Invasion. Second is President Eisenhower’s battle with Army Chief of Staff Matthew Ridgway over the New Look national security strategy. Third are his diplomatic struggles with British Prime Ministers Churchill and Eden over their competing strategies in the Middle East. Fourth is the contest between Eisenhower and Eden over their differing approaches on how to resolve the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956.

The first case study is an overview of one of the unresolved issues that General Eisenhower thought were critical to the success of the planned 1944 Allied invasion of German occupied Normandy, France. He wanted Allied strategic bomber forces to execute a strategy he called the Transportation Plan that would destroy distribution nodes in Northern France to prevent the German Army from reinforcing the landing Beaches of Normandy. As the Commander of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEPF), Eisenhower

¹⁰Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 113.

¹¹Robert R. Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace*. (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998), 258.

¹²Evan Thomas, *Ike’s Bluff; President Eisenhower’s Secret Battle to Save the World* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2012), 397-398.

believed he needed command and control of British and American strategic air forces to accomplish this. American and British air force commanders and British politicians were opposed to Eisenhower's demands.¹³ The section discusses why the Transportation Plan was important to Eisenhower and the steps he took to communicate this. It gives the opposing views of the air force leaders and British politicians and the eventual steps Eisenhower took to mitigate the opposition and finally implement the strategy.

The New Look National Security Strategy was an attempt by the Eisenhower Administration to strike a balanced national budget by decreasing the fiscal outlays of the Department of Defense (DOD). Eisenhower believed that a vibrant economy was the true source of national strength and the main deterrent to Soviet communist expansion. He wanted to cut the Pentagon's budget and rely on a cheaper combination of Air Force technology and nuclear weapons to deter the Soviet Union as opposed to a large standing conventional army.¹⁴ The President put a great deal of energy into overcoming the opposition to the strategy that came principally from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), and specifically from the Army Chief of Staff General Matthew Ridgway.¹⁵

The Eisenhower Administration viewed the Middle East, specifically building strong relations with Saudi Arabia and Egypt, as a method of securing a reliable source of oil and geographically containing the Soviet Union. Great Britain, in attempt to hold on to their pre-war colonial dominance of the region increasingly came into conflict with American Middle East

¹³Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (New York: DaCapo Press, Inc, 1948), 220-223.

¹⁴Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change The White House Years: 1953-1956* (Garden City, NY: Double Day & Company, 1963), 445-446.

¹⁵Matthew B. Ridgway, *Soldier: The Memoirs of Matthew B. Ridgway* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 272-273.

strategy. The differences centered on their diplomatic approaches to Saudi Arabia and Egypt.¹⁶ Eisenhower's frustration with Churchill and Eden stemmed from Britain's territorial disputes with Saudi Arabia over newly discovered oil in the Buraimi Oasis, disagreements over arms sales to Egypt and funding sources for the Aswan Dam project.¹⁷ Combined, these threats to his strategy led to the President's decision to mitigate British dominance in the region.

The fourth case study describes the tension between the US and UK during the Suez Canal Crisis from the time Egypt nationalized the Canal Zone in July 1956, to Eisenhower's decision to use economic pressure to force Eden to withdraw in November. Eisenhower was determined to work towards a peaceful conclusion to the Crisis and he communicated to Eden that British military force would undermine America's strategy in the region. Anthony Eden could have extended British standing as a world power if he had understood, not just Eisenhower as a general, president, and strategy maker but also a leader who would ensure his strategy was not hindered by external threats.¹⁸

SECTION I: TO CONTROL THE STRATEGIC AIR FORCES

It is even more difficult with leaders from other cultures and countries. Trust is the important commodity in these relationships, and frank and open dialogue is the only way to maintain it. While the friction in our relationships would continue, the prime minister and I worked hard to maintain an open dialogue.

—General George W. Casey, Jr.

On 8 June 1943 Lieutenant General Eisenhower saw firsthand how the application of strategic airpower, in support of an amphibious landing, could save the lives of the men under his command. Eisenhower was the commander of the Mediterranean Theater, and on 8 June 1943 he was on the deck of the Royal Navy Cruiser HMS Aurora to witness wave after wave of Allied

¹⁶Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 523-526.

¹⁷Nichols, 36-37, 70-71.

¹⁸Thorpe, 554-555.

heavy, medium and light bombers as they attacked the Mediterranean Island of Pantelleria.¹⁹ During the 25 days of bombing in support of Operation Corkscrew the Allies conducted 5,285 air sorties and expended 6,313 tons of ordnance against the heavily fortified Italian island dubbed the Gibraltar of the Mediterranean.²⁰ Three days later on 11 June the British 1st Infantry Division waded ashore without a single loss of life and accepted the surrender of 11,000 Italian Soldiers. The operation demonstrated to Eisenhower that he could reduce the risk to his forces by having overall command of all air power in support of future amphibious operations.²¹

On 7 December 1943, after the successful invasion of Sicily and Italy, President Roosevelt named Eisenhower to command Operation Overlord scheduled for the following summer.²² Two months prior Eisenhower had the opportunity to study the initial draft plan and task organization for Overlord and identified issues that could put the amphibious landings at risk.²³ He questioned the number of divisions, landing craft, and supporting operations marked for Overlord but he was also very concerned about not having operational control of all air force assets in the theater. Pantelleria taught him an enduring lesson about the necessity of having a single chain of command.²⁴

¹⁹Geoffrey Perret, *Eisenhower* (New York: Random House, 1999), 223.

²⁰Herman S. Wolk, "Pantelleria, 1944," *Air Force Magazine* (2002), <http://Users/user/Desktop/ike%20Online%20Sources/WWII%20Trans%20Plan/Pantelleria,%201943> (accessed 16 January 2013).

²¹Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 166.

²²*Ibid.*, 207. Roosevelt told him in person after the Cairo Conference.

²³Harry C. Butcher, *My Three Years with Eisenhower* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946), 434.

²⁴David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War* (New York: Random House, 1986), 49. Eisenhower did not think there was enough division or landing craft for the operation.

In order to ensure Overlord's success and limit operational risk to his force, Eisenhower knew he needed command of the Allied Strategic Air Forces.²⁵ He agreed with General Sir Fredrick Morgan, head planner of the Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander (COSSAC), who correctly identified that Allied airpower could help prevent a German build up of forces in the vicinity of the Normandy beaches.²⁶ British and American strategic air force commanders shared another belief. They believed that their bomber, if left alone to strike industrial targets within Germany, would be enough to support Overlord by drawing German fighters away from the beaches.²⁷ Eisenhower knew it would be a fight so he resolved to communicate the importance of having command and control of American and British strategic air forces to better protect his force.

To Support the Transportation Plan

Eisenhower saw American and British strategic air force commanders and their position to retain control of their forces as a risk to Overlord. While still in command of the Mediterranean Theater he sent a cable on 17 December 1943 to Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall requesting command of these air forces to directly support Overlord. The cable was one of the first shots in a battle that would ultimately lead to Eisenhower threatening to resign if his request was not approved.²⁸ He believed that getting control of the strategic bombers would enable the

²⁵Vincent Orange, "Cutting through the Political Jungle: Eisenhower and Tedder," *The Royal Air Force Air Power Review* (Winter 2000): 84.

²⁶John Keegan, *The Second World War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1989), 375-376.

²⁷Russell F. Weigly, *The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., 1973), 343.

²⁸Alfred D. Chandler, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower The War Years: III*, 1604-1606.

operational success of the invasion.²⁹ In the months prior to the invasion Eisenhower used the full force of his leadership to achieve this goal. He first built a team and then with the help of the team he would work towards building consensus on the issue.³⁰ He realized that the strategic air force commanders and British politicians would fight his demands. If he could not reach consensus he would resort to measures that ultimately mitigated the threat and achieved his goal.³¹

Professor Solly Zuckerman came to Eisenhower's attention with a concept that theorized that strategic bombers could directly enable ground combat operations and potentially save soldiers' lives. Eisenhower witnessed the application of Zuckerman's theory when strategic bombing supported the capture of the heavily fortified Italian island of Pantelleria without a combat related loss of life.³² After the success of Pantelleria Zuckerman helped to develop the Transportation Plan for the Normandy operation. The Transportation Plan was simple in concept and based in part on Zuckerman's analysis of allied destruction of Italian rail, rail repair facilities, locomotives and rolling stock in the vicinity of Rome in July of 1943.³³ For three months prior to the invasion the Allies would bomb thirty-three targets in France and Belgium and thirty-nine in Germany to disrupt rail and road traffic to prevent the Germans from reinforcing the beachheads. To implement the plan and lower the risk to his forces Eisenhower needed operation control of

²⁹David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War 1943-1945*, 110-111.

³⁰Orange, 81.

³¹Arthur W. Tedder, *With Prejudice The War Memoirs of Marshall of the Air Force Lord Tedder G.C.B.* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966), 532.

³²Ibid., 441-443.

³³Ibid., 489, 503.

the British Bomber Command, American Strategic Air Forces in Britain and the 15th U.S. Air Force in the Mediterranean.³⁴

Protection of the force was critically important to Eisenhower and one of his distinguishing characteristics as a strategic leader and decision maker. As noted Eisenhower historian Steven Ambrose said, “The reason why Eisenhower was so popular with the American people, he was the kind of general they wanted leading their boys into combat because he felt deeply, personally and sincerely about the loss of every one of them.”³⁵ In January 1944 Eisenhower brought Zuckerman with him to SHAEF HQs to be his chief scientist. Zuckerman was instrumental in helping him communicate the need for command and control of American and British strategic air forces and implement the Transportation Plan.³⁶

Eisenhower paid particular attention to the coefficient of forces between allied units and defending German forces. To mitigate the German advantage, Eisenhower requested of the British and American Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS) an increase in the number of divisions landing on Normandy. The CCS approved his request to increase the number of divisions from three to five and an increase in the number of airborne divisions from one to three.³⁷ With this done Eisenhower wanted to ensure that the Germans could not do likewise and increase their numbers in the assault areas. His insurance was Zuckerman’s concept to bomb the transportation centers in Northern France, which would prevent the Germans from sending more forces to

³⁴Gordon A. Harrison, *Cross Channel Attack*, (Washington, DC: United States Army Center for Military History, 1993), 217-218.

³⁵Steven A. Ambrose, “Ike,” 30 January 2012, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uF-Ir3cKgkI> (accessed January 2013). Ambrose was visible emotional on this point.

³⁶Williamson Murray and Allan R. Millett, *A War to Be Won; Fighting the Second World War* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2000), 326.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 416.

reinforce the beaches.³⁸ Control of the strategic air forces to enable the Transportation Plan would keep the coefficient at a manageable level and protect the landings.

Eisenhower was concerned over five German divisions arrayed in over watch of the English Channel between Cherbourg and Calais. In January 1944 the Germans had three of their five divisions centered on the Normandy coast in the vicinity of Caen. Of the five German divisions three were first rate. Second-rate soldiers manned the other two divisions. Concerns for allied planners were the Panzer Divisions within a 24-72 hour march via road or rail from the beachhead.³⁹ It was this German counter attack capability over the numerous ground lines of communication (GLOC) that posed the highest risk to the allied invasion and invited Eisenhower's attention to remedy this threat.⁴⁰ The intent for the bombers would be to delay the Wehrmacht operational reserves and to keep them from conducting that counter attack on vulnerable allied forces.⁴¹

During Operation Torch, the Allied landings in North Africa, Eisenhower learned a valuable lesson about the use of GLOCs. As the Axis armies retreated east, Allied GLOCs became over extended, which affected his ability to get logistics and much needed forces to the front lines. He also saw how the Allied interdiction of Axis sea lines of communication (SLOC) from Europe to North Africa disrupted the German's ability to halt the Allied advance.⁴² The GLOCs in the European Theater of Operation (ETO) were shorter and there were redundant

³⁸Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (New York & London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1995), 147-148.

³⁹David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War*, 108-109.

⁴⁰Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 232.

⁴¹Stephen A. Bourque, "Operational Fires Lisieux and Saint-Lo—The Destruction of Two Norman Towns on D-Day," *Canadian Military History* (Spring 2010): 25.

⁴²Rick Atkinson, *An Army at Dawn: The War in North Africa, 1942-1943* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2002), 488.

means of transportation capabilities for a Wehrmacht planner to choose. Eisenhower also had experience with the transportation nodes of Northern France. As a young Major in 1921 he was assigned to the American Battlefield Monuments Commission based in Paris. For a year he travelled France becoming so adept at navigating the roads, rail and waterways that he did not need a map.⁴³ He understood that strategic bombers could disrupt the ability of the Germans to use these GLOCs by destroying distribution hubs that connected them and the bridges that canalized them.

Eisenhower, motivated by the importance of the strategy, built a team to help him implement it. Zuckerman provided Eisenhower the additional scientific research and data to justify the demand to use strategic bombers.⁴⁴ British Air Marshall Arthur Tedder, Eisenhower's deputy at SHAEF, provided the experience as a politically savvy veteran of the Royal Air Force's upper echelons.⁴⁵ Tedder commanded the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces under Eisenhower and was selected to be his deputy at SHAPE.⁴⁶ Eisenhower also brought his chief of staff Major General Bedall Smith with him to London where Smith's reputation as someone who could get things done would prove critical in the coming months.⁴⁷ Zuckerman, Tedder and Smith understood Eisenhower's leadership and decision-making style and understood what steps needed to be taken to get control of the strategic air forces.

To achieve operational control of the air forces Eisenhower needed to communicate to the Combined Chiefs of Staff (CCS), Churchill and Roosevelt the importance the Transportation

⁴³Perret, 102.

⁴⁴Solly Zuckerman, *From Apes to Warlords* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978), 195.

⁴⁵Murray and Millett, 326.

⁴⁶Tedder, 499.

⁴⁷Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 14, 54-55.

Plan. His team needed to convince the air power community, represented by Air Marshall Harris Chief of Bomber Command and Lieutenant General Spaatz commander of US Strategic Air Forces (USSTAF), that striking Germany only was not supporting the main effort.⁴⁸ For Roosevelt the question of who commanded the strategic bombers was a military matter.⁴⁹ For Churchill and his Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden bombing French transportation nodes with the risk of killing thousands of French civilians made it a political matter. Eisenhower and his team at first used a combination of consensus building and persuasion to engage the air commanders and politicians toward their position.⁵⁰

Air Barons and Politicians: The Threat to the Transportation Plan

Described as single minded and determined, Air Marshall Arthur Harris directed his Bomber Command to conduct nighttime bombing of Germany's industrial capacity with the intent to destroy production.⁵¹ Spaatz, just as aggressive as Harris, focused American bombers on day light raids on Germany.⁵² Both Harris and Spaatz believed that bombing Germany would win the war and where adamantly opposed to Eisenhower's demands. Spaatz went so far as to purpose a strategic bombing plan to hit German oil production as an alternative to Eisenhower's Transportation Plan. As early as the summer of 1943, while British Major General Morgan was leading the Overlord planning, Marshall Harris refuse to work with Morgan's planning staff.⁵³ Harris (nick named "Bomber" Harris for his messianic belief in bombing) believed that the

⁴⁸Tedder, 516-519.

⁴⁹Ibid., 531.

⁵⁰Zuckerman, 247-248.

⁵¹Trevor N. Depuy, Curt Johnson, and David L. Bongard, *The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography* (Edison, NJ: Castle Books, 1995), 317.

⁵²Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 62-63.

⁵³David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War*, 101.

Luftwaffe would lose its ability to impact the Normandy beaches due to his strategic bombers hitting aircraft production and drawing off and decimating their fighters as they attempted to stop his raids over Germany.⁵⁴ Consensus would be hard to reach with Harris and Spaatz with both believing that anything that diverted their bombers from their true role of destroying German cities was a distraction.⁵⁵ The “Air Barons” believed that given just a few more months of clear weather strategic air power would destroy Germany.⁵⁶

British Air Marshall Charles Portal, who sat as a member of the CCS, chaired a meeting in an attempt to reach consensus around Eisenhower’s demands. The meeting was attended by all the “Air Barons,” Harris, Spaatz, and Tedder and highlights the level of disagreement between Eisenhower, his team and his peers. Also in attendance was British Air Force General Trafford Leigh-Mallory Commander in Chief of the Allied Expeditionary Air Force for Overlord. Leigh-Mallory had been appointed by the British and had not been a handpicked member of Eisenhower’s team. Leigh-Mallory believed that the bombers should be under his command but he lacked Tedder’s diplomacy and Tedder’s understanding of Eisenhower’s desire to build consensus at meetings like this. There was immediate friction between Leigh-Mallory, Harris and Spaatz with Harris commenting that did not want his bombers under Leigh-Mallory’s (who was a fighter pilot) command.⁵⁷ Spaatz, despite his close relationship with Eisenhower was very vocal about not putting the 8th Air Force under Leigh-Mallory.⁵⁸ Even Major General James Doolittle, who two years earlier led the famous B-25 raid from the U.S.S. Hornet against Japan, now

⁵⁴Keegan, 415, 430, 432.

⁵⁵Murray and Millett, 307.

⁵⁶David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War*, 116-117.

⁵⁷Ibid., 126.

⁵⁸Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 221.

Commander 8th Air Force, believed that his forces should not be used to strike transportation targets until the German Air Force was defeated.⁵⁹

Spaatz used a delaying tactic to keep his bombers focused on strategic targets in Germany.⁶⁰ Spaatz ordered USSTAF planners to develop a plan devised to convince the CCS that destroying German oil production would directly impact and support the Overlord landings. The Plan submitted to the CCS and SHAEF on 5 March 1944 proposed hitting the German oil industry, which consisted of gasoline production and distribution, and also second priority targets like fighter aircraft, ball bearing, rubber, and bomber production. In a halfhearted consideration to the AEF's Transportation Plan the USSTAF added the bombing of tactical targets like railroad nodes but only as a last priority. Spaatz's delaying tactic at the beginning of March 1944 degraded the time needed by SHAEF to execute the Transportation Plan with any chance of achieving the desired effect on German forces.⁶¹

Harris inferred that there would be considerable civilian collateral damage because his strategic bombers were trained for area bombing and would not be able to accurately hit specific tactical targets. This got Churchill and his War Cabinet's attention.⁶² A reluctant supporter of Overlord, Churchill preferred the approach of attacking the Reich on the periphery in order to avoid the level of casualties he witnessed during the Great War. Churchill saw the Transportation Plan as politically dangerous both from the perspective of domestic politics but also from the perspective of international relations. An initial estimate of French civilian collateral damage was

⁵⁹Harrison, 217-219.

⁶⁰Zuckerman, 303.

⁶¹Harrison, 219-220.

⁶²Murray and Millett, 326.

upwards of over one hundred and fifty thousand casualties.⁶³ It was one thing to kill German civilians but something altogether different and politically unacceptable to knowingly kill civilians of an ally, which could potentially harden post war domestic and international relations.⁶⁴

As Churchill's wartime Foreign Secretary it was Anthony Eden's job to be concerned about the politics of international relations especially the delicate and volatile relations with France. Eden respected Eisenhower but Eden considered him beneath him in the allied hierarchy. Eden also resented the changing balance of power between Britain and America, an issue that would later play a part in their relationship during the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956. Eden viewed Eisenhower as representing that change. Eden liked Eisenhower as a soldier but Eden, ever the archetype imperialist, did not like having to defer to the General and America.⁶⁵ In addition to Eden's position, Churchill was also concerned that if the RAF dropped 12 times as many bombs as the US Army Air Corps and thousands of French civilians were killed it would hurt Britain's post war reputation in comparison to America's.⁶⁶ Churchill put up numerous roadblocks to Eisenhower's demand for control of strategic air forces to support the Transportation Plan but he underestimated Eisenhower's resolve and lengths to which he would go to break through those roadblocks.

⁶³Harrison, 221-223.

⁶⁴Martin Gilbert, *Churchill* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1991), 772.

⁶⁵Peter G. Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence 1955-1957* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 12-13.

⁶⁶Olivier Wieviorka, *Normandy; The Landings to the Liberation of Paris* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 129-130.

Eisenhower understood politics. Despite his public pronouncements that he did not have the temperament for it,⁶⁷ in his wartime memoirs he diplomatically states in reference to the German V-1 Rocket attacks that; “credit British leaders that never once did one of them urge me to vary any detail of my planned operations merely for the purpose of eliminating the scourge.”⁶⁸ This one comment, although not true, is an indicator of why Eisenhower was a successful politician and a success as the Supreme Commander. Churchill put tremendous pressure on Eisenhower to divert assets that were critical to the success of operations in Normandy. David Eisenhower described how his grandfather moved striking the V-1 launch sites to second priority on the target list only behind transportation nodes in the immediate Normandy region.⁶⁹ Eisenhower understood his environment and knew in order to achieve what he wanted he sometimes had to compromise.

The V-1 episode highlights many of the techniques used by Eisenhower in his pursuit of strategy. By compromising on target priorities he demonstrated his strong belief in team play.⁷⁰ Additionally, he publically demonstrated his team approach in a press conference where he stated to the British public that the V1s were a nuisance and he did not like them. He demonstrated empathy with the public and proclaimed military support for the task of eliminating the threat. Ike forwarded Spaatz’s written request to Marshall Tedder to use bombers when conditions were right against Germany instead of V-1 sites. By placing Tedder between himself and a problem, Eisenhower demonstrated another technique he developed in Europe and would later perfect as

⁶⁷Perret, 242-243.

⁶⁸Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 260.

⁶⁹David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War*, 300.

⁷⁰Tedder, 610-611.

president of keeping someone between him and problem.⁷¹ Eisenhower used these techniques effectively but if he still could not get his strategy implemented he was not afraid to eliminate a threat by sacrificing his own career if necessary.

To Implement the Transportation Plan; Mitigate the Threat

In his book the, *Hidden Hand Presidency* Fred Greenstein dispels the myth that Eisenhower was a fatherly, golf playing and out of touch president. Greenstein focused primarily on Eisenhower's presidency but refers briefly to Eisenhower during World War II in order to demonstrate it was his strong leadership style that enabled him to make tough decisions and command exceptional subordinate commanders.⁷² Greenstein presents a leader firmly in control of the reins of power.⁷³ Eisenhower demonstrated a concrete understanding of domestic politics, international affairs and used this combination to make all the major strategy decisions.⁷⁴ When Eisenhower was the Supreme Allied Commander he personally engaged to defend and implement the Transportation Plan by using a combination of consensus, behind the scenes manipulations, threats and compromise. As the Air Barons fought against his strategy Eisenhower and his team would switch tactics and use this combination to implement the Transportation Plan and mitigate the threat.⁷⁵

Marshall ordered Eisenhower back to the United States for rest and consultations prior to assuming command of Overlord in January 1944.⁷⁶ Eisenhower saw these as an opportunity to

⁷¹Ibid., 349-350.

⁷²Greenstein, *Hidden Hand Presidency*, 31,133.

⁷³Ibid., vii-xviii.

⁷⁴Ibid.,124

⁷⁵Perret, 196.

⁷⁶Butcher, 494.

personally engage and communicate the issue of his command of British and American Strategic Air Forces. Eisenhower met with Marshall several times in the Pentagon to discuss the command issue. Marshall shared with Eisenhower that Churchill had told him personally at a meeting in Marrakech, Morocco that Bomber Command would be, in principle, under SHAEF's control. Eisenhower was skeptical because Bedell Smith, then in London as the new SHAEF Chief of Staff, informed Eisenhower that Air Marshall Portal had submitted a plan to place strict guidelines on the use of British Bomber Command and the US 8th and 15th Air Forces by SHAEF.⁷⁷ Eisenhower engaged Hap Arnold, Commanding General of US Army Air Forces, who sat on the JCS and the CCS, in an attempt to get his backing to transfer of the 8th and 15th US Air Forces to SHAEF. Arnold cautioned Eisenhower that Churchill would be under pressure by the British Air Ministry to deny his request. According to David Eisenhower his grandfather's best option was to compromise on the issue.⁷⁸ Although Eisenhower did eventually compromise on certain elements of the plan he continued to battle the Air Barons and British politicians posed.⁷⁹

Eisenhower flew to Britain on 13 January to assume command of SHAEF.⁸⁰ When he arrived in London he met for the first five days with MG Morgan and his staff to review the plan for Overlord.⁸¹ Despite his attempts to personally address the command issue it still persisted and on 17 January he sent a cable to Marshall and readdressed their Washington conversations, "The location of various headquarters, exact pattern of command...are all questions that have not been

⁷⁷David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War*, 60-62.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 116.

⁷⁹Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 221.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 220.

⁸¹David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War*, 117, 120.

definitely settled.” he added, “that the coming venture is the decisive act of the war.”⁸²

Eisenhower, communicating the importance of the issue, found himself directing more and more of his attention towards finding a solution to the problem.⁸³

On 21 January he gathered his team to address the shortfalls in the Overlord Plan. They prepared a list of requirements to the CCS that included his request for a five-division front, more Landing Ship Tanks (LSTs), tactical aircraft, ship requirements and command relationships.⁸⁴ On 23 January Eisenhower sent a cable to the CCS officially presenting the “Bill” for Overlord with the second part of the cable specifically discussing the air issue.⁸⁵ The CCS responded back on 31 January by approving most of the requirements of the “Bill”. The one exception was an answer or any mention of command of the bombers. In fact, the CCS complicated the matter by directing continued priority to the bombing of strategic targets in Germany. Meetings held in the beginning of February between the Air Barons, to broker an informal Overlord C2 agreement, subsequently broke down. Aware of the friction in Britain the JCS on 11 February strengthened Eisenhower’s position by appointing him their agent in future discussions with the British Chiefs of Staff (BCOS). Eisenhower would speak on behalf of the JCS and the President. The move had the desired effect on the BCOS and on 14 February they approved the remainder of the requirements of the “Bill” except, again, any mention of air.⁸⁶

Frustrated by the BCOS, Eisenhower again wrote Marshall on 19 February, “Whatever the conditions in other Theaters of War, the one here that we must never forget is the enemy’s

⁸²Alfred D. Chandler, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower The War Years: III*, 1661-1663.

⁸³Alfred D. Chandler Jr., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower The War Years: III* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins Press, 1970), 1977.

⁸⁴David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War*, 123.

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 124.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 125, 132-133.

highly efficient facilities for concentration of ground troops at any particular point. This is especially true in the whole of France and in the Low Countries.” Eisenhower explained his plan that the only way to prevent the Germans from concentrating troops was to combine the capability of both forces, bombers and ground forces, tactically under one command.⁸⁷

The Air Ministry viewed Bomber Command as a national level asset, a symbol of national prestige that they did want to see fall under a single American commander. The Air Barons took pride in their strategy that the bombing of Germany would both win the war. The British opposed giving command to Eisenhower due to the history and culture that the British armed forces had with command by committee as opposed to the American way of a single strong line of command. Harris continued to fight for his forces not falling under the command of Leigh-Mallory and Eisenhower. Churchill stalled on the decision because he still thought that there would be too many French civilian casualties.⁸⁸ After two months of battle for control of the strategic air forces and the Transportation Plan Eisenhower, frustrated, knew he would have to continue to change tactics and compromise in order to achieve his goal.⁸⁹

To move the issue forward Eisenhower relied on the relationship and trust he had developed with Tedder. Tedder had a similar relationship with Portal and Tedder used that relationship and an understanding of Eisenhower’s leadership style to influence Portal and seek a potential compromise on the air issue. Portal was highly respected by both the British and Americans.⁹⁰ If the air issue was going to change, Portal needed to be on board. Tedder wrote

⁸⁷Alfred D. Chandler, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower The War Years: III*, 1735-1740.

⁸⁸Michael J. Finnegan, *General Eisenhower’s Battle for Control of the Strategic Bombers in Support of Operation Overlord; A Case Study in Unity of Command* (Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College, 1999), 22.

⁸⁹David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower at War*, 150.

⁹⁰Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe*, 242.

Portal on 21 February that the friction over C2 of the air may “precipitate a quite irremediable cleavage.”⁹¹ Tedder helped to plant the seeds of compromise with Portal but Eisenhower soon realized that compromise alone would not move Churchill.

On 28 February, Eisenhower and Bedall Smith were invited to 10 Downing Street for a dinner hosted by Churchill.⁹² The discussion went late into the night on the topic of C2 of the strategic air forces. Eisenhower reminded Churchill that he had promised command of the bombers for Overlord. In a spirited debate between the Prime Minister and Eisenhower Churchill stated that what he meant was Eisenhower would command the American bomber force not British Bomber Command. Churchill went on to reiterate that the bomber community had concerns about serving under Leigh-Mallory. Eisenhower stated that it was the BCOS who assigned Leigh-Mallory to SHAEF. Churchill countered that the BCOS had also given Tedder as Ike’s deputy.⁹³ Eisenhower, clearly “flabbergasted at what was being revealed replied to Churchill that if the CCS did not see him commanding the strategic forces for Overlord then he might “have to pack up and go home.”⁹⁴ As the night progressed the debate focused on a discussion on a possible compromise. Churchill sketched out that Eisenhower would, again, submit specific air requirements to the CCS and that Tedder would be placed over all air forces assigned to SHAEF. Finally the Prime Minister pronounced that Tedder would supervise Harris, Spaatz and Leigh-Mallory. The discussion that night would pave the way for an eventual solution of the air C2 issue.⁹⁵

⁹¹David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower: At War 1943-1945*, 150.

⁹²Chandler, 1755.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 1755-1756.

⁹⁴Butcher, 498.

⁹⁵Chandler, 1755-1756.

Eisenhower left 10 Downing Street and went to work with his lieutenants to seek an agreement with Portal over the specifics of the air requirements to be submitted to the CCS. For a week Tedder and Portal met daily and continued for much of the month of March to work on another directive that would establish command and control lines.⁹⁶ The meetings were lengthy and often contentious over disagreements of specific definitions of command and control relationships. The Supreme Commander again threatened to resign declaring to Tedder, “By God you tell that bunch that if they can’t get together and stop quarreling like children, I will quit, I will tell the Prime Minister to get someone else to run this damn war! I’ll quit.”⁹⁷ Extensive coordination was conducted on specific targets for the bombers and over procedural wording and guidelines. Eisenhower was anxious to get the Transportation Plan underway so he agreed to the term “supervise” for his role in regard the strategic bombers versus having them under his direct “command.”⁹⁸

The negotiations between SHAEF and Portal over command relationships, target sets and timelines were finally reaching consensus. In mid March there was another setback when Eisenhower discovered that his own JCS objected to the word “supervise” and wanted specifically the word “command.”⁹⁹ During a meeting on 13 March Eisenhower, in growing frustration, again stated to Leigh-Mallory, Tedder and Montgomery that the air forces had to be placed under his command.¹⁰⁰ Eventually, after more trans-Atlantic communication the word

⁹⁶Tedder, 513.

⁹⁷Carlos D’Este, *Eisenhower; A Soldier’s Life* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC. 2002), 499.

⁹⁸David Eisenhower, *Eisenhower: At War*, 1943-1945, 180.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 180-181.

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 179-180.

“direction” of strategic air forces was agreed upon by the JCS.¹⁰¹ On 25 March, in a meeting chaired by Portal, all of the stakeholders agreed to the new command relationship between SHAEF and the strategic air forces. Only the conditions of the Transportation Plan were left to resolve.¹⁰²

By the end of March control of the strategic air forces appeared to be settled.¹⁰³ On 3 April, though, Churchill sent a letter to Eisenhower informing him the British War Cabinet had taken an adverse view to the prospect of bombing French transportation nodes due to the risk of civilian casualties. Eisenhower and Churchill met that day to discuss the concerns of the War Cabinet but were unable to resolve the friction. It would not be until mid-April until The War Cabinet agreed to meet Eisenhower’s demands. They only relented because he personally guaranteed to limit French civilian casualties.¹⁰⁴

Eisenhower waged a four-month fight to focus attention on his requirement to place the strategic air forces under his command in support of the Transportation Plan and Overlord. He strongly believed that this would enable the Operation by reducing the risk to his force and he used a combination of leadership traits to achieve his goal. Eisenhower personally engaged Marshall and members of the CCS, used subordinates to build consensus, signaled the importance of the strategy with outburst of anger and would compromise if necessary. Churchill, Eden and the Air Barons fought Eisenhower’s demands, however they failed to recognize and understand that with Roosevelt and Marshall’s backing Eisenhower was in the strongest position. Eisenhower must have recognized this and it ultimately lead to his decision to threaten to resign if he did not

¹⁰¹ Alfred D. Chandler, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower The War Years: III*, 1766-1767.

¹⁰² Tedder, 519-520.

¹⁰³ Harrison, 220.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 222-223.

get what he wanted. Eventually he was successful in implementing his strategy. The next section will examine Eisenhower after World War II and his efforts as President.

SECTION II: NEW LOOK POLICY

Our strategy starts by recognizing that our strength and influence abroad begins with the steps we take at home. We must grow our economy and reduce our deficit.

—President Barack Obama, 2010

On 20 January 1953, Dwight Eisenhower was sworn in as the 34th President of the United States.¹⁰⁵ In his inaugural address Eisenhower focused mainly on national security and foreign affairs but he also discussed domestic fiscal policy. The speech represented the philosophical underpinnings of what would become his New Look National Security Strategy.¹⁰⁶ The New Look was established on Eisenhower's belief that a strong economy was the foundation of national power. Spending on national security would be balanced with other national fiscal requirements.¹⁰⁷ The President charged the Department of Defense (DOD) with reducing fiscal expenditures based on a reduction of force levels and relying on a cheaper combination of technological advantages, specifically air power and nuclear weapons, as a deterrent to Soviet aggression.¹⁰⁸

The impediments to the new policy came from America's spending to fight the war in Korea.¹⁰⁹ The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), America's World War II ally eight

¹⁰⁵Nichols, 1.

¹⁰⁶Dwight D. Eisenhower, "First Inaugural Address" (Washington, DC, 1953).

¹⁰⁷Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change*, 445.

¹⁰⁸Bowie and Immerman, 102.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, 107.

short years before, was also forcing the United States to spend on a large conventional force.¹¹⁰ The internal friction to the policy came from many in the Pentagon and within Congress who believed that a large conventional force was exactly what America needed to meet these threats.¹¹¹ A larger DOD, though, meant larger out year budgets to fund more Army Divisions, more Navy Aircraft Carrier Groups, and more Air Force Wings.¹¹² President Eisenhower was intent on getting Pentagon spending under his control. He signaled this on the first day of his presidency which foreshadowed a collision course with the senior leaders in the military, an institution in which he had served for forty-one years.

This section gives an overview of the New Look Security Strategy and its importance to President Eisenhower. It describes how the President built his cabinet to reflect his beliefs and help communicate the importance of his strategy to the rest of the government and American public.¹¹³ It will discuss the threat to this strategy focusing primarily on the friction generated by the Chief of Staff of the Army General Mathew Ridgway. This section will conclude by demonstrating that the President did communicate his intent but Ridgway either did not understand or chose to ignore the Eisenhower to the detriment of his career and the organization he represented.

The New Look Policy; The Plan for the Pentagon

On 28 October 1950 President Truman asked Mr. Eisenhower, the President of Columbia University, to return to active military service.¹¹⁴ Truman wanted Eisenhower to be the first

¹¹⁰Herspring, 88.

¹¹¹Ibid., 107.

¹¹²Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change*, 132.

¹¹³Perret, 437.

¹¹⁴Perret, 389.

Supreme Allied Commander of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, the military command of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).¹¹⁵ In December 1950, just before he assumed command, Eisenhower met with the leading Republican isolationist and future Republican presidential candidate Senator Robert A. Taft.¹¹⁶ The meeting and Eisenhower's proposal to Taft represents another example where he was willing to sacrifice his own career for something he felt strongly about. Eisenhower wanted to win Taft's support to get Congress to support the strategy of increasing American presence in Europe, from two Army divisions to six, in order to set the example for NATO members to invest in their own militaries. Eisenhower, who was already receiving requests to run for the presidency in the 1952 election, believed so strongly in NATO that he promised Taft that he would not run for the presidency if Taft would support the funding for four more divisions in Europe. Taft refused.¹¹⁷

Two years later Eisenhower defeated Taft to become the Republican nominee for president.¹¹⁸ Eisenhower and Taft met again after the Republican Primaries in September 1952 and in a meeting Taft offered his support to in exchange for Eisenhower's pledge to pursue a smaller federal budget. Eisenhower accepted because he felt strongly in the benefits of a balanced national budget.¹¹⁹ Eisenhower thought that by containing the federal budget he would achieve national security through the economic strength of the nation. This methodology established the foundation of his New Look Policy. The President made formulation and implementation of the

¹¹⁵Thomas, 9.

¹¹⁶Perret, 391.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 391-392.

¹¹⁸Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: 1890-1952* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1983), 541.

¹¹⁹Perret, 413.

New Look a top priority of his administration .¹²⁰ In keeping with his leadership style of putting the right people in the right job Eisenhower assembled a team he thought would help him achieve national security through economic balance.¹²¹

He appointed the Cleveland industrialist, George Humphrey, as his Secretary of the Treasury.¹²² In addition to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, a staunch anti-communist, Humphrey became one of Eisenhower's most trusted advisors.¹²³ So important was Humphrey and the Treasury Department to his future policy that Eisenhower added the secretary as a regular member of the National Security Council along with Joseph Dodge as Director of the Bureau of the Budget.¹²⁴ He appointed a Boston banker, Robert Cutler, to the new post of Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs.¹²⁵ The CEO of General Motors, Charles Wilson, as Secretary of Defense, a choice that would later disappoint the President.¹²⁶ Finally, Eisenhower appointed Admiral Arthur Radford, a proponent of technology and nuclear weapons, as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.¹²⁷ The team that Eisenhower wanted to help develop and reach consensus on his national strategy was in place and it did not take long to get started.¹²⁸

President Truman signed National Security Council 68 (NSC 68) in 1950. NSC 68 was Truman's national security strategy that stated America would meet the perceived Soviet threat of

¹²⁰Stephen E. Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President*, Vol. II (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1984), 71-72.

¹²¹Douglas Kinard, *President Eisenhower and Strategy Management; A Study in Defense Politics* (Washington, DC: Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, 1989), 17-21.

¹²²Perret, 423.

¹²³Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President*, Vol. II, 23.

¹²⁴Herspring, 90.

¹²⁵Bowie and Immermann, 86.

¹²⁶Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President*, Vol. II, 23, 223.

¹²⁷Perret, 458.

¹²⁸Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President*, Vol. II., 45.

communist expansion by globally containing it.¹²⁹ Eisenhower did not disagree with NSC 68 and NSC 141, which Truman signed just before leaving office, but he knew the fiscal resources required to globally contain the USSR, specifically the military requirement, would be too expensive.¹³⁰ He believed that America's economic strength and technological advantage was the way to contain the Soviets. In order to implement the new security strategy the Pentagon's budget needed to reflect this belief. On 4 March 1953, Budget Director Dodge brought a proposal to the President that outlined a cut to the Pentagon's budget for fiscal year 1954. The proposal was \$4.3 billion less than what Truman had recommended. The proposed downward fiscal trajectory for the Pentagon's budget would continue as he also proposed \$9.4 billion in cuts for fiscal year 1955.¹³¹

To reach consensus Eisenhower gave the SECDEF and JCS the task of looking at what the impact would be of Dodge's proposed budget cut backs on the Department of Defense.¹³² Wilson and the Chiefs returned to brief their conclusions at an NSC meeting on 25 March 1953 chaired by the President. The Chiefs concluded that Dodge's proposal threatened their capacity to deal with their worldwide military commitments.¹³³ Wilson backed the Chiefs and in doing so agitated the President. Eisenhower had selected Wilson, an outsider to Washington politics, to help him manage the Pentagon and implement his vision not vacillate between his policy and the Pentagon's desires. The President rejected the Pentagon's conclusion and again asked them to look at acceptable cuts. Wilson, feeling the pressure from the White House, back and agreed to

¹²⁹Bowie and Immerman, 3.

¹³⁰Ibid., 98.

¹³¹Herspring, 91.

¹³²Ibid., 91.

¹³³Bowie and Immerman, 101-102.

cut the FY 54 budget and continue to decrease the Pentagon's budget until 1957.¹³⁴ The Chiefs were incensed by what they felt as a betrayal by Wilson. Eisenhower knew the strategy he wanted and he now knew where the principle opposition to the strategy was coming from.

Eisenhower wanted a framework for his new strategy, a way to reach consensus and gain support from the Pentagon, Congress and the American public.¹³⁵ The way ahead came during a meeting held in the White House Solarium Room on 8 May 1953.¹³⁶ The Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, briefed Eisenhower on his concept of how to achieve the President's intent of containing the USSR while maintaining America's economic and technological advantage.¹³⁷ Also in attendance was George Humphrey, the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Allen Dulles, brother of John Dulles, Deputy Secretary of State Bedall Smith, and Charles Jackson the Assistant for Cold War Strategy. Dulles gave his assessment of east-west relations, European and Asian allies and the world wide Soviet threat.¹³⁸ The discourse energized Eisenhower and he directed that three task forces be established to look at different ways to respond to the Soviet threat. The task forces would work under an operation code named Solarium. Operation Solarium became the conceptual foundation for his New Look Policy.¹³⁹

The three Solarium Task Forces briefed the President on 16 July 1953. In attendance were the JCS nominees scheduled to be sworn in the following month. Eisenhower had selected them, to replace the Chiefs that Truman had appointed four years earlier, with the hope that they

¹³⁴Herspring, 92.

¹³⁵Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change: The Whitehouse Years 1953-1956*.

¹³⁶Bowie and Immerman, 124.

¹³⁷Perret, 447-448. Investing in government funded research and development.

¹³⁸Bowie and Immerman, 124-125.

¹³⁹Perret, 448-449.

would help transform the Pentagon.¹⁴⁰ During the briefings a framework for the President's concept emerged. America would meet the Soviet Union where America's national interests were vital as opposed to NSC 68, which proposed meeting Soviet aggression everywhere. America would now contain communist expansion with a combination of engagement but also a first strike nuclear capability from a technologically superior arsenal. America would not just rely on huge conventional force but a balanced military of conventional forces, cutting edge technology and nuclear deterrence.¹⁴¹ The new look of Operation Solarium succeeded in advancing Eisenhower's intent to weave foreign policy, military policy, and domestic economic policy into one coherent national policy that would keep America safe and secure without bankrupting the economy.¹⁴²

The New Look Policy would enable what the President proposed during his inaugural speech that, "Knowing that only a United States that is strong and immensely productive can help defend freedom in our world," adhering to the principle that American's recognized, "economic health as an indispensable basis of military strength and the free world's peace."¹⁴³ Eisenhower put a team together, to include the new Chiefs, specifically the new Army Chief of Staff Matthew Ridgway, who would implement the new policy designed to achieve a strong and productive America. He communicated his intent clearly but allowed the Chiefs to submit a first draft budget proposal believing they would follow his lead.¹⁴⁴ However, to the JCS nominees in the room that day of the Solarium Brief, the new strategy threatened their services especially the Army.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰Kinard, 23.

¹⁴¹Perret, 449-450.

¹⁴²Kinard, 27-28.

¹⁴³Dwight D. Eisenhower, "First Inaugural Address."

¹⁴⁴Herspring, 96.

¹⁴⁵Kinard, 22-23.

The Pentagon Pushes Back

The new Army Chief of Staff, General Matthew Ridgway was familiar with the President having commanded the 82nd Airborne Division in the European Theater during World War II.¹⁴⁶ The Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Carney, like Ridgway, was also a veteran of both world wars and knew Eisenhower from their time at NATO.¹⁴⁷ Both saw Eisenhower and the New Look Policy as a threat to their respective services.¹⁴⁸ Ridgway and Carney knew their services would lose fiscal resources with a policy that championed the technology of air force strategic air power and nuclear weapons over conventional infantry divisions and capital ships.¹⁴⁹ Despite the directives of their commander and chief the two chiefs fought back and searched for allies wherever they could find them.¹⁵⁰

After the 16 July Operation Solarium Meeting, the NSC went to work hammering out the details of the new policy.¹⁵¹ The SECDEF and the new chiefs went back to the Pentagon to develop their own budget recommendation. Throughout the fall of 1953 the conclusions of the new chiefs were similar to those of the old chiefs and they informed the president they could not cut the Pentagon's budget.¹⁵² The JCS presented their analysis to an NSC meeting on 13 October. They surmised that since there was not a visible decrease in worldwide security requirements they did not believe their respective services could afford cuts. The Secretary of the Treasury and Budget Director both voiced their disagreement. The Chairman, Admiral Radford, then broke

¹⁴⁶Dupuy, Johnson, and Bongard, 632-633.

¹⁴⁷Ridgway, 236, 266.

¹⁴⁸Perret, 458.

¹⁴⁹Bowie and Immermann, 185.

¹⁵⁰Perret, 460-461.

¹⁵¹Bowie and Immermann, 138.

¹⁵²Kinard, 24.

from the Chiefs, without prior consultation, and declared that if the guidance from the President was that nuclear weapons were to be used from the outset of a conflict then money could be saved on smaller force structure.¹⁵³

On 30 October the NSC submitted NSC 162/2. NSC-162/2 was the official policy laying out the tenants of the New Look Policy. President Eisenhower approved the document. This set the stage for the President's team to make public the new policy as the Chiefs went back to the Pentagon to prepare a December budget submission for Fiscal Year 1955. The Chiefs would also prepare a supporting JCS New Look Paper that would propose supporting force levels through 1957.¹⁵⁴ Ridgway would later state that he did not concur with events that fall. His statements in public forums and congressional testimony bear this out.¹⁵⁵

Eisenhower had a rule, which stated that you could criticize in private but not in public.¹⁵⁶ Ridgway openly criticized the new strategy and extolled the virtues of a large standing Army.¹⁵⁷ In the spring of 1954 during congressional budget hearings, Ridgway's statements were critical of the New Lock Policy. Democrats took the opportunity, in both the House of Representative and the Senate, to latch on to Ridgway's comments in an attempt to level criticism on the President and threaten his policy.¹⁵⁸

When the public and media began to hear about the New Look Policy at the end of December 1953 criticism came from multiple directions.¹⁵⁹ Princeton Professor William

¹⁵³Kinard, 24.

¹⁵⁴Kinard, 24-25.

¹⁵⁵Ridgway, 288-289.

¹⁵⁶Perret, 461.

¹⁵⁷Herspring, 102-103.

¹⁵⁸Kinard, 31-35.

¹⁵⁹Thomas, 112-113.

Kauffman believed that Eisenhower's assumption that the two communist powers controlled the world not under the influence of the west was wrong. Containment of the USSR and China by nuclear weapons could not prevent what peripheral countries did on a limited basis. Bernard Brodie of the Rand Corporation in a November 1954 article stated, "that there was still a requirement of limited war." Harvard faculty member and future Secretary of State Henry Kissinger wrote in his book *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* that Eisenhower's emphasis on nuclear power made America vulnerable to lesser threats.¹⁶⁰

The threats to the New Look Policy came from the Pentagon, the Congress, and from academia. Congress passed the FY 1955 budget in the spring of 1954, which did not end the criticism or the battle for the policy.¹⁶¹ The New Look Policy was a long-term policy with portions of it to be implemented through 1958.¹⁶² The fight to implement the policy would be an ongoing battle. Eisenhower viewed critics of the policy as attacks on the foundation that was at the heart of American national security. The battle to defend his policy began immediately and would continue throughout both of his administrations.

To Implement the New Look Policy: Eliminate the Threat

On 6 August 1953, three weeks after the President made his decision on Operation Solarium, Admiral Radford set sail in the Chesapeake Bay in the Secretary of the Navy's yacht *Sequoia*.¹⁶³ Also on the *Sequoia* for this three-day tour were his fellow Chiefs of Staff. Radford

¹⁶⁰Ibid., 44-45.

¹⁶¹Perret, 460.

¹⁶²Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change; The Whitehouse Years 1953-1956*, 452-453.

¹⁶³Herspring, 95.

was concerned that Ridgway and Carney would hinder the new strategy¹⁶⁴ Radford, like General Eisenhower's World War Two deputy Air Marshall Tedder, understood his boss and was intent upon achieving a consensus from the Chiefs, in writing, to support the policy.¹⁶⁵ The Chiefs signed the report on 8 August only then did the *Sequoia* returned to Washington the day.¹⁶⁶

The concession to the Chiefs on the document they signed was important because it requested more guidance from the administration on the use of nuclear weapons. The document also explained their concern that the American military was overextended, two points that were the basis of much of the Pentagon's criticism of the New Look. The President was enthusiastic about the report. Eisenhower and Humphrey saw the discussion on being overextended as an opportunity to bring units home and save on force structure. In the NSC meetings leading up to the 30 October debut of NSC 162/2, Ridgway and Carney attempted to distance them selves from the Sequoia Report because they felt pressured to sign it. The SECDEF, walking a line between the administration and the JCS, backed his Chiefs, which angered Eisenhower.¹⁶⁷ Eisenhower, frustrated with Wilson, Ridgway, and Carney by the lack of consensus would change his tactics to deal with the threat to his strategy.

Matthew Ridgway in his autobiography recalls a conversation with Wilson. The SECDEF was recommending specific reductions to divisional force structure. Ridgway said he would not do it and Wilson countered that the "suggestion" came directly from the President.¹⁶⁸ Eisenhower brought Wilson to the Pentagon because he thought if he could profitably run one of the world's largest corporations he would be able achieve the fiscal balance he was looking for in the

¹⁶⁴Bowie and Immerman, 185.

¹⁶⁵Perret, 94.

¹⁶⁶Herspring, 96.

¹⁶⁷Herspring, 96-97.

¹⁶⁸Ridgway, 286-287.

Pentagon.¹⁶⁹ However, Wilson did not live up to Eisenhower's expectations. He did not always carry out his guidance and he could not keep Ridgway and Carney in line with his intent. To ensure his strategy was carried out Eisenhower was forced to become his own Secretary of Defense.¹⁷⁰ He preferred persuasion to coercion but when it involved a threat to the New Look he demonstrated that direct guidance, like the guidance to Ridgway on force structure, would continue to come directly from his desk.¹⁷¹

With NCS 162/2 approved on 30 October 1953, the President and his team wasted no time in taking the offensive to preempt the critics to the New Look.¹⁷² Despite his struggle to control the Chiefs, Wilson supported the President by briefing the National Press Club in a speech on 10 November where he stated that more reliance on air power might bring about greater fiscal balance.¹⁷³ In December Admiral Radford and Dulles also discussed aspects of the New Look before the National Press Club. Dulles broached the controversial topic of nuclear weapons as a deterrent.¹⁷⁴

The President on 7 January 1954 finally added his own voice. During the State of the Union, address to Congress, the President stated, "First...while determined to use atomic power to serve the usages of peace, we take into full account our great and growing number of nuclear weapons and the most effective means of using them against an aggressor if they are needed to preserve our freedom." The President immediately followed this passage with a statement directly

¹⁶⁹Greenstein, 83.

¹⁷⁰Thomas, 397.

¹⁷¹Herspring, 88-89.

¹⁷²Thomas, 112-114.

¹⁷³Kinnard, 26.

¹⁷⁴James Bonright, "Memorandum by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs to the Deputy Under Secretary of State February 1, 1954" (Washington, DC: Department of State Office of the Historian History.state.gov).

aimed at the Army, “Second...As will be seen from the Budget Message on 21 January, the airpower of our Navy and Air Force is receiving heavy emphasis.” Finally, as if to ensure that Ridgway absolutely understood his intent, “Fourth...our defense must rest on trained manpower at its most economical”¹⁷⁵

As the Administration geared up for the budget fight with Congress, Eisenhower had Dulles give one more policy speech. In his controversial speech “*The Evolution of Foreign Policy*” in front of the Council on Foreign Relations on 12 January, Dulles framed the New Look within the greater context of the Cold War. Expanding on his 22 December speech to the National Press Club Dulles stated that the United States would meet a Soviet threat not where they occurred but where America decided, based on its “deterrent of massive retaliatory power.” There was intense reaction to the speech, both domestically and internationally, and it lasted until the congressional fights in the spring and would continue at differing level of intensity through the end of his Presidency.¹⁷⁶

Wilson, Radford, and the Chiefs all testified before the House Subcommittee on Defense Appropriations in February 1954, followed by the House debate on the floor and then Senate Appropriations Committee in April. Wilson at the House Subcommittee tried to walk a line between the President's intent and Ridgway's position when he said, “Two or three divisions in being, more or less, is not going to be the balance of power in the world.” Ridgway added that the Army's commitments were not declining but Army strength was. A Democratic Senator asked repeatedly if Ridgway was satisfied whether the Army had adequate resources. Ridgway

¹⁷⁵Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union,” 7 January 1954, The American Presidency Program, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=10096> (accessed March 2013). Ridgway did understand but his memoirs make it abundantly clear that he did not agree.

¹⁷⁶Kinnard, 27.

answered, “The time for recommendations is past, Sir.”¹⁷⁷ Despite Ridgway’s testimony Congress passed the budget, not with Ridgway’s recommendations but with the President’s recommendations in tack.

Ridgway proposed in 1953 a decrease in Army end strength of 195,000 soldiers by 1955. With Congress passing the budget the Army was forced to eliminate over 500,000 soldiers by 1955.¹⁷⁸ Had Ridgway been more compromising on the budget process he may have either saved more Army force structure or lessened the severity of the time it took to decrease the size.¹⁷⁹ Instead he fought the President during this process and paid a high price for not understanding the lengths to which Eisenhower would go to achieve his goal. Eisenhower and his team used an aggressive combination of tactics to communicate his intent and the importance of New Look. Eisenhower personally engaged on the issue with much of his energy directed towards the Pentagon.¹⁸⁰ There would be future policy battles and he did not want fights within the executive branch especially if the Chiefs publicly disagreed with him like Ridgway did.¹⁸¹ In order to eliminate any future threats President Eisenhower ensured that Ridgway and Carney left the Pentagon in 1955 after two years in what are usually four-year tours.¹⁸² Wilson left in 1957.¹⁸³

SECTION III: PRESIDENT EISENHOWER’S MIDDLE EAST STRATEGY

The strategic importance of the region to the United States is well known, but our policy is motivated by more than strategic interests. We also have an irreversible commitment to the survival and territorial integrity of friendly states. Nor can we ignore

¹⁷⁷Ibid., 27-28.

¹⁷⁸Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Mandate for Change; The Whitehouse Years 1953-1956*, 452.

¹⁷⁹Herspring, 99-101.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., 99-101.

¹⁸¹Ambrose, *Eisenhower; The President*, Vol. II, 234.

¹⁸²Perret, 461.

¹⁸³Ambrose, *Eisenhower; The President*, Vol. II, 441.

the fact that the well-being of much of the world's economy is tied to stability in the strife-torn Middle East.

—President Ronald Reagan 1982

On 18 February 1953, Prime Minister Churchill sent a letter to President Eisenhower sharing his frustration about Egypt over the direction of negotiations for control of the Suez Canal.¹⁸⁴ Egypt wanted all British troops out of the Suez Canal Zone on a faster timeline than Britain wanted.¹⁸⁵ Churchill wanted a guarantee of partial control in future operations and wanted American backing if the British military had to use force if the canal was threatened after their troop withdraw.¹⁸⁶ The Prime Minister addressed the importance of the canal, “As for Egypt herself, the cutting off of oil would, as you know, exercise a decisive effect. There is therefore no question of our needing your help to reinforce the 80,000 men we have kept at great expense.”¹⁸⁷ On 25 February Churchill indicated that, in addition to oil, Britain and America should work together stop Soviet incursions into the Middle East. “All the Egyptian theater lies behind Ridgway’s (Supreme Allied Commander Europe at the time) right wing and if cast away might be a source of weakness to the whole position in Western Europe. The Canal of course is a lateral communication in the whole potential front.”¹⁸⁸ Three salient points emerge over the course of Churchill and Eisenhower’s correspondence. They both agreed on the importance of maintaining access to Middle East oil and the need to contain the Soviet Union. The divergence was over the strategy of how this would be accomplished. The following section will demonstrate why the Middle East was important to the President, how he attempted to build consensus with Britain for

¹⁸⁴Peter G. Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1953-1955* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 25-26.

¹⁸⁵Steven Z. Freiburger, *Dawn over Suez* (Chicago, IL: Ivan R. Dee, 1992), 58.

¹⁸⁶*Ibid.*, 58-59.

¹⁸⁷Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1953-1955*, 25-26.

¹⁸⁸*Ibid.*, 28-29.

implementing America's Middle East strategy, how the British threatened that strategy, and how and why he mitigated that threat.

The Strategy of Securing Oil and Containing the Soviet Union

President Eisenhower's first inaugural speech was focused primarily on foreign affairs.¹⁸⁹ His first state of the union speech two weeks later on 2 February 1953 emphasized domestic policy.¹⁹⁰ The irony is that for a President whose first administration was characterized by events surrounding the Suez Canal Crisis three and a half years later, there is no mention of the Middle East in either speech.¹⁹¹ Churchill's first few letters to Eisenhower focused on the Middle East and forced the President to look at the region sooner than he thought.¹⁹²

Eisenhower saw that America and Britain had the same joint goal of keeping the USSR out of the Middle East and securing a reliable source of Middle East oil with unconstrained distribution.¹⁹³ They differed on the method of how to achieve that goal. Eisenhower saw Britain achieving their goal by maintaining their pre-war colonial structure. The President surmised that the Middle East had changed and with it the old colonial order.¹⁹⁴ If Eisenhower supported Britain in how they wanted to go forward, countries like Egypt and Saudi Arabia would see America having the same colonial aspirations and thus push those countries toward the USSR. Eisenhower attempted to explain this to both Churchill and Eden. He attempted to build

¹⁸⁹Dwight D. Eisenhower, "First Inaugural Address 1953."

¹⁹⁰Dwight D. Eisenhower, "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, 2 February 1953, The American Presidency Project, [://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=100965](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=100965) (accessed March, 2013).

¹⁹¹Ibid.

¹⁹²Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1953-1955*, 24-25.

¹⁹³Cole C. Kingseed, *Eisenhower and the Suez Crisis of 1956* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 26.

¹⁹⁴Nichols, 4-5.

consensus through diplomatic negotiations but when these measures failed to achieve his strategy he took action to mitigate the threats to his Middle East Strategy.¹⁹⁵

Eisenhower viewed stronger relations with Egypt and Saudi Arabia as key to the region and key to the strategy.¹⁹⁶ Eisenhower's leadership style was to build teams of people to help him achieve a strategy, but in the case of the Middle East Eisenhower wanted to build a team of countries to help him achieve a strategy that would help secure America. The President saw America and Britain as a collective security partners for Egypt and Saudi Arabia with Britain and America on equal terms in the region. The friction was triggered do to Britain's desire to retain their footing as the preeminent western power in the region. There was also tension between Britain, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia and the President did not want to be viewed as supporting Britain and the old order but moving ahead with America in this new role.¹⁹⁷ The differences can be seen in the first correspondence exchanged by Prime Minister Churchill and a new American President with Churchill trying to justify their position and Eisenhower trying to convince Churchill of a new approach to the Middle East.¹⁹⁸

Churchill followed the 18 February letter to Eisenhower asking for help with Anglo-Egyptian Suez Canal negotiations with three more letters on the 20th, 22nd, and 23rd pressing Eisenhower for a response.¹⁹⁹ Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, attempting to reinforce the Prime Minister's request, went to Washington to discuss Egypt and the Middle East of 4 March.²⁰⁰ After

¹⁹⁵Diane B. Kunz, *The Economic Diplomacy of the Suez Crisis* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 30-31, 86-88.

¹⁹⁶Peter L. Hahn, *The United States, Great Britain, and the Egypt, 1945-56* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 155-156, 233.

¹⁹⁷Kissinger, 523-526, 548-549.

¹⁹⁸Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1953-1955*, 32-33.

¹⁹⁹*Ibid.*, 27-28.

²⁰⁰Hahn, 161.

the meetings with Eden, Eisenhower sent a reply to Churchill in the attempt to build consensus by communicating agreement to what Britain was trying to achieve but differing on where he saw America in those negotiations:

My point is this: If the United States walks into a conference with you, against the wishes of the Egyptian Government, then the only obvious interpretation would be that our two governments, together, are there to announce an ultimatum. An uninvited guest cannot possibly come into your house, be asked to leave, and then expect cordial and courteous treatment if he insists upon staying.²⁰¹

Churchill may have pressured Eisenhower to address Egypt and the Middle East sooner than he was expecting, but what Churchill did not foresee was that when he asked the President to back Britain in negotiations he forced Eisenhower to move to a position at odds with Britain.²⁰²

By the end of 1953 Eisenhower's formalized America's position in relation to Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Britain in NSC 162/2,²⁰³

United States policies must, therefore, be designed to retain the cooperation of our allies (NATO), to seek to win the friendship and cooperation of the presently uncommitted areas of the world...Our allies (NATO) must be genuinely convinced that our strategy is one of collective security.²⁰⁴

The President wanted to strengthen relations with Egypt by helping to facilitate a British pullout of the Suez that was favorable to both parties not just the British.²⁰⁵ If successful then America would be in a better position to lessen tensions between Egypt and Israel and provide increased stability in the region. This would help both domestically and with the Middle East Policy by decreasing the objections of the Jewish lobby to congressionally approved weapons packages to

²⁰¹Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1953-1955*, 33-34.

²⁰²Thorpe.

²⁰³Bowie and Immerman, 202.

²⁰⁴National Security Council, "Statement of Policy by the National Security Council on Basic National Security Policy," NSC 162/2 (Washington, DC: United States National Security Council, 30 October 1953).

²⁰⁵Freiberger, 60.

neighboring Arab countries.²⁰⁶ With Arab nations fiscally tied to America the concept was they would not be tempted by a similar Soviet offer. This would keep the Soviets out of the region and enable access to Middle Eastern oil. In December 1953 the State Department proposed between \$20 million to \$27.5 million in aid to Egypt.²⁰⁷ The proposal caused more friction with Britain who saw money as an attempt to mitigate their influence with Egypt.²⁰⁸

The financial incentives continued in 1955 when the United States offered Egypt to financially fund the Aswan Dam.²⁰⁹ The United States pledged \$54 million, Britain \$14 million; the World Bank would lend \$200 million and Egypt with \$900 million of their own.²¹⁰ The purpose of the offer was to move Egypt and the new Egyptian President Gamal Nasser closer to the United States by taking the lead with the project and demonstrating America's financial power in relation to Britain's. It was also an attempt to block Soviet offers to fund the same project and limit the impact of Soviet arms deals with Egypt.²¹¹ The move further highlighted the differences between America and Britain and was to be a technique used again in Saudi Arabia.

America's formal oil based relationship with Saudi Arabia and the Saud Royal Family dates to August 1932 when America entered into a long-term bilateral relationship with far reaching economic and military ties.²¹² The United States got permission to establish an airbase in

²⁰⁶Ibid., 71.

²⁰⁷Ibid., 71-72.

²⁰⁸Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1953-1955*, 114-115.

²⁰⁹W. M. Roger Louis and Roger Owen, *Suez 1956; The Crisis and the Consequence* (Oxford UK: Clarendon Press, 1989), 190.

²¹⁰Kingseed, *The Suez Crisis of 1956*, 34.

²¹¹Nichols, 44-48.

²¹²Michael B. Oren, *Power Faith and Fantasy; America in the Middle East 1776 to the Present* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2007), 414.

Dhahran Saudi Arabia in 1945.²¹³ On 10 June 1953 in a letter to Churchill Eisenhower offered the use of this base to Britain as incentive to leave the Suez Canal Zone sooner. He was communicating to Churchill a dual message. The first of “our special relationship with Saudi Arabia” and the second of America’s desire to see Britain out of Egypt with “a quick start on withdrawal of UK troops.”²¹⁴ Saudi Arabia held a prominent position the previous three US Presidential Administrations and it also featured prominently in the Eisenhower Administration.²¹⁵ Saudi Arabia was also important because, despite Eisenhower’s attempt to build a relationship with Egypt, the Administration began to see Nasser as a threat to Middle East collective security.²¹⁶ This intelligence led to a reassessment of Saudi Arabia from a special, predominately economic alliance into one where the President saw Saudi Arabia playing a leading political role in the region and he did not want Britain interfering with this.²¹⁷

Great Britain as a Threat

David Reynolds’ writing on the question of whether there is a historic special relationship between Britain and America relates a story about Churchill visiting Roosevelt shortly after Pearl Harbor. Roosevelt, as the story goes, caught Churchill coming out of the bath. As Roosevelt went to leave Churchill pronounced, “The Prime Minister of Great Britain has nothing to hide from the

²¹³Wikipedia, Dhahran Airfield, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dhahran_Airfield (accessed March 2103).

²¹⁴Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1953-1955*, 69-70.

²¹⁵Bruce R. Kuhnholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 182, 212, 425.

²¹⁶Nichols, 90.

²¹⁷John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 179-180.

President of the United States!”²¹⁸ Eisenhower knew the Prime Minister and realized the special relationship with Britain, but he began to see Churchill and Britain as hiding their actions in the Middle East from the United States. A State Department diplomat remarked on the national interests of the United States and the country he worked with, “They do not support our national interest, they cooperate when the two interests coincide.”²¹⁹ Eisenhower saw the method to achieve America’s national interests in the Middle East as divergent from those of Great Britain. He saw Churchill and Eden wanting to use the United States to help maintain Great Britain’s old imperial position in the region by using veiled threats, manipulation, and deception.²²⁰

In a letter in early 1953, Churchill uses a veiled threat to get Eisenhower to support Britain in negotiations with Egypt. Churchill explained to Eisenhower that his government maintains at “great expense” eighty thousand British troops in the Canal Zone.²²¹ This statement is within the context of the time. In February 1953 Britain had troops fighting alongside Americans in Korea, forces in many of their colonies worldwide and a division recently deployed, at America’s request, for occupation duty in Germany. Churchill, perhaps knowing Eisenhower’s thoughts on imperialism, attempted to assuage the President on why he wants America’s support, “This is not question of British Imperialism or indeed of any national advantage to us, but only of the common cause,” the pressure came at the end of the letter when Churchill threatened to pull out of Korea if he did not get Eisenhower’s support for Egypt. “Please think of a potential

²¹⁸David Fromkin, “The Importance of Being English: Eyeing the Sceptered Isles,” *Foreign Affairs* (September/October 1999): 25.

²¹⁹Department of State Foreign Service Officer, *Observations of a Eurasian Country* (United States of America Consulate Eurasian Country, October 2012).

²²⁰Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1953-1955*, 24.

²²¹*Ibid.*, 25-26.

regrouping of forces as a part of your bitter problem in Korea.”²²² Eisenhower, early in his administration, did not like what he saw the Prime Minister attempting do.

Eisenhower and Eden at the March 1953 Washington meetings discuss, among other foreign policy issues, British negotiations with Egypt for withdrawal from the Canal Zone.²²³ Eden came away from those discussions believing that America did not want to “help” and reported this back to Churchill. On 19 March Churchill wrote Eisenhower with another threat that if America would not help Britain then; “even if we have to continue keeping 80,000 troops in the Canal Zone I assure you that in no circumstances will her majesty’s Government abandon the United Nations crusade in Korea” Churchill pressed the message with; “At present we seem to be heading for a costly and indefinite stalemate both in the Middle East and the Far East instead of helping each other to reach conclusions agreeable to world peace at both ends”²²⁴ Churchill’s attempt at a quid pro quo over mutual support would continue in an attempt to maintain Britain’s position in the Middle East, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the Far East.

Churchill, under pressure from the opposition party in Parliament for the unfavorable direction the Suez Canal negotiations had gone, was unhappy about Eisenhower’s lack of support on Suez negotiations and America’s proposed arms sale to Egypt.²²⁵ Churchill and Eisenhower met in Bermuda on 4 December 1953 for a conference that the British did not think was successful due in part to the discussion of the proposed arms for Egypt.²²⁶ Shortly after the conference on 19 December Churchill wrote Eisenhower inferring that his government might fall to the opposition party if the negotiations were not favorable to Britain, “I am very much worried

²²²Ibid.

²²³Ibid, 29-30.

²²⁴Ibid., 32-33.

²²⁵Freiberger, 72.

²²⁶Ibid., 72-73.

at the idea of the grant of American economic aid to Egypt at a time when our differences with them are so acute. It would, I am sure, have a grave effect in this country on Anglo-American relations.” Churchill went on to infer that Britain would resort to force in the region to ensure their interests, “We have not the slightest intentions of making any more concessions to Egypt after all we have done in these long negotiations, and fighting might easily occur at any moment.”²²⁷ Churchill’s threat of force against Egypt threatened Eisenhower’s Middle East interests. When Britain actually did use force against Saudi Arabia it did not just threaten stability in the region but also the flow of oil.²²⁸

Al Buraimi is a Governorate of Oman positioned astride the Border with the United Arab Emirates and close to the border of Saudi Arabia. In 1949 a group of Aramco oilmen on a reconnaissance from Saudi Arabia discovered oil there. Saudi Arabia then laid claim to the oasis using historical documentation as justification for the move. The Sheik of Oman protested. In 1952 Saudis followed the claim by forcibly occupying the area. Oman continued to protest and in July 1954 the Jeddah agreement was reached by where the dispute would go before the International Court. The British backed Oman and the Emirates and the American backed the Saudis. The British accused the Saudis of trying to undermine the arbitration process. In October 1955, British backed and advised Arab levees, in a surprise attack, pushed the Saudis and American oil workers out of Buraimi.²²⁹ America had no knowledge beforehand that the British were going to attack their closest Arab partner in the region.²³⁰ This was not an oversight by the British but a deliberate decision.

²²⁷Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1953-1955*, 114-115.

²²⁸Freiberger, 142.

²²⁹W. B. R. Neave-Hill, “Operations in Muscat and Oman 1952-1959” (Ministry of Defence Whitehall London: The Historical Society Army Department Library, 1964), 1, 5, 8.

²³⁰British National Archives, Makins-Dulles Meeting October 27, 1955, FO371/115867.

Prior to the attack the British Foreign Office circulated a memo titled “POSSIBLE REACTIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST TO A BRITISH INSPIRED REOCCUPATION OF BURAIMI.” The memo stated that Saudi Arabia’s reaction; “will be immediate and intense efforts to try to obtain American Diplomatic support.” The memo also stated that the Saudis would take the matter to the UN Security Council, break off diplomatic relations with the UK and if the Saudis did not get American support the Saudis would go to the Russians for arms. The memo also spoke to Egypt’s reaction to, “adopt a more uncooperative attitude to the UK,” and Egypt would also take the lead in encouraging other Arab states to stand behind Saudi Arabia.²³¹ To reinforce and confirm the memo the UK Ambassador to the United States Sir Robert Makins sent a cable to the Foreign Office recounting a conversation with Secretary of State Dulles. Dulles said that America was only considering selling arms to Saudi Arabia to keep the Saudis from going to the Soviets. Makins reminded Dulles that “heavy equipment (armored vehicles)” would be a threat to Britain’s “friends in the south (Oman).”²³² The cable demonstrated that Britain knew what the ramifications would be in regards to an attack and that they had the opportunity to tell America but chose not to because the deception was deliberate.

On 19 October the British Ministry of Defence (MOD) sent a cable to General Headquarters Middle East Land Forces and to the Prime Minister’s Office referencing the operation to reoccupy Buraimi, “Subject to final Cabinet approval Ministers have decided to go ahead with operations and wish it to be launched as soon as possible.” In what can be construed as guidance on communication with the US, the memo cable directs, “Surprise and secrecy is vital not only for the success of the military operation, but for political reasons. It is not the

²³¹British National Archives. Possible Reaction in the Middle East to a British Inspired Preoccupation of Buraimi. October 1955, FO 371/115867.

²³²British National Archives. Makins-Dulles Meeting 7 October 1955 FO 371/115469.

intention to inform friendly governments until a few hours before zero hour for launching the operation.”²³³ On 26 October Makins sent a cable to London informing the Foreign Office that the embassy had just informed the State Department “at 3 p.m. G.M.T. today” (26 October 1955) that the Buraimi operation was commencing.²³⁴ There was an immediate and negative reaction from the American Government to the British attack. For Eisenhower this was another threat to his strategy and he would have to take more steps to mitigate Britain as a threat.

To Mitigate the Threat

Despite their long friendship President Eisenhower could not support Prime Minister Churchill with Britain’s negotiations with Egypt over withdrawal from the Suez Canal Zone.²³⁵ He also saw Britain’s insistence that Egypt join a British-lead Middle East Defense Organization, a condition for the British to withdraw, as exacerbating tensions.²³⁶ The longer the negotiations dragged on the easier it would be for Egypt to move towards neutral stance in the region or worse moving closer to the Soviets. Eisenhower put pressure on Britain to try to convince them to settle the negotiations and begin withdrawal. The negotiations ended on terms more favorable to Egypt and the United States than they did for Britain.²³⁷ The last British troop left the Canal Zone in early 1956. The settlement meant America could move towards setting Arab-Israeli border disputes and block, for a time, Soviet incursions into the region.²³⁸

²³³British National Archives, Ministry of Defence to G. H. Q. Middle East Land Forces, (Main). October 19, 1955, WO288/77.

²³⁴British National Archives, Makins Informs U.S. of Buraimi Attack. October 26, 1955, FO 371115469.

²³⁵Louis and Owen, 59.

²³⁶Freiberger, 59.

²³⁷Louis and Owen, 62-63.

²³⁸Hahn, 177-179.

America's position of not fully supporting Britain during the negotiations and as being seen as the honest broker between the two countries, at least by Egypt, had the desired effect with the Egyptian government.²³⁹ The two countries agreed to an arms deal. The British saw this as a direct threat to their steadily falling position in the Middle East. By selling arms to Egypt it put heavy weapons in the hands of people who threatened to use them against the British. The Americans saw this move as establishing closer ties with the de facto leader of the Arab world, Nasser. Arms sales could also follow with other countries establishing economic ties with America that would keep the Soviets out of the Middle East. By backing Egypt in the negotiations, America forced another point of friction with Britain and another example of Eisenhower mitigating Britain as a threat.²⁴⁰

Britain established the Baghdad Pact with Iraq, Turkey, and Pakistan as a means to provide a buffer between the Soviet Union and Britain's oil and distribution interests. This "Northern Tier" would also contain the Soviet Union. The British wanted the Americans to join the Pact.²⁴¹ The US believed in the Pact and supported it but would not join despite direct appeals from Prime Minister Eden to Eisenhower.²⁴² The reasons rested, like the Suez negotiations, with the relationship between America, Egypt, Israel, and continued American influence in the region. Eisenhower would not join the Pact because Egypt was against it and by doing so would risk the stability he was trying to achieve between Israel and Egypt.²⁴³ Nasser wanted Egypt to be the

²³⁹Freiberger, 79.

²⁴⁰Ibid., 81.

²⁴¹Nichols, 13-14.

²⁴²Boyle, *The Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence 1955-1957*, 119.

²⁴³Ibid., 71.

country in the region seen as the preeminent leader of any Middle East organization and not aligned with Britain. Britain supported Iraq and Nasser saw Iraq as a British puppet.²⁴⁴

Joining the Pact would also have threatened Eisenhower's domestic political standing. The Israelis did not want the United States joining an alliance with the Arabs, even if meant keeping the Soviets out of the Middle East. The Israelis, and by extension the Jewish American Lobby, put pressure on the Eisenhower Administration and Congress not to join. By joining the Baghdad Pact America may have been limited in the nation they could establish bilateral agreements with and whom they could sell arms to.²⁴⁵ This last point was what Nasser was particularly concerned about.²⁴⁶ Eisenhower did not join and without American signatory support the British position in the region and the effectiveness of the Baghdad Pact continued to decline. Britain suffered setbacks over the Suez negotiations and the Baghdad Pact because they felt that they did not get the support they needed from the United States.²⁴⁷ It is understandable, from Britain's position, why they did not tell America about their attack on Saudi forces in Buraimi.

From his inauguration in January 1953 through October 1955 Eisenhower and Dulles dealt with the British in an atmosphere of openness over differences. Positions and actions were known and acknowledged by both allies. Negotiations, meetings, diplomatic cables, and personal correspondence marked the cooperation. If Eisenhower saw a British position as counter to his strategy there was an established procedure to work out differences. If the differences could not be overcome then Eisenhower made decisions that protected his strategy. The British may not have liked it but they were not surprised. Conversely, British Foreign Policy in the Middle East

²⁴⁴ Anne Alexander, *Nasser* (London: Haus Publishing, 2005), 76, 90, 109.

²⁴⁵ Nichols, 71.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 60.

²⁴⁷ Louis and Owen, 35-355.

did not surprise the Americans, that was, until the British attacked Buraimi without telling the United States. The attack took the Saudis by surprise and it also took the American Government by surprise.²⁴⁸ The British were surprised by the American's asking why they had not been consulted. American surprise turned too tough questioning of the British when the Saudis accused America of being complicit in the attack.²⁴⁹ The Saudis put pressure on the America by inferring that they would court Soviet arms sales if America did not support them against the British.²⁵⁰

When the Saudis threatened to bring the matter before the United Nations Security Council, Secretary Dulles informed Ambassador Makins that America would not support Britain if the issue did go before the council.²⁵¹ Vice President Nixon, chairing a National Security Council meeting on 27 October 1955, asked the CIA director what were the British up to and if there was anything we could do about it.²⁵² Several days later Dulles answered that question by giving the British an ultimatum dictating steps the British needed to take to rectify the Buraimi dispute.²⁵³ The British did try to rectify the dispute but the issue dragged on until finally an agreement was reached in 1974.

The contrast between how Eisenhower dealt with Britain over the Suez Canal withdraw negotiations, arms sales to Egypt, and not joining the Baghdad Pact stand in contrast to how he dealt with them over the Buraimi Dispute. The decisions in regard to the former were marked by extensive dialogue between the two countries with Eisenhower communicating directly with the Prime Ministers on his intent behind his decisions. The British may not have liked the decision and

²⁴⁸Nichols, 36-37.

²⁴⁹Ibid., 53.

²⁵⁰Freiberger, 147-148.

²⁵¹Nichols., 93-95.

²⁵²Ibid., 36-37.

²⁵³Freiberger, 142.

their position in the region may have slipped in relation to the United States but the political atmosphere was still cordial. The British though, foreshadowing their actions one year later during the Suez Canal Crisis, did not consult the Americans prior to the attack on Buraimi. This offended the President's sense of team and consensus building and he saw it as the greatest threat, thus far, to his overall Middle East strategy. He used Dulles to apply direct diplomatic pressure against the British in favor of Saudi Arabia. The lesson, missed by the British, was that how the British handled the dispute changed their relationship with America in the region. It would be a costly lesson for the British because the next time Britain threatened Eisenhower's Middle East strategy the President would not mitigate the threat he would eliminate it.

SECTION IV: THE SUEZ CANAL CRISIS STRATEGY

For all the pain it caused, the Suez crisis had marked America's ascension into world leadership. With a sigh of relief, America used the occasion of Suez to cut loose from allies it had always held accountable from the blight of Realpolitik and their flawed devotion to the balance of power.

—Henry Kissinger

President Eisenhower began to perceive Gamal Nasser as a threat to America's Middle East strategy. Despite American overtures of aide and a desire to establish a security relationship with Egypt he continued to be uncooperative over border dispute negotiations with Israel, dealings with the Soviet Union for arms and the move towards non alignment and away from any western lead alliance.²⁵⁴ Eisenhower switched tactics and directed Dulles on 19 July 1956 to inform Egyptian Ambassador to America, Dr. Ahmed Hussein, that the United States would no longer fund the Aswan Dam Project.²⁵⁵ Eisenhower wanted to work in a cooperative manner with

²⁵⁴Kingseed, *The Suez Crisis of 1956*, 34-35.

²⁵⁵*Ibid.*, 38.

Egypt in order to get Nasser to support American aims in the Region.²⁵⁶ Nasser's reaction to the Aswan Dam funding cut was to nationalize the Suez Canal.²⁵⁷ On 26 July Egyptian Forces seized control of the Suez Canal Headquarters in Cairo.²⁵⁸ The action caught the world by surprise especially Britain, France, and Western Europe who relied on the canal for critical trade specifically Middle Eastern oil.²⁵⁹ Eisenhower feared that the British would resort to force in order to regain control of the Canal. A British use of force would not only threaten his Middle East Strategy but also his domestic strategy to get reelected in November.²⁶⁰

This section discusses the evolution of Eisenhower's Middle East Strategy and why he did not want the British to escalate the Suez Canal Crisis with the use of force against Egypt. It examines the steps the President took to build consensus for a peaceful solution to the crisis, and how he tried directly and indirectly to communicate this to Prime Minister Eden. It covers how Eden ignored the President's warnings and directed a British lead surprise attack against the Egyptians, which directly threatened not only the stability in the region but globally. Finally it demonstrates how Eisenhower directed the diplomatic and fiscal tools of American national power to eliminate British influence in the region and eliminate Eden as threat to his strategy.

A Peaceful Solution to the Canal Crisis.

The day after Nasser nationalized the canal the President received a State Department report from London informing him that the British wanted to know if the United States would

²⁵⁶Nichols, 90-92.

²⁵⁷Freiberger, 156.

²⁵⁸Kingseed, *The Suez Crisis of 1956*, 41.

²⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 44-46.

²⁶⁰Nichols, 136-137.

support economic and military actions against the Egyptians.²⁶¹ The State Department cable was followed by a message from Eden reminding Eisenhower of Britain's reliance on the canal for oil, which was critical, due to Britain's slim six weeks' worth of reserves. Eden ended the message by informing Eisenhower that Britain was prepared to use force against Nasser.²⁶²

The President's Middle East strategy was predicated upon the desire to keep the Soviet Union out of the Middle East and to sustain access to a reliable source of oil. The British Prime Minister's potential use of force threatened both tenants of Eisenhower's strategy. The Egyptians had already bought arms from the Soviets in September 1955 and a British use of force could be an excuse for the Egyptians to actually invite the Soviets into their country as advisors.²⁶³ The canal remained open even after Egyptian nationalization. Nasser hoped to pay for the Aswan Dam with the fees from the canal so from Eisenhower's perspective Nasser did not have incentive to shut down the canal to Western shipping. A British use of force even without American involvement would jeopardize reliable access to oil.²⁶⁴

President Eisenhower's decisions and actions in support of his Middle East strategy were often at odds with British Foreign Policy. These differences were lost in translation where countries in the region were concerned. It was hard for the region to see a difference between American Foreign Policy and British Foreign Policy. This was clearly demonstrated to Eisenhower when, after the British seized Buraimi, the Saudis accused the United States of being in collusion with the British. The lesson of Buraimi was not lost on Eisenhower who understood

²⁶¹Freiberger, 162.

²⁶²Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1955-1956*, 158-159.

²⁶³Freiberger, 167.

²⁶⁴Boyle, *Eisenhower-Eden Correspondence, 1955-1957*, 163-164.

that America would be seen as complicit if Britain used force against Egypt to resolve the dispute.

The President also had another reason to keep the British from using force to settle the crisis. Eisenhower faced reelection on 6 November 1956 and he was running as the peace and prosperity candidate. Adlai Stevenson, Eisenhower's Democratic opponent, seized upon the opportunity to criticize the President's Middle East Strategy by pointing out that crisis was due to the failure of that policy. Eisenhower was worried that Stevenson would use the crisis to his advantage by personally calling for a conference to peacefully settle the crisis himself.²⁶⁵ Motivated by the risk posed by Stevenson, Eisenhower redoubled his efforts to pressure Britain to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis.

It was for these reasons that Eisenhower wrote back to Eden highlighting his "chain of reasoning" as to why force should not be used as a solution to the crisis. As he had done in the past, when attempting to mitigate a potential threat to his strategy, Eisenhower's 31 July 1956 message to Eden was an attempt persuade through logic. Eisenhower feigned sympathy and understanding toward Britain's position but ended his message by warning that if a peaceful solution was not achieved it would "prove disastrous to the prosperity and living standards of every nation whose economy depends directly or indirectly upon East-West shipping."²⁶⁶ Within the first five days of Nasser nationalizing the canal, Eisenhower used the same techniques to mitigate the threat by using persuasion and consensus building that he had used when he initially perceived a threat to his Overlord Plan, New Look Policy, and Middle East Strategy. Eden, like the Air Barons, Ridgway and Carney did not heed the initial warnings and continued to push courses of action that moved Eisenhower from mitigation to elimination.

²⁶⁵Nichols, 176.

²⁶⁶Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1955-1957*, 156-157.

Eden Pushes Back

Anthony Eden was one of the only British politicians in the interwar period that publically spoke out against his government's policy toward Germany's dictator Adolf Hitler and his aggressive actions toward Germany's neighbors.²⁶⁷ A son of English nobility and British colonialism Eden's career benefited by being a voice of dissent and when Neville Chamberlain stepped down as Prime Minister because he appeased Hitler Eden rose to be Churchill's Foreign Minister.²⁶⁸ Eden won his reputation by facing down dictators and perceived Nasser to be one such dictator who again threatened the British Empire. In response to Eisenhower's warning of 31 July, Eden on 6 September compared Nasser to Hitler. Eden ended his letter by professing agreement with Eisenhower's assessment that "prolonged" military action would be economically detrimental to the west but added, with a "but," that it is "our duty" to prevent Egypt acting in concert with the Soviet Union from holding the West ransom.²⁶⁹

Eden believed that the United Kingdom had the right to use force to protect vital national interests and the Suez Canal was vital.²⁷⁰ Eden saw Nasser holding a knife directly to the main economic artery of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom had six weeks of oil reserves available and Eden, based on the Chancellor of the Exchequer's assessment, was worried that this predicament coupled with the tenuous position of the British Pound on the international monetary market, made Britain vulnerable if something was not done.²⁷¹

Anthony Eden also came of age when the sun truly never set on the British Empire. He had fought in World War I and guided British Foreign Policy for Churchill through the World

²⁶⁷Thorpe, 210-211.

²⁶⁸Ibid., 13.

²⁶⁹Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1955-1957*, 164-167.

²⁷⁰Thorpe, 486-487.

²⁷¹Louis and Owen, 218.

War II and during Churchill's second government from 1951 to 1955 where they both tried to maintain the vestiges of Empire. Eden understood Britain's power in regard to Americas but he did not accept it. He also did not accept that a country like Egypt could hold his once great country ransom.²⁷² As prime minister he was determined to not let British Foreign Policy be dictated by the Americans and let Egypt threaten vital national interests. Eden's was determined to face down a dictator, to protect Britain's vital economic interests and to not be the historical prime minister who presided over the Empire when the sun finally did set.²⁷³

This determination, already evident in the first two years of the Eden Government, was responsible for the friction that existed over British and American Middle East Foreign Policies. Eden tried to walk a tight rope between his intellectual understanding to work with the United States to help settle the crisis and his nationalistic motives to implement his foreign policy like British prime minister's had done for the previous two hundred years.²⁷⁴ On the surface of diplomacy he agreed to discussions, conferences, and United Nations processes that Eisenhower wanted to have in an attempt to peacefully settle the crisis. Below that same surface, he secretly plotted a course of action that put Britain in collusion with France and Israel on the trajectory to us force and a collision course with the United States.²⁷⁵

As soon as Nasser nationalized the canal Eden gave guidance to the Ministry of Defence to start preparation to use military force to seize and secure the canal.²⁷⁶ With Eisenhower and Dulles' negotiations for a peaceful resolution, in and outside of the United Nations, progressing Eden made plans for an invasion. On 14 October he met with French representatives at his

²⁷²Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence*, 1955-1957, 7-13.

²⁷³Freiberger, 163.

²⁷⁴Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence*, 1955-1957, 198.

²⁷⁵Nichols, 234.

²⁷⁶Kingseed, *The Suez Crisis of 1956*, 142-143.

country estate of Chequers in order to develop a plan to involve the Israeli's in a plot. The plot was to have the Israelis invade Egypt thus giving the British and French an excuse to intervene on the premise of protecting the canal for international shipping.²⁷⁷ During 22-24 October 1956, in a villa in the suburbs for Paris, officials from Britain, France, and Israel signed the Protocol of Sevres, which set the date for the Israeli attack on Egypt for 29 October.²⁷⁸

As planned Israel invaded Egypt on 29 October and Britain and France immediately issued an ultimatum that both parties withdraw to lines 10 miles on either side of the canal or they would intervene.²⁷⁹ On 30 October Eden wrote to the president, "When we received news of the Israeli mobilization, we instructed our Ambassador in Tel Aviv to urge restraint."²⁸⁰ On 31 October the Egyptians refused the British-French declaration for a cease-fire and began sinking ships in the canal effectively blocking it to traffic.²⁸¹ On 5 November British Paratroopers conducted multiple airborne operations seizing key Egyptian positions throughout the canal. Later that day Eden asked for Eisenhower's understanding and support and invoked their close wartime relations as he prophetically stated, "History alone can judge whether we have made the right the decision."²⁸²

²⁷⁷Freiberger, 181.

²⁷⁸Nichols, 186-187.

²⁷⁹Ibid., 201.

²⁸⁰Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1955-1957*, 178-179.

²⁸¹Nichols, 12 Picture.

²⁸²Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1955-1957*, 182-184.

Eisenhower Eliminates the Threat

On 30 July 1956, Nasser called in Henry Byroade the American Ambassador to Egypt.²⁸³ He gave Byroade Egypt's justification for nationalizing the canal in part because the West's refusal to fund the Aswan Dam. Nasser also held out an olive branch to America. He stated "he was planning no further moves" and he did not want the United States to be "critical of his action" because "he clearly wished his move to be looked on as proof of his desire to remain completely independent of outside influence, including that of the Soviet Union."²⁸⁴ Nasser's statement added one more reason underpinning the basis for Eisenhower wanting to seek a peaceful resolution to the dispute.

President Eisenhower wanted, above all, a peaceful resolution to the Suez Canal Crisis. Although he sympathized with the British he did not want to be seen as siding with the British. Even though relations with Nasser were strained, due to the actions surrounding the Aswan Dam, Eisenhower still saw strong relations with Egypt as important. Byroade's conversation with Nasser, and reports from the American Ambassador to Britain about British militant rhetoric against Egypt gave the President cause to direct Dulles to focus the full force of American diplomatic efforts to communicate to Britain the importance of reaching a peaceful solution.²⁸⁵

Secretary of State Dulles called Ambassador Roger Makins, the British Ambassador to the United States, to his office on 30 July and cautioned him "as long as there was no interference with the navigation of the canal, no threats to foreign nationals in Egypt, there was no basis for military action." Makin went on to report in a dispatch to the Foreign Office that the Secretary of State also informed him that there was no case that could be put to Congress that could justify

²⁸³Kingseed, *The Suez Crisis of 1956*, 56.

²⁸⁴Nichols, 139.

²⁸⁵Nichols, 140-141.

American military intervention. Makins, who had been the British Ambassador since 1953, had a deep understanding of Eisenhower and the American Government. He concluded his dispatch by warning London that “In prevailing conditions we can look for little help from Washington.”²⁸⁶

On 31 July, Eisenhower, armed with information from his Ambassadors to Cairo and London, wrote Eden cautioning against aggressive British action and suggested that a conference be held to settle the canal dispute by peaceful means. The next day the President sent Dulles to London to meet with Selwyn and Eden to discuss the concept for that conference based on the original canal operating principles outlined in the (Cairo) Conference of 1888.²⁸⁷ Dulles’ mission was to ensure the British understood the President’s intent by elaborating on the President’s personal message to Eden and to assess, through the eyes of his Secretary of State, British intent.²⁸⁸

The Conference of 1888 was signed by 24 nations, to include Egypt. The 24 nations were the primary users of the Suez Canal at that time. The agreement dictated the principles and rules, in peace and in war, as to the use of the canal by the signatories. Eisenhower’s intent was to convene all 24 nations to discuss the current situations and prepare a peaceful solution for the future.²⁸⁹ Britain and France agreed to the conference to be held on 16 August. In the end the conference failed because Egypt refused to accept giving up any control of the canal and the right to accept all of the toll fees. Despite the failure of the conference Eisenhower was still able to buy more time to settle the dispute peacefully. For the British and French the conference bought more time to prepare forces to settle the dispute militarily.

²⁸⁶British National Archives, Makins-Dulles Meeting July 30, 1956 FO 371/115469.

²⁸⁷Nichols, 142.

²⁸⁸Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1955-1957*, 156-157.

²⁸⁹Nichols, 142-143.

When Nasser refused the terms of the conference Eisenhower continued what he considered the successful strategy of buying time to prevent the prospect of British military intervention. Eisenhower used personal engagement to caution Eden and he used a trusted lieutenant, Dulles, to convene a second conference for another multilateral approach.²⁹⁰ Eisenhower on 8 September, wrote an uncharacteristically long letter and engaged Eden by cautioning against action and emphasizing the benefits of another scheduled conference, “to resort to military action when the world believes there are other means available for resolving the dispute would set in motion forces that could lead, in the years to come, to the most distressing results.” In addition to the letter being long it was also uncharacteristically blunt in language. Eisenhower, who usually let his subordinates resort to blunt language, was signaling to Eden the importance of his conviction.²⁹¹

The second conference was called the Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA) convened in London 19 September 1956.²⁹² Eisenhower was using the conference to buy time to find a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Eden used the conference to buy time to build up the military force needed to execute the Protocol of Sevres.²⁹³ Both countries attempted to use the United Nations Security Council as they diplomatically maneuvered to a position of advantage. The difference between Eisenhower was that the President was open about his intent for a peaceful resolution to the crisis. Eden was intentionally deceptive.²⁹⁴

The situation in Britain was deteriorating economically. The crisis was negatively impacting the value of the British Pound and cost and reserves of oil supplies. Chancellor of the

²⁹⁰Nichols, 166.

²⁹¹Boyle, *Eden-Eisenhower Correspondence, 1955-1957*, 167-169.

²⁹²Kingseed, *The Suez Crisis of 1956*, 75.

²⁹³Thorpe, 508.

²⁹⁴Nichols, 171.

Exchequer, Harold Macmillan, briefed Eden and his cabinet in August of the threat to the British economy and that they would have to ask the Americans for help with their currency and oil reserves.²⁹⁵ Eden was facing increasing opposition in Parliament from the Labor Party and from within his own cabinet lead by his Chancellor of the Exchequer Harold Macmillan.²⁹⁶

When the British did attack the Suez on 5 November 1956 the reaction from Eisenhower was swift and direct. He used Britain's economic vulnerability as leverage over Eden. The President initiated a United Nations Resolution for an immediate cease-fire and he let Britain know that their much-needed assistance for financial aid and oil reserves would be withheld. On 6 November Macmillan informed the Prime Minister the value of the British Pound was reaching critical levels. The American Secretary of the Treasuring informed Macmillan that no assistance was coming unless the British agreed to a cease-fire.²⁹⁷ In a phone call between Eisenhower and Eden later on 6 November, the President made sure that a British cease-fire and withdraw was the only acceptable solution.²⁹⁸ On 8 November a vote of confidence for Eden occurred signaling his eventual resignation in January 1957 and the rise of Eisenhower's old friend Harold Macmillan as the next British Prime Minister.²⁹⁹

Despite his long relationship with Eisenhower Eden failed to recognize the President's leadership style. Eden lacked the situational understanding to see Britain's positional disadvantage in regards to the United States. Eisenhower communicated directly to Eden on multiple occasions that he wanted a peaceful resolution to the crisis. He attempted to build consensus with the Suez Canal user's conferences and through the United Nations to achieve a

²⁹⁵Louis and Owen, 218-221.

²⁹⁶Thorpe, 499-500.

²⁹⁷Kingseed, *The Suez Crisis of 1956*, 124-125.

²⁹⁸Nichols, 254-255.

²⁹⁹Thorpe, 533-537.

peaceful resolution. Eden threatened Eisenhower's Middle East strategy. His deception cost him this position as Prime Minister and Britain's position as one of the world's true global powers.

CONCLUSION

Eisenhower believed strongly in his strategies. This strong belief provided the motivation to aggressively pursue these strategies. Eisenhower's leadership style was to build a team to help build consensus in favor of his strategy. He used multiple methods to communicate the importance of and the reasons behind his strategy. If a subordinate or peer did not support his strategy he would continue to persuade them, but if he was unsuccessful and viewed the lack of support as threat he would take action against the transgressors.

Whether Eisenhower took steps to either mitigate or eliminate the threat depended on how he perceived the threat. If Eisenhower perceived the subordinate or peer as not just supporting his strategy he would mitigate the threat as in the case of the Air Barons' obstinacy during the fight for control of the strategic bombers to support the Operation Overlord. Eisenhower's mitigation measure was to threaten resignation as the Supreme Allied Commander if he did not get control of the bombers. Eisenhower knew he had the backing of Roosevelt and Marshal and the threat worked. Mitigation was also the case with Churchill and Britain during the process to implement Eisenhower's Middle East Strategy. Eisenhower saw Britain by wanting to hold to their imperial influence in the Middle East as threatening America's strategy to secure oil and keep the Soviets out of the region. Eisenhower used diplomatic and economic pressure to mitigate British influence.

If Eisenhower perceived a subordinate or a peer as threat who actively worked against him or deceived him he would attempt to eliminate the threat as opposed to mitigating the threat. This was the case with Army Chief of Staff Mathew Ridgway in the battle over the New Look National Security Strategy. Eisenhower eliminated Ridgway after only two years as the Chief because the General actively went to Congress and the press and spoke publicly against the

President's Policy. Eisenhower wanted a peaceful resolution to the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956 and communicated this to British Prime Minister Anthony Eden. The President attempted multiple times to build international consensus to achieve peace. Eden saw these consensus building initiatives as a way to give him more time to build the needed forces and capabilities to conduct a surprise attack on Egypt. Eden actively deceived Eisenhower as to his intentions. Eisenhower again used diplomatic and economic measures to force Britain to cease-fire and withdraw from the canal, which cost Eden his job and Britain, her position as a true global power.

Eisenhower's leadership style as a strategic decision maker in pursuit of strategy is as relevant today as it was sixty years ago. Today there are as many leadership styles as there are strategic decision makers. The one thing that strategic decision makers have in common is that they all attempt to communicate their intent and reason behind their strategies. How they communicate will vary as much as leadership styles vary. The importance of understanding the lessons of Eisenhower is that it is incumbent upon the subordinates and peers to pay attention to the leadership styles of today's strategic decision makers and understand how they communicate their strategies. How well a subordinate or peer understands a strategic decision makers can determine if they are successful.

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