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Ike's Last War: Making War Safe for Society

A Thesis by

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Chapman University

Orange, CA

Wilkinson College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in War and Society

May 2019

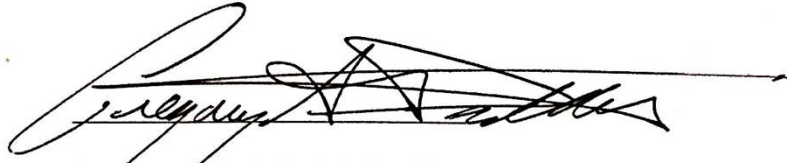
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Lori Cox Han, Ph.D.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Slayton", written over a horizontal line.

Robert Slayton, Ph.D.

May 2019

Ike's Last War: Making War Safe for Society

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To my wife, Andrea, thank you for forcing me to put down the books and have fun. Here's to our future sailing adventures. Many thanks to my sons, Anders and Karsten, for their patience while waiting for me to get back from the library. And for their feedback. When I described what I was writing, Anders asked, "actually, can you stop talking cause you're, um, like kind of boring." People spend fortunes to hear less honest assessments.

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ABSTRACT

Ike's Last War: Making War Safe for Society

by Jesse A. Faugstad

This thesis analyzes how Eisenhower defined war and its utility in his New Look defense policy and the ramifications for America's interactions with the world through its foreign policy. It argues that Eisenhower redefined the relationship between war and society as he executed his grand strategy, further removing society from the decision for war. To avoid what he believed to be the inevitable global destruction of a general war turned nuclear, Eisenhower broadened the scope of 'war' to balance domestic opinion for containing communism while also avoiding the devastating consequences of war in American society. By authorizing coups in Iran and Guatemala, Eisenhower blurred the line between coercive diplomacy and violent political warfare. President Eisenhower's reliance on covert action to achieve political outcomes prevented general or nuclear war but it strengthened an emerging model for society's relationship with war. Political warfare and covert action increased the gap between society and the commitment of American power during the Cold War. In his effort to prevent war, Eisenhower expanded presidential power and set a precedent that continues today.

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Introduction

If any person in 1953 could have claimed to understand war's utility, it would have been President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The hero-general of the Second World War and the first Supreme Commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization had studied or participated in war since his entry into the United States Military Academy in 1911. On 9 May 1953, Eisenhower commissioned a study popularly known as Project Solarium to “formulate and present alternative courses of action which the United States might presently or in the future undertake with respect to the Soviet power bloc.”¹ Forty-two years after his graduation from West Point, “Ike” once again found himself in a familiar setting—receiving a briefing from his staff on possible courses of action for his last war – the Cold War. Late that July, Eisenhower attended a top-secret briefing presented by the participants of each of the three task forces assigned to analyze the Soviet Union's threat to American national security and the options available to the president. While listening to the briefing which offered options ranging from indirect economic confrontation to preventative nuclear war, Eisenhower made a note on his paper. “Global war as a defense of freedom almost a contradiction in terms.”²

What led the American president most experienced in war and its consequences to note that contradiction? How could a Cold War president conceive of global war to save the free world from communism as illogical?

¹ Document #69, “Paper Prepared by the Directing Panel of Project Solarium,” dated June 1, 1953, *United States Department of State, Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 1, *National Security Affairs*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1984), 360. (Hereafter referred to as *FRUS*)

² Handwritten Note, no date, DDE Diary Dec. 52 – July 52 (1), Box 3, DDE Diary Series, Ann Whitman File, Eisenhower, Dwight D. – Papers as President of the United States, 1953-1961, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library (Hereafter DDEL).

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze how Eisenhower defined war and its utility in his New Look defense policy and the ramifications for America's interactions with the world through its foreign policy.³ It argues that Eisenhower redefined the relationship between war and society as he executed his grand strategy, further removing society from the decision for war. To avoid what he believed to be the inevitable global destruction of a general war turned nuclear, Eisenhower broadened the scope of 'war' to balance domestic opinion for containing communism while also avoiding the devastating consequences of war in American society. The president defined war so it would remain a feasible coercive instrument for achieving American self-interests. To wage war, Eisenhower blurred the line between coercive diplomacy and violent political warfare. President Eisenhower's reliance on covert action to achieve political outcomes prevented general or nuclear war but it strengthened an emerging model for society's relationship

³ What is war? For the purposes of this thesis war represents two distinct, yet related ideas. First, war is a means of achieving policy objectives (utility). Second, war describes the various means of employing national power to influence or compel an opponent (nuclear, general, political, psychological). This second definition of war is commonly referred to as warfare in documents from Eisenhower's administration. War is often tied to the idea of victory. Military victory represents the strategic, operational, or tactical defeat of an enemy's corresponding military power. It is a limited aim, or more specifically, an aim commonly thought of in a sequential process. That is, first the enemy's military forces must be defeated and then the political outcome will be achieved. Victory in war, however, represents the successful application of violence in achieving policy objectives. There may be a period of time between military victory and victory in war; enemy forces may be defeated but the political settlement does not immediately occur. Victory at best represents a more acceptable relationship between actors than before the outbreak of war. In this discussion of Eisenhower's grand strategy "war" represents achieving policy objectives through coercion or force. When Eisenhower's view of waging war is discussed "war" is preceded by a modifier signifying his conceptualization of means (i.e. political warfare). Most important to this discussion is the idea—which Eisenhower subscribed to—that war is chaotic and uncontrollable in nature. When analyzing the president's statements about war and conflict it is important to recognize that Eisenhower did not believe war could be controlled or the outcome predicted.

For competing definitions of war see the following: For a discussion of war as a "social fact" that mirrors society see Miguel A. Centeno and Elaine Enriquez, *War and Society* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2016), 4-9; For the unpredictable nature of war and an analysis of war as a "nonlinear phenomenon see Alan Beyerchen, "Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and War," *International Security* 17, no. 3 (Winter, 1992-1993): 60-61; 5-16 For a discussion on modern war and the complications that emerge when defining war, see Richard English, *Modern War: A Very Short Introduction* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5-16.

with war. Political warfare and covert action increased the gap between society and the commitment of American power during the Cold War.

Ike broadly classified war as nuclear war, general war, and political war. Nuclear war assumed a variety of definitions during the Cold War, but for Eisenhower it represented uncontrollable escalation to unfathomable—and unproductive—destruction through nuclear exchange. General war meant conventional armies fighting with fully mobilized societies backing the effort, essentially the not so distant experience of the Second World War. While society and policymakers could readily identify nuclear war and general war, political warfare proved to be the most important instrument of American power and created a blurring of foreign policy and ‘war’. Asking why Eisenhower defined war and its utility this way provides perspective on Ike’s understanding of the Cold War and the relationship between war, foreign policy, and grand strategy. More importantly, this thesis reveals how the American view of war and its utility differed from that of nations subjected to American intervention. The blurring of foreign policy and war in Eisenhower’s New Look limited his administration’s understanding of war’s consequences—both at home and abroad.

This thesis relies on National Security Council meeting notes, policy planning documents, and personal correspondence between Eisenhower and key individuals in his administration. Integrating these primary sources with scholarship concerning conflict, grand strategy, and the Cold War in the Third World provides a perspective of war and its consequences in society—both foreign and domestic. Many historians have noted Eisenhower’s view of war and the covert nature of his foreign policy. However, there is no study that analyzes how Eisenhower’s view of war’s utility in U.S. grand strategy

shaped American interventions in the early and mid 1950s. No other study analyzes how Eisenhower's definition of war influenced his grand strategy.

This thesis first analyzes Eisenhower's conceptualization of grand strategy and the key experiences and ideas that influenced him prior to entering the White House. Second, it evaluates Eisenhower's correspondence and comments in National Security meetings to establish how the president defined war and its utility. The third section considers the means Eisenhower identified to achieve American interests below the threshold of war. The fourth assesses how Eisenhower executed his grand strategy by examining his use of political warfare and covert regime change, in Iran and Guatemala. Finally, this thesis describes how Eisenhower's definition of war militarized American foreign policy in an already war-focused national security state. This final section reveals how Cold War policies attributed to Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson emerged during Eisenhower's administration and the importance of defining war and peace as America interacts with other nations.

The intention of this thesis is not to define war, peace, or how to formulate grand strategy. Rather, it contributes to the ongoing discourse of war's utility in grand strategy. It analyzes the questions raised by Eisenhower and his administration, and more importantly, the questions it prompts us to ask today as America continues to exist in an interconnected world. The wide-ranging approaches to executing grand strategy through diplomatic, economic, and military means that Eisenhower considered in 1953 are still relevant today. In fact, the range of options to consider in executing grand strategy should be approached with the same amount of study and planning that Eisenhower pursued

using his systemized National Security Council process.⁴ Foreign policy is inherently interventionist—states seek to shape other states’ actions to advance their interest. The negative connotation that interventionism often evokes speaks to the importance of examining where coercive foreign policy moves closer to general war, or at the least its characteristics.⁵ Eisenhower’s key policymakers understood the consequence of policies that appeared interventionist, even suggesting that American actions be framed as “participation” while communist actions be labeled “intervention.”⁶ Despite this awareness, Eisenhower faced a vital question: where is the line between general war and political warfare? The answer mattered as all world leaders sought to advance interests without triggering nuclear war. A question not as evident in Eisenhower’s national security process is one that confronts states today: how far can a state pursue its interests in another state before society needs to sanction the use of coercive measures, to include violence?⁷

⁴ For a review of Eisenhower’s National Security system see chapter five in Robert R. Bowie and Richard Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998).

⁵ While interventionist and coercive may seem dramatic terms to describe the United States interaction with other nations, it is useful to consider the power dynamic between the United States and other states. While the United States may seek to link policies or leverage certain issues, a smaller country may not have the economic or political capital to counter the United States efforts. From the other state’s perspective this seemingly normal interaction would appear coercive as the state has little power to counter the United States’ effort.

⁶ “Memorandum for the National Security Council, Subject: Intelligence Advisory Committee Comments on the Intelligence Aspects of NSC Action No. 1074-a,” dated April 6, 1954, Security Efforts Overseas [April 1954—September 1958], Box 10, Subject Series, NSC Series, White House Office, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs: Records, 1952-61, DDEL.

⁷ A timely question to consider as the United States processes the Mueller Report. While there is widespread outrage at Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election it would be useful for Americans to consider how the United States interfered with foreign elections during the Cold War. One is not better than the other, but perhaps the outrage could be directed to national self-reflection on how the United States’ pursues relations with other states and what reaction that provokes. The United States adopted political warfare during Eisenhower’s time in office because they noted the success that the Soviet’s had in waging political warfare.

War's utility is ultimately a perception based on how a leader or state balances costs and benefits. This thesis acknowledges the revisionist and post-revisionist views of Eisenhower's grand strategy.⁸ While Eisenhower admittedly sought to avoid war, and its effects on American society, he also pursued policies that created instability and violence abroad. In large part then, this thesis shows how war reflects society, and that war often occurs when society perceives it as useful. Of course, the view of war's utility—and what constitutes war—varies by nation. Analyzing Eisenhower's efforts to prevent nuclear war, which redirected violence to the Third World through coercive foreign policy, demonstrates the futility of war and peace as distinct times in an interconnected world. Understanding the utility of war—perceived and actual—informs policy making, moral and ethical debates, and ultimately how a nation defines interests in relation to means. The Jackson Committee, charged with studying political warfare as a means of national power, stated that, “national security and a just and peaceful world order,” were unattainable but approachable.⁹ In 1953 that assessment probably sounded pragmatic, yet hopeful. Viewed from Eisenhower's final years in office, though, that uncertain assessment sounds like the tired view of a man too long at war.

⁸ Revisionists argue that Eisenhower actively directed American national security policy and sought to contain communism without triggering nuclear war. Post-revisionists argue that Eisenhower's “Waging Peace” narrative neglects the numerous covert operations and coercive foreign policies that disrupted the emergence of the Third World following the end of colonialism. For an overview of the historiography of Eisenhower's presidency see Richard Immerman, “Confessions of an Eisenhower Revisionist: An Agonizing Reappraisal,” *Diplomatic History* 14, no. 3 (Summer 1990): 319-342.

⁹ Document #370, “Report to the President by the President's Committee on International Information Activities,” dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1798.

Chapter 1 – Ike’s War

Eisenhower’s Grand Strategy: The Great Equation

Grand strategy is difficult to define, hard to observe in practice, and often a title assigned to a pattern of policies and decisions in hindsight. More often, grand strategy reflects a dialogue of competing worldviews that ebbs and flows with success and failure.¹⁰ Despite the hazards of developing and implementing grand strategy, it continues to be associated with the deliberate and calculated use of power to achieve interests.¹¹ Historian Hal Brands offered a useful definition, describing grand strategy as a “conceptual framework” through which interests are translated into ends and supported by means.¹² Some scholars argue that only large states can craft grand strategy because they actually possess the means to achieve interests.¹³ However, if grand strategy is viewed as conceptual framework then any state, or actor, could develop a grand strategy despite limited means. Grand strategy can also serve as a blue print that dictates actions

¹⁰ For a look at this dimension of grand strategy see the competing views concerning United States’ grand strategy in the May/June 2019 issue of *Foreign Affairs*.

¹¹ R.D. Hooker, Jr., *The Grand Strategy of the United States*, Institute for National Strategic Studies Monograph, (Washington D.C., October 2014), 1, <https://inss.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/Books/grand-strategy-us.pdf> (accessed April 4, 2019)

¹² Hal Brands, *What Good is Grand Strategy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2014), 3. The United States military defines grand strategy as “Grand strategy aims to secure and advance a nation’s long-term, enduring, core interests over time.” Quote taken from “Joint Doctrine Note 1-18: Strategy,” dated April 25, 2018, Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Electronic Library, U.S. Department of Defense, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/jdn_jg/jdn1_18.pdf?ver=2018-04-25-150439-540 (accessed April 27, 2019). The website notes that “A joint doctrine note (JDN) is a pre-doctrinal publication that does not necessarily describe a position of consensus across joint forces.” The main document guiding joint planners, U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 5-0, “Joint Planning,” dated June 16, 2017, does not include a definition of grand strategy.

¹³ Williamson Murray, “Thoughts on Grand Strategy,” in *The Shaping of Grand Strategy: Policy, Diplomacy, and War*, eds. Williamson Murray, Richard Hart Sinnreich, and James Lacey (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1.

or a process to determine an acceptable decision in relation to a state's environment.¹⁴

Because states do not operate in a vacuum, and the interconnected nature of the world means that decisions are made in a constantly changing context, it is important that grand strategy is developed through process, if not a process in itself.¹⁵ Another way to consider grand strategy is the ideals or principles guiding a state's actions. Grand strategy does not achieve an end, rather, it describes conditions a state wishes to achieve or maintain.

States observe the world and make decisions through the lens of grand strategy.

President Dwight D. Eisenhower arguably possessed a grand strategy for the United States during his presidency that governed the instruments of national power. The president identified security and solvency as the two driving factors of American grand strategy, and he called it the "Great Equation."¹⁶ Eisenhower also believed war lacked utility in the atomic age. Rather than counter communism through general war, Ike waged war using diplomatic, economic, and information means to achieve the objectives of his grand strategy. Another factor informing Eisenhower's grand strategy was the belief that communism posed an existential threat to the free world and consequently America needed to confront communist expansion. These two factors—war's lack of utility and the need to confront communism—informed the development of Ike's foreign

¹⁴ Rebecca Friedman Lissner, "What Is Grand Strategy? Sweeping a Conceptual Minefield," *Texas National Security Review* 2, no. 1 (November 2018), <https://tnsr.org/2018/11/what-is-grand-strategy-sweeping-a-conceptual-minefield/> (accessed April 29, 2019).

¹⁵ Tarak Barkawi, *Globalization and War* (New York, NY: Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), 99-101. In this sense, grand strategy is a cultural expression of how society views power, interests, and violence in its interactions with other people.

¹⁶ Immerman and Bowie, *Waging Peace*, 44. See also Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower's Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 53-55.

policy along with the Great Equation.¹⁷ The Cold War ideology concerning communism and freedom is so imbedded in popular memory and scholarship that America's need to confront communism is taken as fact rather than a choice.¹⁸

Grand strategy is different from foreign policy, diplomacy, and military strategy in that it informs those instruments of state power; it is executed through military, economic, diplomatic, and other means. The employment of means within the conceptual framework of grand strategy is how nations govern the specific means of their state power. For Eisenhower, National Security Council paper 162/2 outlined his defense policy to support his grand strategy. Known as the "New Look," NSC 162/2 addressed

¹⁷ Given the ideological rhetoric that permeates Cold War political discourse the ability to discern truth, or rather honest belief, from rhetoric designed to mobilize or contain sentiments becomes critical. Eisenhower's presidency, no less his defense policy, has been assessed as purely pragmatic as well as manipulative. As this thesis analyzes how and why Eisenhower defined war it cannot rely on any one type of source. Marc Trachtenberg stated, "If you are interested in seeing what a key policy maker was actually thinking, you do not want to focus too narrowly on just one particular document. You want to see whether that policy maker said much the same thing in a wide variety of contexts, over a considerable period of time, and whether particular points were made with real feeling. And you want to see whether the words corresponded to what was actually done." Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 156. While this thesis focuses on Eisenhower's development of NSC 162/2, it analyzes Iran and Guatemala as examples of Eisenhower's conceptualization of war's utility in foreign policy.

¹⁸ The term ideology is controversial and as sociologist Clifford Geertz noted, "It is one of the minor ironies of modern intellectual history that the term "ideology" has itself become thoroughly ideologized. A concept that once meant but a collection of political proposals perhaps somewhat intellectualistic and impractical but an any rate idealistic—"social romances" as someone, perhaps Napoleon, called them—has now become, to quote *Webster's*, "the integrated assertions, theories, and aims constituting a politico-social program, often with an implication of factitious propagandizing; as, Fascism was altered in Germany to fit the Nazi *ideology*"—a much more formidable proposition." Geertz also made an important point regarding ideology that deserves attention before discussing the role of beliefs in Eisenhower's policy and American society during the 1950s. Geertz argued that, "The quality of social rhetoric in ideology is thus not proof that the vision of sociopsychological reality upon which it is based is false and that it draws its persuasive power from any discrepancy between what is believed and what can, now or someday, be established as scientifically correct. That it may indeed lose touch with reality in an orgy of autistic fantasy—even that, in situations where it is left uncriticized by either a free science or competing ideologies well-rooted in the general social structure, it has a very strong tendency to do so—is all too apparent." For more information on ideology and culture see Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretations of Cultures* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2017), 211 and 250.

one aspect of American grand strategy that consumed the latter half of the twentieth century—containing the Soviet Union.¹⁹

Eisenhower's life prepared him for crafting a comprehensive grand strategy and understanding the relationship between interests, ends, and means.²⁰ Before the Second World War, Eisenhower benefited from the mentorship of Generals Fox Connor, John Pershing, Douglas MacArthur, and George Marshall. While all four generals assisted

¹⁹ There are two main strategies associated with Eisenhower's presidency: the New Look and the Eisenhower Doctrine. While the term Eisenhower Doctrine is unequivocally linked to Eisenhower's Middle East policy established in 1957, the New Look is used loosely and represents competing ideas about Eisenhower's grand strategy. First, some historians argue that the New Look emerged in the 1952 presidential campaign. Others argue that the New Look was Eisenhower's view of American priorities, more accurately stated as the Great Equation. Still other historians claim that New Look emphasized Mutually Assured Destruction as Eisenhower's strategy though this emphasis on nuclear deterrence did not emerge until 1956-57. Eisenhower best expressed his view of the New Look and military forces in a press conference on 23 May 1956. While responding to questions he stated that the New Look entailed an examination of the role and organization of the armed forces to meet. He also reiterated that security did not come from military means alone but "the combined whole strength of America." He also refuted claims that massive retaliation served as a new strategy in American defense policy. Eisenhower stated that, "the sole use of Armed Forces, so far as war between two great countries possessing atom and hydrogen bombs today is this: their deterrent value." Nuclear weapons played a role in the grand strategy of the United States, but the feasibility of nuclear war never advanced past deterring war in Eisenhower's mind.

Historian Michael J. Hogan provided a concise summary of the New Look while also relating it to previous American administrations. Hogan argued that, "This strategy, which aimed to control costs and limit the need for military manpower and troops stationed abroad, began to emerge in the early years of the Truman administration, gave way temporarily during the Korean War, and then reemerged as the so-called New Look in the 1950s. Indeed, the Eisenhower administration, as the debates over the New Look point out, would wrestle with the same problems of institution building and budget making as its predecessor, reach some of the same compromises, and thus consolidate a pattern of state making and military strategy that had been taking shape since the end of World War II." In "Introduction: The National Security Discourse of the Early Cold War and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman," in *Origins of the National Security State and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman*, ed. Mary Ann Heiss and Michael J. Hogan (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2015), 6. NSC 162/2 became known as the New Look: after Joint Chief of Staff Admiral Arthur Radford and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles referred to it by that name in public speeches. NSC 162/2 can be accessed in Document #101, *FRUS, National Security Affairs*, Volume II, Part I, <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54v02p1/d101>.

²⁰ Many historians have noted Eisenhower's military background as key to understanding his actions as president. For an analysis focused on Eisenhower's use of rhetoric see Ira Chernus, *General Eisenhower: Ideology and Discourse* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2002); For an intimate look at Eisenhower's relationship with General Fox Connor see Steven Rabalais, *General Fox Connor: Pershing's Chief of Operations and Eisenhower's Mentor* (Havertown, PA: Casemate Publishers, 2016); For an analysis of Eisenhower's military and presidential career that provides a personal view of Ike see Jean Edward Smith, *Eisenhower: In War and Peace* (New York, NY: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2013); For a policy and diplomatic history of Eisenhower's national security system see Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*.

Ike's career through personal advocacy and finding positions that benefited Eisenhower, they also provided him perspective on war, politics, and grand strategy.²¹ Best known for making Eisenhower read Carl von Clausewitz's *On War* three times, Connor taught Ike the benefit of studying history and the particulars of working with allied armies.²² Eisenhower's assignment with General Pershing in the American Battle Monuments Commission culminated with Ike writing *A Guide to the American Battle Fields in Europe*. The research and analysis required to write the guide, combined with Ike walking the battlefields in France, provided him an understanding of World War I and the consequences of strategic decisions. This experience also directed his attention to the issue of preparedness and mobilization. Eisenhower wrote his U.S. Army War College research paper on how to prepare the American military for future conflict.²³ In the years prior to World War II, Eisenhower served in the War Department and in the Philippines under the guidance of MacArthur and Marshall, furthering his exposure to grand strategy and politics.²⁴

Eisenhower's service in the Second World War leading the War Department's War Plans Division, commander of Operation Torch, and Supreme Allied Commander taught him the promise and limits of military power, the importance of political

²¹ The best overview of Eisenhower's relationship with his mentors can be found in Smith, *Eisenhower: In War and Peace*. See chapter three for his relationship with Connor; chapter four for Pershing's influence; chapter five and six for MacArthur and Eisenhower's service in Washington D.C. and the Philippines; see chapter eight for Eisenhower's service with Marshall. For a shorter synopsis see Immerman and Bowie, *Waging Peace*, 41-43.

²² Rabalais, *General Fox Connor*, 183.

²³ Smith, *Eisenhower*, 81.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 141-144. See also, Immerman and Bowie, *Waging Peace*, 41-43.

objectives in relation to military objectives, and the devastating effects of war.²⁵ Working closely with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and allied politicians and military members impressed upon Ike that military objectives served a policy objective.²⁶ His first combat assignment to command the invasion of North Africa emerged from the debate between the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union about where, when, and how to open a second front against the Axis powers. Ike's service in the military, and close interaction with politicians, allowed him to develop and refine a keen appreciation for the use of rhetoric in strategic communication, a key aspect of a grand strategy that relied on information and psychological warfare.²⁷ Despite Eisenhower's extensive experience crafting *military* strategy and working with international leaders during the war, Ike implemented rather than crafted grand strategy.

The course of international affairs from 1945 to 1952 further refined Eisenhower's understanding of America's role in the world and the feasibility of means and ends. President Truman's decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 marked a change in international relations and the magnitude of what some deemed as "total war."²⁸ When the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb in 1948, fears of nuclear war increased, in part because of lingering disagreement over wartime

²⁵ Immerman and Bowie, *Waging Peace*, 41-43.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 42. See Smith, *Eisenhower*, 208-213 for a discussion of the debate over Operation TORCH and President Roosevelt's assertion of authority as commander in chief.

²⁷ Chernus, *General Eisenhower*, 2.

²⁸ For a discussion differing views of war in the nuclear age see, Michael Carver, "Conventional War in the Nuclear Age," in *Makers of Modern Strategy: From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* eds. Peter Paret, Gordon A. Craig, and Felix Gilbert (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).

treaties to subdue Germany and rebuild Europe.²⁹ Fears that the Soviet Union had directed North Korea's 1950 attack on South Korea seemed to validate the idea of a monolithic communist organization spreading across the globe.³⁰ Truman already had established the European Relief Program (ERP), popularly known as the Marshall Plan, and spurred the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to rebuild Western Europe and buttress it against the fear of Soviet aggression.³¹

Though supportive of rebuilding Europe and serving as NATO's first Supreme Commander, Eisenhower grew concerned about the consequences of Truman policies. Comparing Truman to "a fine man, who, in the middle of a stormy lake, knows nothing of swimming," Eisenhower lamented "if his wisdom could only equal his good intent." Ike viewed Truman's policy making process as chaotic and reactive while also expending American resources without considering the likely duration of the Cold War.³² For Eisenhower, international events after 1945 reinforced his belief that America's fate was inseparable from the new world order. America's military, economic, and "spiritual" might necessitated action in preserving that new, and ever-changing world.

Domestic factors also weighed heavily on Eisenhower's mind as he identified American interests and acceptable means for maintaining those interests. Approached by both the Democratic and Republican party as a presidential candidate, Eisenhower decided to run as a Republican. Eisenhower supported parts of New Deal social welfare,

²⁹ Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), vii.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 99-100.

³¹ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 70-71.

³² Immerman and Bowie, *Waging Peace*, 20.

but he also wanted to slow the continuing shift to leftist policies sponsored by the Democratic party. Likewise, he also feared what would happen to the United States and the world order if Republicans led by Senator Robert Taft gained power and carried out their isolationist views. Eisenhower saw himself as the candidate of the “Middle Way.”³³ While vowing during his presidential campaign to end the Korean War, he also argued for American involvement in the world to counter communist expansion. Ike wrote to a childhood friend that “The one indispensable thing to remember is that, if the free world cannot provide for its ‘collective’ security, the alternative for every one of these nations, including our own, is an eventual fate that is worse than any kind of expense or effort we can now imagine.”³⁴ While the American home-front had been separated physically from the battlefields of the world wars, Eisenhower believed that the Cold War could impact America at home. The desire to balance domestic policies and maintain a firm commitment to America’s allies arguably influenced the new president as much as foreign affairs.³⁵

Eisenhower’s decision to run for president as a Republican against Senator Robert Taft revealed his domestic and foreign outlook: America could not retreat into isolationism, nor could it sustain continued growth of social welfare programs and an

³³ Eisenhower wrote to his friend General Bradford Chynoweth that, “When I refer to the Middle Way, I merely mean the middle way as it represents a practical working basis between extremists, both of whose doctrines I flatly reject. The generality that I advance is merely this: Excluding the field of moral values, anything that affects or is proposed for masses of humans is wrong if the position it seeks is at either end of possible argument.” For the full text of the letter see Dwight D. Eisenhower to General Bradford Chynoweth, July 13, 1954, in Louis Galambos, et al., eds., *The Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, 13 vols. (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 15:1186n.997 (hereafter DDEP, followed by volume number)

³⁴ Dwight D. Eisenhower to Everett E. Hazlett, June 21, 1951, in Robert Griffith, *Ike’s Letters to a Friend, 1941-1958* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1984), 85.

³⁵ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 125.

increasingly large defense budget. The American economy required access to natural resources in strategic areas across the globe. This necessitated trade agreements with friendly nations, something that Eisenhower and many policymakers perceived as under attack due to communist expansion.³⁶ Likewise, the growing defense budget, thanks to the Korean War and the United States' economic aid to allies in Europe, continued to swell because of perceived communist expansion and the Truman Doctrine's promise to assist free nations anywhere.³⁷

In short, Eisenhower wanted to reduce the tension between solvency and security. He believed "that the overwhelming majority of the people of the free world appreciate the fact that a healthy American economy and a functioning economy in their own home country are inseparable from true defense."³⁸ Solvency also served as a deterrent to war and its destructive effect on American society. Eisenhower noted to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles that, "if the contest to maintain this relative position [of nuclear power] should have to continue indefinitely, the cost would either drive use to war—or into some form of dictatorial government. In such circumstances, we would be forced to consider whether or not our duty to future generations did not require us to *initiate* war."³⁹ Insolvency threatened not only domestic economic health, but the American public's attitude toward war's utility. While the Great Equation seemed obvious to Eisenhower, he

³⁶ Speech: "A Survey of Foreign Policy Problems", 1953 January 27; John Foster Dulles Papers, Box 310; Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

³⁷ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 22-23.

³⁸ Dwight D. Eisenhower, April 30, 1953, The President's News Conference Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/231701> (accessed April 29, 2019).

³⁹ "Memorandum for the Secretary of State," dated September 8, 1953, Aug—Sept 1953 (1), Box 3, DDE Diary Series, Ann Whitman File, Papers as President, 1953-1961, DDEL.

noted that “we must have the enlightened support of Americans” to justify defense spending without driving Americans to believe war provided a faster path to economic stability and prosperity.⁴⁰

Though Eisenhower distanced himself from Truman’s version of containment that he believed overextended American interests and means, by 1952 Truman’s administration also understood and grappled with the tension between security, solvency, and the need for a long-term policy. To that end, and anticipating the presidential transition, President Truman directed a reappraisal of NSC-68 in 1952. A memorandum from Counselor of the Department of State Charles E. Bohlen to the Director of the Policy Planning Staff, Paul Nitze, detailing initial conclusions from the drafting group’s analysis indicates that Truman’s policy staff had already developed views that are largely attributed to Eisenhower in his New Look. After reviewing updated estimates of Soviet atomic capabilities, the drafting group concluded that American national security strategy designed to counter the Soviet threat was sound and should be continued “without feeling the compulsion of achieving them by a certain date.”⁴¹ In 1952, draft policy statements reveal that policy planners no longer believed in a date of maximum danger as described in NSC 68. The planners returned to the conclusion of NSC 20/1—drafted in 1948—that, “We are faced here with no rigid periodicity of war and peace which would enable us to conclude that we must achieve our peacetime objectives by a given date.”⁴² As Truman’s presidency came to a close, his staff argued that general war would inevitably escalate to

⁴⁰ Ibid., 3

⁴¹ Document #7, “Memorandum by the Counselor (Bohlen) to the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Nitze) National Security Affairs,” dated May 13, 1952, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 1, *National Security Affairs*, 16.

⁴² Ibid., 13.

nuclear war. Due to the threat of nuclear war—and its attendant destruction—the utility of general war as a means to deter Soviet expansion became “less rewarding.” However, the acceptance of NSC 141 on 13 January 1953 as the final reappraisal of NSC 68 reaffirmed the assumptions that informed the development of NSC 68. Though Truman did not accept the drafting group’s conclusions in the final document, it is clear that key elements of Eisenhower’s New Look were already present in the national security documents circulating and informing administration decision making.⁴³

Eisenhower’s experience in international affairs provided him the opportunity to identify the nature and characteristics of the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. By his inauguration in 1953, Eisenhower had spent over ten years at the highest levels of military command where military strategy connects to policy and American grand strategy. Eisenhower understood the Cold War as a challenge to America’s way of life. Economic prosperity, physical survival, global cooperation, and America’s ability to shape its future became uncertain as the world grappled to understand the Soviet Union’s intentions. Many wondered if democratic capitalism could peacefully coexist with communism. Both ideologies expressed the same goals of security and prosperity, yet the methods used to achieve the ends clearly were different. Such ideological tension created fear, suspicion, and uncertainty. The Cold War became a multi-faceted conflict to ensure American hegemony based on protecting the global free world. War represented military force, covert action, psychological warfare, and economic policy. Communism, the Soviet Union, communist China, and satellite states

⁴³ Michael J. Hogan, “Introduction: The National Security Discourse of the Early Cold War and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman,” in *Origins of the National Security State and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman*, eds. Mary Ann Heiss and Michael J. Hogan (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2015), 6.

became the enemy. Peace was not an option so long as the ideological war remained. Victory could not be guaranteed by action, but by the inevitable failure of a corrupt system.⁴⁴ Survival only could be guaranteed by action. War was a state of contest between democracy and communism, yet Eisenhower worried about war's destructiveness, and he cautiously balanced countering communism with preserving American values and ideas.

Eisenhower's Understanding of the Cold War

Without question, the Cold War context influenced how Eisenhower identified and prioritized interests, threats, means, and ends. Addressing the press shortly after his inauguration, Ike noted that "A true posture of defense is composed of three factors--spiritual, military, and economic."⁴⁵ Like Truman, Eisenhower did not support preventative war or isolationism.⁴⁶ He noted the tension felt by many Americans in his diary, writing that, "I'd like to see the United States able to sit at home and ignore the rest of the world. What a pleasing prospect, until you look at ultimate consequences, destruction." McGeorge Bundy, best known for his service as Presidents Kennedy and Johnson's National Security Advisor, noted in 1952 that Eisenhower's election represented three truths of the Cold War. First, that the United States had to stand up against an expansionist Soviet Union. Second, that "the United States must not try to go it

⁴⁴ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 47-49.

⁴⁵ Dwight D. Eisenhower, April 30, 1953, The President's News Conference Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project (<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/231701>).

⁴⁶ Document #16, "Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary (Lay)," dated August 15, 1952, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 1, *National Security Affairs*, 272.

alone.” And finally, that Eisenhower represented America because “he was at heart a man of peace.”⁴⁷ Eisenhower viewed the Cold War as more than a new *modus vivendi* for foreign relations in a world marked by nuclear weapons, decolonization, and the postwar world order—it also defined American interests and identity. Always the soldier, Ike believed his presidential campaign was a call to duty on behalf of the American public, and he promoted a similar call to duty to American citizens. By responding to the threats presented by communism and the Soviet Union the American people became defenders of freedom and prosperity.⁴⁸

The interests of the United States during the Cold War reflected the multi-faceted nature of the conflict.⁴⁹ American and Soviet views of the world collided in ideological, economic, moral, and global spaces. Fears of communism that the war had moderated, or forced out of public discourse, resurfaced as Americans watched the Soviet Union exert greater control over Eastern Europe. European states rebuilt after the war and re-established domestic political systems, exposing the influence of communism behind the Iron Curtain. While a vulnerable Europe loomed in the minds of U.S. policy makers, a majority of Americans also feared the prospect of another economic depression after the Second World War. Moreover, the morality, and political feasibility, of colonialism and imperialism came into question as European powers lost their ability to retain colonial possessions as nationalism grew in the Third World. Global economic, political, and

⁴⁷ McGeorge Bundy, “November 1952: Imperatives of Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Affairs* October 1952 <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/1952-10-01/november-1952-imperatives-foreign-policy> (accessed on March 08, 2019).

⁴⁸ Chernus, *General Eisenhower*, 84.

⁴⁹ For a discussion of the competing views on the Cold War’s origin see Timothy White, “Cold War Historiography: New Evidence Behind Traditional Typographies,” *International Social Science Review* 75, no 3/4 (2000): 35-46.

social movements thus collided with American and Soviet actions. The superpower competition between the United States and the Soviet Union occurred in an already diverse and interconnected world.

The Cold War was an ideological conflict waged in America and across the globe. Ira Chernus noted that ideology played a central role in the Cold War.⁵⁰ The ideological conflict occurred domestically and internationally. Like previous wars, the Cold War influenced American national identity and it continues to impact the United States today.⁵¹ Eisenhower used the conflict to shape American society in the continuing debate over the role of the federal government and the relation of the individual to society. Ike viewed extremists in both the Democrat and Republican parties as dangerous to national unity. Image and prestige mattered in the Cold War. Language influenced the perception of action, even similar acts by countries ideologically opposed.

For example, in a memorandum to the National Security Council, the Intelligence Advisory Committee proposed “substituting the word ‘participation’ for ‘intervention’ throughout the paper wherever reference is made to US action as opposed to Chinese communist action.”⁵² Yet, as the memorandum and supporting annexes suggest, while intervention—in this case, in Indochina—would focus on destroying Vietminh forces, there was potential that “once U.S. forces and prestige have been committed,

⁵⁰ Ira Chernus, *General Eisenhower*, 1-2, 84. There is debate on the ideological nature of the Cold War, however, this thesis relies on a basic definition of ideology. Namely, that beliefs held by policy-makers, to include the importance of physical security, became overarching ideological forces that influenced policy.

⁵¹ For an example of the Cold War’s influence on the United States’ identity in relation to foreign policy see, Daniel W. Drezner, “This Time Is Different: Why U.S. Foreign Policy Will Never Recover,” *Foreign Affairs*, (May/June 2019): 10-17.

⁵² “Memorandum for the National Security Council,” dated April 6, 1954, Security Effort Overseas [April 1954 – September 1958] (1), Box 10, Subject Series, NSC Series, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs-Records, 1952-1961, White House Office, DDEL.

disengagement will not be possible short of victory.”⁵³ Ideology affected the domestic and international affairs of both the Soviet Union and the United States. The leaders of each nation had to justify domestic policies while also balancing public support and fiscal resources for international agendas.

The Cold War developed into an economic competition to prove the viability of political systems and to ensure the survival of the allied coalitions. Economic ideology also drove the perception of economic strength. Eisenhower believed that if states turned to communism, the United States would inevitably lose access to resources and markets.⁵⁴ A Bureau of Economic Affairs study on foreign economic relations explained the importance of economic relations to American foreign policy during the Cold War. “The basic aim of our foreign policy is to improve the security and well-being of the US. This objective is generally accepted and understood. What is less widely appreciated is the fact that our international economic policies are a major instrument for achieving this objective. In fact, unless we can regain and step up the initiative in the foreign economic field, US leadership in the free world is threatened.”⁵⁵ Economic relations improved security by guaranteeing access to strategic resources required to wage “modern war.”⁵⁶

Dulles confirmed the importance of this economic competition to the Cold War. “I have become personally convinced that it is going to be very difficult to stop communism in much of the world if we cannot in some way duplicate the intensive

⁵³ “Annex, NSC Action No. 1074-a,” dated April 5, 1954, Security Effort Overseas [April 1954 – September 1958] (1), Box 10, Subject Series, NSC Series, Office of the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs-Records, 1952-1961, White House Office, DDEL.

⁵⁴ Eisenhower to Edward Everett, Jr., August 3, 1956, DDEP, 17:2227.

⁵⁵ Document #22, “Paper Prepared in the Bureau of Economic Affairs,” dated May 17, 1954, *FRUS, 1952-1954, General: Economic and Political Matters*, Vol. 1, Part 1, 66.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Communist effort to raise productive standards...That is one reason Communism has such great appeal where the slogans of 'liberty', 'freedom', and 'personal dignity' have little appeal."⁵⁷ The ideological values and norms of democratic capitalism needed to bring palpable benefits to rising nations. Likewise, preventing the success of communist movements became a focal point for the Eisenhower administration. Economic prosperity, centered on international trade, influenced Eisenhower's approach to the conflict between capitalism and communism. The Cold War became a competition to prove the universal application of their capitalist and communist ideologies.⁵⁸ Because Eisenhower tied economic prosperity to national survival, his administration equated economic expansion and growth with security and successful foreign policy.

The Cold War also represented a moral conflict between good and evil, driven largely by the need to build domestic support of defense spending. John Foster Dulles's staunch belief in the moral nature of the Cold War is well known, and at times caused the public to doubt if Eisenhower had control over his secretary of state.⁵⁹ Speaking to the 1953 graduating class at the National War College in Washington, D.C., Dulles argued that "Where, however, there are many who do not accept moral principles, then that creates the need to protect those who do." His speech defined the coalition of free nations

⁵⁷ "Letter to C.D. Jackson," dated August 24, 1954, Strictly Confidential: J-K (1), Box 2, General Correspondence and Memoranda Series, John Foster Dulles: Papers 1951-1959, DDEL.

⁵⁸ Westad, *The Global Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 396.

⁵⁹ Evan Thomas, *Ike's Bluff: President Eisenhower's Secret Battle to Save the World* (New York, NY: Back Bay Books, 2012), 199-201.

as those who “wish to live by the moral law” as opposed to communists who “believe in enforced conformity to a materialistic standard.”⁶⁰

Historian Ira Chernus has argued that “Eisenhower’s ideology constructed human life as an eternal struggle between two basic elements of human nature: the universal impulse to selfishness and the countervailing impulse to control our own innate selfishness. For Eisenhower, this struggle was a religious struggle and the essence of what many religions are really about.”⁶¹ Eisenhower’s statement to the American Legion in February 1953 reflects the moral and religious language that Chernus noted. In his statement on the American Legion’s “Back to God Program,” Eisenhower told the audience that “we know that the blessings that we are really thankful for are a different type. They are what our forefathers called our rights—our human rights. One reason that we cherish these rights so sincerely is because they are God-given. They belong to the people who have been created in His image.”⁶² Morality did not direct grand strategy—the extreme moralist that Chernus portrays Eisenhower as would have encouraged the nation to accept hardship over encroaching on other nations to achieve economic prosperity—but it did influence the language of the Cold War.⁶³

⁶⁰ Speech: “Morals and Power,” National War College, Washington D.C., 1953 June 16; John Foster Dulles Papers, Box 314; Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library, 3 <http://findingaids.princeton.edu/collections/MC016/c9655> (accessed April 29, 2019).

⁶¹ Ira Chernus, *Eisenhower’s Atoms for Peace* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 7.

⁶² Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Remarks Recorded for the American Legion “Back to God” Program,” dated February 1, 1953, Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/231633> (accessed April 29, 2019).

⁶³ While Chernus’ analysis of Eisenhower’s rhetoric and the larger Cold War discourse overlooks the actions Eisenhower took, and many of his public and private statements that urged a compromise between extremist views, Chernus does provide a useful examination of how words representing national security, politics, economics, and religion were chained together so as to be interchangeable in public

Strong regional and hemispheric alliances and considerations also influenced the nature of the Cold War. Western Europe remained the critical point of American and Soviet military confrontation due to the postwar location of military forces and the importance of European resources and industry. Many scholars contend that the origin of the Cold War was the disagreement over the partition of Germany, and Germany's role in the postwar world did exert influence on foreign policy decisions throughout the Cold War.⁶⁴ While popular narratives of the Cold War portray the Third World and nations on the periphery as gaining importance due to the struggle between capitalism and communism, a cursory examination of American history shows that the Cold War merely intensified the scope of American interests—and intervention—in periphery nations.⁶⁵ The advantage of retaining key geography for staging military forces or for maintaining control of raw materials required for war mobilization gave value to countries and peoples with no direct relationship with the United States.⁶⁶

Solvency required growth especially with domestic fears of another depression and the loss of markets to communist expansion.⁶⁷ Six months into his presidency,

discourse. For Chernus' examination of terms in the Cold War see, Chernus, *Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace*, 119.

⁶⁴ For an assessment of how the partition of Germany marks the beginning of the Cold War see Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, vii. For examples of Germany's role as a fulcrum of policy making consider the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Kennedy's fear, shared by members of his Executive Committee, that Khrushchev would attempt to make a move on Berlin. In an interconnected world the influence of one variable is rarely sufficient by itself to confirm a course of action, but its existence requires historians to consider it necessary in an initial analysis.

⁶⁵ Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 8-9.

⁶⁶ For a representative analysis, see Rashid Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis: The Cold War and American Dominance in the Middle East* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2009), 40-69. Khalidi analyzed the United States and the Soviet Union's relationship with the Middle East during the Cold War.

⁶⁷ See Melvyn P. Leffler, *For the Soul of Mankind: The United States, the Soviet Union, and the Cold War* (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 2007), 57-70.

Eisenhower noted in his diary that “One thing that the long-term good of each of us demands is the fiscal, economic, industrial, and agricultural soundness of America.”⁶⁸ American solvency supported and relied on trade with the free world. President Truman had wielded America’s economic might to stabilize and rebuild Europe through the Marshall Plan, and Ike had similar intentions but different means to achieve stability. To maintain economic dominance and to support the coalition of free countries, America had to maintain economic growth and a strong free world economy. Myron C. Cowen, the American ambassador to Belgium, noted that “It is one of the major parts of the great problem before the nations of the free world—the creation of an effective and integrated economy on this side of the Iron Curtain. It is the common awareness of this problem, both in Europe and in the United States, that has been responsible for the wide acceptance of such phrases as ‘trade, not aid.’”⁶⁹ Economic aid might support allies but it could equally drain American wealth without a return on the investment. Burton Kaufman has argued that Eisenhower “was committed, like most other U.S. government leaders, to a foreign economic program of eliminating foreign aid and relying instead on liberalized world trade and the encouragement of private foreign investment to assure world economic growth and prosperity.”⁷⁰ Promoting trade over aid benefited both America and its allies because it promised to create economic growth for all parties.⁷¹

⁶⁸ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The Eisenhower Diaries*, ed. By Robert H. Ferrell, (New York, NY: Norton, 1981), 252.

⁶⁹ John Foster Dulles, “Germany Ratifies Contractuals and EDC Treaty,” dated March 30, 1953, U.S. Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin* 28, no. 718: 471.

⁷⁰ Burton Ira Kaufman, *Trade and Aid: Eisenhower’s Foreign Economic Policy, 1953-1961* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), 7.

⁷¹ Kaufmann also argued that there was a, “transition from a foreign economic program based on the concept of “trade not aid” when Eisenhower took office, to one predicated on the principle of “trade

Internal considerations and history drove both the American and Soviet development of interests. During the Cold War, the United States and Soviet Union both struggled on the home-front to achieve the stability and mobilization needed to achieve victory in the world order. The home-front became another arena where the United States and Soviet Union both attempted to win the Cold War by creating ideal societies based on their respective economic ideologies.⁷² The United States used fear of communism to suppress dissent and prevent unrest, thereby eliminating communist influence in society.⁷³ The Soviet Union created a closed society and directed its population to focus internally on achieving the dream of communism.⁷⁴

Without question, American leaders were concerned about the potential domestic instability in the aftermath of the Second World War. Both the population and policymakers feared another economic depression, the lingering effects of women's wartime social emancipation, and the reintegration of millions of demobilized servicemen.⁷⁵ Memories of the Great Depression and the dislocations caused by war encouraged many Americans to embrace the image of a stable family life as the

and aid" (the emphasis clearly being on the flow of public capital abroad) by the time he left the White House in 1961." Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*, 6.

⁷² Susan A. Brewer, *Why America Fights: Patriotism and War Propaganda from the Philippines to Iraq* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2009), 145.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 86-87. See also Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2008), 26.

⁷⁴ Donald J. Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers: An Oral History of Russia's Cold War Generation* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 7.

⁷⁵ Though the popular narrative is that postwar society feared another economic depression Robert Higgs argued that the economic data for 1946 shows no signs of a depression. While government spending decreased, private investment and consumption increased leading to little overall change in economic growth. See Robert Higgs, *Depression, War, and Cold War: Challenging the Myths of Conflict and Prosperity* (Oakland, CA: The Independent Institute, 2009), 25 and 102.

American ideal.⁷⁶ Depression and war had delayed gratification and people yearned for a more prosperous life. Despite wartime production requiring a sixty percent increase in working women, the fear of women taking jobs from returning servicemen stifled support for a permanent shift in gender roles.⁷⁷ This uncertainty of reintegrating servicemen revolved around behavioral concerns. Leaders worried how war-affected men would resume roles in society, especially as husbands and fathers.⁷⁸ In the midst of these uncertainties, government leaders confronted the spreading influence of communism. Such concerns led American leaders to fear that any instability could be manipulated by communists to gain a foothold in American society. The Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) already had increased support due to the economic hardship of the depression, and the racial and class inequality present in Jim Crow America.⁷⁹ While the CPUSA remained small, the spy trials of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, the fall of China to communism, and the Korean War all exacerbated fears that every subversive posed a threat.⁸⁰

Security against such threats required military strength and capacity to defend the nation and its interests, and not just according to American leaders. While the United States had expanded its power in the 1940s, the destruction of the Second World War presented visible reminders to Soviet citizens. Likewise, the Soviet Union entered the

⁷⁶ May, *Homeward Bound*, 58.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁷⁸ May, *Homeward Bound*, 85.

⁷⁹ Geoffrey R. Stone, *War and Liberty: An American Dilemma: 1790 To the Present* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton and Company, 2007), 87.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 90-91.

Cold War with similar experiences but with different memories. No Soviet leader could ignore the fact that the Second World War consumed one-third of the Soviet Union's national wealth and resulted in twenty-seven million soldiers and civilians killed.⁸¹ Due to the emotional and psychological impact of the Second World War in Soviet society, the cult of Stalin strengthened as he positioned himself as the hero of the Great Patriotic War through official propaganda and parades in his honor.⁸² The Great Patriotic War defined a generation and their pride in victory enabled them to overlook the darker side of Stalin's form of communism, namely the political purges and hardships of the 1930s. Stalin capitalized on the Soviet population's pride in victory, celebrating their sacrifice and urging citizens to delay gratification a while longer to rebuild the country.⁸³ Within Soviet society, the desire to achieve peace and prosperity conflicted with the need to "catch up to America" and achieve the goal of communism.⁸⁴

In their own framing of the Cold War, the United States government attempted to prevent social instability and mobilize the home-front against communism by enlarging the fear about the Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal, the societal ills of sexually liberated women and homosexuals, and linking traditional family norms to future prosperity. Whereas nuclear war created uncertainty in society, the government hoped that "the modern family would tame fears of atomic holocaust and tame women as well."⁸⁵ In this formulation, families that embraced traditional roles of men as breadwinners, women as

⁸¹ Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 6-7.

⁸² Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 7.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸⁵ May, *Homeward Bound*, 108.

nurturing mothers, and children as obedient and studious would prevent communism from infecting American society. Businesses advertised modern appliances and other consumer goods to promote convenience and persuade women to embrace domesticity as their profession. Traditional family norms would also serve to contain women's sexuality and prevent 'subversive' behavior like homosexuality which would erode social values and present a way for communists to disrupt American society. To some extent, Americans shared these goals. Historian Elaine May has noted that "Like their leaders, most Americans agreed that family stability appeared to be the best bulwark against the dangers of the Cold War." The desire for a stable and prosperous family life reflected the pre-Cold War influences.⁸⁶ Government propaganda during the Second World War had encouraged men to fight for a girl waiting for them at home or to protect the 'American way of life', and that message continued into the Cold War.⁸⁷ The Great Depression and a world war had disrupted family life for many men and women, and the government capitalized on the longing for a stable family to contain any social instability that might provide an opening for communism to take root.

Meanwhile, Stalin waged an anti-cosmopolitan war at home. Stalin had eased coercive policies toward Soviet society during the Great Patriotic War to win over the United States and Great Britain, but after the war he targeted the intelligentsia and any publication not heralding the superiority of the Soviet system. The Soviet family became a tool in Stalin's campaign to rebuild the Soviet economy and industry.⁸⁸ Unlike the early

⁸⁶ May, *Homeward Bound*, 31.

⁸⁷ Brewer, *Why America Fights*, 152-153.

⁸⁸ Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 7, 21.

Cold War American family which had begun to move to the suburbs, the Soviet family lived in multi-generational housing. Privacy concerns prevented families from discussing state policies out of fear that neighbors would spy on them. This prevented the spread of dissent about the poor living conditions and lack of consumer goods. Children born after the war did not understand how a lack of food meant progress towards full communism, whereas the parents and grandparents who survived Stalin's purges and the war reflected that they were better off than during the war.⁸⁹ The fear of Stalin's wrath and the memory of the Great Patriotic War suppressed dissent.

Stalin also compared American and Soviet societies to highlight the gender equality benefits of communism. Whereas American society encouraged women to stay home, Soviet women worked and enjoyed the same status as men. Soviet women primarily worked because rebuilding the Soviet economy required full mobilization and the war had created a significant male-female imbalance.⁹⁰ The same realities allowed the Soviet Union to claim greater gender equality in higher education where more women than men graduated college.⁹¹ Though communism appeared more socially liberating, the Soviet system still embraced traditional family norms. Laws restricting abortion and divorce forced women to remain in unfulfilling marriages. Insufficient state day care facilities also meant that mothers faced the unequal task of balancing work and raising children, though the multigenerational family housing allowed grandparents to raise children.⁹²

⁸⁹ Raleigh, *Soviet Baby Boomers*, 250-252.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 35-36.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁹² *Ibid.*

Thus, both nations developed interests based on insecurities and perceived threats, rather than on a grand design for democratic capitalism or communism. However, the ideology of democratic capitalism and communism created and gave meaning to threats and interests. For the Soviet Union the insecurity stemmed from a history of conflict and devastation. Soviet fears of the state collapsing after the Second World War because of internal turmoil only heightened insecurities. For the United States, insecurity grew from its new role in the world order. Though America possessed the atomic bomb, a global defense network, and an untouched home-front it realized “that the price of preeminence is vulnerability.”⁹³ No state is—or feels—immune from socio-economic crisis, and the Soviet Union and the United States both prioritized their own state survival over wantonly dominating ideology. Each state feared the other’s intentions because of differences in ideologies, yet both states chose not to attack the other because ideological conflict threatened the state—and therefore its ideology. Ideology prevented conflict while also increasing tension. Maintaining control over their respective domestic political systems remained the basic requirement for survival.⁹⁴ National unity, always at risk of decay in the aftermath of war or during times of change, required a force to give it meaning.⁹⁵

⁹³ John Lewis Gaddis, *The Long Peace: Inquiries into the History of the Cold War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1987), 21.

⁹⁴ Immerman and Bowie, *Waging Peace*, 153-154.

⁹⁵ Chris Hedges, *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2014), 63. Another aspect of war that influenced societies during the Cold War is the “myth of war” that Chris Hedges describes as a unifying force that creates identity. Though beliefs about economic systems and power were genuine, the deliberate information campaigns conducted by Eisenhower’s administration served to give meaning to the state of domestic and international affairs.

Evaluating Threats: America, Communism, and the Soviet Union

The emergence of a strong Soviet Union and the belief in monolithic communism drove American interests. Policy makers in Truman and Eisenhower's administrations admitted they lacked adequate intelligence about Soviet intentions. The Net Assessments referenced in National Security Council meetings and planning documents reveal the vague and incomplete understanding of the Soviet Union's capabilities. Yet, the intentions and desires are boldly stated. The available intelligence that Eisenhower and his administration used to make policy was insufficient in understanding the Soviet Union's true capacity and did not consider the effect of the Second World War's destruction in the Soviet mindset.⁹⁶ Dulles noted that C.D. Jackson felt "the CIA was exercising an excessive role in relation to policy-making" instead of its primary responsibility to "provide the facts" that should inform policy makers.⁹⁷ It is difficult for policy-makers to balance bias and perspective when formulating national security policy; relying on intelligence that favors a specific policy approach only complicates the process. The potential skewing of intelligence added to the intelligence deficiency Eisenhower inherited from the Truman administration—the inability to gauge Soviet intentions.

⁹⁶ "The current appraisal of the vulnerability of the United States to Soviet air attack is an important advance, but so far as can be ascertained it is the first net estimate of relative military capabilities which has been available to the National Security Council as a basis for its policy recommendations. We recommend that the necessary measures be taken to provide net estimates of political, economic and military capabilities." Document #370, "Report to the President by the President's Committee on International Information Activities," dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 2323.

⁹⁷ C.D. Jackson to John Foster Dulles, dated August 19, 1954, Box 1, Folder General J-K (1), Box 1, General Correspondence and Memoranda Series, John Foster Dulles: Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

Even as Eisenhower's New Look policy reached its final form in October 1953, Ike's planning staff recommended developing net assessments concerning "political, economic, and military capabilities" of the Soviet Union. It is quixotic—and flawed—to expect complete and accurate intelligence. However, the lack of assessments focusing on intentions and socio-political factors in the Soviet Union questions how different Eisenhower's New Look was from Truman's understanding of the Cold War. An assessment of the Foreign Intelligence Program included in NSC 161 provides a sobering look at how well the United States could measure Soviet intentions as it considered how to confront and contain communism. "Conclusions concerning Soviet and Communist intentions to initiate hostilities at any given time must be tentative generalizations drawn from inadequate evidence."⁹⁸

Despite this bleak assessment by American intelligence, American government officials had drawn their own conclusions. George Kennan, a key figure throughout the Cold War but especially in the Truman administration, provided the most detailed information on Soviet intentions and beliefs. While many Americans believed that the Soviet Union would seek to expand communism across the globe no matter the cost, Kennan believed that the Soviets wanted to avoid any confrontation with the United States, especially a military one.⁹⁹ More importantly, Kennan believed that "atomic bombs and other weapons of mass destruction were useful only for destroying an adversary, not for changing his attitudes."¹⁰⁰ Eisenhower and Kennan shared similar

⁹⁸ Document #155, "National Security Council Report: NSC 161, Status of United States Programs for National Security as of June 30, 1953," dated August 14, 1953, *FRUS, 1950-1955, The Intelligence Community, 1950-1955*, 446.

⁹⁹ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 44.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 47.

beliefs about war and its role in defeating communism. When Ike convened Project Solarium to examine possible approaches to containing the Soviet Union, Kennan served as the leader of Task Force A. The president noted Kennan's impressive grasp of the world situation after receiving a presentation of Project Solarium's conclusions on 16 July 1953.¹⁰¹

Despite Kennan's information, US intelligence continued to focus on Soviet capabilities, not intentions. As John Lewis Gaddis has noted, this "quantitative fallacy"—what can be counted counts most—led to capabilities indicating, even replacing, intentions.¹⁰² Faced with an inability to truly understand Soviet intentions, policy makers could only observe the growth of Soviet capabilities. Even an accurate understanding of capabilities presented challenges as the bomber and missile gap controversies of Eisenhower's presidency demonstrate. Though there were military and civilian leaders who realized Soviet actions often reflected a *reaction* to American power, those views had no effect on the final policy positions that documented Soviet intentions.¹⁰³ More commonly, American policy makers reflected Undersecretary of State Walter Bedell Smith's opinion that,

The root of the paradox lies in the Soviet obsession with the power factor. Because of this obsession we're compelled to create strength of our own as a counterweight to the strength of the Soviet Union. Even though we reject force as an instrument in our relationship with other nations, we've learned through bitter experience that Soviet intransigence reaches a peak

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 137.

¹⁰² Ibid., 82. The idea of "quantitative fallacy" comes from John Hackett Fischer, *Historical Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York, NY: 1970), 90.

¹⁰³ Aaron B. O'Connell, "An Accidental Empire? President Harry S. Truman and the Origins of America's Global Military Presence," in *Origins of the National Security State and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman*, eds. Mary Ann Heiss and Michael J. Hogan (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2015), 196-199.

when the negotiator across the table lacks power. On the other hand, we've learned that it's possible to negotiate with the Soviet Union if our negotiating position has solid strength behind it.¹⁰⁴

Even though the United States sought a political negotiation to the Cold War, based on the decline of the Soviet Union, that negotiation would require a strong military deterrent. No matter the intentions of the Soviet Union, American leaders believed that resolving the Cold War conflict required strength.

Throughout 1953, National Intelligence Estimates of the Soviet Union did not change significantly and focused on capabilities, even though Stalin's death presented the possibility of changing Soviet intentions. While the military and intelligence communities equated Soviet capabilities with intentions, Eisenhower signaled that he understood the difference. At an April 1953 press conference, James R. Shepley of *Time* magazine asked the president if he believed in the year of maximum danger. This concept originated with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and their belief that the Soviet Union would be able to strike the United States with an atomic bomb by 1954. "I am not going to quarrel with [the JCS] estimate on when [the Soviets] will have atomic bombs," Eisenhower responded. "But I do not admit that anyone can predict when, if ever, another government would want to launch global war. I just don't believe there is a necessary relationship between those two concepts."¹⁰⁵ Despite these views, the language of national security studies and memoranda continued to focus on Soviet capabilities.

¹⁰⁴ Walter Bedell Smith, "Practicalities of Power," dated May 11, 1953, U.S. Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin* 28, no. 724: 676.

¹⁰⁵ Dwight D. Eisenhower, dated April 30, 1953, The President's News Conference Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/231701> (accessed April 29, 2019).

Moreover, competition over resources required for economic growth and strategic war stocks illustrated how American insecurity formed the perspective of Soviet actions. The ideological struggle between capitalism and communism morphed into a geographic contest as each nation sought to retain access to natural resources. Eisenhower's economic policy advocated that the United States needed "to develop and insure, in conjunction with its allies, resources which will provide an adequate supply of petroleum products to meet the combined requirements of the United States and its allies in a future major war."¹⁰⁶ The presence of Soviet troops in northern Iran after the Second World War and the rising influence of the communist Tudeh party there heightened American fears that the Soviet Union would soon have access to one of the West's strategic oil reserves. In fact, George Kennan based his concept of containment on the contest to maintain control over five strategic areas and, thus, the problems of competition and insecurity became ingrained in Cold War thinking.¹⁰⁷ Though National Intelligence Estimates noted that the Soviet Union was "unlikely to risk general war," the thought of an enemy possessing a military advantage led to an increase in American defense development and procurement. Early in Eisenhower's administration the fear of how an aging fuel tanker fleet would survive in a future war led to debates in multiple NSC meetings about acquiring faster tankers. Prudent as it may have been, when does planning for a future war reach diminishing returns for society?

¹⁰⁶ Document #40, "Report to the National Security Council by the NSC Planning Board," dated May 23, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 1, Part 2, *General: Economic and Political Matters*, 985.

¹⁰⁷ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 29. The five areas were the United States, Great Britain, Germany and Central Europe, the Soviet Union, and Japan.

Without a doubt, raw materials and economic growth were key American interests, and the communist ability to threaten those interests through rising nationalism and anti-colonial movements led to an overestimation of Soviet intentions. By partially viewing the Cold War as an economic competition to validate economic systems, Eisenhower conflated Soviet economic expansion with Soviet aggression. While Ike would justify American involvement in regions surrounding the Soviet Union based on economic interest, similar involvement by the Soviet Union seemed to threaten the global free world. This reflected the zero-sum nature of the Cold War. Though Americans wanted peace to maintain stability and economic prosperity, many remained skeptical if peaceful coexistence truly was possible. Competition for economic growth and dominance appeared as an existential threat because American identity and survival rested on economic prosperity. Yet, no serious debate can be found in National Security Meetings or other public statements about how prosperity should be defined or measured. Like security, prosperity represented a vague ideal that had the ability to intensify events and actions beyond reasonable concern.

The rise of Senator Joseph McCarthy and the anti-communist movement in the United States also served as a threat to American interests because it endangered the middle-road approach that Eisenhower hoped to restore to domestic politics. Eisenhower privately condemned Senator McCarthy's extremist approach to communism but could ill afford to take a public stance that appeared soft on communism or absolved Truman of any responsibility for 'losing' China.¹⁰⁸ Domestic opinion focused on potential communist subversion in the United States and government officials "increasingly came

¹⁰⁸ Audrey R. Kahin and George McT. Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy: The Secret Eisenhower and Dulles Debacle in Indonesia* (New York, NY: The New Press, 1995), 4.

to view domestic Communism as part of a worldwide Soviet conspiracy.”¹⁰⁹ With McCarthy and his followers denouncing anyone who questioned the United States approach to containment, it led to a polarization of ideas.¹¹⁰ Though Eisenhower believed communism to be flawed, in his memoir of World War II, *Crusade in Europe*, he noted the need for cooperation and peaceful coexistence with the Soviet Union.¹¹¹ By the time Ike entered the White House, that opinion had become politically indefensible. At best, Eisenhower sought to maintain enough concern about communism without promoting the divisive discourse that characterized McCarthy’s effect on society.

The Korean War also validated the belief that the Soviet Union directed international communism, despite the fact that Eisenhower and key administration officials identified the divide between the Soviet Union and communist China. Eisenhower’s criticism of Truman’s failure in China and his subsequent handling of the Korea War during the 1952 presidential campaign required Ike to take a firm stand against communist encroachment.¹¹² In his study of how American society developed the image of the communist enemy during the Cold War, Ron Robin has argued that the Korean War “hastened the creation of the national security state [and] strengthened existing images of the enemy.”¹¹³ The fall of China to communist forces, followed

¹⁰⁹ Ellen Schrecker, *Many Are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 155.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 368-371. See also, Ellen Schrecker, *The Age of McCarthyism: A Brief History with Documents* (New York, NY: Bedford / St. Martin’s, 2002), 104-105.

¹¹¹ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1948), 476. “The lessons of 1914 and 1939 remain valid so long as the world has not learned the futility of making competitive force the final arbiter of human questions.”

¹¹² Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy*, 4.

¹¹³ Rob Robin, *The Making of the Cold War Enemy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 8.

shortly by the Korean War, confirmed the idea that the Soviet Union directed all communist expansion.

American public opinion both enabled Eisenhower to construct his grand strategy while also requiring him to enlarge the nature of the conflict and the potential consequences. While Eisenhower has been construed by some as a manipulative politician who created fears of an “apocalypse,” the consistency between his public and private statements makes such analyses unbalanced.¹¹⁴ In fact, Eisenhower’s administration struggled with creating a narrative for the American public despite Ike’s simple Great Equation. A report analyzing a grass roots poll completed in the summer of 1953 noted the need for “a deliberate public relations campaign.”¹¹⁵ Eisenhower noted the issue again in a memorandum to Dulles in September 1953. Ike argued that “programs for informing American public, as well as other populations, are indispensable if we are able to do anything except to drift aimlessly, probably to our own eventual destruction.”¹¹⁶ The process of developing a strategy focused on more than its feasibility in containing communism. As Eisenhower wrote as he listened to the Project Solarium briefing, any policy “requires above all--public opinion at home [and] abroad.”¹¹⁷ To obtain the required public support—“at home and abroad”—Eisenhower presented his

¹¹⁴ See Ira Chernus, *Apocalypse Management: Eisenhower and the Discourse of National Security* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008).

¹¹⁵ “Grass Roots Report: Highlights of Second Public Opinion Poll in California,” no date, DDE Diary Aug-Sept. 1953 (1), Box 3, DDE Diary Series, AWF, Papers as President of the US, 1953-1961, DDEL.

¹¹⁶ “Memorandum for the Secretary of State,” dated September 8, 1953, DDE Diary Aug-Sept. 1953 (1), Box 3, DDE Diary Series, AWF, Papers as President of the US, 1953-1961, DDEL.

¹¹⁷ Dwight D. Eisenhower, Handwritten Note, dated July 16, 1953, DDE Diary Dec. 52 – July 52 (1), Box 3, DDE Diary Series, AWF, Eisenhower, Dwight D. – Papers as President of the United States, 1953-1961, DDEL.

famous “Atoms for Peace” speech at the United Nations in December 1953.¹¹⁸ Ike and his administration hoped to calm the fears of Europeans who saw themselves caught in the middle of a potential nuclear war between the two superpowers. Conversely, the president wanted to maintain the American public’s awareness of the threat posed by the Soviet Union and the possibility of nuclear weapons.¹¹⁹

While the Truman administration had viewed general war as a potential means to achieve ends, Eisenhower largely identified general war as a threat in his Great Equation framework. War threatened the American way of life and created unfathomable levels of destruction in the nuclear age. War threatened the ultimate interest—national survival. Eisenhower’s perception of threats also differed from Truman in that he understood that the United States would not be able to force the end of the Cold War simply by the threat of nuclear war. Only time and the eventual decline of the Soviet Union would signal the end of threats to American interests.

Because of the long-haul nature of the Cold War, Eisenhower stressed the need to defend against the external threat posed by communism and the internal threat of economic decline and social instability. Focusing too much on either would upset the Great Equation. Ike rejected Truman’s idea of preparing for a year of maximum danger because the mobilization method threatened America. He noted that “if you have a maximum production program, to reach maximum strength by July 1st, 1954--1955--or any other figure, how do you then suddenly level off and maintain it? It is simply not

¹¹⁸ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 155.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

possible.”¹²⁰ While the intelligence community focused on capabilities, the three Task Forces that composed Project Solarium concluded that the Soviet Union had no intention of attacking the United States and therefore planning for a year of maximum danger was unnecessary.¹²¹ Focusing on the long-haul, and basing grand strategy on general threats to US security, brought the unmentioned consequence of requiring a constant state of preparedness. Rather than focusing on a specific threat based on an intention supported by a known capability, Eisenhower started the nation down a long, and seemingly endless road of constant defense. C.D. Jackson noted that the intention versus capability debate disrupted policy formation.¹²² The capabilities of the Soviet Union could not be verified. However, Eisenhower and his administration could determine Soviet military capabilities better than political intentions and so defense policy focused on defending against observable Soviet military power.

One Threat to Define All Interests: Soviet Communism

The development of NSC 162/2 and the numerous committees created to explore American foreign policy options reflected Eisenhower’s systematic approach to national

¹²⁰ Dwight D. Eisenhower, dated April 30, 1953, The President's News Conference Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/231701> (accessed May 1, 2019).

¹²¹ Valerie L. Adams, *Eisenhower’s Fine Group of Fellows: Crafting a National Security Policy to Uphold the Great Equation* (New York, NY: Lexington Books, 2006), 62. Adams presents a useful summary of Project Solarium, the Killian Report, and the Gaither Committee. Consistent with the title, Adams provides more insight into the participants of those projects than most historical accounts. However, Adams portrays Eisenhower’s foreign policy views as starkly different than Truman’s that overlooks the slow reversion to NSC 20/1 that many members of Truman’s administration and policy staff made in 1952. Additionally, Adams falls squarely in the revisionist camp of Eisenhower scholarship, focusing on the peaceful nature of Ike’s policies while neglecting the violent and destabilizing effects it had, especially in the Third World. For a more balanced account of how Eisenhower and Truman’s administrations viewed foreign policy consider Heiss and Hogan, *Origins of the National Security State*.

¹²² C.D. Jackson, “Memorandum To Mr. Luce,” dated July 23, 1954, “Log-1954 (3),” Box 68, Jackson, C.D.-Papers, DDEL.

security. He focused on identifying interests and ends. While Eisenhower's Great Equation symbolized the ultimate interests of the United States—security and solvency—the potential means for achieving those ends were only limited by resources. The specific and achievable policies that supported the long-term interests of the United States had to match the reality of American means. In a way, the interest in solvency acted to restrict means. While Eisenhower framed the means of his grand strategy in similar format to the Truman administration, he differed sharply from his predecessor in that he did not believe resources would expand to fit ends, or that the nation should pursue expansionist defense budgeting to stimulate the American economy. Ike believed security and solvency would remain interests of the United States, and a growing coalition of free countries would serve those interests. However, the capabilities of the Soviet Union to harm the United States became a threat to the grand strategic aims of maintaining security and solvency.

NSC 162/2 reflected Eisenhower's belief that Soviet leaders would not risk general or nuclear war despite the Soviet Union's possession of the means to do so. "The uncertain prospects for Soviet victory in a general war, the change in leadership, satellite unrest, and the U.S. capability to retaliate massively, make such a course improbable."¹²³ However, the American preoccupation with deterring Soviet military power failed to differentiate the Soviet's assumed capacity for attacking the United States from Soviet intentions and what feasible ends would support Soviet grand strategy.

Eisenhower's New Look is remembered in popular history as relying on the threat of nuclear retaliation to deter the Soviet Union while his actual grand strategy utilized a variety of means that he hoped would eliminate the possibility of war with the Soviet

¹²³ Document #101, "Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary," dated October 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 1, *National Security Affairs*, 578.

Union. The primacy of the Soviet threat—representing the menace of international communism—led to NSC 162/2 becoming representative of America’s grand strategy in the 1950s. Though NSC 162/2 is known as the New Look of Eisenhower’s global defense policy, the study specifically focused on how “to meet the Soviet threat to U.S. security.”¹²⁴ While nuclear weapons served as a deterrent to the Soviet Union’s war-making abilities, it did not address conflicts on the periphery. The New Look identified three requirements of American national security: a strong military posture ““with emphasis on the capability of inflicting massive retaliatory damage by offensive striking power,” a strong and stable economy, and the will of the American people.¹²⁵ While the idea of massive retaliation was part of NSC 162/2, it was not the sole means that Eisenhower envisioned for countering communism. Rather, the basic national security policy focused on the Soviet Union and exerted tremendous influence on how the United States approached other foreign policy issues. Likewise, the prominence of nuclear weapons in Cold War planning documents influenced later analyses of the New Look, oversimplifying President Eisenhower’s multifaceted approach to the Cold War.

Limited Resources for an Expanding Conflict

Eisenhower commissioned the Jackson Committee in the spring of 1953 to explore the utility of psychological warfare. The committee broadly defined national means as either military, diplomatic, economic, or psychological.¹²⁶ The Jackson

¹²⁴ Document #101, ““Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary,” dated October 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 1, *National Security Affairs*, 578.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 582.

Committee Report was the first significant document in the Eisenhower administration to define national objectives, means, and limitations. Commissioned before the convening of Project Solarium, it demonstrates that Eisenhower viewed information operations with as much importance, if not more, than nuclear retaliation. The report noted that the Soviet Union sought to avoid general war because it could threaten Soviet leaders' domestic political power, but also because political warfare appeared to be achieving Soviet objectives.¹²⁷

Diplomatic means focused on three groups in the new world order: the coalition of the global free world, that is nations aligned with the United States; the communist coalition centered on the Soviet Union and communist China; and the neutral or non-aligned countries that gained independence and power as rising nationalism and anti-colonial movements gained traction in the post-war era. The Jackson Report noted that “A basic feature of the conflict—one that underlies and largely determines the conduct of the struggle—is that it is a conflict between coalitions, the one an imposed coalition dominated by the Kremlin, the other a voluntary coalition led by the United States.”¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Document #370, “Report to the President by the President’s Committee on International Information Activities,” dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1796. The United States Department of Defense joint military doctrine still uses this framework, known as DIME (diplomatic, information, military, and economic), but also utilizes MIDFIELD (military, informational, diplomatic, financial, intelligence, economic, law, and development). See “Joint Doctrine Note 1-18,” dated April 25, 2018, Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Electronic Library, U.S. Department of Defense, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/jdn_jg/jdn1_18.pdf?ver=2018-04-25-150439-540 (accessed April 27, 2019).

¹²⁷ Document #370, “Report to the President by the President’s Committee on International Information Activities,” dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1800. Eisenhower’s use of psychological operations continues to receive attention from historians and political scientists due to the priority Ike placed on political warfare and its seeming relevancy to current debates in the national security realm concerning Russian and Chinese activities, specifically hybrid warfare.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1801.

Even in this key policy document, the Cold War's moral ideology found a place next to analysis. Whether the American or Soviet coalition was voluntary or imposed depended on the perspective of each nation. As the Jackson Committee identified, "National security can ultimately be assured only in conjunction with strong and resolute allies throughout the world. A world order of free and peaceful nations has become a general objective of United States policy."¹²⁹ A larger coalition ensured military and economic strength while also serving as a hopeful sign that nations around the world found democratic capitalism more beneficial than communism.

Economic aid took form as a general economic stimulus—such as the European Recovery Plan—military or security force funding, or trade relations. Eisenhower sought to limit economic aid and attempted to substitute its stabilizing effect by focusing on trade. Trade also served as an offensive instrument of national power. Dulles wrote Senator McCarthy that trade with China could control its economy while also obtaining resources required for American security.¹³⁰ Trading with communist nations, or non-aligned states, displayed "the economic superiority of free enterprise" and could convince states to reject communism.¹³¹ Trading with ideological enemies fit Eisenhower's rejection of isolationism. Refusing to trade with enemies did not guarantee the enemy's economic collapse and it prevented America from influencing foreign populations. The Jackson Committee noted that "Efforts to intensify these restrictions may well be resisted

¹²⁹ Document #370, "Report to the President by the President's Committee on International Information Activities," dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1798.

¹³⁰ John Foster Dulles to Joseph R. McCarthy, dated May 7, 1953, Strictly Confidential: M(3), Box 3, General Correspondence and Memoranda Series, John Foster Dulles: Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

¹³¹ John Foster Dulles to Joseph R. McCarthy, dated May 6, 1953, Strictly Confidential: M(3), Box 3, General Correspondence and Memoranda Series, John Foster Dulles: Papers, 1951-1959, DDEL.

by allied countries who regard them as harmful to their own economic interests.”¹³²

Economic aid also acted as a form of information operations because any disparity between American promises and the effect of economic aid to foreign countries could serve as discrediting information that the Soviet Union could use to divide the free world coalition.

The Jackson Committee concluded that political warfare served as a more useful term to describe the effect Eisenhower desired. Just as Kennan argued that political warfare constituted all means of national power short of general war, the Jackson Committee argued that “the ‘psychological’ aspect of policy is not separable from policy, but is inherent in every diplomatic, economic or military action. There is a “psychological” implication in every act, but this does not have life apart from the act.”¹³³ Eisenhower agreed, telling Dulles that, “After all, psychological warfare can be anything from the singing of a hymn up to the most extraordinary kind of physical sabotage.”¹³⁴ Political warfare—the attempt to achieve national objectives without resorting to general war—potentially weaponized every interaction with other nations.

The Jackson Committee’s conclusion about political warfare reflected George Kennan’s view of war in the nuclear age. This is but one example of Cold War grand strategy consisting of different strains of the same theme competing for relevance and acceptance throughout the Cold War. Though the political and rhetorical nature of

¹³² Document #370, “Report to the President by the President’s Committee on International Information Activities,” dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1809.

¹³³ Document #370, “Report to the President by the President’s Committee on International Information Activities,” dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1861.

¹³⁴ Eisenhower to John Foster Dulles, October 24, 1953, DDEP, 14:600.

presidential elections and administrations creates partitions in how society considers the history of American grand strategy, the bureaucratic nature of federal government makes it unsurprising that rather than each administration developing distinct approaches to containment, there were competing definitions and debates about American interests, resources, and threats. Rather than each administration taking distinct approaches to containment, the presence of career bureaucrats, outside advisors, and politicians spanning multiple administrations suggested more continuity to the development of ideas and the specific actors aligned with those philosophies.

Time and the American way of life were two other means not specified in NSC 162/2 or in the Task Force reports of Project Solarium. Eisenhower believed time would eventually reveal the inadequacy of communism and that American values and systems would be symbols of hope and emulation for rising nations and dissatisfied communist societies. Eisenhower's long-term approach allowed the Soviet Union to decline without resorting to war while also requiring ends and means to be calculated for an unknown length of conflict.¹³⁵ Eisenhower deliberately guided American actions with a focus on how the world perceived the coalition of free nations. In a memorandum providing guidance about the Korean Armistice, Eisenhower noted that "We can show the entire world that America and her allies are engaged in helping humans, not merely in asserting and supporting any particular government system or policy."¹³⁶ Demonstrating the moral and material worth of American society served as a means of grand strategy.¹³⁷ The

¹³⁵ Osgood's *Total Cold War*, 361-363.

¹³⁶ "Rough Draft Memorandum For the Secretary of State, Defense, and Mutual Security Administrator," dated July 31, 1953, DDE Diary Dec 52- July 53 (1), Box 2, DDE Diary Series, AWF, Papers as President 1951-1961, DDEL.

¹³⁷ Osgood's *Total Cold War*, 214-252.

United States Ambassador to Italy, Clare Boothe Luce, said as such during a public speech in 1953. “And now in closing, I address myself to the real ambassadors, who are you the people. Sound diplomacy, it has been said, is simply Christian charity and prudence operating in international affairs.”¹³⁸ Americans and their lifestyle became another method to counter the expansion of international communism.

Finding the Average Solution: Ends within Means

Eisenhower translated his Great Equation into several broad guidelines for developing foreign policy in pursuit of his grand strategy. First, he sought to scale back economic commitments while nurturing collective security to bolster defense and the free world coalition. After listening to the Joint Chiefs of Staff present their views on the Military and Mutual Security Programs, arguing for increasing the number of American divisions in the army, the president noted that “that perhaps the Council should have a report as to whether national bankruptcy or national destruction would get us first.”¹³⁹ Ike argued that “the cost of maintaining an American soldier in the field is fantastically higher than the cost of maintaining a foreign soldier.”¹⁴⁰ While preventing the expansion of communism became the primary objective of the United States, Eisenhower recognized the necessity of avoiding the image of an imperialist or colonialist government.

¹³⁸ Clare Boothe Luce, “The Foreign Service as an Arm of U. S. Policy,” dated May 11, 1953, U.S. Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin* 28, no. 724: 681.

¹³⁹ Document #52, “Memorandum of Discussion at the 138th Meeting of the National Security Council, Wednesday, March 25, 1953,” dated March 25, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954, National Security Affairs*, Vol. 2, Part 1, 260.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Henry A. Byroade, the Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, noted the strong “opposition to foreign influence” in countries that had recently emerged from colonial rule.¹⁴¹ Contrary to portrayals of ignorant American officials not understanding the foreign policy challenge of working with new nations, Byroade claimed that “there is no single problem which we can call a ‘colonial problem.’ Instead, there are many different kinds of problems which exist in many different areas. Our Government must ever be alert to the necessity of doing those things which the circumstances of time and place demand.”¹⁴² Eisenhower and his administration’s primary foreign policy challenge remained how to inspire change within communist societies rather than force it through war, while building enough military strength to deter a potential Soviet attack against Europe or the United States. However, the Jackson Committee Report warned that “Not all of the free world is prepared to view its problems in the context of a struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union.”¹⁴³

Eisenhower did not believe the United States had sole agency in ending the Cold War, holding similar views as Kennan that internal forces in the Soviet Union would eventually cause its downfall. Though Eisenhower did not believe the United States could affect the end of communism, he hoped to support dissension within the Soviet Union and its satellites to increase the regime’s instability. Part of that effort involved demonstrating unity in the free world and the superiority of democratic capitalism. In his

¹⁴¹ Henry A. Byroade, “The World’s Colonies and Ex-Colonies: A Challenge to America,” dated November 17, 1953, U.S. Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin* 29, no. 751: 655.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Document #370, “Report to the President by the President’s Committee on International Information Activities,” dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1841.

1954 State of the Union Address, the president noted that “the unity of the free world lies our best chance to reduce the Communist threat without war.”¹⁴⁴ However, preventing communist expansion required military force, especially the threat of military force, to influence Soviet calculations of interests and means. War had shaped the world order during the Second World War and Eisenhower did not dismiss its importance in the Cold War. However, Ike’s view of war shaped the nature of his approach to interests and means that illuminated the Cold War era tension between policy objectives and war’s utility. In one of his first public speeches as secretary of state, Dulles asserted that “We shall never choose war as the instrument of our foreign policy.”¹⁴⁵ Yet, how Eisenhower defined war remained unclear.

Chapter 2 – Defining War and Peace

Eisenhower’s view of war developed throughout his military service but especially as he witnessed the devastation of World War II as Supreme Allied Commander, and later as he grappled with nuclear weapons and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as its first Supreme Commander. Reflecting on his experience as a commander, Ike noted that “The problems pertaining to a true Supreme command are partially military, but they are also partially psychological, industrial, financial, and political.” Eisenhower understood that war served a larger policy objective. Reflecting on his decision about American policy toward Indochina in 1953, he wrote that “A proper

¹⁴⁴ Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union,” dated January 7, 1954, Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/232936> (accessed May 1, 2019).

¹⁴⁵ Speech: “A Survey of Foreign Policy Problems”, 1953 January 27; John Foster Dulles Papers, Box 310; Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

political foundation for any military action was essential. Since we could not bring it about, I gave not even a tentative approval to any plan for massive intervention.”¹⁴⁶ The objective of American domestic and foreign policy was the “prosperity, well-being, and opportunity that extends from the most to the least fortunate among us.” The president wanted to show “the direct connection between a prosperous and happy America, and the execution of an intelligent foreign policy.”¹⁴⁷ War might derail a stable economy and require government intrusion through price controls and other forms of centralized planning. Additionally, Ike believed that any general war would inevitably involve nuclear weapons. The thought of nuclear war only heightened Ike’s aversion to war as a suitable means of achieving American national interests. In fact, avoiding war became a pillar of the president’s conceptualization of national security. War would not guarantee peace and security. However, the threat of war’s destructive power could serve as a deterrent to those who might threaten American prosperity and well-being.

“War” encompassed numerous instruments of national power: nuclear war, general war, limited war, political warfare, and the credible threat of war, also known as deterrence theory. The advent of nuclear weapons and the confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union brought limited war to the forefront of military and political debate. As an instrument of national power, war had to support policy objectives otherwise destruction became its only purpose. War alone, though, did not serve as a surefire means to achieving peace. In fact, some in Eisenhower’s administration believed that the Second World War had not, in fact, brought peace. While debating how to block

¹⁴⁶ Eisenhower to Everett E. Hazlett, dated October 23, 1954, in Robert Griffith, *Ike’s Letters to a Friend, 1941-1958*, 134.

¹⁴⁷ Eisenhower to John Foster Dulles, dated November 16, 1953, DDEP, 14:676-677.

Communist China's entry into the United Nations C.D. Jackson wrote to Dulles that "the UN charter was devised (a) before Hiroshima, and (b) on the assumption that the UN was designed to maintain peace. The present UN Charter, therefore, reflects neither the atomic age nor the fact that peace was never made."¹⁴⁸

War and peace evaded precise definition in Eisenhower's administration. The Jackson Committee noted that peace was approachable but unattainable, suggesting that the term "cold war" did not "contribute to a clear understanding of the world struggle."¹⁴⁹ In a sense, Eisenhower carried on the crusade of the Second World War to free the globe from tyranny, a useful rhetorical device to justify American intervention for shaping the world order. Writing to the president of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, Walter P. Reuther, Eisenhower noted the need for material production and the dedication of the American labor force during the Cold War. Though American industry had provided the material to fight World War II, Ike told Reuther that, "unfortunately, peace and freedom did not come to the world when the guns fell silent."¹⁵⁰ Continued efforts to achieve peace would require more than just money and material. Peace meant a lasting political settlement that benefitted the United States.

Nor did military success on the battlefield guarantee peace. An international order that granted freedom to every person came to symbolize victory and a state of peace in the Cold War. A more cynical observer might argue that peace meant America benefitted

¹⁴⁸ C.D. Jackson to John Foster Dulles, dated August 3, 1954, Strictly Confidential – I-K (1), Box 2, General Correspondence and Memoranda Series, John Foster Dulles: Papers 1951-1959, DDEL.

¹⁴⁹ Document #370, "Report to the President by the President's Committee on International Information Activities," dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1796.

¹⁵⁰ Eisenhower to Walter P. Reuther, dated November 13, 1953, DDE Diary November 1953 (2), Box 3, DDE Diary Series, AWF, Papers as President 1951-1961, DDEL.

from the world order.¹⁵¹ Given the continuing debate over the role of government in relation to the individual, and what freedom meant, it is no surprise Eisenhower continued to define peace in various ways. Speaking at the American Jewish Tercentenary dinner in October 1954, Eisenhower stated that “The pursuit of peace is at once our religious obligation and our national policy. Peace in freedom, where all men dwell in security, is the ideal toward which our foreign policy is directed.”¹⁵² Peace meant security but in the age of nuclear weapons total security seemed quixotic. However, Eisenhower’s view that nuclear war was unreasonable and unproductive in reaching political settlements—one he believed shared by Soviet leaders—made peace approachable if not ultimately attainable in spirit.

In this view, nuclear war could never serve as a viable means to achieve policy objectives because of its destructive power and the inability to control escalation in nuclear conflict. However, that did not mean the United States could abandon nuclear war as a deterrent. Possessing a nuclear capability complicated the Soviet Union’s decision to use conventional forces and freed America from the economic burden of maintaining a large standing military. Thus, Eisenhower believed that “the dependence that we are placing on new weapons [atomic bombs] would justify completely some reduction in conventional forces—that is, both ground troops and certain parts of the Navy.”¹⁵³ Despite Eisenhower’s willingness to use nuclear weapons as a deterrent, he did

¹⁵¹ Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis*, 163-165.

¹⁵² Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Address at the American Jewish Tercentenary Dinner,” dated October 20, 1954, Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/232896> (accessed May 1, 2019).

¹⁵³ “Memorandum for Record,” dated November 11, 1953, DDE Diary November 1953 (2), Box 3, DDE Diary Series, AWF, Papers as President 1951-1961, DDEL.

not believe victory was possible in nuclear war. Writing to an acquaintance in 1956, Ike remarked that “I firmly believe that the only way to “win” the war that sometimes seems so threateningly close is to prevent it.”¹⁵⁴ Ike’s last war as commander-in-chief was a “war” against war.¹⁵⁵

At a press conference in May 1956, Charles S. von Fremd of CBS News asked Eisenhower if “it would be possible for any nation in this time, who had a large control of hydrogen bombs, to win a war in a very short time, say, within 24 hours, by knocking out the major cities and farm centers of population of its enemy?” Eisenhower’s reply shows how he understood military power, victory, and the purpose of war. “Well, you say ‘win a war.’ What would the other fellow be doing with his stuff while you were knocking out those cities? You can destroy unquestionably the productive capacity of a nation if it is carried out by surprise on the way you just state the case. But what then do you do to him?”¹⁵⁶ Simply destroying the other nation’s population centers—while enabling your enemy to launch a nuclear strike—did not sound like victory to Eisenhower. Nor was it feasible for achieving a political victory over communism. Speaking to members of the State Department, Ike noted that “the soldier can no longer regain a peace that is usable to the world. I believe that the best he could do would be to retain some semblance of a tattered nation in a world that was very greatly in ashes and relics of

¹⁵⁴ Eisenhower to Lessing Julious Rosenwald, dated November 8, 1956, DDEP, 17:2375.

¹⁵⁵ Eisenhower to Richard Leo Simon, dated April 4, 1956, DDEP, 16:2113. Eisenhower wrote in his letter that, “Suffice it to say here that I doubt that any columnist—and here I depend upon hearsay as I have no time to read them—is concerning himself with what is the true security problem of the day. That problem is not merely man against man or nation against nation. It is man against war.”

¹⁵⁶ Dwight D. Eisenhower, The President's News Conference, dated May 23, 1956, Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/232886> (accessed April 29, 2019).

destruction.”¹⁵⁷ Nuclear war could only destroy, and the potential escalation from general war to nuclear war challenged war’s utility in the atomic age.

General war, though less destructive, posed challenges to American interests and means because of a perceived Soviet advantage in conventional forces and the potential escalation from general war to nuclear war. Eisenhower agreed that “where American interests are seriously jeopardized by unjustified outbreaks of minor wars,” military strength retained utility.¹⁵⁸ However, the president believed that “war implies a contest” and a general war similar to the Second World War no longer offered the prospects of a contest when “the outlook comes close to the destruction of the enemy and suicide for ourselves.”¹⁵⁹ Even limited wars like that in Korea challenged definitions of war and its utility. The dwindling public support for the Korean War, combined with fears of escalation, raised questions about what the United States could achieve through general war.

War also posed different costs and benefits within the coalition of the global free world. Eisenhower’s administration believed that the American public did not understand the “true facts” concerning the nuclear arms race. The president wanted “to make people realize their own individual responsibility,” noting that public opinion could influence how and when nuclear weapons might be used.¹⁶⁰ Europeans on the other hand, still

¹⁵⁷ Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Remarks at the Department of State 1954 Honor Awards Ceremony,” dated October 19, 1954, Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/232841> (accessed April 29, 2019).

¹⁵⁸ Eisenhower to Richard Leo Simon, dated April 4, 1956, DDEP, 16:2114.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ The National Security Meeting notes state Eisenhower believed it was, “at least possible that some action would occur which would force the Government’s hand and cause us to resort to atomic bombardment. He noted that popular pressure had forced the Government’s hand in the Spanish-American

recovering from the Second World War, wanted to ease tensions on the continent. Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech in December 1953 held a different message for the American public and the European nations. To the home front, Ike hoped that the speech would awaken a sense of nuclear war's destructive power and the need for greater involvement in international affairs. To the Europeans, the president hoped to calm their fears of another war by showing the willingness of the United States to pursue peaceful cooperation in nuclear technology.¹⁶¹ Understanding that European leaders felt trapped between two superpowers wielding nuclear weapons, the president sought to reduce fears and prevent disintegration of NATO and other alliances.¹⁶² Contrary to the popular narrative of Eisenhower relying on massive retaliation, he told his National Security Council in February 1953 that "we certainly cannot depend solely, or perhaps even primarily, on atomic bombs if we continue to regard Europe as our first line of defense."¹⁶³ Eisenhower and General Omar Bradley, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

War." From "Discussion at the 146th Meeting of the National Security Council on Wednesday, May 27, 1953," dated May 30, 1953, 146th Meeting of NSC, May 27, 1953, Box 4, NSC Series, AWF, Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL.

¹⁶¹ For an analysis of the language used in Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" speech see Chernus, *Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace*. Chapter five of Kenneth Osgood's *Total Cold War* provides an overview of the speech's development within Eisenhower's grand strategy.

¹⁶² Marc Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy* (Princeton: NJ: Princeton University, 1991), 137.

¹⁶³ "Memorandum, Subject: Discussion at the 132nd Meeting of the National Security Council on Wednesday, February 18, 1953," dated February 19, 1953, 132nd Meeting of NSC February 18, 1953, Box 4, NSC Series, AWF, Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL. The popular narrative of Eisenhower relying on massive retaliation began after Secretary of Defense John Foster Dulles used the term massive retaliation in a speech given in January 1954. For more on the development of Eisenhower's nuclear strategy within the New Look see, Samuel F. Wells, Jr., "The Origins of Massive Retaliation," *Political Science Quarterly* 96, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 34-36. The popular narrative gained prominence after the publication of Maxwell D. Taylor's memoir, *The Uncertain Trumpet* (New York, NY: Harper, 1960), which also coincided with the 1960 United States presidential campaign. During the campaign President John F. Kennedy criticized Eisenhower's reliance on nuclear weapons and advocated a need for a more "flexible response" to communist expansion. For more on Kennedy's focus on flexible response see Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 197-204.

Staff, agreed that “it might well prove necessary to go forward with both the atomic capability and the conventional military capability, but there would certainly have to be a choice of priorities in timing.”¹⁶⁴ Atomic weapons were just one instrument of national power.

Service identities also complicated the debate as services sought to establish their identity and prominence in the nuclear age. Partially due to the misidentification of the New Look as solely relying on massive nuclear relation, “airpower was seen as the dominant form of war, with land power regulated to the status of an auxiliary service.”¹⁶⁵ This analysis misses the contested nature of American military strategy during Eisenhower’s administration. The introduction to the U.S. Army’s Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, reveals the fragility of service identities. According to FM 100-5, the Army’s “combat forces do not support the operations of any other component.... In any case, the efforts of all components are directed toward insuring the success of the land force operation.”¹⁶⁶ By reducing the U.S. Air Force’s role to air-to-ground support, Army leaders hoped to limit the acceptance of strategic airpower as a decisive means to wage war. While the U.S. Army struggled to create an identity in the atomic age, the United States Air Force’s belief in the airpower’s primacy led it to “mirror-image [its] own

¹⁶⁴ “Memorandum, Subject: Discussion at the 132nd Meeting of the National Security Council on Wednesday, February 18, 1953,” dated February 19, 1953, 132nd Meeting of NSC February 18, 1953, Box 4, NSC Series, AWF, Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL.

¹⁶⁵ Ingo Trauschweizer, *The Cold War U.S. Army: Building Deterrence for Limited War* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 18.

¹⁶⁶ U.S. Department of the Army. (1954). *Operations FM 100-5*, 4-5. Retrieved from Combined Arms Research Library Digital Library (<http://cdm16040.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p4013coll9/id/79/rec/8>) (accessed April 29, 2019).

capabilities and objectives” in analyzing Soviet airpower.¹⁶⁷ Not only did the U.S. Air Forces Strategic Air Command (SAC) influence American policy, it also created the idea of a Soviet Union Strategic Air Command (SUSAC)—a Soviet command that never existed.¹⁶⁸

Eisenhower wanted to avoid war’s larger consequences: unwanted commitments such as occupation, greater centralization of government authority, and economic disruption. When the National Security Council debated war objectives in the event of an attack by the Soviet Union, Eisenhower quickly noted the decisions to be made after a nuclear strike—would the United States occupy the Soviet Union? If not, could a political settlement be reached?¹⁶⁹ Likewise, he expressed a key planning consideration that few other contemporaries had voiced: in the event of a nuclear attack, the United States would most likely be hit and American troops would be needed more for civil control and cleanup than for offensive operations overseas. Though there is still considerable debate about how Eisenhower viewed nuclear strategy, especially equipping European allies with nuclear weapons, his stance on war remained steady. President Eisenhower agreed with Clausewitz that “war has an innate tendency to become absolute,” but it is important to remember that he also believed Clausewitz’s theory that war had to be useful—it had to aid in the achievement of a policy objective.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Edward Kaplan, *To Kill Nations: American Strategy in the Air-Atomic Age and the Rise of Mutually Assured Destruction* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 79.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. For analysis of how the development of nuclear weapons and strategy influenced service identities, organization, and training see Ingo Trauschweizer, *The Cold War U.S. Army* and Edward Kaplan, *To Kill Nations*.

¹⁶⁹ “Project Solarium,” dated July 16, 1953, Minutes of 155th Meeting of NSC July 16, 1953, NSC Series, AWF, Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL.

Seeking a middle ground, Eisenhower never considered total disarmament or massive retaliation as feasible policies. Disarmament could only happen if the Soviet Union reciprocated and the president did not believe the Soviets would allow inspections.¹⁷¹ Replying to C.D. Jackson's concerns about the "State-Defense quarrel" over disarmament and enlarging the American atomic stockpile the president noted that "I am not arguing either side of the particular question that you mention. I am merely pointing out that there needs to be a bit of intellectual analysis of these grave problems rather than screaming support of a position already taken."¹⁷² Like his Middle Way domestic political views, Eisenhower also believed in a balanced approach to containing communism. Eisenhower did not want war, but the threat of war served as an instrument of political warfare.

Limited wars in the Third World appeared as the most likely conflicts to surface in the Cold War, yet the drain on American troops and the defense budget reduced their long-term viability. Collective security thus became the most practicable means of protecting the free world against communist expansion. Eisenhower wrote his childhood friend Everett "Swede" Hazlett that, "the one indispensable thing to remember is that, if the free world cannot provide for its 'collective' security, the alternative for every one of

¹⁷⁰ Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy*, 138. For an analysis of Eisenhower's view on sharing nuclear weapons with European allies see Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace*, 193-200.

¹⁷¹ Daily Log, dated January 16, 1954, Log-1954 (1), Box 68, C.D. Jackson Papers, 1931-67, DDEL.

¹⁷² Eisenhower to Charles Douglas Jackson, dated December 31, 1953, DDEP, 15:798.

these nations, including our own, is an eventual fate that is worse than any kind of expense or effort we can now imagine.”¹⁷³

Eisenhower envisioned ‘redoubts’ across the globe that would be integrated with local and regional security forces, while American power remained in reserve in the United States ready to mobilize when required. Redeploying troops to the United States from overseas provided certain advantages. It consolidated military power in preparation for the outbreak of general war, and theoretically gave military commanders flexibility to deploy where needed.¹⁷⁴ Stationing fewer troops abroad also reduced the imperialist image that Eisenhower wanted to avoid, in addition to reducing the economic strain of supplying overseas bases.¹⁷⁵ Eisenhower did not advocate withdrawing all troops from overseas bases. The presence of American military forces acted as a trip-wire that would trigger an American response.¹⁷⁶ Positioning American military forces indicated American national interests and announced that Soviet intrusion would not go unnoticed—a key aspect of deterrence theory. Ike also wanted to avoid any sudden withdrawal of American military forces that might “imply a change in *basic* intent” to support and thus reassure other free nations.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ Eisenhower to Everett E. Hazlett, dated June 21, 1951, in Robert Griffith, *Ike’s Letters to a Friend, 1941-1958*, 85.

¹⁷⁴ Glenn Snyder, “The “New Look” of 1953,” in *Strategy, Politics, and Defense Budgets*, eds. Warner R. Schilling, Paul Y Hammond, and Glenn H. Snyder (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1962), 480.

¹⁷⁵ Snyder, “The “New Look” of 1953,” 480.

¹⁷⁶ Daily Log, dated January 16, 1954, Log-1954 (1), Box 68, C.D. Jackson Papers, 1931-67, DDEL.

¹⁷⁷ Eisenhower to John Foster Dulles, dated September 8, 1953, DDEP, 14:

War's cost, destructive capability, and mismatch with identifiable ends created tension between war's unsuitability and the unavoidable confrontation with growing Soviet military capability. Eisenhower's New Look advocated "the maximum military force which the country could "afford," while at the same time creating conditions which would allow quick expansion to the required force should the enemy begin clearly to exhibit warlike intentions."¹⁷⁸ This sentiment encountered two issues that the Truman administration had already faced. First, how much defense could the nation afford? While Truman and policy-makers who embraced Keynesian economics believed the United States could expand its military power, Eisenhower did not and feared insolvency. The president's attempt to balance security and solvency reflected the conservative "desire for stability."¹⁷⁹

The second issue Eisenhower's administration confronted was how to determine communist intentions. A report by the CIA in March 1953 stated that "Our estimate of Soviet long range plans and intentions are speculations drawn from inadequate evidence."¹⁸⁰ The president's relationship with Russians like General Georgy Zhukov, along with his experience in the military and political arenas, most likely served as the best tool to measure Soviet intentions.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Snyder, "The "New Look" of 1953," 477.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 474.

¹⁸⁰ Document #CIA-RDP80R01443R000100120003-6, "Intelligence on the Soviet Bloc," dated March 31, 1953, General CIA Records, CIA Library <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp80r01443r000100120003-6> (accessed April 17, 2019). The report continued to distinguish between tactical and strategic intelligence-capabilities versus intentions. In the section assessing strategic intelligence the report stated that, "Reliable intelligence of the enemy's long-range plans and intentions is practically non-existent. Little improvement in these deficiencies can be expected in the near future despite our efforts."

¹⁸¹ Historian Evan Thomas alludes to this in *Ike's Bluff*, noting that Eisenhower's adeptness at bridge made him an excellent judge of people and intentions. For a personal look at Eisenhower as

Ironically, when war seemed the least useful for achieving policy objectives, America's capacity to wage war grew out of proportion to Eisenhower's willingness to wage war. Historian Ingo Tauschweizer argues that "Eisenhower's New Look Defense policy with its threat of Massive Retaliation raised serious questions about the utility of ground forces in the atomic age."¹⁸² For Eisenhower, the New Look defined the utility of general war in the nuclear age. Despite criticism that the New Look forced America "to choose between thermonuclear incineration or inaction," Eisenhower wanted to reduce the probability of war.¹⁸³ War is not simply the act, but the capability and the intent. Intent and capability served as a deterrent and Eisenhower allowed his military leaders to increase the United States' military capability despite his view of war's utility. Eisenhower developed America's nuclear capability to counter the Soviet capability described in National Intelligence Estimates.¹⁸⁴

Still, deterrence posed a challenge to Eisenhower and his administration: how do you manage building the capacity for the possibility of war without increasing the intention for war? The United States and the Soviet Union appeared to be 'arming' past each other in the conversation of national defense and weapon development. While the Soviets sought to close the nuclear gap benefitting the United States, the U.S. military

president see Thomas, *Ike's Bluff*. Interestingly, a CIA information report date 26 April 1954, stated that "The Soviets will do everything in their power to avoid a general war at this time since they believe that a war now would result in certain disaster for them." Document #CIA-RDP80-00810A004000690008-4, "Central Intelligence Agency Information Report USSR/China/Indo-China," dated April 26, 1954, General CIA Records, CIA Library <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp80-00810a004000690008-4> (accessed April 17, 2019).

¹⁸² Tauschweizer, *The Cold War U.S. Army*, 13.

¹⁸³ Snyder, "The "New Look" of 1953," 465.

¹⁸⁴ "Bipartisan Leadership Meeting," dated December 14, 1954, Staff Notes January thru Dec. '54, Box 4, DDE Diary Series, AWF, Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL.

and intelligence communities struggled to calculate and build capable armed forces that could defeat the Soviet Union's growing military might.¹⁸⁵ In the process, arming for deterrence heightened insecurities and perpetuated an arms race. While Eisenhower doubted that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union would be able to restrict the use of nuclear weapons if war broke out, he thought "it might tend to reduce very materially the possibility of *any* war."¹⁸⁶

Simply building a massive stockpile of atomic weapons did not deter, and it could have potentially fatal effects. The president remarked that "atomic weapons strongly favor the side that attacks aggressively and *by surprise*. This the United States will never do; and let me point out that we never had any of this hysterical fear of *any nation* until atomic weapons appeared upon the scene and we knew that others had solved the secret."¹⁸⁷ The shortened time to react to a nuclear attack necessitated faster reaction and decision making. An air delivered nuclear retaliatory ability and an adequate Civil Defense served as two main pillars of Eisenhower's defense plan. While Civil Defense would not amount to much in the wake of an atomic attack, it did serve as a form of propaganda to "prepare Americans psychologically for a prolonged cold war and armaments race."¹⁸⁸ Despite Eisenhower's focus on the shortened warning time, his administration still pursued mobilization planning that reflected ideas generated during

¹⁸⁵ Document #0000269294, "National Intelligence Estimate 65: Soviet Bloc Capabilities Through 1957," dated June 16, 1953, National Intelligence Council (NIC) Collection, Freedom of Information Reading Room, CIA Library <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/0000269294> (accessed April 19, 2019).

¹⁸⁶ Eisenhower to Winston Spencer Churchill, dated April 27, 1956, DDEP, 16:2139.

¹⁸⁷ Eisenhower to Charles Douglas Jackson, dated December 31, 1953, DDEP, 15:798.

¹⁸⁸ Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 92.

and after the Second World War. The focus on mobilization planning—and the need for access to raw materials—in turn drove strategy by making access to those materials a key aspect of national security.¹⁸⁹

Deterring the Soviet Union directly would not suffice to support American diplomatic and economic policies intended to achieve American interests abroad. Military action continued to be a viable option below the threshold of general war. Rather than war militarizing diplomacy, American society's desire to shape the world expanded the acceptable limits of coercive diplomacy. The desire to change another nation's political system gained increasing importance in the ideological battle between capitalist and communist systems. The belief that America had a duty to change other countries' political outlook to save the free world meant that the Eisenhower's administration pushed the boundaries of coercive diplomacy. Colonel Edward Lansdale equated the United States' grand strategy to a "Pax Americanan in the world."¹⁹⁰ Diplomacy's lack of utility in changing another nation's self-determination led to increasingly coercive diplomatic practices. Throughout Eisenhower's first year in office, war did not militarize diplomacy. Rather, general war's lack of utility meant that coercive diplomacy expanded to fill the void resulting in a new standard of coercive interaction below general war: political warfare.

¹⁸⁹ See Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy*, 4-15 for an analysis of "The Thermonuclear Revolution" and its relation to the Second World War idea of bombing, mobilization, and general war.

¹⁹⁰ "Memorandum for C.D. Jackson," dated March 7, 1953, L, Box 4, C.D. Jackson Records, DDEL.

Chapter 3 – Political Warfare: Below the Threshold of War

During the Truman administration, George Kennan and other policy planners noted the need to describe war short of outright conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. In a 1948 staff memorandum, Kennan argued that “Political warfare is the logical application of Clausewitz’s doctrine in a time of peace.” It utilized “all the means at a nation’s command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives.”¹⁹¹ The American public’s popular image, and in a way understanding, of war focused on the recent experience of the United States in the Second World War—war as the conventional or nuclear confrontation between military forces. However, war in the policy makers construction remained the use of national power to achieve political objectives. The term warfare described the means—both covert and overt in Kennan’s framework—to achieve national objectives.¹⁹² The United States government could wage war without public awareness or involvement because “war” to the American public meant the clash of armies on the battlefield.¹⁹³ Kennan observed that postwar America had been handicapped “by a popular attachment to the concept of a basic difference between peace and war, by a tendency to view war as a sort of sporting context outside of all political context, by a national tendency to seek a political cure-all, and by a

¹⁹¹ Document #269, “Policy Planning Staff Memorandum,” dated May 4, 1948, *FRUS, 1945-1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, 668.

¹⁹² Document #269, “Policy Planning Staff Memorandum,” dated May 4, 1948, *FRUS, 1945-1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, 668.

¹⁹³ For a recent example of this distinction consider the presence of United States military forces in Niger. After the ambush of U.S. Special Forces serving in Niger even some U.S. Senators were surprised to learn that the United States had been engaged in combat operations. See Andrew Lebovich, “The Real Reason U.S. Troops Are in Niger,” *Foreign Policy*, October 27, 2017, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/10/27/the-real-reason-u-s-troops-are-in-niger/> (accessed May 1, 2019).

reluctance to recognize the realities of international relations—the perpetual rhythm of [struggle, in and out of war.]” For Kennan, politics extended into war and therefore waging war was a political act. Thus, Kennan could justify aggressive political actions as political warfare without requiring Congressional involvement.¹⁹⁴ Kennan cited the British Empire and the Kremlin’s use of political warfare to maintain control as proof that the United States could no longer ignore its use.¹⁹⁵

Eisenhower approached the ideological nature of the Cold War with a familiarity and belief in psychological operations that grew out of his own wartime experiences.¹⁹⁶ Searching for options to counter the Soviet Union, Eisenhower commissioned the Jackson Committee on 24 January 1953. He charged it with analyzing government information operations and other policies that would promote the security of the global free world. The United States could not destroy communism or defeat the Soviet Union through general or nuclear war, but Eisenhower believed the United States had to find a way to counter the spread of communism.

The Jackson Committee reached a conclusion similar to Kennan’s, recommending the term political warfare and widening the scope of Cold War conflict by expanding the means available to intervene against communist influence. The committee’s report also stated that “specific goals of national action abroad should be defined in as precise

¹⁹⁴ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 49-52.

¹⁹⁵ Document #269, “Policy Planning Staff Memorandum,” dated May 4, 1948, *FRUS, 1945-1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, 669. Interesting to note that the same argument is being made today about the United States’ cyber warfare capabilities in response to Russian and Chinese capabilities.

¹⁹⁶ Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 51. See also, James Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War: US Policy, Intelligence, and CIA Operations* (New York, NY: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 93.

political, diplomatic, economic, military or psychological terms as possible.”¹⁹⁷ The United States’ ends, capabilities, and policies had to be feasible otherwise “the announcement of unrealizable goals and the arousing of excessive hopes in the satellite countries or elsewhere, may have serious adverse consequences for the world position of the United States.”¹⁹⁸ C.D. Jackson, a committee member, consulted Colonel Edward Lansdale about how to contain communism and promote governments that supported the United States in Latin America. Lansdale believed that “psychological-political and para-military warfare” efforts were “technical necessities” for defeating communist infrastructures in Latin American countries based on his experience in Indonesia.¹⁹⁹

Eisenhower’s focus on identifying means to confront communist expansion presented a more offensive grand strategy than that of the Truman administration. During the 1952 presidential campaign, Eisenhower characterized Truman’s response to communism as weak.²⁰⁰ Despite Eisenhower’s tough stance on communism, his association with the Republican party had international repercussions. The administration found that, “the 1952 presidential campaign had an impact on US prestige in Europe that was definitely adverse,” because the Republican party, though staunchly anti-communist, was also the party of isolationists.²⁰¹ The spread of communism, especially through local

¹⁹⁷ Document #370, “Report to the President by the President’s Committee on International Information Activities,” dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1798.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1799.

¹⁹⁹ “Memorandum for C.D. Jackson,” dated March 7, 1953, L, Box 4, C.D. Jackson Records, DDEL.

²⁰⁰ Gregory F. Treverton, *Covert Action: The CIA and the Limits of American Intervention in the Postwar World* (London: I.B. Tauris and Company, 1987), 42.

elections or nationalist revolutions, challenged “the credibility of U.S. international leadership” and more importantly, the supposed superiority of democratic capitalism.²⁰² While the Eisenhower administration determined that rolling back communism in the Soviet Union and its satellites was unrealistic, political warfare could roll back communism in other areas. Massive retaliation, containment, limited war, and rollback did not represent either-or strategies for dealing with the communism threat. Rather, each served as a viable means of advancing the interests of the United States depending on the regional context and actors involved.

While many information programs existed prior to Eisenhower’s election, he reviewed and reprioritized them, allocating more funding for programs like Voice of America. The Jackson Committee noted that “in the event of war, radio will be a political warfare weapon of major importance,” and the president believed that broadcasting information and propaganda into the Soviet bloc remained the last “offensive” option available in that area of the world. Information operations aimed to promote the image of the United States while showing the contradictions and inadequacies of communism.²⁰³ Eisenhower continued the “Campaign of Truth” that President Truman created in 1950 to

²⁰¹ “Reported Decline in U.S. Prestige,” dated September 23, 1953, Psychological and Informational Programs (8), Box 40, Disaster File, White House Office, National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948-1961, DDEL.

²⁰² Michael Grow, *U.S. Presidents and Latin American Interventions: Pursuing Regime Change in the Cold War* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 18.

²⁰³ Document #370, “Report to the President by the President’s Committee on International Information Activities,” dated June 30, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1824-1829.

counteract Soviet propaganda.²⁰⁴ The radio thus became a primary weapon in countering communism.

Measures other than war, in Kennan's words, also included trade with allies and communist countries. At a National Security Council Meeting in July 1953, Eisenhower reminded the group that "We should not forget that we are trying to induce the satellites to come over to our side by judicious use of trade."²⁰⁵ The president felt that "the purpose of our trade should be to split the Soviet world."²⁰⁶ Trade policies could also serve to attack communist infrastructures. CIA Director Allen Dulles noted that any blockade on communist China would create a "severe strain" on the Chinese-Manchurian railway as supplies would have to be routed overland.²⁰⁷ John Foster Dulles, Allen's brother and the Secretary of State, stated that the challenges in Latin America were "largely economic" and that the "vital element in their solution must be a flow of capital" into the region.²⁰⁸ Trade, aid, and advertising the prosperity of the free world coalition targeted the economic foundations of communist expansion.

The administration also strategically promoted the American way of life. In a national broadcast, the Secretary of State told the public that "the heart of a successful

²⁰⁴ Document #295, "Memorandum by the Deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration (Humelsine) to the Regional Bureau Executive Directors," dated January 30, 1952, *FRUS, 1952-1954*, Vol. 2, Part 2, *National Security Affairs*, 1601. See also, Belmonte, *Selling the American Way*, 39-43.

²⁰⁵ "Memorandum, Subject: Discussion at the 157th Meeting of the National Security Council, Thursday, July 30, 1953," dated July 31, 1953, 157th Meeting of NSC July 30, 1953, Box 4, NSC Series, AWF, Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ "Memorandum, Subject: Discussion at the 131st Meeting of the National Security Council on Wednesday, February 11, 1953," dated February 12, 1953, 131st Meeting February 11, 1953, Box 4, NSC Series, AWF, Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL.

²⁰⁸ John M. Cabot, "U.S. Capital Investment in Latin America," dated March 30, 1953, U.S. Department of State, *Department of State Bulletin* 28, no. 718: 462.

foreign policy is our national conduct and example.” He argued that American citizens could speed the fall of communism by “demonstrating by our own performance, by our own examples, how good freedom is and how much better it is than despotism is.”²⁰⁹ Guiding countries toward policies that modernized economies and modeled American democracy acted as means to influence countries perceived as susceptible to communist influence. While modernization theory is associated with the Kennedy administration, Eisenhower promoted similar concepts. Yet because he wanted to reduce the United States’ economic commitments, the president initially promoted trade over aid.²¹⁰ Regardless of the means, economic development became the cure to symptoms of instability in developing countries. According to John Foster Dulles, economic development was “the way the United States developed, and that [was] the best and surest way for [Latin America] to develop.”²¹¹ While Dulles’ statement offered a simplistic comparison it typifies the American centric view of how to solve instability around the globe.

The president also allowed the CIA and other actors to take covert action against foreign countries. Eisenhower had identified a way for war to be useful in the atomic age. In theory, covert action protected American credibility and other nations paid the price in troops and instability. Eisenhower did not advocate for covert action in the Soviet Union

²⁰⁹ Speech: “A Survey of Foreign Policy Problems”, 1953 January 27; John Foster Dulles Papers, Box 310; Public Policy Papers, Department of Rare books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

²¹⁰ For an analysis of how Eisenhower’s foreign economic policy developed see Kaufman, *Trade and Aid*.

²¹¹ John M. Cabot, “U.S. Capital Investment in Latin America,” 462.

or its satellites, but it remained an option for countries in the periphery.²¹² Covert operations in Europe did occur, but the attention given to events in Europe, along with the threat of escalating tensions with the Soviet Union, led to more information campaigns than covert paramilitary efforts.²¹³ As historian H.W. Brands has noted, “ideology demanded that the United States carry on the struggle against communism; pragmatism required that the struggle be conducted by means other than direct confrontation with the Soviet Union.”²¹⁴

Measures short of war challenged the conceptual framework of war and peace that agencies like the CIA and the Department of Defense used to frame their actions and authority. While a declaration of war would signal different responsibilities and allow for expanded means, political warfare blurred the lines between war and peace. A memorandum for the National Security Council on covert operations noted the necessity of separating covert operations into two categories, peacetime and wartime. “The above division appears to be a most logical one inasmuch as it is very difficult to believe that we would send in parties to accomplish physical destruction in any phase of a ‘cold’ war.”²¹⁵ And yet Eisenhower’s administration would challenge that logic in Iran and Guatemala.

²¹² Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 96.

²¹³ Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy*, 8.

²¹⁴ H.W. Brands, *Cold Warriors: Eisenhower’s Generation and American Foreign Policy* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1988), 48.

²¹⁵ Document #278, “Memorandum From Director of Central Intelligence Hillenkoetter to the National Security Council,” dated May 24, 1948, *FRUS, 1945-1950, Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, Retrospective Volume, 687.

Eisenhower's use of political warfare also challenged the legal definition of war. Constitutional law gives Congress the right to declare war—establishing war time—yet tensions between the United States' military that remained deployed to 'redoubts' around the globe resulted in accidental (and deadly) aerial and ground engagements. The United States employed military force around the globe, and society recognized the Cold War as a contest of survival, yet Eisenhower only obtained authorization for the use of military force from Congress twice during his presidency.²¹⁶ Documents clearly show Eisenhower's respect for the congressional role in declaring war, especially the actual commitment of American troops.²¹⁷ However, Ike also believed in a strong executive branch as his fight against the Bricker Amendment shows.²¹⁸ The legal and Constitutional distinction between war and political warfare is evident. As president, Eisenhower would use instruments of national power to achieve policy objectives, yet he would not use American ground combat troops in direct engagement with communist forces. Congressional approval would not be sought for anything less.

²¹⁶ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Declarations of War and Authorizations for the Use of Military Force: Historical Background and Legal Implications*, by Jennifer K. Elsea and Matthew C. Weed, RL31133 (2014), 7-9.

²¹⁷ At his February 17, 1953 press conference Eisenhower told reporters that, "Now I don't know about these statements that you talk about, but I have said this publicly time and again: in these matters affecting the broad policy of the United States, and not mere expedients within the proper purview of the responsibilities of a mere Commander in Chief, they will never be undertaken until they are discussed with the proper leaders of the Congress; and if necessary they will have to act on them. I don't believe in doing these things haphazardly and on an individual and arbitrary basis." Dwight D. Eisenhower, The President's News Conference, dated February 17, 1953, Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/231672> (accessed April 17, 2019).

²¹⁸ The Bricker Amendment was a key political battle over executive power in foreign affairs during Eisenhower's presidency. For more information on the Bricker Amendment and Eisenhower see, Duane A. Tananbaum, "The Bricker Amendment Controversy: Its Origins and Eisenhower's Role," *Diplomatic History* 9, no. 1 (January 1985): 73-93.

Political warfare also changed the nature of victory in the Cold War. No longer would military might be publicly hailed as the guarantor of victory—or American credibility. Following the Project Solarium presentation, Vice President Nixon worried over the decline of the United States’ prestige, which he defined as the United States’ “ability to influence other people because of their attitudes toward us, as distinguished from our ability to exert influence through the use of special incentives.”²¹⁹ The report noted a widely held perception that the United States was “hysterical” about communism and militaristic.²²⁰ Historian Ira Chernus has argued that peace represented a continual struggle against communism. Eisenhower “taught the nation to desire peace as its highest goal while giving unlimited support to waging cold war.”²²¹ As the political definition of victory changed from unconditional surrender to patience with firmness, military planning focused on victory divorced from the reality of war’s destructive power in the age of atomic warfare.²²²

Relying so heavily on political warfare led to questions of Eisenhower’s sincerity in ‘waging peace’ that continues today. While historians like Ira Chernus characterize Eisenhower as deceptive and developing a state of national insecurity, Eisenhower’s goal was the prevention of general war. Though Eisenhower surely possessed the cunning and forethought to be deceptive, a more balanced analysis of his personal correspondence, speeches, and diary entries reveals a hopeful but cautious man. Ike’s diary entry two days

²¹⁹ “Reported Decline in U.S. Prestige,” dated September 23, 1953, Psychological and Informational Programs (8), Box 40, Disaster File, White House Office, National Security Council Staff: Papers, 1948-1961, DDEL.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ Chernus, *Eisenhower’s Atoms for Peace*, 13.

²²² Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy*, 138-140.

after his “Atoms for Peace” speech shows his willingness to extend a cooperative hand to the Soviets while still upholding American security. He justified America offering to hand over part of its nuclear stockpile to an international agency because “even in the event that the USSR would cooperate in such a plan for ‘propaganda purposes’...the US would still have nuclear superiority.”²²³ Whether Eisenhower waged peace or increased violence in the world, one goal was sincere—confronting communism.²²⁴

The reliance on political warfare to achieve grand strategy fit the threat-based perception of Eisenhower’s National Security Council. Political warfare could avoid war’s physical destruction in America, but a militaristic mentality spread to diplomatic and economic policies that perpetuated conflict on the periphery. The belief that general war lacked utility due to nuclear war and fears of insolvency, while still aiming to defeat the Soviet Union and global communism, created unintended consequences. Diplomacy, economic, and information means had to become more aggressive to wage political warfare. Dulles correctly stated that the United States would not use war to achieve its national self-interest. However, wars were fought in pursuit of American interests by others and against people who did not pose a physical threat to the United States. War would thus defend the United States’ credibility, ability to access natural resources, and the promotion of a cohesive and prosperous free world coalition.

²²³ Ferrell, *The Eisenhower Diaries*, 262.

²²⁴ See Osgood, *Total Cold War*, 6-7 for an argument critiquing the revisionist view that Eisenhower sought détente with the Soviet Union.

Chapter 4 – A Contradiction in Terms

Waging Peace: Eisenhower and Covert Action

Eisenhower's second presidential memoir may be titled *Waging Peace*, but the president's Cold War policies created conditions more closely associated with war than peace, especially in the Third World. The coups sponsored by the United States in Iran and Guatemala challenge the definition of war as socially sanctioned violence. Violence, funded and encouraged by the administration, played a role in both coups. Yet the covert nature of coups separated the socially sanctioned nature of war from its violence. While the American experience of Eisenhower's New Look defense strategy remained peaceful, countries considered on the periphery of the Cold War—like Iran and Guatemala—suffered long term social and political unrest that made the Cold War simply war. Historian Andrew Rathmell has argued that “No diplomatic or political history can explain events if it omits the roles played by covert action and political violence.”²²⁵ Rathmell's statement is relevant to understanding Eisenhower's definition of war. Just as Eisenhower's policies focused on more than the Soviet Union, so a thorough analysis of his policy must consider the role of war beyond the scope of general or nuclear war. In sanctioning coups, Eisenhower removed society's role in sanctioning violence. This redefined war as state sanctioned violence to achieve political objectives.²²⁶ American

²²⁵ Rathmell, *Secret War in the Middle East*, 1.

²²⁶ Consider the definition of war found in *Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States*, dated July 12, 2017, Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Electronic Library, U.S. Department of Defense, ix. https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/pubs/jp1_ch1.pdf (accessed May 20, 2019). It states that, “war is socially sanctioned violence to achieve a political purpose.” While the state acts on behalf of the population, is state sanctioned violence (like a coup) socially sanctioned when the state acts without social awareness? Actions by the state that conform with international law may be legal, but what does “socially sanctioned violence” mean? Is social sanction an active measure, like Congress

society became further removed from the decision to wage war. Separating society's approval from state directed violence is problematic when policy makers must decide when diplomatic interactions will move from competition to conflict. Who makes the decision to move from competition to conflict? If conflict means war—the use of violence to achieve political outcomes—then society should be involved in that decision according to the United States Constitution. Eisenhower approved regime change in Iran and Guatemala without Congressional or public approval. While the public's will may have been carried out through the use of coups—containing communism—the use of violence was not justified by social consensus or Constitutional authority.

Presidential power is most evident in foreign policy decisions that support a nation's grand strategy. Eisenhower believed in Constitutional checks and balances. He did not consider unilateral action by a single branch healthy for the nation, though he acknowledged that emergencies required action.²²⁷ The president also believed that if a foreign policy decision involved the use of American troops, he would need Congressional approval.²²⁸ Ike summarized his decision-making process thusly: "Having gotten the issue well defined in my mind, I try in the next step to determine what answer would best serve the *long term* advantage and welfare of the United States and the free world. I then consider the *immediate problem* and what solution can we get that will best conform to the long term interests of the country and at the same time *can command a*

declaring war? Or, is it the state acting on the mandate of representing the larger interests of society without needing to publicly announce its actions?

²²⁷ Dwight D. Eisenhower, dated February 17, 1953, The President's News Conference Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/231672> (accessed April 19, 2019).

²²⁸ As an example, see Eisenhower to Henry Robinson Luce, dated January 24, 1955, DDEP 16:1519-1521.

sufficient approval in this country so as to secure the necessary Congressional action.”²²⁹

However, the president also believed in the executive’s role in executing foreign policy. Eisenhower approved coercive diplomatic measures, like coups, that would otherwise fit the traditional definition of war if American military force had been used. He also approved covert action by CIA and foreign actors to achieve objectives that likely would have lacked public support to wage general war. More important to the president, covert action could achieve objectives that would otherwise generate a direct conflict with the Soviet Union.

Due to the Cold War’s ideological and political context, the policy objective of countering the Soviet Union influenced the development of Eisenhower’s Latin America policy. An intelligence update by Allen Dulles in February 1953 noted that “the four major trends in South and Central America were trends in the direction of economic nationalism, regionalism, neutralism, and increasing Communist influence.”²³⁰ This endangered the United States’ “sources of supply for such strategic materials as copper, petroleum, and tin,” while also delaying diplomatic agreements for “military cooperation.”²³¹ Already in 1953, Guatemala had been identified as an “approaching crisis.”²³² The Truman administration had identified Iran and Guatemala as foreign policy

²²⁹ Eisenhower to Alfred Maximilian Gruenther, dated February 1, 1955, DDEP, 16:1539. What makes this letter useful as evidence of Eisenhower’s belief in Congressional power is the recipient. President Eisenhower was writing to General Al Gruenther who was serving as the Supreme Allied Commander of NATO. For a fellow general, and then president, to acknowledge the balance between the executive and legislative branch is a testament to Eisenhower’s respect for the United States’ system of government.

²³⁰ “Discussion at the 132nd Meeting of the National Security Council on Wednesday, February 18, 1953,” dated February 19, 1953, 132nd Meeting of NSC February 18, 1953, Box 4, NSC Series, AWF, Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL.

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² Ibid.

challenges, and Eisenhower's Secretary of State John Foster Dulles echoed that assessment in a televised speech on 27 January 1953.

The coups in Iran and Guatemala reflect the tension between presidential and congressional power. Although Eisenhower respected Congress's role in declaring war, the president also defended the executive branch's prerogative in foreign policy. Foreign policy is well within the authority of the presidency, but what about war? A coup is coercive and violent foreign policy—political warfare at the extreme—so does that act of war require congressional approval? The Cold War's ideological nature blurred the line between foreign policy and political warfare. Likewise, Eisenhower did not clearly distinguish the relationship between political warfare and war.

Eisenhower's use of covert action to prevent general or nuclear war redefined the relationship between war and society as he executed his grand strategy. Covert regime change aligned with Eisenhower's view of war's utility in the Cold War. The Iranian and Guatemalan crises emerged during Truman's administration and Eisenhower inherited them. Though the coups in Iran and Guatemala used foreign troops and agents, with paramilitary assistance unattributed to America, covert operations and subversive acts like Indonesia also involved the US Navy and Air Force.²³³ The question remains: did Eisenhower consider coups as coercive diplomacy, political warfare, or general war through proxy? Analyzing the United States' actions in Iran and Guatemala during the early 1950s help answer those questions.

²³³ Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy*, 3.

Unsanctioned War: Eisenhower's Preventative War in Iran

Foreign interference in Iranian domestic politics began long before the American-sponsored coup in 1953. Iran's history is replete with internal political and social struggles that influenced its development. The Iranian Constitutional Revolution in 1905 occurred after a century of intermittent conflict with Russia. A famine in the 1870s and again in the 1920s killed millions of Iranians, all while Iranian political parties struggled for power. Internal political conflict, along with foreign interference by Russia and Britain prior to the Second World War prevented a strong Iranian government from gaining control of its territory and future. Historian Rashid Khalidi notes that "the Cold War was only another episode in this region's recent history of being a target for external intervention."²³⁴ The 1953 coup sponsored by Eisenhower's administration is not unique because it represents foreign interference in Iranian politics; it is important because it represents a new method the United States used to achieve political outcomes in the Cold War. Moreover, it blurred the lines between war and political warfare.

Iran had served as a site of great power cooperation during the Second World. Great Britain and the Soviet Union invaded Iran in 1941 to prevent Germany from seizing strategic oil fields that would have provided much needed supplies for its conquest of the Soviet Union. Likewise, Lend-Lease aid flowed from the United States to Russia through Iran. The Tehran Conference of 1943 also served as a symbolic and physical site of cooperation between wartime allies. Despite the cooperation during the Second World War, the global nature of the Cold War reaffirmed Iran's role as a site of great power competition.

²³⁴ Khalidi, *Sowing Crisis*, 162.

Oil and regional access had made Iran important prior to the 1950s. However, the ideological nature of the Cold War, and the need to create strong coalitions created a new form of competition that placed Iran between the United States and the Soviet Union. American interests in Iran reflected the multifaceted nature of the Cold War. The United States wanted to keep Soviet communism from expanding into Iran and threatening the free world's access to oil. To contain the Soviet Union, the United States and its allies retained World War II military bases throughout the world that enabled the United States to strike the Soviet Union with air deliverable nuclear weapons. Retaining Iran's support, or more aptly controlling its political direction, became a key American interest. A Truman administration official noted that "the best we can hope for is to prevent Iran's falling into Soviet hands during the cold war period."²³⁵

American options toward Iran consisted of economic, political, and military means. While the United States supported Greece and Turkey with aid—and membership in NATO—Iran received little support. The Truman administration noted that "Iran does not fall into the category of countries we have helped too lavishly. We have in fact given the Iranians very little; they feel this keenly in view of what we have done for Greece and Turkey, and are genuinely skeptical of the sincerity of our interest in Iran." What made this apparent slight even more insulting was that "Iran is threatened with an actual Soviet invasion (as distinct from an indirect, Soviet-inspired invasion)."²³⁶ Other reports stated

²³⁵ Document #15, "Memorandum From the Chief of the Plans Staff, Near East and Africa Division, Directorate of Plans ([name not declassified]) to the Acting Chief of the Policy, Plans and Review Section, Office of Policy Coordination, Directorate of Plans, Central Intelligence Agency ([name not declassified])," dated April 12, 1951, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954*, Second Edition, 64.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

that if the situation continued Britain might “send troops to southern Iran.”²³⁷ Despite Iran’s importance—and the numerous foreign governments intervening—the United States efforts during the Truman administration meant that “it would be somewhat unrealistic to expect Iran to throw itself lock, stock, and barrel into the Western camp—particularly in the absence of military commitments from [the United States].”²³⁸

To prevent Iran’s fall to communism, the United States looked for a dynamic leader that would rely on the United States for support and stem the growth of communist parties in Iran. This would be especially important since the United States was unwilling to provide a large amount of foreign aid, especially military support, to Iran. Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadeq had been elected in 1951 based on what American intelligence officers called an ““out-with-all-foreigners” propaganda campaign.”²³⁹ Despite Mossadeq’s call for less foreign interference, a national intelligence estimate in January 1953 noted that “the Mossadeq regime almost certainly desires to keep US support as a counterweight to the USSR and appears to want US economic and military assistance.”²⁴⁰ The United States feared that the Iranian communist party, Tudeh, would gain power as Mossadeq built his domestic coalition. However, the national intelligence

²³⁷ Document #16, “Memorandum From the Assistant Director of the Office of National Estimates (Langer) to Director of Central Intelligence Smith,” dated April 20, 1951, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954*, Second Edition, 66.

²³⁸ Document #15, ““Memorandum From the Chief of the Plans Staff, Near East and Africa Division, Directorate of Plans ([name not declassified]) to the Acting Chief of the Policy, Plans and Review Section, Office of Policy Coordination, Directorate of Plans, Central Intelligence Agency ([name not declassified]),” dated April 12, 1951, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954*, Second Edition, 64.

²³⁹ Document #154, “Memorandum From Acting Director of Central Intelligence Dulles to the Under Secretary of State (Smith),” dated February 19, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954, Second Edition*, 450.

²⁴⁰ Document #152, “National Intelligence Estimate (NIE-75/1),” dated January 9, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954*, Second Edition, 439.

estimate acknowledged that “the Communist Tudeh Party is not likely to develop the strength to overthrow the National Front by constitutional means or by force during the period of this estimate.”²⁴¹ Mossadeq did not pose a direct threat to American interests, but his cooperation with the Tudeh party, and the United States belief that he would not hold power for a long period of time, was a concern. An intelligence agent in Iran expressed unease that even if the United States supported Mossadeq, he would eventually retire and the United States would “be right back where we were in 1950—looking for another [leader].”²⁴²

The United States thus embarked upon regime change to prevent Iran from turning communist.²⁴³ The national intelligence estimate provided to the Eisenhower administration shortly before Ike’s inauguration noted that “the USSR has the capability for greatly increasing its overt and covert interference.” However, as Mossadeq struggled to maintain a domestic coalition, and the CIA predicted a Tudeh sponsored coup, planning and preparation for Mossadeq’s overthrow—Operation AJAX—began in the spring of 1953.²⁴⁴

Kermit Roosevelt, Jr., grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt, led the small American team responsible for staging the coup in Iran. After the operation received

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Document #154, “Memorandum From Acting Director of Central Intelligence Dulles to the Under Secretary of State (Smith),” dated February 19, 1953, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Iran, 1951-1954*, Second Edition, 451.

²⁴³ Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War*, 87.

²⁴⁴ John Foran, “Discursive Subversions: *Time Magazine*, the CIA Overthrow of Musaddiq, and the Installation of the Shah,” in *Cold War Constructions: The Political Culture of United States Imperialism, 1945-1966*, ed. Christian G. Appy (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 175.

approval, Roosevelt traveled to Iran and began preparing for the coup in July 1953.²⁴⁵ Meanwhile the Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, steadily lost influence in Iran, and Mossadeq had become more reliant on the Tudeh party for support. Roosevelt initiated the coup in the beginning of August and on 20 August, Prime Minister Mossadeq resigned paving the way for the Shah to appointed Major General Fazlollah Zahedi as the new prime minister.²⁴⁶ The immediate effect of covert action represented a stunning success for the Eisenhower administration. Iran went from a potentially communist leaning state to one ruled firmly by the Shah who if not loyal, understood the power and influence the United States had in Iran. Ike and his advisers believed a potential war between the United States and the Soviet Union over Iran's political future had been avoided.

The long-term consequences of the coup continue today. In the process of overthrowing Mossadeq, the United States also overthrew the first democratically elected government in postwar Iran. Historian Stephen Kinzer has noted that the coup "was a great trauma for Iran, the Middle East, and the colonial world."²⁴⁷ The coup attempted to fix Iranian domestic political power through external interference meaning that tensions and ideological divides had merely been suppressed, not resolved. In fact, Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini's path to power is attributed to Mossadeq's overthrow. An outspoken

²⁴⁵ Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War*, 116. While there is no documentary evidence of Eisenhower approving the coup, the memorandums and cables show that Eisenhower had full knowledge of the coup. While historian Stephen Kinzer noted that, "Only one important figure in the Eisenhower administration still hoped for compromise with Mossadegh: President Eisenhower himself," it does not negate Eisenhower's authority and responsibility to make the decision. See Stephen Kinzer, *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2008), 156.

²⁴⁶ Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War*, 117.

²⁴⁷ Kinzer, *All the Shah's Men*, x.

critic of the Shah and his relationship with the United States, Khomeini eventually overthrew of the Shah during the 1979 Iranian Revolution.

The “atrocious harmlessness of all things”: Guatemala and Covert Violence

The 1954 American sponsored coup in Guatemala remains a morally and politically confusing event. The confusion appeared in an early intelligence summary from 1952 which argued that Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz’s policies modeled President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal. Yet, fears of Arbenz’s leftist policies like land and labor reform, not to mention his act of legalizing the Guatemalan Communist Party in 1952, made Guatemala the primary concern of American policymakers worried about communist expansion into Central America. Historian Piero Gleijeses has noted that “the Guatemalans’ major sins were two: their ‘persecution’ of American companies and their irresponsible attitude toward communism.”²⁴⁸ Just as American involvement in Guatemala, and the rest of Central America, began before Eisenhower’s presidency, so did the planning for a coup to bring Guatemala in line with the United States’ objectives. The CIA presented Truman the plan for a coup to overthrow Arbenz in 1952, but Secretary of State Dean Acheson stopped the operation because he believed it would reflect badly on the United States.²⁴⁹

Like the Iranian coup, a potential communist takeover proved to be the only threat in Guatemala that Eisenhower used to justify intervention. Echoing the CIA’s evaluation of Mossadeq, a report in 1952 claimed that “although President Arbenz appears to

²⁴⁸ Piero Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope: The Guatemalan Revolution and the United States, 1944-1954* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1991), 85.

²⁴⁹ Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War*, 119.

collaborate with the Communists and extremists to the detriment of Guatemala's relations with the US, I am quite certain that he personally does not agree with the economic and political ideas of the Guatemalan or Soviet Communists."²⁵⁰ Arbenz was Guatemala's second democratically elected ruler after the Second World War. His efforts to build domestic coalitions necessarily included communist, or leftist leaning groups, though it raised concerns in Eisenhower's administration, since the inclusion of communists in the Guatemalan government seemed to challenge U.S. power in the Western Hemisphere. With the United States seeking to build a free world coalition that proved the inadequacy of communism, it could not afford to have Guatemala spurning American businesses, and more importantly, U.S. authority. As with Iran, American policy makers imagined Guatemala as a domino, where communist influence in one country would inevitably lead to communist encroachment in the region.²⁵¹

Scholars have also shown an uncomfortable connection between the United Fruit Company (UFC), the Eisenhower administration, and intelligence reports about Guatemala.²⁵² The United States had significant business ties in the country, principally through the UFC, which owned Guatemala's only major port, Puerto Barrios, in addition to significant portions of the country's railroad and communication infrastructure.²⁵³

²⁵⁰ Document #27, "Central Intelligence Agency Information Report," dated October 10, 1952, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Guatemala*, Retrospective Volume, 39.

²⁵¹ For an example of the domino theory in Iran see, Document #171, "Memorandum of Discussion at the 135th Meeting of the National Security Council," dated March 4, 1953, *FRUS, 1951-1954, Iran*, Second Edition, 481. For an example of the domino theory regarding Guatemala see, Document #130, "Paper Prepared in Operation PBSUCCESS Headquarters in Florida," dated April 21, 1954, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Guatemala*, Retrospective Volume.

²⁵² For a detailed examination of the United Fruit Company in Guatemala see Stephen Schlesinger and Stephen Kinzer, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).

²⁵³ Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War*, 118.

However, the link between Eisenhower's administration and the UFC does not explain why the coup occurred nor is it supported in the documentary record.²⁵⁴ What is clear is that Eisenhower linked Arbenz's communist associations with fears that Soviet communism was gaining a foothold in Central America.

The American sponsored coup utilized all instruments of political warfare outlined in Eisenhower's New Look: economic, information, military aid, and paramilitary support. Yet psychological methods proved most essential to the coup's success. When the small military force under ex-Guatemalan army Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas halted just seven miles across the Honduran border after "invading" Guatemala, the coup appeared to be in danger. To tip the balance of public support towards Armas' insurrection, and to persuade the Guatemalan army to cease supporting Arbenz, the CIA bombed selected targets in Guatemala City. The spectacle of planes bombing the city, along with the Guatemalan army commanders' fears that further resistance would result in the United States deploying troops led to Arbenz' capitulation on 27 June.

On a strategic level, the coup also had psychological value. Historian James Callanan has argued that the coup "assisted Eisenhower's efforts to combat, and draw attention away from, a communist advance in Indochina" as well as "helping Washington in its drive to meet the Marxist challenge head-on in Latin America."²⁵⁵ It served as a symbol of the United States power and a warning to other Latin American states about the consequences that would come from experimenting with communist like policies.

²⁵⁴ Gleijeses, *Shattered Hope*, 362.

²⁵⁵ Callanan, *Covert Action in the Cold War*, 123.

The fervor of anti-communist thought driving the United States decision to wage action in Iran and Guatemala is best represented by U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala, John S. Peurifoy. He used William James' phrase "atrocious harmlessness" in his 19 June 1954, telegram to Allen Dulles to emphasize the need for American intervention.²⁵⁶ Peurifoy asked for CIA air assets to drop bombs on Guatemala City to support the insurrection. Peurifoy thought inaction would amount to "atrocious harmlessness"—foolishly standing by in the wake of communist aggression. Not utilizing war's violence in what had been a relatively stable, democratic nation would require restraint unfathomable in the ideologically fueled Cold War.²⁵⁷

His plea for violent action raises the question: if war is socially sanctioned violence, are some forms of state sponsored violence more just than others? This would require political aims—capitalism or communism—to possess normative values. Yet, each system is a social construction of how people and economies should relate. Why bother with just war theory if war is based on social consensus which is formed by of its own social construction? The argument is not whether a communist or democratic capitalist society is morally correct or economically feasible. Rather, does using violence

²⁵⁶ Document #208, "Telegram From the CIA Chief of Station in Guatemala to the Central Intelligence Agency," dated June 19, 1954, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Guatemala*, Retrospective Volume, 351. The phrase comes from William James, *The Letters of William James* (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1920), 2:43. William James described Chatauqua, New York, noting "This order is too tame, this culture too second-rate, this goodness too uninspiring. This human drama without a villain or a pang; this community so refined that ice-cream soda is the utmost offering it can make to the brute animal in man; this city shimmering in the tepid lakeside sun; this *atrocious harmlessness* in all things."

²⁵⁷ William James, *The Letters of William James* (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1920), 2:43. The coups in Iran and Guatemala are evidence that the Cold War was an ideological struggle. Neither Arbenz nor Mossadeq were members of the communist party, and each struggle with his own nation's communist party for complete control. Mossadeq had even suppressed Tudeh party riots that threatened the Shaf in the lead up to the coup. Both nations were susceptible to communist infiltration, but the leaders did not envision a communist state as their ultimate objective. Fear of a communist coup, or Soviet intervention, moved the United States to act preventatively.

for a just end outweigh the consequences of using violence? The question illuminates Eisenhower's justification for sponsoring the coup. His administration truly believed a communist regime would bring more social unrest and violence to Guatemala. The rise of a communist Guatemala would also enable the Soviet Union to gain power through political warfare by exploiting communist success in Central America.²⁵⁸ As the first use of "war" by the United States after the Korean War, the coups signaled the characteristics of American Cold War foreign policy decision making: adherence to the domino theory, fear of appearing weak (Munich analogy), and a desire to protect American prestige by not committing the armed forces of the United States.²⁵⁹

There was no overwhelming public demand in America for Iran and Guatemala to be invaded, but the fear and distrust of communist influence in those countries was public knowledge. As Audrey R. Kahin and George McT. Kahin argued, "Concern over the potential spread of communism was clearly the fundamental stratum on which the Eisenhower administration's global policies rested." If "the American public could be persuaded that the Truman administration had possessed the capacity to halt the march of communism in China and was responsible for its 'loss' to the 'Free World,' then surely

²⁵⁸ Consider how the perspective of foreign policy as intervention is expanded in Rathmell's definition of covert action: "This book deals with conspiracies initiated or abetted by intelligence services in pursuit of foreign policy goals. In modern intelligence terminology such activity comes under the rubric of 'covert action'. This can be defined as 'any operation or activity designed to influence foreign governments, persons or events in support of the sponsoring government's foreign policy objectives while keeping the sponsoring government's *support* of the operation secret. Covert operations can be grouped into three categories: *propaganda*, *political action*, and *paramilitary*. Propaganda is often overt but in its covert forms it may be grey, 'in which true sponsorship is not acknowledged,' or black, purporting to come 'from a source other than the true one.' Political action involves 'attempts to change the balance of political forces in a country, most often by providing money to particular groups.' Paramilitary operations may involve secret military aid or training, or actual participation in acts of subversive violence." In Rathmell, *Secret War in the Middle East*, 3.

²⁵⁹ For an example of Eisenhower referencing the Munich analogy in relation to Guatemala, see Eisenhower to Alfred Maximilian Gruenther, February 1, 1955, DDEP, 16:1538.

successor administrations might well be held responsible if any further areas of Asia were lost to Communist control.”²⁶⁰

Though Eisenhower wanted to avoid general war does not mean he thought America should not shape the world order. The president’s conceptualization of political warfare described everything from humanitarian assistance to offensive information operations. Covert action allowed the American public to avoid the consequences of war while also offering the possibility of a quick resolution to an international problem. While Eisenhower focused on the long term when crafting policy, he did not consider that long term social and political instability in the Third World would be the legacy of his covert action programs.

Making War: NSC 162/2 and the Militarization of Foreign Policy

Relying on political and covert warfare as a substitute for general war militarized an already threat focused National Security state. Actions below the threshold of general war had short term utility in resolving foreign policy challenges in states that had the potential to upset the existing global balance of power. Despite Eisenhower’s objective to avoid direct confrontation with the Soviet Union, he supported economic warfare that militarized international trade policies in his attempts to contain the Soviet Union’s war-making ability. Little thought, however, was given to Soviet reactions in losing their access to strategic resources. Eisenhower’s national security council never seriously considered that Soviet expansion might also be a reactionary measure to maintain access to strategic resources. Petroleum and other natural resources had long been identified as

²⁶⁰ Kahin and Kahin, *Subversion as Foreign Policy*, 4.

key resources and even though Eisenhower wanted to avoid war he could not avoid preparing for war. The free world military's natural resource requirements necessitated a global focus and extended American interests. Nations and regions that seemingly had little significance to American security became prioritized based on their resources and their potential impact on American credibility.

Credibility, and the perception that the Soviet Union only responded to strength, militarized American interactions because overt military strength broadcasted American interests and intent more than covert power or political warfare. Even in countries like Vietnam, where Eisenhower sought to avoid a military commitment and the image of America as an imperial power, he expanded an American presence because of credibility—an unintended consequence of placing more importance on political warfare. The importance of perception, in short, helped to justify interventionism. In this way, the coups in Iran and Guatemala made sense when both countries were seen as threats to American interests.

Moreover, such expanded American interests tended to create conflict between the global free world and communist nations. War existed as a possible instrument of national power though Eisenhower considered war as the last option to be used in the pursuit of American interests. The question remains: did the coups in Iran and Guatemala indicate Eisenhower did not believe that communism would eventually fail in the “long-haul,” or were they a pragmatic use of limited force to avoid committing American armed forces—and prestige-- later? Analyzed from Eisenhower's conceptualization of war, the coups seemed to have arisen from the belief that general war was not a practical foreign policy option. Diplomacy and information operations were not effective. Rather than

continue in uncertain stalemate—or in Eisenhower’s mind, risk the more dangerous prospect of communist expansion—coercive force was used in both countries to achieve the superficial objective of preventing communist leadership from gaining control of supposedly vital areas in Latin America and the Middle East.

Conclusion: The Utility of War in Grand Strategy

In 1957, political scientist Robert Osgood analyzed limited war to answer a question that troubled policy-makers: “how can the United States employ military power as a rational instrument of foreign policy when the destructive potentialities of war exceed any rational purpose?”²⁶¹ Eisenhower had grappled with that same question in formulating his New Look. “I have spent my life,” he said, “in the study of military strength as a deterrent to war, and in the character of military armaments necessary to win a war.”²⁶² Eisenhower believed that America had the means to address a variety of interests, yet he consistently worried about military escalation between the superpowers. Political warfare, to him, offered the flexibility to meet communist expansion without the risk of general war. However, Eisenhower did use military power in a flexible manner; he allowed the development of tactical nuclear weapons, projected American military power across the globe, and confronted the Soviet Union and communist China with an

²⁶¹ Robert Endicott Osgood, *Limited War: The Challenge to American Strategy* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 1.

²⁶² Eisenhower to Richard Leo Simon, dated April 4, 1956, DDEP, 16:2114.

increasingly powerful American military establishment. Using military power as a deterrent and not as an instrument retained the utility, and reason, for a strong military.²⁶³

A military response did not necessarily require armed conflict, merely the possibility of conflict. Eisenhower believed that the United States could never first use nuclear weapons or conventional forces against the Soviet Union, yet it could use military power as a deterrent. By expanding the United States nuclear arsenal, Ike wanted to communicate the infeasibility of general and nuclear war. Ike hoped the mere possibility of incalculable destruction posed by nuclear weapons would prevent even the consideration of general war.²⁶⁴ Just as Eisenhower's view of nuclear war's utility and the applicability of political war reflected ideas from the Truman administration, Eisenhower's concept of general war's utility continued into the Kennedy and Johnson administrations though in a much less restrained manner. Limited war only appealed to Eisenhower if the host nation had the willpower and ability to fight; Ike did not want to unilaterally commit American troops or treasure to local conflicts.

Moreover, his focus on creating economic growth and prosperity to prevent instability and susceptibility to communist subversion shows the growing consensus of modernization theory—a theory that projected an American narrative onto other nations. Eisenhower's New Look also shifted the confrontation with communism to the Third World, bringing the political violence of war with it. Though Eisenhower supported the efforts of nations seeking self-determination in the aftermath of colonialism, American

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ “Bipartisan Leadership Meeting,” dated December 14, 1954, Staff Notes January thru Dec. '54, Box 4, DDE Diary Series, AWF, Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL.

support inevitably forced those nations into the global conflict between the free world and communist states.

The relative peace of the Cold War during Eisenhower's presidency was only peaceful for America and European nations as the indirect confrontation with communism over strategic resources grew in the periphery. While Eisenhower claimed that America never "lost a soldier or a foot of ground in my administration," that statement ignores the underlying violence of the Cold War.²⁶⁵ At the 30 July 1953 National Security Council meeting, CIA Director Allen Dulles briefed the council on the loss of an US Air Force reconnaissance plane. After Dulles noted that Soviet MiG-15s had shot down the plane north of Japan and that four surviving crew were "believed to have been picked up by Soviet PT-boats," the president inquired if the United States "had shot down any of their reconnaissance planes." After General Bradley confirmed that the United States "had destroyed some reconnaissance planes" near US naval forces, Ike remarked that "we and the Russians know that if U.S. planes go toward Vladivostok they are not simply on a training mission. Hence the incident was not as unprovoked as it might appear to be at first glance."²⁶⁶ A few months prior, just a week after Stalin died, Czech aircraft had shot down American and British military planes causing the death of numerous servicemembers. True, general war and nuclear war did not occur but the

²⁶⁵ Adams, *Eisenhower's Fine Group of Fellows*, 8.

²⁶⁶ "Memorandum, Subject: Discussion at the 157th Meeting of the National Security Council, Thursday, July 30, 1953," dated July 31, 1953, 157th Meeting of the NSC July 30, 1953, Box 4, NSC Series, AWF, DDE Papers as President, 1953-1961, DDEL.

violence occurring around the world between states questions the idea of the Cold War as a “long peace.”²⁶⁷

Violence in the Third World exposed the Cold War’s violence even more. Though questions of causation and agency remain, Eisenhower enacted policies and programs that increased the interventionist nature of American foreign policy.

In pursuing the unattainable but approachable state of peace, President Eisenhower’s approach to foreign policy reveals the space between peace and war. If peace is unattainable, is war unavoidable? Are countries always at war or in competition with one another? Is human interaction destined for conflict? Political scientist Klaus Knorr has argued that:

Warfare states do exist, here and elsewhere, because the international system and most of its actors are such that military aggression and war remain a fateful contingency; and, thus far at least, mankind has found no workable alternative to this system. As long as it does not, the United States in particular will be unable to do without maintaining an extensive warfare state. This country cannot hope to receive effective protection from the warfare states of other nations; rather, the military security of a great many less powerful countries is in fact dependent on American protection and the American warfare state.²⁶⁸

Eisenhower may have avoided general or nuclear war, but he also emphasized the need for psychological and political warfare. Even trade among allies and non-aligned countries was governed by the overarching philosophy of the New Look. Victory required more than military force. “While it is obvious that in thirty to sixty days the two giants in the atomic field might conceivably accomplish a mutual destruction of terrifying

²⁶⁷ For a discussion of the Cold War and the disproportionate distribution of violence see Paul Thomas Chamberlain, *The Cold War’s Killing Fields: Rethinking the Long Peace* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2018), 1-19.

²⁶⁸ Klaus Knorr, “Warfare and Peacefare States and the Cost of Transition: A Review,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 7, no. 4 (December 1963): 756.

proportions,” Eisenhower wrote in his diary, “this would not in itself necessarily end the war. Wars are conducted by the will of a population and that will can be at times a most stubborn and practically unconquerable element.”²⁶⁹ The president believed that general and nuclear war could not win the desired political outcome—peace. Gaining social consensus for the United States’ ideology through political warfare would reduce the potential for war by eliminating the opposing ideology of communism. However, the military capability of nations also influenced public support, especially the psychological aspects of how society viewed a potential nuclear war.

Eisenhower pursued a pragmatic approach to international relations in a globalized world where confrontation and conflicting interests were inevitable. Likewise, Ike advanced an enduring state of polarization between freedom and anything deemed a threat to that freedom. The long-term focus of Eisenhower’s foreign policy during his first year as president provides a perspective of how ideology, pragmatism, and American values interact in the perpetual state of war “toward a lasting peace in a free and prosperous world.”²⁷⁰ While Eisenhower’s legacy remains contested, most historians agree that Ike’s grand strategy and foreign policy views were set in 1953. Eisenhower wrote to his brother Milton in November 1953 that “it has been our general intention to use 1953 largely as a period of study and formulation of programs. We have always felt

²⁶⁹ Eisenhower Diary Entry, dated January 11, 1956. DDEP, 16:1952.

²⁷⁰ Dwight D. Eisenhower, “Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union,” dated January 7, 1954, Online by Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/232936> (accessed April 29, 2019).

that the ‘Administration Bible’ would be brought out for publication in the delivery of the 1954 message to Congress [State of the Union].”²⁷¹

Historian Mary Dudziak argued that “a cultural framing of wartimes as discrete and temporary occasions, destined to give way to a state of normality, undermines democratic vigilance.”²⁷² However, not identifying war as a specific time of socially sanctioned violence serves the same end. If war is a state of normalcy then the popular discourses of grand strategy, foreign policy, and national security would need to ignore the distinction between war and peace. Yet, war time becomes an appealing idea in the absence of grand strategy, perhaps because it allows society to embrace the militarization and competitiveness that underlies American foreign policy. War as a distinct time is inherent in the United States Constitution. Power is given to the president in a time of war. Yet the fact that war’s purpose is not clearly defined presents obstacles. Eisenhower made the informal distinction by determining if US troops would be involved. A useful measure but what about the role of State Department officers or CIA personnel in the conduct of political warfare? When the United States—or any nation—relies on coercive diplomacy and political warfare, does the presence of ground combat troops signal a substantial difference in purpose or aim? War stems from the cultural belief that violence by the state on behalf of the majority justifies harming other human beings. While the cultural foundation of war is not a discrete time, the application of that cultural construct should be.

²⁷¹ Eisenhower to Milton Eisenhower, dated November 6, 1953, DDE Diary November 1953 (2), Box 3, DDE Diary Series, AWF, Papers as President 1951-1961, DDEL.

²⁷² Mary Dudziak, *War Time: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2012), 136.

No one would argue that a nation should not pursue its self-interest, but few will acknowledge that self-interest can exist with international cooperation. Eisenhower's long-haul approach to Cold War grand strategy provides a useful perspective on the costs, tensions, and effort required to formulate a grand strategy that promotes internationalism while maintaining and building domestic politics focused on American individuality and initiative.²⁷³

Eisenhower's Middle Way inevitably left hardliners on the left and right dissatisfied. Self-interest is a deceiving term because it creates the image of national unity. Though critiques of national self-interest often sound pessimistic, they do provide a useful way of understanding the difficulty in developing international interests. There were competing international and national interests at play in Ike's Middle Way. The dominance of extremes in any country threatens war, much like the ideological Cold War heightened the fear of war. Recognizing the futility of nuclear war to resolve such differences, Eisenhower chose political warfare as the least destructive means to achieve American interests.²⁷⁴ War had a place in international relations up to the point it destroyed the very meaning of prosperity and existence.

While revisionists view Eisenhower as waging peace, and post-revisionists see the darker, even cynical, side of Eisenhower's foreign policy, there is another view that applies equally today. There is no universal Middle Way of using war because peace and war are largely a matter of perspective. From an American point of view, the threat or use

²⁷³ Eisenhower to Everett E. Hazlett, dated June 4, 1955, in Robert Griffith, *Ike's Letters to a Friend, 1941-1958*, 145.

²⁷⁴ There will always be a debate about the short-term and long-term consequences of resorting to general war or relying on political warfare. Without digressing into a moral debate—though important to the topic—predicting the amount of physical destruction caused by either course of action is difficult before initiating conflict. No course of action can retire into collective memory free of unintended consequences.

of military force seem restrained, even benevolently used because American objectives are equated with democracy and freedom.²⁷⁵ War is an instrument of coercive force that is bounded by social consensus—moral, legal, and ethical. While the norms of *jus in bello* rightfully govern actions in war, war’s legacy is judged by *jus ad bellum*. A just war is based on perspective as well, the social consensus of what constitutes a reasonable aim of sovereign nations. The American public expects policy to stem from serious consideration of options and the effects. However, by developing strategy that relies on military force, American leaders begin assessing options based on capabilities rather than the feasibility of achieving the political objective. War centric planning also stifles considerations about what options a nation’s opponent can realistically employ. While the United States may consider an opponent’s move aggressive and the prelude to war, it may simply be the only option that nation possesses to confront a global superpower. A continual, and honest, reassessment of national interests, threats, means, and ends prevents the narrowing of perspective. Eisenhower understood the contradiction—war was as awful as it was useful.

Eisenhower’s administration provides a valuable example of policy analysis and assessment. Even though historians note Project Solarium as a major step in Eisenhower’s formulation of foreign policy, it is important to note that by September 1953—less than two months after Solarium—Eisenhower remarked to Dulles that “an intensive study by the ablest group of individuals we can possibly assemble” should be initiated to look at nuclear weapons, disarmament, and how it affected deterrence.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵Eliot A. Cohen, *The Big Stick: The Limits of Soft Power and the Necessity of Military Force* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2016), 227-228.

Eisenhower understood that the context of decision-making continuously changed and therefore analysis never ended. While Kennedy's National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy thought Eisenhower's national security system and policy memos were "fairly useless exercises," the process enabled a larger number of people to provide perspective on security issues.²⁷⁷

Grand strategy also reflects ideology—the meaning given to events through popular culture and how it permeates politics, economics, military planning, and media. Grand strategy is philosophical in its ideals but hopefully pragmatic in what can be achieved. Feasibility is not merely the physical resources of a nation, but the ideological barriers that influence public opinion, funding, and the policymaker's identity. Decisions are made to achieve practical and physical ends like security and economic prosperity, but ideological beliefs can limit options or miscalculate policy effect. Ideology plays a role in creating the identity—and intentions—of the other. During the Cold War the Soviet Union—and communism in general—became defined by what the United States was not.²⁷⁸ Journalist Chris Hedges referred to it as "negative space" identification—creating a national identity based on what negative attributes the nation does not

²⁷⁶ Memorandum for the Secretary of State, dated September 8, 1953, DDE Diary Aug Sept. 1953 (1), box 3, DDE Diary Series AWF, Papers as President, 1951-1961, DDEL.

²⁷⁷ Bundy to Kennedy, January 24, 1961, "NSC, Organization and Administration, 1/1/61-1/25/61," Departments and Agencies, National Security Files, John F. Kennedy Presidential Library, 3; quoted in Kaplan, *To Kill Nations*, 163.

²⁷⁸ Chernus, *Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace*, 119.

project.²⁷⁹ This construction of American and Soviet identity acted as a lens through which facts became distorted or misread.

While misreading the Soviet threat during the Cold War might be considered paranoia, that does not mean security policies were unjustified. Lack of information and intelligence does not confirm the absence of threat. It is a rational response in an uncertain world to plan for the most dangerous scenario. However, how should policy makers balance the need to maintain national security while dealing with varying levels of intelligence regarding enemy capabilities and intentions? Arguably, this question is most important before any form of war is initiated.

The definition of victory in war—the attainment of a policy objective—did not change in Eisenhower’s mind with the emergence of nuclear weapons. Rather, the idea of nuclear war lacked utility in Eisenhower’s mind given the purpose of war and its connection to a political settlement. National survival could not be attained through the use of nuclear weapons, only retaliatory destruction. Mutually assured destruction could not achieve a state of peace better than the one prior to nuclear war.²⁸⁰

Ideology may drive decisions by limiting options, but also by requiring a decision. The popular media’s portrayal of Iran and Guatemala as communist threats prompted a response by the Eisenhower administration. Conflating the Soviet Union with any communist movement, or leftist policies like land reform, led to perceived threats broadening interests. Guatemalan policies that appeared leftist confirmed for many in

²⁷⁹ Hedges, *War Is A Force That Gives Us Meaning*, 32. See also Dudziak, *War Time*, 112. Mary Dudziak noted that, “national identity is often framed in response to an enemy, the threat of radical Islam gave Americans a way to see themselves.”

²⁸⁰ Basil Liddell Hart, *Strategy* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1967), 322.

Eisenhower's administration that Guatemala had aligned itself with the Soviet Union. Whereas Guatemala—and the rest of Latin America—did not register as a significant interest in American grand strategy during the early Cold War, the potential for a Soviet beachhead clearly expanded American interests.

In such actions overseas, Eisenhower remained aware of public opinion but attempted to operate free of its containing force. He noted that “much of our so-called “public opinion” is merely a reflection of some commentator's reports which, as you so well know, bear little relation to truth. By the same token, I believe that public opinion based on such flimsy foundations can be changed rapidly, and I agree with you most heartily that it must be changed by *deeds*.”²⁸¹

Leaders have a responsibility to use rhetoric and information cautiously. Raising support and funding for policies often requires more emotion than reason. American society expects strength and decisiveness from the executive branch, especially in foreign affairs. Ike noted that “in war there is scarcely any difficulty that a good resounding victory will not cure—temporarily.”²⁸² Yet, sometimes restraint is the wiser choice. How can society identify the ideological forces that turn prudent caution and deliberation into the “atrocious harmlessness” of not dropping bombs to overturn a foreign government?²⁸³

²⁸¹ Eisenhower to Emmet John Hughes, dated December 10, 1953, DDEP, 15:750.

²⁸² Ibid.

²⁸³ Document #208, “Telegram From the CIA Chief of Station in Guatemala to the Central Intelligence Agency,” dated June 19, 1954, *FRUS, 1952-1954, Guatemala*, Retrospective Volume, 351.

The Munich analogy condemning any sign of negotiation or settlement has plagued every administration from Harry S. Truman to Donald J. Trump.²⁸⁴

The New Look, and the larger Cold War, emerged due to competing ideologies in global society. In *On War*, Clausewitz described war as a contest between duelists and wrestlers. But what happens when one of the duelists refuses to participate? The coups in Iran and Guatemala demonstrate the result of refusing to duel. Whereas the United States and Soviet Union consented to duel with each other, Third World nations on the periphery had no choice. War in the New Look was the *global* containment and undermining of Soviet communism through every means of American society. Coercive diplomacy thus morphed easily into political warfare. War was coercion—whether physical force or consent to duel was present or not. Eisenhower may have waged war for peace, but for the nations caught between the United States and the Soviet Union’s ideologies, the Cold War was anything but peaceful.

National security often is driven more by domestic political ideology than the foreign affairs typically associated with the term. If national security is about state defense and survival, then the question must be asked: what is state survival and how do social and cultural forces determine the range of that definition? There is a popular belief that American society is too disconnected from the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria.²⁸⁵ Yet, after examining Eisenhower’s definition of war and how he waged it in Iran and Guatemala, perhaps American society is not disconnected. National credibility is

²⁸⁴ Richard Fontaine and Vance Serchuk, “The Uses and Misuses of Historical Analogy for North Korea,” *The Atlantic*, October 3, 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2017/10/the-uses-and-misuses-of-historical-analogy-on-north-korea/541866/> (accessed April 27, 2019).

²⁸⁵ See James Fallows, “The Tragedy of the American Military,” *The Atlantic*, (January/February 2015), <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/01/the-tragedy-of-the-american-military/383516/> (accessed April 27, 2019).

constructed by domestic and international audiences—to include the policy makers concerned about, and attempting to measure, credibility. Does American society consider its role in placing the burden of credibility on decision-maker's? Rather than criticize the limiting effects of domestic politics, a more useful practice would be to raise awareness of how social and cultural values inform foreign policy decision making.²⁸⁶

Eisenhower avoided American society's sanctioning of political violence when he authorized the coups, but did America's containment policy lend passive authorization? Does a general belief that terrorism should be stopped allow the United States government to wage a global war on terror? War is a social construct that justifies violence on behalf of the majority.²⁸⁷ Legal precedent provides some semblance of order, but Eisenhower understood that the passion of public opinion could force a decision for war.²⁸⁸ Yet, even Eisenhower's decision to wage covert warfare shows that he believed that the public would not accept the spread of communism. Rather than satisfy the American public's wishes in direct confrontation, Ike waged political and covert warfare to avoid confrontation with the Soviet Union. He hoped it would reduce frantic public opinion that would call for nuclear war. Using covert violence to advance national self-interest can lead to unethical and expansionist policies, but war is also governed by the

²⁸⁶ On the relationship of public opinion and policy it is interesting to note that Eisenhower thought public opinion could be swayed easily—for better or worse—by “a good victory.” In Vice President Nixon's notes during his trip to Vietnam in 1953 he noted that the French public's disinterest and lack of informed views had led to a lack of public support for France's mission in Vietnam. Today we typically associate public disinterest with the government's ability to pursue open-ended commitments.

²⁸⁷ Another aspect to consider is the power dynamic of international law, which is based largely on the Western experience. It gives power to sovereign nations by legalizing and constraining the use of violence, yet it also condemns similar acts by those not empowered by territory and international status.

²⁸⁸ “Discussion at the 146th Meeting of the National Security Council on Wednesday, May 27, 1953,” dated May 30, 1953, 146th Meeting of NSC, May 27, 1953, Box 4, NSC Series, AWF, Dwight D. Eisenhower Papers as President, 1953-61, DDEL.

passion of the people as Clausewitz observed. Is there a balance especially when the current United States military doctrine puts all international relations on a spectrum of cooperation-competition-conflict?²⁸⁹

Too often policies and plans are judged by their feasibility rather than the end they are designed to achieve. This reflects the competing definitions of grand strategy: is it an end or the framework by which decisions are made? Did Eisenhower define war by its feasibility to achieve a military objective or a political settlement? While the militarization of political rhetoric and diplomacy is an enduring legacy of Eisenhower's administration, it also shows that Eisenhower defined war in terms of its utility to achieve policy ends. War took up where peaceful diplomacy left off.

The New Look shows the gap between the two concepts encapsulating the definition of war. First, war is supposed to achieve something, most commonly identified as a policy objective—a better political settlement than before the outbreak of war. Second, war is the use of coercive force on a broad scale to influence the opposing society's political will. The gap between these two concepts of war grew dramatically in the atomic age. Suddenly, a presumed means of war—nuclear weapons—no longer could achieve a policy objective. Some did believe policy objectives could be achieved despite the destructive power of nuclear weapons. However, Eisenhower argued that the political settlement reached after nuclear war would not make for a meaningful peace. It is ironic that in the aftermath of the Second World War's destruction—and the monetary and social cost to global society—that nuclear war advocates considered its potential

²⁸⁹ “Joint Doctrine Note 1-18: Strategy,” dated April 25, 2018, Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint Electronic Library, U.S. Department of Defense, viii-ix, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Doctrine/jdn_jg/jdn1_18.pdf?ver=2018-04-25-150439-540 (accessed May 7, 2019).

destruction compatible with a better political settlement. True, Eisenhower did expand and condone the expansion of war's method to the limits of coercive diplomacy, staging covert operations that destabilized the world with impacts still today. Yet, by identifying and separating the purpose of war from the means of war, Eisenhower established a policy that informed future administrations' view of nuclear war and its relation to American grand strategy. H.W. Brands' conclusion that Eisenhower and his administration "might have done better, but they might also have done much worse" does not sound so simple considering the tensions present during the Cold War.²⁹⁰

While Eisenhower was right to question if American military power could achieve policy objectives, a better question might have been, can America influence the outcome at all? A question that cannot be answered until power is exerted; it is a question that bears asking still today. What does America want? Why? And is it within her power to direct the outcome? As war's utility is determine by the policy objective, it is worth studying and defining the policy objective before defining war. Perhaps as policy-makers ponder those questions it would be wise to remember President Eisenhower's counsel to his close friend, General Al Gruenther: "Whatever is now to happen, I know that nothing could be worse than global war."²⁹¹

²⁹⁰ Brands, *Cold Warriors*, 211.

²⁹¹ Eisenhower to Alfred Maximilian Gruenther, dated February 1, 1955, DDEP, 16:1539.

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