

8 National and International Security: The Policy Problem

In the preceding chapters we have examined different aspects and levels of the national security problem at considerable length. The emphasis throughout has been on the objective dimensions of the problem at the level of individuals, states and the system as a whole. Regardless of these neat, and rather abstract inquiries, however, at the end of the day national security must still be dealt with as a policy problem. The various actors involved have to cope with the national security problem in real time, and in the light of their very different experiences and capabilities. Their policies, regardless of logic or merit, go out into the system, and in aggregate become the larger structures, processes and dynamics which we have discussed.

In the best of all possible worlds, all the actors in international relations would possess perfect information, would understand the positions and motives of others, and also the workings of the system as a whole, would be capable of making rational decisions based on this information and understanding, and would be free to make, and to implement, such decisions. Such a situation would greatly ease the job both of foreign policy decision-makers and of academic analysts. Unfortunately, we do not live in this perfect world. In the real world, policy-makers are only partially informed, do not fully understand other actors or the system, are capable of only limited rationality, and are highly constrained in what they can do. Because of these imperfections, the policy-making process itself becomes an important component in the national security problem. Many factors within it have little to do with the problem itself, but none the less have a considerable influence on policies produced in the name of national security. Because of the powerful feedback effects between policy and the problem, as illustrated by arms racing, the policy-making process becomes a major source of intervening variables in relation to the larger rationalities of the national security problem.

This whole issue of domestic variables has been extensively analysed in the large literature on foreign policy,¹ so we do not need to repeat that exercise here. Instead, we shall confine ourselves to

surveying the
security po
how these
We shall ta
purely logi
about ends
factors whi
has securit
to have a c
policy is m
to the need

Logical

The makin
the object
instrument
Even if we
interfere v
Many com
fundament
always im
essentially
starting pe
Taken ε
problem th
obtained i
aspiration
impossible
extremely
arise abou
adjustmen
which rel
permanen
imperfect,
serve as a
satisfactor
ephemeral
as we have
to acquire
stimulate
measures

surveying the kinds of intervening variables which affect national security policy in particular, and to drawing some conclusions about how these variables affect the national security problem as a whole. We shall take three approaches to this subject, looking first at the purely logical dilemmas faced by policy-makers in making choices about ends and means, and then at the perceptual and the political factors which complicate the policy-making process. Every country has security relations whether it wants them or not. Most would like to have a coherent and reliable security policy, but, as always, such a policy is much harder to acquire than is the problem which gives rise to the need for it.

Logical Problems

The making of national security policy requires choices about both the objectives of policy (ends), and the techniques, resources, instruments and actions which will be used to implement it (means). Even if we assume that neither political nor perceptual problems interfere with the process, these choices are not straightforward. Many complex logical difficulties arise which, because they reflect the fundamental character of the national security problem itself, will always impinge on policy choices. Here we are back again to the essentially contested nature of security as a concept, which was the starting point of our inquiry.

Taken as an end, national security runs immediately into the problem that it can never be achieved. Complete security cannot be obtained in an anarchic system, and therefore to hold that goal as an aspiration is to condemn oneself to pursuit of an operationally impossible objective. If national security is a relative end, then extremely complicated and objectively unanswerable questions arise about how much security is enough, and about how to make adjustments to the ceaseless changes in the innumerable criteria by which relative security must be defined. Relative security is a permanently unsatisfactory condition. It can always be criticised as imperfect, because on logical grounds it must be so. And it can never serve as a stable resting place, because the factors which define a satisfactory relative level at any given moment are themselves ephemeral. The structure of the system and its interaction dynamics, as we have seen, complete this dilemma by ensuring that any attempt to acquire, or even move towards, complete security by any actor will stimulate reactions which raise the level of threat in proportion to the measures taken. The arms race, the Cold War and the defence

dilemma give new meaning in this context to Shakespeare's observation that, 'security is mortals' chiefest enemy'.²

Attempts to clarify the ends of security policy naturally lead to attempts at definition, an exercise which we specifically eschewed at the beginning of this book. Wolfers warned about its ambiguity, and Charles Schultze argues explicitly that: 'The concept of national security does not lend itself to neat and precise formulation. It deals with a wide variety of risks about whose probabilities we have little knowledge and of contingencies whose nature we can only dimly perceive.'³ Several writers have, none the less, taken this approach. Their efforts to define national security typically confuse aspirations with operational ends. Hence, they usually underplay its relativistic dimension, which is where most of its real meaning lies, and fall into the trap of emphasising the more appealing simplicities of security as an absolute condition.

A major reason for this is that such definitions are normally associated with discussion of great powers, which by definition are more able to approach perfect security than are lesser powers. This is particularly true of the United States. No country in the history of the modern state system has approached the level of relative dominance and absolute security which the United States enjoyed in the decade following 1945. The steady erosion of its relative position since then serves only to enhance the image of its former absolute superiority and high security as possibly re-attainable goals, even though at the time they were experienced in the paranoid context of the Cold War. The bias in security definitions towards great powers and absolute security also reflects first, the dominance of the Realist School in International Relations, with its emphasis on power, and second, an arcadian longing for the simpler days when defence was a clear and meaningful concept.

Examples of these attempts include the following:

Walter Lippmann: '... a nation is secure to the extent to which it is not in danger of having to sacrifice core values if it wishes to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by victory in such a war.'⁴

Arnold Wolfers: '... security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked.'⁵

Michael H.H. Lohr: 'national security includes traditional defence policy and also 'the non-military actions of a state to ensure its total capacity to survive as a political entity in order to exert influence and to carry out its internal and international objectives'.⁶

lat
cor
cor
Fre
of
nat
pro
poi
Jol
thr
The
which
in spe
absoli
condi
itself
the sp
useful
securi
firmne
onto l
values
them
under
object
the on
does a
to hav
infring
point
quo at
that n
whole
The
power
firm ar
it allfec
are de
conne
nature
on leve
the pur
at least
are led

Ian Bellamy: 'Security itself is a relative freedom from war, coupled with a relatively high expectation that defeat will not be a consequence of any war that should occur.'⁷

Frank N. Trager and F.N. Simonie: 'National security is that part of government policy having as its objective the creation of national and international political conditions favourable to the protection or extension of vital national values against existing and potential adversaries.'⁸

John E. Mroz: 'Security is 'the relative freedom from harmful threats'.⁹

These definitions are not without merit, especially that of Mroz which avoids any absolutist bias, and is too vague to get bogged down in specifics. For purely semantic reasons, it is difficult to avoid the absolute sense of security. The word itself implies an absolute condition – something is either secure or insecure – and does not lend itself to the idea of a measurably-graded spectrum like that which fills the space between hot and cold. Although these definitions do a useful service in pointing out some of the criteria for national security, they do a disservice by giving the concept an appearance of firmness which it does not merit, and by focusing attention primarily onto level 2. Most of them avoid crucial questions. What are 'core values'? Are they a fixed or a floating reference point? And are they in themselves free from contradictions? Does 'victory' mean anything under contemporary conditions of warfare? Are subjective and objective aspects of security separable in any meaningful way? Is war the only form of threat relevant to national security? And what right does a state have to define its security values in terms which require it to have influence beyond its own territory, with the almost inevitable infringement of others' security interests which this implies? This last point leads us back to the discussion of objectives as between status quo and revisionist states in the last chapter, with its strong lesson that national security cannot be considered in isolation from the whole structure of the international system.

These definitions tend towards an absolute view of security, a great power orientation, and the notion that national security has some firm and readily identifiable meaning. Their bias is important because it affects a major logical divide in how the ends of national security are defined, and therefore in how policy is oriented. This divide connects particularly to the arguments made in chapter 3 about the nature of threats and vulnerabilities, and the choice between action on level 2 or level 3 as a response. If we start with the tautology that the purpose of national security policy is to make the state secure, or at least *sufficiently* secure if we reject the absolute possibility, then we are led to the question 'How?'. It is within this question that the

divide on security ends occurs. The whole inquiry assumes that threats exist, that insecurity is a problem. The divide is this: security can be pursued either by taking action to reduce vulnerability, or by trying to eliminate or reduce the threats by addressing their causes at source. The first of these options we shall call the *national security strategy*, because it is based largely within the threatened state. The second we shall call the *international security strategy*, because it depends on the adjustment of relations between states.¹⁰

If a national security strategy is adopted, then security policy will tend to be focused on the state. Vulnerabilities can be reduced by increasing self-reliance, and countervailing forces can be built up to deal with specific threats. If the threats are military, then they can be met by strengthening one's own military forces, by seeking alliances, or by hardening the country against attack. Economic threats can be met by increasing self-reliance, diversifying sources of supply, or learning to do without. The whole range of threats surveyed in chapter 3 is relevant here, for any or all of them might have to be met in this strategy by countervailing actions based on the threatened state, and appropriate to the particular situation. Thus, for example, one of the primary British responses to German naval building programmes in the early years of this century was to increase the strength of the Royal Navy as an offset force. The British made quite clear their intention to match and exceed German construction, so that whatever the German effort, they would be allowed to make no gain beyond a ratio of forces set by, and favourable to, Britain. In this way, Britain could meet the German threat directly by taking measures within Britain which would counteract or offset the particular type of threat being developed by the Germans.

The national security strategy is not without its merits but, almost by definition, it makes less sense for lesser powers. As a rule, only great powers command sufficient resources to carry it off.¹¹ This great power emphasis connects the national security strategy with the biases in thinking about national security which we looked at above. Indeed, the very term 'national security' implies a self-help approach which is perhaps not surprising given its American origins. The principal advantages of a national security strategy are that threats can be met specifically as they arise, and that the measures which provide security are largely, if not wholly, under the control of the state concerned. In theory, and resources permitting, measures could be taken against all identified threats which would have the total effect of blocking or offsetting all sources of insecurity. A pleasing certainty attaches to this approach, not only because the state retains firm control over the sources of its own security, but also because it deals with the firm realities of capabilities rather than with the

uncertain
security
making
quo or i
struggle
extent tl
its best,
founded
the han

The p
based a
work to
powerfu
nationa
an open
to accot
4-7. Th
2, to a
contem
leads to
complet
feedback
strategy
consequ
security
having a
balance-
power-s
operatic
further,
only de
conditic
between
political
then, fa
Ashley's

If the
ted, sect
purpose
eliminat
other th
British
they wo
sort, or

uncertainties of other actors' intentions. For this reason, a national security strategy enables its practitioner to avoid the burden of making difficult distinctions about whether other actors are status quo or revisionist, and whether the security problem reflects a power struggle or a security one. All these distinctions can be ignored to the extent that the state can afford to protect itself against any threats. At its best, this approach would produce a security which was clearly founded, relatively straightforward in operation, and indisputably in the hands of each actor in relation to itself.

The problem with the national security strategy is that its logic is based almost wholly on level 2. Great powers will be able to make it work to some extent, but even they will not be able to ignore the powerful security logic which operates on level 3. Because the national security strategy ignores the sources of threats, it risks both an open-ended commitment to expenditure of resources and a failure to account for the security dynamics which we examined in chapters 4-7. The logic of the national security strategy by itself leads, on level 2, to a militarised and security-obsessed society, of which the best contemporary examples are Israel and the Soviet Union. On level 3, it leads to a highly charged security dilemma which will largely, perhaps completely, defeat the strategy by subjecting it to intense, negative feedback, as in an arms race. The weakness of the national security strategy by itself is that it cannot escape from the interactive consequences of its own effect on the system. Although national security measures may be argued to influence the sources of threat by having a deterrent effect on their perpetrators, any such effect must be balanced against the stimulation which the measures give to the power-security dilemma. Where a defence dilemma is also in operation, the logic of the national security strategy collapses even further, because military threats can no longer be turned aside but only deterred by threats of unacceptable retaliation. Under these conditions, as we have seen, the danger arises of a disharmony between individual and national security which can undermine the political foundations of the strategy. The national security strategy, then, falls victim both to Booth's critique of ethnocentrism, and Ashley's critique of 'technical rationality'.¹²

If the second option – an international security strategy – is adopted, security policy focuses on the sources and causes of threats, the purpose being not to block or offset the threats, but to reduce or eliminate them by political action. Thus, the British had options other than building more Dreadnoughts than the Germans. Had the British government been bent on an international security strategy, they would have given priority to reaching a naval agreement of some sort, or to changing the basis of relations with Germany so that the

Germans had lower incentives to acquire massive naval forces of their own. Some attempts at reaching a naval agreement were indeed made during the later stages of the naval race. The international security strategy has a number of advantages: it addresses the security logic of level 3 squarely, and offers a prospect of a much more efficient security policy than that available with a national security strategy. If threats have been eliminated at source, then resources do not have to be wasted in meeting each of them on its own terms. Such resource economies would have a positive feedback effect in as much as they muted the power-security dilemma, and led to a general lowering of threats all round. They make an attractive alternative to the costly and dangerous competitive security-seeking of unregulated national security strategies. In addition, an international security strategy offers options other than association with a great power to the majority of lesser states whose resources do not permit them to pursue a national security strategy on their own. One of the reasons why these lesser powers pose continuing security problems to the great powers is precisely because they are unable to pursue an effective national security strategy on their own, and therefore need to be attached to a larger power. Pressure from the defence dilemma also makes a very good case for an international security strategy, since the high risks of mutual deterrence need to be offset by sufficient management of relations to ensure that the probabilities of major conflict remain as close to zero as possible.

Unfortunately, the international security strategy is also not without its problems. The most obvious of these is that, where a power struggle is in operation, the basic conditions for an international strategy cannot be met. If states actually want to threaten each other, then there will be severe limits to the scope for threat reduction by negotiation, and those feeling threatened will be forced to adopt a national security approach. Related to this is the disadvantage that states lose considerable control over the factors which provide their security. An international security strategy depends on the management of relations among states, and these are notoriously fickle. The instability of intentions as compared with the relative durability of capabilities is one of the longest-standing axioms of international relations. If one rests one's security on restraint by others in offering threats, then one's security is at the mercy of changes of mind by others. This contrasts unfavourably with the self-reliance logic of the national security strategy, for it seems reasonable to argue that if one does not control the conditions of one's security, then one is secure only in a superficial sense. The only remedy for this problem is to follow the logic of the international security strategy to its full extent, but this would require the erosion

of the st
which w
We are t
dilemma
also bep
easy or o
and the v
is not pc

Taken
internati
bases fo
general r
objective
and level
the strair
the threa
a policy
elements
a serious
two strat
that mak
rative of
internatic
ment are
national
security)
consequ
obviously

The mi
balance
splendid
Alliances
security p
from leve
illustrates
national
however,
national
While the
constitute
security c
strategy c
are with a
alliances

of the state and the dissolution of the state system, an eventuality which we have already rejected as unreal for the foreseeable future. We are back again to the problem of world government. This same dilemma occurs if we follow the logic of the arms dynamic, which can also be posited as a difficulty of the international security strategy. No easy or obvious grounds for stable ACD exist, as argued in chapter 7, and the world government solution which would resolve the dilemma is not politically available.

Taken by themselves, then, neither the national security nor the international security strategies are free from serious problems as bases for policy. The difficulty is that while national security in general represents a level 2 objective (making the state secure), this objective cannot be achieved without taking action on both level 2 and level 3. Action on level 2 or level 3 alone cannot work, because of the strain on national resources in the case of level 2, and because of the threat to the basic character of the state on level 3. The solution is a policy which mixes elements of a national security strategy with elements of an international security one, but this approach also faces a serious obstacle. While it would be going too far to suggest that the two strategies are mutually exclusive, there is much between them that makes their simultaneous operation contradictory. The imperative of minimising vulnerabilities sits unhappily with the risks of international agreement, and the prospects for international agreement are weakened by the power-security dilemma effects of a national security strategy. Despite this problem, in the real world security policy must be, and indeed is, a mix, if only because the consequences of pursuing either strategy singlemindedly are so obviously disastrous.

The most common middle ground is alliance policy as part of the balance of power game, as illustrated by Britain's move from splendid isolation to the Triple Entente in the years before 1914. Alliances manipulate the distribution of power by adding national security policies together, and in this sense they represent a step away from level 2 towards level 3. But as the fractious history of NATO illustrates, alliances do not escape the severe tensions between national and international security strategies. More important, however, is that alliances represent much more a variation on the national security theme than a move towards international security. While they may serve some security needs for some states, they do not constitute an attempt to mitigate the basic dynamics of the power-security dilemma. They are more in line with the national security strategy of increasing strength and reducing vulnerability than they are with an international strategy aimed at reducing threats. At best, alliances can serve an international security strategy by creating an

aggregated framework for reducing threats. Thus, NATO not only provides a structure within which western European states can reduce the threats they would otherwise exchange among themselves, but it also serves, to a limited extent, as a multi-national unit in the pursuit of accommodation with the Soviet Union.

The question that remains is, what kind of mix between level 2 and level 3 strategies is most appropriate? The trend of our argument so far is that too much emphasis gets placed on the national security strategy and not enough on the international one, so the implication is that security policy needs a stronger international emphasis. We shall return to this point in the final chapter when we consider holistic approaches to the national security problem.

The logical difficulties of choosing between national and international security strategies represent a core element in the national security policy problem, and would do so even if threats, and the means of dealing with them, were clear and understood factors in the equation. In fact, however, neither threats nor policy means are clear factors, and consequently a second, and more basic level of logical problem exists for security policy-makers. The discussion in chapters 2 and 3 sketched out much of the problem in relation to threats, vulnerabilities and policy means. Trying to assess vulnerabilities leads us back to the ambiguities inherent in applying a concept like security to intangible referent objects like the idea of the state. Threats are numerous and diverse in type and form, and consequently the security problem they create is complex, shifting and frequently unclear. Some elements of a particular threat can be relatively clear (the capability of Soviet missiles to wreak massive damage on the NATO states), while others are clouded in obscurity (the reasons for Soviet force strength and the probability that they would risk a nuclear war). Similarly, a choice of means might appear to strengthen a state's security position (the creation of a powerful German navy between 1898 and 1914), while in fact leading to an aggregate result which worsens it (stimulating a more than proportionate growth in British naval strength, and pushing Britain into an anti-German association with the two powers which had previously been its major rivals, France and Russia).

In addition, threats cannot uniformly be seen as a bad thing. Some level of external threat may be politically useful in suppressing domestic political squabbling, and maintaining the political coherence and identity of the state. While it may be argued that this effect is most useful to repressive governments, it cannot be denied that it plays a significant political role in most states. The history of American domestic politics, for example, would have been quite different in the absence of strong and widespread anti-communist

sentiment
they ser
security
nature c
reliably.
enormo

This :
particul
more ge
have err
though :
matters
OAEPC
security
impact c
about tl
incalcul
argumen
fundame
The diffi
theory th
true, this
maintain
World V
maintain
unsettlin
of securit
political
resulting
decline. I
may well
of past c
such mag
to figure

Another
policy le
structure
Waltz's, i
the one r
anarchy,
terms. No
effects, as
and long
individua

sentiments. Such unities of negatives are a political fact, and even if they serve mainly the interest of élites, they still leave the puzzle for security policy of 'When is a threat not a threat?' If neither the true nature of threats, nor the likely impact of means, can be calculated reliably, then the difficulty of security policy-making is compounded enormously.

This problem gets worse as one moves away from the highly particular, day-to-day issues of national security, and towards the more general, larger-scale and longer-term perspectives which we have emphasised in the preceding chapters. It is relatively easy, though still in an absolute sense difficult, to deal with immediate matters like what to do if the Soviets invade West Germany, or OAPC reduces oil supplies. It is much more difficult to handle security questions of a larger scope, such as how to deal with the impact of the economic system on the political one, or what to do about the arms dynamic. These questions are so complex and incalculable that they are frequently not even asked. Yet, as the argument in this book indicates, many of the larger issues have a fundamental importance to the overall problem of national security. The difficulty of linking these ideas to policy is illustrated by the theory that hegemonic powers cannot sustain the role indefinitely. If true, this theory suggests that a country like the United States cannot maintain the international position it won for itself during the Second World War. If the United States defines its security in terms of maintaining its position, then it is doomed to a steady and highly unsettling erosion of the conditions by which it defines its own sense of security. Even worse, analysis of its security problems leads to the politically unacceptable conclusion that domestic developments resulting from initial success are an important factor in the present decline. Dwindling adaptability and loss of leadership in innovation may well be at the root of a national security problem defined in terms of past conditions. But in policy terms, this constitutes an issue of such magnitude, complexity and political sensitivity that it is unlikely to figure at all in the mainstream of national security policy-making.

Another illustration of the problem of linking larger ideas to the policy level can be taken from our earlier discussion of system structure and process. Even if one finds convincing arguments like Waltz's, that bipolar systems are the safest in security terms, or like the one made in chapter 4 about the security benefits of a mature anarchy, the question is how such ideals can be addressed in policy terms. No state commands the resources to create massive systemic effects, and systemic evolution is easily dismissed as a complicated and long-term process which is effectively beyond the reach of individual policy actions. A purposeful move towards a specified

system structure would involve not only an unprecedented degree of policy coordination among states, but also a massive political commitment to a largely theoretical proposition. The international economy is often thought about in macro-terms, but only in rare watersheds, like that following the Second World War, can major changes in design be implemented by conscious policy. Most of the time, the character of the economic system is determined more by the cumulative impact of many actors pursuing their own interests than it is by the impact of attempts of international economic planning. The creation of the European Community (EC) is a rare example of macro-policy in the political domain. In a fully developed version, the EC would amount to a major transformation in the international distribution of power, with profound implications for the structure of the system. Little thinking, outside the not unimportant resolution of the western European security complex which it provides, appears to have been done as to the macro-purposes of this transformation. Those who accept Waltz's argument on the virtues of bipolarity must presumably view its implications with alarm.

National security policy-makers normally have enough difficulty coping with short-term problems without having to think on the grander scales which this level involves. From their perspective, it is much easier to leave the system to take care of itself. The system as an entity is both too unmanageable for them to deal with, and beyond their national political mandate. At best it can be relegated to the background with the hope that its natural development will somehow turn out to be progressive and benign, with factors such as technology, education, experience, interdependence and environmental constraints pushing steadily towards a more sensible arrangement of international relations. Only disarmament and world government among the grander ideas have actually made it onto the security policy agenda. But neither is considered realistic, and their function is, at best, to inject a moral and idealist perspective into security policy and, at worst, to provide a smokescreen for the practice of short-term, business-as-usual, power politics.

The difficulty of creating a practicable macro-dimension to national security policy tends to confine policy-makers to a narrow, short-term focus. But even at this more restricted level, the ambiguities of ends and means cause serious difficulties. These difficulties are compounded by the lack of clear direction from a well-developed sense of larger objectives, priorities and methods. What we are discussing here fits neatly into the classic model of collective action in which the narrow pursuit of interests by individual actors does not lead to the fulfilment of the general good. No benevolent, invisible hand operates to ensure that general well-being results from the

pursui
revers
rally n
pictur
How,
range
widely
vailing
are se
gerous
examp
interw
War. I
1930s,
the lat
Log
arise fi
deterri
interes
Treaty
term s
longer
the Tr
interv
foreign
1970s'.
critica
with v
howev
the no
standa
Gernæ
of Len
centur
power
App
securit
securit
destru
Such a
invade
the 'be
might
prospe

pursuit of individual interest. Indeed, the invisible hand operates to reverse effect, amplifying individual security-seeking into the generally malign result of the power-security dilemma. Because the large picture is so unclear, even short-range policy can be hard to assess. How, for instance, can policy-makers determine the appropriate range and direction for their policies? If security horizons are set too widely, then resources are wasted unnecessarily, and the counter-vailing operation of the power-security dilemma is intensified. If they are set too narrowly, then threats will already have become dangerously large before action is taken. The United States provides an example here, having set its security horizons too narrowly during the interwar years, and, by way of reaction, too widely during the Cold War. Can it be argued in retrospect that either isolationism in the 1930s, or the intervention in Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s, served the larger purposes of American national security?

Logical conundrums of the kind associated with utilitarian calculus arise from this problem of range. For example, is a policy like nuclear deterrence, which serves short-term interests, but subjects the interests of future generations to grave risks, sound? Was the 1919 Treaty of Versailles a good policy in view of the undeniable short-term security benefits to France and others, as weighed against the longer-term outcome in the European security complex with which the Treaty is now associated? How do American rationalisations for intervention in Lebanon in 1958 look now in the light of the civil and foreign chaos which have reigned in that country since the mid-1970s? These questions are unfair in the sense that they apply the easy critical wisdom of hindsight to decisions made under pressure and with virtually no reliable knowledge of future effects. The purpose, however, is not to score debating points, but to illustrate how poorly the normal logic of national security works, even by its own standards. The ultimate example here must be the decision by the German and Austro-Hungarian authorities to facilitate the activities of Lenin and his Bolsheviks during the early years of the twentieth century. Few short-term security ploys aimed at weakening a rival power can have produced such disastrous long-term results as this.

Applying long-term criteria to the judgement of short-term security goals can produce alarming results. In the normal context of security analysis, invasion and occupation rank just below total destruction at the top of the hierarchy of threats to national security. Such a threat is seen to justify extreme measures like those taken by invaded and threatened countries during the Second World War. On the 'better dead than red' principle and its counterparts, occupation might even be resisted by something approaching national suicide – a prospect facing front-line states in any nuclear war in Europe. If a

long historical view is taken, however, invasion and occupation might be seen as often being no bad thing. Although it might be hard for the generation which experiences it, one could argue that it is seldom worse than war unless the invader's bent on genocide.

Many historical invasions appear in retrospect to have produced a fruitful mixing of cultures. The Roman and Norman invasions of Britain are not now seen as disasters. Much of the Mediterranean world prospered under Roman rule. Japan can hardly be said to have been devastated by American occupation. Even eastern Europe has not done badly since 1945 when compared with its previous condition; certainly not so badly that annihilation would seem a reasonable alternative if a choice were offered. One might almost argue that European and Indian civilisation has been built on the fruits of invasion and cultural mixing. Such thoughts amount to heresy in relation to conventional security thinking and the political commitment to the independent state on which it rests. Until recently, they would have been rendered politically utopian both by the vested interest of the current generation, and by the immense strength of the nation-state culture. But the rise of the defence dilemma may yet propel them into the arena of political realism. One might speculate, in this context, whether Soviet hegemony over Europe would be worse than nuclear war. Extending the thought, one might ask whether a Soviet absorption of so massive and dynamic a cultural entity as western Europe would not wreak larger transformations on the Soviet system than on the European. Such speculations are unanswerable, but no more so than calculations of nuclear risk. They serve not only to illustrate the logical difficulties of security policy, but also to raise core questions about the purposes and priorities of security policy-makers.

Perceptual Problems

Logical problems are only part of the difficulty inherent in the national security policy process. In most areas they are accompanied by perceptual uncertainties. The perceptual problem is fundamental because it affects the entire information base on which the decision-making process rests. It has two components, which are the same for individuals as for states: perceptions vary according to where the observer is located in relation to the thing viewed, and according to the internal constitution of the viewer. Positional perspectives vary in time and space. Thus, the fall of the Roman empire looked quite different to a sixth-century citizen of Rome than it did to one living in

1981, and than it did to a viewer of a different capability. A viewer believes. The century J. liberately view of the experience troubles c orthodox problem a them has : which ma constituti the others As arguec factors, b maintains through v

The me Byzantine extensivel Jervis.¹⁴ imperfect. in extent, expands t allegiance equipmen neries, an accuracy, gather or security p selection friends), e like Khru Once recr various p are necess at the bu

Just as of people bureaucra recognisa

1981, and the First World War looked quite different from Japan than it did from France. Constitutional factors reflect the sensory capability, historical memory and psychological make-up of the viewer. As Robert Jervis sums it up, one tends to see what one believes.¹³ Thus, external events made little impact on eighteenth-century Japan, because contact with the outside world was deliberately kept very limited. Most Third World countries find their view of the international system heavily conditioned by their colonial experience, and Marxist thinkers will see the current economic troubles of the West quite differently from those trained to more orthodox economic views. These two components of the perceptual problem apply to all the states in the international system. Each of them has a different positional perspective on the objects and events which make up the information base of the system, and the constitutional structure of each is sufficiently different from that of all the others to ensure that they see any single event or thing differently. As argued in chapter 2, states are united as a class by relatively few factors, but differentiated from each other by many. The process maintains itself as each state accumulates a distinctive history through which current events get filtered.

The mechanisms of the perceptual problems are rooted in the Byzantine complexities of human psychology, and have already been extensively explored in the context of international politics by Robert Jervis.¹⁴ Perception is distorted initially because information is imperfect. The relevant information for security policy is enormous in extent, covering almost all areas of human activity. It changes and expands constantly. Much of it, such as the depth of political allegiance (as in the Warsaw Pact countries), the quality of military equipment under wartime conditions, the efficiency of state machineries, and the motives of actors, is inherently unknowable with any accuracy, even to the actors themselves. Even the greatest powers can gather only a small part of this information as a basis for their security policy. Such information as they get will be distorted by the selection process (less will be available from enemies than from friends), and by deliberate deception (attempts at secrecy and bluff, like Khrushchev's cultivation of a missile gap during the late 1950s). Once received, this information will be further distorted by the various processes of deletion, condensation and interpretation which are necessary to reduce it to a form concise enough to be used by those at the business end of policy-making.

Just as in the party game where a message is passed along a chain of people by word of mouth, information going into a government bureaucratic network will emerge at the other end in a scarcely recognisable form. In the process it will encounter the numerous

filters of conventional wisdom, each of which will attempt to reconcile incoming data with pre-existing theories, or mental sets. Information which tends to support the conventional wisdom will be amplified and passed on, that which tends to cast doubt on it will be suppressed, devalued or diverted.¹⁵ The aggregate effect of these distortions will be to protect the conventional wisdom against countervailing information up to the point at which the evidence against it becomes overwhelming, either because of its cumulative weight (like the failure of the Americans to win in Vietnam year after year), or because some highly visible transformational event makes the old view publically insupportable (like Hitler's occupation of the Czechoslovak rump in March 1939, which violated the nationalist principle of German expansion and destroyed what was left of the case for appeasement).

This tendency to delay and distort the rationalising effect of new information has major consequences for the national security problem. Since the international anarchy tends naturally to generate insecurity and suspicion, the perceptual factor feeds into the power-security dilemma, amplifying and perpetuating negative images. Once a pattern of hostility is established, as between the United States and the Soviet Union, each will tend to see the other as an enemy, and assume that worst interpretations of behaviour are correct. Disproportionately large amounts of information will be required to break this cycle. The process is universal, and tends to amplify itself in each of the actors individually, precisely because it influences the behaviour of the other actors in the system. As Jervis argues, the process is also inevitable, because mental sets and theories of some sort are necessary if any sense is to be made of the huge volume of incoming information in the first place.¹⁶ Without some means of ordering and simplifying data, policy-makers would be even more confused and inconsistent than they are with them. Each event would have to be interpreted on its own merits, and no sense of pattern would exist around which to structure policy.

Some of the other perceptual problems identified by Jervis include a tendency to assume that other actors are more centrally in control of themselves than you are, and that your role in and influence on events are greater than they in fact are.¹⁷ Others are assumed to be more centralised because one observes mainly their behavioural output. All behaviour is imputed to conscious central command and control. In observing one's own behaviour, whether individual or state, one is much more aware of the confusion, conflict and error which underlie it. If central control is assumed, then strict and conspiratorial assessments of motive are justified, but if weak central control is assumed, then a more forgiving and less threaten-

ing analysis and inference, whether the section of a towards the reaction to about the international to the behaviour mechanism

Similar to one's own so when co generally be one. These and a tendency influence of exaggerated cost of und within the l is seriously been miscal like the Pa viable solu another stu picture. Of rather than interests ha and perpet correct, but negative fe failure of tl and force a will be for excessively (like the malignant powers.

These are role in the from the bureaucratic personalities intensified sl

ing analysis may be appropriate. Enormous differences in analysis and inferences for western security policy will occur, depending on whether the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is seen as one more section of a carefully laid, long-term plan for Soviet advancement towards the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf, or as a bungled over-reaction to events in Iran, combined with traditional Soviet paranoia about the stability of its buffer-states. As a general feature of international relations, a tendency to apply much stricter standards to the behaviour of others than to one's own, feeds directly into the mechanisms which drive and maintain the power-security dilemma.

Similar kinds of distortion in analysis can arise from assuming that one's own influence on affairs is larger than it actually is, particularly so when combined with a tendency to assume that one's influence is generally benign, and that one's own view of events is the only correct one. These perceptual biases can lead to self-righteous behaviour, and a tendency to place blame for bad outcomes on the malignant influence of others. A great power like the United States, for example, exaggerates its influence in a place like the Middle East only at the cost of underestimating the importance of the issues and alignments within the local security complex. Already, its basis for sound policy is seriously flawed because the real balance of forces in the area has been miscalculated, with the result that vital actors in the problem, like the Palestinians, are not given sufficient weight to allow for a viable solution. If it also assumes that its influence is benign, then another strand of political misunderstanding gets woven into the picture. Opposition to its actions will be interpreted as hostility, rather than being examined as a valid complaint of a party whose interests have been damaged. This type of error will be compounded and perpetuated by a tendency to assume that one's own view is correct, because such an outlook closes the policy-making process to negative feedback, and immunises it against criticism. Only massive failure of the policy will be sufficient to break into such a closed cycle and force a reconsideration. Until such an event occurs, the tendency will be for good outcomes (like the Israel-Egypt reconciliation) to be excessively attributed to American influence, and for bad outcomes (like the situation in Lebanon since 1975) to be attributed to malignant local forces or to the machinations of hostile outside powers.

These and other perceptual mechanisms clearly play an important role in the security policy-making process. They work at all levels, from the generation and influence of public opinion, through the bureaucratic labyrinths of government machinery, to the individual personalities of leaders. They operate constantly, but can be intensified sharply under the pressure of crisis, when time for analysis

and decision shrinks, the risks and stakes attached to policy behaviour rise, and uncertainties of information inflate. An extensive literature on crises explores both the theoretical and the practical effects of these pressures on the psychology of perception and decision-making.¹⁸

Even under routine conditions of policy, perceptual factors can play a fundamental role. If, for example, one assumes that one's opponent sees things in basically the same way as oneself, then this can serve as a foundation for policy, because one can calculate his reactions to be roughly what one's own would be if the positions were reversed. For many years during the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s, the conventional wisdom in the West took roughly this view of Soviet strategic doctrine. If the Soviets accepted evolving western views of nuclear deterrence, albeit with some lag because of their technological inferiority, then policies like MAD could be pursued with considerable hope that a stable balance of deterrence would result. The falseness of this assumption was revealed during the 1970s, as growing Soviet military strength made its policy more obvious, and this revelation stimulated a reassessment of western strategic doctrine. A recent article by Fritz W. Ermarth outlines the historical, geostrategic, doctrinal and military differences in perspective between the two which make it surprising, in retrospect, that any perception of parallel perspectives could have been sustained in the first place.¹⁹

Instances like this illustrate both the pitfalls which perceptual factors place in the path of the policy process, and the real difficulty of establishing common ground on which to base more orderly relations. Because positional and constitutional differences among states generate different interpretations of the same reality, the natural structure of the system tends to enhance misunderstanding, and feed the dynamic of the power-security dilemma. From this perspective, international relations cannot be compared to a chess game, in which a struggle for power and position proceeds according to agreed rules which establish a common perception of the significance of events. Instead, security relations are more like a chess game in which the players follow somewhat different rules. Each player believes his own rules to be universally valid, and assumes the other player to know this. Enough similarity exists between their rules to enable a game to proceed, but where differences occur, each side assumes that the other is trying to cheat. Not surprisingly, the board is often overturned in the ensuing squabble.

Logical problems in security analysis are inherent in the nature of the issues, particularly in the weak understanding of cause-effect relations and the consequent inability to make reliable predictions.

Because
effect rel
problem
psycholo
applied,
ception o
confusing
often pro
removed,
no clear
questions
process.
back aga
contested

Politie

The deb
forms, a
the conte
between
and Real
seen, this
system, b
or the ot
form of
which be
like the
warfighti
reducing
does it th
nuclear
defence
In bet
potential
alignmer
United S
(How m
(how st
Afghanis
should e
on polit

Because of the extraordinary complexity and mutability of cause-effect relations in the international system, no solution to this problem is in sight. Perceptual problems are rooted in human psychology, and although some countervailing measures can be applied, Jervis concludes that 'no formula will eliminate misperception or reveal what image is correct. Faced with ambiguous and confusing evidence, decision-makers must draw inferences that will often prove to be incorrect.'²⁰ Because neither problem can be removed, security analysis is plagued by questions which have either no clear answer, or several equally plausible ones. Where such questions exist, the way is clear for politicisation of the security policy process, as different interests seek to make their view prevail. We are back again to the basic character of security as an essentially contested concept.

Political Problems

The debates and disputes about security come in many familiar forms, and on many levels of specificity. At the most general level, the contest takes the form, outlined by Carr, as a see-saw struggle between idealist, security-struggle-oriented views on the one hand, and Realist, power-struggle-oriented views on the other. As we have seen, this struggle is not resolvable within the context of an anarchic system, but that does not prevent the political ascendancy of one view or the other for a time. At the most specific level, the contest takes the form of disputes about particular weapons systems, like the one which began over the neutron bomb in the late 1970s. Does a weapon like the neutron bomb enhance security by filling a gap in the warfighting arsenal (defence against mass armoured assault) and reducing collateral damage when fighting on friendly ground? Or does it threaten security by easing the path up the escalation ladder to nuclear exchange, and heightening the insecurity caused by the defence dilemma?

In between these extremes lies an enormous range of actual and potential disputes. These include, among others, questions of security alignment (Should Ireland join NATO? Should China and the United States seek a formal alliance?); of national defence policy (How much should be spent, and on what?); of situational policy (how should the West respond to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan?); and of security methods (Given a defined goal, should emphasis be placed on military means, on economic means or on political and cultural means?). Questions of method tend to

dominate these debates, mostly because there is a disinclination to define objectives in any but the most general terms. What might be labelled the Humpty Dumpty syndrome – confusion over what tasks military forces are suited to, and what tasks are best performed by non-military instruments – is a particular favourite. As Trager and Simonie note, 'an over-emphasis on the technique and detail of National Security operations has obscured the purpose of maintaining a national security system in the first place'.²¹

These disputes about security questions concern not only the relations between the state and its international environment, but also relations within the state. As we have argued in most of the preceding chapters, the state is not a unitary actor. It is perhaps best viewed as a container, or an arena, within which a variety of powers and interests pursue their political life. Disputes and contradictions are thus the normal stuff of domestic politics. Individual security interests, as we saw in chapter 1, must clash to some extent with national security policy despite the necessary existence of some harmony between the two levels. More generalised domestic contradictions exist everywhere, and where they are severe, they create what has been labelled in chapter 2 as weak states. In weak states, the willingness to use force in pursuit of domestic political objectives lies close to the surface of political life, and sub-state actors become as important as the state itself as referent objects for security.

The internal political process of the state is not a routinised, mechanistic, rational policy-making device, but a dynamic, potentially unstable, and normally fractious system of relations among contending interests. As was argued in chapter 4, under the heading of security complexes, domestic disputes form the first basic level of inquiry in analysing security problems. We must, then, expect that the national security questions raised by relations between the state and its environment will feed into the pattern of domestic political alignments and disputes. The impact of security policy choices on domestic political interests is seldom neutral, and it would be foolish to assume that domestic interests would allow policy to be made according to the detached logic of international system analysis alone.

The resulting political struggle occurs within and around institutional and normative structures which are unique to each state. In other words, the political process happens everywhere, but is different in style, form, emphasis, organisation and procedure from one country to the next. This is the familiar world of comparative politics, with its emphasis on the innumerable paths to political order which have evolved to suit the conditions of different countries. Regardless of these differences, however, it is the domestic political

system i:
Nowher
of secu
competi
result th
the secu
security
respons
distorte
are.

To do
in chap
book in
scope &
Within
the go
econor
citizen
public
securit
policy-
other
variety
cross-1
burea

Neve
nator:
need
scand:
will se
lyses l
newsp
securi
while
newsp
offici

Pol
press
inter
follo
polic
attac
able,
each

system in each state which actually produces national security policy. Nowhere does this process allow a detached and rational formulation of security policy. Everywhere, in some form, the dynamic of competing interests intrudes into the security policy process, with the result that extraneous influences become significant determinants of the security policy which the state eventually adopts. National security policy, in other words, cannot be seen as an unadulterated response to the inputs from the international system. It is skewed and distorted by other interests, and it is worth taking a look at what these are.

To do this, we need to open up the state for examination, as we did in chapter 2, but with a more specific focus. This task could easily fill a book in itself, and our purpose here will be simply to indicate the scope and character of the problem, without exploring it in detail. Within the state exist many layers of sub-state actors, ranging from the government and its various bureaucratic organs, through the economic, political and media organisations, to the individual citizens, both as individuals, and as the amorphous entity known as public opinion. Many of these actors have some interest in national security and involve themselves in varying degrees in the security policy-making process. The problem is that most of them also have other interests as well, and these bias their security interests in a variety of ways. To illustrate this point, we shall look briefly at the cross-pressures affecting newspapers, political parties, government bureaucracies and business organisations.

Newspapers, for example, are interested in the subject matter of national security, but are constrained in what they report by their need to sell their product to readers and advertisers. Stories of scandal, malice, threat, crisis, mismanagement, conflict and death will sell more newspapers than long-winded and complicated analyses like the ones in this book. Thus, because of their dual interest, newspapers distort the public view of what is important in national security, focusing attention on short-term issues and military means, while largely ignoring longer-range and more abstract issues. Where newspapers are controlled by the state, the bias will be towards the official interpretations of events.

Political parties suffer from some of the same dual interest pressures as the media. Security policy must be one of their areas of interest, but only one of many, and they must strive to attract a mass following. Complex, or highly unorthodox positions on security policy will not serve their political needs and will open them up to attacks from their opponents. Because security policy is so contestable, it can become a useful club with which opposing parties can beat each other regardless of circumstances. Whatever one side advocates,

the other can make a plausible case against on grounds of waste, cost, militarism, risk or ideology. Such attacks may occur regardless of what the parties do when in office. In Britain, pro-military Conservatives cut the navy on economic grounds, while ostensibly anti-military Labour governments allow major nuclear warhead programmes to proceed in secret. Posturing on security issues may have more to do with electoral needs, ideological pretensions and the rituals of party rivalry than with serious thinking about the issues themselves. Considerable domestic political mileage can be wrung from security issues on the principle that a unity of negatives is easier to create and maintain than is a unity of positives. If political cohesion cannot be built on a common ground of what people want, then it can be built on the common ground of what they can be brought to fear or hate. A unity of negatives based on making a bogey out of some foreign power can usefully cover a multitude of domestic disagreements.

More parochially, parties may support certain security policies because they provide employment in politically sensitive areas. Thus, weapons might be produced more for reasons to do with the domestic political economy than for reasons deriving from the international situation. These and other interests can all affect the way a political party deals with security policy. This is not to argue that parties have no substantive positions and beliefs on security policy, and that they are therefore totally opportunistic in relation to security issues. Rather, it is to point out that many other considerations affect their position and their ability to act, and that the effect of these is to introduce domestic political considerations into the security policy-making process. The kinds of pressures on parties will vary according to whether the country is a multi-party system or not, but even in one-party states, the party must respond to domestic political interests if it wishes to remain in office. At worst, it will require the armed forces for domestic control, and this need will distort national security policy by importing it into the domestic political arena.

Government bureaucracies of various kinds participate in security policy-making, and each of them brings to the process its own mix of interests. Some will have direct interest in the issues, like those responsible for defence, foreign policy, trade and finance. Others will have the indirect interest of being competitors in the continuous game of resource allocation, in which departments do battle with each other for shares of the budgetary pie. Thus security policy will not only be subjected to cross-cutting interests, like Treasury concerns to cut public spending, or Department of Employment concerns to maintain defence production jobs, but also it will be put through the mill of resource allocation politics, where outcomes may depend as

much
Even w
burea
Service
notori
strong
which
techn
Thus,
iron ar
The tr
which
Armie

In n
funda
ships
becau
Likew
the w
aircra
entire
itself
functi
resour
strugg
weap
them.
while
These
proce
in thi
gover
which
Force
the en
not) a
part o
that
conse
Vietn.

Ind
securi
conce
may l

much on political strength and skill as on the merits of the issues. Even within a single department like Defence, many institutional and bureaucratic factors can intervene to skew the logic of security policy. Service traditions and inter-service rivalries are among the more notorious sources of such influence. Different services often develop strong attachments to their own traditions and to the instruments on which those traditions rest. These attachments can lead them to resist technological developments which will undermine their traditions. Thus, the Royal Navy was reluctant to abandon wood and sail for iron and steam until the pressure of foreign developments forced it to. The transition meant the loss of an entire, centuries long tradition on which British naval superiority, and style of naval life, had rested. Armies were similarly reluctant to abandon horse cavalry.

In modern times, technological developments threaten even more fundamental changes. Navies still cling to the idea of large surface ships even though they become increasingly costly and vulnerable, because without them the entire naval tradition is jeopardised. Likewise, airforces continue to advocate manned bombers because the whole airforce tradition and glamour is based on men flying in aircraft. Missiles and automated aircraft threaten to eliminate pilots entirely, and with them, the central role and symbol of the airforce itself. In addition, the services struggle among themselves to capture functions which will strengthen their case in the scramble for resources. Armies, navies and airforces in various countries have struggled among themselves for control over strategic nuclear weapons, and the additional resources and status associated with them. In earlier periods, airforces had to fight for a separate existence, while armies and navies tried to hold on to their own air components. These organisational vested interests all feed into the security policy process and play their part in determining its outcome, especially so, in that the services are a main supplier of military advice to governments. A good case-study of the counter-rational pressures which result can be found in the resistance of the United States Air Force to the results of the Strategic Bombing Survey carried out at the end of the Second World War. The Air Force could not (and did not) accept the results of the survey without undermining a major part of the rationale for its existence. Institutional survival demanded that the facts about military effectiveness be ignored, and one consequence of this was the savage and futile aerial campaign against Vietnam two decades later.²²

Industrial and commercial organisations also have interests in security policy, and again these interests mix with their other concerns to produce distortions in rationality. Such organisations may be more or less closely attached to the government, depending

on whether the economy leans towards central planning or towards the market, and this will cause significant differences in their other concerns, particularly on matters like profit. These organisations can have an interest in security policy either because they produce goods, like military equipment, which are called for by security policy, or because they have external interests, like markets, investments, transportation routes or sources of supply which they wish to see come under the aegis of national security policy.

The arms industry is an obvious example to take here, because it ties into the discussion of arms racing in the previous chapter. Arms manufacturers in a market economy will have a number of organisational interests of their own which can affect national security policy.²³ In particular, they will have the normal concerns of business about profit, about creating a reliable demand for their product, and about participating in technological advance in their field. Unless they can ensure these things, their existence as organisations is in jeopardy. Governments, as a rule, will share some objectives with the arms industry. They will wish to ensure that good quality weapons are available for their armed forces, and that research and development is adequate to match the efforts of possible enemies. They may want to keep in being a surplus capacity in the industry in order to allow for a rapid meeting of increased demand in time of crisis or war. Where resources allow, governments will prefer to maintain as much domestic independence in arms manufacture as possible in order to minimise constraints on their freedom of action, though this logic applies mainly to larger powers capable of mounting a significant arms industry in the first place.

This common interest between governments and companies can result in at least two effects which might influence security policy. First, the desire to maintain a sufficient, or surplus, national capacity, combined with the companies' desire to assure markets and make profits, can lead to pressure either to consume more than is objectively required, or to export. For countries like Britain and France, maintenance of a substantial armaments industry requires the cultivation of exports, because domestic demand is too low to support such industry by itself. Larger producers like the United States could maintain their industries on domestic demand, but exports offer a way to reduce costs to the government (by increasing economies of scale in production), to ease the problem of keeping the industry in regular work, to maintain surplus capacity, and to increase profits for the companies. An interest in the arms trade, once established, can impinge on security policy in a number of ways. It creates ties to the buyers which affect national security alignments, like those between the United States and Iran under the Shah. It

stimu
Midd
syste
being
elsew
indus
can ir
impe
techn
other

Th
ment
differ
quali
in th
attac
leadi
inter
indiv
for w
book
sourc
milit
to d
tech
susta
of ot
frequ
whic
tinui
seen
quic
to th
lock
betw
have
initi
patt
in th
W
look
cate
in t
orga

stimulates secondary arms races among purchasers, like those in the Middle East, which can in turn affect the general security of the system. It can create a vested interest in maintaining exports by not being too concerned about the stimulation of rivalries and conflict elsewhere. Similar arguments could be applied to the nuclear power industry, which also illustrates how economic and security dynamics can interact to distort national security policy-making.²⁴ Economic imperatives work to spread nuclear materials, knowledge and technology to countries like India, Pakistan, South Africa, Iraq and others whose interest in nuclear weapons is only thinly disguised.

The second effect concerns the process of technological improvement. Both governments and companies share this interest, but for different reasons. Governments are concerned at least to maintain the quality of their military equipment to the general standard prevailing in the international system, although in some cases (war, planned attack, arms racing) they may also be interested in occupying the leading edge of technological development. Companies may be interested in technological advance for its own sake, with many individuals within them deriving their job satisfaction from pushing forward the state of the art. One has only to look at the number of books published about weapons in order to get some idea of the source and strength of this fascination with the beauty and power of military technology. Companies generally have economic incentives to drive their interest in technology. On simple grounds, better technology gives them a commercial edge in sales. More subtly, sustained pressure for technological improvement increases the pace of obsolescence. If equipment needs to be replaced or upgraded more frequently, then companies can be assured of more regular demand which solves, though at considerable cost, their problem of continuity and the governments problem of assured capacity. As we have seen, however, a sustained push behind military technology feeds quickly into the arms maintenance/arms race dynamic, leading both to the self-sustaining rivalry of military competition, and to the self-locking effect in which arms racing becomes internalised in the rivalry between arms manufacturers within a single state. This process can have major implications for national security even though it derives initially from factors internal to the state, and extraneous to the pattern of external threats which define the national security problem in the first place.

We could extend this type of analysis almost indefinitely, both by looking in more detail at a range of cases within the four general categories just reviewed, and by bringing into the picture other actors in the domestic political process, such as academia, workers' organisations, the whole range of public pressure groups, and the

mostly inarticulate, but constraining force of mass public opinion. We could also bring in a variety of external participants in the domestic political process, ranging from externally-sponsored political groups, through external governments or companies with economic interests in, and leverage over, the state, to allies whose own security is explicitly tied to that of the state in question. To include these latter would complete the picture, but only at the risk of confusing the domestic level with the international security environment.

The illustrations already given are, however, sufficient to illustrate the present point, which is that the structure and character of the domestic political process constitute a major independent variable in national security policy-making. Not only does the domestic political process inject a large number of powerful cross-cutting interests into security policy, but also it subjects that policy to competition with other state policy priorities. In other words, national security policy is disconnected from the rationality of the external security problem not only by domestic intrusions into the policy process, but also by a political market in which even the distorted policy may get bumped or altered while interacting with other policies competing for state attention and resources. Thus, a policy proposal for a weapons system like a manned bomber might get almost as far as the production stage, only to be cut for reasons arising from a different universe of budgetary, economic and normative considerations. Conversely, an economic policy which might normally have been politically impossible to sell, might gain acceptance because of its association with national security interests, as in the case of the Marshall Plan in the United States in 1947.²⁵

Conclusions: Policy-Making as Part of the National Security Problem

The argument in this chapter has been that the logical and perceptual problems arising from security provide much of the input into domestic policy-making. We can conclude not only that the policy process has a limited ability to solve these problems, but also that it adds its own dimension of further difficulties to the national security problem overall. The political process necessarily engages a variety of domestic interests in the formulation of security policy, with the result that the national policy which goes out into the international system is as much a product of internal factors as it is of the external ones which provide its principal justification. These arguments could

easily
one se
way o
so. the
deals v
collecti

Two
totally
ration
logica
able e
proces
both r
impin
decisi
dome:

The
broad
of the
dome:
intruc
risks.
intere
of na
Natio
3 per
Unior
lute a
billio
forty
which
billio
sizeat
enthu
altern
more
invest
on n
piori
what
polic
even
of all
as a r

easily be read as a critique of the domestic political process, and in one sense they are. Their inference is that domestic factors get in the way of a rational formulation of national security policy. By doing so, they distort, impede and confuse the process by which the state deals with threats and, by implication, they result in less rational, less effective, and possibly even counter-productive policies.

Two counter-arguments, however, weigh heavily, though not totally against this critique. The first is that no purely detached and rational policy-making process is available in the real world. The logical and perceptual impediments to rationality are to a considerable extent insurmountable, and to assume that an apolitical policy process is feasible in a quintessentially political entity like a state, is both naive and contradictory. Domestic political factors will always impinge on national security policy, if only because the whole decision-making apparatus of the state is largely set up in relation to domestic interests.

The second argument reinforces the first, on the grounds that a broad domestic interest in national security policy is justified because of the massive feedback effect which security policy can have on domestic society. Two obvious ways in which security policy can intrude into domestic society are through its costs and through its risks. These considerations alone would justify a major domestic interest in the formulation of such policy. By the late 1970s, the cost of national defence seldom dropped below 1 per cent of Gross National Product (GNP), and for larger states it was normally above 3 per cent. For the United States it was over 5 per cent, for the Soviet Union well over 10 per cent, and for Israel over 30 per cent. The absolute amounts involved are huge. Three states each spent over \$50 billion in 1980, and four more spent over \$10 billion each. Around forty states spent over \$1 billion each. Even a country like Japan, which is normally thought to be very lightly armed, spent nearly \$9 billion (0.9 per cent of its GNP).²⁶ These sums often amount to a sizeable proportion of public expenditure, and as disarmament enthusiasts never tire of pointing out, their opportunity costs in alternative social goods and services are very great. More schools, more hospitals, cleaner environments, more disposable income, more investment, and such-like all have to be weighed against expenditures on national security. This implies a set of choices about social priorities between security and other values, and such choices are what the domestic political process is all about. The risks in security policy are more abstract and intermittent than the costs, but pose even graver questions. Bungled policy might lead to the termination of all social values in nuclear obliteration, or to their drastic revision as a result of invasion or revolution. For these reasons, the substance

of security policy is clearly a legitimate matter for domestic political concern.

On more subtle grounds, we can increase the strength of this argument by exploring the numerous ways in which security policy can influence the basic structure of political society. Most of these links are well known. Many of them come under the general heading of the militarisation of society. They include arguments about conscription, about military influence in government, about the military-industrial complex as a powerful élite interest, about the corruption of higher values by the blatant willingness to use force, about the infringement of civil liberties by the requirements of domestic security, and about the self-perpetuating logic of security demands on society which arise from the dilemmas we explored in the previous two chapters. These arguments link to those about resources above, for at some point, discussion about the allocation of resources becomes indistinguishable from debate about the value priorities at stake. Commitment to a military establishment creates a new power in domestic politics which will generate organisational imperatives of its own. These imperatives may, in the long run, result in consequences which outweigh the original purpose of having a military establishment. Military interests may lead to the self-defeating cycles of an internalised arms race, or to the militarisation of national politics which is such a problem in many weak states. As one Latin American observer put it, 'What we are doing is building up armies which weigh nothing in the international scale, but which are Juggernauts for the internal life of each country. Each country is being occupied by its own army.'²⁷

On this level, national security policy has implications which run through the entire structure of the state. An obsession with security can lead to versions of the warfare state in which all political structures and values are subordinated to the accumulation of military power. This Spartan model has echoes in places like Israel and the Soviet Union, where high levels of mobilisation, or readiness to mobilise very quickly, have become a permanent condition rather than a wartime phenomenon and permeates society with their effects. Corrupted versions of the warfare state are possible in which the military dominates the state for its own purposes, rather than in response to any pressing external threat. By turning its powers inward, a military establishment could exploit the state as a resource base for its own organisational aggrandisement.

The linkage between security and other state structures is obvious in these extreme cases, but it can also be found in more normal circumstances. One might follow Alexis de Tocqueville²⁸ by arguing, for example, that while the political institutions of the United States

are ex
diver
consequ
security
context,
balance
are ill-d
policy.
(interna
flexibilit
superior
of dome
restrict
of other
unique
because
impact
pressur
States fl
changes
internat

To th
policy g
system.
then th
between
generat
creates
be, coc
ternatic
that do
toward
sistent.
and to t
lable cir
see ther
circums
of the s

Self-
If each
others j
effect is
them al
others :

are excellently designed to contain and to manage the numerous and divergent political forces within that vast society, they are, as a direct consequence, remarkably poorly suited to the conduct of foreign and security policy. Features which serve well in the general political context, such as openness to pressure groups, intricate checks and balances, frequent elections and a politically-appointed civil service are ill-designed for the specialised needs of foreign and security policy. They impede continuity of policy where it is most vital (international negotiations, arms policy), and compel it where flexibility might serve better (anti-communism, notions of military superiority, extravagant energy consumption). They amplify the role of domestic factors and interests in the policy-making process, and restrict input from, and sensitivity to, the needs, fears and dynamics of other actors in the international system. Such criticisms are not unique to the United States, they are merely more obvious there because of the openness of the American system and the extent of its impact on the rest of the world. Most states respond more to domestic pressures and interests than to external ones, but when the United States floats the value of its currency, or subsidises the price of oil, or changes its attitude to the export of weapons, the effect in the international system is large.

To the extent that domestic forces cause these actions, foreign policy gets made without reference to the rest of the international system. If domestic factors dominate policy-making in most states, then the international system becomes one in which feedback between the units is weak. Behaviour, in other words, is internally generated, and therefore relatively insensitive to the effects which it creates in the system. We have argued that states are not, and cannot be, cool, calculating and rational actors in relation to the international dimension of the national security problem. To the extent that domestic factors dominate decision-making, their behaviour towards each other will tend to be myopic, insensitive and inconsistent. They will be attuned to others as threats and opportunities, and to themselves as possessors of rights and as victims of uncontrollable circumstances. But they will be only dimly aware of how others see them, of the extent to which others are victims of uncontrollable circumstances, of the impact which their actions make externally, and of the sensitivities which drive the domestic politics of others.

Self-centred actors are the key to turning an anarchy into a chaos. If each actor generates most of its behaviour internally, treating others primarily as sources of threat or support, then the combined effect is to maximise the power-security dilemma which encompasses them all. The internal dynamics of each will result in policies which others see as threatening and inflexible, and because the policies are

internally set, they will be difficult to change. Level 2 policies will dominate by default, because that is the only level which receives serious policy-making attention. As Rosecrance puts it, 'one of the fundamental reasons for tension in the international system is the formulation of objectives and policies on a purely domestic basis'.²⁹ This political dominance of level 2 amplifies the singularity of positional perspective which is the natural geographical and historical heritage of each state. Each tends anyway to interpret the system from the perspective of its own position within it, and when domestic political preoccupations intrude as well, the propensity to take a parochial view grows stronger. In as much as each state is governed by parochial views, no strong common view of the system as a whole can develop among them. The absence of such a common view in turn reinforces the parochial impulse, because the system appears to be an unmanageable chaos which leaves no option but to rely on one's own resources.

If one argues that this situation is dangerous, as most of this book does, then the inescapable conclusion is that the structure of domestic politics must be altered. How such alteration should be done, given the numerous justifications for domestic political involvement in security policy, constitutes a major area for inquiry. The link between domestic political structures and security policy is both basic and unavoidable, and the national security policy problem which arises from it is a problem both for individual states and for the international system as a whole.

Notes

- 1 See chapter I, note 16.
- 2 Macbeth, III v. The speaker is Hecate. The meaning of the quote in its original context is that an excessive feeling of security leads to carelessness in action, and is therefore a cause of weakness and vulnerability. This sense might also be applied to the national security problem, in as much as excessive military power, and its accompanying policy orientation, can lead to underestimation of other factors, as illustrated by the American performance in Vietnam.
- 3 Charles L. Schultze, 'The Economic Content of National Security Policy', *Foreign Affairs*, 51:3 (1973), pp. 529-30.
- 4 Cited in Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), p. 150.
- 5 *Ibid.*
- 6 Michael H.H. Louw, *National Security* (Pretoria, ISS - University of Pretoria, 1978), the quote is from the introductory note titled 'The Purpose of the Symposium'.

7 Ian
Stu
8 Fra
of
Sec
Ka
9 Joh
Isra
(en
10 Thi
wa
car
pri
ma
for
sec
str
an:
of
str
sec
sec
11 So
be
wi
the
sit:
12 Ki
Ri
Fr
13 Re
(P
14 Ib.
Pe
15 Je
H
me
16 Je
17 Ib
18 Se
Y
In
Fi
G
St
At
E
19 Fi
T

- 7 Ian Bellamy, 'Towards a Theory of International Security', *Political Studies*, 29:1 (1981), p. 102.
- 8 Frank N. Trager and Frank L. Simonie, 'An Introduction to the Study of National Security', in F.N. Trager and P.S. Kronenberg, *National Security and American Society* (Lawrence Kansas, University Press of Kansas, 1973), p. 36.
- 9 John E. Mroz, *Beyond Security: Private Perceptions Among Arabs and Israelis* (New York, International Peace Academy, 1980), p. 105, (emphasis in original).
- 10 The same problem of confusion between level 2 and level 3 arises here as was discussed in chapter 4. The term 'international security strategy' cannot be used in the sense indicated without involving both levels. The prime referent is the state, because that is the level on which policy is made. But, carried to its logical conclusion, the strategy has implications for the system as an object of security. If all states had made themselves secure by dealing with threats at their external source, then the system structure would also be secure, probably in the form of a mature anarchic structure. This approach needs to be distinguished from the stricter sense of international security in which the referent object is *only* the system structure. In that sense, the balance of power works to preserve the security of the anarchic structure, but without necessarily serving the security of the units at level 2.
- 11 Some smaller powers like Sweden, Switzerland and Yugoslavia have been able to go a long way down this path because of their position within a larger balance of power. The importance of external factors to their success is indicated by the failure of Belgium to succeed with a similar approach.
- 12 Kèn Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (London, Croom Helm, 1979); Richard K. Ashley, *The Political Economy of War and Peace* (London, Frances Pinter, 1980), pp. 205-30.
- 13 Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1976), p. 170.
- 14 *Ibid.* See also J.C. Farrell and A.P. Smith, *Image and Reality in World Politics* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1968).
- 15 Jervis, *ibid.*, chs. 4, 5, and 7. Daniel Yergin, *Shattered Peace* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1978), can be read as a case-study of the establishment of a major mental set in American foreign policy-making.
- 16 Jervis, *ibid.*, pp. 160-2, 175-6.
- 17 *Ibid.*, chs. 8 and 9.
- 18 See, *inter alia*, Charles F. Hermann (ed.), *International Crises* (New York, Free Press, 1972); Raymond Cohen, *Threat Perception in International Crises* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1979); D. Frei (ed.), *International Crisis and Crisis Management* (Aldershot, Gower, 1978); 'Special Issue on international Crises', *International Studies Quarterly*, 21:1 (1977); Ole R. Holsti, 'The 1914 Case', *American Political Science Review*, 59 (1965); Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision* (Boston, Little Brown, 1971).
- 19 Fritz W. Ermarth, 'Contrasts in American and Soviet Strategic Thought', *International Security*, 3:2 (1978).

- 20 Jervis, *op. cit.* (note 13), p. 409.
- 21 Trager and Simonie, *op. cit.* (note 8), p. 36.
- 22 John K. Galbraith, *A Life in Our Times* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1981), pp. 195-6, 201, 204-6, 213, 215, 225-37.
- 23 On the arms industry, see notes 27 and 45⁺, chapter 7; and Anthony Sampson, *The Arms Bazaar* (London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1977); and Philip Noel-Baker, *The Private Manufacture of Armaments* (London, Gollancz, 1936).
- 24 For an interesting study of this, see Michael J. Brenner, *Nuclear Power and Non-Proliferation* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981).
- 25 L.B. Krause and J.S. Nye, 'Reflections on the Economics and Politics of International Economic Organizations', in C.F. Bergsten and L.B. Krause (eds), *World Politics and International Economics* (Washington DC, Brookings Institution, 1975), pp. 324-5.
- 26 Figures from *the Military Balance 1980-81* (London, IISS, 1980), pp. 96-7.
- 27 Edvarado Santoz, quoted in Edwin Lieuwen, *Arms and Politics in Latin America* (New York, Praeger, 1961), pp. 236-8.
- 28 Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (New York, Vintage Books, 1945), vol. I, pp. 241-4.
- 29 Richard Rosecrance, *International Relations: Peace of War* (New York, McGraw Hill, 1973), p. 186.

There
chap
with
the t
conn
and
indiv
dema
can
terna
each
treat
persp
Th
an u
partl
own
throu
syste
the l
chap
stor
also
to th
corr
cons
natic
proc
pher
secu
othe
part
is a