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COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

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COERCIVE DIPLOMACY IS A TECHNIQUE of statecraft that involves what Alexander George aptly termed "forceful persuasion."[1] It is an attempt to get a target—be it a state, groups within a state, or a nonstate actor—to change its behavior through the threat to use force or through the actual use of limited force. Coercive diplomacy can include, but need not include, the use of positive inducements, and it generally involves a mix of both negotiation and coercion. Coercive diplomacy therefore stakes out a middle ground in statecraft between the wholesale resort to force, on the one hand, and the use only of diplomacy, on the other. Coercive diplomacy is attractive to decision makers because it promises the achievement of their objectives "on the cheap": it holds out hope of big results with small costs (to the coercer). If the record of the United States is indicative, however, coercive diplomacy is hard to execute successfully.

This chapter provides an overview of coercive diplomacy as it has been practiced by the United States since the end of the Cold War. We concentrate on the United States because there is a dearth of studies on how other states have used coercive diplomacy, but a relative abundance of them on how the United States has employed it, especially since 1990.[2] We proceed as follows. First, we examine the nature of coercive diplomacy. Second, we analyze how the United States used this technique in eleven instances from 1990 to 2003 and why it was successful in some cases and unsuccessful in others. Third, we examine the protracted and ongoing cases of North Korea and Iran and U.S. attempts, unsuccessful so far, to apply coercive diplomacy in order to get the former to give up its nuclear weapons and the latter its quest for them. Finally, from these cases we draw some general conclusions about the exercise of coercive diplomacy.

So, what is coercive diplomacy, what is its track record, and why does it work in some cases but fail in others? These are the questions this chapter addresses.

THE NATURE OF COERCIVE DIPLOMACY

Alexander George of Stanford University was the first to theorize systematically about coercive diplomacy.[3] Beginning in the early 1970s, he asked a simple question: How could a global nuclear power like the United States successfully use a limited amount of force or simply the threat of force to compel a much weaker adversary to retreat from territory that it had occupied, or to halt its military aggression, or in some cases even to relinquish its hold on governmental power? The crux of the challenge for the user of coercive diplomacy, thought George, was how to persuade, not bludgeon, an opponent into seeing a situation the user's way. The philosophy associated with President Teddy Roosevelt—"speak softly and carry a big stick"—embodies the spirit of coercive diplomacy: it is a means of signaling to an opponent the merits of settling disputes without having to wage war. Thus, what separates coercive diplomacy from mere diplomacy is the use of some force so as to convince a target of the coercer's willingness and capacity to resort to full-scale military action should the target not give way.

George studied seven cases of coercive diplomacy, all of which but the first took place during the Cold War: U.S. opposition to Japanese expansion in the 1930s, the 1961–62 crisis in Laos, the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, the 1965 confrontation with North Vietnam, confrontations with Nicaragua and Libya in the early 1980s, and the 1990 Persian Gulf crisis precipitated by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. By his reckoning, the United States clearly achieved its objectives only in the Cuban and Laotian cases and failed in the Japanese, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf cases. George found the Nicaraguan and Libyan cases sufficiently ambiguous that they were hard to classify as either a success or a failure because he could not determine whether U.S. actions helped to produce the outcomes.[4]

From these cases George derived some general lessons. First, he emphasized that the coercer had to be crystal clear about what it sought from the target and to communicate clearly to the target what was wanted. If the coercer was vague about what it wanted, or if the target did not understand what was wanted of it, then coercive diplomacy was not likely to work. Second, George underlined the importance of creating in the target a sense of urgency about complying with the demands; otherwise, the target would find little incentive to comply. Third, the coercer had to find a way to convey to the target a sufficiently credible threat of punishment for noncompliance; otherwise, there would be no reason for the target to comply. Fourth, the coercer had to decide whether to couple the threatened punishment with positive inducements, something that George had found to be pivotal in his two successful cases. Fifth, the coercer had to be strongly motivated to accept the costs and risks of engaging in coercive diplomacy, to provide strong leadership, and to garner sufficient domestic and international support for its actions.[5]

Finally, from the cases that he examined, George derived a typology of three strategies for implementing coercive diplomacy.[6] In the first instance, the coercer issues an ultimatum, whether explicit or tacit, by drawing a red line, setting a deadline for action, and threatening punishment for noncompliance. In the second instance, the coercer resorts to a "try-and-see" strategy: the coercer issues an ultimatum, follows this up with a coercive action or threat, but does not communicate a sense of urgency about compliance to the target and waits to see how the target responds before deciding whether to issue more threats or take other coercive actions. Or, in the third instance, the coercer adopts a strategy that George called "turning the screw," which involves communicating at the outset to the target that pressure and punishment will be gradually ratcheted up if the target does not comply. The first is

the starkest form of coercive diplomacy; the second and third are softer forms.

All but one of George's cases occurred during the Cold War, when the superpower rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union dominated world politics. With the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Union, the nature of conflict changed. Instead of proxy wars between the two superpowers, there arose a wave of ethnic, political, and religious wars, exemplified by the dissolution of Yugoslavia, conflicts with Saddam Hussein, confrontations with transnational terrorists, and a confrontation with China. If the Cold War had been a time when survival itself seemed at stake for the superpowers, the 1990s for the United States became a series of more limited uses of force for more limited aims: containing Iraq in the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War throughout the 1990s, confronting warlords in the midst of humanitarian operations in Somalia in 1992–93, reinstalling order in Haiti in 1994, averting war with North Korea while attempting to freeze its nuclear weapons program in 1993–94, suppressing aggression and human rights abuses in Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999, staring down the Chinese across the Taiwan Strait in 1996, and dealing with nonstate terrorist organizations in the late 1990s.

These cases became the subject of a second group effort to develop further George's insights about the U.S. exercise of coercive diplomacy.[7] In analyzing these cases, we tried to determine, in particular, why coercive diplomacy proved so difficult for the United States to execute successfully (the United States achieved unqualified success only in the Haiti and Bosnia cases) during a period when the United States was the only global superpower. Why did a state as strong as the United States, no longer restrained by the existence of another superpower, find it so difficult to bend to its will actors so much weaker than itself? This was our puzzle, and from the cases we examined, we drew four fundamental reasons why we believe coercive diplomacy is so difficult, even for powerful states.[8]

First, coercive diplomacy is a form of compellence, and compellence is intrinsically difficult. Unlike deterrence, which seeks to dissuade a target from changing its behavior, compellence tries to get a target to change its objectionable behavior.[9] Affecting changes in the behavior of a target is difficult because there is greater humiliation for the target if it changes its behavior in the face of a compellent action than if it does not change its behavior in the face of a deterrent threat. In the former case, the target cannot claim that its actions were taken freely; in the latter case, it can. Compellent threats also engage the passions of a target more directly than do deterrent threats. Finally, compellent threats bring about changes in the status quo, while deterrent threats maintain the status quo, and changing the status quo requires more effort than preserving it.

Second, as Robert Pape has pointed out, threats of force and demonstrative uses of force are less effective than significant amounts of force in denying an adversary a goal, in punishing it, or in posing it with the risk of further punishment.[10] Denial is a strategy that seeks to prevent a target from achieving its aims by undercutting its military capability and strategy. Punishment is a strategy that attempts to get the target to change its behavior by raising the costs of its continuing resistance. Risk is a strategy that promises punishment if the target does not comply. A risk strategy is difficult to apply because the infliction of actual pain is more effective than the promise of pain. Coercive diplomacy either poses risk through threats to use force or else administers only a small amount of punishment because the force used is limited. Because of this fact, coercive diplomacy cannot produce as much punishment or pose as great a risk as can larger amounts of force. Similarly, because it uses only threats or quite limited amounts of force, denial is difficult for coercive diplomacy.

In fact, strictly speaking, coercive diplomacy cannot undercut a target's military capability and strategy; it can only threaten to do so or demonstrate that it could do so. For all these reasons, coercive diplomacy has a harder time with denial, punishment, and risk than the use of larger amounts of force.

Third, coercive diplomacy is directed at a target's resolve—the intensity and strength of the target's will to prevail in a contest of wills. Resolve, however, is notoriously difficult to estimate before a coercive contest begins, and it can change during that contest. Coercive diplomacy contests are equivalent to games-of-chicken crises in which the strength of the respective resolves of the coercer and the target are in play. If the relative strength of these wills were known before the crisis, there would be no crisis because the party with the weaker will would give way, or if the wills were equal in strength, both parties would simply muster all their capabilities and fight until the party with the greater strength won. Crises are ways to measure the relative strength of wills; consequently, mistakes are easy to make in situations where resolve is hard to estimate. In such situations, the coercer too often underestimates the target's will to resist because, more often than not, the target cares more about the matter at issue than the coercer. Consequently, the coercer has to apply larger amounts of force, but then it has entered the realm of war, not coercive diplomacy.

Fourth, a target finds it difficult to give in to a coercer because both its credibility and its power are at stake. By bending to a coercer's will, a target not only loses some of its reputation for resolve, it also loses some of its capabilities. It not only appears to be weaker than thought; it can actually become weaker. A target must worry not only about the present, but also about the future. It has to ask itself, "If I give way on this issue, will the coercer be emboldened to demand even more again shortly and will I be able to resist when I will have become weaker by complying now?" Because power stakes are also at issue, a target is less willing to comply with the coercer, making coercive diplomacy more difficult to execute.

These four factors operate in nearly every coercive diplomatic situation. In addition, two more factors can be present, depending on the particular circumstances in a given situation. Sometimes, there can be either multiple coercers or multiple targets, or both. Multiple coercers mean that a coalition of coercers is operating, raising the difficult problem of holding a coalition together. Multiple targets can complicate coercive diplomacy because different targets require different strategies for coercion, but also because actions taken to coerce one target may actually embolden another target not to give way, especially in situations where the two targets are at loggerheads with one another. Another factor that can sometimes be present is the target's calculation that it has the wherewithal to counter the coercer's measures. To the extent that the target believes it can do so, it is not likely to give way. Even more vexing are those situations where a target believes it can counter the coercer's measures but cannot say so publicly because doing so would undercut its countercoercion capabilities. In that situation coercive diplomacy is even more likely to fail.

For all these reasons, coercive diplomacy is a difficult tool of statecraft to employ. If it fails, the coercer has two choices: back down or up the ante. Backing down will affect the coercer's reputation in future situations; upping the ante usually means crossing the line from coercive diplomacy to war. Neither outcome is a good one from the coercer's standpoint, and for that reason coercive diplomatic gambits should never be undertaken lightly. A brief overview of the instances in which the United States has employed coercive diplomacy since the end of the Cold War in 1990 illustrates the points developed thus far.

CASE STUDIES IN COERCIVE DIPLOMACY, 1990–2003

From 1990 to 2006, the United States resorted to coercive diplomacy thirteen times: in Somalia in 1992–93 against the warlords, in Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999 against the Serbs, in Haiti in 1994 against the military government, against Iraq from 1990 to 1998, against the North Korean government in 1994, against China over Taiwan in 1996, against al Qaeda and against the Sudanese and Taliban governments to combat terrorism in 1998 and again in 2001, against Iraq in 2002–3, against Libya in 2003, against North Korea from 2001 to 2006, and against Iran from 2001 to 2006.[11] The last two cases are ongoing; consequently, we deal with the first eleven in this section and the last two in the next. [12]

Somalia in 1992–93

The United States' intervention in Somalia in 1992–93 was only partly successful. Somalia had remained one of the world's poorest countries throughout two decades of rule under the military dictator, Mohammed Siad Barre, who once told then assistant secretary of state Chester Crocker, "We are not Americans, and I am not Lincoln." Two years of civil war created further deterioration to the point that the government collapsed in January 1991. Initially, the U.S. goal was aimed at forestalling widespread famine, which threatened perhaps two million people. Through a threat to react with overwhelming military force should they oppose U.S. intervention, the Bush administration persuaded the Somali warlords to stop using starvation of civilians as a means of waging war and to allow the United States to bring food to the population.

Once that phase of the intervention proved successful, however, the United Nations, with the Clinton administration's backing, undertook a much broader mandate—the reconstruction of the Somali government and the disarming of the warlords' militias—but with a force far smaller than the one used to stop the starvation. Paradoxically, the United Nations approved a more ambitious goal with a much smaller force, and the nation-building exercise proved a disaster after the United States made a halfhearted attempt to disarm one of the most powerful warlords in Mogadishu. That attempt led to U.S. casualties that, while relatively few in number, prompted the evacuation of the U.S. military force. The U.S. government had failed to fully calculate the potential costs of trying to coerce a warlord out of power. The warlords had acquiesced in the humanitarian mission partly due to U.S. threats, partly due to their calculation that the U.S. intervention was only temporary, and partly due to the fact that the United States would not contest their military might as long as they did not oppose the feeding of civilians. Disarming the warlords and reconstructing the country were entirely different matters: these would undercut the bases of warlord power. The warlords agreed to a temporary humanitarian intervention but not to actions that would end their power. The United States succeeded in the first phase of the Somalia intervention because it correctly matched means to ends; it did not succeed in the second phase because it failed to match means and ends.

Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999

Bosnia and Kosovo became flashpoints after the Yugoslav Federation dissolved in the early 1990s and unleashed competing claims of national self-determination. In 1992, Bosnian Muslims sought to follow the lead of Slovenia and Croatia and establish their own independent state. Meanwhile, Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs sought to take "their" parts of Bosnia and incorporate them, respectively, into the newly independent states of Croatia and Serbia. As the Bosnian tragedy unfolded, the West resisted forceful intervention for a time, but the strangulation of Sarajevo in the

summer of 1993, the massacre of civilians in the Markala market in February 1994, and the assault on Gorazde in April underscored the price of feckless diplomacy. In 1995, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), galvanized into action under strong U.S. leadership, finally acted to end the Bosnian war by coercing Serbs and Muslims to cease fighting and sign a peace agreement. A few weeks of air strikes and heavy artillery bombardment brought the Serbs to the bargaining table, while the threat to end air strikes coerced the Muslims to do likewise. Bosnia might be judged a borderline success for coercive diplomacy—borderline because the Serbs were facing pressure not simply from U.S. and NATO military action, but also from the Croats who had launched a lightning ground offensive in the Krajina and were threatening to bring on the collapse of the entire Serbian military position in western Bosnia. In addition, several years of economic sanctions also had an effect on Slobodan Milosevic, president of Serbia, and made him willing to put pressure on the Bosnian Serbs to settle.

The settlement reached at Dayton in December 1995 ended the Bosnian war, and NATO troops dispatched to Bosnia to enforce the accord stabilized the country. Kosovo was not so lucky, and it was largely ignored by the great powers after the breakup of Yugoslavia. To be sure, there had been an early threat, the so-called Christmas warning by President George H. W. Bush in December 1992, to use force against the Serbs should they attack the Kosovars; but to achieve success in Bosnia, the United States and Europe had to secure Milosevic's cooperation, and they largely ignored the persecution that Milosevic was inflicting on the Kosovars. In time, peaceful resistance by Albanian Kosovars gave way to the Kosovo Liberation Army's (KLA) violent tactics to secure the independence of Kosovo from Serbia. NATO sought to protect the Kosovars' minority rights within the Serbian federation (leaving aside the more controversial demand for secession), but in the summer of 1998 a successful KLA offensive prompted a Serbian counteroffensive. Nearly a quarter of a million Kosovar Albanians were displaced. United Nations Security Council Resolution 1199 was followed by a NATO activation warning. U.S. statesman Richard Holbrooke negotiated an accord with Milosevic in October 1998 in Belgrade. But in 1999, an attempt to end Serb repression of Albanian Kosovars was rebuffed by Milosevic, who was willing to risk NATO bombing rather than sign an agreement not to his liking. The NATO threat was undercut in part by Russian and Chinese diplomatic opposition at the UN Security Council, but the NATO threat was also undermined by NATO's own failure to take decisive action after numerous previous threats went unheeded. In particular, there was a conscious decision to avoid making the threat of a ground assault if demands were not met. When Milosevic refused to negotiate any further, NATO initiated some limited air assaults in March 1999, but when Milosevic did not back down, the alliance was compelled to escalate the air attack into an extended campaign. Eventually, Milosevic capitulated, especially when NATO, under U.S. pressure, began to direct its air assault away from Serbian positions in Kosovo and toward Serbia proper. Because the air campaign against Serbia was extensive and sustained, coercive diplomacy failed in this case. In the end, Milosevic's compliance required a fully mobilized war effort.

Haiti in 1994

In Haiti the United States had to deploy more coercion than diplomacy. Haiti held its first free election in December 1990, and a young priest—but by no means a saint—named Jean-Bertrand Aristide won and took office in February 1991. Seven months later, the Haitian military overthrew the democratically elected Aristide. For the next three years the United States issued empty threats in various diplomatic démarches. Finally, in 1994, President

William Clinton dispatched a high-level, bipartisan team comprising former president Jimmy Carter, Senator Sam Nunn, and former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Colin Powell, who in turn had twenty-four thousand troops behind them. The goal of the United States was clear: Raoul Cedras, the leader of the military junta, had to relinquish power so that the freely elected government of Aristide could be reinstated. Equally clear was the threat of punishment: an invading army. Although negotiations came within a knife-edge of collapse, a deal was struck. However, Haiti cannot be considered an unqualified success, because the premature deployment of force nearly scuttled delicate talks with General Philippe Biamby, number two in the Haitian military chain of command, who called off negotiations believing that the Americans were attacking rather than bargaining. Ultimately, his decision was reversed and U.S. troops invaded, although the invasion was bloodless and the deal with the Haitian military was consummated. Haiti is a borderline success for coercive diplomacy because an invasion was required to get the military junta to resign, even though it was a bloodless invasion. Subsequent difficulties with security and development in Haiti have been legion, but they cannot be blamed on coercive diplomacy but rather on the failed efforts at nation building in Haiti by both the United Nations and the United States.

Iraq from 1990 to 1998

The case of Iraq from 1990 to 1998 is complicated and instructive. During this period, coercive diplomacy was but one of several strategies, which also included engagement, containment, and deterrence used by the United States from the time of Saddam Hussein's invasion of neighboring Kuwait in 1990 until 1998, when the United States embraced the goal of regime change in Iraq and when Saddam in retaliation expelled UN weapons inspectors from Iraq. The U.S. goals during this period included evicting Saddam from Iraq, keeping his military weak, deterring him from attacking Kuwait again, preventing him from invading the Kurdish area of Iraq, destroying his weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and making certain that he did not acquire the wherewithal to reconstruct his WMD programs. The United States had mixed results in using coercive diplomacy against Iraq during this period, even though it was generally successful in containing him and preventing him from reconstituting his WMD programs. For starters, in the autumn of 1990, the United States launched Operation Desert Shield—a massive military mobilization and deployment to the Persian Gulf—while it attempted to negotiate a reversal of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The buildup of U.S. military forces in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and the clear threat to go to war to evict Iraqi forces from Kuwait, did not compel Saddam to leave. Coercive diplomacy failed, and the United States had to go to war in early 1991 to evict him from Kuwait.

After the war was won in 1991, the United States then used the threat of air strikes and limited precision strikes to coerce Saddam into stopping assaults on the Kurds and the Shiite communities (it was more successful in the former case than in the latter), as well as to stop his interference with international weapons inspectors that were helping to enforce UN Security Council resolutions imposed on the Iraqi government. One early success of coercive diplomacy was Operation Provide Comfort, which protected a safe haven for the Kurds in the north of Iraq and prevented a tide of Kurdish refugees from streaming into Turkey and Iran. At least until August 1996, the Iraqis stood down large-scale attacks because of the strong diplomatic warnings backed by limited force, both on the ground and by air assault. The success of coercive diplomacy in shoring up the no-fly zones and inspections in the two years after the war had more mixed results. Having accepted the arms control inspections under duress as a

condition of the 1991 cease-fire, Saddam soon ordered his soldiers to intimidate the inspectors, who were sprayed with warning shots as early as July 1991. When inspectors discovered a cache of documents indicating that the Iraqis were developing a clandestine nuclear program, Saddam denied them permission to leave a parking lot for four days. The UN Security Council threatened enforcement, the United States dispatched forces, and the Iraqis relented. Saddam also backed down in February 1992, when the UN Security Council declared Iraq to be in material breach of its resolutions and threatened serious consequences. After Iraqi military forces encroached on the southern no-fly zone and restricted United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspectors' travel in late 1992, Iraq soon announced a unilateral cease-fire in January 1993 in the face of unified Western pressure and UN support. Perhaps the most successful coercive diplomacy gambit toward Iraq was Operation Vigilant Warrior in 1994, which was a swift U.S. military troop deployment in response to Iraq's massing of some fifty thousand troops near the Kuwait border in October 1994. Stern diplomatic warning backed by deployed U.S. troops convinced the Iraqi regime to retreat.

In many ways, the mid-1990s marked a turning point in the battle to contain Saddam Hussein. At this point, Western powers were losing their enthusiasm for military action, Saddam was slowly rebuilding and learning to adapt his countercoercive diplomacy tactics, and the international community was becoming more concerned with the deprivations of many Iraqi people rather than the prevarications of their leader. Specifically, one can look at an assault by forty thousand Iraqi troops into northern Iraq in 1996, in which Kurdish troops were killed, members of the Iraqi National Council were arrested, and a covert operation run by the Central Intelligence Agency in Irbl was reportedly smashed. In a situation that some likened to the famous Bay of Pigs fiasco against Cuba, the United States did not provide air cover for the Kurdish fighters. Although Iraqi troops quickly withdrew, they had already accomplished their objectives. An emboldened Saddam Hussein then went after the UNSCOM weapons inspectors with renewed determination, even as the corrupt Oil-for-Food Programme was providing the Iraqi regime with hidden streams of money. In 1997–98, in defiance of UNSCOM, Saddam issued an eviction notice in October 1998. The U.S.-led response was Operation Desert Fox in December 1998. Alas, Saddam had gained the upper hand, a hand he would play until the U.S.-led coalition would topple him from power just over four years later. In sum, coercive diplomacy had some successes and some failures against Iraq under Saddam in the 1990s, but eventually Iraq became inured to limited threats of force, and Saddam became more adroit at seeking tailored approaches to finite goals against a sagging international coalition.

North Korea in 1994

The United States has engaged in coercive diplomacy twice against North Korea, first in 1994 with mixed success and then again from 2001 until the present, with the outcome still to be decided. (The second instance is treated in the next section.) In both instances, the U.S. goal has been to stop North Korea from developing nuclear weapons and to give up any that it had developed. In the 1994 case, U.S. actions were designed to convince the Kim Il Sung government to halt its program to acquire the fissile material—plutonium—necessary to produce nuclear weapons. To achieve this objective, the United States threatened to impose economic sanctions and then made threats to use force if North Korea did not comply with its demands. U.S. actions were centered on stopping North Korea from reprocessing the plutonium embedded in the spent fuel rods that it had extracted from its 30-megawatt experimental nuclear reactor at

Yongbyon. The crisis began in March 1993, when North Korea, in response to a demand by Hans Blix, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), to inspect two suspected nuclear waste sites, announced that it intended to withdraw from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) after three months. By June 1994, the United States and North Korea were on the verge of war. North Korea was not budging from its refusal of the full cooperation with the IAEA that was necessary to account for whether it had already reprocessed plutonium, while the United States had issued threats, both publicly and privately, that it would not permit North Korea to develop nuclear weapons and was prepared to use force if diplomacy failed.

The crisis turned from the path of war toward resolution when former president Jimmy Carter, on his own initiative, went to Pyongyang in June, committed the United States to a resumption of talks with the North and told Kim Il Sung that the United States would not go to the Security Council to seek the imposition of sanctions, an action that North Korea had declared would be equivalent to an act of war. In return, Kim agreed to freeze North Korea's nuclear program under IAEA monitoring and to begin talks again with the United States. Even though the Clinton administration had not sanctioned Carter's actions, it ended up essentially agreeing with them. On October 21, 1994, the United States and North Korea reached agreement on what came to be known as the Agreed Framework. Each got something that it wanted. The United States obtained North Korea's agreement on a verifiable freeze on its known nuclear activity, a commitment to resolve its nuclear past through special inspections (to see how much plutonium it had reprocessed), and an agreement to dismantle its nuclear weapons program. North Korea got direct engagement and negotiations with the United States, heavy oil to solve its immediate energy needs, the promise of future provision of new light-water reactors, the lifting of economic sanctions, and increased aid and trade.[13]

On the face of it, the North Korean case appears to be a success for the exercise of coercive diplomacy. Such a judgment, however, is complicated by two factors: Jimmy Carter's unauthorized intervention and North Korea's subsequent cheating on the Agreed Framework. Carter's intervention, especially his unilateral and unauthorized announcement about sanctions, appears to have turned the two states away from war in the early summer of 1994 and toward negotiations. Had he not intervened, war might well have occurred. Second, although the North Koreans adhered to the Agreed Framework's provisions regarding the reprocessing of plutonium for nearly ten years, it secretly began work on uranium enrichment several years later, violating the spirit if not also the terms of the agreement.[14]

In addition to these two factors, there are two more that render a final judgment on this case difficult. Although North Korea cheated, a case could be made that the United States and its allies were not as forthcoming on the provision of light-water reactors as the agreement called for. Whether this caused the North Koreans to believe that the United States had no intention of meeting its commitments at all, or whether they would have cheated anyway, is not clear. Furthermore, although the North Koreans began a covert uranium enrichment program, they did cease their reprocessing program for nearly ten years, which means that they had far less fissile material, and therefore far fewer nuclear weapons, ten years later than would have been the case had there been no 1994 agreement. For all these reasons, a final judgment about the degree of success of coercive diplomacy in the North Korean case remains problematical. At best, it is a highly qualified success; at worst, a clear failure.

China in 1996

The crisis between the United States and China in 1996 over Taiwan is also an ambiguous one

for coercive diplomacy, in part because both the United States and China were engaging in coercive actions against each other. Both China and the United States were taking coercive actions in order to shore up their respective red lines regarding Taiwan: China opposes the independence of Taiwan, and the United States opposes the mainland's use of force to resolve the status of Taiwan. In 1996, both states engaged in coercive diplomacy to strengthen the deterrent power of these respective red lines.

From China's perspective, Taiwan in the 1990s appeared to be moving toward independence, and the United States appeared, even if indirectly, to be increasing its support for it. In order to stop this creeping independence and U.S. support for it, China resorted to a display of force by firing missiles around Taiwanese waters. In response, the United States sent two aircraft carrier battle groups into the Taiwan Strait. China's missiles were meant to show its willingness to escalate to the use of force to stop the independence creep if necessary. The U.S. action was meant to show that it, too, was willing to make good on its commitment to prevent the forceful resolution of Taiwan's status by using its air and naval power if necessary. By engaging in displays of force, none of which involved direct combat, both China and the United States signaled to each other the seriousness of their respective intents. The result of these displays of force was an outcome that achieved the objectives that both the United States and China wanted, although not what Taiwan's leadership wanted. China affected Taiwan's calculations about the costs of independence and succeeded in curtailing U.S. support of Taiwan's moves toward independence. For its part, the United States shored up its reputation in the region by demonstrating that it remained committed to the defense of Taiwan should China take military action against it.

From the U.S. standpoint, was the 1996 crisis an example of the successful exercise of coercive diplomacy? The answer is not clear. To date, China has not resorted to forceful displays to rein in the Taiwanese government, but there also has been less need for it to do so, in part because the United States has exerted pressure on that government to avoid steps that could be interpreted by the mainland as provocative or to retract actions to which the mainland has objected. China's actions made the United States more aware of the risks of unconstrained Taiwanese behavior, thus causing the United States to put Taiwan on a tighter leash. U.S. actions made China more aware of the United States' determination to match the mainland's use of force, thus causing the mainland to be more restrained in its use of force. The best that can be said about this case is that the United States and China both had a vested interest in preventing Taiwan from unilaterally declaring independence when they were dramatically reminded what the costs for them both would be if that happened.

The 1998 and 2001 Strikes against Terrorism

Before the 9/11 attack on the United States and immediately after it occurred, the United States resorted overtly to coercive diplomacy to deal with terrorism, and al Qaeda was its target. The first attempt occurred in August 1998, and the second in September 2001.

The first consisted of two cruise missile strikes—one against a pharmaceutical plant in Khartoum and the other against training camps in Afghanistan used by Osama bin Laden. The purpose of the strikes was to retaliate against al Qaeda in response to the terrorist bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. These two strikes were examples of coercive diplomacy because they were designed not simply to retaliate but also, in the case of the Afghanistan attack, to kill Bin Laden. Retaliation is a form of revenge, but also of disruption, destruction, and coercion. To the extent that the air strikes were coercive, they partook of this logic: "Do not strike me

again because this is what I will do to you." They are akin to the China case: an attempt to deter future attacks by engaging in coercive measures.

The second attempt is classic case of coercive diplomacy. It came in September 2001, after the 9/11 attacks, and was directed at the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. In this case the United States demanded that the Taliban turn over Bin Laden for trial and threatened military attack if it did not, and backed up the threat by the movement of heavy bombers and other forces to within striking distance of Afghanistan.

Neither of these attempts at coercive diplomacy worked. The 1998 Sudan and Afghanistan strikes did not coerce al Qaeda into ceasing its attacks against U.S. targets; the 2000 attack against the U.S. destroyer *Cole* that was docked in port in Yemen for refueling and the 9/11 attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., are concrete proof of that. The 2001 coercive threat also failed to work because the Taliban regime refused to turn Bin Laden over, and the United States had to go war with it to overthrow the regime. (War signals a failure of coercive diplomacy.) Coercive diplomacy failed in both cases because terrorist groups are, by definition, highly determined and are prepared to lose their lives for their cause. In fact, trying to coerce terrorists may be the most challenging test for coercive diplomacy, not only because terrorists are so highly motivated, but also because one of the goals of their actions is to provoke a response from a government, hopefully an overreaction. What the government views as coercive diplomacy, therefore, may be exactly what the terrorist is trying to bring about.

Iraq in 2002–3

The Iraqi case is especially interesting because, unlike in the Afghanistan case, coercive diplomacy worked. Saddam Hussein, under threat of attack, allowed UN inspectors back into Iraq to look for weapons of mass destruction. He ultimately gave way to assure the survival of his regime, but the Bush administration was not interested simply in defanging Iraq of any weapons of mass destruction it may have harbored; it also wanted to remove Saddam from power. For the United States, regime change was the ultimate guarantee that Iraq would not harbor, nor acquire, such weapons.

From various accounts of his decision to go to war, it seems clear that President George W. Bush had made up his mind by the spring of 2002 to wage war against Iraq in order to remove Saddam from power.[15] In his UN speech of September 2002, he threatened military action if Iraq did not comply with the Security Council resolutions. According to the Duelfer Report, this speech "unsettled Saddam and the former Regime's leadership," especially the threat inherent in Bush's words that "the purposes of the United States should not be doubted."[16] On October 10, the U.S. Congress backed the president by authorizing him to use force against Iraq as he "determines to be necessary and appropriate."[17] Saddam continued to resist inspections. On November 8, 2002, the Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1441, finding Iraq in "material breach of all its obligations under relevant resolutions."[18] Resolution 1441 required that Iraq provide the UN inspection team (the United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission, UNMOVIC) and the IAEA "immediate, unimpeded, unconditional, and unrestricted access" to all buildings, records, and persons whom UNMOVIC and the IAEA wanted to see or talk with.[19] Iraq then allowed UNMOVIC and the IAEA into the country to resume inspections but still did not cooperate fully. Under tremendous pressure from both the Russians and the French, and fearing looming U.S. military action, Saddam called together his senior officials in December and told them to cooperate completely with the inspectors, "stating that all Iraqi organizations should open themselves entirely to UNMOVIC inspections."[20] This even included the Republican

Guard, the military mainstay of Saddam's tenacious hold on power.

According to the Duelfer Report, Saddam evidently hoped that full cooperation would not only avert a U.S. attack but also lead to the lifting of UN sanctions once the UN inspectors found no evidence of weapons of mass destruction.[21] Although Hans Blix, head of UNMOVIC, reported on January 27, 2003, that Saddam "appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance . . . of the disarmament which was demanded of it," nonetheless, the inspectors failed to find any evidence of biological, chemical, or nuclear weapons and continued their work.[22] Three weeks later, Blix reported that "the situation has improved" and that the inspections "are effectively helping to bridge the gap in knowledge that arose due to the absence of inspections between December 1998 and November 2002."[23] However, the Bush administration was not interested in allowing inspections to go on for several more months, something that its European allies favored.[24] Having failed to get a second resolution out of the Security Council authorizing the use of force, the United States, together with its British ally, attacked Iraq on March 20.

In this case, coercive diplomacy had worked to obtain Iraq's full cooperation with inspectors. Saddam agreed to inspections and then to full cooperation to save his regime and to obtain the lifting of sanctions. The threat of military action, combined with Saddam's hope that sanctions would be lifted with full cooperation, produced compliance. The Bush administration, however, refused to take yes for an answer. It wanted regime change, something that Saddam would not willingly agree to. As a consequence, coercive diplomacy failed in this case to meet the administration's full objectives, although it did work to meet the terms of UN Resolution 1441.

Libya in 2003

Libya is a clear success for coercive diplomacy. The United States got Mu'ammar al-Gadhafi to abandon his quest for nuclear weapons and to yield up his chemical weapons capability and restricted classes of ballistic missiles.[25] What is at dispute in the Libyan case is not the fact that coercive diplomacy succeeded, but how important to its success was Bush's overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime and the implied threat to do the same to Gadhafi if he did not yield up his weapons of mass destruction.

Gadhafi took steps to approach the United States before the Bush administration came to power. In fact, according to Martin Indyk, who handled Middle Eastern affairs under Clinton as assistant secretary of state, Gadhafi had tried to open back channels with the Clinton administration through various Arab interlocutors as soon as Clinton came into office, all to little avail. In May 1999 at Geneva, Indyk and Libyan representatives first met to discuss outstanding issues, and, at that meeting, the Libyan representatives officially conveyed the offer to surrender Libya's weapons of mass destruction. At the time the Clinton administration was more concerned about settling the Pan Am 103 issues (getting Libya to admit culpability and compensating the families of the victims) and stopping Libya's support of terrorism than it was about Libya's WMD programs. Libya's clandestine chemical weapons program was not believed to be an imminent threat, and its nuclear program had barely begun. As a consequence, the Clinton administration did not follow up on Libya's offer to surrender its chemical weapons program, an offer Libya repeated in October 1999, and chose to concentrate on the Pan Am issues instead.[26] In all, there were five meetings between May 1999 and early 2000.[27] The significance of these contacts with the Clinton administration is that Gadhafi had made a decision "to come out of the cold" and reach an accommodation with the United States before the Bush administration came to power and certainly before it launched the Iraqi war of 2003.

The Bush administration followed up on these initial contacts. It, too, put settling the

outstanding issues of Pan Am 103 before dealing with Libya's weapons of mass destruction. It told the Libyan representatives that once Libya dealt with the Pan Am issues, the United States would allow UN sanctions to be lifted. By early 2003 Libya had done so, and the UN sanctions were lifted. However, the Bush administration told the Libyans that U.S. sanctions would not be lifted until Libya addressed other U.S. concerns, particularly its WMD programs.[28] This is the context in which the Libyan decision of December 2003—to give up its chemical weapons capability and its nuclear weapons quest—must be understood.

Viewed from the perspective of nearly six years of U.S.-Libyan contacts, negotiations, and bargaining, what stands out is not Gadhafi's decision to give up his WMD programs, but his initial decision to approach the United States with the objective of normalizing relations, together with his continued willingness to meet the various terms that the United States set for such a normalization. Domestic factors loom large in Gadhafi's decision. Libya's economy was in a shambles by the 1990s owing to disastrous economic policies, and UN and U.S. sanctions made it impossible for Libya to import the oil technology necessary to expand oil production. As a consequence, Gadhafi was facing increasing unrest at home and became increasingly concerned about his hold on power. Regime survival appears to be the key reason that Gadhafi decided to do what was necessary to reach a rapprochement with the United States, and the key to regime survival was getting the multilateral and unilateral U.S. sanctions lifted.[29]

What effect did the U.S. overthrow of Saddam Hussein have on Gadhafi? No definitive answer is possible. One view is that regime change in Iraq concentrated Gadhafi's mind, and this view points to a phone conversation in which Gadhafi said to Italian prime minister Silvio Berlusconi, "I will do whatever the Americans want, because I saw what happened in Iraq, and I was afraid."[30] The other view is that it was the implicit assurances of regime survival that Bush gave to Gadhafi that finally persuaded him to come in from the cold. Rather than seeking regime change, the Bush administration, in Robert Litwak's words, accepted "behavior change."[31] The truth probably lies somewhere between these two views. The Iraqi war had an effect on Gadhafi, making him fear for his survival, but he already had good domestic reasons for worrying about his regime's survival, and it was these that had impelled him to seek normalization of relations with the United States in the first place. Had the Bush administration not provided assurances that it was not seeking regime change in Libya, Gadhafi could just as easily have been repelled from normalization by the Iraqi invasion and accelerated his WMD programs. The invasion increased Gadhafi's already-present concern about his hold on power, but the Bush administration's assurances that it did not seek regime change were necessary for Gadhafi to continue on the rapprochement path. In short, the threat of regime overthrow could work only if assurances of regime survival were also given.

Summary

The analysis of these eleven cases, spanning the period from 1990 to 2003, supports the argument made at the outset: coercive diplomacy is difficult to execute successfully. Measured by the ability of the U.S. government to achieve its objectives through its own use of force short of war, only Libya in 2003 was an unequivocal success for coercive diplomacy. Iraq in 2002–3 was a success for coercive diplomacy if measured by Saddam Hussein's willingness to agree to UN inspections of his WMD capabilities, but not if measured by the goals of the Bush administration: to remove him from power. Bosnia in 1995, Haiti in 1994, and North Korea in 1994 were borderline successes. The United States succeeded in achieving its objectives in Bosnia only with

the help of the Croats who had launched a highly effective ground offensive against Serbian forces before NATO undertook the bombing of Bosnian Serb forces. It took a U.S. military invasion of Haiti to bring the Cedras government to heel, even though no shots were fired in that operation. North Korea cheated by beginning a uranium enrichment program while it suspended its plutonium reprocessing program. Somalia in 1992–93 and Iraq from 1990 to 1998 had as many elements, if not more, of failure than of success and thus constitute highly mixed cases of success and failure. Kosovo in 1999 and the 1998 and 2001 terrorism cases are clear failures. China in 1996 is too ambiguous to call. This is a record that supports a success rate of 10 percent to 50 percent, depending on how the cases are coded. Coercive diplomacy is not impossible to bring off, but it is difficult, even for a state as powerful as the United States.

What accounts for the differences in the outcomes of these cases? Many factors are involved in making for success or failure in coercive diplomacy. Among them are the price of what is being asked of the target, the coercer's ability to create a sense of urgency in the target, the target's fear of the costs of escalation, the clarity of the objectives being sought in the target's mind, and the intensity of the target's attachment to the issue in dispute. Generally, the coercer is more likely to be successful if its will to prevail is stronger than that of the target's.

In these cases, however, another factor appears to be at work. In nearly every case where the United States had a clear or partial success, inducements and reassurance, either tacit or explicit, were as important as threats. In the Libyan case, Gadhafi was offered a return to the international community, the lifting of sanctions and, most important, the security of the regime, while the coercive threat was, depending on one's interpretation of the case, his overthrow through internal unrest or through the implicit exercise of U.S. military force. In the case of Iraq in 2002–3, the inducements were Saddam's hope of staying in power if he agreed to UN inspections and the lifting of sanctions, while the coercive threat was the use of U.S. power to remove him from office if he did not agree. In Bosnia, Ambassador Holbrooke made verbal promises to Milosevic that sanctions on Serbia would be lifted, while the coercive threat was more force used against the Bosnian Serbs that would reverse their military gains in the war. In Haiti, Cedras and his officers were promised a U.S.-Haitian military agreement to bring about the renewal and modernization of Haitian military forces, as well as a safe haven outside the country, while the coercive threat was the use of the invasion force that had occupied the capital to fight the junta. In the 1994 North Korean case, the offer to build light-water reactors and the promise of eventual normalization of relations with the United States were the inducements, while the threat to go to war and unseat the regime was the coercion.

In these cases of success or borderline success, the United States appeared to have found the correct balance between threat and inducement. In the cases of failure, the United States offered little or no inducement to the target to comply. In the Somalia case, the United States offered Mohammed Farah Aideed, the most powerful Somalia warlord, nothing by way of inducement, and instead, sought to capture or kill him. There were no inducements that the United States offered Saddam Hussein between 1990 and 1998, only containment, deterrence, and coercion. In Kosovo, the United States gave Milosevic no assurance that Serbia would retain control over Kosovo, offered him no other inducements, and presented him only with the threat of NATO force. In the terrorism cases, the United States offered nothing by way of inducement to Bin Laden to stop his attacks, and the demand made of the Taliban to give up Bin Laden would have been suicidal for the regime because of the central role that al Qaeda played in propping it up. In the cases of failure, then, no positive

inducements were offered, either because the situation did not merit it or because the United States chose, for whatever reason, not to offer any. One possible conclusion from these cases, then, is that coercive diplomacy has a better chance of working when threats and limited uses of force are combined with reassurances and inducements.

NORTH KOREA AND IRAN, 2001–6

Negotiations with North Korea and Iran during the first decade of the twenty-first century reveal the limits of compellence in general and coercive diplomacy in particular. Both these cases, moreover, demonstrate how difficult coercive diplomacy can be when issues of core security are involved and when the balance between threat and inducement is weighted more heavily toward the former.[32]

North Korea, 2001–6

President George W. Bush entered office in 2001 determined to prevent Iraq and Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons and to pressure North Korea to give them up. These were the three countries he dubbed the "axis of evil" in his second State of the Union address in January 2002. The most immediate impact of the new Bush administration's policy, and it was almost surely inadvertent, was to end the common negotiating strategy between South Korea and the United States. One of the achievements of the Clinton administration's handling of North Korea was the concerted attempt by Secretary of Defense William Perry to align the United States, Japan, and South Korea in a common negotiating strategy. That strategy, in effect, was nullified when South Korean president Kim Dae-jung visited President Bush in the early weeks of the new U.S. administration. Japan's concern about the status of its citizens that North Korea had abducted in previous years further complicated the administration's attempts to realign external pressure against North Korea. Diplomacy was frozen, and the subsequent terrorist strikes on the United States pushed North Korea further down the U.S. agenda.

After it had ousted the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and removed Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq, the Bush administration dispatched Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly to confront the North Koreans with the basic choice of disarm or pay the price. Kelly was not authorized to offer new incentives, and, in a meeting in Pyongyang in October 2002, he thought he heard the North Koreans confirm his accusation that they were engaged in a covert highly enriched uranium program —one quite independent of the earlier plutonium reactor that had been frozen under the 1994 Agreed Framework. Washington sought to slap what further sanctions it could find on North Korea, but the key act was the administration's decision to stop oil shipments, which had been part of the Agreed Framework bargain. The abrupt end to the Agreed Framework was something not entirely unexpected, because the prospect of completing the two light-water nuclear reactors agreed to in 1994 was less palatable to the Bush administration than it had been to the Clinton White House. (The Korean Energy Development Organization that was building the reactors would officially suspend activity in November 2003.) North Korea responded by removing IAEA seals at the Yongbyon facilities, expelling the inspectors, removing the fuel rods from their storage tanks, and then later reprocessing them. North-South talks and a planned joint railroad also fell victim to rising tensions and mutual recriminations between Pyongyang and Washington.

The search for what in effect would be a new framework for diplomacy—one that would try to dismantle both the plutonium and enrichment programs—proved to be quite elusive for the next three years. By the spring of 2003, North Korea was hinting at a nuclear deal after quiet talks were established in Beijing with China's help. Yet later that year North

Korea was reported to be back at reprocessing fuel rods at the Yongbyon reactor. President Bush insisted that North Korea submit to a comprehensive and verifiable end to all its nuclear programs before the United States would consider steps to improve relations between the two, whereas President Kim Jong Il insisted on a host of demands if it froze its nuclear program, not the least of which were direct talks with the United States. The Bush administration sought to "front-load" its proposals with North Korea, while the North Koreans demanded "rewards for freeze"—and, even so, it was never apparent that North Korea was placing its highly enriched uranium on the bargaining table.[33] Washington tried to ratchet up the pressure on Kim Jong Il by establishing the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), which provided a coalition of the willing to stop any WMD contraband. The PSI was not limited to North Korea, but it was aimed primarily at it and Iran. Washington also took quiet steps to try to close down the foreign bank havens for North Korean assets. If these steps yielded major dividends, they were not readily apparent.

North Korea eventually agreed to participate in a new multilateral negotiation process, which was dubbed the Six Party Talks, and these negotiations included the United States, South Korea, China, Japan, and Russia.[34] The talks became effectively stalemated in 2005 when the United States applied financial sanctions over North Korean currency counterfeiting and other illicit activity. In the meantime, North Korea continued to increase the size of its nuclear arsenal. The best available intelligence estimate had been that the North could have built one or two nuclear weapons based on the fissile material it had produced at Yongbyon in the 1990s; now estimates suggested the North might have quadrupled its small arsenal based on additional reprocessing in 2003–5. In 2006, North Korea continued to be secondary to security concerns in the Middle East, a fact that may have prompted Pyongyang's missile launches in July. North Korea remained surprisingly stable and stubborn. Whether the Six Party Talks and the pressure put on North Korea through the Proliferation Security Initiative and the financial controls would eventually yield results, only time could tell. However, the exertion of coercive diplomacy in this second trial must be judged thus far a provisional failure.

Iran, 2001–6

Unlike North Korea, Iran is a large power with enormous natural resources critical to the global energy supply. Moreover, the government of Iran tended to maintain cooperation with the West and with the IAEA and to adhere to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty —notwithstanding being found in violation of its safeguards agreement with the IAEA. The Bush administration focused initially on providing more intelligence and information on Iran's nuclear program, supporting the IAEA to expose Iran's safeguards violations. The United States kept the threat of military force on the table—something that in 2003 seemed more than just an idle bluff, given the intervention in Iraq and the 2002 National Security Strategy's emphasis on preemption. Even so, the Bush administration kept diplomacy in the forefront by giving Britain, France, and Germany (the so-called EU-3) a chance to try to secure a deal with Iran to suspend and ultimately forgo its enrichment and reprocessing programs.

In the fall of 2003 and then again in 2004, Iran would seemingly back down and accept negotiations and a voluntary suspension of enrichment-related activity when faced with the threat of IAEA censure and referral of Iran to the UN Security Council. In the fall of 2005, however, Iran unilaterally opted to resume this activity. The IAEA eventually did vote to refer Iran to the UN Security Council, although it postponed the time before debate over possible sanctions would begin. In the meantime, in April 2006, Iran declared that it

had achieved success in its experimental enrichment program. Heightened concerns about possible military action, including leaked reports that the Pentagon was being told to keep the possible use of tactical nuclear weapons on the table, seemed to strengthen, not weaken, Tehran's resolve to proceed with its nuclear ambitions.[35]

From the outset of the Bush administration until June 2006, diplomacy backed by threats of force against Iran had done little to stem the Islamic Republic's push to master nuclear technology and, most observers assume, to build nuclear weapons. Indeed, the culmination of this five-year effort of dealing with the nuclear threat from Iran was the announcement in Tehran that it had successfully experimented with enriched uranium and thereby "joined the nuclear club."

In June 2006, the Bush administration sharply changed course. It announced its conditional willingness to open direct talks with Iran for the first time in a quarter century if Iran verifiably suspended its uranium enrichment program.[36] This concession was, in the first instance, a bid to strengthen U.S. leverage with the EU-3 in their ongoing negotiations with Iran, as well as to make a common approach more palatable to China and Russia, whose support in the UN Security Council would be necessary for any forceful actions against Iran. The EU-3 had consistently been urging the United States to be more forthcoming toward Iran and to join the direct negotiations, while the Chinese and Russians were resisting the imposition of sanctions against Iran and were opposed to even more forceful measures. The Bush administration reversed its position, much as it had done earlier with regard to North Korea, and agreed to direct negotiations because it had no choice. The EU-3–Russian–Chinese coalition would not have supported sanctions, much less military action, against Iran unless the United States took every diplomatic step possible to engage it.[37] Whether this radical change of course will bear fruit is not clear at the time of this writing (June 2006), but if the Iraqi and Libyan cases are any guide to the Iranian one, the Bush administration will not make significant headway with Iran unless it is prepared to give security assurances to the Iranian regime.

Summary

The United States made little progress between 2001 and late spring 2006 in getting either North Korea to give up its nuclear program or Iran to stop its program. Three factors were responsible for these stalemates.

First, each state believed that a nuclear program was essential to its security, and where security—the most vital of a state's national interests—is at issue, compromise is hard. Coercive diplomacy is difficult to pull off successfully when a state believes that what it is being asked to give up makes it vulnerable to the actions of the coercing state.

Second, the Bush administration tended to follow a hard line in its negotiations with both states. It offered little in the way of reassurance and inducement to either one, and mostly demanded concessions from both. For example, with regard to North Korea, in the fall of 2005, after nearly five years of a hard-line, no-compromise policy, the Bush administration finally offered an inducement—providing North Korea with a civilian power plant, but only "well after North Korea had dismantled all its nuclear facilities and allowed highly intrusive inspections of the country." North Korea promptly stated that the United States "should not dream" that it would dismantle its program until after it received the new nuclear plant.[38] With regard to Iran, in May 2003, the Bush administration passed up an opportunity either to achieve a normalization of relations or to test the Iranian's sincerity about doing so. The Iranian foreign ministry proposed a grand bargain in which Tehran would deal with U.S. concerns about terrorism and proliferation among other issues, while the United States would lift its economic sanctions and

provide security assurances and drop "regime change" from its vocabulary. The Bush administration did not respond and instead castigated the Swiss diplomats (Switzerland represents U.S. interests in Iran) who passed on the proposal.[39] Coercive diplomacy is difficult when there is primarily coercion and little diplomacy.

Third, the Bush administration was as much if not more interested in regime change as it was in stopping the nuclear programs of both states. The administration alternated between the goals of changing the regimes and getting the regimes to change their policy, thereby further increasing the insecurity of both.[40] Coercive diplomacy is difficult when the coercer communicates to the regime it is trying to coerce that it wants regime change, as the case of Iraq in 2002–3 also demonstrated.

In sum, attempts to get states to give up programs that they believe are vital to their security are difficult enterprises. It becomes even more difficult when little is offered in return and when the states concerned are made to feel even more insecure.

CONCLUSIONS

The case studies of U.S. resort to coercive diplomacy since 1990 reveal the numerous difficulties that are encountered in applying this technique. These difficulties can all too easily undermine the target state's willingness to comply with the coercer's demands. The cases also show that success at coercive diplomacy is more difficult when several states are employing the strategy together against more than one target. In addition, targets of coercion develop countercoercion techniques that constrain the coercing power's ability to pursue strong action. Coercive diplomacy is also difficult to employ on behalf of humanitarian goals because what the coercer may consider to be humanitarian the target state considers vital. Moreover, in general, positive inducements should not be offered until coercive threats or limited force is used in order to make clear that there will be punishment for noncompliance. Finally, it can be difficult to determine whether coercive diplomacy has succeeded. Coercive diplomacy is a seductive tool of statecraft because it promises "success on the cheap," but the cases surveyed in this chapter demonstrate that U.S. decision makers should not be easily seduced because coercive diplomacy too often fails.

Three other general points are in order. First, coercive diplomacy works best when the goal sought is limited. Regime change has proved difficult to effect through coercive diplomacy, but so, too, has the goal of denying a state a nuclear program that it believes vital to its survival. Indeed, some would question whether it is at all realistic to expect either a large middle power such as Iran or a survival-seeking regime such as North Korea to respond to coercive diplomatic attempts to get rid of its nuclear program. Second, if coercive diplomacy is to have a good chance of success, then methods of reassurance and forms of positive inducements must also accompany the coercion. Third, coercive diplomacy often involves an element of bluff. If the threat of limited action proves futile, a state may well find its resort to coercive diplomacy in the future undercut if it does not follow through on its current threats. Consequently, a state should not utilize this technique unless it is prepared to go down the path of war should coercive diplomacy fail.

Coercive diplomacy has the best chance of succeeding when the coercer's objective is focused, when the target regime's survival is not threatened, when threats are mixed with incentives to effect a face-saving element for the target, when there is a united front from the international community against the target rather than escape valves offered by other states or actors that make it unnecessary for the target to comply, and when the coercing state is persistent in pursuit of its objectives. However, because coercive diplomacy is about particular actors pursuing particular goals at a

particular time, it is difficult before the fact to state with certainty whether any given coercive diplomatic gambit that meets these ideal conditions will succeed.

NOTES

1. Alexander L. George, *Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1991).

2. Todd Sechser will rectify this situation when his study of coercive diplomacy in the twentieth century is completed. See Todd S. Sechser, "Winning without a Fight: Power, Appeasement, and Compellent Threats" (PhD diss., Stanford University, forthcoming). For a preliminary version of his investigations, see Todd Sechser, "Why Can the United States Deter but Not Compel? How Military Power Makes Compellence More Difficult" (paper prepared for the 101st American Political Science Association Convention, September 1, 2005). Sechser finds that the overall success rate of coercive diplomacy is higher than what we have found for the U.S. experience with it since 1990, but he does confirm the lower success rate for the United States.

3. See Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy —Laos, Cuba, Vietnam* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971); and Alexander L. George and William Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1994). Subsequent theoretical studies on coercive diplomacy include Lawrence Freedman, ed., *Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Peter Jakobsen, *Western Use of Coercive Diplomacy after the Cold War: A Challenge for Theory and Practice*; and Daniel L. Byman and Matthew C. Waxman, *The Dynamic of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

4. See the chart in George et al., *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2nd ed., 270. See also the abbreviated discussion of each case in George, *Forceful Persuasion.*

5. See *Forceful Persuasion*, 27, 35, and 75–80; and *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, 2nd ed., 288.

6. *Forceful Persuasion*, 7–9.

7. See Robert J. Art and Patrick M. Cronin, eds., *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2003).

8. The following discussion draws from ibid., 361–370.

9. Thomas Schelling coined the term "compellence." See Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1966), 69–86.

10. See Robert A. Pape, *Bombing to Win: Airpower and Coercion* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996), 18–19.

11. Several cases can be broken down into multiple cases, but here we treat them as one case. To see how some can be broken up into multiple cases, see Art and Cronin, *The United States and Coercive Diplomacy*, 378, 386.

12. The discussion of the first eight cases in this section draws primarily from the case studies in ibid.

13. For the definitive account of the negotiations with North Korea by members of the Clinton administration most directly involved in them, see Joel S. Wit, Daniel B. Poneman, and Robert L. Gallucci, *Going Critical: The First North Korean Nuclear Crisis* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2004).

14. In the Agreed Framework was a provision committing North Korea to implement the North-South Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, which explicitly states that neither North nor South Korea will possess nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment facilities.

15. See, for example, Ivo H. Daalder and James M. Lindsay, *America Unbound: The Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2003), chap. 9.

16. Central Intelligence Agency, *Comprehensive Report of the Special Advisor to the DCI on Iraq's WDM* (known as the Duelfer Report), vol. 1, 62, September 30, 2004, http://www.cia.gov/cia/reports/iraq_wmd_2004/contents.htm.

17. Quoted in Robert S. Litwak, *Strategies of Regime Change* (forthcoming), chap. 4. We are indebted to Rob for sharing with us his book manuscript before publication.

18. Quoted in ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 62–63.

21. Ibid., 63.

22. Quoted in ibid., chap. 5, 31.

23. Quoted in Philip H. Gordon and Jeremy Shapiro, *Allies at War: America, Europe, and the Crisis over Iraq* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 143.

24. For the transatlantic differences over inspections and the general differences in approach between the Americans and the British, on the one hand, and the Germans and the French, on the other, see ibid.

25. We have found especially helpful these two sources for the Libyan case: Bruce W. Jentleson and Christopher A. Whytock, "Who Won Libya? The Force-Diplomacy Debate and Its Implications for Theory and Policy," *International Security* 30, no. 3 (Winter 2005–6): 47–87; and Litwak, *Strategies of Regime Change*, chap. 5.

26. This account is based on Martin Indyk, "Iraq Did Not Force Qaddafi's Hand," *Financial Times*, March 9, 2004, 11. Flynt Leverett, who served on the Policy Planning Staff of the State Department under Bush and then became senior director for Middle Eastern affairs on the National Security Council in 2002–3, confirms that these talks took place in 1999. See Flynt Leverett, "Why Libya Gave Up on the Bomb," *New York Times*, January 23, 2004, A25.

27. Litwak, *Strategies of Regime Change*, chap. 5, 18.

28. Leverett, "Why Libya Gave Up on the Bomb."

29. Indyk, "Iraq Did Not Force Qaddafi's Hand"; and Litwak, *Strategies of Regime Change*, chap. 5, 37.

30. Quoted in Litwak, *Strategies of Regime Change*, 34.

31. Ibid., 40. Jentleson and Whytock make the same point. See Jentleson and Whytock, "Who Won Libya?" 81–82.

32. For a comprehensive analysis of U.S. policy toward North Korea and Iran, see Litwak, *Strategies of Regime Change*, chaps. 6 and 7. For particulars on the North Korean and Iranian nuclear programs, see *Iran's Strategic Weapons Programs: A Net Assessment* (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 2005); and Larry A. Niksch, *Iran's Program to Produce Plutonium and Enriched Uranium*, CRS Issue Brief (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, March 25, 2005).

33. The phrases are taken from Litwak, *Strategies of Regime Change*, chap. 6, 36.

34. See Nautilus Institute, *Full Text of Six-Nation Statement on North Korea*, September 20, 2005, http://www.nautilus.org/napset/sr/2005/0577Agreement.html.

35. See Seymour M. Hersh, "The Iran Plans," *New Yorker*, April 17, 2006, 30–37.

36. See Steven R. Weisman, "U.S. Now Ready to Meet Iranians on Nuclear Plan," *New York Times*, June 1, 2006, A1.

37. See the analysis by David E. Sanger, "Bush's Realization on Iran: No Good Choice Left Except Talks," *New York Times*, June 1, 2006, A8.

38. Joseph Kahn and David E. Sanger, "U.S.-Korean Deal on Arms Leaves Key Points Open," *New York Times*, September 20, 2005, A1.

39. Flynt Leverett, "The Gulf between Us," *New York Times*, January 24, 2006, A25; and Litwak, *Strategies for Regime Change*, chap. 6, 32.

40. Litwak makes this crystal clear in his chapters on Iran and North Korea. See Litwak, *Strategies for Regime Change*, chaps. 6 and 7.