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ADVERSARIAL PEACE:
THE PERSISTENCE OF NUCLEAR RIVALRIES

By

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A dissertation submitted to the

School of Graduate Studies

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Graduate Program in Political Science

Written under the direction of

Dr. Eric Davis

And approved by

New Brunswick, New Jersey

May 2018

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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Rivalry has been an essential element of the human story from the inception of life to the current interconnected globalized world. The central aim of this dissertation is to observe the persistence of adversarial relations between rivals with nuclear weapons. The central questions posed in this study are: *why do nuclear rivalries persist, despite incentives to cooperate and opportunities to resolve the conflict? Furthermore, what explains the variation in the interactions between nuclear rivals? And, under what conditions do nuclear rivals cooperate with one another?* This research project tackles these questions by focusing on the role of nuclear weapons in rivalry interaction and termination. To understand rivalries with nuclear weapons, I employ the concept of “adversarial peace” and highlight the persistence and cyclical pattern within nuclear rivalries. The core of the argument rests on the mutual vulnerability dilemma where both sides feel a profound psychological susceptibility to mutual annihilation and perceive that the other controls what the state values the most. In this way, strategic rivalries with nuclear weapons transition into a state of

perpetual adversity. To test this argument, I employ a historical approach with a focus on the individual, regional and system level factors through in-depth historical case studies. My main cases are the US-USSR, and US-Russia and the India-Pakistan, and a mini-case study of Brazil and Argentina where the nuclear question was resolved and a protracted rivalry terminated.

Dedication

For,

Naveed

Mikaeel, Amna & Emaan

Acknowledgements

“IF”

*“If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: ‘Hold on!’”*

Rudyard Kipling

Writing a dissertation is one of the most grueling test a student faces. However, as Kipling noted in his poem, it is the “will” and perseverance that gets one over the finish line. The tremendous challenge of writing a dissertation is easier if you have a strong support system, and for this, I am grateful to my friends and loved ones. Whatever the flaws of this work are, they are mine and mine alone. Any aspects of this study that shine are the result of the constructive conversations and guidance of my incredible teachers, friends and family members, and I am eternally grateful for their support.

I am profoundly grateful to my committee members, Eric Davis, Alexander Motyl, Paul Poast and Drucilla Cornell. Eric Davis guided me not only for my dissertation but throughout the Ph.D. program and I am grateful to him for his

kindness. Alexander Motyl was my thesis advisor at Newark and I was thrilled when he agreed to be on my dissertation committee. Prof. Motyl's suggestions have been particularly helpful for understanding Russia. During Paul Poast's time at Rutgers, he was extremely supportive of all the graduate students in the department. Paul made sure he helps as many students as possible. I have found Paul's comments, suggestions and guidance extremely helpful. Drucilla Cornell has always helped me in thinking about the deeper questions and of course the significance of theory in political science. I thank her for her encouragement and for seeing me through this process.

In addition to my committee, I am profoundly grateful to two scholars who have shaped my thinking and helped me where I am. Christophe Jaffrelot and Sumit Ganguly. Christophe believed in me when I was a first-year Ph.D. student, gave me the chance to write a chapter for his book, and invited me to Paris to present my chapter. Our research trip to Pakistan was memorable and an exceptional learning experience for me. He not only shaped my thinking on South Asia, but also taught me, that we, as scholars don't have any borders. I am grateful to him for believing in me and giving me the chance to write for a publication. Sumit Ganguly is a rare individual who goes the extra mile for students interested in IR and South Asia. Students at Indiana are lucky to have him as a faculty member. Sumit provided me with comments, suggestions and assistance in the prospectus phase of my dissertation and shaped my understanding of South Asia and the nuclear dimension of the Indo-Pak rivalry.

I would also like to thank: Zehra Arat, Thomas Christensen, Kim Schepelle, Zia Mian, Christopher Chyba, Andrew Murphy, and Robert Kaufman. I am Immensely grateful to Alexandra Bachman, Barbara Sirman, and the Rutgers Graduate Courses Consortium that allowed me to take my IR courses at Princeton, under the BEST scholars one can ask for. I am grateful to the superb team at the Grad office for making this possible. At Hickman, Paulette Flowers Yapp has been an incredibly supportive friend during these years. I am tremendously grateful for her help and kindness.

I have greatly benefited from the help and support of my friends, particularly: Teflah Alajmi who made the pain of grad school bearable. I could count on calling her at 3 am or for that matter at any hour, to ask the monotonous question: “Why am I doing this to myself?” In a calm and comforting voice, she always reminded me that its ok and I can do it. I can never thank her enough for the support, kindness and above all her friendship that means a lot to me.

I would also like to mention Ali Alhababi to whom I am grateful to have found a lifelong friend and brother. Additionally, I thank my poli-sci comrades Hesham, Dilia, Ion, Brian, Diah, Kira, Sara Angevine, and many other friends. I will forever remember my time in Syracuse with Alex FH, Leslie, Elona, and others. I thank Nate and Jinny for help in reading and editing as well as friendship and support. I thank Alexander Lanoszka for helping me in the early phases of my dissertation. Alex shaped my thinking on the nuclear question more than anyone and I am grateful to him for his friendship.

Some people you meet late in your life but they inspire you the most. Dr Azra Raza, who I met late in the dissertation phase, inspired me more than anyone in my life. Azra Apa reignited the spark for achieving the impossible, and I am immensely grateful for her love, friendship and genius.

A good friend in life is the foremost blessing and a priceless gift one can ask for. I am lucky to find that friend in Ghaidaa Hetou. Thank you for your incomparable friendship the countless cups of tea, and hours of conversation from politics to poetry. Besides being my wonderful friend, you have also provided me constructive criticism and feedback on almost everything I have ever written. You have kept me honest and you do not hold back in telling me what needs to be improved. I now use the GH standard: is the chapter/paper scratching the surface or digging deeper? Most importantly, if it were not for your push I would have not finished this dissertation. I am eternally grateful for your friendship, support and your brilliance.

To my mother Bibi Jan, I am indebted to you for a lot, and I cannot put it in words for how much I love you and how grateful I am to you for everything -- for standing up for me and never giving up on me, to all your constant duas. To my brother Imran Khan, the last few years have been tough, and I am sorry for not staying in touch as much as I should have been. I am grateful for your understanding and love. My little sister Amna Dittu, you are the only person who had to deal with my obnoxious moods. You not only quietly listened to me but also cheered me up with your jokes. To my Nano Khala, thank you for the duas

and all your love. I would also like to acknowledge Najeeb Jan and Yasmin Jan. Thank you for your support. Najeeb I understand the pain you went through and I am sorry if I ever asked the dreaded question: “when are you going to be done?” One person I will miss the most in celebrating with is my brother Abdullah – not a single day has gone by that I have not missed you.

To Udarthy (Dorothy) Darwin: thank you for taking care of everything. Your help in keeping my life order means the world to me. I don't know what I would do without you – I am grateful for your love, friendship and support.

To my amazing kids, thank you for patiently waiting for me to finish the dissertation. Mikaeel, Amna and Emaan, you make every day fun for me and you are the joy of my life. I am very sorry for missing many piano recitals, tennis matches, birthday parties and movie nights. I will try to make it up now. Thank you for your patience and bearing my frustrations during the writing and Ph.D. course work phase. Special shout out to my son Mikaeel Jan, thank you for reading my drafts.

Last but the most important one of all, my husband Naveed Jan. Thank you for being my best friend and my everything. I have tremendously benefitted from your endless love, and if it was not for your support I would have not achieved anything. You make me a better person everyday with your love. I am sorry for being absent on family vacations, and no date nights and dinners for so many years. I will work on being socially present and involved. The dissertation was

the toughest thing I had to work on, finding you was the best thing in my life,
however loving you was instant and remains that way.

The great Steve Jobs once said, that “as with all matters of the heart and life –
keep looking and don't settle.” This disquisition is in no way settled and complete
and a lot more needs to be added to it. Thus, the journey to understanding
rivalries and the interaction between nuclear rivals continues in the book
manuscript.

Farah Jan
New Brunswick, NJ.
April 2018.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

“The Historian who moves in the world of real will sees at once that the demand for eternal peace is purely reactionary....All movement and all growth would disappear with war, only the exhausted, spiritless, degenerate periods of history have toyed with the idea.”

Heinrich von Treitschke

Introduction

Rivalry has been an essential element of the human story from the inception of life to the current globalized world. The very first rivalry was predicated on the conflict of interest between Cain and Abel, and was resolved when the stronger Cain eliminated the weaker Abel. Since the *Battle of Brothers*, the human story is filled with various rivalries: from sibling rivalries to love rivalries; from sport rivalries to corporate rivalries; from interstate rivalries to intra-state rivalries, and from regional rivalries to great power rivalries. However, the persistent feature in most rivalries is hostility based on conflicting interests that are resolved in the overpowering or elimination of an adversary. As German historian Heinrich von Treitschke captured the brute reality of rivalries, “Brave peoples alone have an existence, an evolution or future; the weak and cowardly perish, and perish justly. The grandeur of history lies in the perpetual conflict of nations, and it is simply foolish to desire the suppression of their rivalry.”¹ In the past two centuries nearly 80 percent of the interstate warfare was carried out by

¹ Heinrich von Treitschke, quoted in Jacob Leib Talmon, *The Myth of the Nation and the Vision of Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 106

rivalries; furthermore, in the post-World War II era, the figure jumps up to 91 percent (21 out of 23 wars).²

Research Question:

This dissertation is about a select pair of states that are rivals with nuclear weapons. The central question posed in this study is: *why do nuclear rivalries persist, despite incentives to cooperate and opportunities to resolve the conflict? What explains the variation in the interactions between nuclear rivals? And, under what conditions do nuclear rivals cooperate with one another?*

History teaches us that interstate rivalries are characterized by conflicting national interests and enduring hostilities, where competition is anticipated, but incentives for cooperation are few and far between. Scholars have advanced several theoretical arguments about the effects of nuclear weapons on interstate conflict³ and outcome.⁴ Similarly, substantial literature on rivalries has

² Michael Colaresi, Karen Rasler, and William Thompson, *Strategic Rivalries in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007) Introduction.

³ Kenneth Waltz, "The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May be Better," Adelphi Paper No 171 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1981); John Mearsheimer, "Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence in Europe," *International Security*, Vol. 9, No 3 (Winter 1984/85), pp 1946; John Mueller, "The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability in the Postwar World," *International Security*, Vol 13, No.2 (Fall 1988), pp. 55-79; Scott Sagan, "The Perils of Proliferation: Organization Theory, Deterrence Theory, and the spread of Nuclear Weapons," *International Security*, Vol. 18, No.4 (Spring 1994), pp 66-107; Erick Gartzke and Dong-Joon Jo, "Bargaining, Nuclear Proliferation, and Interstate Disputes," *Journal of conflict Resolution*, Vol. 53, No 2 (April 2009), pp-209-233; Matthew Kroenig, "Nuclear Superiority and the Balance of Resolve: Explaining Nuclear crisis Outcomes," *International Organization*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (January 2013), pp. 141-171; Vipin Narang, "What Does it Take to Deter? Regional Nuclear Postures and International Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 57, No. 3 (June 2013), pp-478-508; and Mark Bell and Nicholas

developed in the last fifty years – a literature that covers both quantitative and case study research on the initiation, maintenance and termination of rivalries.⁵ However, the existing literature on nuclear deterrence and interstate rivalries does not indicate whether nuclear weapons impact the duration or termination of strategic nuclear rivalries. The literature also ignores the interaction (both conflict and cooperation) among nuclear rivals that fluctuates due to change in the capabilities of the adversaries. The existing literature examines the effect of nuclear weapons on the intensity and frequency of conflict, but it does not address the question of why nuclear rivals cooperate– or, for that matter, under

Miller, “Questioning the Effect of Nuclear Weapons on Conflict,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 59, No. 1 (February 2015), pp. 74-92.

⁴ Richard Betts, *Nuclear Blackmail and Nuclear Balance* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1987); Kyle Beardsley and Victor Asal, “Winning with the Bomb,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 53, No.2 (April 2009), pp. 278-301; Matthew Kroenig, “Nuclear Superiority and the Balance of Resolve: Explaining Nuclear crisis Outcomes,” *International Organization*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (January 2013), pp. 141-171; Todd S. Sechser and Matthew Fuhrmann, “Crisis Bargaining and Nuclear Blackmail,” *International Organization*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (January 2013), pp. 173-195.

⁵ The origin of scholarly work on the concept of rivalry can be traced to two research programs – enemy perception/image and protracted conflicts. Bronfenbrenner’s work (1961) focused on the enemy image and its roots in social psychology; William Eckhardt and Ralph White, “A Test of the Mirror-Image Hypothesis: Kennedy and Khrushchev,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol 11, No. 3 (1967) 325-332; Ole Holsti, “Belief Systems and National Images: A case Study,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.6, No. 3 (1962) 244-252; David Finlay, Ole Holsti, and Richard Fagen, *Enemies in Politics* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1967); Robert Jervis’ work on perception and misperception and the security dilemma (1976 & 1978). The protracted conflict literature traces its roots to Edward Azar as one of the forefathers of the conflict resolution field, in *Conflict Processes and the Breakdown of International Systems*, ed. Dina Zinnes (Denver: University of Denver, 1984); Charles Gochman and Zeev Maoz, “ Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816-1976: Procedures, Patterns, and Insights.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 28 (1984), 585-616; Wayman (1982); Singer and Small (1982) Diehl (1985); John Vasquez (1993) William Thompson (1993, 1995, 2001); Bennett (1996) Geller (1998); Levy (1999); Walker (2000) Goertz and Diehl (2000) Rasler (2001); Thompson, Rasler and Ganguly (2013).

what conditions interstate rivals would cooperate while maintaining the rivalry. My dissertation addresses the persistence (and cyclical pattern) of nuclear rivalries and attempts to identify the conditions under which nuclear rivals cooperate.

Defining Rivalries

Before discussing the persistence of nuclear rivalries, it is important to define the unit of analysis: strategic rivalry(ies). I adopt the strategic rivalry approach advanced by William Thompson (2001) and later by Michael Colaresi and Karen Rasler (2007). The primary criteria for strategic rivalry are that rivals regard each other's as competitive and threatening enemies. Unlike the idea of "enduring rivalry," which is conceptualized as the number of militarized conflicts in a certain period, "strategic rivalry" provides a more nuanced conceptualization of nuclear rivals in the absence of militarized disputes, when competition and enemy threat perception is protracted.⁶ Understanding why nuclear rivalries persist despite the prospect of peace may illuminate a path for future research on strategic rivalries as well as provide policy recommendations for nuclear nonproliferation.

⁶ Enduring rivalry with a specified number of militarized interstate disputes within a period is in Gary Goertz and Paul Diehl, *Handbook of War Studies II* ed. Manus Midlarsky, (Ann Arbor: University Michigan Press, 2000); Moar and Mor (2002) For Strategic Rivalry refer to Colaresi, Rasler and Thomson (2007).

Puzzle/ Motivation:

Rivalries change over time and not all rivalries are alike, but all are characterized by competition and enemy threat perception. If we look at international relations since the end of World War II, a few pairs of states have demonstrated a tendency to engage in frequent militarized conflicts.⁷ A review of the rivalry cases highlights that almost 68 percent (17 out of 25) of the states involved in warfare in the second half of the twentieth century were either nuclear armed states at the time or acquired nuclear capability later (See Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Warfare Post-World War II - 2010

	Date	Rivalries
First Kashmir War	1948-49	India-Pakistan
Palestine	1948	Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, & Syria - Israel
Korean War	1950-53	ROK-DPRK & China – United States
Russo-Hungarian War	1956	USSR – Hungary (revolution)
Sinai War	1956	Egypt - Israel
Assam War	1962	China-India
Vietnam War	1965-75	North Vietnam – South Vietnam
Second Kashmir War	1965	India-Pakistan
Six-Day War	1967	Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Syria - Israel
Israeli Egyptian War	1969-70	Egypt - Israel
Football	1969	El-Salvador - Honduras
Bangladesh War	1971	India-Pakistan
Yom Kipur War	1973	Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Syria - Israel
Vietnamese War	1975-79	Cambodia-Vietnam
Ethiopian Somali War	1977	Ethiopia-Somalia
Iran-Iraq War	1980-88	Iran-Iraq
Afghan-Soviet War	1979-90	USSR-Afghanistan
Falklands	1982	United Kingdom-Argentina

⁷ Hensel, Diss. (1996); Goertz and Diehl. (2000)

Israel-Syria	1982	Israel-Syria
Sino-Vietnamese	1987	China-Vietnam
Gulf War	1990-91	Iraq-Kuwait; Egypt, Saudi-Arabia, Syria, United States
Nagorno-Karabakh	1991-94	Armenia-Azerbaijan
Yugoslav disintegration	1991-95	Bosnia-Croatia; Bosnia-Serbia; Croatia-Serbia
Eritrea-Ethiopia	1998-2000	Eritrea-Ethiopia
Kosovo	1999	
Kargil	1999	India-Pakistan
Second Afghan War	2001-	Taliban regime – United States & Allies
Iraq War post 9/11	2003-	Iraq-United States & Allies

Source: The entries are taken from Michael Colaresi, Karen Rasler and William Thompson's book Strategic Rivalries, p.13. They relied on the Correlates of War inventory. I have added the Second Gulf War and the two Afghan wars to their list.

The cases in Table 1.1 show that a few states consistently experience conflict, but that the same pair of rivals reduces the number of militarized disputes after acquiring nuclear weapons. However, the distinctive competitor aspect and the perception of the other as the enemy with potential militarized threat remains. I seek to explain why these two components of the rivalry continue to exist in a nuclear rivalry, as nuclear weapons make states more secure and that in turn reduces the risk of conflict and deters aggression.⁸

Table 1.2: States that Pursued Nuclear Weapons⁹

	Program Initiated	Acquired/Abandoned	Strategic Rivalries
United States	1945	1945	USSR; China
Soviet Union	1945	1949	US; China
United Kingdom	1947	1952	USSR
France	1954	1960	Germany 1816-1955
China	1955	1964	US; USSR; India; Taiwan;

⁸ Waltz, (1981); John Mearsheimer (1984; 1990; 1993); Robert Jervis (1989).

⁹ Nuclear weapons program data from Christopher way and Jessica Weeks, Regime Type and Nuclear Proliferation, (2014); Strategic Rivalry data from Colerasi, Rassler and Thompson, (2007).

Israel	1958	1969	Vietnam
Australia	1961	Abandoned-1973	Arab states
India	1964	1988/1998	China
Egypt	1965	Abandoned-1974	Pakistan; China
Taiwan	1967	Abandoned-1977	Iran; Israel
South Korea	1970	Abandoned-1978	China
Libya	1970	Abandoned-2003	North Korea
Pakistan	1971	1987	India
South Africa	1974	1979/Abandoned-1991	Zimbabwe; Zambia
Argentina	1978	Abandoned/1990	Brazil
Brazil	1978	Abandoned/1990	Argentina
North Korea	1980	2006	South Korea; United States
Iraq	1983	Abandoned/1995	Iran
Iran	1985	-	Iraq; Israel; Saudi Arabia
Syria	2000	Abandoned	Israel

If one examines the states in Table 1.2, 50 percent of the nuclear aspirants abandoned their nuclear weapons program; and in the case of Brazil and Argentina, the rivalry ended after the nuclear question was resolved between the dyads. What is perhaps more striking about the states in Table 1.2 is that all nuclear aspirants were involved in a rivalry with one or more states. This dissertation focuses on strategic rivalries in which both actors have nuclear weapons.

According to realist assumptions, states acquire nuclear weapons to maximize security. Nuclear weapons have decreased (if not eliminated) the prospects of war between nuclear-armed rivals, but they certainly did not end the rivalry. Explaining the persistence of nuclear rivalries requires an in-depth historical study of each of these rivalry cases. Inferential statistical procedures can measure variance on militarized disputes among rival dyads, but a summary measure of variance does not explain the persistence of competition and enemy threat perception in nuclear rivalries, nor does it explain the variance in

interactions between nuclear rivalries, or the conditions under which nuclear rivals cooperate.

It is important to separate nuclear rivalry cases from the list of 104 strategic rivalry cases in Colaresi, Rasler and Thompson (2007) starting from 1945 – 2010. This study departs from quantitative analyses, as the simplification of rivalry dynamic to statistical procedures does not provide an appropriate explanation for the variation in rivalry interaction, cooperation and continuation. There has also not been much empirical research done on the cooperation that takes place between nuclear rivals. Much of the work done on nuclear armed states is concentrated on conflict, deterrence and crisis-management.¹⁰ By

¹⁰ Glenn H. Snyder, "The Balance of Power and the Balance of Terror," in *Balance of Power*, ed. Paul Seabury (San Francisco: Chandler, 1965); Kenneth Waltz, "The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May be Better," *Adelphi Papers* 21, no. 171 (1981); John Mearsheimer, "The Case for Ukrainian Nuclear Deterrent," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no.3 (1984); Curtis Signorino and Ahmer Tarar, "A Unified Theory and Test of Extended Immediate Deterrence," *American Journal of Political Science* 50, No. 3 (2006): 586-605. For crises: See Kyle Beardsley and Victor Asal, "Winning with the Bomb," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, No. 2 (April 2009): 278-301; Erik Gartzke and Dong-Joon Jo, "Bargaining, Nuclear Proliferation, and Interstate Disputes," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no.2 (2009); John Mueller, "The Essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability and Postwar World," *Atomic obsession: Nuclear Alarmism from Hiroshima to Al Qaeda* (Oxford University Press: 2010); Matthew Kroenig, "Nuclear Superiority and the Balance of Resolve: Explaining Nuclear Crisis Outcomes" *International Organization* 67, No. 1 (Winter 2013): 141-171. For a contrasting finding, see Todd Sechser and Matthew Fuhrmann, "Crisis Bargaining and Nuclear Blackmail," *International Organization* 67, No. 1 (Winter 2013): 173-195. Vipin Narang, "What Does it Take to Deter? Regional Power Nuclear Postures and International Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57, No. 3 (2013): 478-508; Vipin Narang, *Nuclear Strategy in the Modern Era: Regional Powers and International Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); and Mark Bell and Nicholas Miller, "Questioning the Effect of Nuclear Weapons on Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, no1. (2015): 74-92.

contrast, this study confronts the crucial issues of cooperation and competition through the lens of strategic rivalry.

The strongest evidence for rivalry continuation comes from the case of US-USSR-Russia. US- Russian relations in the Cold War and post-Cold War eras have consistently been adversarial. The dyad met the criteria for strategic rivalry (competition, military threat, and enemy) from 1945 to 1989. However, after 1989/90, scholars were quick to claim the end of the rivalry and to equate the end with the termination of the Cold War. But was the end of the Cold War also the end of the US-Russian rivalry?

I argue that the 1989/90 disintegration of the Soviet Union did not result in the termination of the US-Russian rivalry. The collapse of the Soviet state was a change in the domestic political and economic institutions, and not a destruction of Russia. Colaresi, Rasler, and Thompson (2007) note that a strategic rivalry ends when: a) “if one or both states in a rivalry lose their competitive status” or b) “one or both states cease to being perceived as projecting threat.”¹¹ My argument holds on both points: the disintegration of USSR was not the destruction of Russia. Instead it was a critical juncture where the political and economic institutions changed. The core of the USSR – the decision-making authority – was always Russia, not the periphery states. If we identify the end of US-USSR/Russia rivalry by the termination of a protracted conflict, then how do we account for the continued competition between the US and Russia over subsequent years? Similarly, though the enemy perception and the potential of a

¹¹ Colaresi, Rasler and Thompson(2007), 86. Furthermore a detailed discussion of strategic rivalry termination will be discussed in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

militarized threat between the dyads faded (Russia was facing economic and political crises), the threat did not disappear. The US troops remained in Germany and other parts of Europe due to the threat of Russia, however the number of troops were reduced.

The collapse of the Soviet state created an asymmetrical relationship, where one superpower lost its status and the international system transformed from bipolar to unipolar world; that was a systemic shift, but it did not change the competition, threat, or enemy perception among the rivals. This study argues that we must approach rivalry termination differently and most importantly not fall for what David Hackett Fischer called the “quantitative fallacy.”¹² Instead of counting crises and the number of battle deaths to decide rivalry termination points, we must focus on a cyclical approach to nuclear rivalries. At the end of the Cold War the Soviet system collapsed (not the state), but its rivalry with the United States was dormant – not extinct.

This study also aims to explore the extent of cooperation that takes place among rival dyads: specifically, why do some strategic nuclear rivals cooperate and others remain competitive? And under what conditions do rival dyads begin to cooperate? Understanding rivalries is crucial for international security; however, a knowledge of nuclear rivalries is even more important because of the

¹² The notion of ‘quantitative fallacy’ argues that “facts are important in proportion to their susceptibility to quantification.” Fischer, *Historians’ Fallacies*, p. 90. In John Lewis Gaddis, “International relations theory and the end of the cold war.” *IS*, Vol. 17:3 1992/3. For related criticisms, K. N. Waltz, *Theory of international politics* (1979), 64; and Stanley Hoffmann, “The Long Road to Theory,” (1959), 427-429.

potential of nuclear war. If we look at the list of wars since 1815, it seems to show that most militarized disputes occurred “out of the blue,” but if we examine it closely, we see that conflict emerged out of previous hostile interactions over a long period of time.¹³ Thus, understanding the conditions of cooperation in a nuclear rivalry is central to the stability of the rivalry and ultimately addressing the issue of rivalry termination.

Argument in Brief:

This dissertation makes contributions to our theoretical understanding of how nuclear weapons affect strategic rivalries. It focuses on the persistent nature of nuclear rivalries, and characterizes the relationship as adversarial peace. The concept itself is borrowed from a 1992 discussion paper between Shimon Shamir from Tel-Aviv University, and Alexander George. Shamir described the Israeli-Egyptian relationship as adversarial peace, he characterized it by “sharp ideological differences, intensive propaganda warfare, and mutual perception of grave threat and deep distrust, despite a formal peace agreement.”¹⁴ To refine Shamir’s definition for nuclear rivalries, I would argue that nuclear rivals share intense spatial and/or positional differences, along with mutual perception of threat and distrust, and in some cases intensive propaganda warfare that has now taken the shape of cyber warfare, despite of increased security cooperation.

¹³ Small and Singer (1982); Scott Bennett (1996; 1997; 1998).

¹⁴ Alexander George, “From Conflict to Peace: Stages Along the Road,” *United Institute of Peace Journal* 5, no 6. (December 1992), 8.

This study holds that nuclear dyads have a strong interest in managing and stabilizing their rivalry, as the cost and risks associated with a militarized conflict are too high. The shared interest of preventing war is further coupled with the desire for stability and cooperation. Thus, nuclear weapons in a rivalry create the conditions for states to settle their disputes without resorting to force. This is what Karl Deutsch described as the 'security community,' he defined it as, "the real assurance that the members of that community will not fight each other physically, but will settle their disputes in some other way."¹⁵ However, it is the disputes involving the intrinsic interests¹⁶ of the nuclear rivals that remain unresolved, and lead to the continuation of the enemy perception and thus transforming the rivalry to an adversarial peace.

¹⁵ Karl Deutsch et al, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 3 - 5.

¹⁶ Jervis discussion on intrinsic and extrinsic interests. Robert Jervis, (1979), 315. Intrinsic interests are the core or vital interests of a state that it is willing to fight for if challenged. Robert Jervis defined intrinsic interests as: "*we can say that the state that has the greater intrinsic interest in an issue is likely to prevail. Its costs of retreating will be higher than those of the other; this, the incentives in the bargaining process favor it, especially if the other side realizes that the 'balance of interest' favors the state.*" A detailed discussion of interests and value in Glynn Snyder, *Deterrence and Defense*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 30-40. He draws a distinction between defense values/interests and deterrence values. Divides them into intrinsic, power and political. Jervis provides a more appropriate for this study explanation, of interests and deterrence in a nuclear era, in *Deterrence Theory Revisited* (1989), 314. Also see Thomas Schelling, in *The Strategy of Conflict*, (1980), 123-24. Intrinsic interests are also known as vital interests, see James Fearon, (1997), 69.

Plan of the Dissertation:

The dissertation is organized as follows: Chapter two reviews the literature on origins, evolutions and termination of rivalries. This chapter also lays down the concept of nuclear rivalries and distinguishes it from other types. Chapter three lays down the foundation for the adversarial peace argument and research design. From chapter 4, 5 and 6 are case study chapters on great power rivalry, and provides a detailed account of the US-USSR and later US-Russia rivalry. Chapter 7 is a detailed account of a regional rivalry – between Pakistan and India, and explores the interaction between the two regional rivals. Chapter 8, briefly reviews the case of Brazil and Argentina's rivalry as a mini-case study to illustrate a case where a long-standing rivalry terminated after the resolution of the nuclear question. Finally, chapter nine concludes and briefly reviews the findings of this study and suggests future research avenues.

Chapter 2

Why (Nuclear) Rivalries?

*The doubt of future foes exiles my present joy,...
Which should not be if reason ruled or wisdom weaved the web.
But clouds of joys untried do cloak aspiring minds,...
The dazzled eyes with pride, which great ambition blinds,
Shall be unsealed by worthy wights whose foresight falsehood finds...
My rusty sword through rest shall first his edge employ
To poll their tops that seek such change or gape for future joy.*

Elizabeth I, Queen of England

Introduction:

What is rivalry termination and what does it look like? How can we observe rivalry termination? About fifty years ago, Kenneth Thompson claimed, “If one is asked for a short definition of international politics it may be called the study of rivalry among nations and the conditions and institutions which ameliorate or exacerbate these relationships.”¹ The history of international relations is filled with rivalries, from Thucydides’s account of Athens and Sparta in the Peloponnesian War to Kautilya’s Arthashastra in India. All have narrated the story of struggle for supremacy, where states strive to maximize power and in the process, they fortify their military capabilities and secure alliances, instilling fear in their rivals and increasing the risk of war.² Rivalries

¹ Kenneth Thompson, *Political realism and the crisis of world politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), 21- 22.

² Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*; Kautilya, *The Arthashastra*; Waltz, (1979), 118-121.

hold a paramount position in the field, because competition between two or more sovereign states is often marked by militarized disputes leading to war. (Colaresi, Rasler and Thompson 2007)

For centuries, long-standing rivalries have been at the frontline of international war and peace. Rivalries, as Colaresi, et al., note, are important because “they are dangerous incubators of conflict and crisis, and war.”³ Diehl and Goertz (2000) found that over fifty per cent of long-standing rivals have fought a war at least once during their lifespan. To be precise, less than one percent of all dyads are responsible for nearly eighty percent of the interstate warfare.⁴ A small number of dyads are culpable for most interstate conflicts since the end of World War II.⁵ Furthermore, sixty-eight percent of states involved in warfare since World War II were either nuclear weapon states at the time or acquired nuclear weapons later. (See Table 1.1 in chapter 1) Scholars working on nuclear weapons and their impact on state behavior have argued that nuclear weapons make states more secure, reducing the risk of war and deterring aggression.⁶ Scholars

³ Colaresi, Rasler and Thompson (2007), 131.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Moaz and Mor (2002:3) on rivalries: “The belief in the pervasiveness of international conflict contrasts with the empirical record. A systematic survey of the last two centuries yields two seemingly striking facts. First, most states were relatively peaceful; only a small group of states was responsible for most of interstate disputes and war during this period. Second, these conflict-prone states did not fight randomly—they tended to fight each other. Consequently, a small group of dyads is responsible for a disproportionately large number of conflicts and wars.”

⁶ Kenneth Waltz, (1981); John Mearsheimer (1984, 1990, 1993); and Robert Jervis (1989). The broader literature on the spread of nuclear weapons is characterized by the debate between nuclear optimists and nuclear pessimists, between Kenneth Waltz and Scott Sagan. On the one side, the optimists (Waltz) argue that nuclear weapons are stabilizing, because of the mutual vulnerability dilemma. On the other side, the pessimists (Sagan) forcefully argue that nuclear weapons are destabilizing due to myriad of things that can go wrong from nuclear accidents and mistakes to rogue leaders. A similar debate on South Asia was carried between Sumit Ganguly and Paul Kapur.

with a more pessimistic outlook have pointed out the risks associated with nuclear weapons and the possibility of accidental nuclear use or preventive war.⁷ Despite the importance of the impact of nuclear weapons on interstate rivalries, we still lack a clear understanding and in-depth empirical research on the effect of nuclear weapons on rivalries. Do nuclear weapons have different effects on competition and cooperation in a rivalry? And most importantly, what impact does it have on the trajectory of an interstate rivalry?

Existing rivalry scholarship has focused on the factors that contribute to a pattern of conflict and/or cooperation between rival dyads. Similarly, nuclear security scholars have worked extensively on the effects of nuclear weapons on interstate conflict behavior, capabilities of nuclear adversaries, as well as whether nuclear weapons deter aggression. However, the two separate research programs have left a gap in the field, as they are not integrated or bridged by research that could shed light on the impact of nuclear weapons on longstanding rivalries. The impact of nuclear weapons on rivalry

Where Ganguly argues that nuclear weapons have acted as a stabilizer in South Asia, Kapur maintains that Pakistan has used nuclear weapons as a nuclear shield against retaliation and pursued strategies that are destabilizing for the region. More recently the nuclear pessimists have pushed the discussion that nuclear weapons provide a shield against retaliation and hence are used by the weaker and dissatisfied states to pursue asymmetric warfare by engaging in destabilizing behavior in crisis situations.

⁷ Scott Sagan (1994); Bruce Blair (1993) and Paul Kapur (2005). Other arguments about effects of nuclear weapons Glenn Snyder's (1965) Stability-Instability Paradox that hold that nuclear weapons might deter the super powers in an all-out nuclear war but it heightens conflict at other levels. "the greater the stability of the strategic balance of terror, the lower the stability of the overall balance at its lower levels of violence... firm stability in the strategic nuclear balance tends to destabilize the conventional balance." In other words, the super powers might not directly challenge each other but they will challenge each other on the periphery.

should be seen in a broader historical context, and it would be simplistic to arbitrarily select a slice of time to assess the frequency or intensity of conflict. Empirical work has neglected the impact of nuclear weapons on rivalries at large, and this dissertation addresses the shortcomings in the existing scholarship.

This chapter reviews the extensive literature on rivalries and highlights the research program on the effects of nuclear weapons on conflict behavior. It begins by introducing existing definitions of rivalry in international relations and why these definitions matter. Much of the work in the rivalry literature examines the origins of the concept of rivalry, different types of rivalries, and the factors that determine the initiation, evolution and termination of a rivalry. The literature examines how the major international relations theories address rivalry termination and recognizes the limitations in the existing theories. The second part of this chapter reviews the literature on the impact of nuclear weapons on interstate interaction; this dissertation focuses on the impact on nuclear weapons on rivalry termination and/or transformation. The chapter concludes with the empirical, theoretical, and policy importance of rivalry research.

The Concept of Rivalry in International Relations

Description, Definition & Literature:

Interstate rivalry is defined as ‘a persistent, fundamental and long-term incompatibility of goals between two states.’⁸ Bennett defines a rivalry as a “situation in which two states disagree over the resolution of some issue(s) between them for an extended period of time, leading them to commit substantial resources (military,

⁸ Moaz and Mor (2002), 4.

economic or diplomatic) towards opposing each other and feature occasional diplomatic or military challenges to the disputed status quo by one or both side.”⁹ Jack Levy provides a definition broad enough to capture both militarized and non-militarized rivalries, arguing that rivalries are: ‘*interactive, competitive, nonanonymous, hostile, sustained, and self-conscious*.’¹⁰

The literature on interstate rivalry is divided between behavioral, perceptual and strategic interaction.¹¹ Some scholars have defined the concept of rivalry based on the dispute threshold (number of conflicts and wars over a certain period of time) while others are skeptical of that approach. This dissertation opposes the dispute threshold model by empirically establishing that rivalries continue despite the absence of militarized disputes.

⁹ Bennett Scott (1993) Diss. University of Michigan.

¹⁰ (Levy, 1999) argues that “rivalries are 1) *interactive* because the welfare of each depends in part on the actions of the other; they are 2) *competitive* because they are vying over control or division of some finite good; they are 3) *nonanonymous* because rivals recognize each others identity, and are nonanonymous competitors in a market system; they are 4) *hostile* because rivals typically perceive gains and losses in relative terms, where one sides gain is the rival sides loss; 5) *sustained* because isolated or brief conflict does not imply a long term relationship and 6) *self-conscious* because each actor perceives that it is involved in a sustained hostile competition with a particular adversary or adversaries and expects that the conflictual relationship will persist into future.”

¹¹ The behavioral approach focuses on dyads that engage in a series of militarized disputes with a temporal dimension. The perceptual approach (William Thompson [2001], Colaresi, Rasler, and Thompson 2007) to rivalries is based on decision makers threat perception of the competitors (detailed description is under strategic rivalries in this chapter). Zeev Moaz and Ben Mor (Bound by Struggle) have incorporated the strategic interaction approach they have taken elements from both the behavioral and perceptual approach. As they define a rivalry as “a persistent, fundamental, and long term incompatibility of goals.” (4) The rivalry criteria for them is: 1) set of unresolved issues, 2) psychological manifestations of enmity, 3) strategic interdependence. (p. 6-8)

Before discussing how our conceptualization of “rivalry” originated and the different approaches to interstate rivalries, we must acknowledge the lack of consensus among rivalry scholars on the definition of rivalry. Colaresi et al. attempted to apply the criteria of 6 primary rivalry datasets started encompassing 1816-2000 to 355 dyads, and in only 23 cases do all 6 agree. (See Appendix A for the Colaresi et al. dataset & see Table 2.1 for the 23 cases of consensus rivalries.)

Table 2.1 Consensus Rivalry Cases from 1816 - 2006

Afghanistan–Pakistan	Greece–Turkey
Argentina–Chile	India–Pakistan
Britain–Germany	Israel–Jordan
Britain–United States	Israel–Syria
China–India	Italy–Turkey
China–Japan	Japan–Russia
China–Russia	N. Korea–S. Korea
China–United States	Mexico–United States
Ecuador–Peru	Russia–United States
Egypt–Israel	Spain–United States
Ethiopia–Somalia	Turkey–Russia
France–Germany	

Source: Colaresi, Rasler and Thompson, 2007 p.57

Origin of the Rivalry Concept

Before turning directly to the theories of rivalry termination, I will review the origin of the rivalry concept as it is understood in the field of international relations. This section will briefly address the concept of rivalry and how it has been variously defined and understood. After all, how rivalry is defined is based on the methodological orientation of the scholar, and it determines what the trajectory and eventual termination of a rivalry is understood to be.

The concept of rivalry is complex, and is not simply competition between two actors. Early literature on rivalries relied on the concept of ‘**international enemies**.’ Finlay, Holsti and Fagen introduced this concept and provided a minimalist definition,

as “something or someone we perceive to be threatening, harmful, or injurious to our welfare or wishes,” and “the armed forces of a nation with which there is an overt or latent hostility which might lead to war.”¹² Initial work on rivalry focused on enemy perception, and with the Cold War at its peak, the obvious case was the US-Soviet rivalry.

Robert Jervis’ book, *Perception and Misperception in International Relations*, contributed to our understanding of how decision-makers process information and form beliefs about other actors. In this volume, Jervis lays the framework for the levels of analysis in international relations as following: international environment; domestic determinants; bureaucracy level, and of course the decision-making level. Jervis’s work on the levels is central to our understanding of rivalries: why they initiate, escalate, or persist, and the interconnections between the different levels. As Jervis argued, “which level one focuses on is not arbitrary... it is the product of beliefs about the nature of the variables that influence the phenomena.”¹³ This argument is tied to the idea that rivalry takes place at several levels: the system level (for great powers), regional level (for regional powers), domestic level, and individual/decision makers level. Football rivalries are a great example of different levels of interconnectivity in a rivalry:

“the dyadic drama of football takes place at a number of levels: players, teams, clubs, and countries. Each player is locked into a personal battle with his opposing number... Equally, football clubs establish cultural identities through

¹² David Finlay, Ole R. Holsti, and Richard Fagen, (1967.) This book consists of three case studies and the authors lay out the theoretical dimension of the concept of enemy. The three cases were on Russia, Ghana, and Cuba with Dulles, Nkrumah and Castro as the impact of political leaders on the history of conflict.

¹³ Robert Jervis, (1976), 15

rivalry and opposition.... The meaning of these football rivalries have tended to be underpinned by deeper historical and cultural divisions.”¹⁴

Similarly, interstate rivalries are connected at each level, and as Jervis pointed out, “one element controls another, which in turn controls a third, thereby producing great indirect influence. Thus in the 1920’s, if the U.S. had been willing to guarantee Britain’s security, Britain would have been willing to guarantee France’s, which would have generated a very different pattern of international politics.”¹⁵ It is clear, then, that research on interstate rivalries must draw insights from all levels, and particularly the perceptions of rival decision-makers. Moving further, this study aims to highlight Robert Jervis’ work on nuclear revolution and its implications for nuclear rivalries.

Given the broad meaning of “international enemies,” the rivalry research began studying the duration of conflict in longstanding, protracted adversarial relations. The notion of protracted conflict was conceptualized by Edward Azar, who argued, “protracted social conflict is long-term, ongoing conflict that permeates all aspect of society... it accentuates issue regarding identity and interests of the participants.” The earlier concept of international enemies was primarily focused on super power rivalry, and Azar, Jureidini, and McLaurin highlighted the frustration and failure of

¹⁴ Richard Giulianotti cited in Seweryn Dmowski, “Geographical Typology of European Football Rivalries.” *Soccer and Society*, Vol. 14, No.3, (2013), 334.

¹⁵ Robert Jervis, (2001), 20 – 22. He elaborates on the Franco-German interconnectedness and how it affected the French decision. He noted that French-German connections in the 1920s were not quite physical, but were so “embedded in the laws of economics that they might as well have been. France had two basic objectives: to extract reparations from Germany and to keep that country weak. Only in prosperous Germany could pay reparations and by French and goods, but a prosperous Germany would pose a renewed threat, and a French recovery became narrowly dependent on German prosperity, the Germans would have the leveraged to throw off reparations entirely.” This example gives a good idea of the impact of the different levels on decisions and interstate relations.

international relations in ignoring “non-superpower” related conflicts. They argued that small states play less of a role in the ‘input’ side but more at the ‘output’ side of international politics. They added the following characteristics to the definition of protracted conflicts:¹⁶

1. Duration (protractedness) of a high conflict – hostilities extending over a long period of time.
2. Fluctuation in the intensity and frequency of conflict.
3. Possibility of conflict spillover into all areas of the society.
4. Interactions whether conflictive or cooperative remain in the normal relations range.
5. The absence of a distinct termination.

Azar et al.’s definition of protracted conflict is situated in the behavioral approach to rivalries, and is aimed at explaining lengthy hostile relationships between states. Azar et al.’s research on protracted conflicts provided the rivalry literature a temporal dimension, but like the international enemies concept, this was too broad and focused only on the militarized dimension of a rivalry.

John Vasquez’s research also examined adversaries in protracted conflict. For Vasquez, a rivalry is “a relationship characterized by extreme competition and psychological hostility, in which the issue positions of contender are governed primarily by their attitude towards each other rather than by the stakes at hand.”¹⁷ For these scholars, the focus was more on the conflict and its duration, rather than the issues that

¹⁶ Edward Azar, Jureidini, and McLaurin (1978), 53.

¹⁷ Vasquez (1996), 532.

initiated the conflict. This approach cannot account for all kind of interstate rivalries, as the militarized dimension of the conflicts disqualifies commercial rivalries and strategic rivalries.

Rivalry Classifications – Enduring and Strategic Rivalry:

To address the compartmentalization of the protracted conflict concept, scholars introduced the idea of ‘**enduring rivalry**,’ which was characterized by persistence of rivalry over time. Wayman (1982); Diehl (1983); and Gochman and Moaz (1984) made the initial contribution to our understanding of the term. Most of the scholars working on the enduring rivalry concept during its nascent phase integrated the work on international enemies/enemy perception with the work on protracted conflicts. Wayman and Jones further added the identifying characteristics of severity, durability and continuity to the conceptualization of enduring rivalries.¹⁸ Diehl and Goertz elaborated on the concept of enduring rivalries in their book *War and Peace in International Rivalry* (2000), advocating for the rivalry approach to interstate relations and contending that the earlier work was “a case of putting the cart before the horse,

¹⁸ Frank Wayman and Daniel Jones, (1991) “*Evolution of Conflict in Enduring Rivalries*.” Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of ISA Vancouver. In the paper they provided the following identifying characteristics of a) severity: At least 5 reciprocated militarized disputes involving the same pair of rivals, where the disputes have lasted a minimum of thirty days. b) Durability: there must be at least 25 years between the outbreak of the first dispute and the termination of the last dispute. c) Continuity: when the gap between the militarized disputes and issues remained unresolved and there is at least one dispute in the last 25 years.

and that rivalries did not receive extended conceptual attention until a small critical mass of studies had been conducted.”¹⁹

Diehl and Goertz add three dimensions to the concept of enduring rivalries: 1) spatial consistency, 2) time or duration 3) militarized competitiveness or conflict. However, the central contribution of their work is the rivalry approach, which they argue has “theoretical, methodological and empirical dimensions.” The rivalry approach “creates new ways to test old hypotheses,” ways that were difficult or impossible to achieve with traditional methods. This improvement resulted from thinking about conflict within militarized relationships that can last for decades, rather than in isolation and devoid of context.”²⁰ Under the rivalry approach, the focus of debate moves from conflict to long-term interactions and relationships; however, the militarized dimension of enduring rivalries limits the application of their argument to strategic rivalries.

Most scholars in the behavioral school focus on dyads engaged in militarized conflicts within a specified period. Compare this with our nuclear rivalry cases, in which militarized conflict is limited or non-existent. This takes us to the approach of **strategic rivalries** that this dissertation has adopted.

William Thompson is credited with the development of the perceptual approach to international rivalries.²¹ He defined rivalry based on threat perception and compiled a dataset based on that definition. Thompson argued that decision-makers do not view all threats equally, and will perceive some adversaries as commanding more attention than

¹⁹ Diehl and Goertz *War and Peace in International Rivalry* (2000). P. 19.

²⁰ Ibid. Chap.1 & 2

²¹ The concept of strategic rivalry was initially elaborated in William Thompson’s article, “identifying Rivals and Rivalries,” (2001). The term was later elaborated in a collaborated book on strategic rivalries with Colaresi and Rasler in 2007.

others. The question is: how would we measure and empirically investigate such perceptions? Thompson argued, “foreign policy-makers not only talk and write explicitly about their identification of rivals, they also bias their activities by concentrating considerable energy on coping with their selected adversaries.”²² Historical record for evidence of such perceptions will guide researchers to investigate the decision-maker’s perceptions about adversaries.

Colaresi, et al., give the following criteria to identify a strategic rivalry:

1. Competitors:²³ the competitor criteria restrict rivalries to similar class.
2. Threat perception: the source of actual or latent threats that pose some possibility of becoming militarized.
3. Enemies.

The perceptual approach to rivalry is not just about perceptions; it is “very much about conflict.” Since 1816, 58 out of 75 wars occurred between strategic rivalries, or 77.3 percent of all wars. During the twentieth century, strategic rivalries opposed each other in 41 of 47 wars: around 87. 2 percent. In the post-World War II era, the numbers are even more stark: 21 out of all 23 interstate wars (91.3%) were between strategic

²² William Thompson “identifying rivals and rivalries in world politics” *International studies quarterly*. (December – 2001), 557-586.

²³ The competitor aspect of this criteria opens it to criticism. Thompson addressed this in his 2001 article, that “the competitor status of identification can be murkier and tends to hinge on how the threat is perceived. If the threat is too great to be met by the threatened acting alone or in conjunction with other states of similar capabilities, or if the threat is too insignificant to worry much about, the source of threat is not usually viewed as a competitor.” p. 564. Thompson gave the example of Denmark and the Soviet Union. Denmark felt threatened by the USSR but was not in the same league as the USSR and would not be considered as a competitor. On other hand, Britain had a long-standing rivalry with Russia and the Soviets considered Britain to be a competitor.

rivals.²⁴ Unlike “enduring rivalries,” which involve militarized interstate disputes (Wayman and Jones 1991; Goertz and Diehl 1993; Bennett 1996), in a strategic rivalry, militarized disputes are not required for the adversarial relationship to qualify as a rivalry. It is this dimension of strategic rivalry that allows this study to explain the conflict and cooperation spectrum of the nuclear rivals.

Colaresi et al. further divide strategic rivalries into main and secondary types. Main types of strategic rivalries are spatial (contest based on territorial issues); positional (contest based on relative share of influence and prestige), and ideational (based on the difference in political, economic, societal and or religious beliefs). Secondary types include: ethnic (based on the treatment of minorities); dissidents; resources and access based strategic rivalries.²⁵

Rivalry Termination:

To have a unified theory of rivalry termination would be a utopian scenario, as we have yet to find consensus on the definition and criteria of the term rivalry. For enduring rivalries, the termination point is linked with the end of militarized conflict, making it easier to quantitatively mark the termination of a rivalry. However, that is problematic in its own right. Most enduring rivalry scholars were quick to mark the termination point of US-Soviet rivalry,²⁶ but recent relations between the United States and Russia have confirmed the persistence of the US-Russian rivalry. As Thompson critically noted, “we no longer think twice about coding information on the existence and

²⁴ Colaresi, Rasler and Thompson, (2007).

²⁵ Ibid., 79 (See Table 3.3)

²⁶ The quantitative literature on rivalry termination includes, Bennett (1997); Goertz and Diehl, (2000) on the initiation and termination of enduring rivalries.

dates of onset and termination of wars, crises, deterrence attempts, alliances or trade.”²⁷ Strategic rivalries are not sharply defined as raw numbers of crises or battle deaths etc., and they require interpreting historical data and codifying decision-makers’ perceptions. Strategic rivalries do not require temporal limitation, nor do they impose a number of crises and conflicts.

The way a rivalry is defined allows scholars to identify the factors responsible for the persistence and termination of a rivalry. For any rivalry, various factors on the international, regional, domestic and decision-maker levels play a role in the initiation, continuation and termination process. Rivalries are dynamic, and major shifts on any level impact their trajectory. When it comes to the international level, great power involvement and systemic and structural factors have played a role in extending the rivalries. At the same time, major changes in great power policies have also resulted in rivalry termination. On the regional level, territorial divisions; nuclear weapons; power asymmetry; lack of effective regional institutions; dearth of economic interactions have each contributed to rivalry continuation. Territorial settlements; nuclear stability; preponderance of status quo power; strengthening of regional institutions; and deepening economic interdependence have resulted in rivalry termination. On the domestic and decision-maker level: problems of national identity; institutional incompatibility; secession; and leadership priorities have caused the rivalry to persist,

²⁷ Thompson, (2001), 562.

whereas secure identities; democratization; abandonment of irredentism and change in leadership priorities have resulted in rivalry termination.²⁸

Scholars have acknowledged the difficulty of measuring the end point of a rivalry; as Diehl and Goertz (2000) noted, “the beginnings of rivalries are often signaled by concrete events, [but] rivalries do not have clearly defined ends.”²⁹ The question is: how and when do rivalries terminate? Furthermore, how do we know that a rivalry has ended? Does signing a peace treaty, or extensive destruction of a rival, end a long-standing adversarial relationship?

Although Germany was militarily and economically destroyed at the end of World War II, that did not result in the termination of the Franco-German rivalry. It was not until 1955, a decade later, that French decision-makers stopped regarding Germany as a threat. For that ten-year period, the French continued to perceive the Germans as potential enemy competitors and only in 1955 did the French officially accept the West German state.³⁰

Likewise, at the end of World War II, when two atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, the Japanese surrendered. In the words of Emperor Hirohito: “should we continue to fight it would not only result in the ultimate collapse and obliteration of the Japanese nation, but also would lead to the total extinction of human civilization.”³¹ This was major shift from the Emperor’s previous statements, in

²⁸ T.V. Paul and William Hogg, Table 11.1: on Factors Determining the persistence and possible termination of rivalry. In T.V. Paul’s edited book, *The India Pakistan Conflict an Enduring Rivalry*, (Cambridge University Press: 2005), 252.

²⁹ Diehl and Goertz, (2000), 30.

³⁰ Thompson (2001), 564-565.

³¹ Emperor’s quotation from Marius B. Jansen, *The Making of Modern Japan*. (2000), 660.

which he had asked the people to make any sacrifice necessary to defeat the enemy. In 1946, after the war, Japan's Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru made a sage prediction when he remarked, "history provides examples of winning by diplomacy after losing war." Japan's acceptance of defeat, its ultimate dependence on the United States for economic recovery, and its existence as an independent state led to the end of the rivalry.³² As Michael Schaller pointed out, "less than five years after unconditionally defeating Japan, the United States had not only committed substantial resources to its recovery, but also began bidding for Tokyo's loyalty." And as Prime Minister Yoshida had predicted, through cooperation and skillful diplomacy as a "good loser," Japan emerged victorious and the rivalry terminated.

As these two examples demonstrate, we cannot simply measure the end of a rivalry by counting the number of crises or the years between the last dispute. Instead, a more comprehensive historical approach is required to understand rivalries and their end points.

Every rivalry is different, as there are a host of factors responsible for initiating the rivalry, from systemic to individual factors; likewise, there are host of factors responsible for rivalry termination. Hence, approaching a rivalry based only on the dispute-density measure is needlessly reductive. For example, some scholars argue that

³² There were a host of factors responsible for Japanese surrender. Starting from the devastation of the war; Battle of Midway (1942) & the Battle of the Philippine Sea; fall of Saipan and the most devastating of all the complete destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the atomic bombs. These losses led to change in perception of the decision makers. The perception was not of the enemy changed to an ally, instead it was of acceptance of defeat – as evident from the statements issued by the Emperor and post-war Prime Minister.

the Israel-Egypt rivalry terminated after the 1979 Peace Treaty,³³ but the Colaresi et al. dataset noted that the rivalry persists. If we rely on the number of militarized disputes between dyads, then the rivalry terminated; however, if we apply the strategic rivalry criteria, the rivalry persists. In 2013, a PEW survey found that 69 percent of Egyptians oppose the 1979 Peace Treaty and that many Egyptians are against Israeli settlements.³⁴ In 1996, Egypt's newspapers warned of the consequences of Israeli "inflexibility," saying, "Cairo newspapers today unanimously describe the Israeli Government's decision to abolish the restrictions on settlement expansion in the Palestinian territories, and Israel's continued attempts to erect obstacles in the face of negotiations, as an unequivocal threat to the regional peace process. ...Israel's stance is a blatant contradiction to all the signed agreements between the concerned Arab parties and Israel."³⁵

According to scholars who subscribe to the "enduring" school of thought, another example of rivalry termination is the case of India-Pakistan, with the rivalry terminating in 1991.³⁶ But the two states tested nuclear weapons in 1998, and the Kargil conflict the following year turned South Asia into "perhaps the most dangerous place in the world today because of the tensions over Kashmir and the possession of nuclear weapons,"³⁷

³³ Klein, James P., Gary Goertz, and Paul F. Diehl. 2006. "The New Rivalry Data Set: Procedures and patterns." *Journal of Peace Research* 43 (3): 331–48.

³⁴ Egyptians Increasingly Glum: Accessed March 19th 2017.

<http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/05/16/egyptians-increasingly-glum/>

³⁵ Egypt: Newspapers Warn of Consequences of Israeli 'Inflexibility,' Published in Daily Report Near East & South Asia, FBIS-NES-96-160

³⁶ Diehl and Goertz's (2000)

³⁷ Quoted by Terence Hunt, Associated Press, 19th March 2000,

http://abcnews.go.com/sections/world/DailyNews/clinton_india000319.html.

according to Bill Clinton. Marking the termination of the India-Pakistan rivalry in 1991 is an example of what Thompson (2001) criticized when he said, “we no longer think twice about coding information on the existence or dates.”

With that said, I do not want to minimize the importance of the *number* of militarized conflicts, but that must not be the only dimension we look at when exploring longstanding rivalries – particularly rivalries with nuclear weapons. In the case of India-Pakistan, the issue of Kashmir is still unresolved, and if rivalry termination or continuation is based on the resolution of a spatial or positional issue, then in that case it remains unterminated.

What is Rivalry Termination?

The work on rivalry termination is underdeveloped. Though scholars working on rivalries have paid attention to the initiation and dynamics of rivalries, theories of rivalry termination are lacking. The absence of consensus on the definition of rivalry has also led to disagreement on rivalry termination points. Rivalry scholars working in the quantitative tradition use the term “rivalry termination” more often than qualitative scholars, as it is easy for them to employ numerical measures like the threshold of time and number of disputes.³⁸ This study is interested in understanding what scholars mean when they say a rivalry has terminated. In other words, what is rivalry termination and what does it look like? How can we observe rivalry termination?

³⁸ The quantitative literature on rivalry termination includes the work of Scott Bennett, “Measuring Rivalry Termination;” Goertz and Diehl, (2000) “The Initiation and termination of Enduring Rivalries.”; Colaresi, Rasler and Thompson (2007) “Strategic Rivalries” has focused on the formation of rivalries and the relationship between rivals.

These questions are important for theoretical, empirical and policy reasons. As the empirical record has shown, it is the conflict-prone dyads that tend to fight each other and that are disproportionately responsible for interstate war.³⁹ Three theories have contributed to our current understanding of rivalry termination: 1) Punctuated-equilibrium theory, 2) Evolutionary theory, 3) Rationalist account of rivalry, and 4) the Expectancy framework of rivalry termination. I summarize and critique them below, before presenting my own theory.

The structural-based or punctuated equilibrium argument holds that once a rivalry is initiated, it establishes a Base Rivalry Level (BRL) of militarized competition and stability within the rivalry, until an exogenous shock brings a shift and change. Diehl and Goertz argue that when two dyads are locked in a rivalry, the rivalry continues and stabilizes until one of the states encounters strong external or internal shocks. The impact of the shock “is a dramatic change in the international system or its subsystem that fundamentally alters the processes, relationships, and expectations that drive nation -state interactions.”⁴⁰ They argue that ninety per cent of rivalry initiation and termination is determined by internal or external “shocks,” and by that they mean: the two world wars, territorial changes, power distributions, national independence, civil war, regime change, and democratization. For Diehl and Goertz, (2000) “large shocks create windows of opportunity for change...and only when window of opportunity is opened by a political shock will enduring rivalry begin or end.”⁴¹ The theory of internal or external shocks might explain some cases, but its generalizability is limited, and the

³⁹ Moaz and Mor (2002), 3.

⁴⁰ Diehl and Goertz (2000), 221.

⁴¹ Ibid, 140.

model is limited to conflict behavior in a rivalry while ignoring the determinants of rivalry interaction. In the case of nuclear rivalries (US-Russia; US-China; China-Russia; China-India & India-Pakistan) and other ongoing rivalries (Syria –Israel; North and South Korea), exogenous or endogenous shocks might have initiated the rivalry, but fail to explain the continuation or transformation of these cases.

The evolutionary approach to rivalry termination emphasizes how rivalries evolve. The focus is more on domestic elements and how they determine rivalry behavior. The evolutionary approach looks at interactions between rivals and the role they play in shaping the rivalry. Paul Hensel (2001) lays out the multiple phases of a rivalry and formulates his rivalry model in line with Darwin's natural selection model. The model contends that a rivalry begins over an issue (territorial or strategic conflict) and forces decision-makers towards an aggressive stance or/and away from cooperative measures. The difference between the evolutionary and structural approach is that, in the evolutionary model, the conflict increases in its severity and likelihood with future interactions, whereas in the structural explanation, rivalries are locked in the BRL, which creates stability between the rivals until an external or internal shock can change the course of the rivalry. Paul Hensel explains the evolutionary model thus:

“Before rivalry begins foreign affairs are unlikely to play much of a role in the selection of state leaders...as conflict begins to accumulate...relations with rival are likely to become important in domestic political debate. A leader with unpopular or unsuccessful policies must attempt to adapt his or her policy preferences in order to deal with the changing environment, or the leader may be selected out of office; specific outcomes of past confrontations and the salience of the issues under contention between the rivals may exacerbate or mitigate this

effect...The evolutionary approach herein tells a plausible story about domestic political process that accompany the road towards rivalry.”⁴²

The evolutionary approach to rivalries accounts for the initiation of the rivalry and reasons for conflict escalation, but it falls short of providing an explanation for why rivalries terminate. Hensel’s theory makes a strong case for domestic determinants of rivalry dynamics and gives us a better understanding of rivalry persistence. However, this framework does not provide conditions for cooperation in a rivalry; political leaders’ policy preferences are contingent on action-reaction, and thus increasing hostility towards a rival will result in domestic political incentives. Hence, the question remains: how does this kind of rivalry terminate? And if past interactions and conflicts have an effect on future relations, under what conditions would a political leader decide to change the course of the rivalry to avoid being trapped in the action-reaction cycle? Given that past disputes and conflicts can generate future adversarial ties and (as Hensel emphasizes) the importance of past interactions, that does not explain how a rivalry ends. The evolutionary theory certainly contributes to an explanation of conflict within rivalries, but not the cooperation and termination of rivalries. Some elements of the evolutionary framework are useful for this study’s focus on nuclear rivalries, as the evolution from a strategic rivalry to a nuclear rivalry is important. Similarly, in my cases of nuclear rivalries, it is crucial to analyze the different phases of rivalry behavior and see the learning that takes place after a rival acquires nuclear weapons. However, the evolutionary theory is needlessly reductive.

⁴² Paul Hensel, “Evolution in Domestic Politics and the Development of Rivalry: The Bolivia-Paraguay Case.” In William Thompson ed. *Evolutionary Interpretations of World Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 211.

This takes us to the rationalist account or the strategic interaction explanation for how rivalries end. The term “rationalist” is used in the sense that the strategic bargaining and its outcome are products of rational choice by the decision makers. It is what Jon Elster calls the efficient and optimal option.⁴³ Unlike the structural and evolutionary frameworks, the rationalist, strategic interaction model focuses on bargaining and mutual accommodation between two rivals on the issues at stake. Scott Bennett argues that interstate rivalries are situations in which states disagree over issues and engage in diplomatic and military disputes based on the issue at stake.⁴⁴ Rivalries end when both parties reach a compromise. Strategic bargaining occurs when rivals negotiate on the issue at stake, and is resolved in a written agreement. This framework faces the problem of commitment (with regards to the agreements) and issue indivisibility (with regards to issues).

International relations operate in an anarchic system where there is no enforcement authority, so persuading states to abide by agreements is complex. As Kenneth Waltz reminds us, “among states as among men there is no automatic adjustment or interests. In the absence of a supreme authority there is then the constant possibility that conflict will be settle by force.”⁴⁵ Similarly, because of anarchy, there is the constant possibility that rivals may go back on an agreement; even allies can clash when their interests are in conflict. Simultaneously, the notion of compromise on issues at stake is not that simple, since rivals may be unable to find a settlement due to the

⁴³ Jon Elster, *Rational Choice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), Introduction. Also cited in James Fearon’s dissertation “Threats to use force: Costly, signals and bargaining in international crises,” (1992), 59.

⁴⁴ Bennett, D. (1996), 157-183.

⁴⁵ Waltz, (1959), 188.

indivisible nature of the issue. As Fearon observed, ‘the cause of indivisibility lies in the domestic political and other mechanisms rather than in the nature of the issues themselves’ and he further argues that ‘side-payments or linkages with other issues are possible.’⁴⁶

Maoz and Mor (2002) take a game theoretic approach to rivalry initiation, evolution, and termination, building their argument around two factors: learning processes and preference change. Rivals engaged in longstanding conflicts learn about each other and form their beliefs about the motives, goals and calculations of their rival based on continuous interaction. Actors’ preferences depend on their attitude towards the status quo. If at least one rival is dissatisfied with the status quo, the rivalry will persist, and “when the outcome of confrontations leave both actors satisfied with the status quo the rivalry will terminate.”⁴⁷

In the most recent work on rivalry termination by Rasler, Thompson and Ganguly, *How Rivalries End?*, they elaborate on the expectancy framework to address rivalry termination and de-escalation based on four factors: shocks, expectational revision, reciprocity and reinforcement.⁴⁸ Before addressing their expectancy model,

⁴⁶ James Fearon, (1995), 381-2.

⁴⁷ Maoz and Mor, (2002), 9-10

⁴⁸ Karen Rasler, William Thompson and Sumit Ganguly, (2013), 2. The summary of their theory: “Decision makers create assumptions about their own preferred foreign policy behavior (strategies) on the basis of perceptions (expectation) of external threats, the capabilities of their enemies, and the resources available to cope with external threats. Overtime, the expectations formed about external rivals become entrenched. Changing these entrenched expectations may require some combination of radical changes in the environment (shocks), new decision makers with control over their governments and less allegiance to old expectations (policy entrepreneurs who occasionally develop consolidated political positions), and encouragement from external patrons (third-party pressures). Once new strategies begin to be experimented with, intransigence upon the part of the enemy (a lack of reciprocity) and/or the failure of the

they argue that the simplest explanation for rivalry termination is via two fundamental paths based on coercion, subordination or surrender:

1. One or both actors in the rivalry lose their competitive status:
 - a. by either a decisive defeat;
 - b. acknowledges defeat without war, or
 - c. one or both actors experience political-economic shock and or civil war.⁴⁹
2. One or both actors cease to be perceived as a threatening enemy.

Rasler et al. (2013) dataset of rivalry termination because of decisive defeats show between 1816-2010 48 out of 139 rivalries terminated due to coercion or exhaustion. (see Table 2.2)

Rasler et al. (2013) list fifteen cases where a rivalry ended without war and one side acknowledging inferiority. Table 2.3 illustrates the sixty-six cases of rivalries that terminated with one side accepting defeat without being forced to do so.

new strategies to achieve a de-escalation in hostility (a lack of reinforcement) are likely to lead to an abandonment of the strategic experimentation and a relapse to the earlier strategies.”p.16.

⁴⁹ Rasler, Thompson, & Ganguly, (2013), 6-7.

Table 2.2: *Rivalries Terminated by Coercion or Exhaustion, 1816-2010*

<i>Rivalry</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Rivalry</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Afghanistan-Iran II	1996–2001	Czechoslovakia-Poland	1920–1938
Angola-DRC	1975–1997	Egypt-Ethiopia	1868–1882
Argentina-Paraguay	1862–1870	Egypt-Ottoman Empire	1828–1841
Austria-France	1816–1918	Ethiopia-Italy	1882–1943
Austria-Italy	1847–1918	France-Italy	1881–1940
Austria-Ottoman/Turkey	1816–1908	France-Vietnam	1858–1884
Austria-Russia	1816–1918	Germany-Poland	1933–1939
Austria-Serbia	1903–1920	Germany-Russia II	1890–1945
Bolivia-Paraguay	1887–1938	Germany–United States I	1899–1918
Brazil-Paraguay	1860–1870	Germany–United States II	1933–1945
Britain-Burma	1816–1826	Guatemala-Nicaragua	1855–1907
Britain-Germany I	1896–1918	Hungary-Rumania	1918–1947
Britain-Germany II	1934–1945	Indonesia-Netherlands	1951–1962
Britain-Italy	1934–1943	Italy-Turkey	1884–1943
Britain-Japan	1932–1945	Japan-Russia	1874–1945
Bulgaria-Yugoslavia	1878–1955	Japan–United States	1898–1945
Burma-Thailand	1816–1826	Lithuania-Poland	1918–1939
Cambodia–S. Vietnam	1956–1975	Mexico–United States	1821–1848
Cambodia-Vietnam	1976–1983	Mozambique-Rhodesia	1975–1979
Chad-Libya	1966–1994	Poland–Soviet Union	1918–1939
China-France	1844–1900	Saudi Arabia–Yemen I	1932–1934
China-Japan I	1873–1945	Thailand-Vietnam I	1816–1884
Czechoslovakia-Germany	1933–1938	Vietnam–S. Vietnam	1954–1975
Czechoslovakia-Hungary	1920–1938	Yemen–S. Yemen	1967–1990

Source: Table from Rasler, Thompson and Ganguly's book "How Rivalries End" (2013), 7.

Table 2.3: *Rivalries Terminated Non-coercively, 1816-2010*

<i>Rivalry</i>	<i>Duration</i>	<i>Rivalry</i>	<i>Duration</i>
Afghanistan-Iran I	1816-1937	Ghana-Ivory Coast	1960-1970
Albania-Greece	1913-1996	Ghana-Nigeria	1960-1966
Angola-South Africa	1975-1988	Ghana-Togo	1960-1995
Argentina-Chile	1816-1904	Greece-Ottoman/Turkey I	1827-1930
Bahrain-Qatar	1986-2001	Greece-Serbia	1879-1954
Belize-Guatemala	1981-1993	Guatemala-Honduras	1840-1907
Bolivia-Peru	1825-1932	Guinea Bissau-Senegal	1989-1993
Britain-France II	1816-1904	Honduras-Nicaragua I	1895-1962
Britain-United States	1816-1904	Honduras-Nicaragua II	1980-1987
Bulgaria-Greece	1878-1947	Hungary-Yugoslavia	1918-1955
Bulgaria-Ottoman/Turkey	1878-1950	Indonesia-Malaysia	1962-1966
Bulgaria-Romania	1878-1945	Iran-Iraq I	1932-1939
Burkina Faso-Mali	1960-1986	Iraq-Saudi Arabia	1946-1958
Burundi-Rwanda	1962-1966	Israel-Jordan	1848-1994
Chad-Sudan I	1964-1969	Italy-Yugoslavia	1918-1954
Chile-Peru	1832-1929	Jordan-Saudi Arabia	1946-1958
China-Russia I	1816-1949	Kenya-Somalia	1963-1981
China-Soviet Union II	1958-1989	Kenya-Sudan	1989-1994
China-United States I	1949-1972	Kenya-Uganda	1986-1995
Colombia-Ecuador	1831-1919	Libya-Sudan	1974-1985
Colombia-Nicaragua	1971-1990	Malawi-Tanzania	1964-1994
Colombia-Peru	1827-1935	Malawi-Zambia	1964-1986
Costa Rica-Nicaragua I	1840-1858	Mauritania-Morocco	1960-1969
Costa Rica-Nicaragua II	1948-1992	Mauritania-Senegal	1989-1995
Costa Rica-Panama	1921-1944	Morocco-Spain	1956-1991
Dominican Republic-Haiti	1845-1893	Ottoman Empire-Serbia	1878-1918
DRC-Rwanda	1996-2009	Oman-S. Yemen	1972-1982
DRC-Uganda	1996-2009	Rhodesia-Zambia	1965-1979
Ecuador-Peru	1830-1998	Rwanda-Uganda	1999-2009
Egypt-Iran I	1955-1971	Saudi Arabia-Syria	1961-1970
Egypt-Jordan	1946-1970	South Africa-Zambia	1965-1991
Egypt-Libya	1973-1992	South Africa-Zimbabwe	1980-1992
Egypt-Saudi Arabia	1957-1970	Sudan-Uganda I	1963-1972
Egypt-Syria	1961-1990	Tanzania-Uganda	1971-1979
El Salvador-Guatemala	1840-1930	Thailand-Vietnam II	1954-1988
El Salvador-Honduras	1840-1992	United States-Soviet Union	1945-1989
France-Germany II	1816-1955	Soviet Union-Yugoslavia	1948-1955
France-Russia II	1816-1894		
W. Germany-E. Germany	1949-1973		

Source: Table from Rasler, Thompson and Ganguly's book on "How Rivalries End." (2013), 9.

What is missing from the dataset in Table 2.3 are the India-Pakistan and China-India rivalries. The dataset lists the US-Soviet and Sino-Soviet rivalry as terminated in 1989 with the disintegration of the USSR, whereas the US-China rivalry is listed as

terminated in 1972. If we are to accept the US-USSR rivalry termination point as 1989 due to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, then what do we call the current relationship between the United States and Russia? It is by no means in the range of “normal” relations;⁵⁰ in fact, we can categorize it as a rivalry under the strategic rivalry criterion of threatening a competitor who qualifies as an enemy. Similarly, US-China relations can be categorized under the strategic rivalries criterion of threatening a competitor as an enemy, but the level of threat from Beijing is different than that from Moscow.

In their book *How Rivalries End*, Rasler et al. do address the reemergence of both Russian-US and Sino-US rivalry and note that “in more constraint hues than had been exhibited in their earlier manifestation.”⁵¹ I agree with the authors that the US-Russia and US-China rivalry are different from the earlier versions, but we cannot ignore the similarities. As Thompson (1999) notes, the difference between a rival and competitor “is the element of insecurity that differentiates full-fledged rivals from competitors....as long as the possibility of military attack due to the perceived gravity of

⁵⁰ According to the *Dictionary of Diplomacy* by Berridge and James (2003), the terminology used for interstate relations are: **détente**: “an easing of strained diplomatic relations” (p.69); **Rapprochement**: “an overcoming or putting aside of previous difficulties in diplomatic relations, a reconciliation and growth in intimacy...the term is employed to describe the improvement in relations – at first cautious and slow, then dramatic and rapid.”(p223); **entente**: “a relationship between states in which military commitments are implicit rather than explicit...suggests strongly that the parties are sympathetic to each other to the point that they will stand shoulder to shoulder in war but contain no international legal obligations”(p.93-94), and **alliance**: “a treaty entered into by two or more states to engage in cooperative military action in specified circumstances... The difference between an alliance and entente is the precision of its commitments.” (p.8)

⁵¹ Rasler, Thompson and Ganguly (2013), 5.

the issues is missing, it is unlikely that a competitor will be transformed into a strategic rival.”⁵²

Significance of Nuclear Rivalries

Thus far, I have introduced the origins of the concept of rivalry, the various classifications of rivalries in international relations, and major theories of rivalry termination. In this study, I restrict my focus to nuclear rivalries – a key gap in the literature, as existing work does not address them as a separate category. Diehl and Goertz (2000) advocated for a rivalry approach to understanding interstate relations, and I argue their model is extremely useful because it incorporates the context and not just the conflict. However, their rivalry approach only focuses on militarized dispute, and thus lacks a complete picture. Having argued the limitations of the Diehl and Goertz theory, I contend that in order to understand nuclear rivalries, we need an approach that allows us to identify the internal, external, and regional dynamics between these dyads that play a role in rivalry persistence. Further, a definition of rivalry must be flexible to allow for rivalries with or without the militarized dispute dimension.

Existing scholarship on rivalries inadequately addresses the impact of nuclear weapons on rivalry interaction and termination. As I demonstrated by reviewing the literature on rivalries and its conceptual and methodological limitations, the literature has not sufficiently come to grips with the concept of rivalry or addressed nuclear rivalries. Similarly, the literature on nuclear weapons and their impact on state behavior has not provided us with a theory that would satisfactorily explain why nuclear adversarial relations persist, despite the security cooperation that takes place within

⁵² Thompson, (1999), 13.

these rivalries. The literature on nuclear weapons is organized under proliferation, deterrence and nuclear strategy, and offers insights into the conflict propensity of nuclear weapons states, as well as the impact of nuclear weapons on the process by which conflicts unfold.⁵³

Table 2.4: Nuclear Rivalries

Nuclear Rivalry	Duration
US-USSR/Russia	1945 – Present
US-China	1949 – Present
China-USSR/Russia	1958 – Present
China-India	1959 – Present
India-Pakistan	1947 – Present

Despite the enormous attention paid to rivalries, nuclear deterrence, and interstate interaction, the existing literature inadequately addresses the question of rivalry persistence and the cycle of cooperation and competition in nuclear dyads. In this study, I develop a theory that builds on the insights of previous scholarship to integrate the literature on nuclear deterrence and its impact on rivalry interaction into a single model.

⁵³ Glenn Synder (1965); Kenneth Waltz (1981;2010); John Mearsheimer (1984; 1993) Scott Sagan (1994; 2010) Erik Gartzke and Dong-Joon Jo (2009) Barry Posen (1991; 1997); Victor Asal and Beardsley (2007); Vipin Narang (2014) Nick Miller and Mark Bell (2015). The list is extensive I have just mentioned a few of the prominent works on nuclear weapons and its impact on interstate conflict, behavior and process.

I begin with the assertion that nuclear rivals are inextricably linked. As “nuclear weapons raise the cost of military conflict and this fact coupled with the assumption of rationality makes for the prediction that both crises and war will be less frequent among nuclear rivals.”⁵⁴ Nuclear rivalries have a high degree of mutual vulnerability, which perpetuates the possibility of military threat. Robert Jervis emphasized that nuclear weapons can cause destruction that is unimaginably enormous, and both sides can face the devastation in a very short period of time.⁵⁵ Given that nuclear weapons have raised the cost of conflict, I want to first begin with the question: do nuclear weapons stabilize a rivalry or have the opposite effect? To quote John Lewis Gaddis:

“nuclear weapons stabilized [the U.S.-USSR rivalry] but probably also prolong that conflict...these weapons discouraged escalation of the kind that had caused pre-Cold War crises to lead to hot wars... The Cold War was full of crises, none of them escalated to all out war, and in this case nuclear weapons were beneficial. In another sense they may have extended the Cold War Beyond the point at which it might otherwise have ended. Nuclear weapons were so awesome -- and the world had apparently come so close to seeing them used during the Cuban missile crisis -- that the tendency developed to measure world power almost entirely in terms of nuclear capabilities.”⁵⁶

For John Lewis Gaddis, nuclear weapons were the most important factors for the “long peace” between the super powers. However, other scholars have reservations about the nuclear peace theory; as John Mueller argued, the experience of the two world wars played a role in discouraging the two super powers from starting a third world war in the 50’s, and it was the economic factors that created incentives for super powers to avoid war. But if that was the case, then Stalin would not have reversed all military

⁵⁴ Fearon, (1992), 77.

⁵⁵ Robert Jervis, (1988), 31 – 36.

⁵⁶ John Lewis Gaddis, *The New Cold War History*. From a keynote address delivered at the Foreign Policy Research History Institute, on the Cold War Revisited, May 1st 1998.

cutbacks and started a massive arms build-up in January 1950, as he is known to have done. He had believed that the Third World War would start by the middle of 1950's and that the USSR should be ready for either a strong response to an American attack or be able to launch a preemptive strike.⁵⁷ In an interview with Stalin with an American journalist, Alexander Werth, Stalin said "atomic bombs are meant to frighten those with weak nerves, but they cannot decide the fate of wars since atomic bombs are quite insufficient for that."⁵⁸ For Stalin, nuclear weapons had two effects: psychological impact and the possibility of unleashing armageddon on the enemy.⁵⁹ I argue that nuclear weapons maintained the stability between the Cold War rivals, and the decision-makers' aversion towards another World War was magnified due to the devastation that could result from a nuclear war. Hence, nuclear weapons shape a leader's perception and impact their decision to not escalate a crisis to a large-scale war. As Snyder and Diesing point out, "the primary effect of the possession of nuclear weapons on the behavior of adversaries is the creation of new constraints on the ultimate range of their

⁵⁷ David Holloway (1994) argued in his book, 'Stalin And The Bomb,' that Stalin had decided that the maximum danger from the United States would come around the mid – 1950's, but in Holloway's work he noted that Stalin might back a pre-emptive war, but not wage one. However, the conversation between Stalin and Mao that was reported in the book, 'Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao and the Korean War,' by Sergei Goncharov, John Lewis, and Xue Litai (1993) based their argument on documents that were declassified later that "Stalin's statement to Mao suggest that Stalin was leaning toward what might be called a limited preemptive conflict." pp. 109

⁵⁸ John Lewis Gaddis, Philip Gordon, Ernest May and Jonathan Rosenberg, 'Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy Since 1945.' 1999 p 52

⁵⁹ Zubock, 'Stalin,' in Gaddis, *Cold War Statesmen confront the Bomb, Nuclear diplomacy since 1945* (1999), 54.

coercive tactics – a result of the extraordinary increase in the interval between the value of the interests at stake in a conflict and the potential costs of war.”⁶⁰

One of the most influential concepts that emerged from the nuclear peace thesis was the notion of “mutually assured destruction” (MAD), meaning that if war were to start between nuclear dyads, the two rivals could unleash assured destruction by exchanging nuclear weapons. Lawrence Freedman noted that the “deterrence of nuclear war still rests on the mutual threat of assured destruction⁶¹...and it is not nearly as fragile as many critics suggest.”⁶² The risk of mutually assured destruction forces political leaders to observe caution to avoid miscalculation that could result in war. As Waltz noted, “nuclear weapons make states more cautious,”⁶³ making war between nuclear dyads impossible. It must be noted that ‘MAD is a condition and not a strategy and within it are a range of strategies and postures.’⁶⁴ A core proposition of MAD is second-strike capability, meaning the capacity to strike back after the first round of nuclear exchange. However, Waltz questions the determination of states for a second round, arguing that “given second strike capabilities, it is not the balance of forces that counts but the courage to use them that counts. The balance or imbalance of strategic

⁶⁰ Snyder, G. H., & Diesing, P. (1977). Also, cited in Daniel Geller’s “Nuclear weapons and crisis escalation page 295

⁶¹ Before MAD was the concept of *assured destruction*, and it was defined by Alain Enthoven and K. Wayne Smith, as “deter a deliberate nuclear attack upon the United States or its allies by maintaining at all times a clear and unmistakable ability inflict an unacceptable degree of damage upon any aggressor, or a combination of aggressors - even after absorbing a surprise first strike.” in “How Much is Enough?” (1971), 174.

⁶² Gerald Segal; Edwina Moreton; Lawrence Freedman and John Baylis, ‘Nuclear War and Nuclear Peace.’ (London: MacMillan Press: 1983), 154.

⁶³ Waltz and Sagan, (2010), 39.

⁶⁴ Charles Glaser, *Analyzing Strategic Nuclear Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 4.

forces affects neither the calculation of the danger nor the question of whose will is the stronger. Second strike forces have to be seen in absolute terms.”⁶⁵

The discussion on whether MAD creates stability or instability between rivals was extensively debated during the Cold War. The supporters of MAD believed that it created stability in the US-USSR rivalry, as the cost of even a small nuclear attack exceeded its benefits, and effective defense against a nuclear attack was not possible.⁶⁶ The proponents of MAD opposed counterforce strategies and missile defense programs as they were deemed destabilizing to the rivalry.⁶⁷ In sharp contrast, the critics of MAD argued that deterrence could fail and that if parity was achieved within a rivalry by the adversary, it would result in a loss of leverage in bargaining with the enemy. These scholars pushed for a counterforce strategy to secure victory in a nuclear war.⁶⁸ What was missing from the argument was that victory is not possible in a nuclear war. American Presidents from Truman to Eisenhower; from Reagan to Bush; and from Clinton to Obama all believed that nuclear war cannot be won. We see a similar understanding on the Soviet side; however, Stalin had different designs, but he never lived too long to see the actual formation of Soviet nuclear strategy and posture.

The most remarkable case of nuclear deterrence is observed in Asia, with China facing two nuclear rivals (USSR/Russia & India) and two nuclear allies (Pakistan & North Korea), confronting the United States on global platform as well as in the region. Until recently, China’s strategic nuclear force was aimed at the United States and the

⁶⁵ Waltz,(1995), 18.

⁶⁶ McGeorge Bundy, “To Cap the Volcano,” *Foreign Affairs*, 48, (Oct. 1969), 10.

⁶⁷ A ‘counter-force’ strategy entails weapons designed to destroy Soviet nuclear forces. ‘Counter-value,’ on the other hand threatens Soviet society.

⁶⁸ John Baylis and John Garnett, *Makers of Nuclear Strategy*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991), 65. “Albert Wohlstetter.”

number was comparatively very small.⁶⁹ Avery Goldstein's research on the Chinese, French and British case argued that a small number of nuclear weapons were sufficient to deter an adversary. As he noted, "nuclear armed states do not need to convince a potential aggressor that retaliation is certain, or even likely, only that it is possible and, most importantly, that *neither* party can safely predict what actually response will be." Similarly, in the case of India and Pakistan, Devin Hagerty (1998) found that the primary goal of both the states is to avoid nuclear war.⁷⁰

This study argues that when rivals acquire nuclear weapons, the rivalry transforms to an adversarial yet stable relation, where the relationship operates between competition and cooperation. Furthermore, in chapter 3, I elaborate on types of nuclear rivalry relations based on the degrees of competition and cooperation between rivals.

Where Do We Go From Here?

As Kenneth Waltz noted, "we have enjoyed half a century of nuclear peace."⁷¹ Indeed, the long peace continues, despite the great power rivalries that persist. Rivalry study is important empirically, theoretically, and for policy. Popular understanding of rivalries is that they are interstate relationships characterized by strong issue disagreements, mutual suspicion, and repeated militarized conflicts.⁷² Rivalries are situations where one or both rivals are dissatisfied with the status quo, where each rival views the other as a threat to their intrinsic interests, and where the threat perception is

⁶⁹ Thomas Christensen, (2016), 68

⁷⁰ Devin Hagerty, (1998), 184.

⁷¹ Waltz, (1995), 33.

⁷² Wayman (1989); Huth and Russett (1993); Goertz and Diehl (1993).

high on both sides, often leading to militarized conflicts.⁷³ Thus rivalries, as Colaresi, Rasler and Thompson (2007) note, “are dangerous incubators of conflict and crisis, and war.”⁷⁴

Over the last seventy years, extensive literature has been devoted to the U.S.-USSR rivalry and the nuclear strategy during the Cold War and the decisions and options available to the political leaders in both states. The literature has not provided a rigorous and satisfactory account of the concept of strategic nuclear rivalry. Although this dissertation is not the comprehensive authority on the concept, I aim to start the discussion. Explanation of specific crises does not confer an understanding on the larger phenomenon of nuclear rivalries. The current literature covers specific events, crises, and wars at the cost of neglecting understanding of the larger phenomenon of what caused the crises/war or event.

⁷³ Goertz and Diehl, (1993).

⁷⁴ Colaresi, Rasler, and Thompson, (2007), 131.

Chapter 3

Adversarial Peace

“No monarch or dictator or group of oligarchs is ever absolute. They rule not only subject to the data of the national situation but also subject to the necessity of acting with some people, of getting along with others, of neutralizing still others and of subduing the rest. And this may be done in an almost infinite variety of ways each of which will determine what a given formal arrangement really means either for the nation in which it obtains or for the scientific observer; to speak of monarchy as if it meant a definite thing spells dilettantism.”

—Joseph Schumpeter¹

“Nobody pities or respects the weak. Respect is reserved for the strong.”²

Introduction:

This dissertation asks: why do nuclear rivalries persist, despite incentives to cooperate and opportunities to resolve the conflict? What explains the variation in the interactions with and between nuclear rivals? In answering these questions, I focus on the leaders, domestic political and economic factors and the role of other actors in the region as well as great powers in the system.

In this chapter, I develop my argument of adversarial peace that explains the transformation of a strategic rivalry to a nuclear rivalry and the continuation of the rivalry. I argue, that nuclear weapons change the dynamics of the rivalry interaction. As Rajesh Basrur argued in the case of Pakistan and India, but the argument is valid for nuclear rivalry behavior in general, “nuclear weapons have complex effects, by

¹ Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1942), 245.

² Zubok, V. M. *A Failed Empire: the Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 19

intensifying rivalries and yet moderating the way they are played out. Nuclear rivals behave in contrary ways. When war is near, they try hard to avoid it. When it is not, they behave as if it were a viable option.”³ He further argues that, “regardless of how strong the basis of conflict is, the reality is that nuclear weapons produce an environment in which cold-warring states have strong incentives to learn and rethink – a process which decision makers can shape.”

Realist Perspective on Rivalries:

The study of conflict and cooperation is the core of international relations field, where the battle lines are drawn between the realist and neo-liberalist paradigms. To situated each paradigms perspective on the study of rivalry and rivalry termination, one simply visits the core assumptions of both the paradigms. Anarchy plays a crucial role for realism, as it is a constant feature of the international system, hence, it also creates the constant possibility of war between states – friends or foe. Of course, realism is not a single theory, classical realist like Hans Morgenthau and Reinhold Niebuhr, would that states have an innate desire to dominate and it is this desire that leads to war.

Morgenthau stressed on a multipolar, balance of power system, and considered the rivalry between the US and USSR during the Cold War as dangerous. Kenneth Waltz, advanced the argument on the effects of the international system on rivalries. Waltz considered the system to be made up of several great powers and each seeking and maximization security in an anarchic system. Waltz argued that conditions in the international system would propel rivals to balance, rather than bandwagon.

³ Rajesh Basrur, *South Asia's Cold War: Nuclear Weapons and Conflict in Comparative perspective* (New York: Routledge, 2008) 4.

Robert Jervis, and Stephen Van Evera refined the realist theory further and argued that war is likely when states know they can conquer their adversaries. Similarly, they argue that when defense is easier than offense in a rivalry, incentives for cooperation are higher. “and if defense had the advantage, states could distinguish between offensive and defensive weapons, then states could acquire the means to defend themselves without threatening others, thereby dampening the effects of anarchy in a rivalry.”⁴ Stephen Walt’s further refinement to the balancing model by adding geographic proximity, offensive capability and perceived aggressive intent as components of threat.

Realist Thesis on Rivalry Persistence/Cooperation:

Common Enemy:

The first hypothesis is that rival states will put aside their rivalry to balance a greater common threat. The cooperation with a rival in this situation is based on the degree of threat faced by both states. As Jervis argues, “a rough proportionality between the magnitude of the conflict with the enemy and the strength of the unifying force generated... the more deeply two countries are divided from each other, the greater the external threat that will be required to bring them together.”⁵

Asymmetry of Power:

Dale Copeland argues that there is one factor that drives states, regardless of its

⁴ Stephen Walt, “International Relations: One World, Many Theories.” *Foreign Policy*, (Spring 1998).

⁵ Robert Jervis, (2001), 222-223.

characteristics: power.⁶ Rivalries persist due to the asymmetry of power, “fear of decline in economic and potential power leads to hardline military policies.”⁷ However, according to this line of thinking, rivalries end when the power asymmetries grow so wide that military victory is no longer possible and leaders opt for a political solution. In the case of nuclear rivalries, military victory is impossible and yet the rivalries

Nuclear Peace:

According to the Nuclear revolution literature, nuclear weapons dramatically reduces the possibility of war, and increases the likelihood of peace between nuclear rivals. In the Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution, Robert Jervis, lays out that in a nuclear rivalry war fight is a delusion and in fact it is the stable balance of terror that relaxes the security dilemma and dampens the constraints of anarchy. Jervis also notes that, “nuclear weapons have brought superpower [rivalry] great security and enormous insecurity. Security is great because the chance of war is unusually low, and insecurity because if major war would occur they would be destroyed.”⁸

A Liberal Perspective on Rivalries:

Liberalism remains the principle challengers to realism. Liberal thought have emphasized on economic interdependence, democratic peace, and more recently focused on international institutions in discouraging states from using forces against each other. Bruce Russett and John O’neal argue that in a “mutually reinforcing effects

⁶ Dale Copeland, *The Origins of Major War*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 1.

⁷ Ibid, 175.

⁸ Robert Jervis, (1986), 690.

of democracy, interdependence, and international organizations on peace and on one another “are apt to become stronger, and the system itself more stable over time.”⁹

A Parochial Interest thesis:

This hypothesis advances the argument of domestic political processes on rivalries. Christopher Darnton, argues that “government agencies with vested interests in the policies associated with rivalry will act to prevent national leaders from achieving cooperation with the rivals.” He argued that when two conditions are met: “first, the emergence of an alternative mission for those agencies in the form of a common foe, and second, state resource constraints that force budgetary tradeoffs among policy priorities.”¹⁰ He takes the concept of “vested interests” from Thorstein Veblen, who defines vest interests as, “a marketable right to get something for nothing. . . . Vested interests are immaterial wealth, intangible assets.”

Adversarial Peace Model

If we look at international relations since the end of World War II, a few pairs of states have demonstrated a tendency to engage in frequent militarized conflicts, and within those cases of conflict almost 68 percent (17 out of 25) of the states involved in warfare are either nuclear armed states at the time or acquired nuclear capability later. (See Table 1.1). Furthermore, in that list a few states consistently experience conflict,

⁹ Bruce Russett and John Oneal, *Triangulating Peace: Democracy, Interdependence, and International Organizations* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 35. Also cited in Christopher Darnton, (2016), 23.

¹⁰ Christopher Darnton, (2016), 27.

(for example, India and Pakistan) but that the same pair of rival reduces the number of militarized disputes after acquiring nuclear weapons. The nuclear weapons addition to the rivalry, does not take away the competition between the rivals, and neither does it eliminate the enemy perception with potential militarized threat remains. I argue that nuclear rivalry persists based on a combination of factors – both on domestic and external - regional and systemic level. Fundamentally, not all nuclear rivalries are alike, and even within the same rivalry over time you have different leaders at different times, thus we cannot have one hypothesis or model that can explain it all. However, the consistent thread in all adversarial peace is the enemy perception of the other that leads to a distrust and elevated threat level. The concept of adversarial peace comes from Shimon Shamir from Tel-Aviv University, he described the Israeli - Egyptian relationship as adversarial peace, he characterized it by “sharp ideological differences, intensive propaganda warfare, and mutual perception of grave threat and deep distrust, despite a formal peace agreement.”¹¹ To refine Shamir’s definition for nuclear rivalries, I would argue that nuclear rivals share intense spatial and/or positional differences, along with mutual perception of threat and distrust, and in some cases intensive propaganda warfare that has now taken the shape of cyber warfare, despite of increased security cooperation.

Nuclear Rivalry Interaction:

This study offers an explanation for rivalry persistence and interaction based on the mutual vulnerability dilemma/threat perception and domestic constraints/politics.

¹¹ Alexander George, “From Conflict to Peace: Stages Along the Road,” *United Institute of Peace Journal* Vol.5 (December, 1992), 8.

First, the dissertation offers a typology of nuclear rivalry interaction to identify the variation in the values of the dependent variable (cooperation and competition).

Empirically, we observe the following interaction in a nuclear rivalry: a *collaborative competition*, *strategic cooperation*, *cooperative coexistence*, and *conflictual coexistence*. Each of the interaction is distinct, empirically observable and historically rooted to measure the variation in the dependent variable.

Table 1.3: Typology of Nuclear Rivalry Interaction

Nuclear Rivalry Interaction	
1. Collaborative competition	Is a relationship where there are strong elements of cooperation and competition. Along with differing perceptions and divergent expectations of cooperation due to strong domestic pressures from both sides. Example: detente was pursued with an arms race, ideological warfare and at the same time guarantee of peace and stability.
2. Strategic cooperation	When rivals form a relationship of mutual confidence, and mutual coordination. One state cooperates due to domestic constraints and the other actor cooperates due to regional constraints. China – Russia strategic partnership in the 90's is a good example of this typology.
3. Cooperative coexistence	Is a relationship with bilateral - high cooperation and low competition. External pressure due to a common enemy as was the case of US- China rapprochement. Aligned expectations with regards to the threat.
4. Conflictual coexistence	When each state has a strong preference for relying on its own efforts to assure security by taking unilateral action, rather than depending on cooperative arrangements with a adversary and the decision makers prefer competition over cooperation. – no arms agreement and militarized border. Example: India-Pakistan.

Furthermore, the variation is observed through the following mechanism in the nuclear rivalry cases: 1.) *Mutual adjustment*: include (bilateral or multilateral) measures that reduce competition by attempting to or removing an existing or potential source of conflict. Examples for mutual adjustment measures in the US-USSR case include: the Austrian Treaty 1955; the Antarctic Treaty of 1959; the 1971 Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin and the tacit understanding of not interfering with each other's space and satellite activities. 2.) *Reciprocal coordination*: state policies and actions that would reduce the rival's insecurity and limit the type of competition that could potentially lead to harmful consequences that both sides would not prefer. Confidence and Security Building Measure (CSBMs) and arms control agreements fall under this category. Examples include: the various arms control agreements between the US and USSR; the establishment of hotlines, etc. 3.) *Unilateral actions*: these measures are rare, but they can reduce or increase uncertainty. Either side can take a unilateral action without expecting the other to reciprocate. Alexander George argues that these actions can 'contribute directly or indirectly to a state's own security without increasing the other side's insecurity.' Examples include, the Incidents at Sea Agreement of 1972.¹²

Like most relationships, inter-state relations are on the conflict – cooperation spectrum. However, nuclear rivalries are not on a linear spectrum, and instead are

¹² Alexander George in the edited volume, *'U.S.-Soviet Security Cooperation,'* lays out "the first comprehensive systematic study of the efforts the United States and USSR have made since World War II to develop and carry out cooperative arrangements to improve their own security and that of other nations." (1988), vii. In this book, he provides alternative form of cooperation and they were 1. Mutual adjustment; 2. Reciprocal coordination, and 3. Unilateral action. p. 4 This dissertation utilizes George's three types of cooperation and applies it to all the nuclear rivalry cases.

analogous to the Möbius strip: a one sided non-orientable twisted cylinder. Nuclear rivalries have a similar mechanism as the Möbius strip: they are interlocked by the mutual vulnerability dilemma and they remain embedded in an adversarial peace circle, where war is not an option and the enemy perception of “the other” persists; they are interlocked in a cycle of competition and cooperation. The mutual vulnerability dilemma sets in when both rivals can destroy each other with nuclear weapons, what Robert Jervis calls “fate-control.”¹³ According to the social psychology literature, fate-control is the ability to determine what happens to the other. The key consequences of mutual nuclear possession are that states cannot escalate a crisis to war, but they remain insecure because the adversary has control over its fate and what it values the most.

This dissertation investigates the impact of mutual nuclear possession on conflict and cooperation – concepts that are central to our understanding of rivalries. Nuclear rivalries have historically experienced both competitive and cooperative cycles. When competitive elements in a rivalry grow, the cooperative elements decline in response—as in the Möbius strip, when the negative curvature traverses upwards, positive curvature declines, and the shift occurs after reaching the zero-curvature point, where it readjusts. For example, in 1998 the events leading up to the Kargil Crisis between India and Pakistan demonstrate that before the crisis started the two states were improving relations, with India’s Prime Minister Vajpayee taking the bus to Lahore to meet his

¹³ Jervis, (1989), 3 Jervis notes that “nuclear weapons are very powerful in one sense but not in another.” He draws from John Thibaut and Harold Kelly’s work on fate control and behavior control, “terms that indicate, the former is the ability to determine what happens to others and the latter is the ability to control their behavior.” He further contends that, the US-USSR have fate-control over each other, but its not clear how much it translates into behavior control. John Thibaut and Harold Kelly, *The Social Psychology of Groups* (New York:1959), 101-11.

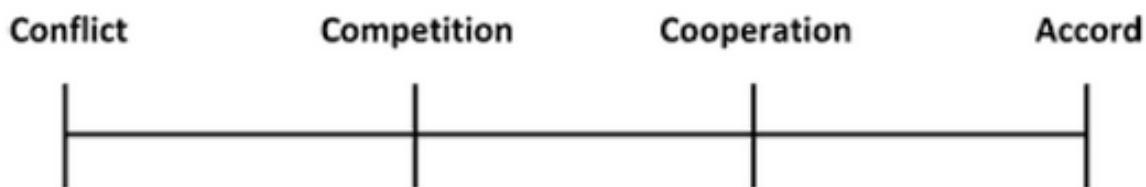
counterpart. Yet, they could not find common ground on the Kashmir issue, and then the downward turn began. Confirming the parochial interest hypothesis, government agencies with vested interest will act to prevent from achieving cooperation in a rivalry, and eventually taking the negative curvature upwards by bring the two states to the verge of war in 1998.

In international relations, cooperation and competition are both conditioned by domestic constraints and external factors. The current US-Chinese relationship, which is experiencing a *collaborative competition phase*, where we observe a decrease in cooperation and an increase competition, exemplifies this relationship. David Shambaugh (2013) notes that there are several factors behind the changing relationship between the United States and China. The systemic changes affecting this relationship range from the shift in power balance between the two states to the *structural interdependence*.¹⁴ Shambaugh describes structural interdependence as the condition that binds both states together due to their interdependencies on each other, but it also “exacerbates existing friction and produces new competition.”¹⁵ David Shambaugh’s argument is in line with my adversarial peace thesis; furthermore, he points to the “odd-mixture” of competition and cooperation in this relationship and calls it the competitive coexistence phase. What I will show in this dissertation is the cycle of cooperation and competition that plays out in the strategic rivalries with nuclear weapons compared to those without.

¹⁴ David Shambaugh, *Tangled Titans: The United States and China* (Rowman & Littlefield: 2013), 5.

¹⁵ Ibid.

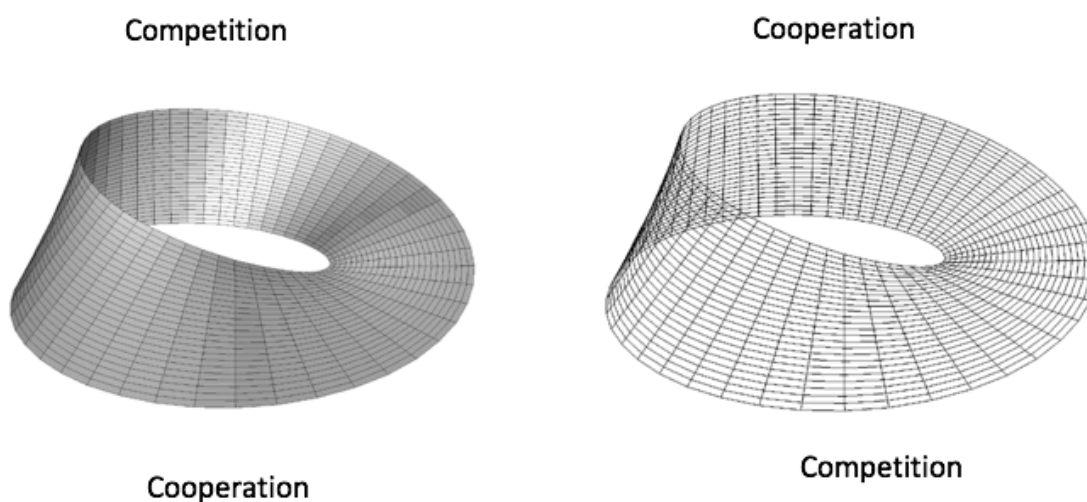
Figure 1.1: Spectrum of Interstate Relationship



Source: David Shambaugh, Tangled Titans. p22. He used this spectrum to describe the US-China relationship.

Achieving cooperation in any interstate relationship is difficult, and the task is even more complicated in a competitive relationship tied with military threat and enemy perception. Figure 1.1 shows the range of possible interstate relationships, from conflict to accord. Nuclear rivalries operate between cooperation and competition (see Figure 1.2). The extreme end that is conflict is avoided due to the danger of escalation; at the same time, the potential for a military threat and enemy perception prevents nuclear dyads from forging accords and alliances.

Figure 1.2: Strategic Nuclear Rivalry Spectrum



To explain why nuclear rivals cooperate, I argue that nuclear weapons create the mutual vulnerability dilemma where both sides feel a profound psychological susceptibility to mutual annihilation and that the other controls what the state values the most and vice versa. Prior to nuclear acquisition, military forces could seize and capture disputed territory; they could limit or decrease the military effectiveness of rival forces, and most importantly, they could inflict punishment on the other side.¹⁶ In mutual nuclear possession within a rivalry, either side can achieve those objectives, but at the cost of what it values the most. This is what Thomas Schelling calls 'mutual-kill.' Schelling argued that what is significant about nuclear weapons is not overkill but mutual-kill, meaning the side that is losing by any measure can inflict unprecedented destruction on the side that is winning as easy as the winner can do this to the loser.¹⁷ I argue that in the wake of the mutual vulnerability dilemma, nuclear rivalries transition into a state of perpetual adversarial relationships like the Mobius strip analogy. Where both states accept the limitations on their interactions and embrace an adversarial peace, where large-scale war is no longer an option; crises become infrequent and the status quo is resistant to change. This in turn results in cooperation both in security as well as economic domains, while maintaining the competitive dimension of a rivalry. Thus, a recognition and understanding of the mutual vulnerability dilemma facilitates cooperation in a nuclear rivalry.

¹⁶ Robert Jervis, (1986), 690.

¹⁷ Thomas Schelling, (1980).

Research Design:

The central aim for this study is to observe the persistence of adversarial relations between rivals with nuclear weapons and explore the interaction of the nuclear rivals. Observation of a certain phenomenon is carried out in three basic methods, experimentation, observation using large-n analysis, or observation using case study method. Stephen Van Evera argues that case studies can serve, five main purposes: testing theories, creating theories, identifying antecedent conditions, testing the importance of these antecedent conditions, and most importantly explaining intrinsic importance.¹⁸ Furthermore, Van Evera argues that case studies offer three formats for testing theory: controlled comparison, congruence procedures, and process tracing.¹⁹

This study addresses two important inquiries: why do nuclear rivalries persist? And secondly, it aims to understand the interaction between nuclear rivals since the end of WWII. I employ the comparative historical case study method and specifically I undertake process tracing to trace the impact of both the external and internal factor on the interaction within the rivalry. Process tracing identifies the causal process and intervening variable between the independent variable and the dependent variables. “Process tracing allows the investigator to explore the chain of events, by which the initial case conditions are translated into case outcomes.”²⁰ It also allows the researcher to focus on important “inflection points in any large decision, and show how the changes

¹⁸ Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 55-56

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid

in key variables produce different outcomes.”²¹ Van Evera further notes, that a “complete process-trace looks for evidence of all links in all the chains.”²²

The Case Study Method:

The case study method is the most suitable methodology for understanding the persistence of nuclear rivalries and the variation in the behavior of the nuclear rivals. Case studies allow for the detailed historical explanations that are required to discover the interaction between nuclear rivals and the observed outcome of rivalry continuation. Case study makes it easier to assess the cause and effect of factors that are sometimes difficult to measure, (for example, enemy perception).

Sources and Data:

My research is based on over 10,000 primary documents, that I have collected from the LBJ, Nixon and George H W Bush presidential libraries; the National Archives in Islamabad; the Digital National Security Archives, and the Office of the United States Historian. In my Pakistan-India case, I have conducted interviews on the threat and enemy perception of each other. Additionally, I have relied on the memoirs of the decision-makers and diplomats, along with newspaper archives for both the main case studies.

In this study, I examined both primary and secondary sources to provide and construct the historical background and theoretical context. The study of the persistence of nuclear rivalries is methodologically challenging as information on some of the cases

²¹ Joshua Rovner, *Fixing the facts : national security and the politics of intelligence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 26

²² Van Evera, (1999, 55-56)

is extremely difficult to attain. The case of the United States rivalry with the Soviet Union and Russia is a unique case where data on the American side is accessible, but some of the archive in Moscow are difficult due to language barriers and other constraints. The subject lends itself to qualitative analysis, there simply not enough cases to justify a large-N analysis, but more importantly large-N study is not plausible for the type of questions this study asks.

Case Selection Criteria:

The potential cases for this study are nuclear weapon states that are involved in long standing rivalries. To understand the persistence of nuclear rivalry I have selected cases that range from great power rivalry to regional rivalries. The US-USSR/ US-Russia case based on its great power nuclear rivalry status, and the India-Pakistan because of its regional nuclear rivalry status. To demonstrate, variation in rivalry outcome, I have a selected the mini-case of Brazil and Argentina rivalry where rapprochement occurred after the nuclear question was resolved between the long-standing rivals. These three cases, exhibit variation in the interaction and outcome. In the case of US-USSR/Russia and India-Pakistan, the rivalry persists, but the variation is in the degree of cooperation. In the Brazil-Argentina case, the level of cooperation increased and the rivalry terminated after the nuclear question was resolved.

The aim of any study on rivalry termination or persistence is to develop clear arguments and a parsimonious theory, but most of the work on rapprochement and rivalry termination falls short of theory. The question is, can we have a parsimonious theory on rivalry termination or rapprochement because a satisfactory explanation requires an in-depth analysis of the complexities various factors and actors involved.

The aim for any work on rivalry termination and persistence is to identify the mechanism that maintains the rivalry and the conditions under which the rivalry terminates.

One criticism of the case selection in this dissertation, is that it ignores the case of China – a case where you have the great power rivalry with the United States, as well as regional rivalry with India and Russia. It would also benefit from a mini-case study on Saudi Arabia’s rivalry with Iran, where the nuclear question was resolved and yet the rivalry persists. While the research design and argument would be strengthened by including China’s rivalries, and I do plan on incorporating China and her rivalries and Saudi Arabia and Iran’s rivalry in the book manuscript of this study.

The Value of Descriptive Historical Case Studies:

This dissertation employs the method of comparative historical case study method. With two set of cases: the US-USSR and US-Russia case as the great power nuclear rivalry, and second the India-Pakistan rivalry as the regional nuclear rivalry. The literature on nuclear deterrence and proliferation has given immense focus to conflict and crises in nuclear dyads. These studies are valuable but they lack the close attention to the other factors that play a role in the strategic interaction between nuclear rival states.

This study draws immense encouragement from Stephen Van Evera’s category of evaluative historical dissertations. A dissertation question on nuclear rivalry persistence is best answered with a combination of *literature assessing*, and *historical explanatory* category. King, Keohane, and Verba who are known to be proponents of quantitative work, have argued, “in the field such as International Relations, descriptive work is

particularly important because there is a great deal we still do not know.”²³ A *literature assessing* dissertation “summarizes and evaluates existing theoretical and empirical literature on a subject.” Furthermore, it asks “whether existing theories are valuable and existing tests are persuasive and complete.”²⁴ Stephen Van Evera describes *historical explanatory* dissertations “uses theory to explain the causes, patterns, or consequences of historical cases...and provides a good deal of description but focus on explaining what is described.”²⁵

²³ King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Science Inquiry*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 44-45.

²⁴ Van Evera, (1999), 90.

²⁵ Ibid., 91-92.

Chapter 4

The Clash of the Titans: The Start of the US-USSR Rivalry

“I think before 10 years elapse they (the Americans and the Western powers) will with our ass. Our prestige has been declining abominably! Nobody will support the Soviet Union.”¹

Conversations between the Soviet generals, December 1946

“Roosevelt believed that Russians would come and bow down to America and beg, since Russia is a poor country, without industry, without bread. Then we looked at it differently. For the people were ready for sacrifice and struggle.”

Molotov, June 1976 ²

“Never – neither then or at any later date – did I consider the Soviet Union a fit ally, or associate, actual or potential, for this country.”

George Kennan 1933

“If we see that Germany is winning we ought to help Russia and if Russia is winning we ought to help Germany and that we let them kill as many as possible, although I don't want to see Hitler victorious under any circumstances. Neither of them thinks anything of their pledged word.”

Harry Truman

Introduction

Before June 1941, it would have been inconceivable for the Communist leadership in the USSR to form an alliance with the United States and Britain against Germany.³ But by 1944, Secretary of State Cordell Hull noted, “the relations between the

¹ Vladislov Zubok, *A Failed Empire: The Soviet Union in the Cold War from Stalin to Gorbachev* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 29

² Ibid., 1

³ Vesselin Dimitrov, *Stalin's cold war: Soviet foreign policy, democracy and communism in Bulgaria, 1941-1948* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 41. On June 22, 1941, the Nazi attacked the Soviet Union. It was “this event that Stalin had been working so desperately to avoid since 1933 and it finally occurred.... and.. it was the war against Germany, the Soviet Union found itself in an alliance with the world’s most power capitalist states, whilst the march of its armies towards Berlin and Vienna enabled it to exert direct influence on the political life of the Eastern European countries.” p. 41

United States and Russia were closer than they had ever been. Through the Moscow and Tehran Conferences we had brought Russia into a program of real cooperation for the remainder of the war, and we hoped, for the future.”⁴ It was Hitler’s invasion of Russia that made the alliance between Russia and the West a reality, but the wartime alliance between the United States and the Soviet Union turned to be unsustainable and descended into a Cold War. Although Roosevelt had hoped that the wartime alliance would fill the ideological gap between the West and Russia and create conditions for peace,⁵ towards the end of WWII in 1945, Stalin believed “that he was in the same position as Alexander I after the defeat of Napoleon and that he could dictate the rule for all of Europe.”⁶

Hence, the conditions were ripe for a US-USSR rivalry, despite extensive military cooperation during the war, and the Allies’ assurance to Stalin during the Teheran conference that the United States and Britain were not against Russia. Both Roosevelt and Churchill tried to appease Stalin in their own way, but that did not curb Stalin’s expansionist intentions.⁷ The two states that surfaced from the ashes of the war were thus destined to be rivals, as they adjusted to: the emerging bipolar distribution of

⁴ Cordell Hull, *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull 1871-1955*. (New York: Macmillan Co., 1948), 1436.

⁵ Susan Butler, Roosevelt, Franklin D. *"My Dear Mr. Stalin the Complete Correspondence between Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph V. Stalin."* edited by Joseph Stalin and Susan Butler, (Yale University, 2005), xi . Arthur Schlesinger in the Foreword to this book mentions Walter Lippmann’s analysis that FDR was too cynical and not that naive, “he distrusted everybody. What he thought he could do was outwit Stalin, which quite a different thing.”

⁶ Zubok, (2007), Cites a recollection of Khrushchev.

⁷ Adam Ulam, *The Rivals: America and Russia Since World War II* (Viking Press: 1971), 14 – 15. The author notes, both Churchill and Roosevelt hoped appease Stalin. Churchill went out of his way to initiate a discussion on the Polish problem. Roosevelt, sided with Stalin in dispute with Churchill and tried to make light of the mood.

power in the international system; the economic crisis brewing in Western Europe; the threat of communist takeover in Europe, and the conflict of interest in the oil-rich and militarily strategic parts of the world.

This chapter focuses on the initiation of the US-USSR rivalry. It begins with a historical overview of the Grand Alliance, starting from the period of 1941 – 1945, and establishes the enemy perception between the USSR and Western Allies that formed due to Soviet behavior with regards to the Polish question, and after the defeat of Hitler and the division of Germany. The chapter addresses two important crises that followed the fall of Germany: the Turkish Strait crisis, in which the Truman Administration considered a retaliatory strike option that also included the use of an atomic bomb on the Soviet Union, and the Iranian Crisis, in which the Russians breached their commitment by failing to withdraw troops from Northern Iran. The chapter also addresses the role of nuclear weapons in the early interaction between the US and the USSR. The chapter concludes with a summary of the events described.

From the Grand Alliance to the Troubled Alliance: 1941-1945

Before addressing the key events of the Cold War, I briefly discuss the origins of the US – USSR rivalry. The wartime alliance that started in 1941 and that Winston Churchill designated the “Grand Alliance” started to show signs of rupture in just two years. By 1943, the Grand Alliance had turned into the “Strange alliance,”⁸ or as others called it, the “troubled alliance.”⁹ On the British side, Prime Minister Churchill’s frustration was evident when he said, “the Soviet government had the impression that

⁸ Gen. John R Deane who was the secretary of the Combined Chiefs of Staff until 1943.

⁹ Secretary Hull called it the troubled alliance.

they were conferring a great favor on us by fighting in their own country for their own lives. The more they fought the heavier our debt became. This was not a balanced view.”¹⁰

On the American side, the primary goal was to win the war and forge a lasting peace in Europe. To that end, President Roosevelt had two objectives, one domestic and the other international: on the domestic front, he did not want the United States to retreat into isolationist foreign policy, and on the international front, he was concerned with ending the war. He saw the solution to both his goals in an international organization – the United Nations – that would prevent another world war. To achieve his objectives, Franklin Roosevelt needed the help of Joseph Stalin, and he knew that without the participation of Russia it would be impossible to create a United Nations. Thus, to gain Stalin’s trust and admiration, Roosevelt made sure the United States supplied raw materials and military tools to the Soviet army on a large scale.¹¹ After the German invasion of Russia, Roosevelt wrote to Secretary of War Henry Stimson, “I deem it of paramount importance for the safety and security of America that all reasonable munitions help be provided to Russia, not only immediately but as long as she continues to fight the Axis powers effectively.”¹²

¹⁰ Winston Churchill, *Memoirs of the Second World War: The Grand Alliance our Soviet ally* (Boston: 1959), 479.

¹¹ Records of the Presidents Soviet Protocol Committee, May 29th1942 FDRL. The US aid began in October 1941, they received American machinery and raw materials for Soviet factories. Raw material included: rubber, aluminum, duralumin, brass, cobalt, steel, lead, tin. The Russian army received: 400 planes a month; 500 tanks a month; 5,000 cars over a period of nine months. Between Oct 1941 – April 1944 Russia received, 6,430 aircrafts (plus the 2,442 aircrafts from the British obligation); 3,734 tanks; 400,000 trucks; 3,168 anti-aircraft guns, 5,500,000 pair of army boots; 2,199,000 tons of food.

¹² Butler, S. (2005), 11

On the Russian side, the German invasion of 1941 had a profound psychological effect on Stalin, such that he locked himself in his study and refused to meet anyone or take part in any state decisions. The impact of the invasion depressed him to the degree that it fell to Molotov to deliver the news of the invasion to the Russian people and world. On June 24, Russian newspapers headlines read: “*Under Stalin’s name we score victories. With Stalin’s name we shall win. For our country, for Stalin. Forward.*”¹³ However, Stalin himself was quiet and his absence was felt across the world, as the Russian Ambassador in London was heard asking, “Why Molotov? Why not Stalin?”¹⁴ When Stalin finally addressed the nation on the 3rd of July 1941, “he was dull and colorless and often stopping and breathing heavily...he seemed to be ailing and at the end of his strength. The speech could not have led to an upsurge of enthusiasm among his listeners.”¹⁵ Stalin was concerned that the communist regime might not survive the war, which was evident in his address when he pleaded to unite the nation, and said, “our war for the freedom of our Fatherland will become one with the war of the nations of Europe and America for their independence and democratic freedom.... unite not only around the Red Army but also around the party of Lenin and Stalin.”¹⁶

Common Enemy:

The evidence for the early days of World War II supports the realist common enemy/threat thesis, and correctly argues that when rivals face greater threat, they will put aside their rivalry and balance against the greater threat. After Hitler attacked

¹³ Adam Ulam, *Stalin: The Man and His Era*. (Beacon Press, 1987), 539-540.

¹⁴ Adam Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence: The History of Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-67* (Praeger Press, 1971), 312-313.

¹⁵ Ibid., 316

¹⁶ Ibid.

Russia in 1941, the Western powers and the Soviets Union kept their rivalries aside as they both faced a greater threat that brought them together to unite.

Churchill delivered the historic speech in which he declared an alliance with Russia on the same day when Germany defied the Nazi-Soviet Nonaggression Pact and attacked the Soviet Union. It is important to highlight the shift in relations between Russia and Britain and the United States. Prior to the 1941 invasion, each state had tried to undermine the other. The enemy perception of the other was explicit; Churchill's secretary J.R. Colville noted the irony of Churchill allying with Bolshevism that he had sought to "strangle in its cradle." Churchill replied, "if Hitler invaded Hell, I would make at least a favorable reference to the Devil in the House of Commons."¹⁷ In his declaration of support for Russia he noted,

"this is no time to moralise on the follies of countries and governments which have allowed themselves to be struck down one by one, when by united action they could have saved themselves and saved the world from this catastrophe.... However, the Russian danger is our danger, and the danger of the United States, just as the cause of any Russian fighting for his hearth and home is the cause of free peoples in every quarter of the globe."¹⁸

Thus, it was with this premise that the Grand Alliance started, with each state's interests threatened by Germany and the only remaining strategic choice being to ally with one another to fight Hitler. However, from the very beginning, the alliance demonstrated major fault lines with divergence in both the Soviet and the US domestic interests, as well as threat perceptions.

¹⁷ Winston Churchill, *Never Give in!: the Best of Winston Churchill's Speeches*. (New York: Hyperion, 2003), 289.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 293.

You Made Me Love You; I Didn't Want to Do It

After Churchill gave his historic speech at the House Commons declaring the alliance with Russia, the British wanted to show solidarity with the Soviet Union, but Churchill instructed that under 'no account would the BBC play the [Russian national anthem] *Internationale*.' In place of the Russian anthem it was suggested that the song, "*You Made Me Love You; I Didn't Want to Do It*" be played to solve the dilemma.¹⁹ This story captures the actors' reaction to the abruptness of the alliance that would never have happened without Hitler's attack.

By 1944, it was clear that the US-Soviet interests had started to diverge. In fact, the US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, W. Averell Harriman, had sent a cable to Secretary of State Hull warning him of Moscow's intentions and advised that the United States must "oppose them [the Soviets] promptly with the greatest of firmness wherever we see them going wrong."²⁰ On September 10th 1944, Ambassador Harriman sent a cable to President Roosevelt's assistant Harry Hopkins, to warn the President that,

"Our relations with the Soviets now that the end of the war is in sight have taken a startling turn evident during the last two months. The Soviets have held up our requests with complete indifference to our interests and have shown an unwillingness even to discuss pressing problems...

Since early in the year I have been conscious of the division among Stalin's advisors on the question of corporation with us. My feeling now is that those who oppose the kind of corporation we expect have recently been getting their way and the policy appears to be crystallizing to force us and the British to accept all Soviet policies backed by the strength and prestige of the Red Army....

We can, I am convinced, divert this trend, but only if we change materially our policy toward the Soviet government. I have evidence that they have

¹⁹ Steven Merritt Miner, *Stalin's Holy War: religion, nationalism, and alliance politics, 1941 – 1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 206.

²⁰ W. Averell Harriman, *America and Russia in a Changing World*. (London : G. Allen & Unwin, 1971), vii.

misinterpreted our general attitude toward them as an acceptance of their policies and a sign of weakness....

The time has come when we must make it clear what we expect of the Soviets as the price of our goodwill. There is every indication that unless we take issue with the present policy the Soviet Union will become a word bully wherever their interests are involved....

I am disappointed but not discouraged. This job of getting the Soviet government to play a decent role in international affairs is, however, going to be more difficult than we had hoped.”²¹

The following year, in 1945, Ambassador Harriman sent another cable to Washington reinstating his firm position while showing some flexibility: “I am as you know a most earnest advocate of the closest possible understanding with the Soviet Union so that what I am saying relates only to how best to attain such understanding.”²² Averell Harriman understood that the United States could not extirpate Soviet Communism and the only option was to work out practical ways of managing the relationship. Harriman believed that this could only be achieved by “neither differing to the Soviet Union nor by crusading against it but rather by the calm, vigilant and rational defense of democratic interests and by the firm determination to seek agreement would be of mutual advantage.”²³ Similarly, on the British side, by May 1944, Churchill was alarmed by the Soviet army’s advance into Central Europe and he deemed it urgent to come to a political arrangement with the Russians. He wrote to his Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, “evidently we are approaching a show-down with the Russians.”²⁴

The tension between Russia and its Western Allies started on multiple issues of concern. Despite President Roosevelt’s optimism and his refusal to permit restrictions

²¹ FRUS Foreign Relations of the United States Diplomatic Papers, 1944 Vol IV. [Harriman (Moscow) to Hopkins (Washington DC) September 10th 1944 Cable.]

²² Ibid, p viii.

²³ Ibid., viii.

²⁴ Dimitrov, V. (2008), 58-59.

on Russia, Stalin continued with his insistence on issues such as the Polish question, where Russia wanted a dominant position.²⁵ Adam Ulam, who wrote extensively on Soviet history, noted that the Winter of 1943 was the turning point for Stalin. Ulam argued “that the war was to take on an increasingly political character... the Soviet solicitude about their political aims was to become, now that the military disaster had been averted much more explicit.”²⁶ The shift in Stalin’s behavior was evident from his refusal to attend the Casablanca conference in January 1943. Starting from 1944 Soviet expansionist designs were explicit. Ivan Maisky, who had served as the ambassador to the UK during the war and was serving as the Deputy Commissar of foreign affairs, wrote to Stalin and said, “the USSR must position itself in such a way after the war as to make it “unthinkable” for any combination of states in Europe and Asia to pose a challenge to Soviet security.”²⁷ Maisky’s suggestion included the taking of territory from Japan and proposed, “military, air, and naval bases in Finland and Rumania, along with strategic access routes to the Persian Gulf via Iran.”²⁸ The domestic push for expansion, as well as Stalin’s personal intentions and ambitions of Soviet imperial expansion led to Soviet aggression in Poland. At the same time, Soviet officials also believed that cooperation with the United States was necessary in a post-war situation, because only in that situation can they avoid the formation of US-UK alliance against the USSR.

Andrei Gromyko, Soviet ambassador to the United States, commented in July 1944, “in

²⁵ Stalin wrote to Roosevelt, on April 7th, 1945: “The Soviet government insists on this as blood of Soviet troops abundantly shed for the liberation of Poland and the fact that in the course of the last 30 years the territory of Poland has been used by the enemy twice for a attack upon Russia, all this obliges the Soviet government to strive that the relations between the Soviet Union and Poland be friendly.”

²⁶ Ulam, (1968), 338

²⁷ Quoted in Zubok, (2007), 8

²⁸ Zubok, (2007) , 8

spite of all possible difficulties that are likely to emerge from time to time in our relations with the United States there are certainly conditions for continuation of cooperation between our two countries in the postwar period.”²⁹ Others like Litinov were explicitly concerned about the threat of a US-UK bloc, and he stated that the post-war foreign policy objective of the Soviet Union was “to prevent the emergence of a bloc of Great Britain and the USA against the Soviet Union.”³⁰

Similarly, when it came to the United Nations, the Russian’s pushed for the two extra votes at the General Assembly. This was perceived as a weakness of Roosevelt by the American public, which attributed it to Roosevelt’s poor health. However, unbeknownst to the public, Roosevelt had secretly hammered out a deal with Stalin. Stalin had agreed that the Soviet Union would declare war on Japan within three months after Germany surrendered. This was a major victory for the Roosevelt; where 1 million Soviet soldiers had moved across Siberia and invaded Manchuria. The American public would never find out that the Russians took more than half million Japanese soldiers as prisoners before Japan surrendered. Roosevelt died before that agreement could be disclosed, and the importance of this deal was overshadowed by the use of nuclear weapons in Japan.³¹

Roosevelt and Stalin Domestic Repercussions of Peace

Both Roosevelt and Stalin were restrained by domestic politics in their foreign policies. However, both were affected differently by their domestic situation. For Stalin,

²⁹ Quoted in Zubok, (2007), 14.

³⁰ Zubok (2007), 12-13.

³¹ Butler, (2005), 30.

the primary concern was psychological: he was afraid that any peace agreement with the West would affect his party's control over Soviet society.³² In other words, an ideological coexistence with the West would expose the Russian society to Western ideas, and that in turn was a potential threat to the Communist ideology in Soviet Russia.

For Roosevelt, the concerns were different: he was afraid of the revival of American isolationism and a repeat of the missteps that led to the rejection of the League of Nations and the break out of war in Europe in 1939.³³ Roosevelt believed that “the only device that could keep the United States from slipping back to isolationism” was an international organization.³⁴ Furthermore, President Roosevelt feared “that the enchantment over the terms of the peace would make the American people turn their back on the world and render fruitless all the sacrifices of the war.”³⁵ Later, in a joint session of Congress on Nov 18th 1943, Secretary Hull laid the framework for this international organization and post-war order. He said, “the principle of sovereign equality of all peace-loving states, irrespective of size and strength, as partners in a future system of general security will be the foundation stone upon which the future international organization will be constructed.”³⁶

The American plan for a post-WWII order was to ensure the success of an international organization where great powers could reach agreements in alignment with their interests. Hence, Russian cooperation was crucial for the success of this

³² Ulam, (1968), 35

³³ Butler, (2005), xii

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ulam. (1968), 35. In another place FDR privately said, “Anybody who thinks that isolationism is dead in this country is crazy. As soon as this war is over, it may well be stronger than ever.” Also in Butler (2005), xiii

³⁶ Hull, (1948), 1686

international institution. On the formation of the United Nations, the initial proposal was a Four Nation Declaration, agreeing on the establishment of an international organization. On June 15th 1944, President Roosevelt advanced the post-war international security plan, and called for, a “fully representative organization,” of peace loving countries.³⁷ He said,

“The maintenance of peace and security must be the joint task of all peace-loving nations. We have, therefore sought to develop plans for an international organization comprising all such nations. It is our thought that the organization would be fully representative body with broad responsibilities for promoting and facilitating international cooperation. It is our further thought that the organization would provide for a council, elected annually by the fully representative body of all nations, which would include the four major nations and a suitable number of other nations... We are not thinking of a superstate with its own police forces and other paraphernalia of coercive power. We are seeking effective agreement and arrangements through which the nations would maintain, according to their capacities, adequate forces to meet the needs of preventing war and making impossible deliberate preparation for war and to have such forces available for joint action when necessary... the hope of a peaceful and advancing world will rest upon the willingness and ability of the peace-loving nations, large and small, bearing responsibility commensurate with their individual capacities, to work together for the maintenance of peace and security.”³⁸

The inclusion of China was very important for Roosevelt, who strongly believed that postwar security and peace could only be guaranteed with China’s participation. During the meeting at the Conference of Foreign Ministers in 1944, the question of China was raised by the US Secretary of State Hull, and his Russian counterpart Molotov was against the admission of China. President Roosevelt, however, had instructed Secretary Hull to make sure the USSR and the United Kingdom would accept

³⁷ Charles Hurd, President outlines U.S. plan for world security union. *New York Times*, June 16, 1944, (accessed June, 2016).
from: <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/106839120?accountid=10226>

³⁸ Hull, (1948), 1688-89.

the plan for China's admission.³⁹ His Russian counterpart, Molotov was concerned that China's inclusion might provoke Japan, as the countries were at war, and disrupt Russia's neutrality towards Japan.⁴⁰ Churchill, like Stalin, was not enthusiastic about the idea of including China. As his physician wrote in his diary, "to the President [FDR], China means four hundred million people who are going to count in the world of tomorrow, but Winston thinks only of the colour of their skin; it is when he talks of India or China that you remember he is Victorian."⁴¹ Roosevelt and Hull pushed for the inclusion of China as one of the four powers and, as it emerged later, Sec. Hull offered major incentives to Russia to agree to the declaration by promising Molotov that "when it came time to distribute the captured Italian naval and merchant ships," the United States would be generous. On this Churchill commented, "What can you expect from a bear but a growl."⁴²

On August 21, 1944, the United States presented the blueprint of the peacekeeping organization to the representatives of England, Soviet Union, and China. The aim for this meeting was to finalize the "tentative" United Nations Charter and secure an agreement on the major principles. The United States had hoped to set the course for international cooperation for the four major powers of the world. Secretary Hull described the American aspirations as "the Soviet Union has made up its mind to follow the course of international corporation.... It is only through international corporation that she can advance her general economic interests, her industrial development, her social welfare. . . Like some other nations at various times and under

³⁹ Butler, (2005), 7-8

⁴⁰ Ibid., 8

⁴¹ Correspondence recorded in Butler, (2005), 176.

⁴² Butler (2005), 199-200

various circumstances, the Soviet Union might get off the line but . . . She would have to come back into line in time because she would discover that any course other than corporation was against her own interests.”⁴³

The divergence between the domestic constraints of the USA and USSR led to different conclusions and diverging priorities. Joseph Stalin was an expansionist whose objectives were to maximize vassal states and his sphere of influence surrounding the USSR. Adam Ulam argues that Stalin wanted to ‘strengthen Russia behind this new socialist version of “*cordon sanitaire*,” and pursue a policy of isolation from the West.’⁴⁴ The United States and Britain maintained friendlier ties with Russia during the course of the Grand Alliance, and consistently consulted Moscow on matters that related to Russia and its interests. As President Roosevelt wrote to Stalin, “there are many matters about which I would like to talk to you almost every day in the week, and I wish that you and I were not several thousand miles apart.”⁴⁵ However, Russia occasionally ignored the United States and Britain, and took unilateral steps that further created friction between Russia and the Allies.⁴⁶ One such unilateral step was when the Soviet Union

⁴³ Ulam, (1971), 18.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 35. The question of *cordon sanitaire* was discussed between the Allied governments in 1944, on which Molotov said, “he knew of no reason to believe that the Soviet Government would be interested in separate zones or spheres of influence and he could guarantee that there was no disposition on the part of his government to divide Europe.” Hull, Cordell, (1948), 1298 – 1299. However, Stalin had different plans and as Ulam has noted he wanted a Soviet version of the *cordon sanitaire*.

⁴⁵ FDR Letter to Marshall Stalin (192) on March 10th and 16th 1944. In Susan Butler (2005), 218

⁴⁶ Hull, (1948), 1449

established diplomatic ties with Italy on March 13, 1944, without notice or consultation with other Allied governments.⁴⁷

By the summer of 1944, Soviet troops had taken control of Poland and seized the Balkans and Eastern Europe. Stalin's army did not directly march into Germany, instead waiting for the Allies to reach the western border. By this time, Roosevelt had accepted the Russian influence on the Balkans and Eastern Europe. The United States' objective in a post-war international order was an institutional arrangement where states could negotiate and war could be avoided. Roosevelt wanted to set up a world order where the US, Britain, Russia and China would maintain peace based on consultation. President Roosevelt wanted to avoid the mistakes of Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations that he believed led to the world war and disastrous predicament that the United States faced. Besides his own desire and commitment for an international organization of united nations, Roosevelt also was pressured domestically, by a series of polls conducted in 1943 and 1944. The Poll by the National Opinion Research Center, asked: "If a union of nations is formed after the war, do you think it would be a good idea for the United States to join?" The response was overwhelmingly in the favor of the US joining, as the results were: 70 to 16 per cent in January 1943; 88 to 11 per cent in September 1943, and 71 to 13 per cent in February 1944.⁴⁸ On the political front, the J. William Fulbright, the

⁴⁷ By The, Associated Press. "Envoys Will be Exchanged between Russia and Italy." *New York Times*, Mar 14, 1944, *ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times with Index*, <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/107020872?accountid=10226>.

⁴⁸ Edward C. Luck, *Mixed Messages: American Politics and International Organization 1919 – 1999* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2010), 267. What is interesting about the polls is that after the creation of the United Nations the support declined. As the number dropped from 71 to 52 per cent by February 1946.

Congressman from the Third District of Arkansas, introduced the resolution that passed the House with 360 to 29 votes on September 21st 1943, called for an international peace keeping organization and the US participation in that organization.⁴⁹

By 1943, it was clear that a post-war world depended on character of the interrelationship between the US, USSR and Britain. Each had different preferences and interests. At the end of war, two issues stood out: the future of Poland, and the division and future of Germany. On the one hand, the United States did not want to be engaged in the politics of Europe. The primary goal for United States was the end of war and the foundation of an international organization. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, had expansionist ambitions, and thus the fate of Poland and Germany was decided before the Yalta meeting or the end of war. Stalin on one occasion made the following reply to Churchill on the question of Poland: “if Poland was a question of honor for the British, for the Russians it was a question of life and death. Throughout history Poland has been the corridor of attack against Russia from the west.”⁵⁰ The British Empire was in decline, and its primary concern was to maintain its influential presence in Europe by aligning with the United States. Prime Minister Churchill was aware that the US was the dominant Western power and hence friendship with Roosevelt was crucial for him.

The next section will address how the USA, UK, and USSR differed on the Polish question and how Stalin outmaneuvered Roosevelt and Churchill. This section will

⁴⁹ Congressional Record 89, Part 6, p. 7728 – 7729. The text of the resolution stated: “The House of Representatives hereby expresses itself as favoring the creation of appropriate international machinery with power adequate to prevent future aggression and to maintain lasting peace, and as favoring participation by the United States therein.”

⁵⁰ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, Conferences at Malta and Yalta, 1945, 407.

conclude with the division of Germany and how these two issues laid the foundation for the Cold War rivalry between the US and the USSR.

The Poles That Kept Them Apart: *Stalin's Flip Flop on the Polish Question*

Stalin's unilateral actions on Poland and later the Balkans, along with his preference for a hierarchy of different nationalities was troubling for the Allies. How the government and future territorial boundaries were to be organized remained a principal point of discussion between the Western Allies and the Soviet Union. For Stalin, it was important because Poland was the route through which Hitler invaded Russia; Stalin also considered Poland a 'fascist state' that oppressed the Ukrainians and Belarusians.⁵¹ The importance of Poland was pivotal for Britain, as well, as it had gone to war with Hitler when he attacked Poland. For Roosevelt, the preservation of Poland was vital for public opinion.

In March 1944, Roosevelt had instructed US ambassador to Russia Averell Harriman to raise the question of Poland with Stalin. On the Polish question, Stalin was agitated and had replied: "Again the Poles? Is that the most important question?" Those troublesome Poles, he complained to which Harriman replied, "the Polish question was pressing," and the "American public opinion would not support a handpicked government for Poland and that the Polish people should be given the right to choose their own government." Stalin replied that he was "concerned about the public opinion in the Soviet Union," and not the United States. Harriman in response said, "you know how to handle your public opinion." To which Stalin added, "there have been three

⁵¹ Dimitrov's diary, p. xxxv and conversation at the Kremlin (Stalin, Molotov, Zhdanov) September 7th 1939, 115-116.

revolutions in a generation.” Stalin was referring to the uprising in 1905, the Kerensky revolution in 1917 and the Bolshevik October revolution in 1918. During this conversation, Molotov intervened and said, “In Russia, there is an active public opinion which overthrows governments.”⁵² This interaction between Stalin and the American ambassador is a good example that demonstrates how different domestic pressures were directing the decisions of these states and leaders. The Allies were afraid of Stalin’s expansionist intentions and those fears were actualized after July 1944 when the Soviet behavior turned rather aggressive towards the Polish question. There was also the misunderstanding between the United States and the Soviet Union on the notion of a “friendly neighbor.” Harriman later noted that he discussed this conceptual misunderstanding in depth and for many months with his deputy George Kennan. For the US, it meant a neighboring country with no undue issues, whereas for the Soviet Union, it meant a neighboring country which they can dominate and control.⁵³

Harriman further elaborated on this and said:

“the Russians have in mind something quite different... I believe that it is their [Russian] intention to have a positive sphere of influence over their western neighbors and the Balkan countries... it may be argued that the affairs of this area need not concern American interests. However, what frightens me is this: when a country, by strong arm methods but under the guise of security, begins to extend its influence beyond its borders, it is difficult to see how a line can be drawn. Once the policy is accepted that the U.S.S.R has a right to penetrate its immediate neighbors for security, penetration of the next immediate neighbor becomes equally logical at a certain time.”⁵⁴

Senator Vandenberg (who was known for his isolationist views) called Russia’s behavior a protective expansionism in July 1948, and considered it to become the ‘curse of the

⁵² W. Averell Harriman, (1971), 33.

⁵³ Ibid., 33-34.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

world.’⁵⁵ Before going to Yalta, Churchill had complained to his personal secretary, “Make no mistake, all the Balkans, except Greece, are going to be Bolshevized, and there is nothing I can do to prevent it. There is nothing I can do for poor Poland either.”⁵⁶

The second meeting between the Big Three (Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin) took place in Yalta from the 4th of February until the 11th of February 1945. At that meeting, Stalin did express his agreement regarding how Poland should be managed and committed to Churchill’s proposal for “free and unfettered” elections in Poland and in Europe at large. Stalin pushed for the Warsaw government to be the core of any provisional or temporary Polish government and a few democratic politicians from abroad. President Roosevelt negotiated a compromise that incorporated both the British and Russian positions, noting that “the provisional government which is now functioning in Poland should ... be reorganized on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad... This Polish provisional government shall be pledged to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage.”⁵⁷

In his memoirs, Harriman noted that Roosevelt and Churchill returned from Yalta feeling that they had reached an agreement. At the House of Commons, Churchill said, “the Polish problem has been divided into two main issues – the frontier of Poland

⁵⁵ Arthur Vandenberg, *The Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1952), 145. Senator Vandenberg was from Michigan which had a large Polish-decent population. Thus, his interest in the Polish question and its resolution were high. He remained skeptical about the kind of elections that would take place and the arrangements that were to follow.

⁵⁶ Sir John Colville, *The Fringes of Power: Downing Street Diaries* (London: Norton, 1985) entry Jan 23 Jan 1945.

⁵⁷ Deborah Larson, *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton University Press, 1985), 177.

and the freedom of Poland.” The issue of the freedom and independence of Poland was more important for Britain than the frontier issue, which Churchill further noted in his speech, “to establish a free Polish nation with a good home to live in has always far outweighed, in my mind, then the actual tracing of the frontier line, or whether these boundaries should be shifted on both sides of Poland farther to the West.” Thus, for Churchill and Roosevelt, the issue of Polish independence was the important aspect of the Polish question, even though that independence was dictated by Russia.

In his joint address to the United States Congress, Roosevelt was optimistic about the agreement reached at Yalta. For Roosevelt, the Yalta Conference had two objectives: to bring a swift end to the war in Europe, and to build the foundation of an international organization that would bring order and security despite global chaos. Hence, it was crucial for him to get Russia on board with the international organization - the United Nations – and his speech focused on that achievement. On the Polish question, the President noted, “one outstanding example of joint action by the three major Allied powers in the liberated areas was the solution reached on Poland... a strong, independent and prosperous nation with a government ultimately to be selected by the Polish people themselves.” Roosevelt concluded on the importance of the United Nations and called it a “common ground for peace. It ought to spell the end of the system of unilateral action, the exclusive alliances, the spheres of influence, the balance of power, and all the other expedients that have ... always failed.”⁵⁸ Throughout the United States, the Yalta agreement was a major step to world peace, garnering acclaim all across the political spectrum. Thomas Dewey, who was preparing for a presidential

⁵⁸ W. Averell Harriman, (1971), 35.

bid in 1948 praised the Yalta accords as, “a real contribution to the future of peace.”⁵⁹ Even Senator Vandenberg, known for his isolationist position and as a critic of President Roosevelt, praised the Yalta accords.⁶⁰ The agreement at Yalta was Roosevelt’s bid to end ‘the system of unilateral action, exclusive alliances, spheres of influence, balances of power and all the other expedients that have been tried and have always failed.’

However, President Roosevelt miscalculated the US’s strength compared to the USSR and the rest of the world. The United States had immense military and economic power as well as diplomatic clout, which it failed to translate into influence in securing Poland’s freedom. Roosevelt was too focused on the success of the United Nations and the Russian participation in this new peacekeeping international organization. Averell Harriman noted that Roosevelt showed “very little interest in eastern European matters except as they affect sentiment in America.” Even after days of negotiating at the mountainous Crimean resort, the final agreement on Poland’s future contained no provisions for replacing Russian influence or the Moscow-backed Lublin-based Polish government, and neither did it clearly specify the position of the Polish government in exile in London.⁶¹ Prior to the Yalta meeting in 1945, George Kennan warned Roosevelt that “the US should drop all thought of free elections in Poland and Eastern Europe because it would be impossible to achieve this when the Russian armies entered the area and it would only irritate Moscow unnecessarily.”⁶² Roosevelt’s aim was to change Russian policies through mutual trust and friendship. Stalin, despite his relatively weak

⁵⁹ Congress Leaders Praise Big Three, New York Times Archives, February 13th, 1945. 5.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Quoted in Eric Alterman, *When Presidents Lie: A History of official Deception and Its Consequences* (Viking: New York, 2004), 35.

⁶² Ibid., 37.

position, gained through what Truman later called “pig-headedness,” and clever maneuverability on most issues. And to quote Truman, “Soviet pig headedness became accepted by the Americans as a fact of life.”⁶³

The Soviet Union and Stalin himself considered the Yalta conference and its agreements a “crowning victory,” as it legitimized Soviet spheres of influence along with Soviet military presence in Germany. Vladislav Zubok in his post-Yalta account notes a memorandum that circulated among the Soviet diplomats, and it read, “There was a palpable search for compromise on disputed issues. We assess the [Yalta] conference as highly positive fact, particularly on Polish and Yugoslav issues, and on the issue of reparations.”⁶⁴ Stalin was aware that the strong Polish electorate in the United States would create future clashes on the question of Poland. To that end, Stalin said, “Some propaganda work should be done among those people.”⁶⁵ That was the tool he knew well, as he had mastered it on the Soviet citizens and wanted to use it to quell any noise on the American side, as well. By the time President Roosevelt recognized Stalin’s expansionist intentions, it was too late; he died a few weeks after returning from Yalta. Roosevelt’s death in April 1945 shook Stalin and the Soviet Union, and with Harry Truman as the new president of the United States came the uncertainty of new partner in war that Stalin was not familiar with.

⁶³ Ulam, (1971), 99

⁶⁴ Zubok, (2007), 14

⁶⁵ Ulam, (Expansion and Coexistence: The History of Soviet Foreign Policy 1917-67, 1968), 352

A Slice of Germany for the Victors: Stalin Gets the Bigger Piece of the Peace

The policy towards Germany was as complicated as the Polish question, and the future of Germany depended on how the Allies determined the fate of Poland. The German question remain unresolved after the Tehran Conference, and even after Yalta, the final decision was left for after the war. The Allies did not have a clear policy on Germany and could not agree on the future of the country they were defeating. At the Yalta summit, the Big Three tentatively agreed that Germany would be divided into spheres of occupation between the US, Russia, Britain, and France.

While the Allies were deciding about the division of Germany into zones of occupation, Roosevelt was certain that the American public would not be in favor of US troops in Europe for more than two years.⁶⁶ The lessons from World War I left the Allies with limited options: they could harshly punish Germany for its actions to avoid future German aggression, but that would potentially put Germany and Europe at risk of another war where the Germans' desperation could be manipulated and used for the next war.

The Russians took a harsh, entitled stance on post-war Germany, particularly on the issue of reparations. At the Yalta meeting, Ivan Maisky presented a plan that called for 80 per cent of German industry to be removed and transferred to the Allied governments as a means of compensation for war. Maisky's plan asked for about 10 billion dollars for the Soviet Union in reparations. Churchill was flabbergasted and deeply perturbed by this request, and reminded the Russians of the Weimar Republic's

⁶⁶ Averell Harriman and Elie Abel, *Special Envoy to Churchill and Stalin 1941 – 1946* (New York: Random House, 1975), 401-402

inability to pay the 2 billion pounds for the previous reparations. Nevertheless, the Soviet position was immovable.

The Russian army marched into Eastern Germany by Spring 1945. Scholars have debated whether Stalin had a clear policy position on Germany, or whether he was unprepared as Roosevelt or Churchill on the German question. Vojtech Mastny argues that the Russians were unmistakably aggressive, but after the Yalta conference the Soviet policy had been “erratic and inconsistent rather than premeditated and methodical.”⁶⁷ Similarly, Norman Naimark claims that the “Soviets did not occupy Germany with specific long-range goals in mind...they looked to accomplish a number of immediate tasks that reflected the needs of a variety of Soviet institutions...they were interested in restarting the economy with German assets.”⁶⁸ On the contrary, Vladislav Zubok argues against this line of reasoning and contends that “Stalin and Soviet elites never entertained the idea of a neutral Germany. At a minimum, the Soviets wanted to neutralize the part of Germany under Western control and build their own socialist Germany in their zone of occupation.”⁶⁹ For the Russians, Germany was a source of compensation for losses incurred during the war. For the Soviet elites, it was an opportunity for self-enrichment. Finally, for the Russian military, Germany was a source of technologies and scientists, along with enormous supply of weapons-grade uranium for the Soviet nuclear program.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Vojtech Mastny, *Russia's Road to the Cold War: Diplomacy, Warfare, and the Politics of Communism 1941 – 1945* (Columbia University Press, 1986), 273

⁶⁸ Norman Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945 – 1949* (Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1995), 465

⁶⁹ Zubok, (2007), 62-63

⁷⁰ Ibid., 63

The Big Three formed the European Advisory Commission (EAC) at the Moscow Conference in 1943 to provide policy suggestions for a post-war Europe. Its key aim was to encourage diplomatic cooperation among the Big Three after victory was declared and Germany defeated, but it turned out to be the biggest failure.⁷¹ The EAC produced three agreements, including: instructions for German unconditional surrender; protocol on occupation zones between the US, UK, USSR and France; and the agreement to control machinery for Germany. The EAC provided an outline of the spheres of occupation as early as 1944 and that assigned southern Germany to the United States. Roosevelt was not pleased that the US occupation zone was landlocked and dependent on France or Britain for its supply route. In the end, the US settled on the southern area and allowed the British to control its transit zone. President Roosevelt did not want an explicit agreement on spheres of influence as he was concerned about the adverse reaction by the American public. Deborah Larson argued that he 'opted for a de facto division of influence and relied on the operation of a laissez faire, competitive, anomic balance of power system to curb soviet expansionist ambitions.'⁷²

However, the outcome was what Roosevelt had feared: a divided world between rival blocs, where peace was barely maintained by an unsteady balance of power. Roosevelt was aware of the risks that would emerge after the fall of Germany, "there will be no military power between the Russian border and the English Channel."⁷³ It was in

⁷¹ Bruce Kuklick, "The Genesis of the European Advisory Commission." *Journal of Contemporary History* 4, no. 4 (1969), 189

⁷² Larson, (1985), 75

⁷³ Forrest Davis, *What Really Happened at Teheran (Part I)*, Saturday Evening Post 13th May, 1944, 37.

the interest of the United States to restore the European balance of power. However, Roosevelt gambled on a passive and unassertive strategy that many claimed was like Lincoln's 'string of conciliation' policy for the preservation of the union despite the outcries of the Abolitionists. Roosevelt had hoped that Stalin's expansionist ambition would be contained by the United Nations. The alternative for Roosevelt was to prepare for war, and that he saw as the "clash of continents, a war of giants which will truly shake the earth and bring western civilization down with it."⁷⁴ President Roosevelt had raised enormous stakes with his 'friendly neighbor' diplomacy with Russia with the hope of changing Stalin's perceptions with regards to the good will of the United States, as well as making him a partner in an organization for peace that would dampen the distrust and the causes of war.⁷⁵ Unfortunately, President Roosevelt didn't get to see the outcome of his ultimate gamble; his sudden death on the 12th of April 1945, just a few weeks after the Yalta conference was a shock for Stalin and 'a veritable catastrophe' for Churchill as he said in his memoirs.

When the Atlantic Charter between the Allies was signed in 1941, it formed the basis of European peace settlements. The first clause stated that the signatories would seek no aggrandizement, territorial or otherwise. But by the end of Yalta, the opposite had happened. Germany and its assets were to be divided between the Allied governments. The Russian territory and zone of occupation moved at the expense of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and of course Germany. In the end, it was decided at Yalta, contrary to the first clause of the Atlantic Charter, to divide

⁷⁴ Forrest Davis, What Really Happened at Teheran (Part II), Saturday Evening Post, 20th May, 1944, 48.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

Germany into four parts; in his report to Congress, President Roosevelt stated that he approved the Russian annexation of East Prussia plus other areas.

The Russian occupation zone included a resource-rich region that was also the industrial area.⁷⁶ The German capital was within the Soviet sphere, and as a special concession, the Russians permitted the Allies to have the Control Council's headquarters in Berlin. By the war's end, major German cities were completely destroyed and the country divided due to a totalitarian war that resulted in a totalitarian victory and led to a totalitarian peace. A good description of the peace that resulted from the Yalta accords was noted by one German writer who wrote about the 1918 peace agreement that had been made over 20 years before,

“The war of the future will be totalitarian not only in the mobilization of forces for its prosecution but also in the extent of its results; in other words totalitarian war will end in totalitarian victory. Totalitarian victory means the utter destruction of the vanquished nation, and its complete and final disappearance from the historical arena. The victor will not negotiate with the vanquished concerning peace, because there will be no party capable of negotiation. He will impose whatever conditions he thinks fit.”⁷⁷

Totalitarian Peace Can't Endure: *The Reluctant Truman at Terminal*

The fall of Germany did not end the war; the Allies still faced the war in Asia, as well as the unresolved question of Germany's future and reparations. A meeting of the Big Three – this time with Truman – was called between July 17th – August 1st, 1945 at a

⁷⁶ Die Deutsche Volkskraft in Demaree Bess, *How will We Govern Our Slice of Germany?* April 14th 1945.

⁷⁷ Quoted from Die Deutsche Volkskraft in Demaree Bess, *How will We Govern Our Slice of Germany?* April 14th 1945.

Soviet occupied zone: Potsdam, near Berlin. The Potsdam meeting was given the code name “Terminal,” as Churchill preferred to use secrecy, despite the end of war in sight.⁷⁸

The basic objective for the United States was to create peace in Germany, and to see that the country did not again disturb the peace of Europe. The US position with regards to Germany and Europe remained consistent from Roosevelt to Truman. As the State Department memorandum by the Executive Committee on Foreign Economic Policy stated on August 14, 1944, the long-term interest of the United States was peace. The memo further stated that the indefinite coercion of more than sixty million technically advanced people would be an expensive undertaking with little security assurance.⁷⁹

For President Roosevelt, the goal had been to attain a lasting peace in Europe with the Yalta agreement, but he made the mistake of extending an over-conciliatory policy towards Stalin, a policy that turned a blind eye to Stalin’s aggression and expansionist ambitions. As Senator Vandenberg wrote afterwards, “no permanent peace is possible without a constant, conscious mandate to seek and maintain justice as the basis of peace.”⁸⁰ To take the example of future governments in the liberated states, the Yalta agreement called for assistance of the “people in any European liberated state or former Axis satellite ...to form interim governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population.” However, one of the early targets for

⁷⁸ Ulam, (1971), 72.

⁷⁹ FRUS, Diplomatic Papers 1944 Volume I, August 14, 1944 Memorandum by the Executive Committee on Foreign Economic Policy. ECEFP D-36/4.

⁸⁰ *Peace Can’t Endure Without Justice*, Saturday Evening Post. Vol 217 issue 44, April 14, 1944. p. 112.

Stalin were these states, and he started with Rumania, a country that had irritated Moscow by reaching out to Britain and the United States for assistance.

By late February 1945, the Rumanian Communist party, backed by Moscow, instigated a coup that would result in the downfall of Prime Minister Radescu. Moscow's blatant aggression was evident in the ultimatum issued by Stalin to King Michael of Bucharest, that "Radescu must be replaced by Petru Grozu, a pro-Soviet politician." Stalin backed his ultimatum by ordering two divisions to move into position near Bucharest.⁸¹ The Americans and British were horrified but did not interfere. Similarly, on the Polish front post-Yalta, Stalin authorized the arrest of sixteen Polish leaders and continued the arrests. By the end of 1945, twenty-thousand Polish elites and public servants were locked-up in Soviet camps.⁸²

With Truman in office, the tide had started to shift on the American front. Franklin Roosevelt's conciliatory position was no longer an option and Stalin was made aware of that after the Truman-Molotov meeting in Washington. President Truman had also sent a joint message with Churchill to Stalin that sharply rebuked "Russia concerning the formation of the new Polish regime." Russian behavior and Stalin's tone of communications with Truman and Churchill were indicative that a) he was aware that a sharp shift in US policy position was not going to happen, due to the adverse psychological impact, and b) Truman's tough talk was empty and he would not follow it with action. Thus, Stalin's response to both Truman and Churchill was equally harsh. He

⁸¹ Zubok, (2005), 24.

⁸² Ibid., 23 -24.

said, “it was not the Soviet who were sabotaging formation of Polish government of National Unity, but the British and American ambassadors.”⁸³

The Potsdam Conference was about German-Polish territorial divisions and lines. Truman pushed to instate the territorial lines of 1937 before Teheran and Yalta. This proposition was unacceptable to Stalin, who told Truman that “the Germany after the war [Mr. President], for the Germany of 1937, no longer existed.”⁸⁴ Truman responded by refusing to let Stalin unilaterally give the Poles a zone of their own and agreed on accepting the Soviet claim to Königsberg. The territory remained a troublesome point between the allies, and the United States and Britain were increasingly alarmed by Stalin’s brutal methods in Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary. President Truman and Prime Minister Churchill also objected to Stalin’s preposterous reparations request.

At the end, Stalin could not compel Truman – like he did Roosevelt – to accept the Soviet territorial and reparation demands, but, to his advantage, Soviet troops were already in Poland and had control of the western part of Germany. At Potsdam, Truman was preoccupied with the atomic bomb and the forthcoming attack on Japan. After the meeting, Truman and Churchill warned Japan about the atomic bomb and demanded unconditional surrender. Towards the end of the Potsdam Conference, Truman had broken the news of “the new US weapons of unusual force.”⁸⁵ Stalin responded positively and said, “he was pleased to hear it and hoped we would make good use of it

⁸³ Ulam, (1971), 64.

⁸⁴ W.R Smyser, *From Yalta to Berlin: The Cold War Struggle Over Germany* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 19-20.

⁸⁵ Memoirs by Harry S. Truman, Vol. 1: *1945 Year of Decisions*, (New York: Signet Books) 1965, 458. Truman’s account of the conversation is challenged and questioned by Stalin’s interpreter who said he simply nodded and didn’t say anything. Whereas British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden wrote that Stalin had merely said, “Thank you.”

against the Japanese.” However, on returning from Potsdam, Stalin’s conversation with Molotov in the presence of Marshal Zukov suggested that Stalin had known about the US atomic program and had ordered his commanders to speed up the process after that.⁸⁶

After the US had dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the US Ambassador Harriman was called in by Stalin to discuss the situation. During that conversation, Harriman had asked Stalin what the Japanese response is going to be to this new weapon. Stalin predicted a quick end to the war in the Pacific and said, “the Japanese were at present looking for a pretext to replace the present government with one which would be qualified to undertake the surrender. The bomb might give them this pretext.”⁸⁷ As per Stalin’s prediction, the effect of the atomic bomb was such that Japan surrendered in a week, ending World War II.

An Iron Curtain Has Descended: Turkish and Iranian Crisis of 1946

The Grand Alliance was a fragile alliance founded on a platform of divergent interests and conflicting ideological preferences. From the beginning, it was evident that it would not last after the war ended. As Arthur Schlesinger Jr. noted, “the United States and the USSR were constructed on opposite and antagonistic principles, no one should be surprised by what ensued. A real surprise would’ve been if there had been no Cold

⁸⁶ The following account of Stalin- Molotov conversation is quoted in David Holloway’s book, “Stalin and the Bomb,” p. 117. “Molotov: They are raising the price. Stalin: Let them. We will have a talk with Kurchatov to speed up the process. Stalin further said: I realized that they were talking about the creation of the atomic bomb.”

⁸⁷ David Holloway, *Stalin and the Bomb: The Soviet Union and Atomic Energy, 1939-1956* (Yale University Press: 1994), 128.

War.”⁸⁸ One argument that this dissertation puts forward is that Schlesinger’s logic also applies to current United States-Russia relations. The relationship is still based on opposite and antagonistic principles, and those principles were in place at the end of the Cold War and they remain in play in a post-Cold War order.

The background to the Cold War was the events of 1943- 1945: specifically, two major issues – the German division and the Polish question – that created major barrier for the United States and Russia obstructing them from moving forward into a peaceful post-war transition. With that in the background in August 1945, right after the Potsdam Conference, the United States attacked two Japanese cities with a weapon that had never been used in the history of mankind. The bomb then became a powerful tool of foreign policy between the US and USSR.

In the early days of its discovery, the United States had no clear strategy for how it was going to use it against its adversaries—most importantly, the Soviet Union. The conversations in the administration ranged from viewing the atomic bomb as “just another weapon”⁸⁹ in the US arsenal, to describing it as a “royal straight flush and we mustn’t be a fool about the way we play it.”⁹⁰ The Soviet response to the Americans dropping the bomb on Japan was subdued, and official news outlets *Pravda* and *Izvestiia* both released a summary of President Truman’s statement.⁹¹ David Holloway notes that the “atomic bomb was not only a powerful weapon; it was also a symbol of American power. Stalin had pursued his policy of industrialization under the slogan,

⁸⁸ Butler, (2005), xv

⁸⁹ For Paul Nitze the atomic bomb was just another weapon, but a powerful weapon. As Nitze wrote in his 1946 report, the effects of the atomic bomb were not infinite: they were finite.

⁹⁰ Stimson, Diary, May 14th 1945.

⁹¹ David Holloway, (1994), 127

‘Catch up and overtake.’”⁹² The Soviet acquisition of bomb was never in question. After the US’s atomic status was confirmed, Stalin told the Soviet nuclear physicist Igor Kurchatov, “if a child doesn't cry, the mother doesn't know what he needs. Ask for whatever you like. You won’t be refused.”⁹³ Stalin was willing to pay any cost to achieve the bomb, as the cost of not having one was perceived as an existential threat for the Soviet Union.

The bomb may have changed the balance of power between the United States and Soviet Union, but it did not change Russian policies. The relationship between the two titans increasingly deteriorated in 1946, starting with the Soviet refusal to withdraw from Northern Iran; Soviet backing of the anti-government Chinese Communists; assistance for the communist forces in Korea and Greece; and the unresolved issues on Germany and Poland. Besides the friction of diverging interests in Iran, Europe and Asia, there was the imbalance created by the atomic bomb, with Russian insecurity at an all-time high.

As Churchill declared in his famous speech at Fulton, Missouri, an ‘*iron curtain*’ had descended over the Soviet occupied Europe. Winston Churchill’s speech was the first most anti-Soviet declaration, where he raised concerns that “the dark ages may return, stone age may return on the glittering wings of science ...beware, I say.”⁹⁴ Churchill warned the West and United States that their comrade-in-arms had become an enemy and repeating the mistakes of the past would result in destruction unlike any other.

⁹² Ibid., 133

⁹³ Ibid., 132

⁹⁴ The Best of Winston Churchill’s Speeches, (2003), 420.

The nuclear imbalance did not inhibit Soviet territorial ambitions, nor did it stop them from bullying other states. From October 1945, the Soviet Union pressured Turkey for a naval base in the Dardanelles as well as territory in the form of two eastern Turkish provinces. On May 8, 1945, Molotov received a cable from the Russian ambassador to Turkey, Sergei A. Vladimirov, explicating Turkey's proposal for signing a bilateral treaty of friendship. On June 7th 1945, Molotov summoned the Turkish Ambassador Selim Sarper and rebuffed the bilateral treaty, demanding a naval base and territorial concessions.⁹⁵ The justification for Russia's territorial claims was on the basis that these Turkish territories were once controlled by Czarist Russia. The Turkish government rejected the Soviet territorial claim, one of the first independent states to defy Russian aggression.⁹⁶

The Soviet foreign office threatened Turkey with 'grave consequences.' In his memoirs, Averell Harriman notes the Turkish ambassador Sarper's response: "I don't know what you mean by grave consequences, but if you mean war, we are ready to fight."⁹⁷ The Soviet army swept through Eastern Europe, emboldening Stalin to stretch the borders of Russia further towards Turkey. The question on the American and British side was, as the US ambassador to Moscow General Walter Bedell Smith asked Stalin in April 1946, "*What does the Soviet Union want and how far is Russia going to go?*"⁹⁸ Ambassador Walter Bedell Smith had tried to address the Soviet concerns, and as he said "we deeply sympathize with the suffering of the Soviet people at the hands of the German aggressor, and we appreciate the magnificent effort of the red Army in the

⁹⁵ Pleshakov and Zubok (1996), 92.

⁹⁶ Harriman (1971), 45.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Walter Bedell Smith, *My Three Years in Moscow*, (New York: Lippincott, 1950), 50.

defeat of Germany.” The Ambassador went on to assuage Russian concerns with regards to the raw materials.

To the US Ambassador’s surprise, Stalin accused Churchill of instigating war against Russia in the past. He now contended that, “Russia, as the events of the past few years have proved, is not stupid. We can recognize our friends from our potential enemies.” Stalin was not denying the open animosity that existed between Russia and the West, and he perceived the United States and Great Britain to be a threat. When he was asked, “Is it possible are you really believe that the United States and Great Britain are united in an alliance to thwart Russian?” Stalin responded by saying: “Da” [Yes].⁹⁹

For Stalin, Soviet expansion and domination was limitless. On the US side, George Kennan warned the Secretary of State in his influential telegram on the 22nd of February 1946,

“efforts will be made to advance official limits of Soviet power. For the moment [1946] these efforts are restricted to certain neighboring points conceived of here as being of immediate strategic necessity, such as Northern Iran, Turkey...concealed Soviet political power is extended to new areas. Thus, a “friendly” Persian government might be asked to grant Russia a port on Persian Gulf. Should Spain fall under Communist control, question of Soviet base at Gibraltar Strait might be activated. But such claims will appear on official level only when unofficial preparation is complete.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 50-53: Ambassador Walter Bedell Smith’s account of his conversation with Stalin is very telling of how Stalin perceived United States and Great Britain as enemy and a potential source of military conflict. Despite assurance by Amb. Smith that Churchill is not an instigator of war and that United States is not allied with the UK to cause any harm to the Soviet Union. Towards the end of the meeting, Ambassador Smith reiterated his initial question, how far is Russia are going to go? To which Stalin responded, “we are not going much further, I have assured the president that Soviet Union has no intentions of the attacking Turkey, but Turkey is weak, and the Soviet Union is very conscious of the danger of foreign control of the Straits, which Turkey is not strong enough to protect. The Turkish government is on friendly to us. That is why the Soviet Union has demanded a base in the Dardanelles. It is a matter of our own security.”, 53-54.

Russians will participate officially in international organization where they see opportunity of extending Soviet power or of inhibiting or diluting power of others.”¹⁰⁰

After the Turkish rejection, Russia was determined to dominate Turkey by “fashioning a South Slav Union...to emasculate Turkey and Greece and to place Russia squarely on eastern Mediterranean and Adriatic.”¹⁰¹ Stalin’s geopolitical priority was for the Soviet Union to be a Mediterranean power, and to that end, he planned to diminish Turkey’s independent capacity over the Straits. As Vladislav Zukok noted, for Stalin, the territorial gains became a second goal, whereas control of the Mediterranean was the first. Despite Russian intimidation tactics, Turkey continued to resist Soviet demands and revealed the limits of Stalin’s expansionist ambitions.

The American position for the Turkish Straits was to keep it open for unrestricted commerce of all kind. President Truman noted in a memo to the Secretary of State, “I think it [the Straits] is a waterways link with the Black Sea, the Rhine and the Danube as the Kiel Canal is outlet to the Baltic Sea, which must eventually be internationalized. I am of the opinion if some means isn’t found to prevent it, Russia will undoubtedly take steps by direct action to obtain control of the Black Sea Straits.”¹⁰² Turkey wanted to limit the number of foreign warships in the Straits, and as the US State Department estimated, “there would be nothing to prevent Russia from sailing its entire Black Sea fleet into the Sea of Marmora at any time, leveling its guns at Istanbul, and presenting

¹⁰⁰ FRUS, 1946 Vol VI p. 2811 (MOBI)

¹⁰¹ FRUS, 1946 Vol. VI p. 272 (MOBI) Telegram from the representative in Bulgaria (Barnes) to the Secretary of State on Jan 15th 1946.

¹⁰² FRUS, 1945 Vol VIII, Diplomatic Papers, Memo From President Truman to the Secretary of State, Oct, 13 1945.

Turkey with demands.”¹⁰³ Melvyn Leffler notes that the US military was divided on their position on the Russian base in Dardanelles, with the senior Army and Air Force officers on the Joint Strategic Survey Committee in favor of concessions to the Soviets.¹⁰⁴ However, this difference in position was resolved by General Lincoln’s elaborate rationale for denying the Russians:

“to argue that it is necessary to preserve a unilateral military control by the US or Britain over Panama or Gibraltar and yet deny a similar control to Russia at the Dardanelles may seem open to the criticism of being illogical. It is, however, a logical illogicality. Neither the United States nor the British Empire can by the greatest stretch of the imagination be accused of expansionist or aggressive ambitions.... Russia, however, has not as yet proven that she is entirely without expansionist ambitions.... She is inextricably, almost mystically related to the ideology of Communism which superficially at least can be associated with a rising tide all over the world wherein the common man aspires to higher and wider horizons. Russia must be sorely tempted to combine her strength with her ideology to expand her influence over the earth. Her actions in the past few years give us no assured bases for supposing she has not flirted with the thought.”¹⁰⁵

After the Turkish refusal to grant a naval base, President Truman was afraid that Russia would launch an attack and seize the Straits. It was Molotov’s ultimatum in August 1946 that created anxieties in Washington and led the United States to prepare for a strategy against Soviet aggression in Turkey.¹⁰⁶ On August 15th 1946, a memorandum was presented to President Truman that detailed the US strategy against Russia. The memo advised, “the only thing which will deter the Russians will be the conviction that the United States is prepared, if necessary, to meet aggression with force of arms.” The

¹⁰³ FRUS, 1945 vol. VIII Diplomatic papers, (Kindle Location 33772-33774).

¹⁰⁴ Melvyn Leffler, (1992), 78.

¹⁰⁵ Draft of the letter from Sec War to Sec State, “ US Position re Soviet Proposal on Kiel Canal and Daranelles,” 8th July 1945 Quoted in Melvyn Leffler, (1992), 78.

¹⁰⁶ On August 7 1946, Russians had demanded a restatement of the Montreaux Convention with regards to governing the Straits and insisted on the Russian naval base on Turkish territory.

United States was prepared for retaliatory strikes against the Soviet Union that included the use of atomic bombs.¹⁰⁷

Stalin learned about the American plans code name “Pincher,” and altered his position by making several conciliatory gestures to reduce the tension between the US and the USSR. Scholars have noted Molotov’s account, when Stalin had asked to put pressure on Turkey for the joint control. Molotov replied that it would not happen and Stalin insisted on trying. Many years later Molotov recounted those comments and said, “it is good that we retreated in good time or that would have led to a joint aggression against us.”¹⁰⁸

By Spring 1946, the United States informed the Soviet government that it could no longer “remain indifferent” to the Russian policies in Iran. In a telegram by the Secretary of State to the Charge in the Soviet Union George Kennan on March 5, 1946, the US government reminded Mr. Molotov and the Soviet Union of the Tripartite Treaty clause that states:

“the forces of Allied Powers shall be withdrawn from Iranian territory not later than six month after all hostilities between the Allied Powers and Germany and her associates been suspended by the conclusion of an armistice or armistices, or on the conclusion of peace between them, which ever date is the earlier”.¹⁰⁹

The Soviet Union failed to pull troops out of Iran beyond the period that was specified in the Tripartite Treaty. The memo that was delivered to Molotov also noted that while the government of the United States had aligned with the Soviet Union against the common

¹⁰⁷ Eduard Mark, *The War Scare of 1946 and its Consequences*. Also in, Pleshakov and Zubok (1996), 93.

¹⁰⁸ Holloway, (1994), 169. Also in Pleshakov and Zubok (1996), 93.

¹⁰⁹ FRUS, VII 1946, Document 245, Telegram sent on March 5th 1946, from Secretary of State to Charge in USSR Kennan.

enemy during the war as a fellow member of the United Nations, it hoped that the Soviet Union would do its part by withdrawing troops from Iran. The Soviet Union responded by reinforcing troops, taking command of Azerbaijan, and sending additional troops towards the Iraq border. Furthermore, Soviet troops were sent towards Teheran and possibly to Turkey.¹¹⁰ Stalin's motives in Iran were geostrategic, as well as to seize Iran's oil reserves. The Kremlin also wanted to keep the Western powers away from its borders, to implement a Stalinized version of the Monroe Doctrine.

The Iranian crisis was the first diplomatic clash of the Cold War between the US and USSR. It was this crisis that shifted the US stance from a passive to an active foreign policy. After the Iran crisis and Churchill's 'Iron Curtain' speech in March 1946, US public opinion started to shift against the Soviet Union. Zubok notes that the shift was based not just on the threat to the future of Iran's oil but the nascent United Nations's ability to defend weak states from being dominated by big powers and strong neighbors. I argue that the change in US public opinion was directly linked to a perceived threat to US interests in the Middle East. We also learn from State Department memos and telegrams that the United States had publicly proclaimed that it would not remain silent and adopt a "patience with firmness" policy.¹¹¹ An example of this policy was sending the USS Missouri to the Turkish Straits to send a signal to the Soviets as well as allies in the region.

The Turkish and Iranian crises demonstrated that Stalin was not affected by the US atomic monopoly and was willing to test the limits of his expansionist ambitions. In

¹¹⁰ FRUS, Vol II March 6th 1946 Telegram sent by Rossow.

¹¹¹ Zubok, (2007), 44.

an interview on October 23rd, 1946, Stalin said that “atomic bombs are meant to frighten those with weak nerves.”

Conclusion: Cooperation and Discord Before the Cold War

The short-lived military alliance between the US and USSR was for a purpose – to defeat a common enemy. The intrinsic interests of the Allied governments and Russia were threatened by Germany. However, once that enemy was defeated, persistent conflicts between the US and the USSR determined the course of the relationship.

Averell Harriman was optimistic about US-Soviet cooperation in a post-war order, and other American officials shared Harriman’s optimism during the Yalta conference. Others like Harry Hopkins said that “we really believed in our hearts that this was the dawn of the new day we had all been praying for and talking about for so many years... The Russians had proved that they could be reasonable and farseeing and there wasn't any doubt in the mind of the president or any of us that we could live with them and get along with them peacefully for as far into the future as any of us could imagine.”¹¹²

After the Yalta Conference, the Allies agreed on the following: to coordinate their offensive to prevent the Germans from shifting their troops between the East and West; Stalin assured Russia’s would enter the pacific front of the war after three months of defeating Germany; on the United Nations and the number of votes; Stalin also made concessions to the American view point, and finally the Allies signed a bilateral agreement that dealt with the care and repatriation of prisoners of war. After Roosevelt’s

¹¹² Larson, (1985), 176.

death and the fall of Germany, the fault lines in the Grand Alliance became prominent. While Roosevelt's approach to Stalin was cautious, Truman's approach was the opposite.

In this chapter, we saw that after the defeat of Germany, on the European front the Soviet army was in Eastern Europe and parts of Austria and Germany and Joseph Stalin's expansionist aspirations were not quixotic and very much in his reach. The Red Army had emerged strong and successful, while the British Empire was in decline and Stalin saw an opportunity in the Mediterranean and the oil-rich Middle East. As Georgy Dimitrov, who served as General Secretary of the Communist International (Comintern) in 1935-43 and the head of the International department of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist party (1943-45), wrote to both Stalin and Molotov: "The countries of the Middle East acquire increasing importance in the current international situation and urgently need our intense attention. We should actively study the situation in those countries and take certain measures in the interests of our state."¹¹³ By 1946, the relationship between the USSR and the United States had deteriorated over Soviet behavior and aggression towards Turkey and its failure to withdraw from Northern Iran.

Stalin had made it clear that the Soviet Union would not be intimidated by an atomic threat, but the outcome of both the Turkish and Iranian crises show that American atomic power did deter the Soviet Union to a certain degree. However, David Holloway notes that Stalin's decision to pursue 'a realist, rather than a revolutionary or liberal foreign policy was made before the war ended or before the atomic bomb had entered the Soviet strategic calculation.'¹¹⁴ These events and prior interactions during the period of 1943 – 1945 led to the start of what would be known as the Cold War

¹¹³ Zubok, (2007), 8

¹¹⁴ Holloway, (1994), 169

between two of the most powerful nations, which continues to determine the fate of the world to this day. Alexis de Tocqueville was accurate in his prediction a century ago when he said, “There are now two great nations in the world, which starting from different points, seem to be advancing toward the same goal: the Russians and the Anglo-Americans....each seems called by some secret design of Providence one day to hold in its hands the destinies of half the world.”¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, edited by J.P. Mayer. (Garden City : Anchor/Doubleday, 1969), 412f.

Chapter 5

The Cold War: The Unrivalled Rivalry

“A curious paradox has emerged. Let me put it simply. After a certain point has been passed, it may be said, the worse things get the better. The broad effect of the latest developments is to spread almost indefinitely and at least to a vast extent the area of mortal danger. . . .

Here again we see the value of deterrents, immune against surprise and well understood by all persons on both sides—I repeat on both sides—who have the power to control events. . . .

Then it may well be that we shall, by a process of sublime irony, have reached a stage in this story where safety will be the sturdy child of terror, and survival the twin brother of annihilation.”¹

Winston Churchill

Introduction:

The origin of the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union is traditionally traced to the end of World War II. The interaction between the two states before the Second World War is overlooked in most Cold War research projects. But if we incorporate a complete historical picture we will see how perceptions of the United States by the government of Communist Russia were formed, and how pre-war politics shaped its current and future behavior. The perception of the United States as enemy was rooted in the Soviet narrative, and it was evident when Nikita Khrushchev said, “Communists have never forgotten or forgiven that America was very much involved in a violent attempt to stifle them in their cradle days.”² What Khrushchev was referring to was the 1918 Allied intervention in the Russian civil war. This perception existed prior to

¹ Churchill, *Never Give in! the Best of Winston Churchill’s Speeches*, (2003).

² E. M Halliday, *Ignorant Armies*, (1960), xv.

the deterioration of ties after the end of WWII. The alliance between the United States and Soviet Russia (1941 – 1945) was a short-lived anomaly that existed only because the intrinsic interests of both the states were threatened, and it ended as soon as that threat had dissipated.

Although animosities between the US and USSR had roots that were decades old, the rivalry between the two states reached a new and unprecedented stage after WWII. The previous chapter discussed the events from 1941- 1946 that led the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union to deteriorate. The period of 1946 – 1949 is in particular crucial for our present analysis, as the United States had its nuclear monopoly, but Stalin achieved three main objectives: the consolidation of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe; the rise of the Communist party in China, and the capability to achieve nuclear parity with the United States. It was also during this time that the Russians displayed an aggressive foreign policy and the United State maintained its cooperation with the Soviets. The question is why did the US cooperate when it had a complete nuclear monopoly? Aron Raymond, a French political theorist, points out that the “very enormity of the atomic weapon prevented the United States from using it as a diplomatic instrument.” Furthermore, he argued that, “it was the instinct of humanity which... invented the notion of a correlation between the size of a war and that of the weapons employed” and “neither the victories of Communist China nor, the Berlin blockade or even the invasion of Korea justified the use of the Atomic bomb.”³

³ Raymond Aron, *On War*, (Lanham : University Press of America, 1959), 25.

The period after the Russians' development of the atomic bomb is what this study calls the nuclear rivalry period. In this period, both states possessed nuclear weapons, and they began to compete for super power hegemony on the world stage. This chapter takes a detailed look at the competition and cooperation between the US and the USSR during the Cold War and the role of nuclear weapons in determining the behavior of the two super powers. The competition section focuses on the early crises, the Berlin Blockade of 1948, the Korean War, and how the early crises shaped the thinking and strategy of leaders in both sides. The cooperation between the rivals is highlighted in the arms agreements and other confidence building measures between the US and the USSR.

Containment Strategy:

George Kennan's Long Telegram of 1946 turned out to contain the strategy that the United States was going to follow during the Cold War. It was Stalin's ambitions and Soviet aggression that led to President Truman's decision to shift from Roosevelt's conciliatory position to his "firm but fair" approach towards the Russians.⁴ By July 25th, 1947, the US Congress passed the National Security Act that established the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Council and the Department of Defense. By Fall 1947, the National Security Council (NSC) started to meet and by August 1948 one of the initial documents (NSC/20/1) examined the "United States Objectives with Respect to Russia."⁵ The containment strategy that George Kennan delineated directly

⁴ FRUS, 1945 Vol. 5, Europe p. 232 [Memo, April 20th 1945]

⁵ NSC 20/1, pp. I-IV. The document covered general objective, peacetime aims, and wartime aims. It included the reduction of threat from Moscow by containing the power and influence of Russia.

dealt with the Soviet Union. Kennan's containment strategy was based on knowing the aggressive intentions and motivations of the Soviet Union and the persistent insecurities that had plagued the Russian political elites, and particularly Stalin. George Kennan was an optimist, but when it came to Russia he was grounded in reality, unlike President Roosevelt. Deborah Larson notes that Kennan believed that the "Soviets perceived the world as divided between socialist and capitalist centers, between which they could be no permanent peaceful coexistence."⁶

George Kennan in his Long Telegram identified the Russians' insecurities, and he believed that "Russian rulers learnt to seek security only in patient but deadly struggle for total destruction of rival power, never in the compacts and compromises with it." Kennan further alerted the administration and the West at large, when he said:

"we have here a political force committed fanatically to the belief that with the United States there can be no permanent *modus vivendi*, that it is desirable and necessary that the internal harmony of our society be disrupted, our traditional way of life be destroyed, the international authority of our state be broken, if Soviet power is to be secure."⁷

Stalin's hatred for the Capitalist West was not a surprise, but what Kennan had identified was his adversarial intentions towards the West and the troubling notion that the source of Soviet security would be the destruction or disruption of the West. Kennan also highlighted the weakness in Russia's relative capability and was aware that the decision makers in Moscow were not disillusioned by that reality. Instead it was the United States that had not realized its strength and capabilities. As Kennan noted, "Russia as opposed to the Western world is still by far the weaker party." In his long

⁶ Larson, (1985), 255.

⁷ FRUS, 1946, IV pp. 696-709, Also quoted in Larson, Title, 256.

telegram and later his foreign affairs article Kennan's aim was to alert and create a sense of urgency in the West for containing the communist ideology of the Soviet Union.

The events that followed the end of World War II were perceived differently by both rivals. In the previous chapter, I have discussed at length how the United States perceived Stalin's and the Russians' intentions to be expansionist and aggressive, but as Vladislav Zubok notes, most Russian citizens believed that the United States had initiated the Cold War and engaged in aggressive behavior towards the Soviet Union – not the other way around. Zubok attributes this to the “carefully preserved veneer of international legitimacy” maintained by Stalin maintained, who domestically portrayed the Western Allies as breaking the agreements of Yalta and Potsdam and as escalating in aggression in the Turkish Straits.⁸

The (In)Effectual US Nuclear Hegemony: *Conflictual Coexistence*

The period of 1945-1949 can be classified as conflictual coexistence between the United States and the Soviet Union. Each side had a strong preference for relying on its own efforts to assure security by took *unilateral action*, rather than depending on cooperative arrangements with an adversary and the leaders on both sides preferred competition over cooperation.

From 1945 to 1949, the United States never developed a consistent and effective policy for exploiting its nuclear advantage to wrest concessions from the Soviets. In Potsdam, when President Truman fleetingly mentioned the “new US weapon of unusual

⁸ Zubok, (2007), 49.

force”⁹ to his Russian counterpart, he had hoped that the new weapon would be as powerful diplomatically as it was on the battlefield. Instead, scholars have pointed out the Truman administration’s lack of strategy and understanding of its nuclear leverage, which resulted in the ineffectiveness of the US’ nuclear hegemony.¹⁰ After the use of the atomic bomb on the twin Japanese cities, President Truman and his administration hoped to influence Russian policy. However, after the end of WWII the confusion about the use of nuclear weapon as a diplomatic tool within the Truman administration is evident from conversations between Secretary of Defense Stimson and the US Ambassador to the Soviet Union. As David Holloway notes, Stimson had written a memorandum to Truman arguing that Soviet participation in atomic development can bring about a democratic change in Russia.¹¹ Stimson later changed his position, based on discussions with Ambassador Harriman, and wrote another memorandum to the President arguing that the “atomic bomb could not be used to induce internal change in the Soviet Union.” Furthermore, he pointed out that this “weapon is ostentatiously on our hip” and warned that it “only increases Soviet suspicion and distrust.”¹²

The US’ nuclear hegemony was perceived by the Russians as part of a plan for world domination and, as John Lewis Gaddis has argued, it “intensified Soviet-American distrust.” So the Soviet ambassador to the United States, reflecting Molotov’s views, noted that the United States had “abandoned the wartime cooperation among the

⁹ Truman Memoirs, Vol. 1: 1945 Year of Decisions, (New York: Signet Books) 1965, p. 458 Truman’s account of the conversation is challenged and question by Stalin’s interpreter who said he simply nodded and did not say anything. British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden wrote that Stalin had merely said, “Thank you.”

¹⁰ S. David Broscious, in John Lewis Gaddis, *Cold War Statesmen confront the Bomb, Nuclear diplomacy since 1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 25.

¹¹ Holloway, (1994), 155.

¹² Ibid.

big three and now sought [seeks] world domination.”¹³ This perception of US domination was based on its expanding military presence in the Pacific and the Atlantic.¹⁴ The ineffectiveness of the US’ nuclear advantage became clear at the London Conference of the foreign ministers in 1945, where the Russian Foreign Minister Molotov dismissed the importance of the atomic bomb. David Broscious argues that it was after the London Conference that “the Truman administration abandoned the notion that the atomic bomb could be used to extract diplomatic concessions from Moscow.”¹⁵ On the Russian side, Molotov was ‘instructed by Stalin to show resolute determination’ regarding post-war Soviet policies in eastern Europe.¹⁶ The Russians’ goal was to ensure the failure of the US’ and UK’s post-war policies.

The Berlin Crisis of 1948: Conflictual Coexistence

As the Grand Alliance crumbled, previous ideological and geo-strategic fault lines between the West and the Soviet Union became evident. In contrast to the cooperation during WWII, in the post-war era each state was focused on relying on its own efforts to assure security by taking unilateral actions. Ultimately, after the Turkish Straits and Iranian crisis, Germany was the focal point for Russia, and the American presence in Berlin was a major concern for the Soviet interests in Europe. By 1948, any cooperation in Europe between the East and West had come to a halt. On February 13th 1948, Russia issued a warning to the United States, Britain and France as they were preparing to meet

¹³ Goncharov, Sergei N., John W. Lewis, and Xue Litai. *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1993), 57.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Gaddis, 25

¹⁶ Gaddis, 51

for the London Conference and review the economic situation in West Germany. The Soviets were against the London Conference and noted that it violated “the Potsdam agreement and of other Four-Power decisions, according to which responsibility for the administration of Germany and for defining policy with regard to Germany lies jointly on the occupying powers, and this is incompatible with separate action.”¹⁷ Despite the Russian opposition, the London Conference convened and proposed a federal German government for the Western zones. The Allies were to relinquish control in favor of the democratic federal government in Germany. Additionally, the allies agreed on the European Recovery Program under an international authority that would control the allocation of resources and prevent the remilitarization of Germany.¹⁸

With the end of war a set of disputes and disagreements ranging from the issue of currency reform to the economic integration or unification of Germany emerged. The German economic unification plan that was agreed upon at Potsdam was a point of contention among the Powers that controlled Germany. The French and the Russians obstructed; each had their own interests and designs for the future of Germany. However, the puzzling aspect of this period is that it was during this time that the United States had sole possession of nuclear weapons and yet it did not deter Soviet Union. The Soviets’ hostility towards the Allies was palpable. With every meeting the “Soviet charges become more vitriolic” and “in such an atmosphere, there was no further hope for quadripartite government, or for our proposal for [economic or]

¹⁷ The Soviet Union and the Berlin Question, “Note of the Soviet Government to the Government of the United States,” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR. (Moscow: Government Publication, 1948) p. 5

¹⁸ Communique issued by the London Six Power Conference.

currency reform.”¹⁹ The Western European states were concerned about Soviet aggression and were aware that the United States, despite its nuclear monopoly, was not going to use atomic weapons against the USSR. This is made evident by conversations between the French Ambassador to the US Secretary of State on June 2nd 1948. The Ambassador noted,

“the root of [French] opposition is a fear that as a result of our setting up a government in West Germany, the Russian may endeavor aggressively to force us out of Berlin. If they do that, what will you [Americans] do? Will you fight, and if you fight, with what will you fight? If we were sure you would drop atomic bombs fast enough and often enough, we would not be so worried but we doubt that you will. It would be easy for the Russian armies to overrun France and we shudder to think of what would happen to our beautiful country. We are defenseless, as you well know.”²⁰

It was this insecurity that led to unilateral actions by each state. The Russians departed from the Allied Control Council on June 16th 1948, and with their withdrawal they commented,

“The Allied Kommendatura in Berlin has for all practical purposes ceased its activities since the American Commandant Colonel Howley on June 16th, at a meeting of the Kommandatura, refused to discuss Soviet proposals for the improvement of the material and legal position of workers and office employees in Berlin industry and transport, and after a number of remarks insulting to the Allied Kommandatura walked out of the meeting.”²¹

The Russians also countered the London Conference by assembling the Eastern European states in Warsaw. The purpose of the meeting was to condemn the decisions

¹⁹ Lucius Clay, *Decision in Germany* (Garden City New York; Doubleday and Company, 1950), 209

²⁰ FRUS, Germany and Austria 1948 Vol. II location: 740.00119 Council/6-248: Telegram.

²¹ Beate Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany Under Occupation 1945-1954*, (London Oxford University Press, 1955). op. cit., “Soviet Statement on the withdrawal of the USSR from the Berlin Kommandatura 1st July 1948,” 315.

reached during the London Conference. Its members claimed that it was a “gross violation of Yalta and Potsdam agreements concerning the unity of Germany, the demilitarization, denazification and democratization of Germany, the destruction of her war potential, and the elimination of conditions which might facilitate a recrudescence of German aggression.”²²

At one level, it seems obvious that the Grand Alliance was going to collapse because of the ideological differences between the Soviet Union and the United States. As discussed in chapter 4, the signs of the alliance fracturing were there even before the war ended, and after the defeat of Germany the incentive for the persistence of the alliance had disappeared. However, the allies could not agree on the future of Germany, whether it was demilitarization or economic and currency reforms. On the currency reform issue the Western powers had refused to grant Russia a set of plates for printing currency, and on June 18th 1948 the Deutsche Mark was introduced as the new currency for the Western zones of Germany. The Russians in response sealed off the Soviet controlled parts of Germany to prevent the collapse of the Reichsmark and announced currency reforms not only for their zone but also the zone of Greater Berlin. The Russians blamed the Western powers for destroying German unity. As the Soviet Military Order noted,

“A single currency reform for the whole of Germany was possible and essential in the interest of Germany. Agreement has been reached in the Control Council on the fundamental principles of a currency reform for the whole of Germany. However, the four-Power agreement for a currency reform for the whole of Germany, the major provisions of which were

²² Statement by the foreign minister of the USSR, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, and Hungary. 302

already drafted, has been torpedoed by the American, British, and French occupation authorities.”²³

The American, British and French response to the Russian currency reform was to extend the Deutsche Mark in Berlin.²⁴ On June 24th 1948, the Soviet Military halted all traffic between the Western zone and Berlin. Although the restrictive measures by the Russians were in place for quite some time and could be traced back to January 1948, the complete blockade of flow between the east and west took place on June 24th.²⁵

On the American side, the question arises whether the United States should have used its nuclear leverage to deter the Soviets from blocking transportation routes to Berlin. Instead, President Truman’s indecisiveness and hesitation with regards to the use of bomb were evident. As early as May 1948, Truman said to the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission David Lilienthal, “I gave the order for the others [Hiroshima and Nagasaki], and I don’t want to have to do that again, ever.” Later, Lilienthal noted that Truman said on another occasion, “The atomic bomb is not just another weapon. People make a mistake about that when they talk that way...Dave, we

²³ Beate Ruhm von Oppen, *Documents on Germany Under Occupation 1945-1954*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1955). “Soviet Military Administration Order No. 111 on Currency Reform.” The Soviet Ambassador Panyushkin sent a note to the US secretary of State on July 14th 1948 restating the same feelings. He said, “The Soviet Government... considers that the situation which has been created in Berlin has arisen as a result of violation by the Governments of the United States, Britain, and France... “The Soviet Command has been forced therefore to adopt certain urgent measures for the protection of the interests of the German population and also of the economy of the Soviet zone of occupation and the area of “Greater Berlin.”” Excerpt From: Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. “Germany and Austria (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1948, Volume II).”

²⁴ James Pollock, James Meisel and Henry Bretton, *Germany Under Occupation: Illustrative Materials and Documents* (George Wahr Publishing Co: Ann Arbor Michigan, 1949), 214

²⁵ Ibid.

will never use it again if we can possibly help it.”²⁶ During the 1948 Berlin Blockade Truman’s ambivalence regarding the bomb was discernible yet the use of nuclear weapons was an option. As Truman said to Secretary Defense James Forrestal, “he prayed he would never have to make such a decision again, but if it became necessary, no one need have a misgiving but he would do so.” David Broscious notes that Truman did not specify the condition under which he would be willing to use nuclear weapons, but he did consider the possibility of using atomic weapons again.²⁷

The British, American and French considered the blockade to be a clear violation of the agreement concerning the four-power administration of Berlin. For the Western powers the Berlin blockade was a difficult conundrum. They were faced by Russian obstructionism in the economic and political restoration of post-war Germany, and a concession to Stalin would have meant communist control of western Europe. The Soviet blockade of Berlin remained in place till the 4th of May 1949, and it took diplomacy and counter-blockade by the Western allies to lift the ban.²⁸ However, the US nuclear hegemony was inconsequential in deterring Russia from preventing transport routes and access to Berlin. Alexander George and Richard Smoke described the Russian strategy, “the Berlin Blockade was a classic example of a low-risk, potentially high-gain strategy...Soviet leaders were not committed to persisting in the blockade... they could at any time find a solution to the ‘technical difficulties’ and open up the ground access to West Berlin. Nor need the Soviets persist in the blockade if the Western powers threatened to overreact to it in ways that raised the danger of war.” The

²⁶ David Lilienthal, *Atomic Energy Years*, Vol 2. p. 342

²⁷ David Broscious, Gaddis, *Cold War Statesmen confront the Bomb*, Nuclear diplomacy since 1945 , (1999), 20.

²⁸ Ibid.

Soviet Union perceived the Western influence in reviving Germany to be a threat to its intrinsic interests. So the Russians attempted to deter the United States and other Western allies from going further with their economic and political reforms in Germany despite the US' control over nuclear weapons.

Stalin Gets the Atomic Bomb: The Birth of the Nuclear Rivalry

On August 29th 1949, the Soviet Union successfully tested its first atomic bomb and the United States announced the Russian atomic test on the 23rd of September 1949. Stalin had kept the test a secret due to fear of the capitalist countries attacking the Soviet Union. Khrushchev wrote of the tests and the insecurity against a potential US attack:

“America had a powerful air force and, most important, America had atomic bombs, while we had only just developed the mechanism and had a negligible number of finished bombs. Under Stalin we had no means of delivery. We had no long-range rockets. All we had was short range rockets. This situation weighed heavy on Stalin. He understood that he had to be careful not to be dragged into a war.”²⁹

The Soviet atomic test in 1949 marked the start of the US-Russian nuclear rivalry. This rivalry, as John Lewis Gaddis noted, “went on longer than the Trojan, Persian and Peloponnesian wars put together.”³⁰ I agree with Gaddis's contention and hold that it was the Russians' acquisition of the atomic bomb in August 1949 led to the start of adversarial yet peaceful relations between the United States and Russia.

²⁹ Ibid., 85

³⁰ Leffler, M., & Westad, O. (Eds.). *The Cambridge History of the Cold War : Crises and Détente* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1

Now I am Become Death, The Destroyer of Worlds

American nuclear hegemony did not deter the Soviets during the Iran crisis or the 1948 Berlin Blockade, and neither did it draw out any concession from Stalin. In fact, Stalin said in September 1946, “atomic bombs are meant to frighten those with weak nerves.”³¹ The Soviets’ behavior in the post-war era demonstrates that they were not intimidated by the US’s nuclear hegemony. David Holloway has argued that there is little evidence that the United State compelled the USSR to do anything, or deterred it from invading Western Europe. As he maintains, Stalin had two guiding principles with regards to nuclear weapons: a war of nerves and an understanding of limits. Holloway further noted that the bomb probably restrained the Soviets from using force in ways that raised the potential of risking a war with the United States.³²

When Robert Oppenheimer witnessed the first nuclear detonation on July 16th 1945, he recalled a line from the Bhagavad-Gita, “Now I am become death, the destroyer of the worlds.” Oppenheimer was the father of the US atomic program and was aware that other states would also acquire this incredibly powerful weapon with the capability of destroying mankind. Thus, “man has now become death, capable of destroying itself,” and with this immense power comes the limits imposed by rationality and the risks of miscalculations. As gloomy as Oppenheimer’s statement may appear, its logic is the basis of the theory of nuclear revolution. The nuclear revolution theory argues that rival dyads mutually accept nuclear vulnerability, while maintaining high level of strategic stability. Thus, the two core assumptions of nuclear revolution theory are based on the inescapability of mutual vulnerability. These assumptions recognize the threats posed by

³¹ Holloway (1994) in Leffler and Westad (2010), 73.

³² Ibid, 73 – 87.

second-strike capability and the stability-instability paradox, which can be defined as the trade-off between high-level stability and the cost of low-level instability. This chapter now proceeds to examine the ways in which nuclear weapons affected the interaction in the US–USSR rivalry from the period of the 1950s till the collapse of the Soviet Union. I argue that the historical record is largely consistent with the nuclear revolution thesis on competition. The next section will review the important historical events.

The Korean Conflict: *The Forgotten War*

On June 25th 1950, in a surprise move the Korean People’s Army of North Korea invaded South Korea and moved beyond the thirty-eighth parallel. Moscow had given the North the assurances but the USSR did not realize that the US would react. The US intervention in the Korean war was against the expectation of Mao, Stalin and Kim of North Korea.³³ President Truman had already tested by the USSR during the episode in the Turkish Straits, the Iranian crisis and the Berlin Blockade. In a telegram from the US embassy in Moscow, the message to the Secretary of State was clear,

“We feel... that we are called upon to make clear to the world, and without delay, that we are prepared upon request to assist ROK maintain its independence by all means at our disposal, including military help and vigorous action in UNSC. Embassy assumes that ROK has or will shortly ask for such assistance... Delay could suggest to Soviets possibility their precipitating with impunity further immediate action against Indochina et cetera.

Soviets probably calculating that we will be inclined to allow “neutralization” of Korean civil war in which numerically stronger and more heavily armed NK troops and Commie fifth columnists in ROK territory will form victorious combination and thus advance boundaries Soviet empire without actual use

³³ Zhihua, Shen. *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War: Trilateral Communist Relations in the 1950s*. (Cold War History) (Kindle Location 3167) Taylor and Francis. Kindle Edition.

Soviet military forces. We believe ... does not think Soviets prepared now risk possibility full scale war with West. Kremlin's Korean adventure thus offers us opportunity to show that we mean what we say by talking of firmness, and at same time, to unmask present important Soviet weaknesses before eyes world and particularly Asia where popular concept Soviet power grossly exaggerated as result recent Soviet political and propaganda successes that area.”³⁴

The US responded on June 29th by sending a regimental combat team, and over the course of three years it deployed 1.4 million American soldiers in Korea.³⁵ Besides troop involvement the United States also gathered international support through the United Nations Security Council, which called for North Korea's withdrawal and assistance for South Korea. President Truman was committed to defending South Korea, and US and UN forces under General Douglas MacArthur reversed much of the initial attack and drove the North Korean forces to the Yalu River – the border between China and North Korea. Despite the warning of the Joint Chiefs of Staff not to undertake any operation against the Chinese, General MacArthur issued his own orders to advance on October 24th after crossing the 38th Parallel.³⁶ On October 2nd Zhou Enlai notified the Indian Ambassador K. M. Panikkar that if the United States crossed the 38th Parallel, China would join the war.³⁷ Altogether, it was the Chinese involvement in October 1950 that led to what the US Secretary of State Dean Acheson called the “worst defeat since Bull Run.”³⁸ American casualties were around 11000 in seventy-two hours. Acheson

³⁴ FRUS, 1950, Korea Vol. VII 795.00/6-2550: Telegram (The Ambassador in the Soviet Union (Kirk) to the Secretary of State June 25th 1950.

³⁵ Kaufman, Burton I. *Korean Conflict*, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 3.

³⁶ FRUS: Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. “Korea and China (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951, Volume VII, Part 1).” 795.00/3-2051 Telegram & 795.00/3-2151.

³⁷ U.S Department of State, Office of Intelligence and Research, “The Fate of Science in Communist China” in Far Eastern Notes, No.4, May 14 1953.

³⁸ Robert Beisner, *Dean Acheson: A Life in the Cold War*, (2009), 410.

considered the loss “an incalculable defeat to US foreign policy” and believed that it “destroyed the Truman administration.”³⁹

All the sides had the expectation that Korea was not important in the others’ strategic calculations. The Korean conflict is a ideal example of *Conflictual Coexistence* type of interaction in a nuclear rivalry. Each side had strong preference for relying on its own efforts to assure security by taking unilateral action, rather than depending on cooperative arrangements with the other.

The United States was reasonably “confident in their initial assessment of the Chinese and Soviet unwillingness to risk war with the United States.”⁴⁰ However, it was Chinese intervention that extended the war and resulted in the American troops being pushed back to the 38th Parallel in 1951. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, scholars have attempted to explore the origins of the Korean war. Kathryn Weathersby has argued that North Korea would have not invaded and crossed the 38th Parallel had it not been approved by Moscow and Stalin.⁴¹ She further explores the motives for why Stalin decided to allow North Korea to launch a military campaign against the South. The answer to this question is twofold: Stalin was threatened by the revival of Japan under Western influence, and the Soviets miscalculated that the American would not get involved based on NSC-48, which drew the US defense parameters to the west of Japan and Philippines and not the Asian mainland.⁴² The Korean armistice was signed on July 1953 and since then the 38th Parallel has become the official borderline between North and South Korea.

³⁹ Robert Beisner (2009), 446.

⁴⁰ Goncharov, (1993), 157.

⁴¹ Leffler and Westad (2010), 266.

⁴² Ibid., 266 – 278.

Role of Nuclear weapons in the Korean War:

The Korean conflict was dramatically altered after the Chinese engagement. The US suffered massive losses, and its forces were pushed back to the 38th Parallel. The question is what role nuclear weapons played in the Chinese calculation. The United States had the option of using nuclear weapons, and it hesitated. When asked by the South Korean President Rhee why the United States did not use atomic weapons, the US General Ridgway's answer was, "that would only precipitate world war III."⁴³ The Chinese meanwhile were not deterred by US atomic supremacy, as it is evident from the conversation noted between the Indian Ambassador, K.M Panikkar and Chief of PLA General Nie Rongzhen (Nieh Jung-Chen):

"General Nieh told me in a quiet and unexcited manner that the Chinese did not intend to sit back with folded hands and let the American come up to their border. This was the first indication I had that the Chinese proposed to intervene in the war. I was taken aback a little by this statement, all the more impressive because it was said in a quiet and pleasant tone, as if he were telling me that he intended to go shooting the next day. I asked him whether he realized in full the implications of such an action. He replied, "We know what we are in for, but at all costs American aggression has to be stopped. The American can bomb us, they can destroy our industries, but they cannot defeat us on land. I tried to impress on him how destructive a war with America would be; how the Americans would be able to destroy systematically all the industries of Manchuria and put China back by half a century, how China's coastal towns would be exposed to bombardment and how even the interior could be bombed. He only laughed, "we have calculated all that," he said. "they may even drop atom bombs on us. What then? They may kill a few million people. Without sacrifice a nation's independence cannot be upheld." He gave some calculations of the effectiveness of atom bombs and said:" After all, China lives on the farms. What can atom bombs do there?

⁴³ FRUS, Excerpt From: Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. " Korea and China (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1951, Volume VII, Part 1). "

Yes, our economic development will be put back. We may have to wait for it.”⁴⁴

The use of nuclear weapons in Korea was mentioned and discussed in some military and political circles, but it was not provided a serious consideration as an option to end the war. During his visit to Washington DC in January 1952, the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill had asked US officials if the United States was considering the tactical use of nuclear weapons. To this the Joint Chief of Staff Bradley responded, “it is not our intention to use these bombs, since up to the present no suitable targets were presented.”⁴⁵ By mid 1952, in the heat of the US presidential campaign and amid frustrations at impeded talks on armistice and stalemate on the ground, a study by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) found that for an offensive strategy “it would be necessary to authorize the use of atomic weapons against military targets in the Far East.”⁴⁶ In a formal presentation of these plans the JCS pushed for lifting the restrictions on the use of nuclear weapons against Chinese airbases. Due to 1952 being an election year, the Secretary of Army delayed action on the JCS plan till the Eisenhower administration took over.⁴⁷ However, by September 1952 some State Department officials suggested an effort to influence China by spreading rumors regarding the possibility of the use of atomic bombs in Korea. It stated,

⁴⁴ Morton Halperin, *Chinese Attitudes toward the Use and Control of Nuclear Weapons*, 139.

⁴⁵ Dean Acheson, “memorandum of Conversation at the British Embassy,” January 6, 1952. Acheson Papers, Washington National Records Center, Modern Military Records Division, Suitland, Md., cited in Hewlett and Duncan, *Atomic Shield, 1947/1952*, p 547.

⁴⁶ Schnabel and Watson, *History of JCS*, Vol. 3, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1979) 933-34

⁴⁷ Ibid.

“1. A covert operation to spread rumors in Korea, Japan and China that an amphibious operation is being prepared.

2. Spread the following rumor through covert channels so that it would get circulation in Korea and Japan and China, if possible:

The U.S. has consistently refused to accept prohibitions on the atomic weapons. The reason for this is that the atomic bomb is our real ace in the hole in Korea, but the U.S. Government has been against their use. But pressure from some elements in the U.S. is intense to use them. The present saturation bombings in Korea have been launched in an effort to restrain these elements by satisfying them that we are taking vigorous action. But the saturation bombing obviously is not going to be decisive. A Presidential campaign is on and already one party is demanding more decisive action. As the Presidential campaign grows, this pressure will get much greater. The Government probably will not be able to resist it. There is one way to prevent the use of atomic weapons in Korea. This is to get an armistice without delay. If that is not done and atomic weapons are used, they may not prove decisive since they have never been tried on troops in the field. If that happens, then the same pressure undoubtedly will be exerted to extend the bombings to China, using atomic weapons.”⁴⁸

The Truman Administration attempted to coerce the Chinese into an armistice by using the possibility of deploying atomic weapons in the war. However, there is no evidence that the Truman administration came close to deciding to use atomic weapons in Korea. President Truman was frustrated and getting impatient with the situation in Korea and with the Soviets, and that was evident by what he wrote in his journal. In May 1952,

“You’ve broken every agreement you made at Tehran, Yalta, and Potsdam... Now do you [referring to a possible ultimatum to the Russians] want an end to hostilities in Korea or do you want China and Siberia destroyed? You may have one or the other which ever you want... You either accept our fair and just proposal or you will be completely destroyed.”⁴⁹

Nonetheless, scholars have argued that these were Truman’s private thoughts and not policy position. As Herken has argued, Truman’s journal entries are more an expression

⁴⁸ FRUS, Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. “Korea (in two parts) (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952–1954, Volume XV, Part 1). P.1949-50 ”

⁴⁹ The Private papers of Harry Truman, in Robert Ferrell “Off the Record.” 250-51.

of “pique than of policy.”⁵⁰ President Truman remains the only head of state in history to have ordered the use of nuclear weapons, but after Hiroshima and Nagasaki the Truman administration never came close to a decision to use atomic weapons in the Berlin crisis or the Korean war.

By contrast, the Eisenhower administration considered using atomic weapons to lower the costs and time expended at war.⁵¹ The Eisenhower administration was also better organized than the previous administration in coming up with a strategy for threatening an adversary with nuclear weapons. Eisenhower’s New Look⁵² national strategy was based on three principles:

“the United States would not bankrupt itself to finance its military; America would save money without sacrifice to security by reducing military manpower and relying instead on the threat of nuclear weapons; and America would seek not only to contain Communism but to roll it back with the full panoply of tactical devices, from propaganda to covert action.”⁵³

The New Look strategy was to give the adversary the impression that the United States considered nuclear weapons to be like any other weapon. As Eisenhower said, one could use them “just as you would use a bullet or anything else.”⁵⁴ In the early days of the Eisenhower administration the use of tactical nuclear weapons was considered, but it

⁵⁰ Greg Herkin, Truman papers.

⁵¹ Eisenhower in his memoirs, *Mandate for Change*, pp 179-80 noted that he was not willing to accept the status quo and in order to bring the Korean war to an end he would consider a “course of action other than a conventional ground attack in Korea was necessary... to keep the attack from becoming overly costly, it was clear that we would have to use nuclear weapons.”

⁵² “The term New Look had a definite place in the parlance of the day; it had been coined to describe noticeable changes in the style of women’s dresses. Thus, the tag “new look” probably suggested to many minds a picture of a far more radical change in the composition of our armed forces than was truly the case.” Dwight Eisenhower 1963.

⁵³ Jim Newton, *Eisenhower*, (2011), 304.

⁵⁴ Public papers of the Presidents: Dwight D. Eisenhower, (1955), 332. Cited in Nuclear Rivalry and the International Order by Gjelstad and Njolstad (1996), 43

was Secretary Dulles who raised the moral concerns regarding the use of nuclear weapons. The memorandum of the discussion notes, “Soviet success to date in setting atomic weapons apart from all other weapons as being in a special category. It was his [Secretary Dulles] opinion that we should try to break down this false distinction.”⁵⁵ Eisenhower on multiple occasions considered the possibility of using atomic weapons in Korea but it was the threat of the Soviet retaliation that prevented the US from moving forward with such decision. In one of the NSC meetings in March 1953 Eisenhower responded to the suggestion that the US should use atomic weapons in Korea,

“if we decide to go up to the strength which will be necessary to achieve a sound tactical victory in Korea—for example, to get to the waist—the Russians will very quickly realize what we are doing. They would respond by increasing the Communist strength in Korea, and, as a result, we would be forced ultimately into a situation very close to general mobilization in order to get such a victory in Korea... perhaps we should, but we could not blind our selves to the effects of such a move on our allies, which would be very serious since they feel that they will be the battleground in an atomic war between the United States and the Soviet Union.”⁵⁶

Throughout the Korean war the United States attempted to influence the Chinese with the threat of atomic weapons. The Truman administration first used rumors and propaganda, and later the Eisenhower administration employed public statements made by government and military personnel. On the Soviet front, after Stalin’s death on March, 5th 1953 his successors proposed a peace initiative to reduce the threat of war

⁵⁵ FRUS, Memorandum of Discussion of the 131st Meeting of the National Security Council, Feb 11th 1953. Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. “ Korea (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952–1954, Volume XV, Part 1). ”

⁵⁶ FRUS, Memorandum of Discussion at a National Security Council, March 31st 1953. Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. “ Korea (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952–1954, Volume XV, Part 1). ”

with the United States.⁵⁷ Even before Stalin's death, the Soviets were concerned about the war in Korea leading to an all-out war. As Khrushchev wrote, "in the days leading up to Stalin's death we believed that America would invade the Soviet Union and we would go to war."⁵⁸ The Eisenhower administration's explicit and implicit flirtation with nuclear threats, and later the thermonuclear test of November 1952, guaranteed the Kremlin's attention.

Nikita Khrushchev's Nearly Peaceful-Coexistence: *Collaborative Competition*

Very little attention is paid to the events of 1953, and they are critical to our analysis in this study. 1953 was also the year that would have changed the course of the rivalry and most likely reduced the mistrust between the US and the USSR, if only the two rivals would have utilized the opportunities at hand. The interaction in this period is what this study categorizes as, *Collaborative Coexistence*. This was a shift from the previous interactions between the two rivals. It was during this time when one observes strong elements of cooperation and competition.

Domestic constraints and external factors prevented the two sides from improving relations or reducing tensions. During this period, as this section will discuss, we can observe strong attempts to cooperate on the Soviet side, due to both domestic uncertainties brought about by conflicts for succession and external factors. On the US front, there was a lack of enthusiasm to cooperate with the new leadership in Moscow

⁵⁷ Zubok, (2007). 86

⁵⁸ Schecter and Luchkov, (1990), 100-101.

because of domestic constraints. This study also contends that Nikita Khrushchev was the major factor behind the cooperative steps towards the West and the US. Had the conservative comrades of Stalin gained an upper hand, it would have had the potential to leading to war. Aleksei Kosygin even claimed that he had backed Khrushchev because had Molotov been victorious, “Blood would have flowed again.”⁵⁹ It had also been Khrushchev’s desire to shift resources from defense and security to economic rehabilitation for the Soviet Union, and he was not interested in war.

On the Soviet front, before March 1953 all foreign policy decisions were made by Stalin, and after his death the responsibility fell on a few of his comrades. Troyanovsky Oleg, in his memoirs, best describes the threats faced by the USSR by stating, “it soon became obvious to them [Stalin’s successors] that the legacy they inherited was appalling.” Troyanovsky provides a narrative of the infighting and the shock of the international situation:

...[the situation] had become so tense that another turn of the screw might have led to disaster. There was a war going on in Korea and another in Indochina; the two superpowers were facing each other with daggers drawn; the arms race was steadily gaining momentum; the German problem hung like a dark cloud over Europe; there was no settlement of the Austrian problem in sight; the Soviet Union had no diplomatic relations with either West Germany or Japan, and thousands of prisoners of war were still in camps in Russia; the soviet Union was at loggerheads with Tito’s Yugoslavia for reasons that remained obscure to ordinary mortals; Turkey had turned to the West because of Soviet territorial and other demands; the situation in some East European countries was become more and more disturbing. The inevitability of a major new war was still a part of the communist doctrine and this, if taken at face value, would have made any attempts to prevent a new conflict meaningless.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Oleg Troyanovsky, “The Making of the Soviet Foreign Policy,” in *Nikita Khrushchev*, edited by Taubman, Sergei Khrushchev, and Abbott Gleason. (Oct 2013), 216.

⁶⁰ Oleg Troyanovsky, “The Making of the Soviet Foreign Policy,” in *Nikita Khrushchev*, edited by Taubman, Sergei Khrushchev, and Abbott Gleason. (Oct 2013), 210. In this paragraph Troyanovsky quotes Marshall Zukov.

In his description of the external environment faced by the Soviet leaders, Oleg Troyanovsky also highlights how this was a missed opportunity by the West to improve relations with the Soviets. Instead the western response was one of mistrust and not positive. The Soviet leaders inherited after Stalin's death a situation that was, as Troyanovsky would say, at the edge of an abyss.⁶¹

It was the Soviet peace initiative of 1953 (which took shape because of Stalin's death, Khrushchev's coming to power, and the American thermonuclear test) that reduced the threat of World War III. The Soviets together with the Chinese opened armistice talks with the United States on Korea. The new leadership in Moscow favored a resolution to the crisis and accommodation with the West.⁶² By contrast, the Chinese leadership favored a hardline approach towards the US. The Korean war came to an end on July 1953. It must be noted that each side initially assumed that Korea was not crucial for the others' strategic calculations, but as the Chinese scholar Shen Zhihua has noted, the Korean War was more than just a regional clash of conflicts or the product of miscalculation. It reflected what he has called the "clash of the world's two great camps, with newly allied China and the USSR playing major roles in the war." As he states, "China and the Soviet Union had their respective war goals, strategies and tactics. The cooperation and discord between the two affected the outcome of the war, greatly testing their alliance."⁶³

After Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet policy towards the United States and the West started to shift towards peaceful co-existence. The political elites in Moscow saw

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Zubok, (2007), 86.

⁶³ Zhihua, (2012), Introduction.

the post-Stalin era as an “opportunity to move away from Stalin’s universalist version of communism and global confrontation, to a world where the communist and capitalist would coexist and peacefully compete.”⁶⁴ It is important to note that it was Khrushchev that pushed for destalinization and focus on domestic economy. By contrast, the United States did not consider the Soviet measures towards “peaceful co-existence” to be an opportunity. Instead, as Zubok notes, President Eisenhower and his team regarded the changes in Soviet diplomatic flexibility as a threat and a tactic to derail the US plans to rebuild Western Europe, particularly Germany.⁶⁵ Hence, the lack of trust in the rivalry stemmed from past interactions.⁶⁶ Besides the mistrust of Russian intentions, there was also the issue of domestic politics. As one of Eisenhower’s policy maker reminded those attending the National Security Council meeting, “we [Americans] could hardly tolerate a neutralized Germany.”⁶⁷

The Soviet leaders were apprehensive of appearing weak, and President Eisenhower’s speech on April 16 1953, declared that “The new Soviet leadership now has a precious opportunity to awaken...and help turn the tide of history, Will it do this? We [United States] welcomes every honest act of peace ... opportunities for such deeds are many: armistice in Korea, an Austrian treaty, the release of World War II prisoners of war, and steps to reduce the burden of armaments now weighing upon the world...What

⁶⁴ Pleshakov, (1996), 139

⁶⁵ Zubok, (2007). 94

⁶⁶ Deborah Larson, In *Anatomy of Mistrust* notes, that it is the mistrust in a rivalry formed by past interactions weakens future communications between rival dyads.

⁶⁷ FRUS, 1952-54m Germany and Austria, Vol VII part 1. Memo of discussion at the 159th Meeting of the NSC, August 13th, 1953

is the Soviet Union ready to do?”⁶⁸ The United States at this stage was a thermonuclear power, and the Soviet Union faced domestic uncertainty and external threats, as mentioned previously. Nikita Khrushchev emerged as the decisive leader of the Union of the Soviet States, and as Oleg Troyanovsky noted, Eisenhower’s four deeds were etched in his mind. The Korean armistice was signed a few months after Eisenhower’s speech, on July 1953. The Korean truce was followed by the Austrian treaty in 1955 and the reestablishment of diplomatic ties with the Federal Republic of Germany, along with the release of the prisoners of war.⁶⁹ To the surprise of the United States, one of President Eisenhower’s speech writers even complained about post-Stalin Soviet relations by saying, “we are drowning in a sea of honey.”⁷⁰ Back in Moscow, Khrushchev faced opposition from the conservatives in the Soviet foreign policy community regarding the Austrian treaty. As one secret memorandum noted, “we cannot afford to withdraw Soviet troops from Austria... since it would actually mean placing Austria in the hands of the Americans and weakening our positions in Central Europe.”⁷¹

The US response to the Soviet cooperation was perfunctory for many reasons, some relating to the Soviet Union and others to the constraints of other global crises. The US ambassador to the Soviet Union noted that by 1956 the Russians had demonstrated interest in improving ties with the United States and offered “an honest talk,” as declared by Eisenhower. However, Secretary Dulles never authorized the

⁶⁸ FRUS, President Eisenhower’s speech The Chance for Peace Address Delivered Before the American Society of Newspaper Editors, April 16th 1953.

⁶⁹ Oleg Troyanovsky, “the Making of the Soviet Foreign Policy,” in Taubman, Sergei Khrushchev, and Abbott Gleason, *Nikita Khrushchev*, (Yale University Press, 2013), 212.

⁷⁰ Kurt Steiner, Negotiations for an Austrian Treaty, in Alexander George, Farley and Dallin’s *US-Soviet Security Cooperation* (Oxford University Press, 1988), 57.

⁷¹ Zubok, *Soviet Foreign Policy in Germany and Austria and the Post-Stalin Succession Struggle, 1953-55*, (2008), 21-24; Zubok, (2007), 99.

meeting.⁷² Similarly, on the issue of disarmament the United States demonstrated lack of enthusiasm and only agreed to attend the 1955 Geneva conference as a result of British pressure. As Secretary Dulles stated, “we did not actually desire to enter either negotiation, but felt compelled to do so in order to get our allies to consent to the rearmament of Germany. World opinion demanded that the United States participate in these negotiations with the Communists.”⁷³ The United States’ imperiousness towards Soviet conciliation could be tied to a range of factors. But the successful thermonuclear test appears to be one of the reasons, along with the view of US policy makers that the rivalry with the Soviet Union was a zero-sum game. The past behavior of the Soviets under Stalin was consistently adversarial towards the Western states, with the objective of territorial expansion. Most policy makers in the administration maintained the view that “none of the changes in the Soviet policy suggests any alteration in basic aims or in the concept of an irreconcilable conflict between the communists and the non-communist world.”⁷⁴ The threat of Soviet armies marching in Western Europe had been reduced, but the spread of communism remained a threat. Besides these factors, the United States was dealing with crises involving European allies in the Middle East and Africa: Britain’s conflict with Egypt and Iran, a wave of decolonization and liberation movements, and France’s weakening hold on Indochina and Africa.⁷⁵

A primary concern of Soviet leaders was to not appear weak for both their domestic and international audience. The lack of response from the United States had

⁷² Oleg Troyanovsky, “The Making of the Soviet Foreign Policy,” in Taubman, Sergei Khrushchev, and Abbott Gleason, *Nikita Khrushchev*, (Yale University Press, 2013), 214

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ 1957-1962 National Intelligence Estimates. Quotes in Taubman (2013), 215.

⁷⁵ Adam Ulam, (1971), 202.

placed the Soviet decision makers, particularly Khrushchev, in a difficult position politically. Khrushchev's opponents in the Presidium considered his conciliatory measures towards the West to be appeasement and aimed to return to a Stalinist foreign policy position. The shift in Soviet foreign policy reduced tensions between the US and the USSR for a short term, but it did not change their perception of each other as enemies and further increased insecurities among the Soviets. Oleg Troyanovsky noted that he had the "impression that Khrushchev feared the US would compel the Soviet Union and its allies to retreat in some region of the world...he believed that he would be held responsible for that."⁷⁶ The failure of the 'peaceful coexistence' policy of Khrushchev haunted him, and he was reminded of Stalin's words, "When I am not around, they will strangle you like kittens."⁷⁷

The thermonuclear test further affected the thinking of the Russian leaders and the Eisenhower administration. The shift in Eisenhower's understanding of atomic weapons was evident when he told South Korean President Singman Rhee, "Atomic wars will destroy civilization. It will destroy our cities. There will be millions of people dead. War today is unthinkable with the weapons which we have at our command. If the Kremlin and Washington ever lock up in a war, the results are too horrible to contemplate."⁷⁸ Eisenhower's comments were a complete shift from his earlier position regarding the use of atomic weapons. Eisenhower after the thermonuclear test

⁷⁶ Oleg Troyanovsky, "The Making of the Soviet Foreign Policy," in Taubman, Sergei Khrushchev, and Abbott Gleason, *Nikita Khrushchev*, (Yale University Press, 2013), 235.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Robert Bowie and Richard Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy*, (1998), 247.

understood what Truman had realized by his final State of the Union address, when he said:

“We have entered the atomic age, and war has undergone a technological change which makes it a very different thing from what it used to be. War today between the Soviet empire and the free nations might dig the grave not only of our Stalinist opponents, but of our own society, our world as well as theirs. . . . The war of the future would be one in which man could . . . destroy the very structure of a civilization that has been slowly and painfully built up through hundreds of generations. Such a war is not a possible policy for rational men.”⁷⁹

Indeed, the thermonuclear test may have shifted the thinking among US and Soviet decision makers regarding the use of nuclear weapons, but that did not translate into the resolution of crises, or for that matter, reduction in adversarial public rhetoric. Instead, the two rivals confronted each other on multiple occasions, and Stalin’s successor Nikita Khrushchev till 1961 repeatedly threatened the United States and the West with nuclear war. But after the addition of thermonuclear weapons, the nuclear doctrine for both the United States and the Soviet Union was to avoid war. Over the course of seventy years, many strategies have been discussed, written about, and even added into policy, but the core of each doctrine has been to avoid war between the two rivals.

The two nuclear rivals by 1953 had understood the consequences of nuclear war. For Nikita Khrushchev, the realization came when the Soviet atomic scientists warned him that the explosion of hydrogen bombs will “create on the whole globe conditions impossible for life and ...the threat of an end of all life on earth.”⁸⁰ However, that didn't deter the Soviet leader from aggressive rhetoric, as on one occasion Khrushchev

⁷⁹ Excerpt from Truman’s final State of the Union address, in Gaddis, *Cold War Statesmen confront the Bomb, Nuclear diplomacy since 1945*, (1999), 19.

⁸⁰ Pleshakov and Zubok, (1996), 188 – 194.

attempted to intimidate western diplomats by saying, “Whether you like it or not, history is on our side and we will bury you.”⁸¹ For Khrushchev this was a way of putting ‘moral pressure’ on the United States.⁸²

Nikita Khrushchev’s No-More Peaceful-Coexistence: *Conflictual Coexistence*

By 1958 Nikita Khrushchev was ready to return to the old Soviet foreign policy. His peaceful-coexistence had not led to a breakthrough in ending the adversarial relationship with the United States. Other factors causing this shift in the Soviet policy were the rearming of West Germany and the strengthening of its alliance with the United States; the spread of the arms race between the US-USSR to the outer space; a stalemate in disarmament negotiations; and most importantly, the recognition that the Soviet Union was surrounded by US military bases. Moreover, while the United States was building alliances, the Soviet allies were breaking away in the Eastern Europe, as well as Communist China.⁸³ This was a critical moment faced by Khrushchev in order to stay in power and not appear weak, and the only way was to shift the Soviet policy to a combination of the old tactics fused with a new strategy to deal with the situation of the time. Borrowing a page from Stalin’s handbook, one of the first steps of the shift in Khrushchev’s policy was the crackdown on Hungary after the uprising against the

⁸¹ John Lewis Gaddis. “The Cold War: A New History.” (New York: The Penguin Group, 2005), 168

⁸² Sergei Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev, Vol 2 1945-1964*. (2006), 483-484

⁸³ Taubman, Khrushchev and Gleason, (2000), 216.

Communist regime, followed by his bellicose rhetoric on Germany.⁸⁴ Alexandrov

Agentov noted three elements of the new strategy:

1) to prop up to the maximum and tie to the Soviet Union the ‘people’s democracies’ of Eastern and Central Europe; 2) to create, wherever possible, a neutral buffer between the two-opposing military political blocs; 3) and to gradually establish economic and other more or less normal forms of peaceful cooperation with the NATO countries.⁸⁵

One of the “dearest dreams” of Khrushchev was to dismantle the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO was formed in 1949, due to the threat of a Soviet attack on Western Europe. At that time, NATO’s purpose was described by its first Secretary, General Lord Hastings Lionel Ismay, as an institution that will “keep the [Russian] Soviet Union out, the Americans in, and the Germans down.”⁸⁶ In November 1954 West Germany was accepted as a new NATO member, causing trepidation in Moscow. The creation of NATO was seen by the Russians as the encirclement of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the United States raised the stakes by providing security to European allies and stationing American troops in Western Europe. The Soviet response was to form the Warsaw Pact in 1955, to strengthen the overall defense of the Soviet Bloc, and to safeguard the peace and collective security of communist states. As Zubok notes, in keeping with the first element of the new policy, the formation of the Warsaw pact gave Moscow the legitimacy to station Soviet troops in Europe, and the crackdown on the uprising in Hungary demonstrated the need for Soviet military presence.⁸⁷ Thus, we can argue that the Cold War was *Pax Atlantica vs. Warsaw Dógovor*, and each took a

⁸⁴ Mastny, 322. In Leffler and Westad, *Cold War Origins I*,

⁸⁵ Quoted in Zubok, (2005), 102.

⁸⁶ NATO Declassified, NATO Leaders, (accessed on March 2017)
http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/declassified_137930.htm

⁸⁷ Zubok, (2005), 102.

turn to cooperate when the level of tensions got them closer to war. But during heightened domestic political or economic pressures, leaders used aggressive rhetoric towards the other. Khrushchev's failed détente with the West gave his opponents in the Presidium a reason to attack his foreign policy decisions. Molotov had even gone so far as quote Lenin and make reference to how "naïveté in foreign policy was tantamount to a crime."⁸⁸ Khrushchev was forced to respond aggressively. On November 10th 1958 in a speech he denounced the remilitarization of West Germany and added that "the time had come for East Germany to take control of access to Berlin."⁸⁹

Nikita Khrushchev's speech on Berlin and West Germany was followed by a further provocation. On November 27th the Soviet Union sent a note to the US, UK, and France that set a deadline of six months to solve the Berlin problem and proposed that West Berlin should be turned into a free city. The three Western states perceived the note as a Soviet ultimatum and refused to accept it. This led to the second Berlin crisis. As George and Smoke have pointed out, 'the note contained the classical elements of an ultimatum: a demand; a time limit, and a threat.'⁹⁰ Scholars have argued that the second Berlin crisis was the Soviet fear that West Germany would acquire nuclear weapons from the United States, along with NATO's nuclear doctrine of "first strike."⁹¹ The notion that West Germany could possess nuclear weapons created a sense of urgency to react in the Kremlin. As the US Ambassador to Moscow noted, "Khrushchev is a man in

⁸⁸ Oleg Troyanovsky, in Taubman, Khrushchev and Gleason (2000), 215.

⁸⁹ Alexander George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice*, (Columbia University Press, 1974), 390-391.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 391.

⁹¹ Zubok, 133. On the issue of West German nuclearization, see Kelleher, *Germany and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons*, 43-49; and Trachtenberg, *History and Strategy*, 252-53.

a hurry and considers that time is against him on this issue, particularly in relation to the atomic arming of West Germany. Therefore, I believe Western powers should prepare for a major showdown within the coming months.”⁹² A nuclearized West Germany was perceived as a major threat by the Soviet leadership, and that, coupled with the existing mistrust of the United States, increased tension between the rivals. Khrushchev had personally communicated such Soviet anxieties regarding German nuclearization.⁹³

In a personal message to the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan on December 5th 1958, Khrushchev stressed the seriousness of the West Berlin situation, noted the “acute and dangerous” tension between the two blocs, and reiterated his note from November. Later in a press conference after the Soviet Note on Berlin, Khrushchev further emphasized that the note was not an ultimatum as perceived by the Western powers. Instead, he claimed that it was an opening to resolve the German question and that he was open for other suggestions.⁹⁴ On December 13th 1958, a second note was issued, this time calling for a summit to settle the German question. It proposed an atomic and rocket free zone in Central Europe; pushed for reduction of foreign troops both in NATO and Warsaw Pact states; sought a permanent ban on thermonuclear tests, and solicited settlement on the Berlin question.

The Soviet leader on the one hand desperately wanted to maintain Soviet influence in Europe. But on the other hand Khrushchev proposed radical reduction to

⁹² Thompson to Dulles, November 18th 1958, 762.00/11-1858/DSCF/USNA

⁹³ Kitty Newman, *Macmillan, Khrushchev and the Berlin Crisis, 1958-1960* (Routledge: 2006), 31.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 30.

the armed forces. His reasoning was linked with the sufficiency of Soviet nuclear capability as a deterrent for potential aggression.⁹⁵ Khrushchev's military reforms resulted in reducing the size of the armed forces by 1.2 million men, out of which 250,000 soldiers were forced to retire without a pension, housing, or any compensation.⁹⁶ This measure of military reform and troop reduction came despite the continued violation of the Soviet air space by American U-2s and NATO's plans of installing intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBM) bases in Europe.⁹⁷ The Soviet response to the military bases was the pursuit of a disarmament campaign while at the same time covertly issuing nuclear threats against US allies in Europe as tool of intimidation or compellance.⁹⁸ The inconsistency was due to the fact that the Soviet Union had to catch up to the United States on both economic and military strength and the Soviet desire to be the dominant power in Europe.

The timeline specified in the November 1958 note expired, and both rivals at various points took conciliatory and aggressive diplomatic steps. The available options for both the rivals were risky, and the following year was, as Oleg Troyanovsky has pointed out, filled with threats and counter-threats, feelers and counter-feelers, and hints that one side or the other was prepared to enter into serious negotiations.”⁹⁹

However, it was on May 1st 1960 that an American U-2 flight was shot down on Soviet

⁹⁵ Zubok, 135.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Newman,(2006), 10.

⁹⁸ In December 1957, Soviet officials said to the British government that “they could not understand British participation in the NATO scheme in view of UK's vulnerable geographical position and its inability to defend against modern weapons.” In Newman, (2006), 10.

⁹⁹ Oleg Troyanovsky, in Taubman, Khrushchev and Gleason (2000) 221.

territory by a Russian SA-2 missile. This incident deepened suspicions and, as Khrushchev warned, “worsen[ed] the atmosphere and sow[ed] seeds of suspicions.”¹⁰⁰ Khrushchev’s statement and lack of trust were based on the agreement he had reached with President Eisenhower at Camp David in October 1959. Due to domestic and institutional (CIA) pressure, Eisenhower had reluctantly agreed to the U-2 flight, though he had refused to authorize the reconnaissance missions till April 1960. Kitty Newman notes that Eisenhower towards the end of his term understood Soviet sensitivities and that the U-2 missions would exacerbate Soviet insecurities. However, just like Khrushchev, who faced opposition within the Presidium against his foreign policy, Eisenhower faced opposition to his position towards the Soviet Union and détente from members of his own cabinet and the top military brass. After the U-2 incident, Eisenhower failed to make a private apology to Khrushchev. His successor John F. Kennedy criticized him on the campaign trail, noting that “the President had let the risk of war hang on the possibility of an engine failure. He should have expressed regret on the U-2 flight.”¹⁰¹ The downing of the U-2 had raised the risk of war and lessened the prospects of world peace. In a rally in Oregon Kennedy said that he would have been willing to cool the crisis by expressing “regret that the flight did take place....regret at the timing and give assurances that it would not happen again... a week before the summit...was obviously the wrong time... Every time we go up in a plane... it may come down sooner than we thought... the maintenance of peace... should not hang on the

¹⁰⁰ Newman, (2006), 146.

¹⁰¹ Ted Sorensen, *Kennedy* (Harper Perennial Political Classics, 2009), 379-380.

constant possibility of engine failure.”¹⁰²

British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan wrote in his diary that May 16th 1960 was the most “tragic day” in his life; that was the day the American U-2 was shot down by the Soviets and Macmillan’s ambitions of a successful Paris Summit had “blown up like a volcano – ignominious, tragic and incredible.”¹⁰³ In her elaborate account of the relationship between Macmillan and Khrushchev during the Berlin crisis, Kitty Newman argues that both the leaders, despite the differences in their personalities and ideological perceptions, had hoped that a series of summits and conferences would create some level of confidence, achieve détente, and prevent a nuclear showdown between the two adversaries. However, as Newman notes, “the problem was that it was an intrinsic element of Khrushchev’s character to use threats, bluster and bluff, and nuclear blackmail as a means of achieving his objectives.”¹⁰⁴ Hence, these tactics of the Soviet leader kept the decision makers in the West distrustful of him, and that led Khrushchev’s peaceful coexistence goals to dissipate.

The period between the change of administration in the United States (after Truman) and the change of leadership in the Soviet Union (after the death of Stalin) was a critical point in this rivalry. The tide of mistrust could have been turned back. Instead, the period witnessed a considerable disarray and fear. The key objective for Soviet foreign policy was to prevent West Germany from acquiring nuclear weapons and to keep Europe divided. As one scholar noted, “united Europe would change completely the configuration of forces on the international scene, and it would become the third

¹⁰² Sorensen, (2009), 379-380.

¹⁰³ Newman, (2006), p.167.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 167.

superpower, based on its political, economic and military strength.”¹⁰⁵ To achieve these objectives the Soviet Union tested and at times dangerously ventured to the verge of war with the United States.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, the Soviets’ geographical proximity to Europe and military capabilities gave them the credibility of issuing implicit nuclear threats to Western European states. The tactics of Khrushchev and other Russian decision makers did not result in improving ties with the Western state, nor did they intimidate the United States. However, as Adam Ulam notes, they ‘kept the Western alliance off balance and led to serious fissures within it. Britain was most nervous and willing to meet the Soviet Union half way; West Germany under Adenauer was uncompromising; and most importantly the United States was hesitant and uncertain.’¹⁰⁷

It is relevant to highlight the Soviets’ threat perception with regards to the German nuclear capability, and how Germany increased Russian insecurities much more than the other Western European states. Stalin and the Soviet Union had not been fully deterred by the US atomic monopoly. But as Adam Ulam noted, the Soviet Union was “unawed by America’s mighty nuclear arsenal,” and yet the Russians were threatened and concerned at the “possibility of Bonn acquiring a few bombs of its own.”¹⁰⁸ The question is why it mattered to Khrushchev and others in the leadership position to keep Germany and other central European states denuclearized. Was it

¹⁰⁵ Adam Ulam, (1983), 26-27.

¹⁰⁶ The Chinese took advantage of the ambitious and yet poorly planned Soviet strategy coupled with American uncertainty. Mao aimed and attempted to draw the Soviet Union into a war first during the Korean crisis and later by shelling the islands near the Taiwan Straits. Cited in Ulam (1983) 29; also in V.I Glunin in the ‘Recent History of China.’ (Moscow, 1972), 319.

¹⁰⁷ Adam Ulam, *Dangerous Relations The Soviet Union and World Politics*, (1983), 27.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 28.

simply a matter of a personality difference between Stalin and Khrushchev? Were he and other Russian leaders afraid of being drawn into a nuclear war, or was it that they would not be able to intimidate and march troops on a West Germany or any central European state with nuclear weapons? We can also draw conclusions about Stalin's personality and his capability of demonstrating "strong nerves," whereas Khrushchev had to prove his foreign policy prowess and fortitude to his critics in ways that led him to be insecure. Khrushchev realized how an independent nuclear-capable West Germany would change the dynamics of the US-USSR rivalry, the Cold War and the power balance in Europe. So he pushed for a complete ban on West German nuclear program, and the 'Rapacki proposal' was how he planned to achieve it.

The proposal was put forward by Polish Foreign Minister Adam Rapacki, and it presented a plan for a neutral Germany and a nuclear-free zone in Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Rapacki Plan was initially disregarded by the United States, which infuriated Khrushchev and resulted in his threats against Berlin.¹⁰⁹ The first plan was proposed on the 2nd of October 1957, and after that it was discussed internationally for eight years (1958, 1962 and 1964) with the aim of reducing the risk of nuclear war between the West and the USSR.¹¹⁰ For the Western allies, their distrust of Soviet intentions played a major role.. They agreed that the Rapacki proposal was drafted in Moscow rather than Warsaw, and it was also clear that Warsaw Pact states did not have independent foreign policies. After the failure of the 1964 version of the Rapacki proposal, the involved parties lost interest in the plan. Adam Rapacki died on the 10th of

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 28.

¹¹⁰ Maruzsa Zoltan, *Denuclearization in Central Europe? The Rapacki Plan during the Cold War*. (Cold War History Research Center Budapest, 2008), 225-264, p. 2

October 1970 and did not live to see a signed agreement in November 1970 between West Germany and Poland. This normalized relations, and after the 'eastern-contract' was signed, tensions started to diminish in Central Europe. The eastern-contract also became the precondition for the Helsinki negotiations.¹¹¹

Khrushchev, Kennedy and the Bomb:

Just like the US presidents before him, John F. Kennedy understood what a nuclear war between the US and the USSR would bring. As he said,

“It changes all the answers and all the questions. I don’t think many people really understand the change.... When that day comes, and there is a massive exchange, then that is the end, because you are talking about.... 150 million fatalities in the first of eighteen hours.”¹¹²

Ted Sorensen noted that Kennedy was panicked by these figures, “I was willing to face the ultimate risk of nuclear war. A lot has been written about the high-level briefing that Kennedy received after his meeting with Khrushchev on the effects of a nuclear exchange between the United States and the Soviet Union. The briefing, Sorensen argued, confirmed the following facts the Kennedy already knew:

“1. That neither Soviet Union nor the United States could win a nuclear war in any rational sense of the word; 2. That, except to deter an all-out Soviet attack, our threat of “massive retaliation” to every Communist move was no longer credible, now that it invited our own destruction; and 3. That a policy of “pre-emptive first strike,” or “preventive war” was no longer open to either side inasmuch as even a surprise missile attack would trigger, before those missiles reach their targets, a devastating retaliation that neither country could risk or accept. Nor had either country had developed a reliable defense system against the missiles or even the prospect of acquiring one, despite claims on both sides to the contrary. No matter who fired first or was annihilated last, there will not be

¹¹¹ Ibid., 20.

¹¹² Sorensen, (2009) Kindle, 1,113.

winners...so we have to proceed with care in an age when the human race can obliterate itself.”¹¹³

During the election campaign Kennedy’s opponents had criticized him for his lack of foreign policy experience, and because of his response to the American U-2 downing, he was seen by the Republicans as weak. They called his response “appeasement.” Khrushchev had faced similar criticism for his peaceful coexistence initiative after the death of Stalin. Thus, during the Cuban missile crisis, Khrushchev had no doubt manipulated Kennedy’s desire for peace as a bargaining chip to attain Soviet foreign policy goals. Adam Ulam noted, “There seem to be little doubt that the missiles were intended to serve as a bargaining chip...Khrushchev would have offered to withdraw from the Caribbean in return for concessions on Berlin (banning nuclear weapons and recognizing German Democratic Republic) and China (withdrawal of American military support for Taiwan).”¹¹⁴ Khrushchev’s plans were foiled as the missiles were discovered before they were stationed in Cuba. The Cuban missile crisis resulted in one of the major foreign policy mistakes for the Soviet leader and resulted in Soviet retreat. It also led to the most dangerous crisis after WWII, as it nearly brought about nuclear confrontation between the two super powers.

Kennedy did not believe that the Cold War could be won and noted, that

“three times in my lifetime, our country and Europe have been involved in major wars. In each case, serious misjudgments were made on both sides of the intentions of the others which brought about the great devastation. Now, in the thermonuclear age, any misjudgment on either side about the intentions of the other could rain more devastation in several hours than have been wrought in all the wars of human history.”¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Sorensen, (2009). 1275-1276

¹¹⁴ Adam Ulam, (1983), 31

¹¹⁵ Sorensen, 1277

Unlike his predecessors, Kennedy did not believe in the nationalistic slogans such as “unconditional surrender,” “no substitute for victory,” “total solution,” and “no-win.”¹¹⁶ He understood that the only available option for him was to “was simply to dampen it down... without having a nuclear war.” His way of achieving it was different from that of Khrushchev, and he took the Jeffersonian approach. As he said, “we want to permit what Thomas Jefferson called “the disease of liberty” to be caught in areas which are now held by communists.”¹¹⁷ And it was Kennedy’s idealism that led him to say to Khrushchev, “what your Government believes is its own business, what it does in the world is the world’s business.”¹¹⁸

After the Cuban missile crisis, US-USSR relations saw a moment of improvement when both the states signed the nuclear test ban agreement in July 1963. However, after the Cuban missile crisis, Khrushchev’s hold on power diminished, and he was removed from office in October 1964. Despite his aggressive and reckless rhetoric and personality style, Khrushchev stands as a nuclear optimist, and Zubok describes Khrushchev’s nuclear optimism in the following terms, “his nuclear brinkmanship was exceptionally crude and aggressive, reckless and ideology-driven. The architect of the New Look played hardball, but he relied more on instinct than on strategic calculations.... The Soviet leader was never systematic or consistent regarding nuclear strategy.”¹¹⁹ Kennedy in comparison to Khrushchev was neither aggressive nor reckless in his speech or diplomatic positions. But just as Khrushchev had initiated troop reduction and arms

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ Zubok, (2005), 153

control measures in the Soviet Union, Kennedy had similar aims and objectives. As he said,

“principles alone are not enough. It is therefore our intention to challenge the Soviet Union, not to an arms race, but to a peace race: to advance together step by step, stage by stage, until general and complete disarmament has been achieved....Today...every man, woman and child lives under a nuclear sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest of threads, capable of being cut at any moment by accident or miscalculation or madness.... Unless man can match his strides in weaponry and technology with equal strides in social and political development, our great strength, like that of the dinosaur, will become incapable of proper control, and man, like the dinosaur, will vanish from the earth.”¹²⁰

When President Kennedy came to power in 1961, he wanted to bring a change to the US's relations with the Soviet Union, and at the same time he was determined to change the US foreign and defense policy. In a shift from Eisenhower's threats of massive retaliation, the Kennedy administration saw the previous administration's policies as weakening the Army's man-power and as overreliant on nuclear weapons. As the President-elect Kennedy asked his defense secretary,

“Should there be a supplemental Defense Budget...additional funds now for Polaris, Minuteman and Atlas missiles... an air alert...continental defense...modernization of conventional forces...airlift capabilities...?”

[We] will have to undertake a basic re-evaluation of our defense strategy, targets and capability...the place of manned aircraft...aircraft carriers...present troop strength...bases abroad...the overlapping of services and missions...the coordination of intelligence functions...command and control systems, particularly with regard to the authority to use nuclear weapons...the role of the Reserves and the National Guard...”¹²¹

After Kennedy took office in 1961, the administration found the following had been left by the Eisenhower administration:

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Sorensen, Kennedy, 1501

- “1. A strategy of massive nuclear retaliation as the answer to all military and political aggression, a strategy believed by few of our friends and none of our enemies and resulting in serious weaknesses in our conventional forces.
2. A financial ceiling on national security, making military strategy the stepchild of a predetermined budget.
3. A strategic nuclear force vulnerable to surprise missile attack, a nonnuclear force weak in combat-ready divisions, in airlift capacity and in tactical air support, a counterinsurgency force for all practical purposes nonexistent, and a weapons inventory completely lacking in certain major elements but far oversupplied in others.
4. Too many automatic decisions made in advance instead of in the light of an actual emergency, and too few Pentagon-wide plans for each kind of contingency. The Army was relying on airlift the Air Force could not supply. The Air Force was stockpiling supplies for a war lasting a few days while the Army stockpiles assumed a war of two years.”¹²²

At the time, the relationship between the US and USSR in which Kennedy became involved was fragile, especially after the downing of the U-2 and the collapse of the Paris Summit. President Kennedy’s response to the Eisenhower’s massive retaliation was a posture of flexible response, where the United States would be prepared to respond to any attack. In Kennedy’s first communications with Congress in March 1961, he said, “US military power had to be able to deter all wars, general or limited, nuclear or conventional, large or small – and convince all potential attackers that any attack would be futile.”¹²³ The Kennedy administration shifted the US’s defense policy attention back to conventional forces, but that did not result in reducing the US’s strategic nuclear capabilities. Both the US and USSR were aware that nuclear weapons were sufficient to deter any type of threat. The “US nuclear arsenal gave the West a nuclear superiority” and as Assistant Secretary Defense Paul Nitze noted, “we believe this superiority to be

¹²² Ibid, 1503. Details of a cabinet meeting by McNamara.

¹²³ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War*, (2005), 214

strategically important in the equations of deterrence and strategy.”¹²⁴

Cooperation Amid Cold War:

President Kennedy’s speech at Rice University in September 1962, pushed for US-USSR cooperation and sought to lead the competition in a different direction: a space race and science and technology. He said,

“Those who came before us made certain that this country rode the first waves of the industrial revolutions, the first waves of modern invention, and the first wave of nuclear power, and this generation does not intend to founder in the backwash of the coming age of space. We mean to be a part of it--we mean to lead it. For the eyes of the world now look into space, to the moon and to the planets beyond, and we have vowed that we shall not see it governed by a hostile flag of conquest, but by a banner of freedom and peace. We have vowed that we shall not see space filled with weapons of mass destruction, but with instruments of knowledge and understanding...for the progress of all people.”¹²⁵

President Kennedy’s letter to Nikita Khrushchev after a year in office delineated specific areas of cooperation: “a joint weather satellite system, communications satellite coordination, an exchange of information on space medicine, cooperative tracking arrangements and other, less dramatic areas.”¹²⁶ Khrushchev’s response was limited. The US perceived the limited response as communist suspicions and secrecy, whereas in actuality it was Khrushchev’s insecurity that led to the limited response. The Soviet leader had noted, that “if we had begun to cooperate [with the United States on outer space], it would have become apparent where our strengths and weaknesses lay. Our weakness was that we did not have a sufficient number of rockets for defense and attack.

¹²⁴ Paul Nitze speech at the International Institute of Strategic Studies London, December 11 1961. In Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy During the Cold War*, (2005) p. 218

¹²⁵ Kennedy “Moon Speech” at Rice University September 12, 1962.

¹²⁶ Sorensen, 1314- 1316

The “Semyorka” was not suitable for both these tasks...we still needed time to produce them in sufficient quantity and master their use.”¹²⁷ Kennedy’s advisers on the other hand had complained “that too much cooperation instead of competition would dampen congressional interest and appropriations.”¹²⁸

President Kennedy, in comparison to his predecessors, had exercised restraint and “undertook measures to stabilize the arms race.”¹²⁹ One of the measures was his hesitance in resuming the US nuclear testing after the Soviets had done so in 1961. Kennedy also improved cooperation with the Soviet Union on reconnaissance satellite regimes, and most importantly the installment of the Hot-Line between Moscow and Washington DC.¹³⁰ The reconnaissance satellite agreement was tacitly reached in 1963.

After Kennedy’s death, Lyndon B. Johnson maintained Kennedy’s national security team, and his views were similar to Kennedy’s with regards to the usefulness or the lack thereof of these weapons. Johnson’s fear of using nuclear weapons had haunted him even in his dreams, as the presidential historian Richard Neustadt wrote, “Johnson had a recurrent dream where he would wake up at night and pick up the red telephone and say,: this is your president, I have been tossing and turning and I’ve decided that we’ve got to hit the Russians with all our A-bombs and H-bombs. So I am putting a thumb on the button. They would in return say to me: F***k you, Mr. President.!” In other words, no rational statesmen would issue such order, and no rational public

¹²⁷ Nikita Khrushchev, *Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev*: Vol.2 Reformer (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 2006), 486.

¹²⁸ Sorensen, (2009), 1316.

¹²⁹ Gaddis, *Cold War Statesmen confront the Bomb, Nuclear Diplomacy Since 1945* , (1999), 127.

¹³⁰ Ibid, 127-28.

servant would execute it.¹³¹ Thus, the fact that each nation was vulnerable to nuclear attack was accepted by both sides at this point in history. The United States could not defend its population, despite of its nuclear superiority. The condition of existential deterrence had set in by 1967, and each side aimed to maintain a sufficient offensive nuclear arsenal to ensure a MAD - Mutually Assured Destruction. As Defense Secretary McNamara said:

“with any numerical superiority realistically attainable, the blunt inescapable fact remains that the Soviet Union could still ...effectively destroy the US even after absorbing the full weight of an American first strike... hence ... the cornerstone of our strategic policy continues to be to deter deliberate nuclear attack... by maintaining... our assured destruction capability.”¹³²

The Johnson administration’s policy was in line with that of the Kennedy era. President Johnson’s focus was on reaching a peaceful understanding with the Soviet Union. As he said, “we must improve the East-West environment in order to achieve the unification of Germany in the context of a larger, peaceful and prosperous Europe. Our task is to achieve a reconciliation with the East—a shift from the narrow concept of coexistence to a broader vision of peaceful engagement.”¹³³ President Johnson’s strategy was to focus on trade to improve relations until the invasion of Czechoslovakia. The invasion was a major setback to East-West ties, and Johnson hoped for a summit to resolve the Czech crisis. He also explained the crisis as,

¹³¹Ibid., p4-5

¹³² Speech delivered before the editors of United Press International, San Francisco, Ca. September 18th 1967. Cited in Robert Art and Kenneth Waltz, *The use of Force: International Politics and Foreign Policy*. (Boston: Little Brown and co., 1971), 503-516.

¹³³ Lyndon Johnson, “Remarks in New York, October 7, 1966,” “Public Papers of the President of the United States, 1966, (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1967), 1126-1128.

“the Soviet Union tonight can still return to the only road that really can lead to peace and security for all. That is the road of reducing tensions, of enlarging the area of understanding and agreement. It can still change...if not undo...what it has done in Czechoslovakia. It can still act there and can act elsewhere with the prudence and confidence which characterizes the conduct of any great nation. Because it is never too late to choose the path of reason. Every man of sanity will hope that the Soviets will act now before some new turn of events throws the world back to the grim confrontation of Mr. Stalin’s time.”¹³⁴

President Johnson’s measure to create peaceful engagement was unproductive, and it failed in improving the Cold War tensions. Brezhnev had rejected Johnson’s proposal based on its incompatibility with the US position in Vietnam. Despite its failure, Lyndon Johnson’s peaceful engagement paved the steps for the arms control negotiations that were to follow and made possible the limited test ban agreement and the non-proliferation treaty. However, the Czechoslovakia crisis refreshed memories of Soviet expansion and aggressive behavior in Europe.

Détente or Nixon/Kissinger and Brezhnev’s Nuclear Compellance:

The US-USSR tensions were radically reduced after the Cuban missile crisis. Both rivals had understood the power that they possessed. As Adam Ulam notes, “enhanced power does not automatically, especially in the nuclear age, give a state greater security.”¹³⁵ After Khrushchev’s removal from office, Leonid Brezhnev took over as the most powerful leader of the Soviet Union, both economically and militarily. Brezhnev inherited an empire more powerful and stable than that to which Stalin or Khrushchev had succeeded. Moscow by the 1970s was comfortably in control of its Eastern European allies. Yet with such immense power comes the responsibility of keeping the peace and

¹³⁴ Lyndon Johnson, Address to the B’nai B’rith Meeting in Washington DC. September 10th 1968. “Public Papers of the President of the United States, 1966” (Washington: US Government Printing Office, 1970), 946.

¹³⁵ Adam Ulam, (1983), 39.

not being dragged into a war by an ally in a turbulent world, where the balance is maintained by the rational actions of the super powers.

By the early 1970s the relationship between the two rivals had improved with American the meeting of President Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev in Moscow, where they signed multiple bilateral agreements. The most important of these were the Strategic Arms Limitations Agreement (SALT), the Antiballistic Missiles Treaty, and the Basic Principles of US-Soviet Relations.¹³⁶ Once again, those at the helm played an

¹³⁶ The Basic Principles Agreement in Dept. of State Bulletin, June 1972, pp. 898-899. First. They will proceed from the common determination that in the nuclear age there is no alternative to conducting their mutual relations on the basis of peaceful coexistence. Differences in ideology and in the social systems of the USA and the USSR are not obstacles to the bilateral development of normal relations based on the principles of sovereignty, equality, non-interference in internal affairs and mutual advantage.

Second. The USA and the USSR attach major importance to preventing the development of situations capable of causing a dangerous exacerbation of their relations. Therefore, they will do their utmost to avoid military confrontations and to prevent the outbreak of nuclear war. They will always exercise restraint in their mutual relations, and will be prepared to negotiate and settle differences by peaceful means. Discussions and negotiations on outstanding issues will be conducted in a spirit of reciprocity, mutual accommodation and mutual benefit.

Both sides recognize that efforts to obtain unilateral advantage at the expense of the other, directly or indirectly, are inconsistent with these objectives. The prerequisites for maintaining and strengthening peaceful relations between the USA and the USSR are the recognition of the security interests of the Parties based on the principle of equality and the renunciation of the use or threat of force.

Third. The USA and the USSR have a special responsibility, as do other countries which are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, to do everything in their power so that conflicts or situations will not arise which would serve to increase international tensions. Accordingly, they will seek to promote conditions in which all countries will live in peace and security and will not be subject to outside interference in their internal affairs.

Fourth. The USA and the USSR intend to widen the juridical basis of their mutual relations and to exert the necessary efforts so that bilateral agreements which they have

important role in driving détente. Like Khrushchev, who after Stalin's death had shifted the Soviet foreign policy to a destalinization process and thus reduced tensions with the West, Brezhnev in a post-Khrushchev Soviet Union searched for ways to accommodate the West and improve the international position of the Soviet Union after Khrushchev's debacle of the Cuban missile crisis. One of the objectives of the détente was a form of "crisis-prevention" that was set in motion in 1972. But its end goals were left ambiguous. On the Soviet side, the objective was to avoid crises and situations that would raise the possibility of war. Alexander George notes that on the US side, Nixon and some congressional members took the crisis prevention measures as Soviet willingness to moderate its foreign policy behavior.

The 1972 Treaty on the Limitations of Antiballistic Missile Systems (ABM Treaty) and the Strategic Arms Limitations Treaty (SALT) were the most important cooperative steps between the two nuclear rivals. As we have elaborated on the history, each previous time that an opportunity presented itself, internal or external pressures compelled one government to relent in order not to appear weak or in appeasement of the enemy. The ABM Treaty was a cooperative step that led to reduction of the competition that had started after World War II.

The 1972 bilateral agreements were made possible by two skillful negotiators, Henry Kissinger and Leonid Brezhnev, under an agreed set of rules while the United States was still at war with Vietnam, a Soviet ally. Many at the Kremlin had called for the cancellation of the meeting with Nixon. A conversation between Kosygin and Brezhnev

concluded and multilateral treaties and agreements to which they are jointly parties are faithfully implemented.

on March 9th 1972 is relevant to mention because of its the discussion of the thorny issues of Vietnam and Nixon's visit to the Soviet Union:

"Kosygin: Next week we are receiving the Bhutto and the PM of Afghanistan. With the Afghans it is simple: they want to pick at Pakistan from their side and to take away the Pashtuns. We will tell him that they shouldn't do this. It is more serious with Bhutto. After all ... those generals, who executed the Bengalis, he took them into his government. Maybe we should not receive him right now?

Brezhnev: Actually we are pretty busy right now, what do you think?

Kosygin: We could write him a letter and convey a verbal message through the ambassador, saying that he should put his generals behind bars, otherwise we will not receive him."

Brezhnev: Oh, he is not going to agree to that....

Kosygin: Yes you are right... and if we do not receive him, he will run over to the American or the Chinese.

Brezhnev: He is already with them... Maybe we should write him a polite letter that we are not prepared right now to discuss complex issues that have arisen from the armed conflict. Let them, say discuss it among themselves and try to settle it, it is not our job to be the middlemen. For how long should we postpone it? Until May? No...Nixon is coming in May, damn it. Then let's do June.

Kosygin: Look at how insolent Nixon has gotten. He keeps bombing Vietnam, more and more. Bastard. Listen, Len [Leonid], maybe we should postpone his visit as well?

Brezhnev: Are you kidding?

Kosygin: Why not? What a bombshell that would be! That's not like postponing Bhutto's visit for you!

Brezhnev: It would be a bombshell alright, but who is it going to affect more!

Kosygin: Yes, you are right. But we should write to him at least..."¹³⁷

The debate on Nixon's Vietnam policy in Moscow led for many to call for a cancellation of Nixon's trip. This was a difficult situation for Brezhnev. As noted by Ambassador Dobrynin, it involved "wanting to stop the American bombing and wanting to go ahead with a summit with the President who had ordered the attacks."¹³⁸

¹³⁷ The Diary of Anatoly S. Chernyaev, 1972. The National Security Archives, 2012, p. 2-3

¹³⁸ Anatoly Dobrynin, *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America Six Cold War Presidents* (Seattle: Washington University Press, 1995), 252-253

Like Brezhnev, Kissinger also understood the ambiguous nature of the US-USSR rivalry and was not inhibited by the fear of Soviet expansionist designs and intentions.

As he noted,

“it is not necessary to settle the question of the real intentions of the Communist leaders in the abstract. For we should be prepared to negotiate no matter what the Communist proposes... Negotiations with the Soviet Union must be justified by our purposes, not theirs. If the Soviet Union really wants a settlement, negotiations will reveal this. If Soviet overtures to end the Cold War are a tactical maneuver, a purposeful diplomacy should be able to make Soviet bad faith evident.”¹³⁹

At the end of World War II, as previously noted, George Kennan had anticipated an expansionist Soviet Union and containment as the best possible option. Similarly, Kissinger anticipated a Soviet Union that sought an opening for negotiation since it was concerned about China. He thus expected that negotiations would lead to limited settlements and reveal Soviet intentions. Kissinger’s objective was to shift the focus from the debate on the communist vs capitalist rivalry and to pay attention to the interests of states, while maximizing the opportunities that would be available through negotiations. Kissinger’s focus on negotiations and maximizing opportunities was also one of the key reasons for the breakthrough with China that will be discussed later.

In a second summit in 1973, Nixon and Brezhnev signed an Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War (APNW) and once again reaffirmed cooperation on crisis prevention between the two rivals.¹⁴⁰ The APNW reinforced the measures from the

¹³⁹ Henry Kissinger, *The Necessity for Choice: Prospects of American Foreign Policy*, (Harper & Brothers, 1961), 210

¹⁴⁰ Text of the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War.
<https://www.state.gov/t/isn/5186.htm>

Basic Principles agreement, and it included a stronger emphasis that the two rivals should engage in consultation if a situation developed that could raise the risk of war. Alexander George notes that the APNW was “designed to avert not merely nuclear war but also any nuclear combat that might occur between the super powers and any country.”¹⁴¹ (For detailed description of the agreement see footnote 132.)

The détente was tested during the October 1973 Middle East war. The Americans perceived the Soviets’ actions, or lack thereof, during the war as a violation of the bilateral agreements that they had signed, particularly the 1973 APNW. However, the Soviet Union arguably did not violate the 1973 Agreement, nor did it break any rules with the earlier agreements. The ambiguous nature of détente was bound to create misperceptions regarding the others’ intent. The United States failed to recognize the

Article I: The United States and the Soviet Union agree that an objective of their policies is to remove the danger of nuclear war and of the use of nuclear weapons. Accordingly, the Parties agree that they will act in such a manner as to prevent the development of situations capable of causing a dangerous exacerbation of their relations, as to avoid military confrontations, and as to exclude the outbreak of nuclear war between them and between either of the Parties and other countries.

Article II: The Parties agree, in accordance with Article I and to realize the objective stated in that Article, to proceed from the premise that each Party will refrain from the threat or use of force against the other Party, against the allies of the other Party and against other countries, in circumstances which may endanger international peace and security. The Parties agree that they will be guided by these considerations in the formulation of their foreign policies and in their actions in the field of international relations.

Article IV: If at any time relations between the Parties or between either Party and other countries appear to involve the risk of a nuclear conflict, or if relations between countries not parties to this Agreement appear to involve the risk of nuclear war between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or between either Party and other countries, the United States and the Soviet Union, acting in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement, shall immediately enter into urgent consultations with each other and make every effort to avert this risk.

¹⁴¹ Alexander George, (1983), 110 -111.

Soviet Union's existing relationship with Egypt and the Friendship and Cooperation Treaty between the USSR-Egypt. To give the military plans of an ally or client state to the ally of the state that will be attacked was not a reasonable strategy for the Soviet Union. Dimitri Simes argued, "if the Soviet model of détente was one of managed conflict with elements of cooperation when interests overlap, it was not illogical for the USSR to be satisfied with both superpowers' activities during and immediately after the 1973 Mideast War."¹⁴²

During the Middle East War both superpowers looked out for their allies and client states, while avoiding direct conflict or aggression with each other. The October War was a successful test of détente. As a Washington Post editorial pointed out, the Middle East crisis helped shape and define détente as "an attitude, an understanding, a frame of mind in which the two great powers could pursue their various political interests, and conduct their rivalry, with some sense of the need for pulling back on this side of the brink."¹⁴³ On the Soviet front the success of détente was noted by Brezhnev himself when he said:

"If there had not been this fact of détente developed during the last two or three years, the situation would look entirely differently. If the current conflict would explode in an environment of general international tensions and the sharpening of relations between the United States and the Soviet Union, the confrontation in the Middle East could become far more dangerous and be on a scale threatening the general peace."¹⁴⁴

In his memoirs, Kissinger noted that détente was the reason why the US and Soviet Union could negotiate the end of war in the Middle East. As he said, "détente mitigated

¹⁴² Dimitri Simes, "The Death of Détente, International Security," Vol. 5, No1. Summer 1980, 13

¹⁴³ The Meaning for Détente, Washington Post, 26 October 1973, A26

¹⁴⁴ Simes, (1980), 3

the succession of crises that difference in ideology and geopolitical interest had made nearly inevitable; and I believe we enhanced the national interests in the process.”¹⁴⁵

The Middle East War was called by the Soviet Ambassador to the United States Anatoly Dobrynin the “greatest crisis since the Cuban crisis.”¹⁴⁶ But the US and Soviet Union exercised the means to resolve it.

The Failure of Détente: Conflictual Coexistence

Scholars have given multiple reasons for the eventual failure of détente. Some have argued that the Americans deemed détente to be flawed and considered the Soviet Union to be abusing it. They viewed most of the Soviets’ actions as violating the meaning of détente. The Soviet position was that the United States had abandoned the joint cooperative effort of the 1970s and preferred confrontation over cooperation, as the Americans were interested in military superiority and not the strategic parity with the USSR.¹⁴⁷ Still, the Soviets believed that détente remained an objective and could be common policy between the two rivals.¹⁴⁸ Other scholars, have argued that détente was another form of containment strategy. As John Lewis Gaddis noted, “the strategy of détente was to engage the Soviet Union in serious negotiations on substantive issues. Negotiations had always been held out as the ultimate objective of containment.”¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁵ Henry Kissinger, *Years of Upheaval* (Little Brown & Co; 1983), 600

¹⁴⁶ Memorandum of Conversation between Kissinger and Schlesinger, October 24th 1973. United States National, S. C. (1973). *October war peace negotiations*] Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/1679084336?accountid=10226>

¹⁴⁷ Raymond Garthoff, *Détente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations from Nixon to Reagan*. (Washington DC: Brookings institution Press, 1994), 1068

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Gaddis, (2005), 287.

The question is why did it fail? Was détente another opportunity missed by the two nuclear rivals to terminate the rivalry? The answer takes us back to two points. First, the ambiguous nature of détente led to differing expectations for it. Second, domestic and international events led to the demise of détente. These included the Middle East war, the continued US engagement in Vietnam, and on the domestic front, the Watergate issue, Brezhnev's health, and the improving Soviet economy. In a similar way, the cease-fire between Israel and her neighbors was brokered by both the US and the USSR, but afterwards the United States took a dominant position and kept the Soviet Union out.

The Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev had hoped that his relationship with Nixon would be sufficient in reducing tensions with the West. Cold War historian Vladislav Zubok argues that the Americans “did not know that [détente] was not a devious Politburo scheme but rather a personal dream of the general secretary [Brezhnev]... to become a peace-maker.”¹⁵⁰ During the October 1973 Middle East War, Brezhnev had told Kissinger that “Détente was the most important thing and [he] wouldn't give it up for the Middle East.”¹⁵¹ Brezhnev's personal experience is the reason behind his desire for peace. He had fought during WWII as a division rank political commissar, and as

¹⁵⁰ Zubok, (2005), 202 & 205. Brezhnev's personal story is the reason behind his desire for peace. He had fought during WWII as a division rank political commissar. Zubok notes, that for Brezhnev deeply loathed brinkmanship and crisis-mongering. Here you repeat what is in your body text.

¹⁵¹ Memorandum of Conversation between Kissinger and Schlesinger, October 24th 1973. United States National, S. C. (1973). *October war peace negotiations* Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/1679084336?accountid=10226>

Zubok notes, Brezhnev deeply loathed brinkmanship and crisis-mongering and wanted his legacy to be different from that of Khrushchev.¹⁵²

So why did the cooperation of the 1970s and détente fail within the same decade? And if there were multiple perceptions of détente, what exactly was détente? The idea of détente was in fact oversimplified during the period of détente, and it remains that way even today. John Lewis Gaddis argued that “Nixon and Kissinger were clear about the meaning of détente, and they viewed it as yet another in a long series of attempts to contain the power and influence of the USSR.”¹⁵³ For Kissinger, the idea of détente in 1974 meant, “a more constructive relationship with the Soviet Union.” By 1975, détente was a regulatory mechanism for US-USSR competition. For Kissinger by 1976 détente was “the evolution of habits of mutual restraint, coexistence, and, ultimately, cooperation.” It is his 1976 description of détente that comes close to what détente would mean in a nuclear rivalry. The first step is the creation of habitual restraint, and then coexistence. An acceptance of the potential power of rival follows, and finally enough good will based on continuous interaction is generated to facilitate future cooperation.

In the US-Soviet case, as Raymond Garthoff notes, the foremost cause of the failure of détente between the US-USSR was in the conception of détente. He argues that, “the Nixon-Kissinger saw it as a way of “managing the emergence of Soviet power” in world politics in an age of nuclear parity. The Soviets perceived it as a way of managing the transition of US power from superiority to a modest role in world politics

¹⁵² Zubok, (2005), 202-205

¹⁵³ Gaddis, (2005), 287.

in the age of nuclear parity.’¹⁵⁴ Watergate also impacted the process of détente. President Nixon’s credibility and image were greatly damaged during the entire Watergate saga. The fall of Nixon left his foreign policy initiative in the hands of his successor Gerald Ford, who was constrained on the domestic front by an overactive Congress after the Nixon-Watergate crisis. When President Ford met Brezhnev in Vladivostok for SALT negotiations, he was domestically pressured to insist on strategic and numerical parity with the Soviet Union. During the Vladivostok meeting Brezhnev once a tried to build a personal relationship with the new American President as he had done with Nixon. During the special train journey, Brezhnev laid out his views on arms race in general and nuclear threat in particular. He said:

“We have not achieved any real limitation, and in fact we have been spurring the arms race further and further. This is wrong. Tomorrow science can present us with inventions we cannot even imagine today, and I just don’t know how much farther we can go in building up so-called security. Who knows, maybe the day after tomorrow the arms race will reach even outer space. The people don’t know all this, otherwise they would really have given us hell. We are spending billions on all these things, billions that would be much better spent for the benefit of the people.”¹⁵⁵

Gerald Ford lacked the vision and negotiation skills of Nixon, and his response to Brezhnev was evasive. Ford was also distracted with the events back in the United States. Domestic support for détente was slipping, and the Vladivostok summit, criticized by congressional members in Washington DC, was followed by the Jackson–Vanik Amendment to the Trade Act. The Jackson–Vanik Act denied the Most Favored Nation status to economies that restricted Jewish emigration. For the Soviet Union the Amendment meant a denial of the perks of trade with the United States since it was

¹⁵⁴ Raymond Garthoff (1994), 1069.

¹⁵⁵ Quoted in Dobrynin, Sugubo Doveritelno, (1995), 315, also in Zubok, (2005), 244.

linked with the issue of Jewish emigration from the Soviet Union. The response from Moscow was to reject the Amendment and treat it as a blow to the goodwill created by détente. Zubok notes that the “new American conditions were totally unacceptable, because they contradicted the principle of parity and equality, the major Soviet goal in détente.”¹⁵⁶ The Jackson-Vanik Amendment shattered one of the central reasons for détente and demonstrated how division of power worked in the US. Cooperation and consultation between the executive and legislative branch could oftentimes create effective US foreign policy. However, it can also serve as a blow to a peace process being negotiated with other states with different political constraints.

Towards the end of the 1970s, Soviet Union reassessed its foreign policy and in particular its rivalry with the United States. During this time, the Soviet economy had improved, as global oil prices had surged. As Zubok has highlighted, Soviet reserves reached \$20 billion, an increase of 2250 per cent.¹⁵⁷ By the 1980s, a Soviet Union that was economically strong pursued a foreign policy of expansion in Africa.

Carter’s New World? Brezhnev’s Adventurism!

During his administration, Carter attempted to revisit détente. But by distancing himself from détente during the presidential primaries, he had affected his credibility in pursuing it. Furthermore, a more aggressive Soviet foreign policy made it difficult for Carter to pursue it too. Finally, Carter’s national security advisor Brzezinski had a confrontational attitude towards the Soviet Union, and that in turn played a major role in his administration’s position towards Russia. Brzezinski believed that the United

¹⁵⁶ Zubok, (2005), 233.

¹⁵⁷ Zubok, (2005), 249.

States' negotiating position had been weakened after Vietnam and the Watergate debacle, and making concessions to a strong and confident Soviet Union was not in the best interest of the United States.¹⁵⁸

President Carter in his inaugural address expressed his administration's commitment to human rights. As he said, "because we are free, we can never be indifferent to the fate of freedom elsewhere." For the Soviets, an American policy dictated by human rights was problematic, as it was perceived as direct interference in the domestic affairs of the Soviet Union. The Americans had to assure the Russians that the US position on human rights was not directed solely at them.¹⁵⁹ During the early days of the Carter administration, he took the approach of shifting focus from the ideological divide between the two rivals and containment to their systems of governance. As he said during the commencement speech at the University of Notre Dame in May 1977, "Democracy's recent successes... show that our confidence in this system....[and] our own future.... is free of the inordinate fear of communism, which once led us to embrace any dictator who joined us in that fear."¹⁶⁰ Carter noted that "it is a new world that calls for a new American foreign policy – a policy based on constant decency in its values and on optimism."¹⁶¹ Carter's new world prediction would be revisited by the administration of George H. W. Bush, but in a more concrete position

¹⁵⁸ Charles Gati, *Zbig: The Strategy and Statecraft of Zbigniew Brzezinski*, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 2013), 39-40.

¹⁵⁹ Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Brzezinski Material, Name File, Hyland, William G. 2/77. Secret. Drafted by Hyland, who transmitted a copy to Brzezinski under a covering memorandum.

¹⁶⁰ Jimmy Carters Speech on May 22nd 1977 at the University of Notre Dame. The American Presidency Project: Jimmy Carter: 1977. Online access: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=7552>.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The administration's public position was that it did not follow the step-by step approach of Kissinger, but procedurally not much changed during the Carter administration. Gaddis notes, "Carter and his advisor developed no new strategy, but they did graft onto the basic premises of the old one certain highly visible initiatives designed to make it seem as though the American approach had changed."¹⁶² However, what President Carter wanted to be different was the avoiding of any secret diplomacy with the Soviets and the formulation of an arms control agreement that was proposed and developed by an anti-Soviet neoconservative analyst.¹⁶³ The arms control proposal aimed for deep cuts. For the Soviets that translated into losing half of their best missiles in silos, whereas the Americans' requirement was an assurance that they would not deploy future strategic nuclear-armed systems.¹⁶⁴ The Soviets rejected the Carter administration's proposal, and they were convinced that Carter wanted to "take cheap shots at their expense."¹⁶⁵ The exchange of letters between President Carter and General Secretary Brezhnev starting from February 1977 onwards illustrates how each misperceived the other's intentions. (See Appendix I for the communications). The March 1977 negotiations on strategic nuclear arms reduction failed in this vein when Kremlin leaders were agitated by President Carter's human rights push and thus considered the American not to be interested in negotiating. As Brezhnev wrote to Carter,

"Conclusion of a new agreement between our countries on limiting strategic arms would certainly have great political significance both for Soviet-US

¹⁶² Gaddis, (2005), 345.

¹⁶³ Zubok,(2005), 255 The proposal aim for deep cuts in strategic systems and the elimination of have of the Satan rockets. In other words, the Russians would lose have

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 256.

relations...However, it will be feasible only if the agreement constitutes a real step in the direction of limiting strategic arms. Otherwise, it would be counterproductive.”¹⁶⁶

Yuri Andropov, who later succeeded Brezhnev as the Secretary General, considered the Carter administration’s human rights focus to be an “attempt of the adversary to activate the hostile elements in the USSR by means of providing financial and other material assistance.”¹⁶⁷ To worsen the relations between the two rivals, on the advice of Brzezinski and Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, Carter attempted to use relations with China to force the hand of the Soviets by sending Brzezinski to Beijing for the normalization of relations. Cold War scholars have argued and considered this move of the Carter administration to have deepened the mistrust between the rivals and to have undermined relations between the US and the USSR.¹⁶⁸

Despite the poorly formulated policies of the Carter administration, and the disagreeable ties between the two rivals, the talks on limiting strategic arms continued. Ultimately, the Soviet side made a number of concessions, and the agreement was signed in 1979. Gaddis notes that it came at a cost, as the Soviets demonstrated an aggressive foreign policy during that time. It provided military assistance to the

¹⁶⁶ Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Outside the System File, Box 69, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR): Brezhnev–Carter Correspondence: 1–2/77. No classification marking. Printed from an unofficial translation. Carter recalled in his memoirs, “Brezhnev’s tone changed to harshness in his second message on February 25. His primary objection was to my aggressive proposals on nuclear arms limitations—advocating much deeper cuts than had been discussed at Vladivostok in 1975—but he also expressed strong opposition to our human-rights policy. He seemed especially provoked by my corresponding with him and at the same time sending a letter to Sakharov, who was considered by the Soviet leader to be ‘a renegade who proclaimed himself an enemy of the Soviet state.’” (*Keeping Faith*, p. 146)

¹⁶⁷ Zubok, (2005), 256-257; Dobrynin in Musgrove I, transcript, 66-80-81.

¹⁶⁸ Zubok, (2005), 258 and Raymond Garthoff (1994), 705-6, 770-78.

communist regimes in Angola and Ethiopia and invaded Afghanistan in December 1979.¹⁶⁹ In response to the Afghan invasion, the President Carter announced an embargo on grain sales to the USSR, boycotted the Olympic Games in Moscow, and withdrew the SALT II treaty from the Senate where it was pending ratification. Carter also introduced the Carter Doctrine: “An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.”¹⁷⁰ Brezhnev’s reply to the Carter Doctrine and the pulling of SALT II from the Senate was:

“take such an important document as the SALT 2 Treaty. Its implementation would have opened the way to far-reaching measure in the field of disarmament. This treaty, as we know, received world wide support, including that of America’s NATO allies, and the support of broad sections of the world public. But what did the Carter Administration do with it? The treaty was barely signed when voices in the United States began discrediting it. The ratification procedure was, in substance, used by the opponents of the Treaty – not without the connivance of US government quarters – to gravely complicate its ratification. By his decision to freeze indefinitely the debate on the SALT-2 Treaty in the Senate, President Carter added one more touch to this unseemly process.”¹⁷¹

From SALT to START:

The 1980 election resulted in an overwhelming victory for the Republican candidate Ronald Reagan. Reagan was radically different from Carter. Gaddis describes “his unshakable belief in democracy and capitalism, an abhorrence of communism, an impatience with compromise in what he regarded as a contest between good and evil,

¹⁶⁹ Gaddis, (2005), 348-9.

¹⁷⁰ Louise Chipley Slavicek, (2004), 74.

¹⁷¹ Leonid Brezhnev, *Memoirs*, (1982), 205-6.

and a deep fear that the Cold War might end in a nuclear holocaust, thereby confirming the Biblical prophecy of Armageddon.”¹⁷² President Reagan rejected the notion of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and the SALT Treaty. He called MAD “the craziest thing I ever heard of.” In Reagan’s view the SALT II Treaty legitimized nuclear arms buildup, and he could not agree to it. He shifted the arms control debate from Strategic Arms Limitation Talks to Strategic Arms Reduction Talks.

During this time, the US’ relationship with the USSR had deteriorated. Once again Moscow was dealing with both domestic and international issues. After Brezhnev’s poor health and later death in November 1982, the interregnum period turned out to be economically and politically costly for the Soviet Union. Papers prepared by the CIA report in December 1982 noted that the Soviet economy was in bad shape and that the Soviet hold on Central Europe was shaky.¹⁷³ The Soviet empire was losing control over its client states, while the Solidarity movement in Poland undermined the ability of the USSR to maintain control there. Poland was never easy pickings for the Soviet Union, Joseph Stalin had once described introducing communism to Poland as “fitting a saddle to a cow.” Matthew Ouimet argues that “Poland was the cow that at time acted like a raging bull, and it did that in the most inopportune moments for the Soviet Union.”¹⁷⁴ The August 1980 crisis in Gdansk and the success of the Solidarity movement in Poland made the Soviets fearful that external actors were involved in supporting the revolution.

¹⁷² Gaddis, 350

¹⁷³ Reagan Library, Executive Secretariat, NSC: Country File, USSR – “The Brezhnev Era” Military Posture of the Soviet Union (December 1982) (1) Confidential. Papers created by the Soviet Economy division, Office of Soviet Analysis.

¹⁷⁴ Matthew Ouimet, *The Rise and Fall of the Brezhnev Doctrine in Soviet Foreign Policy*, (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina, 2004), 101.

The leadership in Kremlin was afraid of other states following the Polish case, but Brezhnev, in his poor health, was not prepared for another military invasion. General Wojciech Jaruzelski in his memoirs noted that the Soviets chose not to invade or intervene in the affairs of Poland because the leadership in Moscow was aware that it lacked support within Poland and had been warned by Western counterparts not to repeat the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Along with these factors there was also the fact that interventions required many resources. In Andropov's word, "the quota of interventions abroad has been exhausted."¹⁷⁵

The lack of intervention in Poland meant giving up on the Warsaw Pact. However, the cost of invading would have been economically and politically costly, particularly for the European states. For Cold War analysts, the Soviet response to the Polish crisis should have raised red flags regarding the dire economic crunch faced by the Soviets. Jacques Levesque in his book *The Enigma of 1989*, wrote that he was surprised by the fateful year of 1989 and the collapse of the Eastern European regimes. He highlights how "the "permissiveness" of the USSR must therefore be considered the great enigma of 1989."¹⁷⁶ But this study argues that the USSR's permissiveness started with Poland in 1980 and when the old guard under Brezhnev was still in power – not Gorbachev.

With the ongoing Polish crisis, the Soviet Union had to deal with pressure from the Reagan administration. Reagan wanted to further hurt the Soviet economy.

¹⁷⁵ Zubok, (2007), 267.

¹⁷⁶ Jacques Levesque, *The Enigma of 1989: The USSR and the Liberation of Eastern Europe*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 1-2.

Andropov, who was the head of the KGB at that time, alarmed the senior leadership in Moscow that the US might carry out a surprise nuclear attack on the USSR. Brezhnev who by this time was in very poor physical shape rejected any proposal of a change in Soviet foreign policy. Instead, Brezhnev renounced the first use nuclear doctrine and thus abandoned a Soviet offensive military doctrine that had been in place since the 1960s. Brezhnev died in November 1982, and Andropov, who succeeded him, was suspicious of American intentions and particularly of Reagan. An official memorandum from the deputy director for Intelligence to the director of the CIA described the new Soviet leader as “a new, and in many ways far more intelligent and skillful adversary than we confronted in Khrushchev or Brezhnev – and a man who is a ‘doer.’ He is familiar with the world and a realist...we will face a much greater challenge from the USSR under his leadership.”¹⁷⁷

Adding to Andropov’s pre-existing anxieties of a preemptive US nuclear strike, President Reagan publically declared the Soviet Union as the “evil empire” and announced the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). The SDI questioned the key pillars of SALT I and reversed US policy on arms control. Reagan further raised the possibility of an arms race into the outer space. The SDI was later explained to the Japanese officials as a five-year research plan to determine whether any other technology could be used against ballistic missiles. Besides the Japanese, the Europeans were also concerned that SDI may threaten extended deterrence and become potentially destabilizing if one side

¹⁷⁷ FRUS, No. DDI #9593-82, Memorandum from the Deputy Director for Intelligence to the Director of CIA and the Deputy Director of Intelligence. Nov. 20th, 1982. P 848

could defend itself against ICBMs.¹⁷⁸ What Reagan missed in his SDI announcement was how close it would bring the two rivals to nuclear war. The NATO military exercise known as Able-Archer 83 was assumed by the Russians to be preparations for a preemptive strike on the Soviet Union.¹⁷⁹ After finding out about the Soviet war plans, Reagan was profoundly shaken. The steps taken since then were of reassurance, rather than confrontation. Reagan thus stated in a speech, “just suppose that an Ivan and Anya meet Jim and Sally in a waiting room. They will discuss their kids and hobbies, not their respective governments.” A few weeks after Reagan’s reassuring speech, Andropov died. He was succeeded by Konstantin Chernenko, who was later replaced by Mikhail Gorbachev.

Gorbachev’s *Novoe Myshlenie*¹⁸⁰: A Truly Peaceful Co-existence

Mikhail Gorbachev took over as the General Secretary in 1985 after the death of Chernenko. Secretary of State Shultz had once said to Reagan, “sooner or later, the Soviets would have to face the hurdle of a generational turnover, when the senior members of the politburo would retire or die and would be replaced by younger men who might have a significantly different outlook.”¹⁸¹ When Shultz met Gorbachev for the first time at Chernenko’s funeral, he held a press conference and said that the new

¹⁷⁸ Secret cable sent from the US Embassy in Japan. United, S. E. (1984). *PM deputy director dean's discussion with MOFA disarmament director: SDI, CTB, ASAT and CW* Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.cul.columbia.edu/docview/1679114280?accountid=10226>

¹⁷⁹ Zubok,(2005), 271 This was also the period when the Soviets shot down a Korean Airlines plane that had strayed over Russian islands that were a part of the Soviet defense perimeter. The Reagan administration was deeply shocked and angry over the loss of life. The Soviets denied the incident and that led to a worldwide anti-Soviet propaganda.

¹⁸⁰ Means “new thinking” in Russian.

¹⁸¹ Gaddis, (2005), 361.

Secretary General Gorbachev was “totally different from any Soviet leader I’ve ever met.”¹⁸² When Gorbachev took office, the leadership around him had a very different view of the world, and hence a shift in position was made possible. Gorbachev was seen as the part of a new generation of leaders, a young blood that was not tainted by Stalinist insecurities and paranoia. With Gorbachev came sweeping changes to the Soviet policy between 1985-1991. The USSR signed a major arms control agreements; withdrew from Eastern Europe; and, most important of all, enabled the reunification of Germany. With Gorbachev came new thinking, and the rejection of everything old. He rejected the Stalinist world view and recognized that Soviet security was tied to the security interests of the world.

When Gorbachev took over, he understood the changes that were happening in the international system and the changes in the client states (periphery states) of the USSR. Soviet leadership before Gorbachev had failed to accept that since WWII European states, and Germany in particular, had gone through major institutional changes and were not militaristic and aggressive. Accordingly, the policies of the previous Soviet leadership had focused on strength and power relations with the West. Of course, the United States had also advanced its own interests and, with each leadership change in DC, a different policy to deal or not to deal with the Soviet Union took shape. Gorbachev’s leadership drastically reduced the intensity of the security dilemma and hence led to the reunification of Germany.¹⁸³

¹⁸² George Shultz, *Turmoil and Triumph*, (1993), 532-33; also cited in Gaddis (2005).

¹⁸³ Daniel Deudney and G. John Ikenberry, “The International Sources of Soviet Change,” *International Security* 16 (Winter 1991/92), 83-90.

Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev both aimed to ease tension between the nuclear rivals. After the Reykjavik summit between Gorbachev and Reagan, the two agreed on an arms control agreement. This was the Intermediate Nuclear Force Treaty (INF) that was to be signed in a ceremony at the White House in December 1987. The treaty called for the elimination and destruction of destabilizing weapon systems on both sides, starting with the medium to short range missiles. Gorbachev in his memoirs noted that “this was the first time in history that a treaty on the destruction of an entire class of nuclear weapons was agreed to by both sides. It is difficult to overestimate the significance of this step.”¹⁸⁴ The INF eliminated the SS-20 missiles on the Soviet side and the Pershing II and GLCM missiles on the US side. The INF is important because the Soviet missiles threatened Western Europe and US missiles threatened targets deep within Russia. The Pershing II had allowed the United States to target Moscow from European territory, and it is noted that the USSR pushed for the INF treaty because of the Pershing-II missiles.¹⁸⁵ The INF was made possible because of the new thinking of Gorbachev and the major changes that followed after he took office. With the INF, other confidence building measures, like the Nuclear Risk Reduction Center (NRRC), were also being negotiated. Later in July 1991, the Soviet-American treaty on the substantial reduction of strategic offensive weapons was brokered.

On the US front, Reagan was in his second term and after the Able-Archer incident had adopted a moderate tone. Reagan continued his insistence on Soviet military withdrawal from Afghanistan, Angola, and Ethiopia. Gorbachev was concerned

¹⁸⁴ Mikhail Gorbachev, *On my Country*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), 195

¹⁸⁵ Pershing II. <https://fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/theater/pershing2.htm>

that the immediate withdrawal would be considered as a Soviet retreat. In his memoirs, Gorbachev notes that the discussion of ending the war in Afghanistan was raised in the twenty-seventh Party Congress meeting and that it was agreed that the war must be ended. After the meeting, some troops were withdrawn, and the process of Soviet troop withdrawal was completed on February 15th, 1989. Gorbachev described the end of the Afghan invasion as “a shameful and unhappy page in history” that “had been turned.”¹⁸⁶

The End of the Soviet Empire

The year 1989 changed the political landscape of international relations. George H. W. Bush was sworn in as the 41st President of the United States. The Japanese Emperor Hirohito died, and Akihito was enthroned as the 125th Emperor. The Soviet Union ends its 9-year war in Afghanistan. The Tiananmen Square protests took place, thus embarrassing the CCP. Poland holds democratic elections and elected Wojciech Jaruzelski. Iran elected Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani - a moderate president. The Velvet Revolution occurred in Czechoslovakia, with the Communists giving up control. The US invaded Panama. The Berlin Wall fell. And the most importantly, the Cold War ended.

When Gorbachev came to power, his main objective was to end the Soviet alienation abroad and improve the Soviet economy. By mid-August 1991 the Soviet economy was at the verge of collapse; its domestic trade system had ceased to function. Gorbachev had a month before reached out to President Bush (41) for economic assistance in the form of a new Marshall Plan, but the Bush ignored his pleas. The US economy was in recession, and Bush was fiscally conservative. Once again, this was an opportunity that the United States missed to end the rivalry. The Bush administration

¹⁸⁶ Gorbachev, (2000), 198.

and much of the policy sector in DC were satisfied with the end of the Cold War and were mistaken that it ended the rivalry as well. The United States had a golden opportunity with Gorbachev in Moscow, and their refusal to help came across as betrayal for the Russians.

Conclusion:

The US –Soviet rivalry was about personalities, international structure, and domestic constraints. To write about the US-USSR relationship during the Cold War is an formidable task due to the nature of the data and information available. Every crisis between the two rivals has multiple dimensions and factors that must be addressed. Besides, there is nothing in history that compares to the rivalry between the US and USSR, which continues, as I argue, between the US and Russia. It is one of the longest rivalries in history, for a primary argument of this dissertation is that the rivalry did not terminate with the fall of the Soviet Union and continues to today. Furthermore, the endurance of NATO or *PAX Atlantica* is in itself an explanation for the persistence of the rivalry with Russia. Scholars such as Thomas Risse-Kappen and Wallace Thies, have argued that the success and endurance of NATO is due to the democratic nature of its member states.¹⁸⁷ However, the argument presented in this dissertation holds that NATO survived and has endured not because of the democratic nature of its members but because the rivalry with Russia never ended and the threat of Russia rising was always present.

¹⁸⁷ Wallace Thies, *Why NATO Endures* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation among Democracies: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995)

Thus, when studying the role of nuclear weapons on the US-USSR rivalry, it is necessary to go beyond crises and conflicts. To analyze the impact of nuclear weapons on international rivalries on the simple basis of a decline in crises or a lack war between rivals neglects the cooperation that occurs due to the lack of options and the threat of nuclear war. Thus, crises and war cannot be the whole story.

The key shift in relations and the realization of the impossibility of war between the US and the USSR occurred after the development of the hydrogen bomb. The United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain realized the impossibility of war after thermonuclear weapons were added to the mix. On the US side, Eisenhower in his inaugural address stated: “science seems ready to confer upon us, as its final gift, the power to erase human life.”¹⁸⁸ The Soviet premier, Georgii Malenkov said, “a new world war with modern weapons would mean the end of world civilization.”¹⁸⁹ The great strategist and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s position was, “my thoughts are about London...several million people would certainly be obliterated by four or five of the latest H bombs.”¹⁹⁰

The question then whether the United States strong-armed the Soviet Union after World War II? Scholars have argued that the US unintentionally projected a position of power that resulted in endangering the interests of the Soviet Union. As Melvyn Leffler noted, “the US officials were unable to see the extent to which the position and power of

¹⁸⁸ Richard Hewlett and Jack Holl, *Atoms for Peace and War 1953-1961: Eisenhower and the Atomic Energy commission*, (Berkley : University of California Press, 1989), 34

¹⁸⁹ Comrade G.M. Malenkov’s speech. *Izvestiia*, (March 1954), 2.

¹⁹⁰ Peter Boyle, *The Churchill-Eisenhower Correspondence 1953-1955*, (Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 123. Winston Churchill to Dwight Eisenhower, March 1954.

their country made it a potential menace to other.”¹⁹¹ However, the historical record in the previous chapter (4) has demonstrated Stalin’s expansionist post-war vision, as well as the pragmatic approach of the US towards the USSR during WWII. At the start of the Grand Alliance the Soviet interests were in line with the West; they both faced an existential threat in the form of Nazi Germany. For the United States, President Roosevelt, despite his conciliatory position towards Stalin, was aware that the war-time cooperation was not going to last. As he said to a friend, “I can’t take communism nor can you, but to cross this bridge I would hold hands with the devil.”¹⁹² Stalin’s mistrust of the West and particularly the United States was evident before the end of the war.

After the Korean war, the two rivals danced on the world floor and aimed to balance each other, while avoiding a military-strategic confrontation with the other. This was also the time when Khrushchev was moving forward with de-Stalinization in the Soviet Union and the United States was adjusting to Eisenhower’s New Look strategy and heavy reliance on nuclear weapons. After Stalin’s death, it was noted by Soviet diplomats that “great opportunities were lost in Soviet American affairs between 1959-1963.”¹⁹³ Both sides recognized that Cold War tensions could not be diminished until a solution was reached on Germany and of course Berlin, with its strategic value for all sides. The Soviet leadership, with Nikita Khrushchev at the helm, wanted the United States to recognize the sovereignty of the Soviet-controlled side of Germany and provide a special status for West Berlin. Khrushchev had rejected the Western model of a democratic Germany and a reunification based on free elections to choose to remain in

¹⁹¹ Leffler M. P., (1992), 98-99.

¹⁹² John Lewis Gaddis, (2005), 3.

¹⁹³ Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (New York, 1979), 114.

NATO. Soviet ambitions for Germany involved a confederacy with two separate German states. Khrushchev understood the importance of a German solution and the improvement of ties between the West and the Soviet Union. His massive troop reduction plan and push for a test ban treaty was illustrative of his desire for *détente* with America, but at the same time his personality and persistent threats and bluster defeated his own agenda. Brezhnev, on the other hand, had a different approach from Khrushchev. Just as Khrushchev undertook the destalinization of the Soviet foreign policy, Brezhnev engaged in cleaning up the mess that Khrushchev had left for him. Brezhnev's view on the Cuban missile crisis was one of anger and disappointment. He said, "we slipped into a nuclear war! And what effort did it cost us to pull ourselves out of this, to make the world believe that we really want peace."¹⁹⁴

Why, then did *détente* fail? I argue that the United States used *détente* as another strategy of containment. Its enemy perception of the Soviet Union remained. Similarly, the Soviet Union continuously perceived the United States to be the aggressor. However, during the 1970s each superpower had motives to cooperate with the other. Motives for cooperation as Jervis noted, "overlapped and differed...Vietnam was both a danger and an opportunity. The danger was that the war could spread, Chinese influence could grow and chance of economic relations would decline."¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ Cited in Zubok,(2005), 203.

¹⁹⁵ Robert Jervis, *How Statesmen Think: the Psychology of International Politics*, (2017), 183.

Nuclear Balance of the 1970's and 80's:

In 1963 Secretary Defense McNamara wrote, "As the arms race continues and the weapons multiply and become swift and deadly, the possibility of a global catastrophe, either by miscalculation or design, becomes ever more real. More armaments, whether offensive or defensive, cannot solve this dilemma. Mutual deterrence underscores the need for a renewed effort to find some way, if not to eliminate these deadly weapons completely, then at least to slow down or halt their further accumulation."¹⁹⁶ Détente gave the world SALT. But SALT II, despite its pretensions, had little to show. The question is whether the two nuclear rivals would have been better off without it. Gaddis notes that in the "absence of SALT nothing would have been able to prevent the USSR, and nothing would have induced them to cut back their ICBMs, SLBMs, and ABMs to the extent that they did."¹⁹⁷ Instead the United States gained unprecedented and extended dialogue on highly sensitive issues. As Gaddis notes, one of the most important goals of SALT and détente was the lowering of the danger of nuclear war.¹⁹⁸

The SALT I treaty in 1972 and SALT II in 1979 created much-needed stability on the strategic nuclear level between the two nuclear rivals. One of the factors that led Nikita Khrushchev to take the actions that he did during the Cuban crisis was the instability in the nuclear balance between the US and the USSR. By the time SALT I was signed, the Soviet Union had developed a strong deterrent force against a preemptive strike from the US. SALT I & II established strategic nuclear parity between the US and USSR, but the US tactical systems in Europe were not considered part of the agreement.

¹⁹⁶ 1963 Hearing on the Military Posture, US House of Representatives, 88th Congress, 1st Session, p. 307

¹⁹⁷ Gaddis, (2005), 325.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

The objectives for SALT I and SALT II were to “curb and put an end to the arms race and thereby reducing the risk of outbreak of nuclear war.” It was within the framework of this direction that negotiations on the Before the negotiations for SALT II Agreements, the Russians were curious to know what the US meant when it sought to minimize strategic forces on both sides and what allowable levels and compositions of the strategic forces were. The SALT II agreements were signed in June 1979, and the treaty limited both the US and the USSR to a total of about 2000 delivery vehicles that included submarine based missiles, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and the long-range bombers. SALT II further restricted the number of warheads and the development of new nuclear armament.¹⁹⁹

US-Soviet Cooperation During the Cold War:

Why would rivals cooperate? In this case, why did the US and USSR cooperate during the Cold War when the two sides had a profound mistrust for each other. The existing literature is filled with portrayals of the various crises, conflicts, hostilities and different types of competition between the two rivals. However, cooperation in a nuclear rivalry is an untold story. The next section will discuss the different areas in which the two rivals cooperated, despite the Cold War hostilities and mistrust.

I. Space - Cooperation

The US-Soviet space cooperation was a combination of scientific, foreign policy, and national security issues. Political events on both sides had an impact on the extent

¹⁹⁹ Louise Chipley Slavicek, *Jimmy Carter*, (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004), 62

of space cooperation between the two states. Cooperating on space-related scientific research and issues was made complicated by constant political upheavals. The formal US-USSR space cooperation grew out of the US-Soviet scientific and technical cooperation in 1959, when the two states signed a bilateral agreement for scientific exchanges. The “Agreement Concerning Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes” was signed in 1972 and renewed in 1977.²⁰⁰

On the multilateral level the United States and Soviet space cooperation was expanded through international projects and organizations. It included the ‘World Weather Watch’ conducted by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Maritime Satellite (INMARSAT) system. The United States and the U.S.S.R. also signed and ratified four U.N. treaties and agreements concerning the peaceful use of outer space.²⁰¹

Both the US and the USSR wanted to militarize space, starting from the first ICBM in 1957. By the mid-1960’s, outer space provided the most unique opportunity to advance national security interests. More than 2000 military payloads were placed in orbit by both the US and the USSR. In an estimate provided by SIPRI the US had spent over \$70 + billion in military related activities.²⁰² The two superpowers achieved limited but sustained cooperation on regulating activities in the space. Starting with the Anti-Satellite Weaponry (ASAT), and the SALT I agreement did not address ASAT’s. On July

²⁰⁰ US Soviet Cooperation in Space, July 1985 NTIS order # PB86-114578 (Washington DC: Library of Congress) p. 9

²⁰¹ Ibid., 9

²⁰² Bhupendra Jasani, *Outer Space: A New Dimension of the Arms Race*. SIPRI (London: Taylor and Francis, 1982), 41 and 112. These figures are before the Reagan initiatives.

17th 1975, the US and the USSR reached a high point in space cooperation, when the US Apollo and Soviet Soyuz space craft docked 225 kilometers in orbit. They displayed jointly developed technology and jointly conducted scientific experiments in space.

During the Cold War one of the objectives of the US-Soviet space cooperation was to keep the channels of communication open. This was to decrease mistrust, particularly at the time of increased tensions. Whenever overall US-Soviet relations were at an all-time low, “some believed that cooperation on any level can provide an important conduit for communication.”²⁰³ While the space cooperation acted as a kind of barometer for the rivalry relations, it maintained a continuing dialogue on a governmental level when other avenues may not have been active.²⁰⁴ And some level of cooperation also kept alive the possibility of expanded cooperation in the future.

II. Cooperation in Risk Reduction:

The following is a review of the major US-USSR security based cooperation: The 1963 US-Soviet hotline; 1971 Accident Measures Agreement; the 1972 Incident at sea; the 1973 agreement on the prevention of nuclear war; the 1987 agreement on the establishment of nuclear risk reduction centers. The following are the multilateral agreements: COSPAS/SARSAT satellite aided search and rescue system; the 1985 agreement for the Anchorage area control center, the Tokyo area control

²⁰³ US Soviet Cooperation in Space, July 1985 NTIS order # PB86-114578 (Washington DC: Library of Congress) p.86

²⁰⁴ US Soviet Cooperation in Space, July 1985 NTIS order # PB86-114578 (Washington DC: Library of Congress) p.87

center, and Khavarivsk Area control center in the North Pacific; 1986 Stockholm Agreement.

Hotline Links:

The Soviet Union was the first to propose in 1954 a safeguard system against surprise attacks and accidental wars. A conference was held in Geneva in 1958 but ended without reaching a solution. However, after the Cuban Missile Crisis, in 1963 a hotline agreement was signed. In June 1963, two full-time telephone lines, one connecting the Pentagon and Kremlin, and the other the landline and undersea cable connect Washington–London–Copenhagen–Stockholm–Helsinki–Moscow, and the last one a backup radio circuit, that connects Washington–Tangiers–Moscow. The precise telephone numbers were undisclosed and remain undisclosed. The "Hot Line" agreement was one of the first cooperative bilateral agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union that recognized the dangers of nuclear-weapons and the possibility of nuclear war.²⁰⁵ Furthermore, in 1971, an agreement was reached to improve direct communication between the United States and the Soviet Union via satellites circuits. The US used INTELSAT and the Soviets employed MOLINYA.²⁰⁶

On August 30, 1963 the first message on the Hotline was sent from the United States to the Soviet Union: "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog's back

²⁰⁵ Memorandum of Understanding Between The United States of America and The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Regarding the Establishment of a Direct Communications Link, Signed at Geneva June 20, 1963. State Department Treaties and Agreement Files.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

1234567890." The return message from Moscow was in Russian.²⁰⁷ The communication system was said to be used during the Indo-Pakistani war of 1971; the 1973 Arab-Israeli War; the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus, and the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The system later was modernized in 1983 by adding high-speed fax machine capability to both the sides. Finally, the 1984 accords provided three transmission links: two satellite systems and old wire telegraph circuit as a backup to prevent miscommunication between the two rivals and avoid nuclear war.

The hotline went through multiple upgrades and was later renamed as the Nuclear Risk Reduction Center (NRRC) in 1987. The Center used both U.S. and Soviet satellites to transmit facsimile data. It was the same year when the INF Treaty was signed that the NRRC system the official channel for all communications between the US and the Russia.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷ Arms Control Association: Hotline, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Hotlines>

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

Chapter 6

Transformation from Ideology to Power; From the USSR to Russia

*Wait for me, and I'll return, only wait very hard.
 Wait, when you are filled with sorrow as you watch the yellow rain;
 Wait, when the winds sweep the snowdrifts,
 Wait in the sweltering heat.
 Wait when others have stopped waiting ...
 Wait, for I'll return, defying every death. And let those who did not wait say I was
 lucky;
 They will never understand that in the midst of death, You, with your waiting, saved
 me ...*

(A Russian Poem by Konstantin Siminov published on February 1942 Pravda) ¹

Introduction

The Cold War ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, but with that emerged the “new Russia.” This new Russia faced setbacks for a while, but it has resurfaced as a great power under Vladimir Putin. This takes us back to the start of the US-USSR/Russia case study, when the following questions were posed: Was the Cold War a confrontation of differing ideologies, or a security dilemma? More importantly, did the end of the Cold War terminate the rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union? This chapter addresses these questions by resuming the story where the previous chapter ended and continuing to the current US-Russian tensions.

¹ In Geoffrey Roberts. “Stalin's General.” In February 1942 Pravda published Siminov’s poem “Wait for Me,” a tragic lament that captured the feelings of a whole generation of Soviet people and is still immensely popular in Russia today (Kindle Locations 4246-4253). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

The above poem by the Russian poet Konstantin Siminov emphasizes the staying power of Russia - *wait for me and I will return* - Russia has remained in constant crisis starting from the days of Tsar Nicholai, but yet each time it has returned by *defying every death*. Before the Soviet Union there was the Tsarist Russian Empire, and as Zbigniew Brzezinski has argued, “in both, the inner and dominant core of imperial-might was the Russian State, with the Kremlin as its seat of power.”² This dissertation and its main arguments are in line with such a statement, and so it addresses the current Russian state as well. The study maintains that the collapse of the Soviet Empire was not the collapse of Russia itself. The Soviet Union lost its peripheral states, but the center and dominant core was always Moscow, with the Kremlin as the seat power, and it remained intact. Hence, the rivalry transformed and continued from the US-Soviet rivalry to the US-Russian rivalry. The Russian leadership and political elites have not forgotten their Cold War loss and a decline in their super power status. Russian President Vladimir Putin in a speech to the party elites in 2014 criticized the United States and said, “they cheated us again and again, made decisions behind our back, presenting it to us with completed facts...that's the way it was with the expansion of NATO in the East, with the deployment of military infrastructure at our borders. They always told us the same thing: well, this doesn't involve you.”³ Putin’s tone was one of the Cold War era and of member of the old Soviet guard that had a deep mistrust in the US’ intentions.

² Zbigniew Brzezinski and Paige Sullivan, *Russia and the Common Wealth of Independent States*. (New York: M.E. Sharpe, 1997), 3

³ New York Times, ‘Putin Reclaims Crimea for Russia and Bitterly Denounces the West. March 18th 2014.

https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/19/world/europe/ukraine.html?_r=0

This chapter outlines and explains the continuation and transformation of the US-USSR rivalry to the US-Russian rivalry, and it challenges the literature that conceives of the collapse of the USSR as the rivalry's end. It focuses on the different historical points that illuminate the official position and public perceptions of Russia and how they have remained adversarial towards the United States. The chapter starts with the following questions. What is Russia? Is there a difference between Soviet Russia and today's Russia? In other words, is the Russian Federation going to behave like Stalin's Soviet Union or like a neighbor that respects the sovereignty of other states? The chapter also addresses how the United States missed golden opportunities to alter the trajectory of the rivalry. This includes Gorbachev's request for assistance from President Bush and President Clinton's disregard for Russian sensitivities during the chaotic Yeltsin era. I argue that during the period of 1990 – 1999 the US adopted an arrogant approach towards Russia with the assumption that the rivalry had ended with the USSR. So, it underestimated the rise of the nationalist in Russia. The chapter concludes with reflections on the current state of the tensions between the US and Russia, while touching upon the Ukraine crisis; the Syrian revolution; and more recently Russian meddling in the US' presidential elections of 2016.

New Russia as *Velikaya Derzhavnost*:

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the new Russia that emerged was economically and politically struggling, even though it was still the biggest nuclear and land power in Eurasia. Russia's military-might was on decline. It had lost the war Afghanistan and its geographical landscape was redrawn after losing much of its territory. The Russian military prestige of the WWII days had also fallen. Gorbachev's

foreign policy assistant wrote in his diary in May 1989, “the crux of the matter is the collapse of myths and unnatural forms of life in our own society. The economy is collapsing; the image of Socialism is disintegrating; ideologies already gone; the Federation, i.e., the Empire, is coming apart at the seams; the party is crumbling ... protuberances of chaos have already broken out.”⁴

The “new Russia,” or otherwise Yeltsin’s Russia, was not a great power but a power in decline. It was an enigma. Even if we keep its previous power position and its nuclear power status in perspective, what was the Russia of 1990/1? Or for that matter what was the Russian statehood? After all, the Soviet Union had been comprised of many groups and ethnicities and was a multinational entity. In 1989, Russia faced the fate of Germany at the end of WWII. Once again, the United States and Western Europe were confronted with rebuilding a state, and this time it was the “Russian question,” for which none of them were prepared. Russia needed rebuilding/restoring, like Germany after WWII. The difference was that Germany’s devastation from WWII was palpable, whereas the Cold War was not fought with bombs and tanks but with strategies of containment and counter-containment. The struggle for parity with the United States and the desire for empire had devastated the Soviet Union. In light of the complete collapse of the system, it is important to ask is: what emerged out of the ruins of the Soviet Union, a democratic state willing to accept its place in the region and the system, or a hybrid version of imperial Russia? The answer to this inquiry lies in how Russia and its elite define itself, and it will also help us in understanding the contemporary and future behavior of the Russian leadership. As Brzezinski explains,

⁴ Eric Shiraev and Vladislav Zubok, *Anti-Americanism in Russia from Stalin to Putin*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 28

“A Russia that defines itself as a national state might not always live in peace with its neighbors, but such a self-definition would thereby acknowledge the separate political identity of the non-Russian. A Russia that sees itself as something more than a national state, however, and as source of a supra National and quasi mythical identity, endowed with a special mission in the huge Eurasian geopolitical space formerly occupied by the Soviet Union, is a Russia that claims the right to embrace its neighbors in a relationship that, in effect, denies to them not only genuine sovereignty but even a truly distinctive national identity.”⁵

Zbigniew Brzezinski was a Polish-American who came to the United States during WWII and had seen the impact of how a powerful neighbor can take over not just the territory but also the national identity of smaller, less powerful states. One of the best examples of this type of mindset pertains to the Ukraine. Many Russians believe that Ukraine is part of a larger Slavic family, in which the Ukrainian identity is ‘somewhat distinctive but not really different, and thus it is natural for the Ukrainian people to be a part of a larger multinational state, and that in effective is Russia due to its power position.’⁶

In 2014, the Russian President Vladimir Putin reclaimed Crimea from Ukraine on similar grounds. As Putin announced, “Crimea has always been an integral part of Russia in the hearts and minds of people.” He added, “after a long hard and exhaustive journey at sea, Crimea and Sevastopol are returning to home port, to Russia,”⁷ The current Russian leader Vladimir Putin is inspired by the history of Russia, and his policy is based on the greatness of Russia or *Velikaya Derzhavnost*. As he repeatedly said in an interview, “Russia is a great, powerful, divinely ordained state that stretches back a thousand years. He [Putin] is there to restore its glory, its power, its faith, and above all

⁵ Zbigniew Brzezinski and Sullivan, (1997), 3

⁶ Ibid

⁷ New York Times, “Putin Reclaims Crimea for Russia and Bitterly Denounces the West.” March 18th 2014.

https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/19/world/europe/ukraine.html?_r=0

its proper place in the world.”⁸ But before discussing Putinism in detail it is important to address the views of restoration of the Soviet Russian empire that prevailed after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The Early 1990's: Strategic Cooperation

In the early 1990s, Russian foreign policy elites were faced with the dilemma of imperial nationalists and moderate Russian nationalists. Both, however, aimed to restore Russia's international standing and reinstate its status as a great power. And both agreed that it would only be possible by restoring its military might and economic health. The difference between the two groups was that the imperial nationalist goal was to restore the old glory of the Soviet Union where the power seat was in Moscow, but the moderate Russian nationalists planned for integration and closer relations with the post-Soviet states.

One of the Russian military analysts, Andrei Kokoshin, wrote in 1995, that “the construction of the Armed Forces is not only a task for the military branch. It is an all-state enterprise... One of Russia's most important resources in the struggle for a worthy place in the world hierarchy of powers, if it does not wish to be converted into an appendage for raw materials on the periphery of the world economy, is its military complex, to which over the course of many decades the best specialists have been attracted and where the most substantial material investments have been made.”⁹ Fiona

⁸ Serge Schememann, A Visit with Putin New York Times, September 16th, 2007.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/16/opinion/16iht-edserge.1.7519839.html>

⁹ Cited in Fiona Hill (1998), 384. Andrei Kokoshin, Natsional Naya Bezopasnost I voennaya moshch Rossi p. 247.

Hill describes Kokoshin as the archetypical member of the Russian foreign policy elites. He was also a cosmopolitan academic and arms-control specialist with close links to international governments and academics. Kokoshin's views on territorial disintegration are worth citing in their entirety, as he advanced the idea of a new Eurasian state structure. This structure was to be "on the territory of the former Russian Empire and the disintegrated Soviet Union, a new Eurasian state-political structure, in one form or another, where the Russian Federation will assume the role of the system-forming nucleus, around which other states will unite on an equal and mutually-beneficial basis."¹⁰

Gennady Zyuganov a Russian politician with clear imperial nationalist views presented a report to the annual Congress of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation in 1997. It said, "the restoration of the people's power and the rebirth of the ruined state ... is the basis for a true national consensus ... the Russian Federation cannot be strong outside of a new Union... We are confident—Russia will be Great and Socialist."¹¹ On the contrary the first Russian Ambassador to the United States Vladimir Lukin considered restoration of the Russian Soviet empire to be "unthinkable either technically, without prohibitive sacrifices and costs, or politically because Russia would then find itself in a hostile isolation even more dangerous than the one of the Cold War era...and all this says nothing about whether this variant is compatible with preserving democracy in Russia."¹²

¹⁰ Ibid. 394

¹¹ Ibid., 402.

¹² Zbigniew Brzezinski and Sullivan, (1997), 7-8.

The imperial nationalist groups considered and criticized the Russian President Boris Yeltsin for being servile to the United States, irresponsible with the Russian economy, and weak for letting the former Soviet republics leave the Union. During this period, an old-Soviet anti-Americanism took shape, and it was further reinforced by the American encirclement and the expansion of NATO. The new anti-Americanism emerged at the end of the 1990s, when public and political groups were critical of American influence, policies, and treatment of Russia and the Russian people.¹³

No Marshall Plan – “*Only Bush’s legs*”

In the 1990s, the United States did not systematically help the struggling Russian state. President Bush was fiscally conservative and had no strategy for Russia. At the same time the US economy was also going through recession. The US government was concerned about securing the nuclear arsenal and nuclear materials in the post-Soviet states, and because of that they ignored the opportunity for securing the good will of the Russian people. Eric Shiraev and Valdislav Zubok point out that the United States left economic assistance and advice on how to run the economy and build new institutions to private companies, nongovernment institutions, and individuals to manage. The Bush administration did not realize that non-governmental institution and individual could not replace the role of a government.

Yegor Gaider, a senior Russian government official, complained that “the United States lacked a leader capable like Truman and Marshall.” The older Russians compared the Bush administration’s aid unfavorably to the US assistance in 1942-43, and people

¹³ Shiraev and Zubok, (2000), 52.

in Moscow called the US food shipments “Bush’s legs... they were thin and small as the pillar of American policy toward Russia.”¹⁴ When the Russian officials were asked about the future of US-Russia relations in 1989, the response was, that it “depended on how the West would behave; whether it would believe in seriousness of Russian reforms, whether it would be able to size up their prospects not from the angle of an accountant, but from the viewpoint of social and political strategy.”¹⁵ The US’ aid between 1992-1998 was about ten billion dollars, far less than what was expected from the only superpower.¹⁶ Russian public perception by the mid-1990s was that the United States wanted Russia to remain weak and unable to influence the states around it. This enabled the imperial Russian nationalist groups to blame the United States further for the plight of the Russian people. Yeltsin’s privatization and economic reforms thus were linked with American influence, with both being held responsible for the economic and social collapse in Russia.

The US further harmed its relationship with the Moscow when Washington blocked the 1992-93 Russia-India arms deal worth \$350 million. Under the bilateral agreement, India was to receive a delivery of cryogenic engines for missile technology. Moscow backed off its agreement after the 1993 accord between the US and Russia in Washington DC. The US had also sanctioned both Russia and India in 1991 for violating the Missile Technology Control Regime, when the Indian Space and Research

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid, 51.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Organization had signed an agreement with Glavkosmos, the Russian Space agency.¹⁷

NATO Expansion of 1996 (1999):

By 1996, NATO added Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic – three former Warsaw Pact members. This was on the heels of the 1994 Civil War in the Balkans, which ended with NATO and American strikes against Serbia. NATO's eastward expansion was a sensitive matter for the Russians, and Yeltsin raised concerns about it with his French counterpart on his state visit to France. Domestically Yeltsin was pressured both by the military and opposition groups. The military had insisted on "re-aiming Russian nuclear missiles on Warsaw, Prague and Budapest as an act of intimidation and in retaliation." The opposition had launched protests outside the embassies of the US, UK, France, Germany, and Italy.¹⁸ Despite the domestic uproar, Yeltsin removed army contingents consisting of 300,000 troops from Eastern Europe. Additionally, before the announcement of NATO's expansion, and during his trip to Poland, Yeltsin had tacitly condoned Poland for joining NATO by saying that he understood Poland's desire to join the NATO alliance. During that trip, the Polish President had pushed the United States by saying, "Now the West has no argument to say no to Poland. Until now the West has been using the argument, we don't want to

¹⁷ Sanjoy Hazarika, India Asserts It Will Develop Rocket Engines, New York Times, July 18th, 1993, <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/07/18/world/india-asserts-it-will-develop-rocket-engines.html>

¹⁸ Shiraev and Zubok, (2000), 102-103.

upset the Russians.”¹⁹ He was in effect claiming that since Russia was understanding of Poland’s position, then the West could not hesitate.

Amid such Russian insecurities, in 1997, President Clinton and Yeltsin signed an agreement between Russia and NATO. The agreement noted that NATO and Russia would consult and coordinate together. After the signing, Clinton remarked, “The historic change in the relationship between NATO and Russia grows out of a fundamental change in how we think about each other and our future. NATO's member states recognize that the Russian people are building a new Russia, defining their greatness in terms of the future as much as the past.” He further added that, “...NATO will remain the strongest alliance in history, with smaller, more flexible forces, prepared to provide for our defense...It will be an alliance directed no longer against a hostile bloc of nations, but instead designed to advance the security of every democracy in Europe -- NATO's old members, new members, and non-members alike.”²⁰ Yeltsin’s remarks understandably were not as upbeat as Clinton’s. To start with, Yeltsin had to sell it to his domestic audience, which was looking for any excuse to remove him from power. Yeltsin said, “The Russian leadership’s decision to prepare a document with NATO was far from easy....Russia still views negatively the expansion plans of NATO. At the same time, however, we recognize, we pay tribute to the readiness exhibited by NATO countries,

¹⁹ Jane Perlez, Yeltsin Understands Polish Bid for a role in NATO, August 1993, New York Times <http://www.nytimes.com/1993/08/26/world/yeltsin-understands-polish-bid-for-a-role-in-nato.html>

²⁰ Former Enemies Speak of Peace, May 28th 1997. New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/1997/05/28/world/former-enemies-speak-of-peace.html>

despite those difficulties, to reach an agreement with Russia and take into account our interests.”²¹

The United States Senate confirmed the expansion of NATO on May 1st 1998, by an overwhelming vote of 80 to 19. This step redrew the boundaries of NATO and pushed it 400 miles eastward towards Russia. This measure added the defense of Prague, Warsaw, and Budapest to that of Washington, Paris, or London.²² Within Russia, moderates with a pro-American position felt betrayed by NATO’s eastward expansion. Even Gorbachev noted that this move is “marked by a clear disrespect for Russia, as is shown by its failure to consult Russia on the issue of NATO bombing in Yugoslavia...this proves that some Western politicians would have liked to see Russia play second fiddle in world politics...Russia...will never reconcile itself to such a humiliating position.”²³ Adding further humiliation to Russia was NATO’s fiftieth commemoration celebration, hosted by President Clinton in Washington DC. New members were invited, but Russia had no seat. One is reminded of Lord Ismay’s famous line “the purpose of NATO is to keep the Americans in, the Germans down and the Russians out.”

By 1998, Russia had appointed a new foreign minister, Evgeny Maximovich Primakov. Primakov was considered a hardliner and held nationalist views. One of his first declarations was directed to the United States: “After a period of illusions and exaggerated expectations we are moving towards equal and balanced relationship with

²¹ Ibid.

²² Eric Schmitt, Senate Approves NATO Expansion, May 1st 1998.
<http://www.nytimes.com/1998/05/01/world/senate-approves-expansion-nato-vote-80-19-clinton-pleased-decision.html>

²³ Mikhail Gorbachev, “Russia Will Not Play Second Fiddle,” Moscow News, No37, September 22-28, 1995; Also, cited in Fiona Hill and Clifford Gaddy, (2013), 32.

the United States.”²⁴ This was the end of a pro-US era in Moscow. By 1999 Yeltsin resigned, and his Prime Minister Vladimir Putin took over. At the time of the NATO expansion, Gorbachev had warned the West that “an arrogant attitude towards Russia and her interests is deeply insulting to the Russian people, and that is fraught with grave consequence.” The United States missed multiple opportunities to change the course of this rivalry, but each time failed to do so. Yeltsin was criticized by the opposition for assisting the Americans in achieving the destruction of Russia and allowing NATO to reach its borders. Strobe Talbott has argued, “Putinism is part of the Yeltsin legacy. That is not because Yeltsin promoted Putin and installed him as his successor; it is because Putinism is a reaction to the privations that the Russian people suffered during Yeltsin’s reign, as well as the shock many felt in the loss of a quarter of their territory when the other constituent republics of the USSR headed for exit.”²⁵ To many Yeltsin was a catastrophe for Russia. The economy was in shambles, NATO had pushed to its borders, its international standing was that of a weak state, and politically the state was crumbling and falling apart. To his credit, Yeltsin did lay the groundwork of democratic institutions and market economy in Russia. Hence, Yeltsin’s successor Vladimir Putin, on his Millennium Message to the Russian people communicated a statement pregnant with meaning both for domestic and foreign audience when he stated that, “Russia is not America or Britain, for us, the state and its institutions and structures have always played an exceptionally important role in the life of the country and the people. For Russians, a strong state is not an anomaly to fight against. Quite the contrary, it is the source and guarantor of order, the initiator and the main driving force of any change. . .

²⁴ President Yeltsin’s Address to Russian Diplomats, 3.

²⁵ Fiona Hill Clifford Giddy, (2013), xi.

Society desires the restoration of the guiding and regulating role of the state.”²⁶

The Rise of Putin

The collapse of the Soviet state also resulted in the collapse of the KGB. Its new version, the Federal Security Services, or FSB, was established in 1995. President Yeltsin appointed Vladimir Putin to head the FSB in 1998. By 2000 Putin was the head of Russia. Yeltsin’s appointment of Putin to the FSB was the start of a new era in Russian politics, which continues till today. In his first year in office, President Putin focused on centralizing power in the Kremlin with little opposition. During that year, Kremlin was also suspected of interfering in regional Russian elections, particularly in the larger and economically important regions. The United States and Western powers overlooked Putin’s interference in regional politics and his disregard for civil liberties.²⁷ To understand Vladimir Putin, we must delve into his past experiences that have shaped him. In addition to Putin’s own autobiographical testimony regarding his strength, his biographer Oleg Blotsky narrated a childhood experience that Putin claims to have shaped his personality,

The first time I got beat up, it was a disgrace. . . . That incident was my first serious street “university.” . . . I drew four conclusions. Number one. I was wrong. I don’t remember the exact details of the conflict, but . . . [b]asically I insulted him for no good reason. So he immediately beat me up, and I deserved it. . . . Conclusion number two . . . I understood that you shouldn’t act like that to anybody, that you need to respect everybody. That was a nice “hands-on” lesson! Number three. I realized that in every situation—whether I was right or wrong—I had to be strong. I had to be able to answer back. . . . And number four. I learned that I always had to be

²⁶ Putin, Millennium Message, December 29th, 1999. Also cited in, Hill and Gaddy, (2013) 38.

²⁷ The Economist Intelligence Unit, December 2000

ready to instantly respond to an offense or insult. Instantly! . . . I just understood that if you want to win, then you have to fight to the finish in every fight, as if it was the last and decisive battle . . . you need to assume that there is no retreat and that you'll have to fight to the end. In principle, that's a well-known rule that they later taught me in the KGB, but I learned it much earlier—in those fights as a kid .”²⁸

During his first year of presidency, Putin consolidated his political position and his approval ratings were more than 70 percent. Putin's first two terms as president of Russia, the economy grew and was considered one of the fastest growing economy in the world. In 2000, the Russian economy was at its lowest point, with insignificant foreign reserves and government debt at \$133 billion. By the time, he left the presidency the Russian debt was down to \$37 billion and its foreign reserves were the third largest in the world at \$600 billion.²⁹ The improvement in Russian economy was linked with the global oil and gas market. The Russian economy suffered in the 2009 recession, but that was the time that all global markets were feeling the impact of the US recession.

Vladimir Putin's utmost priority has been to restore the power status of Russia. This objective, along with his anti-Western attitude, has at times resulted in the loss of life for Russia. This was the case with the *Kursk* submarine disaster in 2000, when the nuclear-armed submarine caught fire and sank with the crew and nuclear bombs in the Barents Sea. Some crew members had survived but were trapped underwater, and Putin had refused international assistance. By the arrived, it was too late for the remaining

²⁸ Hill and Gaddy (2013), 93.

²⁹ Ibid., 90.

crew, and all the members had died. For Putin, it was a matter of Russian honor linked with his ego that prevented him from accepting Western help.

The Yeltsin era had a negative impact on democracy in Russia to such a degree that when Pew's Global Attitude poll conducted a survey, they found that 6 out of 10 Russians preferred an authoritarian "strong handed" leader, as oppose to 3 out 10 who preferred a democratically elected leader. Within Russia, the priority for the public and the political elite was the revival of the economy. Militarily Russia could defend itself, as it remained one of the largest nuclear weapon states.

Best Kind of Governance for Russia³⁰

Should Russia relay on a democratic form of Government to solve the country's problems or a leader with a strong with a strong hand?

	Democratic Gov.	Strong Ldr	Don't Know
April 2006	29%	61%	10=100
Spring 2005	28%	66%	6=100
Summer 2002	21%	70%	9=100
1991	51%	39%	10=100

America Goes to War: Cooperative Coexistence

After the September 11 attacks on the United States, Russia provided strong support to the US in its fight against terrorism. Once again, the interest of the two rivals were in line. In June 1941 Hitler invaded Russia, and the United States and the Soviet Union set aside their rivalry to fight a common enemy, In 2001, when the United States

³⁰ Pew Research Center, The Putin Popularity Score:
<http://www.pewglobal.org/2006/12/06/the-putin-popularity-score/>

was attacked, the US and Russia set aside their differences to fight the menace of terrorism that threatens the interest of both states. Vladimir Putin announced Russian support for the US war against Al-Qaeda and the Taliban. Putin's approval ratings were high, but domestically he lacked support for the US war on terror. Former US Ambassador to Russia Mr. McFaul noted, that "there are a lot of enemies and lots of forces that do not want to see this, the first and foremost is the Russian military industrial complex, so if he [Putin] does not have something to deliver to that constituency in particular, I think it is going to be increasingly difficult for him to be pro-American."³¹ In response to Russian fears, the Bush administration reassured Putin that the United States does not want to restrict Russian influence in the region.³²

Putin disregarded the domestic opposition and offered the US its intelligence, opened its air space, and aided the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan. Furthermore, Putin also cooperated with the US in allowing US troops and fighter planes in Central Asia – Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.³³ Putin's focus was to find an opportunity that would help in ending Russia's international isolation, as well as providing it a say in the Afghan campaign. Putin's domestic approval numbers went up despite his support for the US anti-terrorism war. By the end of 2001 his approval figures were at 80%.³⁴ Initially, Putin's US assistance paid off. After the November Summit in Washington, Russia got clearance for WTO membership, a US proposal to cut strategic nuclear stockpile by two-

³¹ Santana Rebecca, Will US-Russia Relations Improve? Middle East News Online, Durham, October 17, 2001.

³² Ibid, Condoleezza Rice's interview with the Russian newspaper.

³³ Economist Intelligence Unit, December 2001. Country Report Russia.

³⁴ Ibid.

thirds, and say in some areas of NATO policy. The WTO membership was approved in 2012 – 19 years after Russia had initially applied.³⁵

What was surprising during Putin's first term was the seismic shift in his rhetoric before and after the September 11th attacks. In his first year as president, Putin condemned every American action regarding Russia. Putin condemned President Bush's announcement on May 1st 2001 that the United States would unilaterally withdraw from the 1972 ABM Treaty and start a national missile defense (NMD). After the 9/11 attacks, the Russian position softened on the ABM withdrawal. For the NMD, Putin even suggested that "such a system will allow Washington to respond appropriately to future threats."³⁶ Additionally, Russia made the following symbolic gestures by closing its naval base in Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam, along with its radar station in Cuba. Furthermore, Russia ratified the START II Treaty in 2000 and the Kyoto agreement in 2004.³⁷ But Russia/Putin's position towards the US returned to its opposition after President Bush's decision to invade Iraq.

Putin won his second term in office in 2004 with seventy-one percent of the vote. He continued his pragmatist foreign policy, but relations with the West were once again on the downward trajectory. In April 2004, NATO added even more new member states, out of which 3 were Baltic states. The Kremlin's response to NATO's expansion was to call it a "twentieth-century solution to twenty-first century security problems." In his second term, he consistently denounced the United States as a hegemonic power-hungry

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Dina Rome Spechler (2010) "Russian Foreign Policy During the Putin Presidency," *Problems of Post-Communism*, 57:5, P.37

³⁷ Tom Casier, "Putin's Policy Towards the West: Reflections on the Nature of Russian Foreign Policy," *International Politics*, (2006), 385.

state. By 2006, Western leaders in Europe started raising concerns about Putin's amassing power and the democratic deficit in Russia. Vladimir Putin remained popular in Russia, despite the slowing of economic improvement and the insurgency in Chechnya. Vladimir Putin was limited by the 1993 Russian constitution to a maximum of two consecutive terms as president. When Putin was leaving office he noted in an interview, "I will do everything to ensure his [the next Russian President's] independence and effectiveness. I worked all these years to make Russia strong. Russia cannot be strong with a weak president."³⁸

Putin's Imperial Designs and Obama's Failed Reset:

In 1939 British Prime Minister Winston Churchill, the visionary statesman, described Russia in a way that still holds true. He said, "Russia is a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma, but perhaps there is a key. That key is the Russian national interest."³⁹ Russian foreign policy towards the United States and West has maintained a pragmatic level of continuity. In March 2009 President Obama's administration announced its Russia reset policy. The goal of the reset policy was to improve relations with Russia, but it instead backfired because of a chain of errors. These errors ranged from the symbolic red button that was wrongly inscribed with the Russian for "overload" instead of "reset" to the erroneous assessment on who was in charge of Russia: Medvedev or Putin. Ariel Cohen further notes, "the administration agreed to cut US strategic nuclear forces under the New Start, abandoned the original program of missile

³⁸ Richard Sakwa, *The Crisis of Russian Democracy: The Dual State, Factionalism and the Medvedev Succession*, (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 267.

³⁹ Winston Churchill speech to the House of Commons, 1st October 1939.

defense deployment in Poland and Czech Republic, engaged in futile missile defense talks, pursued a policy of geopolitical neglect in the former Soviet Union and toned down its criticism of the violation of political freedom.”⁴⁰ The reset was at a cost of US interest and values of human rights, with long lasting consequences. President Obama’s reset with Russia came at time when US was internationally seen as the aggressor after 8 years of Bush presidency, with wars waged in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Apart from Yeltsin, whose attitude was relaxed and had the most Western-oriented policies, most Russian leaders since Stalin maintained the same pragmatic approach towards the United States. Kissinger provides a good description of Putin and how we can expect him to behave, “Unlike his predecessor, who cut his political teeth in the power struggle of the Communist Party, Putin emerged from the word of secret police. Advancement in the shadowy world presupposes a strong nationalist commitment and a cool, analytical streak. It leads to a foreign policy compatible to that during the tzarist centuries, grounding popular support in a series of Russian missions and seeking to dominate neighbors where they cannot be subjugated. With respect to other Powers, it involves a combination of pressures and inducements, the proportion between which is reached by careful patient and conscious manipulation of the balance of power.”⁴¹

⁴⁰ Cohen, A. (2011). Rethinking Reset: Re-examining the Obama Administration Russia Policy. *Hampton Roads International Security Quarterly*, 6.

⁴¹ Henry Kissinger, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy? Toward a Diplomacy for the 21st Century* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001) p.75

Ukraine and the Crimea

When Vladimir Putin met the US President Barack Obama in July 2009, he told him what he had told his predecessor G. W. Bush in 2008. “Ukraine is not even a state, it is little Russia, and the West should keep its hands off Ukraine.”⁴² In another interview Putin had said, “no one should be allowed to interfere in relations between us; they have always been the business of Russia itself.”⁴³ This is a clear sign of Russia defining itself as ‘something more than a national state.” In the words of Brzezinski, “Endowed with a special mission in the huge Eurasian geopolitical space formerly occupied by the Soviet Union, is a Russia that claims the right to embrace its neighbors in a relationship that, in effect, denies to them not only genuine sovereignty but even a truly distinctive national identity.”⁴⁴

The timing for intervention in the Ukraine was not opportune in 2008/9. Russia was embedded in Chechnya with its ongoing insurgency, as well as the war in South Ossetia. Putin learnt from the past mistakes of Soviet leaders not to overextend Russia with military interventions. In 2014 when the events went out of control for Putin, he had to choose whether to give up little Russia or integrate Crimea and Sevastopol back into Russia. Vladimir Putin opted for the latter or more risky option. On February 26th 2014, Russia added 5,000 special operation troops to its existing 15000 troops that were station in Crimea. Putin admitted a year after the Crimean annexation in 2015 that the decision to go into Crimea was made on the 23rd of February 2014, after Ukrainian

⁴² Simon Saradzhyan, Stirring Things Up in the Crimea, Belfer Center, July 5th 2009
<http://www.belfercenter.org/publication/stirring-things-crimea>

⁴³ Putin to the West: Hands Off Ukraine. Time, May 25th 2009
<http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1900838,00.html>

⁴⁴ Brzezinski and Sullivan (1997), 3.

President Yanukovych was deposed.⁴⁵ On February 28th 2014, President Obama issued a warning that there will be cost for invading Crimea. At the time, Vladimir Putin and his government completely denied any Russian covert action or troops in Crimea. The Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said that the premise that Russian troops were in Crimea was “complete nonsense” and that he had “no idea” how Russian military vehicles had gotten there. In response to the Crimean annexation, Russia was voted out by the G-8 industrialized democracies and was threatened with tougher sanctions.⁴⁶ The EU imposed sanctions including asset freezes and travel bans for Russian government officials.

Crimea has a large Russian population, and Russian troops were welcomed there. So without any bloodshed Russia won Crimea back. The question is whether this pattern continue Will Putin take the risk on the Baltic states? I argue that the probability of that is low, for two reasons: first, the Baltic states have NATO membership, and that would seriously be testing the commitment of the NATO member states like United States, France and Great Britain. Second, based on Russia’s new Maritime Doctrine (which will be discussed in the next section), Russia’s core interest in Ukraine were linked with Crimea and Sevastopol. It was not in the interest of Russia to have NATO in the Black Sea, and Sevastopol was not negotiable and came under the intrinsic interests of Russia.

⁴⁵ Neil MacFarquhar, Putin Contradicts Claims on Annexation of Crimea, March 9th 2015, New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/10/world/europe/putin-contrary-to-earlier-assertions-suggests-planning-to-seize-crimea-started-in-early-2014.html>

⁴⁶ Russian is Ousted From Group of 8 by U.S. and Allies, March 24th 2014, New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/25/world/europe/obama-russia-crimea.html>

Russia's New Maritime Doctrine and the Syrian Gamble:

The Syrian civil war added further strain to the US-Russian relationship. Russia has refused to negotiate on the UN Security Council resolution 1973, to authorize intervention in Syria, or to place undue pressure on the Syrian government. Russian interests in Syria are linked with Russia's Military Doctrine, and more specifically its revised Maritime Doctrine. The Russian Naval facility in Tartus ensures Russia a presence in the Mediterranean Sea, and it offers opportunities for Russia to assert itself in the Middle East. During the Cold War the Mediterranean held an important strategic position for both the United States and the USSR, and it remains important for the US and Russia now. Its importance is linked with what Dina Malysheva describes as, "the best possible toehold for the powers wishing to spread their influence in several directions – the Middle East, North Africa, and the Black Sea."⁴⁷ She further highlights the trade routes of the Mediterranean and its role as the main corridor for the energy sector.⁴⁸

Since he became president in 2000, Putin has aimed to restore Russia's past glory as a great power. In July 2015, during Navy Day festivities, Vladimir Putin announced the new Maritime Doctrine for the Federation of Russia. The changes in the doctrine were based on two reasons: "changes in the international situation and

⁴⁷ Malysheva, D.. *Russia in the Mediterranean: Geopolitics and Current Interests*. International affairs (Moscow: 2016-01-01), 62(1), 91.

⁴⁸ Ibid, Malysheva points out the following: About 5% of the world's total oil deliveries and 15% of natural gas are moved through the Suez Canal that connects the Mediterranean with the Red Sea; the Black Sea (Turkish) straits (Bosporus and Dardanelles), the only marine outlet from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, account for 6% of the world's oil trade. The energy potential of the Mediterranean is doubly important for Europe.

improvement in Russian Navy.”⁴⁹ The new doctrine divides naval policy into six regions of intervention: the Atlantic, Arctic, Antarctic, Caspian, Indian, and Pacific regions. The main objective of the new Maritime Doctrine is not just to restore the navy’s old position but be a serious challenger to the United States Navy. I hold this view based on the focus of the doctrine and its long-term goals. Russia is interested in not just to being a dominant power, but it aims to control the untapped resources of the Antarctic and Arctic. At the risk of taking a reductionist approach, I would suggest that Putin’s gamble on Bashar al-Assad’s Syria is based on his permanent presence in Mediterranean. Putin’s options in Ukraine were different, and it was easier to annex Crimea than to continue supporting Yanukovych. The option of annexation of Tartus is not possible, and so Putin supports a brutal regime that is aligned with Russia’s interests.

The Future of US- Russia Rivalry: Conflictual Coexistence

Throughout history there are many instances in which two states have extended their rivalry through a long period of time. Rivalries begin when one state perceives the other to be a threat, and it terminates when the threat is removed. International Relations scholars failed to predict the end of the Cold War, as they did not understand changes over time in the interactions between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁵⁰ As Deborah Larson notes, ‘the competition between the US and USSR eventually evolved into a more cooperative relationship as they develop greater trust and learned more effective strategies for achieving their objectives.’⁵¹ But, does that really explain the

⁴⁹ Novichkov, N. (2015). Analysis: Russia's new maritime doctrine. *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 52(39)

⁵⁰ Deborah Larson in William Thompson, *Great Power Rivalries*, (1999), 372

⁵¹ Ibid

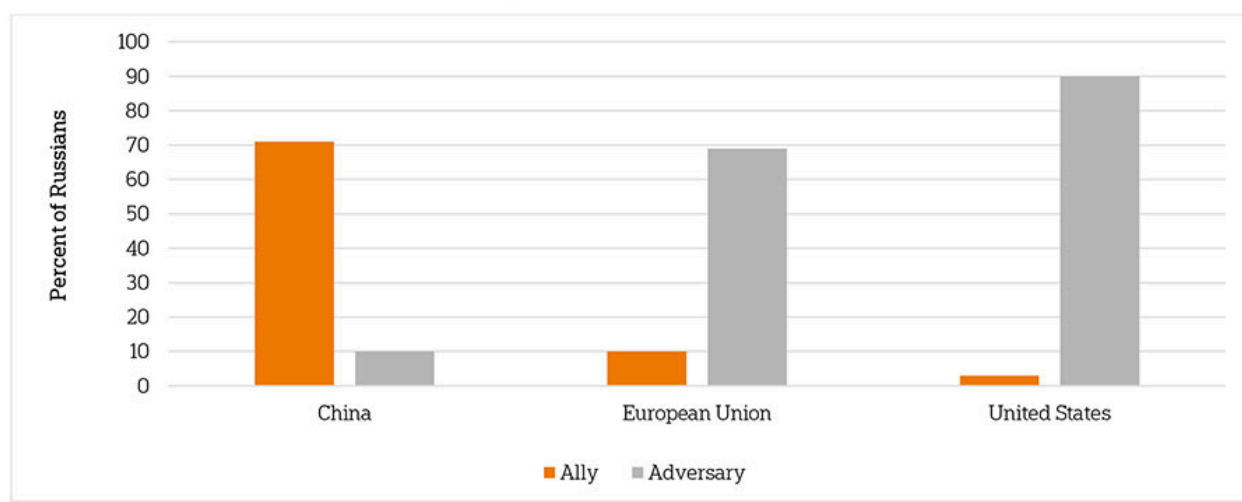
US-Soviet or US-Russian rivalry? I am not convinced that the two nuclear rivals have developed ‘greater trust’ since the end of WWII. However, they certainly developed effective strategies for achieving their objectives, and the essence of their rivalries is in their conflicting interests. When the interests of Russia align with the interests of the United States, and vice versa, they cooperate to achieve shared objectives. Regarding effective strategy, let’s take the recent example of Russia’s Crimea and Sevastopol annexation. Putin’s strategy was well planned and executed, with an initial denial to deflect the blame followed by a referendum for legitimacy. It gained what it wanted for a long time – *little Russia* –by calling a referendum and making it appear the will of the people, with 97% turnout and 83% voting to join the Russian Federation. It was indeed an effective strategy, for both domestic and international audience.

In the book *How Rivalries End*, Rasler et al. address the reemergence of the Russian-US rivalry and note that it has emerged “in more constrained hues than had been exhibited in their earlier manifestation.”⁵² I agree with the authors that the US-Russia rivalry is different from the earlier versions, but we cannot ignore the similarities. Russia continues to compete with the United States for parity, and the US continues to make the same mistakes. One of the best indicators of the rivalry’s continuation is the public perception. A comparison between an opinion poll from the 1990s, when Russia was struggling, to a more recent one in 2014, after the Crimean annexation, gives us a picture of how the Russian public has viewed the United States. A public opinion poll sponsored by the United States Information Agency, in December 1995, found that 61% of Russians viewed the US as “utilizing Russia’s current weakness

⁵² Rasler et.al., (2013), 5

to reduce it to a second-rate power and producer of raw materials.” An overwhelming 85% of Russians wanted to restore military parity with the United States.⁵³ In comparison, a poll conducted in 2014, 65% of Russians viewed the United States unfavorably, only 2% held President Obama favorably. Similarly, Russian public opinion was increasingly unfavorable towards the European Union. At the same time public opinion towards China improved, with a 58% in favor. A majority of Russians also believe that Russia in 2014 was stronger than what it was 10 years ago. Putin’s approval numbers after the Crimean annexation jumped up to over 80%.

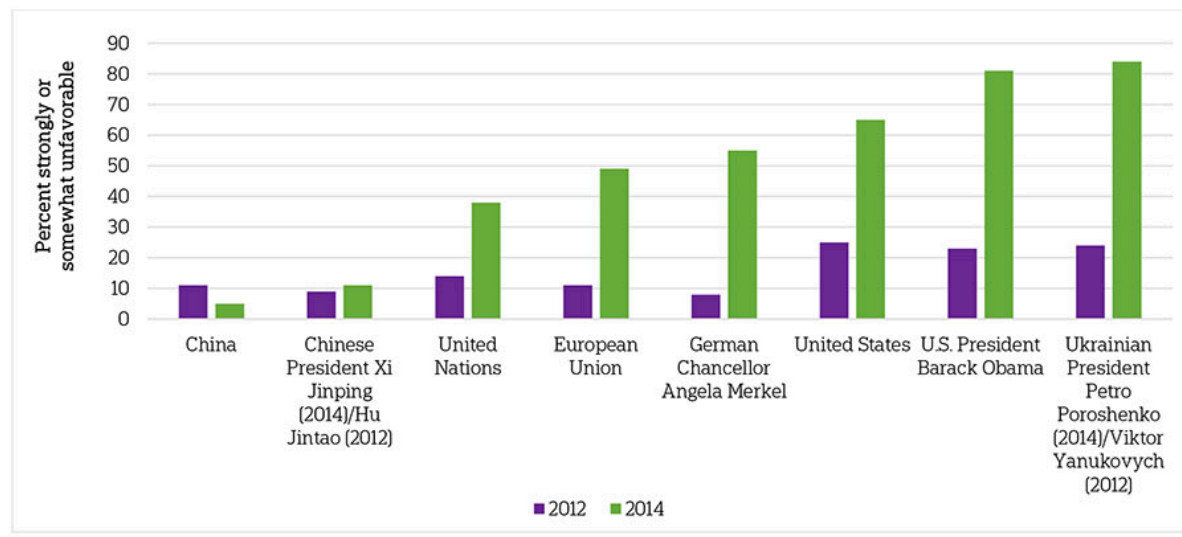
Percent of Russians who see China, the European Union, and United States as adversaries or allies in 2014



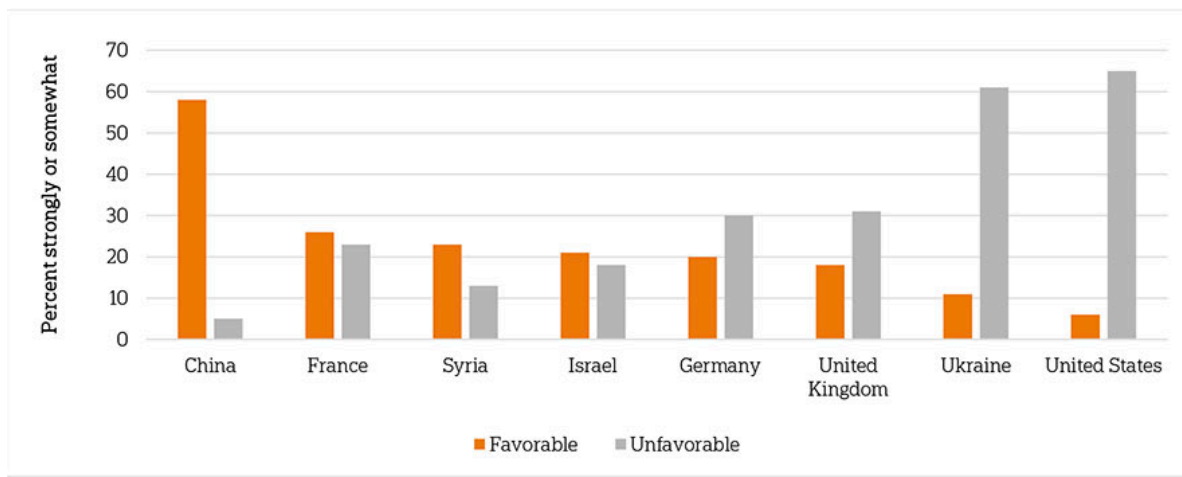
Source: 1 Question: Please tell if you have a favorable, unfavorable, or neither favorable nor unfavorable view of each of the following countries? The Associated Press – NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. (<http://www.apnorc.org/projects/Pages/HTML%20Reports/public-opinion-in-russia-russians-attitudes-on-foreign-affairs-and-social-issues0401-6253.aspx>)

⁵³ United States Information Agency (USIA) poll in Richard Dobson, *Is Russia Turning the Comer: Changing Russian Public Opinion 1991-1996*

Percent of Russians who rate each individual or institution as unfavorable in 2012 and 2014



Source: 2 Question: Please tell me if you have a favorable, unfavorable, are neither favorable nor unfavorable view of the following institutions? The Associated Press – NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. (<http://www.apnorc.org/projects/Pages/HTML%20Reports/public-opinion-in-russia-russians-attitudes-on-foreign-affairs-and-social-issues0401-6253.aspx>)



Source: Question: In general, do you think of the United States the European Union China is more of an ally or more of an adversary? The Associated Press – NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. (<http://www.apnorc.org/projects/Pages/HTML%20Reports/public-opinion-in-russia-russians-attitudes-on-foreign-affairs-and-social-issues0401-6253.aspx>)

Russian Meddling in the 2016 Elections:

Russia in 2016 uses the 2.0 version of the Active Measures Strategy, which resembles the propaganda and manipulation of the Stalin era. It refers to the “manipulative use of slogans, arguments, disinformation, and carefully selected true information, which the Soviets used to try to influence the attitude and actions of foreign publics and governments.”⁵⁴ The Soviet active measures strategy, which has merged with the twenty-first century social media technology, has given a new meaning to the words of Eduard Shevardnadze, who notes a strategy based on the “force of politics rather than the politics of force.” Starting from 2014, Russia has launched an online campaign using state sponsored outlets like RT, Sputnik and others to target US audiences, particularly disaffected groups, to create chaos.⁵⁵ Starting in 2015 the attention moved to the US presidential election to influence the outcome of the election by releasing embarrassing and damaging hacked material from the Democratic National Committee. There were three reasons for Putin’s aggressively asserting his influence on the US elections: first and foremost, Putin’s personal vendetta against Secretary Clinton and her husband Bill Clinton, based on their relations with Russia during their term as Secretary of State and President of the United States. Second, in response to President Obama’s calling Russia a regional power. Putin wanted to demonstrate the new Russia’s capabilities and strength. Finally, he wanted to have a pro-Russian candidate in the

⁵⁴ U.S. Information Agency (June 1992) Soviet Active Measures in the “Post Cold War” Era 1988-1991. U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations. Available at:

http://intellit.muskingum.edu/russia_folder/pcw_era/exec_sum.htm

⁵⁵ Clint Watts Testimony to the US Senate Intelligence Committee. On March 30th, 2017. <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/os-cwatts-033017.pdf>

White House that would keep the United States engaged in domestic affairs and not meddle in Russian neo-imperialistic designs abroad.

Conclusion: *Old Wine in a New Bottle*

The iron fist rule of an executive in Russia continues. This trend in the decision-making process has persisted from Tsarist Russia to the Soviet and now the new Russia under Vladimir Putin. That consistency has also manifested in its foreign policy – assertive in its influence and aggressive in achieving parity with the adversary. As we have seen in this chapter, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the period of the 1990 to 1999 was the window of opportunity for the United States to alter the course of the US-Russia rivalry. However, The United States was focused on securing the Soviet nuclear arsenal and snubbed requests of economic assistance. The Russian political elites and the foreign policy hawks continued to view the US as a threat. They believed that the Americans' intentions involved 'wanting to keep Russia on its knees and weak.'

The early post-Soviet era was marked by the Russian nationalists pushing for the old glory of Russia, in the face of economic and political instability. In the 1990s. US support for Yeltsin and his policies of economic liberalization was seen in Russia as against its interests. The opposition blacklisted the United States and led to the perception of Yeltsin as weak and pro-American. NATO expansion and a collapsing Russian economy provided an opportunity for Vladimir Putin to be elected president. Putin's foreign policy position has been consistent with the ambitions of the Soviet leaders, with a pragmatic approach. The US-Russia rivalry continues, and nuclear weapons prevent the two states from going to war with each other. But they have also

played a role in the persistence of the rivalry. Scholars who have marked the end of the Cold War as the termination point of the rivalry have missed the nuclear capability of Russia and have misinterpreted the 1990s. The adversarial peace theory holds that the relationship between the two has shifted from conflictual coexistence to strategic cooperation depending on the interests, threats and constraints faced by a state. The future of this rivalry under Putin and Trump remains to be seen. However, Donald Trump was the candidate that Russia backed and helped during the 2016 election campaign. So Putin's goal was to keep the US involved in chaotic domestic politics, and the lack of US leadership on the world stage provides Russia with the opportunity to find its old glory and power position. Vladimir Putin is motivated by the same mindset as Stalin and his successor. This is a mindset, as Zubok has explained, in which "leaders used all available method of power politics and diplomacy to promote state interests in a competitive world."⁵⁶

The US-USSR / US-Russia rivalry has been shaped by a few factors: the person in office, external factors, and domestic constraints have all played a role in the trajectory of this rivalry. Had it not been due to the absolute devastation of nuclear weapons, the two rivals would probably have solved the rivalry in a confrontational contest. However, the option of war was replaced when both the states developed thermonuclear bombs and second-strike capability, and it was at that point the strategic rivalry between the two turned to an adversarial peace relationship.

⁵⁶ Zubok, (2005), xxiv.

Chapter 7

Vanity Fair: India – Pakistan Rivalry

“We may do a great deal of injury to Pakistan and might defeat it in war. But both countries will in effect be ruined if that extreme-step had to be taken”¹

Jawaharlal Nehru.

“The destruction caused by the first world war pales into insignificance as compared to the devastation and havoc resulting from the last world war and now with the discovery of the Atom Bomb, one shudders to think of the pattern of future wars...

Pakistan must be prepared for all eventualities and dangers. The weak and the defenseless...invite aggression from others... You [Pakistan] would have to make up for the smallness of its size by your courage and selfless devotion to duty, for it is not life that matters but the courage, fortitude and determination you bring to it.”

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, January, 23, 1948

Introduction

The partition of British India on August 14, 1947 gave birth to a rivalry that tore the social, political and cultural fabric of the sub-continent. The India-Pakistan rivalry is one of the longest and most enduring rivalries in South Asia. It is marked by multiple wars and repeated military crises, along with an arms race that has nuclearized South Asia. Before I address the impact of nuclear weapons on the Indo-Pakistan rivalry, I will first give a brief history of the two states starting from 1947. Unlike the US-USSR/Russia rivalry, where the data on pre-nuclear acquisition cooperation is limited, the Indo-Pakistan rivalry is an ideal case where the conflict and cooperation levels can be traced before and after nuclear acquisition. As per the adversarial peace definition,

¹ Nehru, Jawaharlal. “Letters for a Nation: From Jawaharlal Nehru to His Chief Ministers 1947-1963.”

the Indo-Pak rivalry involves intense spatial differences² in Kashmir and the Siachin glacier and positional differences in Afghanistan. These have intensified the mutual perception of threat and distrust, coupled with an intensive propaganda warfare by both sides that has now taken the shape of cyber-attacks.

In the case of the India-Pakistan rivalry, we also must account for the role of the United States and USSR/Russia during the Cold War, and China's engagement starting from 1962 after the Sino-Indian War. These great powers have played a role in determining the trajectory of this rivalry. On the regional level, we cannot ignore the role of Iran, Saudi Arabia and other Muslim states that funded Pakistan's nuclear program and further fueled the Indo-Pakistan rivalry. However, despite the long-standing hostilities and elevated threat perceptions on both sides, large scale war has not broken out between the two states, and that is largely attributed to the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons.

This case study begins with the history of the rivalry and then focuses on the role of the US, USSR, and China in the region and how it shaped this rivalry. The Indo-Pak rivalry began due to conflicting intrinsic interests; and later the Cold War further fueled the hostilities, when sometimes advertently and other times inadvertently the great powers would back one over the other. The existing literature on India-Pakistan rivalry has paid little attention to the role of US and Chinese military aid to Pakistan and of the American and Soviet arms assistance to India; this study addresses its impact on the continuation of the rivalry. Hence, the involvement of great powers, unresolved issues,

² Spatial conflicts arise from territorial disputes, and positional issues are based on influence and status.

domestic politics, and individuals played a crucial role in perpetuating this adversarial relationship. However, nuclear weapons have had a significant impact on the rivalry. Nuclear weapons cemented the adversarial peace relationship by intensifying the mutual vulnerability dilemma, marked with heightened threat perception and distrust on both sides. Nuclear weapons ended the possibility of war between the two rivals. Robert Oppenheimer's two scorpions analogy is apt and very fitting for the Indo-Pak case, as he noted, "we may be likened to two scorpions in a bottle, each capable of killing the other, but only at the risk of his own life." The issue of Kashmir or Siachin remains unresolved. Both India and Pakistan act as revisionist states. Pakistan's revisionism is spatial in nature and is unsatisfied with the status quo in Kashmir. India's revisionism is positional (being linked with Chinese influence in South Asia and the region at large) and is unsatisfied with playing second best to China in its regional hegemony ambitions.

Postpartum Anxieties:

The independence of Pakistan and India were marked by communal riots on both sides of the border. The jubilant celebration that was to mark the end of the 200 yearlong British rule turned in to a somber mood. To understand the behavior of any state, it is imperative to know the history of that state and how it was created or gained independence. For the sake of being parsimonious, international relations and security studies have paid very little attention to the history and formation of states and how they have shaped their foreign policies. Thus, analyzing India-Pakistan relations through the lens of history can help us understand and predict their future behavior and at the same time make sense of why each of them have behaved the way they did. The question is: what is the starting point of the rivalry? We can argue that the rivalry

existed before the states were even formed, each competing side perceived the other to be a threat. British India was polarized insofar as the Congress and Muslim League could not agree on any agenda. The state was on the verge of a civil war, and violence erupted before the partition of India. As one British General Sir Frank Messervy observed, “having served for 34 years... I would never have believed that agitation could have aroused the normally chivalrous and decent Punjabi ...to such frenzied savagery as was widely prevalent.”³ Each side held deep animosity and hostilities towards the other, and after the partition of India it manifested in the form of violence when caravans and trains were attacked on both sides. As one of English language news correspondent reported,

“There is another sight I am not likely to forget, a five mile long caravan of 20,000 Muslim refugees crawling at a snail’s pace into Pakistan over the Sutlej Bridge, with bullock carts piled high with pitiful chattels, cattle being driven alongside, women with babies in their arms and wretched little tin trunks on their heads. 20,000 men, women and children trekking into the promised land—not because it is the promised land, but because bands of Hindus and Sikhs in Faridkot [Princely] State and the interior of Ferozepur district had hacked hundreds of Muslims to death and made life impossible for the rest.”⁴

The massive exodus of people moving in both direction was completed within a year, and it is estimated that around 7.226 million Muslims migrated from India to East and West Pakistan, and about 7.249 million Hindus and Sikhs moved from Pakistan to India.⁵ To resettle 7 million people was a daunting challenge for any state, but as Dilip

³ Dilip Hiro. *The Longest August: The Unflinching Rivalry Between India and Pakistan*. (New York : Nation Books, 2015), 233.

⁴ Excerpt from *Swatantra* in Dilip Hiro’s. *The Longest August: The Unflinching Rivalry Between India and Pakistan*. 272.

⁵ Ibid, based on the 1951 Government of India census.

Hero noted, “these challenges...paled before the steep hurdles Jinnah and his government had to surmount at the birth of Pakistan.”⁶

Pakistan from its inception faced multitudes of crises, from the 7 million refugees to the fact that it was divided into two regions separated by India in between them. Adding to this was the position of some Congress party leaders who passionately believed that “the division is only of the map of the country and not in the hearts of the people, and [surely] it is going to be a short-lived partition.”⁷ The British and the Congress party could not see the viability of Pakistan and believed the partition to have been a short-term solution to prevent a civil war in India. Thus, Pakistan’s initial existential insecurities were rooted in the anti-Pakistan position of Congress leaders and other powerful actors in the region. One of the best examples of other actors questioning the viability of Pakistan resides in China’s position towards the newly formed states. China was the first country to appoint an envoy to India with the rank of an ambassador and exchange diplomatic representatives. However, China hesitated in appointing an ambassador to Pakistan and played with the idea that one ambassador should be appointed for both dominions.⁸ It was not until a year later in August 1948, on the insistence of the government of Pakistan, that the Chinese government agreed to establish separate diplomatic posts for the two states and allowed Pakistan to open an

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ In Maulana Abul Kalam Azad’s autobiography he noted, Lord Pathick Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps statements that they could not see how a state like Pakistan could be viably and stable. See, *India Wins Freedom*, 150

⁸ National Documentation Centre, Islamabad. Accession No. 7517, Diplomatic Representation in China, June 22, 1948-49. Document title: Reuters India Service, China plans Exchange of Envoys With Pakistan, Nanking, August 2, 1947.

embassy in Nanking and a consulate general in Kashgar, the part of China that is linked to Pakistan by trade and border.⁹

Besides the insecurities on the continuation of the state, at independence the government of Pakistan faced a shortage of funds and supplies on the institutional level. Although Pakistan did inherit a major share of the cash crops (cotton and jute), on the industrial front, it practically had to start from the beginning. Pakistan's share was around 18.75 percent of the cash balance of India and at the time of independence the treasury had around 200 million rupees.¹⁰ The supplies that were dispatched from India via train were looted on its route from Delhi. Jinnah had to use his personal connections to keep the state solvent, but his appeal to the British commonwealth was dismissed. In one of his missives to British Prime Minister Attlee, Jinnah complained, "every effort is being made to put difficulties in our way by our enemies to paralyze or cripple our state and bring forth its collapse. It is amazing that top-most Hindu leaders repeatedly say that Pakistan will have to submit to the union of India. Pakistan will never surrender."

The Indo-Pakistan's strained relationship kept the two states from improving trade. Before the partition the economy in the subcontinent was interdependent in nature, in the sense that Pakistan provided raw material (cotton and jute) for industry in India. After partition, the two states pursued policies of economic autarky, and their rivalry reduced trade and, in turn, decreased economic interdependence. Pakistan's exports to

⁹ National Documentation Centre, Islamabad. Accession No. 7517, Diplomatic Representation in China, June 22, 1948-49 Memo. No. 2317. From Pakistan to Nanking on the 20th of June, 1948.

¹⁰ Economist Intelligence Unit: Economic Review of Pakistan, No.1, April 1952

India in 1948-49 accounted for 53.4 percent, and it dropped to 4.7 percent in 1951.¹¹

This sharp drop was also the result of poor monetary policy and strategy by the government of Pakistan. The two states signed a bilateral trade agreement in 1951 with the aim of improving trade relations. However, economic relations remained competitive, and the two sides could not reach an agreement on the export of jute from Pakistan and coal from India. Both states imposed a discriminating license fee on their respective exports on each other. The Economist Intelligence Unit's India review noted that "trade relations between the two countries remain dangerously poised falling just short of open hostilities – in much the same way as do their political relations."¹²

Political relations between the two remained strained, and on the Indian government's side Dilip Hero noted that some members of Nehru's government "were determined to strangle the nascent Muslim homeland at birth." However, Nehru understood the complexity of ties between the two states, the close border, and the historical and cultural similarities. For Nehru, war was to be avoided because both sides were to lose, as he said, "we may do a great deal of injury to Pakistan and might defeat it in war. But both countries will in effect be ruined if that extreme-step had to be taken." Nehru's perspective was based on conventional war, but his viewpoint in today's nuclear South Asia is pertinent, as it would be the extreme step that would devastate both states.

¹¹ Ibid, p.11

¹² Economist Intelligence Unit: Economic Review of India, No.3, October, 1952 p.8

The Intractable Issue of Kashmir: *Conflictual Coexistence*

In July 1947 Jinnah held a press conference and hoped that the “relations between Pakistan and India would be friendly and cordial.” Since the partition of India, relations between the two neighbors have never been “friendly or cordial.” The division of funds and of princely states proved to be critical issues that further exacerbated the relations. At the time of partition India had around five-hundred and sixty-five princely states under different rulers. Lord Mountbatten had advised them to accede either to Pakistan or India, and the choice was to be determined on geographical position, as well as the predominance of their population. This accession choice had to be made before the final transfer of power in August 1947, and all but three states – Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagadh had delayed their decision.¹³ Junagadh and Hyderabad acceded to Pakistan, and though both were surrounded by India, they were forcefully taken as a part of it. Kashmir on the other hand was ruled by a Hindu Maharaja with a predominantly Muslim population and was also the source of the three rivers that provided water to West Pakistan. The issue of Kashmir turned out to be one of the early disputes between the two states and remains unresolved after seventy years of independence. The Kashmir dispute is of intrinsic value for both states, and has remained the *raison d`etre* for the continuation of the Indo-Pak rivalry. For Pakistan, (Bolitho 1964) the K in its name is for Kashmir, and for India, it is a matter of principle. If it gives up Kashmir it opens the door for other religious and ethnic groups to ask for independence.

¹³ Hector Bolitho, *Jinnah the Creator of Pakistan*, (University of California, 1964), 206.

Going back to the very beginning, the issue of Kashmir emerged when the princely states were given the option to join either of the two dominions. The Muslim majority states were expected to accede to Pakistan, and the Hindu majority were to join India. However, the choice was also dependent upon the geographical contiguity. The princely state of Jammu and Kashmir was ruled by a Hindu maharaja with a Muslim majority. After the partition of India, Maharaja Hari Singh had signed a standstill agreement with Pakistan that allowed supplies and extended the existing arrangements until the “pending settlement of details and formal execution of fresh arrangements.”¹⁴ The Maharaja delayed the accession decision, and by the end of September the Muslim peasants in the southern part of Kashmir revolted. By mid-October Pakistan stopped all shipments of petrol and supplies to Kashmir.¹⁵ Before any formal arrangements were made, a group of tribal rebels, around 5000 armed Pashtuns, crossed the border into the Western part of the state to aid the Muslims of Kashmir against the Hindu Maharaja. Historian Stanley Wolpert notes that as far as Pakistan was concerned, the invasion of Kashmir would be called “a purely volunteer action undertaken spontaneously by irate tribals rushing to aid of oppressed Muslim brothers.”¹⁶ However, the trucks and supplies demonstrated the involvement of Pakistani and British officers hoping to integrate Kashmir into Pakistan.¹⁷ In his panic the Maharaja signed the accession papers with India and requested military assistance from New Delhi. Thus, in

¹⁴ Documents of the Foreign Relations of Pakistan: The Kashmir Question. Edited by K. Sarwar Hasan. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. 1966, p 43.

¹⁵ Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 348.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

the early hours of October 27th 1947 Indian troops landed in Srinagar to push back the tribals that infiltrated from Pakistan.

When Jinnah found out about the Indian troops in Srinagar, he ordered General Douglas Gracey who was serving as the acting commander-in-chief “to move two brigades of the Pak army into Kashmir...one from Rawalpindi and another from Sialkot. The Sialkot army was to march to Jammu, take the city and make the Maharaja a prisoner. The Rawalpindi column was to advance to Srinagar and capture the city.”¹⁸ Wolpert notes that General Gracey refused to accept Jinnah’s orders and issued orders to stand down that meant the withdrawal of all British officers from the Pakistan army.¹⁹ The question is: had General Gracey carried out Jinnah’s orders on the eve of October 27th 1947 and had the army succeeded in capturing the cities, would there then be a rivalry between India and Pakistan, or an enduring rivalry that unfolded as the per the events since 1947? We will never know the answers to these questions, but we do know the events that followed the Kashmir invasion and the multiple wars and crises that ensued between the two states. We also know that the rivalry nuclearized after fifty years and turned into an adversarial yet peaceful relationship due to nuclear weapons in the mix. We must also not negate the importance of Kashmir for India’s first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, as he once said to a British army officer, “in the same way that Calais was written on Mary’s heart, Kashmir is written on mine.”²⁰ Nehru belonged to the Hindu pundit population of Kashmir, and the loss of Kashmir to Pakistan was a personal loss to him. Hence his decision to send troops after the Maharaja fled Kashmir

¹⁸ Ibid, 350.

¹⁹ Ibid, 350-351.

²⁰ Bolitho, (1964), 206.

was based not only on upholding the legality of the accession document but also on preserving a part of his identity and his family heritage and keeping it a part of India. As Henry Kissinger said, “History ...is made by men who cannot always distinguish their emotions from their analysis.”

By December 1947, a formal complaint to the UN Security Council was filed by India, “calling upon Pakistan to put an end immediately to all assistance it was providing to the tribal invaders of Kashmir...or the Government of India may be compelled in self-defense, to enter Pakistani territory, in order to take military action against the invaders.” Pakistan responded by denying the Indian government’s claim and filed a counter-complaint at the UN Security Council against India by accusing India not only of aggression not only in Kashmir but of carrying out “an extensive campaign of genocide directed against the Muslim population by the non-Muslim rulers, people, officials, police and armed forces of the States...large number of Muslims have been ruthlessly massacred... and over five million... driven from their homes.” The United Nations formed a commission to investigate the charges on both sides. On August 13th 1948, the UN passed a resolution that called on both sides to reduce aggression in Kashmir and hold an impartial plebiscite to determine the destiny of the people of Kashmir. The first Indo-Pak war ended on January 1st 1949, after the UN-sponsored ceasefire was accepted, Pakistan came to control one –third of Kashmir and India got the remaining two-third. The UN ceasefire agreement was based on three sequential parts: the withdrawal of all Pakistani troops from Kashmir; the withdrawal of Indian troops, except for a limited number to maintain law and order; and finally the holding of a plebiscite.

Tryst with Destiny or Splintered Dreams: Crises, Conflicts & Wars

On August 15th 1947, India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru delivered a stirring speech. As he said, "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge...At the stroke of midnight hour... India will awake to life and freedom."²¹ The tryst with destiny that Nehru romanticized in his speech resulted in a splintered sub-continent and a region that since independence has seen wars in 1947, 1965, 1971, and a limited war in 1998 under the nuclear umbrella. The issue of Kashmir remains the unresolved part of the partition that haunts both sides of the border even after seventy years of their birth. The question is: had the British decided the fate of the Kashmiri's at partition, would the rivalry between India and Pakistan persisted? In the start of this chapter, I argued that the rivalry and adversarial relationship existed before India was split. The perception on both sides was complicated, and each considered the other to be aggressive and hostile. In the case of India, it achieved political stability, and Prime Minister Nehru made sure that strong democratic institutions took root. By contrast, Pakistan was dealt a blow when Jinnah died right after the first anniversary of independence, and for four decades it was under military rule.

Economic anxieties remained on both sides of the border and was the expected part of the process after independence. However, Pakistan's economic woes stretched further and by summer 1954 it had asked the United States for large scale financial assistance

²¹ Jawaharlal Nehru, Speech at midnight on August 15th 1947.

(besides military and food aid) to maintain necessary economic activity.²² The US aid of \$105 million was secured by October 1954, but that did not resolve the political crisis and security-related issues that Pakistan faced. In the same month the Governor General proclaimed a state of emergency, and a new prime minister was sworn in. This trend continued, and over seventy years after its birth Pakistan has yet to have a prime minister complete his or her term in office. On India's side it was noted that three aspects of the economy gave it cause for concern: agriculture, foreign payments, and employment. Before independence, Pakistan was the bread basket for British India, and India was the industrial engine of the country – one was to provide raw materials and the other to produce and process it. India achieved political stability under Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership and Pakistan failed to attain to similar success.

Crises, Conflicts, Wars and Cooperation Before Nuclearization:

Conflicts, crises and wars have characterized the relationship between India and Pakistan since the creation of the two states in 1947. Communal violence at the time of independence and the deficit of trust that existed before partition created an adversarial narrative on both sides from the very beginning, and it remains high and consistent even today. Pakistan and India have fought four wars (1947-48, 1965, 1971 and 1999) and multiple crises and conflicts, and the public perception of each other has remained consistently negative, with mutual suspicions and imputations on both sides. Initially, the rivalry between the two states was based on territorial and resources based issues: the Kashmir dispute and the Indus water basin. The Indus water basin issue was

²² Economist intelligence Unit Oct. 1954, p 1- 3.

resolved, and the *Indus Agreement* was signed in 1960 by President Ayub and Prime Minister Nehru on September 19th, 1960.²³ The Kashmir issue remains unresolved after seventy years of independence. Violence on the subcontinent has oscillated, but adversarial relations have been a permanent feature of the subcontinent.

Indo-Pakistan Rivalry in the 1960's: Conflictual Coexistence

In every case study, when we trace the history of interstate relationships, we see the effects of different leaders, domestic politics and regional or system factors that have played a role in guiding the trajectory of the rivalry. In the case of India and Pakistan, there have been moments when the rivalry could have been terminated, yet it persisted. Feldman notes that Ayub Khan had hoped for 'the possibility of a rapprochement between the two states, but discovered that the prospects were slender and politically undesirable.'²⁴ The Indo-China war of 1962 resulted in the US and UK providing arms and supplies to India; for Pakistan this was a setback as it had hoped for a weaker India after the war with China. The Ayub administration was also disappointed on the Western front as India had remained non-aligned and Pakistan had aligned with the West, and the USSR continued to side with India on the Kashmir issue at the United Nations by employing its veto power at the Security Council.

The Indo-Pakistan relations during the 1960's remained consistently adversarial and they oscillated between large scale war and crises. The sense of hostility remained high on both sides, but after the Sino-India war in 1962, the provisions of arms by the

²³ Economist Intelligence Unit, p. 1 Nov. 8th 1960 Country Report – Pakistan.

²⁴ Ibid, p126

United States and the United Kingdom to India further aggravated the relationship between the two neighbors. Pakistan perceived the arms assistance by Western powers to India as a threat to its interest in Kashmir.²⁵ The letters by President Ayub Khan to the American President demonstrated the insecurities on Pakistan's side and the continuous push for any assurance on the Kashmir issue.

Rann of Kutch Crisis: 1965

By April 1965, the two states were confronted a new crisis in a desolate area known as the Rann of Kutch. The border in this area was based on an agreement made many years before partition.²⁶ The Rann of Kutch crisis started in January 1965 as the Indian side noticed that the Pakistani police were patrolling below the Indian claim line. A telegram from New Delhi on February 19th, 1965 indicated that the Indian Foreign Secretary M. J. Desai had informed the US embassy about the new crisis and noted "a number of Pak police have taken possession of old fort several miles within established indo-Pak border." Another telegram from the US embassy in Rawalpindi on April 15th 1965 noted that President Ayub rejected the Indian claim and assured the Americans

²⁵ On August 15th 1962, Prime Minister Nehru issued a statement that India did not war to fight Pakistan. President Ayub in his reply questioned the intentions of India and said, the facts belie Nehru's statement as India was spending around 375 crore rupees on its defense budget.

²⁶ Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. "South Asia (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXV)." p.1085

that Pakistani soldiers had not gone beyond and did not intend to go beyond their traditional patrol routes in the disputed area.”²⁷

By mid-April both sides blamed the other for employing armor, and casualties were reported on both sides. The crisis ended when India and Pakistan signed a cease-fire agreement on June 30th 1965. The agreement was facilitated by the United Kingdom and called for troop withdrawal on both sides and the dispute to be settled based on binding arbitration by International Court of Justice (ICJ). The tribunal reached its decision in February 1968 and gave 10 percent of the disputed territory to Pakistan that included the area of the fighting.²⁸ The government of India reluctantly accepted the decision as it claimed sovereignty over the entire Rann of Kutch. Pakistan benefited from the ICJ decision as it was “awarded the larger portion of the usable land... and much of it has been the principal bone of contention between the two countries in the 1965 conflict.”²⁹

In the Rann of Kutch crisis Pakistan undoubtedly aimed to calculate India’s response, and Russell Brines` agrees that “Pakistan’s strategy was to use a low-cost conflict to assess India’s resolve and to a certain degree her capabilities.”³⁰ Sumit Ganguly termed the Rann of Kutch crisis between the two rivals as a “limited probe

²⁷ “Telegram 1971 from Karachi, April 18; *ibid.*, POL 32–1 INDIA–PAK” Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. “South Asia (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXV).” p.1063

²⁸ Untawale, Mukund G. “The Kutch-Sind Dispute: A Case Study in International Arbitration.” *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 4, 1974, pp. 818–839.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Russell Brines, *The Indo-Pakistani Conflict*, (London: Pall Mall Press, 1968), 288.

operation.”³¹ The Rann of Kutch episode emboldened Pakistan to take a more aggressive stance on Kashmir and it thus initiated the war of 1965 by sending armed guerrillas to India- controlled Kashmir. This is evident in the communications between the key decision makers in Pakistan. In a letter to Ayub Khan after Kutch, Bhutto pushed for “a bold and courageous” stance on Kashmir and argued that “India is not in the position to risk a long unlimited war with Pakistan,” while particularly keeping in mind Pakistan’s “relative superiority of the military forces” in terms of its equipment.³² Pakistan’s military equipment had put pressure on the United States after the Kutch incident and further propelled the relationship to such a low point that the Indian Prime Minister Shastri postponed his trip to the US and visit to Moscow.³³ The United States was concerned about the Indo-Soviet ties and at the same time was concerned about putting too much pressure on Pakistan as well. In a memorandum in August 1965, the issue of Kashmir was discussed along with who was responsible for the mess in South Asia. UN Secretary General U Thant wanted to report blaming the Pakistani for starting the crisis, but he withheld his position after Pakistan threatened to withdraw from the UN if he did.³⁴ The United States by September 1965 was also concerned about a clandestine Sino-Pakistani military arrangement.

³¹ Sumit Ganguly, *The Orgins of War in South Asia*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1986), 83.

³² Shivaji Ganguly, *U.S. Policy Towards South Asia*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1990), p. 122.

³³ Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. Memorandum From the Executive Secretary of the Department of State to the President’s Special Assistant for National Security Affairs. “South Asia (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXV).” P. 768

³⁴ Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. Memorandum from Robert Komer of the National Security Council Staff to President

The 1965 War:

The Rann of Kutch was followed by the War of 1965 between India and Pakistan. The War of 1965 was initiated by Pakistan to contain India's military rise and aimed to further internationalize the Kashmir dispute.³⁵ After the Kutch conflict, in August 1965 around 7000 armed and trained guerrillas entered Kashmir to target Indian military installations and incite a rebellion in Kashmir.³⁶ After failing to stir a revolt or "war of liberation," Pakistan escalated the level of aggression in Kashmir "by throwing in regulars, because they can't cope with Indian retaliation across the cease-fire line."³⁷

The origins of this war can be traced back to both domestic and external factors involving the unresolved issue of Kashmir. External factors are directly linked to the 1962 Indo-China War and the Western arms assistance to India. The Indo-China war emboldened Pakistan to attempt to solve the Kashmir issue. The US arms supply to India after the 1962 war had stimulated insecurities within Pakistan, and Rawalpindi viewed this step as strengthening India's military capabilities. Thus, in Pakistan's calculations a stronger India would not negotiate on Kashmir. During the Indo-China war of 1962, Pakistan aligned with China. The question is: had Pakistan sided with India, would that have been the turning point for the rivalry? Instead, Pakistan's

Johnson. August 28, 1965 "South Asia (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXV)." P. 1017

³⁵ P. R. Chari, Iqbal Cheema, and Stephan Cohen, *Four Crises and a Peace Process*. (Washington DC : Brookings Institution, 2007), 16

³⁶ General K.M. Arif, *Khaki Shadows: Pakistan, 1947–1997* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2004), 47–49

³⁷ Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. Memorandum From Komer to President Johnson Aug. 31, 1965. "South Asia (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXV)." P1020

decision to side with China set its relationship with China on the course of an all-weather friendship, and its rivalry with India on a perpetual adversarial trajectory.

I argue that 1962 was a missed opportunity for Pakistan in improving its relationship with India and by pushing for resolving the Kashmir issue under a bilateral framework. Would India have negotiated with Pakistan at that time? Selig Harrison points to the lost opportunity which is not likely to recur, “when India showed a fleeting awareness of its stake in friendship with Pakistan following the Chinese border incursions ... however, Pakistan had started on its intensified diplomacy in Peking.”³⁸ We do not know the answer for that, but Nehru’s speech in 1963 certainly highlighted the damage it did to the relationship. As he said, “in the history of the world you will find very few examples of such deceit and duplicity as Pakistan has shown in siding with China in the dispute between India and China...Pakistan is mistaken if it thinks that it can intimidate us because we are facing this threat from China.”³⁹ Pakistan’s calculation paid off in the form of Chinese unconditional support for its position on Kashmir, and further agitated India. Before large-scale war in 1965, President Ayub visited China for an eight-day state visit, and during it the emphasis was on the peaceful aspirations of China in its friendship with Pakistan. A crucial accomplishment of the trip was Peking’s support for a plebiscite in Kashmir. In a joint communiqué, the Chinese Foreign Minister Marshal Che’en Yi, “made the first of several equivocal statements implying

³⁸ Harrison, Selig S. “Troubled India and Her Neighbors.” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 43, no. 2, 1965, pp. 321.

³⁹ Shivaji Ganguly, (1990), 117.

Chinese military support for Pakistan without pledging it. The evident purpose was to intimidate India.”⁴⁰

For domestic factors, Sumit Ganguly notes that certain “changes in India and Pakistan also contributed towards the proclivity to resort to war.”⁴¹ In India, there was the sudden death of Nehru, along with the possibility of other separatist movements. In Pakistan, President Ayub faced pressure from within after the first elections held and Kashmir was the most important issue of that time. Since the Indo-Chinese war of 1962, domestic pressure was increasing on President Ayub to pursue a more hardline approach on Kashmir, especially after India’s weakened position after the war. To improve his position domestically President Ayub had to adopt a more aggressive position and posture towards India and particularly on Kashmir. As Wayne Wilcox argued, that Ayub was “weakened in the elections in East Pakistan and under pressure from Bhutto and the militants, Ayub needed real success to restore the confidence of his government.”⁴² Furthermore Wilcox noted that President Ayub’s base was in West Pakistan, and the issue of Kashmir was an “emotional issue” for the western wing.⁴³

Starting in 1963, “the Indian government adopted certain policy measures to fully integrate Kashmir, the Home Minister and Prime Minister Nehru announced that Kashmir’s special status has gradually eroded and it is now a fully integrated part of

⁴⁰ Russell Brines (1968), 252.

⁴¹ Sumit Ganguly, (1986), 79.

⁴² Wayne Wilcox, *India, Pakistan and the Rise of China* (New York: Walker and Co., 1964), 167.

⁴³ Ibid.

India.”⁴⁴ These policy directives further aggravated relations between the two states, and Pakistan raised the issue of the violation of the UN Security Council resolutions. India responded that the UN resolution was based on the condition of Pakistan withdrawing fully from Kashmir and that this condition had not been met. Thus India was not bound by the 1948-49 UN resolutions.⁴⁵ This was also the period when PM Nehru suddenly died and with his death any hope of rapprochement between the two countries disappeared as well. Selig Harrison argued that, “the Kashmir settlement envisaged by Nehru presupposed a larger Indo-Pakistan accommodation based on confederal relations between the two countries. This was rejected by Ayub out of fear that even a limited confederation with adequate safeguards would imply separate status for east Pakistan.”⁴⁶ Both the newly independent states were concerned about separatist movements.

The war ended on 23rd September 1965, after a military standstill and intense pressure from the international community. In the aftermath of the war both states rushed to expand and maintain their territorial holdings and military positions.⁴⁷ Russell Brines notes that “Pakistan was compelled by the military situation to accept India’s insistence upon restoring the status quo ante, with only minimum face-saving provisions in the UN resolution for some future consideration of the problems for which the country had embarked on war. ...Pakistan had lost the conflict.”⁴⁸ The 1961 war could not achieve what president Ayub had hoped to archive, a final solution on

⁴⁴ Russell Brines, (1968), 236.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Harrison, Selig S. (1965), 321-22.

⁴⁷ Russell Brines, (1968), 400.

⁴⁸ Ibid, 375.

Kashmir. Pakistan instead realized that India would respond with full force when it came to Kashmir. As one Pakistani scholar noted,

“Operation Gibraltar was not as successful as its architects had hoped...over-optimism and lack of coordination prevented total success. Planning had been based on erroneous assumptions and wishful thinking inspired by the poor performance of the Indian army against China and in the Rann of Kutch. Strategic information was restricted to a handful of people; even the chief of the air force and the information secretary knew nothing about the plans. The campaign was mounted at a wrong time and under wrong circumstances and produced no political settlement. It left the military-minded within Pakistan bitter and ready for another try in the future.”⁴⁹

The Soviets played a crucial role in the cease-fire and called for the Tashkent conference in January 1966 - to settle the outstanding disputes between India and Pakistan. Both sides had publically maintained rigid positions. From the beginning of the Indo-Pakistan conflict, the Soviets adopted a policy of neutrality. Premier Kosygin told Shastri to “avoid any actions that would lead to major conflict with Pakistan.”⁵⁰ During the 1965 war, the Soviets avoided taking sides and continuously pushed for a resolution on Kashmir. This was a drastic change from the 1955 Soviet position, where Nikita Khrushchev stated, “Kashmir is an integral part of India.”⁵¹ The Russian’s carefully measured their steps by publically calling for peace, avoiding the UN veto and refusing to join the Americans in the arms embargo. The cautious strategic line adopted by Moscow was to prevent an adverse reaction from India and gain Pakistan’s confidence.

⁴⁹ Mushtaq-ur-Rahman, *Divided Kashmir: Old Problems, New Opportunities for India, Pakistan, and the Kashmiri People*. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers. 1995)

⁵⁰ Brines, (1968), 363

⁵¹ A.Z. Hilali, *US-Pakistan Relationship* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 38.

At the Tashkent Conference, India maintained the position that Kashmir was not to be discussed at all but later softened up. Shastri initially insisted on not negotiating on Kashmir. However, in the end the Indian Prime Minister made concessions both by giving up outposts like the *Haji Pir* and *Tithwal* positions and abandoning the demand that Pakistan should acknowledge its responsibility for being the aggressive party and sending infiltrators to Kashmir.⁵² Shastri also agreed to withdraw Indian troops from Azad Kashmir, and in return Pakistan agreed to withdraw from territory it held on the Indian side. Ayub on the other hand pushed for a political settlement of Kashmir. Brines notes that, “India’s hope from the meeting was to clean up the aftermath of the war, by agreeing on matter as withdrawal of forces, without touching the central problem. Pakistan’s purpose was the unchanged desire to keep the Kashmir question alive.” In the end the two sides agreed and the Tashkent Declaration said,

“that both sides will exert all efforts to create good neighbourly relations between Indian and Pakistan in accordance with the United Nations Charter. They reaffirmed their obligation under the Charter not to have recourse to force and to settle their disputes through peaceful means. They considered that the interest of peace in their region and particularly in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent and, indeed, the interests of the peoples of India and Pakistan were not served by the continuance of tensions between the two countries. It was against this background that Jammu and Kashmir was discussed, and each of the sides set forth its respective position.”⁵³

The United States was convinced that a lasting political solution could only be achieved between the disputant parties themselves and adopted that policy. At the outbreak of the war President Johnson advised both India and Pakistan for a cease-fire. When Johnson’s call to peace produced no results, he was upset to the degree that he

⁵² Brines (1968), 405.

⁵³ Ibid., 404-405.

ordered Rusk to halt military aid to both countries. Johnson administration was dealing with the Vietnam war along with the other global crises in Cyprus, the Dominican revolution and intervention of 1965, and the Indo-Pakistan war. H. W. Brands note that,

“Johnson's unimaginative orthodoxy allowed his administration to muddle through...he held a lid on troubles in Panama, Brazil, and the Dominican Republic. Without discovering a solution to the Cyprus dispute, he kept the Greeks and Turks from outright warfare. After India and Pakistan put their guns down, he moved to restore useful if not especially warm relations with the two South Asian countries.”⁵⁴

The Johnson administration also warned both sides about the continuation of hostilities. The United States played the China card for both Pakistan and India. Pakistan was alerted not to invite the Chinese into this conflict and that if they did it would impact future military or economic aid to the country. India was told to consider restraint because of what would happen if China came in for Pakistan's defense. The United States told India, “Continuation of the conflict is likely to plunge India more deeply into the cross currents of the cold war and internal Communist bloc conflicts...Chinese... will be certain winners. It is difficult to see how either India or Pakistan could benefit regardless of the outcome.” And if the call for a cease-fire and troop withdrawal is ignored that can lead to “sheer disaster.”⁵⁵

With regards to the outcome of the 1965 war for China, as Russell Brines noted, it failed to wield decisive influence on the subcontinent.⁵⁶ China like the United States was preoccupied in Vietnam and remained cautious and circumspect regarding taking any

⁵⁴ H. W. Brand, *The Wages of Globalism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 29.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 145.

⁵⁶ Brines, (1968), 399.

decisive actions against India. Publically, China condemned India from the start of the war and warned India that “it must bear the responsibility for all the consequences of its criminal and extended aggression.” China later followed this public statement with an ultimatum on September 16th 1965 that demanded India to dismantle its military posts on the Sino-Indian boundary. It stated that “otherwise the Indian government must bear full responsibility for all the grave consequences arising therefrom.”⁵⁷

India came out of the 1965 war confident and determined to keep Kashmir. Pakistan demonstrated heightened patriotic zeal, and Ayub Khan’s government claimed that it had won the war, despite not gaining Kashmir or finding a solution for Kashmir. However, the lessons from the war that both sides learnt were the lack of reliance on the great powers in the region. Yet both states failed to improve relationships with each other, and as we will see, they continued with their hostilities and rivalries that would turn nuclear in the decades to come.

1965 War and the Future of Subcontinent:

The War of 1965 proved to be a critical juncture for South Asia, and particularly the India- Pakistan rivalry. After the war, diplomatic relations between the two rivals eased up for the short term, but the critical issue of Kashmir remained open along with the Ganges water issues. The 1965 war also pushed Pakistan closer to China and away from the United States due to the arms embargo. Pakistan felt betrayed by the United States for not supporting it in its position on Kashmir. The 1960s at large were crucial

⁵⁷ K. Sarwar Hasan, *Documents on the Foreign Relations of Pakistan: The Transfer of Power. (China, India, Pakistan)* (Karachi: Pakistan Institute of International Affairs, 1966), 356.

for the Sino-Pakistan alliance, as Pakistan felt disassociated from its Western alliance. China not only assisted Pakistan in its military needs, but it also provided a countervailing threat to India. China's support for Pakistan further cemented the regional rivalries between India and both China and Pakistan.

The 1965 war raises the following questions: did India decide to develop a nuclear bomb after the 1965 war? Furthermore, what role did the Russian position of neutrality, and the American arms embargo, along with Chinese support for Pakistan, play in India's decision to go nuclear? The US national intelligence estimate predicted in 1965 that "India has the capability to develop nuclear weapons. It probably already has sufficient plutonium for a first device, and could explode it about a year after a decision to develop one."⁵⁸ The intelligence estimate also believed that the proponents of nuclear weapons within India were strengthened by the 1965 war. Others have argued that regional events, like Pakistan's mediation between China and the US, led to Indian insecurity due to a regional tilt in favor of Pakistan and created impetus for India to acquire that bomb.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, United States Department of State. South Asia (Foreign Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, Volume XXV). P.1259 Source: Central Intelligence Agency, Job 79 – R01012A, ODDI Registry of NIE and SNIE Files. Secret; Controlled Dissem. According to a note on the cover sheet, the estimate was prepared by the CIA and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State and Defense, AEC, and NSA. All members of the U.S. Intelligence Board concurred in the estimate on October 21.

⁵⁹ Frankel, Benjamin. "The brooding Shadow: Systemic Incentives and Nuclear Weapons Proliferation." In *The Proliferation Puzzle: Why Nuclear Weapons Spread and What Results*, Edited by: Davis, Zachary S. and Frankel, Benjamin. Frank Cass (1993)

The 1965 war left Pakistan's President Ayub Khan weak and deeply unpopular. He handed over power to another military dictator General Yahya Khan on March 25th 1969. By the end of the 60s, relations with India were at a low point. The period of the 1960s was also marked with major cooperation between the two neighbors. WATER TREATY & Trade treaty India and Pakistan negotiated and signed a trade agreement that called for payment in British Pound Sterling rather than rupee payments. On the water issue, India allowed a team of Pakistani experts to visit the Farakka barrage on the Ganges. This was a diplomatic concession by India, and the government of India also released the boats and fisherman seized after the Rann of Kutch episode.

The 1970's and Indo-Pakistan Rivalry:

The internal political crisis from the previous decade continued in the 1970s as well. East Pakistan transformed into Bangladesh, and Pakistan and India were once again at war on December 1971. However, this was the first war in which the basis was not Kashmir, and the enemy perception of the two played a crucial role as the basis of this war. The crisis ensued after the December 1970 elections where the East Pakistan leader Sheikh Mujib ur Rahman had won by a landslide. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who had succeeded in West-Pakistan did not accept the results and persuaded General Yahya Khan to hold the transfer of power. By March 1971 Sheikh Mujib assumed de facto power in East-Pakistan. In response, the West-Pakistani army moved into East-Pakistan and indiscriminately started killing civilians. As a result a large number of people began to pour into India. On December 3rd 1971, Indian troops entered East Pakistan, and after

a short war with India, the Pakistan army surrendered. On December 20th General Yahya Khan resigned, and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was sworn in as the president and Sheikh Mujib ur Rahman became the leader of Bangladesh.

After the humiliating defeat in the 1971 war, President Bhutto and Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi met at Simla for peace talks in July 1972. During the Simla talks Z. A. Bhutto had told Mrs. Gandhi, “his political enemies at home...would denounce him for surrendering what many in Pakistan considered their vital interest.”⁶⁰ Bhutto agreed to the following points: Kashmir issue should be resolved; the Line of Control could be converted into a de jure border between India and Pakistan, and the release of Pakistani POWs. According to P.N.Dhar, Mrs Gandhi asked Bhutto: “Is this the understanding on which we proceed?” He replied: “Absolutely, *Aap mujh par bharosa keejiye* (trust me).” “There is no written record of these agreements between Bhutto and Indira Gandhi due to his specific request. But Mrs Gandhi was sufficiently convinced, not so much because of Bhutto’s sincerity but because of his compulsions and limitations, to go ahead with the Simla Agreement. It was signed late at night on 2 July 1972.”⁶¹

The 1971 war and the dismemberment of Pakistan had a lasting impact on regional diplomacy and security. It established India as the dominant power in the sub-continent. Furthermore, India’s previous insecurities of a US, USSR and Chinese position during the 1965 war were further confirmed. By 1974, India tested its first nuclear bomb, and by the end of the decade, India had doubled its naval capacity. After

⁶⁰ P. N. Dhar, *Indira Gandhi, the ‘Emergency,’ and Indian Democracy*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000) 190.

⁶¹ J. N. Dxit, *India Pakistan in War and Peace*, (Routledge, 2002), 223.

the 1971 war and the Simla talks, Pakistan's internal crises and the critical decision of drafting and adopting the constitution had kept Bhutto's energies occupied. During this period, a small group of military officers had conspired to take over power, and their conspiracy was crushed before it initiated. Ironically, it was General Zia ul-Haq who oversaw the trial of the conspiring officers. It would be General Zia who would once again intervene in 1977 and impose martial law and remove Z. A Bhutto.

Suspensions, Insecurities and Cooperation in the Protracted Indo-Pak

Rivalry:

After Bhutto's removal in 1977, General Zia stayed in power for almost eleven years. Zia remains the longest serving head of state in Pakistan. He owed his survival in power to a combination of factors: his ruthlessness and political astuteness; the shift in focus from India to Afghanistan after the Russian invasion; the easing of economic pressures due to remittances from the Middle East, and most importantly Western aid and its massive arms package. By September 1981, the United States had assured Zia of a \$3.2 billion arms and aid package, despite the US's concerns over Pakistan's nuclear intentions. By 1982 peace talks had once again resumed on a no-war pact, and an agreement was reached on the establishment of joint commissions to consider questions of trade, cultural and economic cooperation.⁶²

On June 1st, 1983, the foreign ministers of India and Pakistan met and held talks in the first meeting established by the joint commission that was approved by President Zia and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. This was the first formal meeting since the Simla

⁶² Economist Intelligence Unit, Quarterly report 1982, 3rd Quarter. p.8

accords in 1972. Kashmir remained the sensitive topic for the meeting, but due to the shift in regional matters, Afghanistan was the issue remained key topic on the agenda. These pleasantries exchanged were short-lived and ended by 1984. By the mid-1980s, Zia faced tremendous domestic pressure, and the campaign for the restoration of democracy gained momentum, with increased incidences of violence. However, at the same time, the United States reaffirmed its support for General Zia with the US Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger's visit to Islamabad and reassured Pakistan of the US's commitment to supplying sophisticated arms. By October 19th the United States signed an agreement with Pakistan for the sale of the versatile US "Harpoon" missile. The unrest in Pakistan along with American backing led to the worsening of ties with India. General Zia had expressed anger with PM Indira Gandhi when she issued a statement in support of the pro-democracy movement.

By November 1984 both countries were once again holding a series of military exercises near the border that violated the ceasefire line in Kashmir. The heated exchanged started with Zia writing a letter to Mrs. Gandhi and with Mrs. Gandhi's expressing support for the pro-democracy civil rights protestors. Zia in his letter had raised concern about the Indian Muslims killed in the riots in Bombay and Bhiwandi. Tensions continued near the Kashmir border over Siachen. This was the second major border clash and on the world's highest battlefield. The conflict over Siachen is based on the UN-supervised Karachi agreement of 1949, where the parties agreed to extend the cease-fire line north of the map grid. Due to the assumption that human habitation was not feasible, this large stretch between the Chinese border and the LoC and was thus

left un-demarcated.⁶³ On April 13, 1984, India launched Operation Meghdoot, prompting Pakistan to deploy troops as well. Both armies were unable to advance their positions and continue with military presence in that region.⁶⁴ The issue remains unresolved, despite an agreement in 1989 and 1992. Both sides are concerned about the public perception that any concession would give the appearance of weakness.

By the end of 1985, the relationship with India remained delicate and adversarial. On the nuclear issue, India rejected the possibility of signing the non-proliferation treaty (NPT) and refused international inspections of nuclear facilities or the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in South Asia. When Zia and Rajiv Gandhi met at the UN in 1985, India rejected Zia's proposal of technical level meetings between experts.⁶⁵ However, the shift was on the United States side. The US once again tilted towards India, despite India's nuclear plans. This set in a sense of insecurity with Pakistan, which was afraid of a pre-emptive Indian strike on its nuclear facilities at Kahuta. Despite Rajiv Gandhi's rejection of the nuclear proposal, Zia and Gandhi met three more times in Oman, at the SAARC summit and in New Delhi. The aim of these meetings was to improve confidence building measures and not to solve major issues – like Kashmir. At the third meeting in Delhi, the leaders agreed to meeting in Islamabad to sign a peace treaty or a no-war pact. Hopes for the Islamabad meeting were dashed after New Delhi called off the meeting. As India claimed, Pakistan was interfering in the Indian Punjab. Furthermore, India remained convinced about Pakistan's nuclear program with the assistance of China.

⁶³ Chari, Cheema, & Cohen, (2007), 21.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ EIU, 1984 / 4 p. 8-9

Brasstacks:

Brasstacks is the code name given to Indian military exercise carried out by the Indian defense forces on November 1986. From 1984 to 1986, Pakistan's insecurity was heightened as it continuously perceived an attack on its nuclear facilities. Pakistan strongly believed, based on intelligence reports from Canada and Europe, that Israel along with India was planning an attack on Kahuta.⁶⁶ The Soviet forces in Afghanistan and the hawkish and aggressive posture by Indian Prime Minister Gandhi further added to Pakistan's insecurities. Pak officials approached the United States, and Washington confirmed that Israel was not planning an attack on Pakistan, but concluded that war between India and Pakistan was possible. Its views were based on India's military posture, the and position of her fighter bombers, and other suspicions of a war's imminence, along with the Indian-Soviet connection of a joint attack on Pakistan.⁶⁷ Brasstacks came at the heel of the perception of the imminence of an attack by India on Pakistan's nuclear facility, where the Indian and Pakistani armies had been exchanging fire at the Siachen Glacier.

Brasstacks was planned as a series of large scale military readiness exercises by the Indian Army Chief Sundarji supported by the young Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Pakistan assessed that a quarter of million Indian troops and 1300 tanks and about quarter of a billion dollars were spent on Brasstacks exercises. The central objective of the Brasstacks military exercises was decision making and control over the developing

⁶⁶ Chari, Cheema, & Cohen, (2007), 24.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 25.

battlefield.⁶⁸ The political context of Brasstacks, according to a civilian strategic analyst Ravi Rikhye, was to lure Pakistan into a first move via deception and thus unleash a massive attack in response. The analysis of Chari, Cheema and Cohen agrees with Rikhye's analysis and notes that, "conversations with key Indian participants tend to support this interpretation of Brasstacks."⁶⁹

The Brasstacks crisis ended when Indian and Pakistani officials agreed to hold talks in January 1987. On January 26th Pakistan foreign minister Abdul Sattar met with his Indian counterpart and began negotiations to deescalate the tension between the two rivals. Many questions surfaced after the crisis ended, starting from the nuclear dimension. In an interview with Indian journalist Kuldip Nayar, the central figure in Pakistan's nuclear program, Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, hinted at the weaponization of Pakistan's nuclear program. The question is: was this nuclear activity signaling the peak of a crisis? After the interview, General Sundarji, the architect of Brasstacks, remarked

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 44 Chari, Cheema, Cohen, note the central objectives of Brasstacks "—The Reorganized Army Plains Infantry Division (RAPID) formations, consisting of two infantry and one mechanized brigade, designed to be partly mobile but capable of holding territory, which was a uniquely Indian concept suitable for the India-Pakistan theater.

—Plan AREN (Area Radio Engineered Network), an indigenously developed and produced communications grid, which could provide secure links with voice, telex, facsimile, video, and computer terminals.

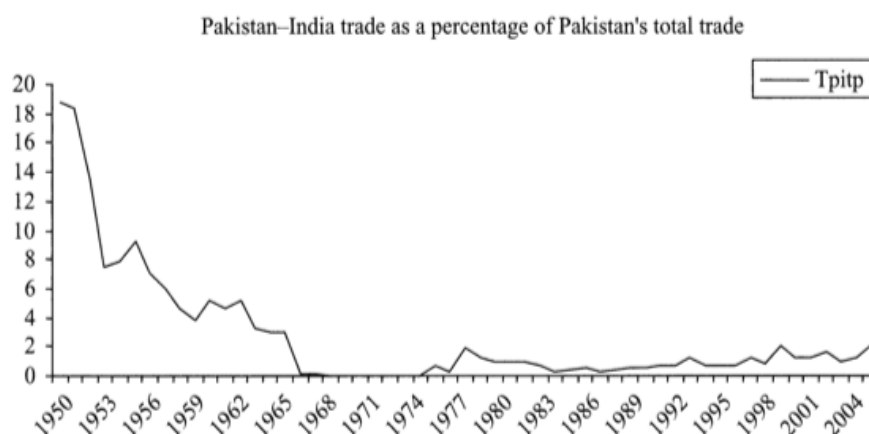
—The command, control, communications, and information systems (C3I), based on commercially available computer equipment and intended to provide field commanders with real-time information on troop movements, battle situation, logistics, and so on, for effective decision making and control over the developing battlefield." P. 44-45

⁶⁹ Ibid, 47.

that this was India's last chance to defeat Pakistan by conventional arms, as nuclear weapons would make an all-out war impossible and extremely dangerous.

American assessment of the Brasstacks till December 1986 was that it consisted of military exercises, but when it extended beyond those, Washington's concerns were raised. Its assessment noted that, if India were to advance across the international border, Pakistan would have little warning and Pakistan would not last more than a month. The US officials believed that Rajiv Gandhi was facing domestic pressure and that his aim was to demonstrate anger towards Pakistan for their support for the Sikh and Kashmiri separatist elements.

The Indo-Pakistan rivalry in the 1980s is a roller coaster of the wars that never happened or the crises that had the potential of a large-scale war. Leaders in both the countries were engaged in domestic political struggles and the cardinal sin on either side was to appear weak with regards to each other. Trade remained nonexistent between the two neighbor (see Figure 7:1)



The decade of the 1980s started with disinterested leaders on both sides that were focused on other domestic and regional issues. The decade ended with new leadership in both countries and nuclear signaling incorporated into the interaction between India and Pakistan. Furthermore, the defense expenditures of both states in comparison to their respective GDP's were also on decline. (See Figure 7:2)

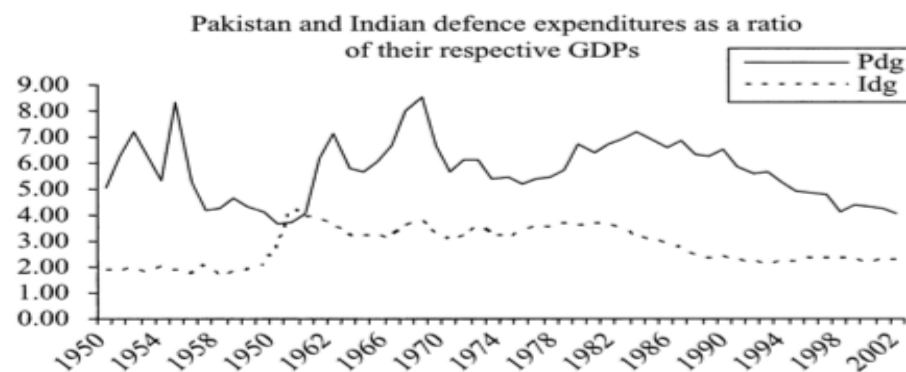


Figure 3. Defence spending as a proportion of GDP in India and Pakistan

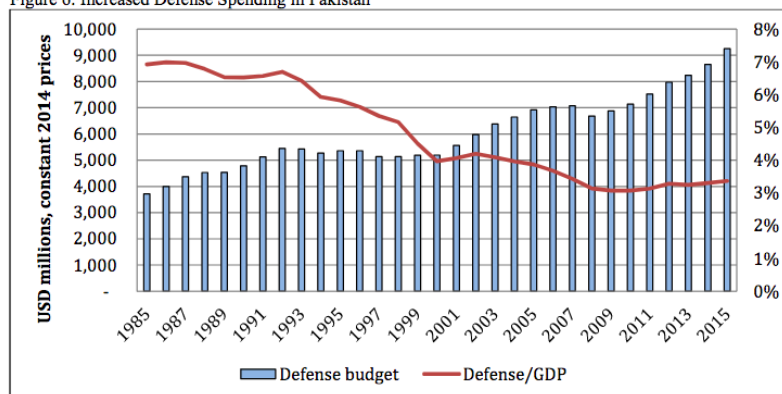
Source: Wilson Center Report on India-Pakistan Defense Spending.

In the Shadow of the Bomb: From Kargil to Mumbai Continuous Conflictual Coexistence

On 11th and 13th May 1998, the Indo-Pakistan rivalry took a drastic turn when India conducted a series of five nuclear tests, and later Pakistan followed on May 30th and 31st with six tests of its own – officially transforming the Indo-Pak rivalry into a nuclear rivalry. The 1990s Pakistan was engulfed in political turmoil, with a new prime minister every few years. Each time a new Prime Minister would be elected, the opposition party

would try to undermine the democratic process and try to weaken the democratically elected leader. Pakistan's economy suffered tremendously and the annual growth rate dropped to just 1 percent between 1990- 1998. In July 1998 the instability resulted in the total collapse of the Karachi stock exchange, which lost more than 60 percent of its value in a year.⁷⁰ The nuclear tests further aggravated the economic outlook of Pakistan, as the United States imposed sanctions after May 1998. The defense budget was not keeping up with the GDP of Pakistan (see Figure 7:1) and the only justification for spending on defense was the India threat.

Figure 6: Increased Defense Spending in Pakistan⁵⁷



Source: Shane Mason, *Military Budgets in India and Pakistan*, Stimson Center. <https://www.stimson.org/sites/default/files/file-attachments/Military-Budgets-India-Pakistan-Trajectories-Priorities-Risks-Oct2016.pdf.pdf>

Relations between India and Pakistan remained delicate with the Kashmir issue as passionate as ever. As the Soviet Union had collapse and Afghanistan was swallowed up in its own civil war. Pakistan and India once again could focus on their rivalry and the unresolved issue of Kashmir was at the forefront. From 1947 to 1971, India and Pakistan had fought three wars and two out of the three were on Kashmir with a non-nuclear

⁷⁰ Zahid Hussain, "Panic grips Pakistan as sanctions bite." *The Times* (London, July 13, 1998).

dimension. The Kargil war was the first war they faced as nuclear weapon states, and the first crisis that marked nuclear South Asia. Although Kargil is a small-scale war, but its importance and significance is due to the fear of a higher level of violence and the potential of a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan.

The Kargil crisis started when both countries were improving relations diplomatically, and came at the heel of India's PM Vajpayee's bus diplomacy tour that took him to Lahore in February 1999. Prime Minister Vajpayee's Lahore trip produced the Lahore Declaration between him and his counterpart PM Nawaz Sharif. The Lahore Declaration, stated that India fully acknowledges the existence of Pakistan and means it no harm and the two countries would forge new bilateral relationship based on the atomic peace in the subcontinent.⁷¹ Besides the bus diplomacy, Prime Minister Vajpayee ignored the demands of Shiv Sena, Hindu fundamentalist party when they asked for cancellation of the cricket and hockey matches with Pakistan. Visa restrictions between the two states were also eased.⁷² Despite of the positive gestures from India, Pakistan's military was not on board with Pm Nawaz Sharif's peace plans.

By October 1998, India claimed Pakistan has carried out attacks on the Siachen area. The clashes continued till May 1999. And By the end of May 1999, India had deployed large number of ground troops and started using its air force to evict the intruders on its Siachen posts. During the Kargil crisis diplomacy failed in the beginning and later when the hotline was established between Nawaz Sharif and Vajpayee, both leaders embarked on a diplomatic campaign to reduce tensions. The Kargil crisis is significant due to its

⁷¹ Chari, Cheema, & Cohen, (2007), 120.

⁷² EIU, 1999, 1, p. 9

nuclear dimension. Pakistan's foreign secretary issued a nuclear warning when he said, "Pakistan would not hesitate to use any weapon in our arsenal to defend out territorial integrity." India in response placed its nuclear weapons on "readiness state 3" level – in other words, its assembled warheads were prepared to be mated with the delivery vehicle.⁷³ However, it is important to highlight India's restraint in not expanding the conflict to other parts of the region. The Indian air force was given strict orders to avoid targets in Pakistani-administered Kashmir. Pakistan's air force avoided escalating an already dangerous situation. Thus, nuclear deterrence prevented the crisis to escalate or spread.

Pakistan's government and its army miscalculated the far-reaching political consequences of the Kargil conflict. Prime Minister Sharif gave the impression that the military did not consult him before taking this military adventure. This led to the worsening of ties between the prime minister and the chief of army staff. The military adventure in Kargil was seen by the public in Pakistan as a diplomatic and military defeat. After Kargil the Line of Control was deemed as the international border between the two states.

Kargil was a major mistake for the Pakistani army. The question is: was it a step to assess India's resolve on a territory that was not necessarily of intrinsic value (like the Rann of Kutch episode of 1965 before the war)? Did nuclear status embolden Pakistan to test India in Kargil first and later in Kashmir? The answer is situated in Pakistan's behavior to follow. Since India demonstrated its resolve on Kargil, Pakistan avoided a

⁷³ Chari, Cheema, & Cohen, (2007), 139.

push on Kashmir. Or perhaps India was concerned that IF it did not act on Kargil, then Pakistan would try to wrestle Kashmir from India based on its emboldened position due to nuclear weapons. Siachen is a glacier extremely remote and inhospitable and at 15000ft, but it holds great strategic importance because of its access to the Karakorum mountain ranges. The loss at Kargil, was an embarrassment and led to international pressure on Pakistan to change its behavior.

Kargil Conflict was followed by the Twin Peaks crisis caused by the terrorist attacks within India. Starting with the December 13, 2001 terrorists attack on the Indian Parliament and later in 2002 with the attack on the Indian army camp at Kaluckak. The attack was blamed on the Pakistan based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish Mohammed (JeM) groups. These attacks were followed by the November 2008 the attack on Mumbai. After the 2008 Mumbai attack, India began deploying troops on the border with Pakistan.⁷⁴

Impact of Nuclear Weapons on the Rivalry:

The basis for Pakistan's quest for nuclear weapons is directly linked with its rivalry with India. Nuclear weapons were considered the ultimate equalizer against India. The relationship between India and Pakistan in the past seventy years has consistently been of conflictual coexistence, and for the Pakistani side it was the nuclear deterrent that would deny future victories in wars between them. Unlike the US-USSR

⁷⁴ A. G. Noorani, "Of War-mongering and Accountability," Frontline (Vol 19. Issue 3, Feb 2002) <http://www.frontline.in/static/html/fl1903/19030220.htm>. Also see, Riaz Mohammad Khan, "Conflict Resolution and Crisis Management: Challenges in Pakistan-India Relations" Stimson Center (January, 2008), 75.

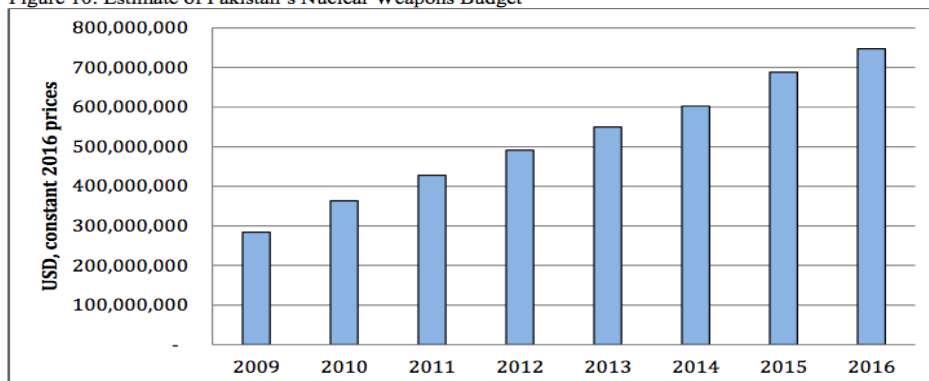
rivalry, where there were windows of opportunity to terminate the rivalry, in the case of India and Pakistan we do not see the same opportunity. Whether it is due to domestic pressures or the outstanding issue of Kashmir, leaders on both sides have stayed away from major concessions at the risk of appearing weak. In the case of Pakistan, as George Perkovich noted, the decision makers had hoped that “nuclear weapons would rebuild Pakistan’s strength, heal its wounds, buttress its pride, and ensure better results in a future war.”⁷⁵ Kargil and the events afterwards proved otherwise, but nuclear weapons have maintained the peace in the region in the sense that the two states have avoided large-scale war since Kargil. Similarly, in the case of India, China’s nuclear test in 1964 and the role of great powers in the 1965 India- Pakistan War played a major role in India’s decision to go nuclear in 1974. As the head of India’s atomic program said, “nuclear weapons give a state possessing them in adequate numbers a deterrent power against attack from a much stronger state.”⁷⁶ For India the lessons learnt from the Rann of Kutch was that if India fails to show its resolve, Pakistan would take a more belligerent position the second time around, as it did in the 1965 War. In the case of Kargil, both states demonstrated restraint. Nevertheless, India went a step further and demonstrated resolve and restraint. Pakistan and India were aware that a “crisis can lead to limited uses of force which in turn, through a variety of mechanisms, could produce an all-out war. Even if neither side initially wanted this result, there is a

⁷⁵ George Perkovich, *Could Anything be done to stop them?: Lessons from Pakistan*. <http://www.npolicy.org/article.php?aid=285&rid=6>

⁷⁶ George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, (Berkley: University California Press, 1999), 68

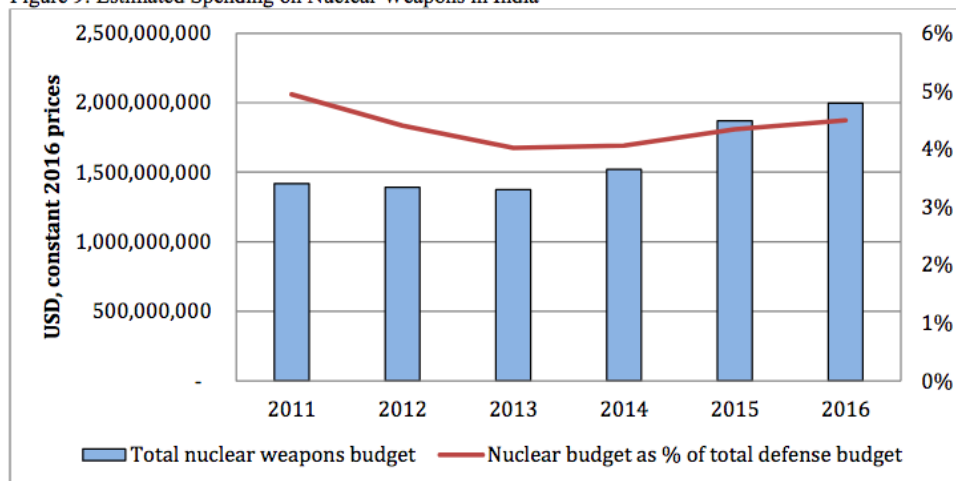
significant, although impossible to quantify, possibility of quick and deadly escalation.”⁷⁷

Figure 10: Estimate of Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Budget



Source: Shane Mason, *Military Budgets in India and Pakistan*, Stimson Center. <https://www.stimson.org/sites/default/files/file-attachments/Military-Budgets-India-Pakistan-Trajectories-Priorities-Risks-Oct2016.pdf.pdf>

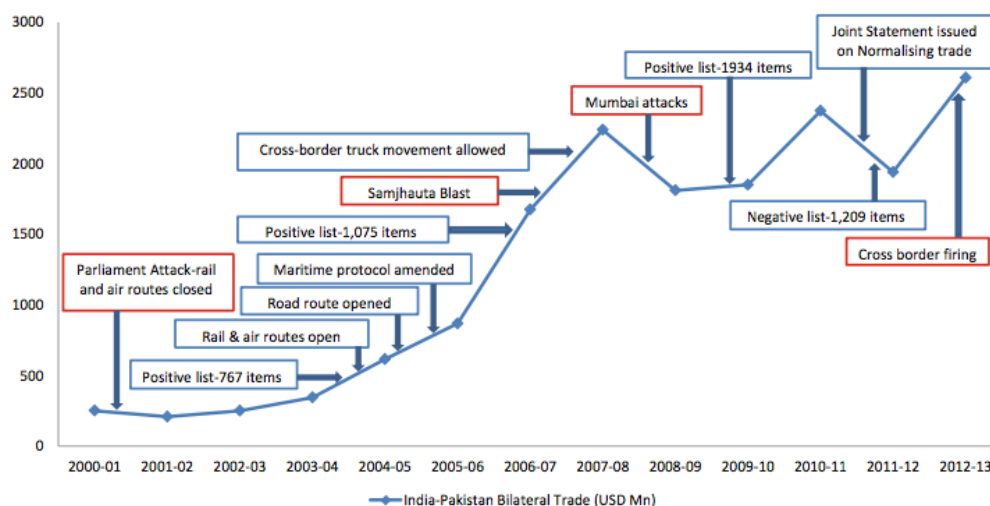
Figure 9: Estimated Spending on Nuclear Weapons in India¹¹¹



Source: Shane Mason, *Military Budgets in India and Pakistan*, Stimson Center. <https://www.stimson.org/sites/default/files/file-attachments/Military-Budgets-India-Pakistan-Trajectories-Priorities-Risks-Oct2016.pdf.pdf>

⁷⁷ Robert Jervis, “The Political Effects of Nuclear weapons,” *International Security*, Fall 1988 (Vol. 13, No.2), 84.

Each crisis worsened the relationship and impacted economic ties between the two rivals. As figure 7:3 shows, levels of trade dropped with each terrorist attack. Under the nuclear shadow, India and Pakistan did not go to war apart from the Kargil episode. Instead Pakistan attempted to alter the status quo on Kashmir based on terrorist attacks within India, and each incident has affected trade between the two rivals.



Source: Nisha Taneja & Sanjib Pohit, *India –Pakistan Trade* (New Delhi: Springer, 2015), 3.

Cold Start or Just Hot Air?

In April 2004, India's chief of army staff introduced and adopted the "Cold Start" doctrine, which gives India the ability to "shift from defensive to offensive operations at the very outset of a conflict, relying in the element of surprise and not giving Pakistan any time to bring diplomatic leverages into play vis-s-vis India."⁷⁸ Although the operational details of Cold Start remain classified, but the main objective of Cold Start is

⁷⁸ Harsh V. Pant, "India's Nuclear Doctrine and Command Structure: Implications for Civil-Military Relations in India," *Armed Forces & Society* 33, no. 2 (2007): 238-64.

to “leverage India’s modest superiority in conventional forces to respond to Pakistan’s continued provocation.” The offensive elements of Cold Start involves a swift and decisive attack on Pakistan, as one analyst have argued, “to bring about a favourable war termination, a favorite scenario being to cut Pakistan into two at its midriff.”⁷⁹

Pakistan responded to India’s Cold Start doctrine by saying that “Proponents of conventional application of military forces, in a nuclear overhang, are chartering an adventurous and dangerous path, the consequences of which could be both unintended and uncontrollable.”⁸⁰ Walter Ladwig III notes that, “geographically given that Pakistan lacks strategic depth, even a small incursions employing the Cold Start could pressure Pakistan to escalate the conflict.”⁸¹ From Kargil, to Mumbai; From the blast in Samjootha Express to heavy exchange on the border and surgical strikes, nuclear weapons has raised the stakes. During Kargil, Bruce Riedel reported that the Pakistani political leadership was unaware that the army had begun to activate plans for a nuclear strike. Similarly, on the Indian side, during Operation Parakram, a rouge commander ordered troops to advance into assault position near the LOC without approval from high authorities.⁸² These are just a few examples of how unintentional escalation could lead to the failure of restraint and thus a nuclear catastrophe.

The India-China-Pakistan Imbroglio:

Since independence, Pakistan has relied on the US and after the 1965 war on China for military assistance and assurances vis – a- vis the India threat. Pakistan

⁷⁹ Firdaus Ahmed, “The Calculus of Cold Start,” India Together, May 2004.

⁸⁰ General Parvez Kayani’s statement. In, Zia Mian’s Imbricated Rivalries, P. 2

⁸¹ Ladwig III, W. C. 2007. “A Cold Start for Hot Wars? The Indian Army’s New Limited War Doctrine.” International Security 32 (3): p.174.

⁸² Ibid., 174.

relationship with China is unique and has remained consistent over the years, despite variations across time and issues. India's rivalry with China plays a major role in the Sino-Pak alliance. However, relationship between China and India is a combination of competition and cooperation, since the dramatic rise in both their economies. India-China trade is estimated to be around \$71.5 billion, and China remains India's largest trading partner.⁸³ The relationship is also marked by the 1962 Sino-Indian war that created the China threat perception in India for decades to come. China's nuclear acquisition in 1964 further fueled the Indo-Chinese rivalry and led to the urgency of India nuclear weapons program.

The imbroglio between India-China and Pakistan is such that: India seeks parity with China and Pakistan aims to seek parity with India. For Indian military strategists have been working on a doctrine that would mobilize and deploy troops on two-fronts (Pakistan on West and China on the Northern border), and more recently the Indian army chief said, "Indian army is fully ready for a two-and-a-half front war,"—the half for domestic insurgency. The friction between the regional rivals remains, despite the 1993 border agreement between India and China, as evident in a 2009 speech by the Indian Navy chief:

"Our 'trust deficit' with China can never be liquidated unless our boundary problems are resolved. China's known propensity for 'intervention in space' and 'cyber-warfare' would also be major planning considerations in our strategic and operational thinking... On the military front, our strategy to deal with China must include reducing the military gap and countering the growing Chinese footprint in the Indian Ocean Region. The traditional or 'attritionist' approach of matching

⁸³ How to Fix India-China Trade, August 31, 2017.
<https://thediplomat.com/2017/08/how-to-fix-india-china-trade/>

‘Division for Division’ must give way to harnessing modern technology for developing high situational awareness and creating a reliable stand-off deterrent.”⁸⁴

India’s goal against China is to be able to project military power from the Indian Ocean to the Malacca Straits in the Pacific.

On the Chinese front, officials have reassured India that “there does not exist a threat to India from China, nor one to China from India.”⁸⁵ However, China’s military support and assistance to Pakistan is viewed as a containment strategy, particularly China’s nuclear assistance to Pakistan. China started arms assistance to Pakistan after the 1965 war, when Pakistan was under US arms embargo. In the 1965 and in 1971 wars, China backed Pakistan. In the 1965 war, China considered India to be the aggressor and held her solely responsible for the conflict. Beijing denounced and condemned the Indian attack as an “act of naked aggression.”⁸⁶

The United States play a large and very important role in the China-India-Pakistan imbroglio. The United States during the Cold War days had hoped for India to join the West against the communist states. India remained non-aligned during most of the Cold War. Nuclear weapons have played a major role when it comes to the South Asian rivalries, in the 1962 India-China War the United States was aware that if it got involved there was a possibility of nuclear weapons use. As Secretary McNamara

⁸⁴ Admiral Suresh Mehta, “India’s National Security Challenges – An Armed Forces Overview,” http://maritimeindia.org/pdfs/CNS_Lec_at_Habitat.pdf

⁸⁵ Ma Jiali, “Striving to Establish a Constructive Cooperation Partnership between China and India,” *China Report*, 36, no.3 (2000). 375-381

⁸⁶ Anwar Hussain Syed, *China and Pakistan: Diplomacy of an Entente Cordiale* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1974), 110.

worried about, “Before any substantial commitment to defend India against China is given, we should recognize that in order to carry out that commitment against any substantial Chinese attack, we would have to use nuclear weapons.” Kennedy’s position on the other hand was, “we should defend India, and therefore we will defend India.”⁸⁷ George Perkovich have argued that Pentagon considered offering, “the possibilities of providing nuclear weapons under US custody to India.” The US ended up joining the Soviet Union in a non-proliferation treaty (NPT) to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and thus the notion of nuclear assistance was ignored.

The recent improvement in US-India ties was the result of the 2004 agreement, when the US announced that, it will expand cooperation with India on their civilian nuclear program and missile defense. The US assistance to India, is in line with China’s support for Pakistan. The United States, along with Japan seek to bolster India’s capabilities - both economic and military – to contain China. Ashley Tellis provided historically backed and succinct analysis of the US-India nuclear deal,

“The United States assisted the British and French nuclear weapon programs in critical ways so as to deny the Soviet Union permanent strategic immunity vis-à-vis these two smaller states. U.S. aid to the French nuclear weapon program is particularly pertinent: first, because it occurred despite President Charles de Gaulle’s withdrawal of France from the unified military command of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO); and second, because of the form it took, namely, the quiet but effective practice of “negative guidance,” through which U.S. weapon scientists were able to tell their French counterparts when and how they were in error, even if the Americans could not always provide the French

⁸⁷ Anand Giridharadas, “63 Tapes Reveal Kennedy and Aides Discussed Using Nuclear Arms in a China-India Clash,” New York Times, 26th August 2005.

with the information to remedy those mistakes...there is good reason to believe that the latter may come to resemble the former at some point because of the anticipated growth of Chinese power. If this turns out to be the case, the only strong argument against U.S.-Indian cooperation in strategic weaponry will be not that it is undesirable, but that it is premature.”⁸⁸

The China- US – India- Pakistan imbroglio with nuclear weapons and high degree of distrust makes the security in South Asia critical and as Zia Mian and M. V. Ramana said,

“The intertwined and overlapping Pakistan-India-China-United States security relationships are driving a profoundly destructive dynamic in South Asia, one that is increasingly becoming globalised as Pakistan, dominated by its army, seeks Chinese and US military and economic support in its struggle with India; India seeks US support against China, and to satisfy its great power ambitions; and, as the United States tries to defer and limit its decline as the dominant world power by constraining and balancing the rise of Chinese power and influence, and as China seeks to establish itself as an emerging global power able to reorder the international system.”⁸⁹

Conclusion:

Jawaharlal Nehru asked, “can newborn nations escape the cycle of wars which plagued old nations?” New nations like old nations have similar conflicts over territory, resources and influence, along with the role of great powers in the region. New nations have competing power structures like old nations, and leaders in new nations must answer to their populace like they did in old nations. Why must they then escape the cycle of wars? India and Pakistan since independence have been embroiled in a rivalry based on unresolved issues of partition. Kashmir remains the principal cause of the

⁸⁸ Ashley Tellis, “India as a New Global Power: An Action Agenda for the United States,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005, 36

⁸⁹ Zia Mian and M. V. Ramana, *Imbricated Regional Rivalries*, 13.

rivalry, along with Pakistan's existential fear of India and its aspirations of parity with India. "From the day of independence," Ayub Khan claimed, "Pakistan was involved in a bitter and prolonged struggle for her very existence and survival. The cause of our major problem is India's inability to reconcile herself to our existence as a sovereign independent State."⁹⁰

In all the crises, conflicts and wars between India and Pakistan we have seen how both the external and internal factors have exploited the rivalry. Nuclear weapons made an all-out war difficult if not impossible. In the case of Pakistan and India, their close geographical proximity make it irrational for either state to use nuclear weapons, or as John Mueller would say, expect to profit from it.⁹¹ Unimaginable devastation would unfold if an all-out war breaks out between Pakistan and India, and neither state can emerge victorious. The outcome of nuclear weapons in a strategic rivalry is always the absence of large-scale war and thus an adversarial peace.

⁹⁰ Ayub Khan, *Friends not Masters*, (Oxford University Press, 1967), 115-116.

⁹¹ John Mueller, The essential Irrelevance of Nuclear Weapons: Stability in the Postwar World, *International Security*, Vol. 13. No.2 (Fall 1988), 55-79.

Chapter 8

What Happens when the Nuclear Question is solved? The case of Brazil and Argentina

“In the case of Brazil-Argentina, the social character of relations is especially important. What we find is a long history, not of Hobbesian conflict, but rather of recurrent rivalry and conflict, often with military overtones, combined with periods of cooperation. . . . Alongside the recurrent fears and suspicions, the post-war period saw a number of previous moves to cooperation. . . . This is in itself something of a puzzle.”

Introduction:

Argentina and Brazil are two of the largest states in the South America. The Argentina and Brazil rivalry, as Ari Kacowicz has argued, was the longest, most deeply rooted, and most influenced by geopolitical factors among the South American international disputes.¹ Argentina and Brazil are also states that have had a longstanding strategic rivalry that rolled back their pursuit of nuclear weapons. This chapter briefly addresses the history of Argentina and Brazil’s rivalry, and explores the role of parochial interests, leaders and the reversal of nuclear weapons ambitions to see why the rivalry terminated. When the nuclear question was resolved, what role did that play in the termination of the Argentinean and Brazilian rivalry?

¹ Arie Kacowicz, *Zones of Peace: South America and West Africa in Comparative Perspective* (Albany: State University of New York, 1998), 84.

Historical Background:

The rivalry between Argentina and Brazil can be traced back to the period of the Portuguese and Spanish conquistadors, from the 16th to the 18th centuries, where each aimed to conquer territory.² The 18th century was marked by heightened competition between Argentina and Brazil due to disputes over a trade route and the eastern bank of Plata (what is today Uruguay). After gaining independence both states carried over the territorial disputes and fought a three-year war that resulted in a stalemate and active mediation efforts by the British.³ By the 19th century, both Argentina and Brazil had become independent republics. Brazil nonetheless had remained a monarchy under Dom Joao I and Dom Joao II, until 1989. Christopher Darnton argues that the rivalry continued for four centuries, during which both states were “involving arms races, territorial disputes, competition for regional hegemony...each aspired great power status.”⁴

During the Cold War, the Argentinian and Brazilian rivalry continued and was marked by failed efforts to end the rivalry, in 1947, 1958, 1961 and 1971/2. By the end of 1979 the South American giants signed a Tripartite Agreement on hydroelectric projects on Corpus and Itaipu. The agreement was followed by a state visit from Brazil to

² For detailed history of Argentine-Brazilian rivalry, Child, *Geopolitics and Conflict in South America*, 98-105, and Hurrell, “An Emerging Security Community in South America?” in Adler and Barnett, eds., *Security Communities*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998)

³ Christopher Darnton, *Overcoming International Security Rivalry: Parochial Interest, Anticommunism, and the Domestic Politics of Rapprochement in Cold War Latin America* (Diss. Princeton University, 2009), 151

⁴ Ibid, 152

Argentina. The rapprochement was a result of the Brazilian President Joao Figueiredo's visit to Argentina on May 1980, which ended a bitter rivalry between the two South American giants. This was followed by 32 bilateral accords between Brazil and Argentina in 1980. These were not limited to the hydroelectric projects, but also included nuclear cooperation and economic integration.⁵

Argentina and Brazils Nuclear Pursuits:

From the late 1960s through the 1980s, both Argentina and Brazil made efforts to create their nuclear power infrastructure. By the 1980s these infrastructures were capable of providing material for a nuclear weapon. There is no evidence that Argentina pursued a nuclear weapons program, but by 1978 the government of Brazil had launched a secret nuclear weapons development program that was to run parallel to the civilian nuclear program of Brazil.

Scholars have argued that the major catalyst for the improvement of relations and later rivalry between Argentina and Brazil was their mutual concern over the possibility of a nuclear arms race in South America.⁶ After the 1979 Tripartite Agreements, the chairman of Argentina's atomic agency said, "it was now possible to think about nuclear cooperation with Brazil."⁷ The Brazilian chief's response was that Argentina and Brazil, "are now like the newly wed and they are thinking about how

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Stanley Hilton, "The Argentine Factor in Twentieth Century Brazilian Foreign policy." *Political Science Quarterly*, (Spring, 1985), 49.

⁷ Ibid.

many children they are going to have.”⁸ The result was multiple agreements to intensify bilateral agreements. The first document signed was a ten-year nuclear agreement providing for an exchange of information, cooperative research on joint uranium prospecting, and the reciprocal transfer of nuclear material. In the period between 1980 – 1989, Brazil and Argentina signed and produced 198 bilateral agreements on nuclear cooperation.⁹

The question is why did it take four centuries for Argentina and Brazil to end their rivalry? What was different about the late 1970s and 1980s? Recent literature on Argentina and Brazil rivalry notes that rapprochement was successful in the 1980s because of the leftist insurgency and economic crisis linked to the oil shock.¹⁰ Yet, Christopher Darnton argues that the rivalry between Argentina and Brazil ended not because of the elevated threat level due to the insurgency. He asserts that the leftist insurgency threat level was the highest in the 1970s and yet both states were not able to overcome the rivalry.¹¹ Both were economically struggling, and thus a mutual weakness contributed to their cooperation. Furthermore, Darnton also argues that at the end of the 1970s foreign pressure over human rights abuses and both states’ fear of a nuclear weapons arms races in South America led to the termination of rivalry and to a new rapprochement.

⁸ FBIS, 19th May 1980 Brazilian Chief Executive told the press in both countries.

⁹ Argentine Ministry of Foreign Relations, <http://www.mrecic.gov.ar/portal/seree/ditra/br2.html>, downloaded on September 23, 2006.

¹⁰ Christopher Darnton, *Rivalry and Alliance Politics in Cold War Latin America*, (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 195

¹¹ Ibid.

Domestically, the nuclear weapons program was viewed in Brazil as an “enormous unproductive white elephant at the cost of hundreds of millions of dollars.” External factors also played a role for Argentina. Its policy of nuclear ambiguity prevented it from achieving better relations with the United States.¹² The leaders in both states agreed that a continued pursuit of nuclear weapons came with political and economic costs to their states, and furthermore, it aggravated regional stability and threatened their respective national interests.¹³ It was not in the intrinsic interests of either state to continue with the nuclear weapons program. Robert Jervis defined intrinsic interests as:

“we can say that the state that has the greater intrinsic interest in an issue is likely to prevail. Its costs of retreating will be higher than those of the other; this, the incentives in the bargaining process favor it, especially if the other side realizes that the ‘balance of interest’ favors the state.”¹⁴

Rivalry Termination from Mutual Adjustment to Reciprocal Coordination

The rivalry of Argentina and Brazil rivalry provides international relations scholars with a case where one can observe a mutual adjustment that involved deeper bilateral cooperation on the nuclear weapons program. This led to the termination of the long-standing rivalry. Mutual adjustment is when rival states take bilateral measures that reduce competition by attempting to or removing an existing or potential source of conflict. Nuclear cooperation is one of the major mutual adjustment measures, and it

¹² Julio Carasales, “External Influences on the Nuclear Policy of Argentina,” *SAIC Center for Global Security and Cooperation*, (Oct. 1998), 10-11.

¹³ James Doyle, Nuclear Rapprochement in Argentina and Brazil, Workshop summary. Oct 1999. <https://www.osti.gov/scitech/servlets/purl/752374>

¹⁴ Jervis, (1979).

occurred due to the improvement of political ties and strengthening of economic integration on both sides. By November 1985, the Argentina and Brazil signed the “Joint Declaration on Nuclear Policy,” that emphasized mutual commitment to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, to promote close cooperation in the nuclear field, and to coordinate the acquisition of nuclear equipment and material.¹⁵

The Joint Declaration was a reciprocal coordination measure, where state policies and action that reduces the rivals insecurities and limits the type of competition that could potentially lead to harmful consequences that both sides would not prefer. The Joint Declaration acted as a major confidence building measure and established the Joint Committee on nuclear policy that was to continue bilateral dialogue on nuclear matters. What is important to highlight is that the major trade agreement was signed after the nuclear accords. In July 1986, leaders on both side signed the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), a trade agreement that eliminated trade barriers in the region.¹⁶

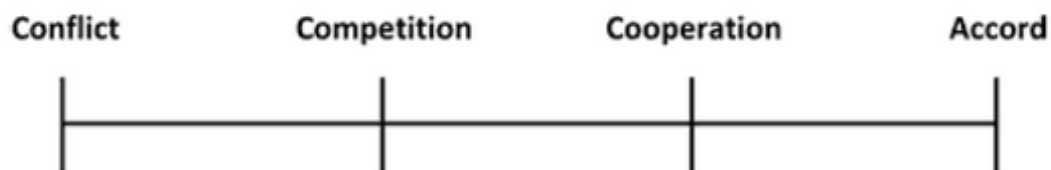
Conclusion:

Argentina and Brazil ended their four-century rivalry in the 1980s after a series of bilateral agreements on their nuclear program, economy and security. Economic weakness on both ends compelled the rivals to search for “new foreign partners.” In the case of the rivalry between Argentina and Brazil, leaders on both side mutually

¹⁵ Wilson Center Digital Archive. International History Declassified, Novemeber, 1985 Brazil- Argentina Foz do Iguacu Joint Declaration on Regional Nuclear Policy. <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/117521.pdf?v=5cbdb3cbe61b1cdc4d830647f2e00939>

¹⁶ John Redick, *Nuclear Illusions: Argentina and Brazil*, Occasional Paper 25, The Henry Stimson Center, December 1995, p.21

recognized the need for cooperation on the source of threat in ways that would result in the improvement of ties and reduction of enemy threat perception. In this instance of interstate relations, we can observe a shift from large-scale conflict that was protracted for four centuries to security cooperation and nuclear accords that eventually terminated the rivalry.



Conclusion

Not So-Great Expectation

“The Grandeur of history lies in the perpetual conflict of nations, and it is simply foolish to desire the suppression of their rivalry.”¹

Heinrich von Treitschke

“We shall, by a process of sublime irony, [reach] a stage where safety will be the sturdy child of terror, and survival the twin brother of annihilation.”²

Winston Churchill

“After nuclear war the two sides would have neither powers, nor laws, nor cities, nor cultures, nor cradles, nor tombs.”³

Charles De Gaulle

Introduction:

History will remember 2016, as the year that gave us Brexit and the Trump presidency. On March 30th 2017, the United States Senate’s Select Committee on Intelligence held an open hearing to expose the unprecedented move by Russia to influence the 2016 US Presidential elections. One experts on the panel testified that, “Russia hopes to win the second Cold War through the force of politics, as opposed to the politics of force.”⁴ This line of reasoning confirms what I argued in my US-USSR/Russia case study. The rivalry that started towards the end of World War II, continues to be as dynamic and vigorous as it was during the Cold War. Scholars who argued, that the US-USSR/Russian rivalry terminated in the 1990’s, underestimated the

¹ Von Treitschke, *Politics*, (New York : Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1963), 13.

² Churchill, *Never Give in!: the Best of Winston Churchill’s Speeches*, (2003).

³ Quoted in, Art & Waltz, *Sixth Edition* (2003), 97.

⁴ U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Documents. Accessed, (Jan. 2018) <https://www.intelligence.senate.gov/sites/default/files/documents/os-cwatts-033017.pdf>

threat perception on both sides. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Moscow continued to view the West (and the United States, in particular) as an enemy. Similarly, the United States maintained its troops in Europe, and if Russia was no longer a threat why keep the troops stationed in Europe. Hence, the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) remained strong, with the United States playing the leading role. The only difference in the US-Russia rivalry today is the failure of US strategy in containing Russian influence across the world. This project's historical analysis and conceptual and theoretical refinement contributes to the understanding of both to the IR and policy world.

In this chapter, I provide a summary of the project and reflect on the implication of this study for other rivalry cases in the future. The central purpose of this dissertation was to evaluate whether nuclear weapons play a role in the persistence of strategic rivalries. The core of the argument was, that nuclear weapons create the mutual vulnerability dilemma where both sides feel a profound psychological susceptibility to mutual annihilation and perceive that the other controls what the state values the most and vice versa. Prior to nuclear acquisition, military forces could seize and capture disputed territory; they could limit or decrease the military effectiveness of rival forces, and most importantly, they could inflict punishment on the other side.⁵ In a state of mutual nuclear possession within a rivalry, either side can achieve those objectives, but at the cost of what it values the most.

In this dissertation, I argued that in the wake of the mutual vulnerability dilemma, nuclear rivalries transition into a state of perpetual adversarial relationships. Like most relationships, inter-state relations are on the conflict – cooperation spectrum.

⁵ Robert Jervis, "The Nuclear Revolution and the Common Defense," *PSQ* 1986: Vol. 101, no 5, 690.

However, nuclear rivalries are not on a linear spectrum, and instead are analogous to the Möbius strip: a one sided non-orientable twisted cylinder. Nuclear rivalries have a similar mechanism as the Möbius strip: they are interlocked by the mutual vulnerability dilemma and they remain embedded in an adversarial peace circle, where war is not an option and the enemy perception of “the other” persists. In other words, they are interlocked in a cycle of competition and cooperation. In this situation, both states accept the limitations on their interactions and embrace an adversarial peace, where large-scale war is no longer an option; crises become infrequent and the status quo is resistant to change.

My dissertation traced the conflicts and episodes of cooperation in the US-USSR/Russia and India-Pakistan rivalries. In the US and Russian case, I found the role of the leader, economic constraints and external factors impacting the interaction between the rivals. However, there were many windows of opportunities when the rivalry could have terminated but the lack of trust and enemy perception prevented it. The India-Pakistan case, have maintain a continuous conflictual coexistence. Leaders on both sides avoid giving a public position of concession towards each other, at the fear of being removed from office. Nuclear rivals take their time in learning and relearning about the destructive nature of nuclear weapons. Leaders realizes the constraints of power when they are in office. As we saw in the nuclear weapons states, whether it was Stalin’s Soviet Union or Putin’s Russia; Truman’s or Eisenhower’s United States; Gandhi’s or Modi’s India; Bhutto’s or Musharraf’s Pakistan; and Mao’s China or Xi Jing ping’s, each decision maker realized the inevitability of war and the constraints of what they possessed.

What did we learn?

First, the dissertation offered a typology of nuclear rivalry interaction to identify the variation in the values of the dependent variable. The following interaction was predicted in a nuclear rivalry: a *collaborative competition*, *strategic cooperation*, *cooperative coexistence*, and *conflictual coexistence*. Each of the interaction is distinct and historically rooted to measure the variation.

We have learned that rivalries persist because of unresolved issues and the enemy threat perception of the other. In the past rivalries ended because states can pursue a military option, but in a nuclear rivalry the military option is impossible. As nuclear weapon make conventional war costly and impossible those disputes and issues are left unresolved. Nuclear weapons provide security to states against existential threats, but they are also responsible for the persistence of the rivalry that led them to acquire nuclear weapons.

Agenda for Future Research:

We can draw important lessons from the case-studies provided in this study for challenges with the current rivalries with North Korea and Iran. In general, this dissertation aimed to provide a macro political and economic view of nuclear rivalries. The goal in this dissertation was to undertake the macro approach in analyzing nuclear rivalries, involving multiple events and critical points in history to create and clarify the behavior of rivals with nuclear weapons. Thus, I focused on the leaders and the economic condition of a state during crisis points and in the period of cooperation. The historical evidence demonstrates that domestic political and economic factors cannot be ignored and they play a crucial role in the enemy perception and the persistence or

termination of a rivalry, as we saw in the case of Brazil and Argentina. The project also provided a theoretical contribution to the study of IR by utilizing and refining the concept of Adversarial peace. How else can we explain the relationship between the United States and Russia today? Or for that matter India and Pakistan. They are historical adversaries with heightened threat perceptions that will avoid going to large scale war with each other.

This dissertation was designed to address the question of: rivalry persistence and interaction between nuclear rivalry. Additionally, I attempted to show the continuation of rivalry in both the US-Russia case and Pakistan-India rivalry where both set of rivals have nuclear weapons. To widen the scope of my argument, I used the Brazil-Argentina mini case study. One in which the nuclear question was resolved and the rivalry terminated. The study lack a negative case and the best example of a negative case would be the Iran-Saudi Arabia Rivalry. I intend to add the Saudi-Iran rivalry case study in the larger manuscript. In the Saudi-Iran case the rivalry continued after the nuclear question was resolved, as the threat perception remained high on both sides.

I plan to write three addition papers based on the findings in this dissertation. The additional work is to cover China's rivalries with the United States, USSR/Russia and India. It will provide us with the insight on a great power rivalry with two different great powers: the United States that is currently in a power struggle with China and Russia that aspires to gain it reputation as a super power. The third is China's rivalry with regional competitor India. Future research on strategic rivalries must address the Subcontinent where Pakistan-India-China-United States all aim to gain influence over the geopolitics of the region.

Appendix I

Letter from President Carter to Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev

Washington, February 14, 1977

Dear Mr. General Secretary:

I am very pleased that our initial exchange of letters² has led us immediately into an examination of the central issues of world peace. Our two great countries share a special responsibility to do what we can, not just to reduce tensions but to create a series of understandings that can lead to a more secure and less dangerous world political climate.

I know and admire your history. As a child, I developed a literary taste by reading your classics. I know also how much, and how very recently, your people have suffered in the course of the last war. I know of your personal role in that war, and of the sacrifices that were imposed on every Soviet family. That is why I believe we are both sincere when we state our dedication to peace, and this gives me hope for the future.

The question is how to translate that dedication into reality. How can we set in motion a process that widens our collaboration as it contains and eventually narrows our competition? That competition—which is real, very expensive, and which neither of us can deny—can at some point become very dangerous, and therefore it should not go on unchecked. To me, this dictates nothing less than an effort, first, to widen where we can our collaborative efforts, especially in regard to nuclear arms limitations; and, second, the exercise of very deliberate self-restraint in regard to those trouble spots in the world which could produce a direct confrontation between us.

I welcome particularly your desire for increased cooperation looking toward an ending of the arms race and the achievement, without delay, of specific disarmament agreements.

It is in the arms control field that I feel we should place greatest emphasis. I will continue to give this my personal attention and can assure you that those who are responsible for these affairs within my administration will give any and all proposals made by you the closest and most positive examination.

Obviously, we must be mutually secure from successful attack, and we must take advantage of our roles as the most powerful nations to initiate substantive reduction in the level of conventional and nuclear armaments. We need not meet deadlines as such, but we do need to make maximum progress without delay.

I agree that in our exchanges and in the conversations which Secretary Vance will have in Moscow at the end of March, we should give priority attention to obtaining a SALT II agreement, perhaps including some substantial force level reductions. It might help us to achieve a successful conclusion to these negotiations if we agree that this is but a first step in a process that may lead to much greater reductions in the size of our respective nuclear arsenals. I wonder in this respect if it might not be helpful to examine the possibility of separating the cruise missile and Backfire issues from SALT II. We could return to those issues immediately in follow-up negotiations. If our objectives are sufficiently ambitious, and particularly if our desire is to achieve real disarmament within minimum forces left which are adequate to assure security to both parties, we may be able to deal more easily later with what appear now to be significant and difficult technical issues.

I hope that our additional personal exchanges and Secretary Vance's talks in Moscow will cover the broadest range of possibilities. I can assure you that the review I am currently conducting of our policies in the arms control field will examine all relevant proposals. As I have discussed with your Ambassador,³ I hope that we may look not only at possible drastic limitations in the total number of nuclear weapons, i.e. a minimum number of missiles that would allow each nation to feel secure from a preemptive strike, but also at restrictions on throw-weight, the possibility of prohibiting all mobile missiles, foregoing any further civil defense preparations, and such additional confidence-building measures as advance notification of all missile test firings and an agreement not to arm satellites or to develop a capability to destroy observation satellites. We also need to explore practical ways to satisfy our mutual need for assuring compliance with our agreements. Such matters as on-site inspection and unrestricted surveillance from space should not become subjects for misinterpretation. They are tools that can be used to make progress and gain public support and understanding for our efforts.

In all these areas, our ultimate aim should be to do more than our technicians tell us may now be advisable. If we keep our sights set on the most ambitious goal, we will be able to achieve a significant change in the level of threat to ourselves and the rest of the world.

It is counterproductive to attempt to negotiate an advantage over one another. We will try to consult without artifice or unnecessary delay, but without pressure or undue haste.

I welcome your willingness to intensify efforts to reach agreement on a comprehensive test ban. I recognize that there are remaining issues with respect to other countries who continue to have test programs and the possible use of peaceful nuclear explosions for mining or construction, but I believe there are satisfactory ways of dealing with these issues. I intend to ask the Congress to ratify the two existing agreements which have been negotiated between our two governments but I consider these only steps toward a common objective of a complete cessation of nuclear tests. In the meantime these unratified agreements will be honored by our government.

In the past, I know that there have been proposals for a demilitarization of the Indian Ocean and that these proposals were not seriously examined. I have asked my colleagues to look closely at the question of the Indian Ocean so that we may be prepared to comment in some detail on the possibilities for an agreement which would advance the cause of world peace. Please let me know specifically what you have in mind. I assume that in such a proposal adequate attention would have to be paid to military activities of both sides in the area. This seems to be a clear case where mutual benefit would require a balanced agreement which leads to a general lessening of military effort in the entire area.

As you know from my public statements, I intend to proceed vigorously in an attempt to reduce the sale or transfer of conventional arms to the third world and hope that you will join in this effort. It seems to me that this is a senseless competition and we, as major suppliers, have a particular responsibility to put limits on such transfers. Obviously other suppliers should be involved in such an effort and we will broaden the discussion to include them.

I also welcome your desire to proceed more vigorously with the Vienna negotiations on reducing armed forces and armaments in central Europe ultimately to minimum acceptable levels.⁴ We have been quite concerned about what seems to be an excessive increase in your military strength in Eastern Europe. We are currently reviewing our positions on this matter, while at the same time instructing our delegation to pursue the examination of data that has been submitted by both sides.

These are subjects that I hope Mr. Vance can discuss in some detail after we have completed our own review. We will, of course, conduct this particular review in complete consultations with our NATO allies.

I would like to make one remark with reference to the Quadripartite Agreement.⁵ As you know, we consider that this Agreement applies to all of Berlin and not just to West Berlin. It is very important for us to carry out the letter and the spirit of that Agreement. We will make every effort to avoid sensitive issues but we must insist that this Agreement, which is so central to our ability to develop peaceful relations in Europe, be implemented in full. Recently there seems to have been an increasing inclination to create new tensions and constraints in Berlin, which could cause deterioration in the delicate political balance there. I trust that you will help to alleviate these tensions.

We look forward to cooperation in pursuing further steps in implementation of the understandings reached in Helsinki regarding human rights.⁶ As I have said to Ambassador Dobrynin, we hope that all aspects of these understandings can be carried out. It is not our intention to interfere in the internal affairs of other nations. We do not wish to create problems with the Soviet Union but it will be necessary for our government to express publicly on occasion the sincere and deep feelings of myself and our people. Our commitment to the furtherance of human rights will not be pursued stridently or in a manner inconsistent with the achievement of reasonable results. We would also, of course, welcome private, confidential exchanges on these delicate areas.

I have noted your response to my earlier comments on the importance of improving trade and economic relations. Your frank expressions in this regard are in a spirit of candor that I admire, but we need to do something practical to bring about the removal of obstacles. For my part I intend to do what I can to achieve mutually beneficial increased trade, but you are aware of some of the Congressional inhibitions with which I must deal.

Let me say a word about our efforts to develop improvements in other areas where disharmony and potential conflicts exist. In the Middle East we are about to begin direct discussion with the parties in the area and it is then my hope to pursue with vigor the process of bringing about a just and lasting settlement. Mr. Vance will welcome the opportunity in his discussions at the end of March to obtain your views on this, including matters of direct interest to our roles as Co-Chairmen of the Geneva Conference.⁷

In Southern Africa we believe Africans should resolve their problems without outside interference. It is to this end that we have been urging peaceful solutions responsive to majority desires and have restricted taking actions that add to the potential for violence.

We have moved to open a dialogue with the Socialist Republic of Viet-Nam, to establish a basis for normal relations with that country. Elsewhere, we will also be guided by our commitment to true freedom, self-determination and economic progress.

I hope that we can continue these written exchanges in order to clarify our thinking and to engage in the widest possible examination of matters which are of such fundamental importance to our two peoples and to the peace of the world. From these frank communications we can evolve clear and concise bases on which to prepare for our discussions in person, a prospect which I await with great anticipation.

With best personal regards,

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

1. **Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Outside the System File, Box 69, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR): Brezhnev-Carter Correspondence: 1-2/77. No classification marking.**^e

Letter From Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev to President Carter

February 25, 1977

Dear Mr. President,

I have carefully studied your letter dated February 14, 1977.² I want to talk bluntly about our impression and thoughts it evoked. As I understand, you are for such straightforward talk.

The statements of a general nature in support of peace and curtailing arms race contained in the letter are certainly consonant with our own aspirations. We are definitely for working towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, and even more, towards general and complete disarmament under an effective international control.

However, the movement toward these lofty goals will by no means be expedited but on the contrary it will be hindered if we, first of all, do not treasure what has already been achieved in that direction over recent years and, secondly, if we supplant a balanced and realistic approach to the definition of further specific steps with putting forward deliberately unacceptable proposals.

Looking at your considerations from this very angle, we unfortunately did not see in many of them a striving for a constructive approach, a readiness for seeking mutually acceptable solutions to the problems which are the subject of our exchange of views.

As I have already written to you, we firmly proceed from the premise that it is necessary in the first place to complete the working out of a new agreement on the limitation of strategic offensive arms on the basis that was agreed upon in Vladivostok. It is a fact that the basic parameters of the agreement which were put down there, as well as additional provisions specifying those parameters which were agreed on during later negotiations, were the product of enormous efforts. On a number of occasions not easy decisions were required indeed for finding a mutually acceptable way out of the situations which seemed deadlocked. And to the extent that the agreement has already been completed, all its elements are interconnected, i.e. it is impossible to remove any important element from it without destroying its whole foundation.

It is sufficient to remind, for example—and it should be known to you, Mr. President, from the documents on the negotiations—that the method of counting the missiles equipped with MIRVs was clearly conditioned by achievement of agreement on the whole complex of cruise missiles. The US side not only agreed with that in principle, but in January last year a concrete formula for the accounting of air-to-surface cruise missiles within the aggregate of strategic arms was practically agreed upon. It remained to agree on concrete formulation regarding sea-based and land-based cruise missiles. True, the US side did try later to propose to leave the issue of sea-based and land-based cruise missiles outside the main agreement, but we categorically rejected such an attempt to depart from the agreement reached earlier.

Now we are invited to leave altogether outside the agreement the whole question of cruise missiles. How should we understand that return to the stage left far behind, to a completely non-perspective raising of the question? To agree with this proposal would mean that by closing one channel of the strategic arms race we open right away still another channel. And what is the difference indeed for people what kind of missile will kill them—a cruise missile or a non-cruise missile? There is no basis whatsoever also to think that it will be easier to resolve the question of cruise missiles later when the sides start deploying them, if we fail to do it now when they are still at the stage of development. The experience testifies convincingly to the contrary.

The continued intention, as is seen from your letter, to artificially retain the question of the Soviet medium-range bomber code-named Backfire in the US does not correspond in any way to what was agreed. Let be no doubts to this effect: we resolutely reject such an approach as not in keeping with the aims and the subject of negotiations and as pursuing only one thing—to complicate deliberately and even generally to cast a doubt upon the conclusion of an agreement.

And is the United States less interested than the Soviet Union in this agreement? We do not believe it and if someone thinks otherwise then it is a serious delusion.

In connection with the question you raised on a possibility of substantial reduction of levels of strategic forces agreed in Vladivostok it is appropriate to remind that we, on our part, have been and are in favor of ending the arms race and for the reduction of strategic forces as well. Agreement reached in Vladivostok testifies to that which for the USSR means a unilateral reduction of strategic delivery vehicles. This is a strive in deeds and not in words for reduction of armaments.

We are for confirming the results achieved in Vladivostok in an agreement without further delay and for moving on ahead. As it was agreed, we are ready immediately after the conclusion of the said agreement to proceed to talks about next steps and to discuss also possible reductions in the future.

However, there should be full clarity: any such steps should be first of all and in full degree in conformity with the principle of equality and equal security of the sides. I think, Mr. President, that no one can challenge the legitimacy of such a position.

Then, how does the idea of drastic reduction of the nuclear and missile forces of the USSR and US look like in that light? In your letter it is advanced separately from all the other aspects of the existing situation. Meanwhile it is evident that in that case there would be an immeasurable increase of importance—and to the unilateral benefit of the US—of such factors as differences in geographic positions of the sides, the presence of the US forward based nuclear systems and aircraft carrier aviation in the proximity of the USSR territory, the possession of nuclear weapons by the US NATO allies and other circumstances which cannot be discarded. The impossibility to ignore all these factors in considering the question of reducing the nuclear missile forces of the USSR and the US is so evident that we cannot fail to raise the question what is the true goal of putting forward proposals of that kind—which outwardly may be appealing to laymen but in fact

are aimed at gaining unilateral advantages. You yourself justly note that attempts to seek at negotiations advantages for one side over the other can only be counterproductive.

The same one-sidedness can be discerned in proposals about prohibiting all mobile missiles (meaning also intermediate missiles which have nothing to do with the subject matter of the Soviet-American negotiations), limiting throw weight, on-site inspections.

You know better, of course, the reason for presenting all those questions in such an unconstructive way. We, on our part, are in favour of having from the very beginning a business-like talk, for seeking mutually acceptable—I stress mutually acceptable—agreements. The Soviet Union will henceforth defend firmly its own interests in all issues while a realistic and constructive approach by the US side will always be met with our understanding and readiness to reach agreement. It is that balanced approach that we hope to see when Secretary Vance comes to Moscow.

It applies both to the problem of the limitation of strategic arms and other questions related to ending the arms race. We definitely expect that the US side will support our appropriate proposals including those on banning the development of new types and systems of weapons of mass annihilation, on banning chemical weapons, on concluding world treaty on non-use of force. Our proposals on those and a number of other questions, including the one of the Indian Ocean were expounded not once and in detail particularly in the UN. We could discuss as well such issues mentioned in your letter as notification of missile test firings, reduction of sales and transfer of conventional weapons to the third world countries etc., being guided by the interests of international security and strengthening peace.

We attach great importance to an agreement on reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe without prejudice to the security of any of the sides.

However, in your letter a onesided approach is clearly seen with regard to the negotiations in Vienna as well. Only in this way one can judge, for example, the words to the effect that the US side is viewing its position in connection with the negotiations in Vienna in the light of some “concern” about “an excessive increase” in the military strength in Eastern Europe. Not only an objective estimate of the actual situation is absent here, but the constructive proposals of the USSR and other socialist countries—participants in the negotiations aimed at achieving progress at the Vienna negotiations are totally ignored as well. We are also prepared henceforth to seek solutions and decisions, and we are ready for endeavours which do not imply acquiring by anyone unilateral advantages. But if we are expected to reduce unilaterally our defensive capabilities and thus to put ourselves and our allies in an unequal position, then nothing will come out of it.

It is impossible to agree with the evaluation given in the letter, of the situation regarding the carrying out of the Quadripartite Agreement. The USSR has not and does not infringe on a special status of West Berlin and the appeal to facilitate alleviating the tensions in that area is sent to a wrong address. The fact that there still appear

complications is connected with a quite definite policy of the FRG, which is pursued with the connivance of the three Western powers and in fact is aimed at eroding the Quadripartite Agreement and its corner stone provision that West Berlin does not belong to the FRG and cannot be governed by it. And the attempts to violate that provision constitute a very slippery way leading to the exacerbation of the situation. We proceed from the fact that the Quadripartite Agreement is to be observed strictly and steadfastly by all parties concerned. We shall strive in every possible way not to allow a return to the period when West Berlin served as a constant source of dangerous frictions and conflicts.

Without going now deeper into the details I shall say that your letter does not indicate at all any changes also in the US approach to such issues as the settlement in the Middle East or the correcting of the situation in the field of trade and economic relations between our countries, which would testify to an intention to really move to their successful solution.

And now the last thing. A so called question of "human rights" is raised again in the letter. The way we qualify the essence of this question and US administration's behavior in this connection was recently communicated through our Ambassador.³ This is our position of principle. We do not intend to impose upon your country or upon other countries our rules but neither shall we allow interference in our internal affairs, whatever pseudo-humanitarian slogans are used to present it. We shall resolutely respond to any attempts of this kind.

And how in general should we regard the situation when the US President sends messages to the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU and at the same time enters into correspondence with a renegade⁴ who proclaimed himself an enemy of the Soviet state and speaks out against normal, good relations between the USSR and the US. We would not like to have our patience tested in any matters of international policy including the questions of Soviet-American relations. This is not the way to deal with the Soviet Union.

Those are the thoughts, Mr. President, which occurred to my colleagues and to myself in connection with your letter. I did not choose rounded phrases, though they might have been more pleasant. The question is about too serious things to leave a room for any ambiguities or understatements.

My letter is warranted by the sincere concern about today and tomorrow of our relations and it is this main thought that I want to bring to you in all directness and confidentiality.

I hope that with the understanding of that high responsibility which is placed on the leadership of our two countries, we shall be able to insure progressive development of Soviet-American relations along the road of peace in the interests of our and all other peoples.

Sincerely,

L. Brezhnev

1. Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Outside the System File, Box 69, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR): Brezhnev–Carter Correspondence: 1–2/77. No classification marking. Printed from an unofficial translation. Carter recalled in his memoirs, “Brezhnev’s tone changed to harshness in his second message on February 25. His primary objection was to my aggressive proposals on nuclear arms limitations—advocating much deeper cuts than had been discussed at Vladivostok in 1975—but he also expressed strong opposition to our human-rights policy. He seemed especially provoked by my corresponding with him and at the same time sending a letter to Sakharov, who was considered by the Soviet leader to be ‘a renegade who proclaimed himself an enemy of the Soviet state.’” (Keeping Faith, p. 146)^c

Letter From President Carter to Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev

Washington, March 4, 1977
To General Secretary Brezhnev

Your letter of February 25th₂ caused me some concern because of its somewhat harsh tone, because it failed to assume good faith on my part, and because there was no positive response to specific suggestions contained in my previous letter. The differences between our countries are deep enough, and I hope that you and I never compound them by doubts about our respective personal motives.

The fact is that no final agreement was ever reached at Vladivostok nor in the subsequent negotiations regarding cruise missiles or the Backfire bomber. I am confident that such agreements can be attained in the future, and I am eager to seek them. I appreciate your concerns regarding the deferral of these issues to later negotiations but I do believe that something is to be gained from generating momentum through a more rapid agreement and I want to emphasize that a deferral of these two contentious issues would be designed only to facilitate a more rapid agreement, with all its positive political consequences. I am also confident that with mutual good will, we should be able to reach agreement regarding such matters as conventional armaments, tactical nuclear weapons, and throw weight.

I do not underestimate for a moment the difficulties that stand in our way. The resolution of these issues will require perseverance, patience, and determination. It is with that consideration in mind that I would like to make two further suggestions, both designed to help in resolving the differences between us.

First of all, I think it would be extremely useful if you were to indicate to us your views regarding greatly reduced strategic force levels which we might reach four or five years from now. In previous strategic arms limitation talks, we have tended to take small steps toward an uncertain future. I am suggesting that instead we seek to define a specific longer-term objective which we can then approach step-by-step with more assurance of success.

Secondly, our search for a stable accommodation would be enhanced by the rapid conclusion of a formal agreement between us on those issues on which both of us seem predisposed to agree.³ We should exploit the fact that we are in agreement or might reach an early agreement on such issues as:

- a) a limit of 2400 (or a mutually agreeable lower limit) on strategic delivery vehicles;
- b) a limit of 1320 (or a mutually agreeable lower limit) on launchers with multiple independent warheads;
- c) provisions for mutually satisfactory verification;
- d) prior notification of missile test launchings;

- e) a comprehensive test ban, including a temporary provision for the conclusion of ongoing peaceful programs;
- f) agreement not to arm satellites nor to develop the ability to destroy or damage satellites;
- g) the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean;
- h) a limit on civil defense efforts;
- i) mutual restraints on arms sales to Third World countries;
- j) elimination of mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The above list is certainly not all-inclusive, and other relatively noncontroversial matters could easily be added to it. The point is to move forward without delay on those issues on which we are able to agree, thereby generating the needed momentum for coping immediately thereafter with more intractable questions.

We are working on these problems with the greatest possible effort, preparing for Secretary Vance's discussions with you in Moscow.

I hope you will⁴ not predicate your future correspondence on the erroneous assumption that we lack sincerity, integrity, or the will to make rapid progress toward mutually advantageous agreements. I do not underestimate the difficulty of the substantive issues or the technical details, but I am determined to succeed in laying the foundation for a stable and peaceful relationship between our two countries. We do not seek any one-sided advantage.

I do not think of our letters as official negotiating documents, but if exchanged on a personal and completely confidential basis they may very well help us both to chart the needed sense of historical direction. It is in this spirit that this correspondence was initiated, and I want you to know that I am committed to arms reduction as a matter of personal belief and because it represents the desire of the people of my country. I hope and believe that you and your people have the same commitment.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter ⁵

1. Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Outside the System File, Box 69, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR): Brezhnev–Carter Correspondence: 1–2/77. No classification marking. In the upper right-hand corner, Carter wrote, “Zbig—O.K. to transmit as amended. J.C.”^e
2. See Document 12.^e

3. The end of this sentence originally read "substantial consensus already exists." Carter struck through these words and substituted "both of us seem predisposed to agree."
4. This sentence originally began "Please do." Carter struck through these words and substituted "I hope you will."
5. Printed from a copy that bears this typed signature.

Letter From Soviet General Secretary Brezhnev to President Carter

March 15, 1977

Dear Mr. President,

Having studied your letter of March 4, I would like to set forth once more the substance of our understanding of the way the things are with the working out of an agreement on strategic offensive arms limitation (to be effective till 1985), as well as to state in more detail our position on specific questions which are still outstanding.

Here are some general observations to start with. We are naturally in favor of concluding an agreement as soon as possible, without delay. However, an attempt to do it on the basis of some artificially simplified version does not by any means expedite the matter if we keep in view the aim we place before us, namely, to really limit strategic arms, being guided by the principle of undiminished security for either of the contracting parties. Just the same, the preparation of an agreement would in no way be expedited if, putting aside some questions which, for that matter, have been worked up in many respects, we would start attaching to it some new issues which, besides, have no direct relation to the subject matter of the agreement.

Conclusion of a new agreement between our countries on limiting strategic arms would certainly have great political significance both for Soviet-US relations and on a broader plane. However, it will be feasible only if the agreement constitutes a real step in the direction of limiting strategic arms. Otherwise, it would be counterproductive.

That would be precisely the case if the question of cruise missiles were left outside the agreement. That question is not only most directly related to the core of the new agreement but it also—which is essential—has been worked up in many respects. Even some specific formulas have been agreed upon. To propose now to put cruise missiles outside the framework of the agreement would mean not only a step back to the initial positions but would also leave a way open for expanding the arms race to a new dangerous direction.

That, we think, corresponds in no way to the goals of rapid conclusion of an agreement on limiting strategic arms. Therefore we confirm our concrete proposals on the whole complex of cruise missiles, namely:

—To consider heavy bombers when equipped with cruise missiles capable of a range of 600 to 2500 kilometers as delivery vehicles equipped with MIRVs and to count them correspondingly in a certain ratio (depending upon the type of a heavy bomber) against the agreed level for such delivery vehicles—1320; air-to-surface cruise missiles capable of a range in excess of 2500 kilometers should be completely banned; the equipping with cruise missiles capable of a range of 600 to 2500 kilometers of other aircraft except heavy bombers, should be also banned;

—All sea-based and land-based cruise missiles capable of a range in excess of 600 kilometers should be completely banned.

I would like to remind once again that our agreement to include into the aggregate number of the missiles equipped with MIRVs (1320) all the missiles of the types, of which even one has been tested with MIRVs, was and remains conditioned upon reaching a final agreement on the questions of cruise missiles.

As for the Soviet medium bomber code-named by you Backfire, we have given official data about the range of this aircraft (2200 km) and expressed readiness to enter into the records of the negotiations this data as well as our intention not to provide this aircraft with capabilities to operate at intercontinental distances—all this on the condition that the issue of Backfire is completely and totally withdrawn from further negotiations. We confirm that position of ours.

The issue of mobile launchers for ballistic missiles of intercontinental range naturally should find its solution in the agreement in question. Earlier we proposed to agree that over the period that agreement remains in force the sides should refrain from deploying land-based mobile ICBM launchers.

Our approach to the question of a possibility for subsequent reductions of the USSR and US strategic forces is set forth in my letter of February 25. I repeat that we shall be ready to proceed to the discussions of this issue immediately after the signing of the agreement. However, it is necessary that account should be taken here of those factors which I already wrote you about on February 25, i.e. such factors as differences in geographic positions of the sides, the presence of the US forward based nuclear systems and aircraft carrier aviation in the proximity of the USSR territory, the possession of nuclear weapons by the US NATO allies and other circumstances which cannot be discarded.

Having in mind these factors and the above mentioned considerations regarding cruise missiles, it could be possible not only to limit the levels of strategic nuclear delivery vehicles for the sides (2400 and 1320) but also to consider the number of such delivery vehicles to be reduced even before the expiration of the agreement being worked out.

The above considerations represent our position of principle which we intend to adhere to in the forthcoming talks with Secretary Vance. The additional questions which are mentioned in your letter, Mr. President, also undoubtedly deserve attention. We shall be prepared to set forth our preliminary considerations on those matters. On those of them, where a prospect appears for finding mutually acceptable solutions special negotiations would be conducted. If progress is achieved, appropriate agreements could be signed simultaneously with the strategic arms limitation agreement.

In conclusion I would like to note, Mr. President, that I do not quite understand the meaning of your reference to the tone of my letter of February 25. Its tone is usual—business-like and considerate. If you have in mind the direct and frank way in which it expounds our views, then I proceeded and do now from the premise that a dialogue of that very nature is in the interests of the matter. If you yet have in mind our attitude of principle toward the attempts to raise issues which go beyond the relations between

states, and in general are far-fetched, then no other reaction from our side can be expected.

I assume that our personal correspondence will serve the interests of constructive development of the relations between our countries.

Sincerely,

L. Brezhnev

- 1. Source: Carter Library, National Security Affairs, Staff Material, Office, Outside the System File, Box 69, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR): Brezhnev–Carter Correspondence: 3–5/77. No classification marking. Printed from an unofficial translation.**e

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