Examining the Development—Security Nexus:

Historical Analogies and Nation Building in U.S. Foreign Policy

An honors thesis for the Program in International Relations

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Chapter 1

Introduction

As Noah Feldman, a scholar of constitutional law at Harvard, traveled to Baghdad in May 2003 to advise American occupational authorities, he observed with shock the in-flight reading of his fellow passengers on the military transport: "Not one seemed to need a refresher on Iraq or the Gulf region. Without exception, they were reading new books on the American occupation and reconstruction of Germany and Japan."[1] Feldman's implication is that his fellow passengers were drawing a historical analogy, using the cases of American nation building in post-war Germany and Japan to draw lessons for the occupation and reconstruction of Iraq.

The veteran diplomat James Dobbins has said, "the occupations of Germany and Japan set standards for post-conflict nation-building that have never again been matched."[2] Given this widely held view, perhaps it should not be surprising that these analogies were ubiquitous in rhetoric as the Bush administration justified to the American people a long and expensive occupation of Iraq. As Feldman's anecdote suggests, however, historical analogies may serve purposes beyond rhetoric: they are a means by which individuals diagnose and analyze situations, make inferences, and draw prescriptions. This study will investigate the role of historical analogies as they relate to decision making in nation building campaigns, asking to what extent the presumptive "lessons of the past" inform the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of nation building campaigns.

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[1] Noah Feldman, *What We Owe Iraq: War and the Ethics of Nation Building* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 1.
[2] Quoted in "Monograph Reports," RAND, available http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1753.html.

What is nation building?

The term nation building is notoriously imprecise. Politicians and the media commonly use the terms *nation* and *state* interchangeably, whereas academics generally distinguish between the two. The most widely accepted definition of the state is Max Weber's, which posits that the state is "a human community that (successfully) claims the *monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force* within a given territory."[3] The nation refers to the collective political identity of a group of people. Benedict Anderson offers a commonly accepted definition of the nation as "an imagined political community—and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign." It is "*imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."[4] The nation-state, then, is said to occur when the *nation* and *state* coincide.[5]

Nation building traditionally referred to the long-term process of developing this sense of collective identity. State building, on the other hand, referred to the long-term process of internal state formation, marked by the consolidation of power and the development of administrative institutions over decades if not centuries. More recently, it has come to encompass state formation advanced—or imposed—by external powers.[6]

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[3] Max Weber, *Politics as a Vocation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 2. Emphasis original.

[4] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verson, 2006), 6. On the consensus formed around Anderson's definition in post-Cold War international relations and political science scholarship, see Jonathan M. Acuff, "Modernity and Nationalism," in *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, Robert A Denemark, ed., (Blackwell Publishing, 2010); Available *Blackwell Reference Online*, http://www.blackwellreference.com.

[5] It has been hypothesized that a high degree of incongruence between the state and nation can be a source of conflict. Benjamin Miller, "Balance of Power or the State-to-Nation Balance: Explaining Middle East War Propensity," *Security Studies* 15 (2006), 658-705.

[6] Catherine Goetze and Dejan Guzina, "Statebuilding and Nationbuilding," in *The International Studies Encyclopedia*, Denemark, ed., Available *Blackwell Reference Online*, http://www.blackwellreference.com.

The U.S. military uses the term *stability operations* to capture the broad spectrum of both kinetic and non-kinetic activities, from achieving basic security to establishing legitimate government to providing basic services, it conducts in post-war environments.[7]

Nation building, as it is used most often in popular discourse, consists of some mixture of all of the above—that is, building the state and the nation. This is frequently through stability operations, which can encompass humanitarian assistance, reconstruction of infrastructure, and longer-term development in a top-down fashion.[8] The United States' projects in Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, are most obviously examples of state building, that is, building the administrative capacities of the countries' respective governments. Yet building a cohesive nation is just as significant a process for ensuring the long term viability of these states. One of the most significant tasks the United States faces in both countries is getting disparate groups—divided along ethnic, religious, or national lines—to accept the legitimacy of a central government and pursue their political agendas within that political framework rather than through violence. Efforts to build integrated armies represent one attempt at building national identities that supersede parochial interests.[9] As Karen Talentino writes, "The task is not to build a single nation in the sense of *ethnos*, but to build a common commitment to a single state."[10]

In line with conventional usage, I will use the term nation building in this study.[11] For my purposes, nation building will refer to long-term commitments to bolster the security capacity of weak states while simultaneously investing in social and economic development, with an aim toward reducing insecurity and improving popular perceptions of the government.

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[7] United States. Department of the Army. *Stability Operations (FM 3-07)*, 6 October 2008, available <train.army.mil> (Accessed 12 December 2011).

[8] Andrea Kathryn Talentino, "The two faces of nation-building: developing function and identity," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 17 (2004), 558.

[9] Nathan Hodge, *Armed Humanitarians: the Rise of the Nation Builders* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2011), 20; Robert K. Brigham, *Iraq, Vietnam, and the Limits of American Power* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008), 76-87.

[10] Talentino, "The two faces of nation-building," 559.

[11] U.S. Army, *Stability Operations (FM 3-07)*, updated October 2008, available <www.train.army.mil>, vi.

Winning Hearts and Minds?

Hearts and Minds (HAM) doctrine might be said to be the lowest common denominator among cases that fall under this relatively broad nation building umbrella. Political scientist D. Michael Shafer has succinctly summarized the prescriptions of HAM doctrine in "three great *oughts*":

> Government *ought* to secure the population from insurgent coercion. They *ought* to provide competent, legal, responsive administration free from past abuses and broader in domain, scope, and vigor. And they *ought* to meet rising expectations with higher living standards.[12]

Taken together, these "oughts" are carried out both as an aspect of counterinsurgency and out of the concern that the vacuum of power in weak states presents broader risks for international security. They constitute a comprehensive strategy for militarily defeating insurgents while undercutting the population's desire to support the insurgency. Derived from the modernization theories of the 1950s and 1960s, they dominated counterinsurgency (COIN) theory and practice throughout the 1960s, and made a resurgence as Shafer was writing in the late-1980s. They continue to form the basis of the theory and practice of counterinsurgency in the doctrine's contemporary iteration.[13]

Yet, as Shafer argues, the Hearts and Minds approach is conceptually flawed. It tends to overstate the leverage that the United States has over the host government, assumes the willingness and capacity of the host government to make necessary reforms, and assumes the fundamental legitimacy of the host government, illegitimacy of insurgents, and that the interests

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[12] D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 116.
[13] Stathis N. Kalyvas, "Review of *The New U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*," *Perspectives on Politics* 6 (2008), 351-353.

of political elites are aligned with those of the people.[14] Stathis Kalyvas notes that contemporary

military doctrine has failed to resolve COIN doctrine's enduring theoretical inconsistencies.[15]

Looking Ahead

This thesis hypothesizes that policymakers may, in fact, rely on the same historical

analogies they use in public rhetoric to help formulate, implement, and evaluate policy. I use a

case study of John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, his development and counterinsurgency

program in Latin America, to test these hypotheses using secondary sources and archival

material. The Marshall Plan, in which the United States assisted in the reconstruction of Western

Europe after World War II was, as will be examined, the predominant analogy. This case study

does not support the contention that reasoning by historical analogy is *determinative* of policy

outcomes. It does not appear, however, the such reasoning has no tangible effects whatsoever on

policy outcomes at these various stages; perhaps, then, historical analogizing in policy making

might better be seen as an intervening variable that can affect the dependent variable—nation

building outcomes—marginally, for better or, more likely, worse.

In the following chapter, I develop a theory of reasoning by historical analogy as it relates

to nation building, building upon the extant literature on foreign policy decision making and

historical analogies in the policy making process. In chapter three, I establish the historical

background of the Alliance for Progress, including its origins and its underwhelming, and, at

times, perverse outcomes. In chapter four, I test my hypotheses regarding historical analogies

using evidence from decision making in the Kennedy White House and State Department,

finding that the role of historical analogies on policy outcomes was marginal. In chapter five, I

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[14] Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 116-127.
[15] Kalyvas, "Review."

conclude by suggesting how the argument might be extended to the war in Iraq, in which

analogies contemporaneous to the Marshall Plan—the reconstruction of Germany and Japan—

were ubiquitous in public rhetoric. Indicators such as de-Ba-athification, a self-conscious

reference to de-Nazification in post-war Germany, I argue, are suggestive that these analogies

did have some tangible impact on the Coalition Provisional Authority's approach to the

occupation. I conclude with possible directions for further research and prescriptions for the

more prudential use of historical analogies in foreign policy decision making.

Chapter 2

A Theory of Historical Analogies &

Decision Making in Nation Building

International politics attracts analogies the way honey attracts bears.
– ALEXANDER HAIG[1]

The chief practical use of history is to deliver us from plausible historical analogies.
– JAMES BRYCE[2]

Introduction

In this chapter, I review the extant literature on foreign policy decision making and the role of historical analogies in the decision making process. Building upon the extant literature, I propose three hypotheses on the role historical analogies may play in decision making with specific regard to nation building. After laying out the hypotheses, their rationales, and predictions yielded by them in this chapter, I will then turn to Kennedy's Alliance for Progress to test these hypotheses in the following chapter.

Theorizing about decision making

The study of individual behavior as a source of state behavior in international relations (IR) had long been consigned to the outskirts of political science theory.[3] Kenneth Waltz posited

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[1] Alexander M. Haig, Jr., "Gulf Analogy: Munich or Vietnam?" *New York Times*, 10 December 1990, A19.
[2] Quoted in David Hackett Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 243.

that there are three "images"—levels of analysis—from which state behavior originates: the first

is the individual (i.e. the decision-maker), the second is the structure of the state, and the third is

the structure of the international system. Yet Waltz by and large dismissed the first image, as

have many of his followers and detractors alike.[4] Most IR scholarship that has not explained state

behavior with the third image has turned to the second, proposing theories drawing on domestic

or bureaucratic politics. Scholars have largely avoided the first image either because they see

individual behavior as constant, and therefore unable to explain variation in state behavior, as

insignificant to state intentions, or as too unpredictable to yield elegant and parsimonious

theories.[5] Daniel Byman and Kenneth Pollack lament the dearth of scholarship focusing on the

first image; individuals matter a great deal in international politics, they argue, and are not so

fickle that they cannot be the subject of relatively parsimonious theories. Byman and Pollack are

particularly interested in how individual behavior—the first image—interacts with and

influences the second and third images to determine a state's behavior.[6]

Realist theories privilege the third image, systemic constraints on state behavior, as the

prime mover in international relations. Realist theories, however, seek to explain broad patterns

in international politics rather than the foreign policies of individual states. Thus, foreign policy

analysis emphasizes analysis at the level of the state (e.g. regime type, bureaucratic, and interest

group approaches) and the individual to enrich our understanding of state behavior.[7] Byman and

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[3] Daniel L. Byman and Kenneth M. Pollack, "Let Us Now Praise Great Men: Bringing the Statesman Back In," *International Security* 25 (2001), 108-109.
[4] *Ibid.*, 111; Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, The State, and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).
[5] Byman and Pollack, "Let Us Now Praise Great Men," 111-114.
[6] *Ibid.*, 143-146.
[7] Waltz, the father of neorealism, argues that the proper relationship between international relations (IR) theory and foreign policy analysis (FPA) is analogous to the division between market theory and firm theory within the discipline of economics. In both cases, the former relies on a certain level of parsimony to explain systemic behaviors, so that it leads to underspecification if it is applied toward the latter. FPA, seeking to explain state behavior, must take into account domestic factors that are extraneous to the purposes of international politics.

Pollack encourage greater emphasis on the latter in scholarship: "Recognizing the importance of individuals is necessary to explode one of the most pernicious and dangerous myths in the study of international relations: the cult of inevitability."[8]

Deborah Welch Larson arrives at a similar conclusion by a different route—one informed by psychology. She emphasizes that analysis at the level of the individual is necessary when state behavior may deviate from that which would be predicted by theories predicated on states maximizing their interests within the constraints of the international system. She writes: "If individual policymakers interpret the same external circumstances differently, than the analysis must include individual level variables."[9]

Within the first image we can examine both rationalist as well as non-rationalist approaches. Non-rationalist approaches can be sub-divided into cognitive ("cold"/unmotivated) and psychological ("hot"/emotional/motivated) theories. "Cold" theories are those that promote cognitive (i.e. information processing) economy while "hot" ones promote ego defense.[10] Individual preferences are constructed in the interaction of these factors. Taken together, both rationalist approaches, suggesting the primacy of the political, and non-rationalist approaches, emphasizing both cognitive and motivated biases, can help elucidate foreign policy decision making. In the following sections, I analyze their findings as they relate to a theory of historical analogies.

Kenneth N. Waltz, "International Politics Is Not Foreign Policy," *Security Studies* 6 (1996), 54-57. Cf. Colin Elman, "Horses for Courses: Why *Not* Neorealist Theories of Foreign Policy?" *Security Studies* 6 (1996), 7-53.

[8] Byman and Pollack, "Let Us Now Praise Great Men," 145.

[9] Larson argues that it is incumbent to look at all three levels of analysis in explaining foreign policy decision-making. What is sacrificed in parsimony is made up for in explanatory richness. Deborah Welch Larson, *Origins of Containment: A Psychological Explanation* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1985): 22. See also, Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press), 18-21.

[10] Chaim D. Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab and into the Archives: A Method for Testing Psychological Explanations of Political Decision Making," *International Studies Quarterly* 38 (1994), 559-560; Rose McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004); David Patrick Houghton, "Invading and Occupying Iraq: Some Insights from Political Psychology," *Peace and Conflict* 14 (2008): 188-189.

Rationalist approaches

Representative of the rationalist approach to the first image is Bueno de Mesquita, whose theory of foreign policy decision making—and by extension, international relations writ large—is predicated on the following:

> The actions leaders take to influence events in the international arena are motivated by personal welfare and, especially, by a desire to stay in office. Leaders' concerns for the national interest are subordinate to personal interests. If the two coincide, then so much the better; if they do not, then leaders will choose what they believe to be best for themselves.[11]

Just as structural theories of realism assume that state are rational, utility-maximizing actors, Bueno de Mesquita's theory assumes individuals are rational utility maximizers. International relations, in this formulation, is fundamentally about the "cumulative effect of policy choices" made by self-interested elites."[12]

Cognitive approaches: limits to rationality

One enduring challenge to the primacy of rational utility maximization models comes from cognitive science. As far back as the 1950s, many scholars—first in psychology and then in economics and political science—recognized that predictions yielded by models of pure rationality were not always reflected in empirical observations. The paradigm of *bounded rationality* emerged, recognizing "the limits of the human capability to calculate, the severe deficiencies of human knowledge about the consequences of choice, and the limits of human ability to adjudicate among multiple goals."[13] In short, there are two chief constraints on rational human decision-making: limitations of knowledge and of computational capacity.[14] This latter limitation is embodied in what is known as the *cognitive miser* model. This model asserts:

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[11] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *Principles of International Politics: People's Power, Preferences, and Perceptions* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 2000), 2.
[12] *Ibid.*, xiii.
[13] Herbert A. Simon, *Models of Bounded Rationality*, vol. 3 (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997), 270.
[14] *Ibid.*, 291.

> People adopt strategies that simplify complex problems; the strategies may not be normatively correct or produce normatively correct answers, but they emphasize efficiency. The capacity-limited thinker searches for rapid, adequate solutions, rather than slow accurate solutions. Consequently, *errors and biases stem from inherent features of the cognitive system*, not necessarily from motivations.[15]

A subsequent generation of psychologists came to recognize the silence of the cognitive miser model on matters of emotion or motivation as a flaw. They came to see the individual more holistically as a *motivated tactician*, "a fully engaged thinker who has multiple cognitive strategies available and chooses among them based on goals, motives, and needs."[16]

Research challenging assumptions of individuals as rational and utility-maximizing actors had repercussions across the social sciences. Classical economics, for example, was challenged by an emerging paradigm of behavioral economics. Likewise, political scientists began incorporating these findings in their research.[17] Within political science, Breslauer and Tetlock note four conditions that make international politics prone to cognitive biases and errors: (a) the complexity of the international system, (b) inherent uncertainty in domestic and international politics, (c) the difficulty of prediction, and lastly, (d) the limited capacity of individuals as information processors.[18] While the first three conditions are structural features of international politics, the last is an inherent feature of human psychology. Political scientists have drawn on cognitive theory to explain both motivated and unmotivated mechanisms that produce biases and errors.

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[15] Susan T. Fiske and Shelley E. Taylor, *Social Cognition,* 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991), 13. Emphasis added.

[16] *Ibid*.; see, for example, Keith J. Holyoak, "The Pragmatics of Analogical Transfer," in *The Psychology of Learning and Motivation*, vol. 19 (San Diego: Academic Press, 1985), 59-87.

[17] The most influential scholars of cognitive psychology are Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky. Their touchstone work is Daniel Kahneman, Paul Slovic, and Amos Tversky, eds., *Judgement Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982). On the influence of their findings on economics, see, for example, Simon, *Bounded Rationality*, 291-298. For applications to American politics, see, for example, Paul M. Sniderman, Richard A. Brody, and Philip E. Tetlock, *Reasoning and Choice: Explorations in Political Psychology*, vol. 3 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[18] George W. Breslauer and Philip E. Tetlock, "Introduction," in *Learning in U.S. and Soviet Foreign Policy*, Breslauer and Tetlock, eds. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991).

Key concepts in cognitive theory

Cognitive dissonance, first posited by Leon Festinger, holds that when old ideas and new information or experiences contradict one another, the individual is "psychologically uncomfortable," and will seek to reduce or avoid the dissonance. Thus, a smoker who has recently learned of the adverse health effects of smoking will seek to reduce the dissonance. He may stop smoking. But evidence suggests he might be more likely to "change his 'knowledge' about the effects of smoking."[19]

Schemata are the general concepts stored in memory; when unfamiliar situations are encountered, individuals search for and invoke the stored schema that most closely resembles the situation at hand, and base their choices and behavior on that schema. Proponents of *schema theory*, which emerged out of the aforementioned cognitive miser model, argue that humans primarily assimilate incoming information in a top-down (theory-driven) manner according to pre-existing beliefs, which may create openings for errors in information processing at three levels: information seeking, information processing, and belief updating. When ambiguous information is acquired, it is interpreted so as to comport with prior beliefs. Meanwhile, dissonant information raises a tension between assimilating the new information to pre-existing theories and beliefs and updating those theories and beliefs to accommodate the new information. In these scenarios, individuals are prone to ignore, rationalize, or discredit the new information.[20] Thus, while Festinger's model cannot predict whether or not the aforementioned

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[19] Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson and Company, 1957), 2-6, 29-31; cf. Fiske and Taylor, *Social Cognition*, 10-11. On the application of cognitive dissonance theory to public perceptions of national security threats, see Kelly M. Greenhill, "Whispers of War, Mongers of Fear: Origins of Threat Perception and Proliferation" (working title, ms in progress, 2012), Chapter 1**,** 15-16. On its application to international relations, see Larson, *Origins of Containment*, 29-34; and David Patrick Houghton, *Political Psychology: Situations, Individuals, and Cases* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 117-118.
[20]Richard Nisbett and Lee Ross, *Human Inference: Strategies and Shortcomings of Social Judgment* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1980), ch. 8; Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, ch. 4; Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War:*

smoker will kick his habit, it does predict that he will apply asymmetrical standards to his

reception and evaluation of incoming information about the health effects of smoking.

Confirmation bias hypothesizes that information will be both selectively interpreted and

recalled so as to validate prior beliefs. In short, "the search for and attention to information is

biased toward information that is congruent with *a priori* expectations and predictions, and the

interpretation of ambiguous events, toward their being consistent with expectations."[21]

Psychologists Richard E. Nisbett and Lee Ross write: "people tend to seek out, recall, and

interpret evidence in a manner that sustains beliefs and tend to become more confident of a belief

in response to a set of mixed evidence which normatively should serve to lower confidence,"

even in the absence of emotional commitments to those beliefs.[22]

Political scientist Jack Levy defines learning as "a change of beliefs (or the degree of

confidence in one's beliefs) or the development of new beliefs, skills, or procedures as a result of

the observation and interpretation of experience."[23] Proponents of schema theory argue that

learning is slower, and beliefs are more stubborn, than a rational theory of learning would

predict, and "individuals tend to hold on to their schemas even when confronted with

contradictory information."[24] Political scientists have applied this concept of *belief perseverance*

to studies of foreign policy decision making.[25]

Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 37-40.

[21] Yaacov Vertzberger, *The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1990), 113; see also, Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 170-172, and 180-183.

[22] Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 192.

[23] Jack S. Levy, "Learning and Foreign Policy: Sweeping A Conceptual Minefield," *International Organization* 48 (1994), 283.

[24] For an overview of the experimental literature, see Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 167-197.

[25] Khong, *Analogies at War*, 39; Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, 196, 201-202.

Emotional approaches

A final approach to the first image in international relations—that of emotion (or "hot" psychology)—has received relatively scant attention in the political science literature. Certainly one of the causes of the dearth of scholarship is that emotion is difficult to define and measure, and therefore difficult to theorize about. Nevertheless, wishful thinking and denial may both be powerful motivational forces.[26] Likewise, a failure to cope well with stress can be detrimental to effective decision making. Janis and Mann, for example, posit *defensive avoidance* as a response to high-stress situations.[27] Under such conditions, buck passing and procrastination are appealing options to individuals. Considering the especially high stakes in foreign policy decision-making, Janis and Mann argue that this effect is especially pronounced in policymakers. When neither buck passing nor procrastination is viable, "members of a policy making group are likely to make an ill-considered decision bolstered by shared rationalizations and a collective sense of invulnerability to threats of failure."[28]

While cognition is relatively static in individuals over time, emotion is highly dynamic. To study the role of emotion, we would have to be inside the actors' head at the time of decision, and in practice it is difficult to distinguish "hot" motivated misperceptions from those "cold" misperceptions caused by cognitive error. With such a fine line in practice between the two, Jervis is skeptical of theories of emotion as a causal factor in decision making and Larson rules out "emotional needs" as a more significant determinant of behavior than the cold processes of

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[26] McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations*, 169-173. Cf. Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, 356-381.

[27] Irving L. Janis and Leon Mann, *Decision Making: A Psychological Analysis of Conflict, Choice, and Commitment* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 107-133.

[28] *Ibid.*, 107. Lebow applies this model to the study of brinksmanship. Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War: The Nature of International Crisis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981). For contemporary contributions to the IR literature, including differential responses to stress by gender, see McDermott, *Political Psychology in International Relations*, 173-177.

"assimilation of information to pre-existing beliefs" both on empirical grounds and in the interests of parsimony.[29]

Chaim Kaufmann has noted that while unmotivated cognitive processes operate continuously, motivated processes operate "only when individuals are confronted with consequential choices, which involve risks to important values, as well as tradeoffs between conflicting values." Robert Jervis argues, "despite differences in underlying assumptions, both social psychology approaches predict broadly similar divergences from rational standards: insufficient information search before forming a judgment, biased evaluation, and excessive resistance to re-evaluation."[30]

Other scholars place much greater importance on the role of emotion in decision making. James N. Druckman and Rose McDermott, for example, infuse prospect theory with an emotional component, arguing that decision makers will undertake risk-seeking behavior when a foreign policy problem is framed in terms of losses but will undertake risk-averse behavior if the same problem is framed in terms of gains.[31] Emotional approaches, however, present many methodological challenges that make them difficult to apply to case study research.[32]

Alternative explanations: group and institutional dynamics

Flaws in processes of decision making have often been attributed to group dynamics. Among the most well known of such flaws is "groupthink," a concept drawn from social psychology. Formulated by Janis, the central hypothesis of groupthink states:

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[29] Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, 380-381; Larson, *Origins of Containment*, 344-345.

[30] Kaufmann, "Out of the Lab and into the Archives," 559.

[31] James N. Druckman and Rose McDermott, "Emotion and the Framing of Risky Choice," *Political Behavior* 30 (2008), 297-321.

[32] Cramer argues that emotional theories do not lend themselves easily to testable hypotheses. See Jane Kellett Cramer, *National Security Panics: Threat Inflation and US Foreign Policy Shifts* (New York: Routledge, forthcoming), 46.

> The more amiability and *esprit de corps* among the members of a policy-making in-group, the greater is the danger that independent critical thinking will be replaced by groupthink, which is likely to result in irrational and dehumanizing actions against out-groups.[33]

Under conditions of groupthink, advisors and policy makers suppress critical diagnoses of problems and evaluations of policy options. In the interest of maintaining membership in the "in-group," they assent to and indeed may promote the dominant view of the group, even if they know the premises to be false or the reasoning problematic.[34]

Drawing on organizational theory, Van Evera offers a rationalist explanation for similar outcomes of flawed decision making. Strong incentives against self-evaluation are embedded within institutions. These incentive structures are especially pronounced in states and their bureaucracies, which do not operate under the market pressures faced by businesses. Van Evera writes: "Elites suppress evaluation because it often threatens their social or political positions."[35] Evaluative units are sidelined by those they are charged with evaluating. Meanwhile, individual would-be evaluators, naturally interested in career advancement, are unlikely to press critical evaluations that might indict their superiors. Effective self-evaluation, then, will tend to be "crushed, deterred, or coopted."[36] Thus, Van Evera argues "groupthink dynamics reflect the simple tendency of people, for rational self-serving reasons, to make life hard on those who criticize their performance. Evaluators understand this tendency and are deterred by it—they silence themselves from fear of retribution." Embedded incentive structures at the individual and

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[33] Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign Policy Decisions and Fiascoes* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1972), esp. 38. For a contemporary, quantitatively-driven view of groupthink, including a chapter on groupthink in the 2003 war in Iraq, see Mark Schafer and Scott Crichlow, *Groupthink versus High-Quality Decision-Making in International Relations* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

[34] *Ibid.*

[35] Stephen Van Evera, "Why States Believe Foolish Ideas: Non-Self Evaluation by States and Societies," available http://web.mit.edu/polisci/research/vanevera/why_states_believe_foolish_ideas.pdf (accessed 15 February 2011), 9.

[36] *Ibid.*, 12.

bureaucratic levels discourage national self-evaluation, and thus, the ability of the state to update beliefs.[37]

These approaches to social and institutional dynamics contribute greatly to our understanding of how state learning might be hindered and misperception might proliferate within the institutions of government. The origins of problematic ideas, however, lie beyond the scope of theories of group dynamics. For such an explanation, it is necessary to look at the individual.[38] In particular, I use historical analogies as a lens by which to analyze the cognitive and political drivers of such ideas.

Historical analogies: cognition and politics

Whenever a policymaker invokes a past event to make a point about another, they are invoking a historical analogy. "The term *historical analogy* signifies an inference that if two or more events separated in time agree in one respect, they may also agree in another."[39] We can model an analogy and its implications as AX:BX::AY:BY, if event B represents the present situation, event A represents its historical analogue, and characteristic X is the common denominator between the two events. If A resulted in outcome Y, then, it can be inferred that B too will result in Y, which is to say B will have the same outcome as A.[40]

Diplomatic historian Ernest May was the first scholar to systematically study the role of analogical reasoning in foreign policy decision making. His book, *"Lessons" of the Past: The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy*, is the foundational text of the literature,

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[37] *Ibid.*, 45.
[38] See, for example, Philip E. Tetlock, *Behavior, Society, and International Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 142.
[39] Khong, *Analogies at War*, 6-7.
[40] David Hackett Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 243-259. Fischer writes of fallacies of both structure and substance. See also: Khong, *Analogies at War*, 7.

a first-cut at explaining the frequently poor policy outcomes he observed as the result of bad

analogizing.[41] May's work is largely atheoretical. His central hypothesis is:

> Policy-makers ordinarily use history badly. When resorting to an analogy, [policymakers] tend to
> seize upon the first that comes to mind. They do not search more widely. Nor do they pause to
> analyze the case, test its fitness, or even ask in what ways it might be misleading.[42]

Subsequent studies have built upon May's initial observation, seeking to develop theoretical

frameworks to explain the causal role of historical analogies in decision-making.

Historical analogies serve two primary functions: they may be a source of understanding

and inference for policymakers or an instrument of advocacy and policy justification. While the

scholarly literature tends to treat these as an either/or proposition, this section will argue that they

need not be mutually exclusive.

Historical analogies as a source of diagnosis and inference

Psychologist Robert Sternberg writes:

> Reasoning by analogy is pervasive in everyday experience and would seem to be an important
> part of what we commonly refer to as intelligence. We reason analogically whenever we make a
> decision about something new in our experience by drawing a parallel to something old in our
> experience.[43]

Much of the political science literature on historical analogies is premised on the notion that

analogical reasoning is as pervasive in political life as it is in personal life, and functions in a

similar fashion. Given the vast, overwhelming, and often ambiguous information available to

decision makers, the inherent uncertainty of domestic and international politics, and the cognitive

and psychological constraints intrinsic to human decision making, decision makers frequently

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[41] Ernest R. May, *"Lessons" of the Past: The Use and Misuse of History in American Foreign Policy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973). See also May's follow up work with political scientist Richard E. Neustadt, covering cases of both foreign and domestic policy: Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers* (New York: Free Press, 1986).

[42] May, *"Lessons" of the Past*, xi.

[43] Robert J. Sternberg, *Intelligence, Information Processing, and Analogical Reasoning: The Componential Analysis of Human Abilities* (Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1977).

turn to the lessons of history to sift through information, resolve its ambiguities, interpret causal

processes, and arrive at decisions.[44]

The use of historical analogies as both an analytical tool and an instrument of learning

has received extensive treatment within the foreign policy decision making school of analysis.

Policymakers, according to this line of thought, use the lessons of the past when confronting

analogous, or even novel, foreign policy situations. Learning will be effective if they draw the

"right" lessons from historical cases and apply them to foreign policy situations bearing

structural similarities to the analogue. "Misperceptions occur when analogies are accessed

suboptimally, but also occur when analogies are applied in ways leading to simplistic and errant

conclusions."[45]

Jervis' *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* built on May's observation

that policymakers draw "lessons from the past" to inform decisions in the present by giving it a

theoretical framework rooted in cognitive psychology.[46] It is Yuen Foong Khong's *Analogies at*

War, however, that has become a seminal text of this body of political science literature, largely

because Khong was among the first and most comprehensive in applying the cognitive research

employed by Jervis, among others, to rigorous empirical examination. Khong's major

contribution is the Analogical Explanation (AE) framework.[47] He writes:

> Analogies (1) help define the nature of the situation confronting the policymaker, (2) help assess
> the stakes, and (3) provide prescriptions. They help evaluate alternative options by (4) predicting

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[44] Margaret MacMillan, *Dangerous Games: The Uses and Abuses of History* (New York: The Modern Library, 2009), 156; Breslauer & Tetlock, "Introduction."

[45] Jane Kellett Cramer, *National Security Panics: Threat Inflation and US Foreign Policy Shifts* (New York: Routledge, forthcoming), 57. A good summary is given by Alex Mintz and Karl DeRouen Jr., *Undertsanding Foreign Policy Decision Making* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 103-105.

[46] Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, 217-287. Vertzberger gives a similar theoretical account. Vertzberger, *The World in Their Minds*, ch. 6.

[47] Khong, *Analogies at War*, 19-46.

their chances of success, (5) evaluating their moral rightness, and (6) warning about dangers associated with the options.[48]

Applying the AE framework to the Lyndon B. Johnson administration, Khong demonstrates how the use by the president and his aides of various historical analogies affected decisions regarding military escalation in Southeast Asia in 1965. Analogies were ubiquitous in public and private discourse, employed by those who favored (in the cases of Munich and Korea) as well as opposed (in the case of Dien Bien Phu) a build-up and expansion of the war. Khong demonstrates that decisions made regarding escalation were consistent with the analogies that he and his aides were most receptive too, viz. Korea and Munich. Had Johnson and his aides been pre-disposed to take more seriously the counter-analogy of Dien Bien Phu, radically different decisions might have been made.[49]

Khong observes that policymakers are likely to choose superficial analogies when they conform to a pre-existing schema; thus analogies, once embraced, are not easily relinquished in the face of evidence to the contrary, a phenomenon Khong calls "clinging."[50] Related to this concept, Khong observed that though debate about the appropriateness of a given analogy was a frequent feature of policy deliberations, more often than not challenges to stated analogies went unheeded: "Interestingly, such criticisms and enumerations of difference seldom registered: the

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[48] *Ibid.*, 10.
[49] The widely accepted "lesson" of Korea was that external Communist aggression against an international border, supported by great powers (i.e. China and the Soviet Union) must be countered by early and forceful military action. The Munich analogy, referring back to Britain's appeasement of Hitler in the 1930s, similarly taught that "aggression unchecked is aggression unleashed," Lastly, Dien Bien Phu evoked the siege and surrender of French forces to Vietnamese nationalists in the 1950s. Dien Bien Phu counseled against escalation, but was repudiated as the preemptive causes of French defeat, including "war weariness and the twilight of the French empire," were not considered to be relevant to the United States: "the analogy painted a picture too much at variance with the national self-perception of most of the policymakers." *Ibid.*, 98, 175-176, 148-149.
[50] Khong, *Analogies at War*, 39-40, 223-225, 257. On the perseverance effect, see Fiske and Taylor, *Social Cognition*, 171; and Nisbett and Ross, *Human Inference*, 167-197.

proposer of the analogy would either dismiss the differences or pay lip service to them and continue to believe that his analogy was valid."[51]

In Khong's account, "poor use" of historical analogies "is defined primarily by process":

> That is, by the tendency of policymakers to pick the first analogies that come to mind, by their failure to search for and to seriously consider other parallels, by their neglect of potentially important differences between situations being compared, and finally, by their tendency to use analogies as substitutes for proof. Poor use, therefore, implies a pattern of partial or inaccurate assessments of unfolding foreign situations, as well as dubious estimates of the costs of alternative policies. On average and over time, one would expect poor use to be associated with suboptimal policy outcomes.[52]

Indeed, Khong notes, the poor use of analogies, and clinging to them once they have been discredited, have been observed among some of the most erudite presidential advisors, historically minded people who should have known better.[53]

Many works have built upon Khong's study, seeking to refine his original argument. Hemmer, for example, argues that a chosen historical analogy may actually help *define* state interests.[54] Most works, however, are firmly within the rationalist camp. Houghton, for example, has located his work in the balance between "cognitive isolationism" and "institutional determinism," and asserts that political scientists studying the role of historical analogies in decision-making must bring *politics* back into their analyses. He emphasizes that analogies inform the choice of policy outcomes within the context of domestic politics, bureaucratic politics, and the international system. Both the selection of analogies and their causal weight are largely dependent on these contextual factors. Studies of foreign policy decision making, then, must take into account all three levels of analysis.[55]

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[51] *Ibid.* (Khong), 219-220.
[52] *Ibid.*, 30.
[53] *Ibid.*, 255.
[54] Christopher M. Hemmer, *Which Lessons Matter?: American Foreign Policy Decision Making in the Middle East, 1979-1987* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000).
[55] David Patrick Houghton, *US Foreign Policy and the Iran Hostage Crisis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Houghton, "The Role of Analogical Reasoning in Novel Foreign-Policy Situations," 523-552. Other works following Khong's approach include: Alex Hybel, *How Leaders Reason: U.S. Intervention in the Caribbean*

Mechanisms of analogies

Cognitive psychologists typically identify four distinct stages in the process of analogical reasoning (see fig. 2.1)—retrieval, mapping, transfer, and learning:

> Typically, a target situation serves as a retrieval cue for a potentially useful source analog. It is then necessary to establish a *mapping*, or a set of systematic correspondences that serve to align the elements of the source and the target. On the basis of mapping, it is possible to derive new inferences about the target, thereby elaborating its representation. In the aftermath of analogical reasoning about a pair of cases, it is possible that some form of relational generalization may take place, yielding a more abstract schema for a class of situations, of which the source and target are both instances.[56]
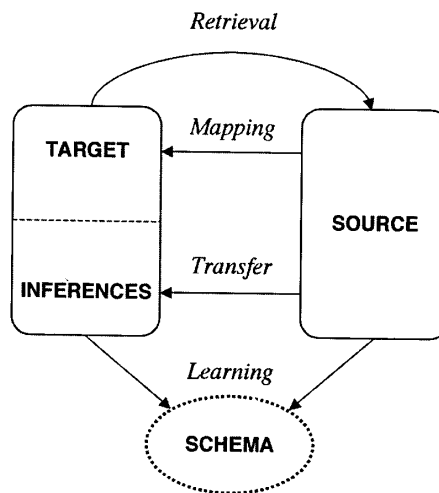

Figure 2.1: "Major Components of Analogical Reasoning"[57]

Basin and Latin America (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990); and Aiden Hehir, "The Impact of Analogical Reasoning on US Foreign Policy Toward Kosovo," *Journal of Peace Research* 43 (2006): 67-81. Cf. Breuning, who argues that by studying cases of reasoning by historical analogy, scholars tend to lose sight of a more holistic image of the processes of decision-making. She argues that abstract reasoning is far more prevalent in policy deliberations than analogical reasoning, and recent scholarship overstates the significance of historical analogies in decision-making. Marijke Breuning, "The Role of Analogies and Abstract Reasoning in Decision-Making: Evidence from the Debate over Truman's Proposal for Development Assistance," *International Studies Quarterly* 47 (2003), 229-245.
[56] Keith J. Holyoak, "Analogy," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Thinking and Reasoning*, Keith J. Holyoak and Robert G. Morrison, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 117-118.
[57] *Ibid.*, 118.

Knowledge of event A, the base domain, is transferred to that of B, the target domain, with the assumption that there are structural, rather than just superficial, similarities between the two.

Policymakers enter office with a wide range of experiences and historical references, many of which will be shared with others of their generation, others of which will be more individual in nature. The ubiquitous Munich analogy was widely held by the generation that come of political consciousness during World War II, as was the case of the Vietnam War for a subsequent generation of Americans. But policymakers may also draw on more idiosyncratic analogies drawn from their personal experience, as was the case as National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski advised President Jimmy Carter on the Iran hostage crisis. Brzezinski had, as it happened, been dining in the home of Israeli president Shimon Peres the night before Israel launched its rescue of hostages at the Entebbe airport in Uganda. By Brzezinski's own admission, this experience heavily influenced his advocacy of a hawkish response to the Iran hostage crisis—specifically, an Entebbe-style rescue—even as other members of the administration were advocating for a more diplomatic approach. Entebbe bore little in common with Tehran, however, and the rescue was a failure.[58]

At the crux of the argument for scholars who have employed the analogical approach is that the analogy affected the policy outcome, the question of retrieval—which analogy will be selected?—is of critical importance.[59] Though it is difficult to predict which analogies policymakers might choose, some are more likely candidates for selection than others. In

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[58] Houghton, "The Role of Analogical Reasoning in Novel Foreign-Policy Situations," 527-544.
[59] E.g., Hemmer, *Which Lessons Matter?*.

addition to political or motivational factors, cognitive psychologists have identified two main heuristics, or rules of thumb, which affect analogy choice:[60]

Representativeness is the degree to which one event is judged to resemble another. Many political scientists have argued that policymakers tend to rely on superficial rather than structural commonalities as these are most vivid, a finding corroborated by some experimental findings.[61] As Khong illustrates, Johnson was more likely to draw an analogy to Korea than Yugoslavia in his deliberations on Vietnam owing to its "geographical proximity to China, communist ideology, a North-South divide, and a North bent on unifying the South by force." Khong implies that an analysis of Yugoslavia's left-leaning nationalist President Tito might have better informed Johnson's assessment of Tito's North Vietnamese counterpart, Ho Chi Minh.[62] Houghton issues a word of caution, however, noting that out of the lab and into the far messier world of foreign policy decision making, the distinction between superficial and structural commonalities is not always obvious *ex ante*.[63]

Availability is the ease with which an historical event or past experience is recalled. First-hand experiences tend to be more salient than generational or national ones; thus, we can expect wide variation in the preferred analogies of various decision-makers. First experiences and most recent experiences of a certain phenomena are among the most salient; these are referred to as the primacy and recency effects, respectively.[64] Jervis argues that "coming of political age" experiences from the formative period of one's career (approximately ages 20-35),

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[60] See, most notably, Tversky and Kahneman, *Judgement Under Uncertainty*; also, Nisbett & Ross, *Human Inference*, 18-28; Khong, *Analogies at War*, 35-57 and 212-219.

[61] E.g. Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*; and Khong, *Analogies at War*. Cf. Isabelle Blanchette and Kevin Dunbar, "How analogies are generated: The roles of structural and superficial similarity," *Memory & Cognition* 28 (2000), 108-124.

[62] Khong, *Analogies at War*, 36.

[63] Houghton, *Political Psychology*, 126-130.

[64] McDermott, *Political Psychology*, 63-67.

whether experienced first-hand or generationally, may be among the most salient, though their

salience is likely to decrease with age as they gain in (sometimes contradictory) experience.[65]

It is commonly said that nations always fight the last [major] war.[66] Thus, Korea may be

seen as a response to Munich and Vietnam a response to Korea. The subsequent hesitancy to use

force ("Vietnam syndrome") and the insistence that force should only be applied when the

national interest is clearly at stake, and then it should be overwhelmingly applied (the Powell-

Weinberger Doctrine) are among the long-lasting repercussions of Vietnam.[67]

Houghton cautions that while psychology can elucidate causal mechanisms in politics, it

forms at best an imperfect basis for forming causal explanations. He writes:

> The chief problem relates to the fact that in the vast majority of these experiments, the subjects
> lack any vested interest or 'stake' in the outcome…. The context of politics is absent…hence the
> choice of analogy is presumably determined by purely cognitive (as opposed to affective)
> factors.[68]

Of the psychological literature most frequently cited by political scientists, he continues:

> Unfortunately, few of the existing experiments faithfully mimic the specific contextual conditions
> under which political decision-makers work. Consequently, considerable uncertainty remains as
> to what happens when the subject is confronted with a whole range of potential analogies, all of
> which seem relevant to solving the policy problem at hand but which push the decision-maker in
> diametrically different directions if followed and adhered to. Nor can we tell from these
> experiments with much certainty what happens in such a situation where the subjects—for
> whatever reason—are predisposed to favor one analogy over another.[69]

Too often, Houghton suggests, those who study the role of historical analogies in decision-

making lose sight of the distinctly *political* baggage and stakes that may affect both the selection

of analogies, the nature of their use, and subsequent policy outcomes.

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[65] Jervis, *Perception and Misperception*, 249-257; Cramer, *National Security Panics*, 57 and 100 fn. 13; Khong,
Analogies at War, 212-215.
[66] *Ibid.* (Jervis), 266-267.
[67] On the lessons of Vietnam, see, for example, *Iraq and the Lessons of Vietnam: Or, How Not to Learn from the
Past*, Lloyd C. Gardner and Marilyn B. Young, eds. (New York: New Press, 2007).
[68] Houghton, *US Foreign Policy and the Iran Hostage Crisis*, 35
[69] *Ibid.*, 37.

Objections and the "instrumental use of history" hypothesis

Historian Margaret MacMillan has warned: "We can learn from history, but we also deceive ourselves when we selectively take evidence from the past to justify what we have already made up our minds to do."[70] Her criticism echoes arguments made by scholars who have expressed skepticism of the importance of historical analogies in decision making. These skeptics dispute the assertion of May and Khong, among others, that historical analogies may have a causal impact on policy outcomes. Rather they argue analogies are invoked for the purposes of advocacy or justification of decisions that have already been arrived at. As Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. wrote in a review of May's first cut at the issue, *"Lessons" of the Past*, "the trouble is that the past is an enormous grab bag with a prize for everybody. The issue of history as rationalization somewhat diminishes the force of the argument that history is per se a powerful formal determinant of policy."[71]

Followers of this school of thought could broadly be grouped as advancing the "instrumental use of history" hypothesis. Rather than learning from historical experience, they suggest, policymakers:

> select from historical experience those cases that provide the greatest support for their preexisting policy preferences, or they reinterpret a given case in a way that reinforces their views, so as to rally support for their preferred policies, whether they be driven by views of the national interest or partisan political interests.[72]

Indeed, historical analogies offer a powerful tool of political communication. Paris demonstrates the political efficacy of historical analogies in the 1999 debates over whether and how the U.S. and NATO should intervene in Kosovo. In these debates, political elites—

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[70] MacMillan, *Dangerous Games,* 164.
[71] Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Review of *"Lessons" of the Past*, *The Journal of American History* 61 (1974): 443-444. The "grab bag" criticism of the selective use of history as advocacy is a common one; Hoffmann has argued that it is a uniquely American tendency. Stanley Hoffmann, *Gulliver's Troubles; or, the Setting of American Foreign Policy* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1968), 135.
[72] Levy, "Learning and foreign policy," 306.

including President Bill Clinton, Secretary of State Madeline Albright, and various congressmen

and senators—all promoted their desired strategy in the Balkans by deploying various historical

analogies, including Hitler and Munich, Vietnam, and the Balkans powderkeg and World War

I.[73] Yet while Paris focuses on historical analogy as a rhetorical tool, his conclusions are

nevertheless consistent with the view proffered here that cognitive and "instrumental use of

history" approaches need not be mutually exclusive.[74] Paris concludes:

> In the debate over Kosovo, historical metaphors seemed to serve as a kind of shorthand
> representing competing understandings of the Balkan crisis, each of which suggested different
> strategies for responding to the crisis. This observation, which is derived from the speeches and
> statements both of Clinton administration officials and members of Congress, lends support to the
> proposition that political metaphors are not merely rhetorical flourishes, but rather, as Max Black
> puts it, "*every metaphor is the tip of a submerged model*."[75]

Both empirical evidence and sheer logic suggest that the debate positing historical

analogies as *either* an analytical tool *or* instrument of persuasion is misplaced. The two may

function simultaneously. As Hemmer argues:

> On the one hand, these critics contend that historical analogies do not influence a decision
> maker's policy choice; those choices are based on the decision maker's objective interests, not
> her reading of the lessons of history. On the other hand, these critics argue that policy makers
> invoke historical analogies to be effective justifications for policies, they must influence policy
> preferences. If the lessons of history did not influence policy preferences, they would be useless
> as propaganda tools. If everybody simply deduced their policy preferences from their objective
> interests, without any consideration of the lessons of history, then why invoke those lessons at
> all?[76]

This view of historical analogies serving complementary functions is reinforced by

Khong's observation, in his study of Johnson's Vietnam War decisions, of a high degree of

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[73] Paris uses "metaphor" much as "historical analogy" is used in this study, with an important caveat: historical metaphors may be invoked explicitly, or implicitly, through the use of trigger words. The use of "quagmire" evokes the Vietnam War nearly universally, as "never again" does for the Holocaust. Further, Paris argues, "metaphor wars" occur at two levels simultaneously. Most obviously, it is a struggle to set current policy, in this case, U.S. policy toward Kosovo. But at the same time, the debate over the applicability of various metaphors gives rise to a secondary debate about the "actual meaning and the perceived lessons" of the historical metaphors being debated. Roland Paris, "Kosovo and the Metaphor War," *Political Science Quarterly* 117 (2002): 423-450.

[74] Cf. William W. Jarosz with Joseph S. Nye, Jr., "The Shadow of the Past: Learning from History in National Security Decision Making," in Philip Tetlock et. al *Behavior, Society, and International Conflict*, Volume 3, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 142.

[75] Paris, "Kosovo and the Metaphor War," 447. Emphasis added.

[76] Hemmer, *Which Lessons Matter?*, 8.

correlation of analogies the administration invoked publicly and privately. Even if the analogies are used in private for purposes of consensus building or decision making—indeed, even if the actor does not believe the analogical arguments he is making—the analogies used may still affect outcomes. Historical analogies could not be useful rhetorical tools if they did not have the power to persuade. Fundamentally, for the purposes of decision making, it does not matter whether the propagators of an analogy are true believers or cynical users. More likely than not, they fall somewhere in the middle of the continuum. Regardless, analogies may nevertheless be germane to policy outcomes.[77]

Munich, Vietnam, and the First Persian Gulf War

The Munich analogy is among the analogies most studied by political scientists, presumably due to its enduring ubiquity in political discourse and decision making. Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Reagan, both Bushes, and Clinton have all been influenced by the "lessons of Munich" at various junctures. Nor has its use been limited to American presidents; Anthony Eden reportedly invoked it during the Suez Canal crisis.[78] I will employ it briefly here to demonstrate the means by which historical analogies might affect presidential decision making. The analogy refers to the pact in which British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain agreed to abide by the annexation of Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland by Nazi Germany with the expectation that this was the full extent of Hitler's expansionist ambitions and Chamberlain's triumphant statement, which with the benefit of hindsight smacks of naïveté, that there would be "peace in our time."[79] Put succinctly, the commonly accepted lesson of Munich is

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[77] Khong, *Analogies at War*, 8-17, 102-105.
[78] *Ibid.*, 5-6, 25-26. 34, 175-190; Hemmer, *Which Lessons Matter?*, 1; Jeffrey Record, "The Use and Abuse of History: Munich, Vietnam, and Iraq" *Survival* 49 (2007), 165.
[79] See, e.g., Gerhard L. Weinberg, "Munich After 50 Years," *Foreign Affairs* 67 (Fall 1988): 165-178.

that "appeasing aggression only invites more of it." The policy suggested by Munich, then, is to "move early and decisively against rising threats."[80]

Take the example of President George H. W. Bush in the lead-up to the First Persian Gulf War. Bush explicitly equated Iraqi President Saddam Hussein with German leader Adolf Hitler. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, then, was implicitly an analogue of the Nazi occupation of the Sudetenland [see fig. 2.2].[81] Bush was the last president to have served in World War II; military service was "the defining experience" for him. *The New Republic* reported:

> Now [Bush] sees Iraq's aggression in World War II terms. "Half a century ago, the world had the chance to stop a ruthless aggressor and missed it," he said two weeks after the Iraqi invasion. "I pledge it to you: we will not make that mistake again."
>
> The president, says another aide, "is totally into World War II analogies." In conversations he constantly refers to the war era, particularly the unsuccessful appeasement of Adolf Hitler in 1939. Associates have fueled his interest by sending him books. [82]

After Bush, it is worth noting, National Security Advisor Brent Snowcroft was the "hardest of the hard-liners" in the White House. He was among those giving the president books on the war era, while lobbying for an aggressive policy in more explicit ways.[83]

A = Germany, 1938, vis-à-vis the Sudetenland	X = Territorial aggression
B = Iraq, 1990, vis-à-vis Kuwait	Y = Further territorial aggression; regional destabilization; war

Figure 2.2: Modeling the Munich analogy's application to the First Persian Gulf War

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[80] Record, "The Use and Abuse of History,"164-165.

[81] *Ibid.* In a similar vein, Lakoff argues that Bush effectively constrained the range of plausible policy options with his chosen metaphors, a cognitive cousin of the analogy. With Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait equated with "rape," U.S. intervention as a fairy tale consisting of heroes, victims, and villains, and Hussein as Hitler, policy options other than war were implicitly ruled out. George Lakoff, "Metaphor and War: The Metaphor System Used to Justify War in the Gulf" <http://georgelakoff.files.wordpress.com/2011/04/metaphor-and-war-the-metaphor-system-used-to-justify-war-in-the-gulf-lakoff-1991.pdf> (Accessed 30 January 2012).

[82] Fred Barnes, "The Hawk Factor," *The New Republic*, 28 January 1991, 8-9.

[83] *Ibid.*

The Munich analogy most explicitly provided strategic analysis and prescriptions. Since Saddam Hussein's invasion and occupation of Kuwait was posited by Bush to be analogous to Hitler's invasion and occupation of the Sudetenland, and having appeased Hitler at Munich was believed to have precipitated further German aggression and ultimately world war, implicit in the analogy is that appeasing Saddam would have similarly harmful consequences for regional and international security.

The Munich analogy, then, provided an explicit policy prescription for the situation faced by Bush: the U.S. *must* intervene immediately to prevent far more dangerous outcomes. Here it is important to set aside what actually happened at Munich, an ongoing historical debate. What matters most for the purposes of understanding the role of analogies in decision making is not history as such, but rather history as it is interpreted by policymakers.[84]

The Munich analogy did not just offer strategic guidance and a policy prescription, but also moral validation of that prescription. Bush evidently genuinely believed that Saddam Hussein, like Hitler, was "evil incarnate," and thus, war would be a "moral crusade." News of Iraqi atrocities in Kuwait took a particular emotional toll on the president. Usually jovial, Bush had become "pensive, subdued, and preoccupied," according to an aide, and uncharacteristically unwilling to compromise.[85]

The Munich analogy primarily offers foreign policy guidance, but also guidance in domestic politics. Bush's interests, after all, went beyond compelling an Iraqi retreat from Kuwait. No doubt he was conscious of the potential domestic ramifications that might be

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[84] On this latter point, see Levy, "Learning and foreign policy," 283. Weinberg argues that commonly assumed lessons of Munich by which policymakers have frequently been influenced are facile, drawn from a poor understanding of history and politics. Beck offers a concise historiography of a half-century of scholarship on Munich, and suggests four more nuanced "lessons" of Munich policymakers and scholars might instead draw from the episode. Weinberg, "Munich After 50 Years," 165-178; Robert J. Beck, "Munich's Lessons Reconsidered," *International Security* 14 (1989): 161-191.
[85] Barnes, "The Hawk Factor," 8-9.

brought on by inaction. In popular memory, Munich, Chamberlain, and appeasement have all

become inextricably entwined, associated with vacillation and cowardice.[86] We can expect that

questions of political capital, re-election, and legacy all weighed on the president in addition to

geopolitical ones. Referring back to World War II, Bush noted that his political capital was far

stronger domestically than either Roosevelt's or Chamberlain's had been before the war.[87]

While serving as a source of analysis and inference on strategic, moral, and domestic

political levels, Bush also used the Munich analogy for the purposes of policy advocacy—to

court public support for war.[88] In an analysis of public opinion data, John Mueller writes that the

American public was by and large unmoved by the strategic reasons for war, viz. the protection

of oil supplies and restoration of the Kuwaiti government. More compelling were arguments

about American hostages, Iraqi chemical and nuclear weapons capacity, and that "aggression

should not be allowed to stand," which is to say the popularly accepted lesson of Munich.[89]

Bush's characterization of Saddam as "worse than Hitler," therefore, resonated deeply with and

helped mobilize the American public.[90]

The Saddam-as-Hitler analogy, once in the public sphere, was a double-edged sword for

Bush:

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[86] Peter Neville, "The Dirty A-Word," *History Today* 54 (April 2006), 39-41.

[87] In defense of Chamberlain, the president noted, "Everybody said he was a symbol for appeasement, but the whole British hierarchy was for appeasement." By contrast, Bush perceived that American public opinion was on his side. Barnes, "The Hawk Factor," 9.

[88] On the origins of the Saddam as Hitler analogy, its domestic political uses in deflecting the public's attention from the support Saddam had received from the Reagan and Bush administrations, and the policy constraints produced by this narrative, see William A. Dorman and Steven Livingston, "Establishing the Gulf Policy Debate," in *Taken by Storm: The Media, Public Opinion, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Gulf War*, W. Lance Bennett and David L. Paletz, eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 63-81.

[89] John E. Mueller, *Policy and Opinion in the Gulf War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 40-42.

[90] Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict, 1990-1991: Diplomacy and War in the New World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 219. For one pundit's defense of the applicability of the Hitler analogy with regard to military intervention in the Persian Gulf, see William Safire, "The Hitler Analogy," *The New York Times*, 24 August 1990. Available http://www.nytimes.com/1990/08/24/opinion/essay-the-hitler-analogy.html (Accessed 13 February 2011).

While the substantially self-induced demonization of Saddam Hussein may have helped Bush to sell the war, it was also to pose a dilemma for the American president. Bush sometimes suggested or implied that the removal of Hussein was an American war aim. However, the policy of the United States and of the UN was to limit the war objectives to driving the Iraqis out of Kuwait and, if it came to war, to destroying Iraq's chemical and nuclear capability and rendering it militarily incapable of aggression. The public, however, came to believe that the ouster of Saddam Hussein should be a major war goal.[91]

Once in the public sphere, then, historical analogies may have unintended consequences.

Some scholars have argued that George H. W. Bush's reluctance to "go to Baghdad" and impose regime change in Iraq—in other words, to carry out the Munich analogy to its logical conclusion—lay in the concomitant salience of a countervailing analogy: Vietnam. A common version of the "lessons of Vietnam" is that (a) ground wars may become quagmires, and (b) the American public has little patience for protracted military engagements likely to incur high casualties. Saddam went to great lengths trying to manipulate American public opinion before the war. He played on the Vietnam analogy's resonance with the American public, promising to deliver them a "second Vietnam." Khong is among those who argue that Bush's sensitivity to the Vietnam analogy determined his decision not to drive into Baghdad and get involved in a messy civil war deposing the Ba'ath regime.[92]

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[91] Mueller, *Policy and Opinion*, 41, 147. Luttwak foresaw this dilemma prior to combat. Edward N. Luttwak, "Blood for Oil: Bush's Growing Dilemma," *The Independent*, 27 August 1990, 17.

[92] The presumptive "lessons of Vietnam" are far more contentious and politically charged than those of Vietnam. Weighing in on the political debate over the appropriate historical analogy, former Secretary of State Alexander Haig wrote:

> The Munich and Vietnam analogies both have application to the gulf but not exactly as many would use them. The Munich analogy teaches us not that Saddam Hussein is already a Hitler but that we must act now to prevent him from becoming one. The Vietnam analogy instructs us not that we should refrain from using force but that if our purposes are just and clear, we should use it decisively..

Yuen Foong Khong, "Vietnam, The Gulf, and U.S. Choices: A Comparison," *Security Studies* 2 (1992), 86-88. See also: Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, "How Kuwait Was Won: Strategy in the Gulf War," *International Security* 16 (1991), 5-41; Mueller, *Public Opinion in the Gulf War*. On the persistent role of both the Munich and Vietnam analogies in American foreign policy decision-making, see Jeffrey Record, *Making War, Thinking History: Munich, Vietnam, and Presidential Uses of Force from Korea to Kosovo* (Annapolis, Md.: Naval Institute Press, 2002). For Haig's view the Munich and Vietnam analogies with respect to the Gulf War, see: Alexander M. Haig, Jr., "Gulf Analogy: Munich of Vietnam?" *The New York Times*, 10 December 1990, A19.

The use of the Munich analogy demonstrates key aspects of the political, cognitive, and emotional functions of analogical reasoning.[93] The chosen analogy was one that deeply influenced Bush's formative years; this is consistent with Jervis' hypothesis that early, firsthand experiences are among the most salient, and therefore, among the most likely to be recalled in a crisis scenario.[94] It appears that Iraqi aggression resonated on an emotional level with Bush in part because of his experience fighting in World War II, and certainly the analogy helped him make sense of the situation and arrive at a policy, taking into account both international security, morality, and domestic politics. Lastly, this case suggests that the same analogy may simultaneously serve cognitive and instrumental functions. Evidence that Bush invoked the Munich analogy in both public and private discourse and that he drew on multiple aspects of that analogy are suggestive that schema theory was applicable to this case. The contention that a competing analogy—Vietnam—steered policy in a direction different than would be suggested by Munich alone undermines somewhat, though not entirely, the force of this hypothesis.[95]

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[93] For a psychologists' take on the Munich analogy in the First Gulf War, see Holyoak, "Analogy," 125-127 and 132-134; and Spellman and Holyoak, "If Saddam is Hitler then who is George Bush? Analogical mapping between systems of social roles," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 62 (1992): 913-933.

[94] Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 249-252.

[95] On the predictions one should expect from the schema theory "misuse of analogies" hypothesis, see Cramer, *National Security Panics*, 60-62.

Figure 2.3: Over a decade after the First Persian Gulf War, the Munich and Vietnam analogies continued to be salient with the American public.[96]

This use of analogical reasoning is consistent with Houghton's observation that "the most persuasive analogies appear to be those which promise not only *policy* success, but *political* success as well."[97] This is also consistent with the assertion that the analytical and instrumental uses of historical analogies need not be mutually exclusive; indeed, the most salient analogies may be those that offer both prescriptive and political utility.

While there is a broad body of literature on the uses of historical analogies in international politics, to my knowledge no study has analyzed the employment and consequences of analogies in cases involving nation building, even though their use—in public and in private deliberations—are ubiquitous in such cases. In the following section, I propose three hypotheses

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[96] Sage Stossel, "History Lessons," *The Atlantic*, 26 September 2002, available http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/unbound/sage/ss2002-09-26.htm.
[97] David Patrick Houghton, "The Role of Analogical Reasoning in Novel Foreign-Policy Situations" *British Journal of Political Science* 26 (1996): 552. Emphasis original. Hemmer laments that most often, the literature on analogical reasoning in foreign policy decision-making avoids questions of domestic politics altogether. Christopher Hemmer, *Which Lessons Matter? American Foreign Policy Decision Making in the Middle East, 1979-1987* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 3-4, 12-14, 145.

on the role of historical analogies in cases of nation building and offer a set of corresponding

predictions about behaviors we should and should not witness if my hypotheses are valid.

Hypotheses and methodology

I do not propose that historical analogies are causal mechanisms in and of themselves.

Rather I treat them as observable proxies that can signal the existence of a certain set of

broader—and often enduring—assumptions held by policymakers. Just as analogies are

particularly useful to policymakers due to their low level of abstraction, they are likewise

appealing to the political analyst. Unlike broad schemata or the pervasive but subtle metaphor,

analogies yield concrete, predictable policy outcomes, and therefore lend themselves to testable

hypotheses, which I shall in turn examine in the case study chapters that follow.

Hypotheses

H1 – Confirmation and expectations: The first hypothesis, drawing on Houghton's

work, suggests that policymakers will choose analogies that comport with their political interests

and "normative visions." Thus, for cognitive and/or political reasons, policymakers will choose

analogies which promise "not only *policy* success, but *political* success as well."[98] Precisely for

this reason, there is an inherent case selection bias. Policymakers are likely to choose an analogy

that overpredicts a policy's likelihood of success. More concretely, a policymaker pursuing a

nation building agenda is likely to choose a particularly successful case of nation building as

his/her predominant analogy, even if less successful cases bear greater structural resemblance to

the case at hand. Thus, I hypothesize:

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[98] Houghton, "The Role of Analogical Reasoning in Novel Foreign-Policy Situations," 552.

Policymakers advocating for nation building will search for and use historical analogies that suggest that nation building is both politically desirable, morally sound, and likely to be successful.

Predictions: We should expect to see that in public as well as in private, policymakers consistently invoke an analogy that validates their desired policy choice. The analogies that are used in public for the purposes of advocacy and justification should be the same as those used in private deliberations if a schema is active. Evidence that the analogy is invoked only after the policy is formulated, it is invoked only in public, or it is employed only partially or sporadically would undermine this hypothesis' prediction that a chosen analogy reflects a policymaker's expectations—cognitively, politically, or both.[99]

H2 – Constraints on implementation: If a policymaker's expectations of the ease with which nation building might be carried out are inflated, then he or she may have correspondingly low expectations of the resources that would be required for implementation. Thus, I hypothesize:

An imperfect analogy may permit policymakers to downplay or overlook obstacles standing in the way of a policy's successful implementation.

Predictions: Any sort of large-scale intervention is likely to encounter a variety of obstacles, but to demonstrate the existence of such obstacles is insufficient. For this hypothesis to hold, it must be shown that policymakers could and should readily have anticipated or acknowledged obstacles that jeopardized the policy's viability, but, in keeping with the presumptive lessons of

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[99] Cramer, *National Security Panics*, 60-62.

the predominant analogy, nevertheless failed to address those obstacles in a way that would obviate fundamental hindrances. This prediction would be disconfirmed if the chief barriers to a nation building campaign's success went unaddressed due to reasons tangential or altogether irrelevant to the perceived lessons of the analogy.

H3 – Perseverance: Lastly, it appears that policymakers will tend to cling to policies long after they are confronted by information that casts doubt on their efficacy. If a predominant analogy can be interpreted to suggest that obstacles to success are temporary or surmountable, then the imperative for evaluation and adjustment—or, for learning to effectively occur and be fully integrated into policy—will be lessened. This may occur for reasons either cognitive, as predicted by schema theory, or political, as may be the case when a policymaker has invested significant political capital in a nation building campaign. Thus, I hypothesize:

Once nation building projects are underway, historical analogies will engender stubbornness in strategy and tactics, and thus be employed by decision makers to forestall change.

Predictions: This hypothesis only holds if analogies invoked in public correspond with those invoked in private policy deliberations. Evidence of a mismatch between public and private use of analogies would suggest that the analogy was strictly serving the purpose of *ex post* justification. Likewise, we should expect policymakers to draw lessons from the same analogy/ies on which they have been relying all along, suggesting an activated schema. If new analogies are invoked out of the blue to explain away policy failure(s), that would suggest the analogy in question did not represent a dominant schema but rather was being used instrumentally.

Methodology

In testing my hypotheses, I adopt the method of what Alexander George and Andrew Bennett refer to as structured, focused comparison. This method demands that case studies are "focused", examining solely the aspects of given cases relevant to the research puzzle, and "structured", asking the same questions of each case. The method seeks to impose analytical rigor on the use of history, enhancing the robustness of case studies and producing results that might be generalizable.[100] I pose the following questions:

1. Who are the key actors, and what are their policy agendas? Do the advocates of nation building engage in meaningful analysis of cost, risk, and likelihood of success, and encourage contingency planning, or do they suffer from "the illusion of invulnerability"? How do they respond to information that suggests their chosen policy is unwise?

2. What historical analogies do these actors invoke? What are the "lessons" (i.e. policy prescriptions) they draw from these analogies? Do subsequent policy decisions suggest that these "lessons" were taken into account in the decision-making process? How did these lessons bear specifically on estimations of costs, risk, and likelihood of success?

3. Which actors dissented from these presumptive "lessons of history"? Did they tease out inconsistencies in the dominant historical analogies, or offer historical analogies of their own? Were other members of the administration receptive or cool to these objections? Did these actors face professional consequences for dissenting?

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[100] Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

4. When policymakers receive negative evaluations, how do they respond? Are new
   analogies invoked, or are old analogies invoked in new ways (i.e. different "lessons"
   learned)? Is there corresponding stubbornness or change in strategy or tactics?

I seek to answer these questions through *process tracing*, a method pioneered by George to "trace the process—the intervening steps—by which beliefs influence behavior."[101] Process-tracing aims, in other words, to use the documentary record to reveal the causal paths between the initial beliefs of actors and the policy outcomes. By reconstructing decision making processes through archival research, oral histories, news accounts, and extant secondary sources, it is possible to evaluate within an individual case "the ways in which the actor's beliefs influenced his receptivity to and assessment of incoming information" and the subsequent course of action taken. Process tracing, then, can be used to analyze when and how historical analogies were used in policy deliberations and how they might have been consequential in the decision making process.[102]

Case selection & expectations

I test my hypotheses through a case study of the Kennedy administration's development and counterinsurgency program in Latin America, and then suggest that similar forces might have been at work in the Bush administration's occupation of Iraq. The Kennedy administration was the first to systematically develop what we now refer to as the "Hearts and Minds" approach in the United States. The Alliance for Progress, their ambitious democratization and development campaign for Latin America that was accompanied by counterinsurgency was among the first

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[101] Alexander L. George, "The Causal Nexus between Cognitive Beliefs and Decision-Making Behavior: The 'Operational Code' Belief System," in *Psychological Models in International Politics*, Lawrence S. Fallowski, ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1979), 113.
[102] *Ibid.*, 113-119.

applications of this theory, which was developed by a collaboration of social scientists and the writers of military doctrine.

The Kennedy case should be a difficult one for my theory, as his administration is widely viewed as among the most collectively erudite that ever occupied the White House. As David Halberstam famously noted—not without irony—they were "the best and the brightest."[103] Though we should therefore expect that use of historical analogies by members of that administration would be historically savvy, many officials and aides nevertheless deployed the Marshall Plan analogy. Referring to the United States' reconstruction program for Western Europe in the aftermath of World War II, the analogy was used as shorthand for basic assumptions regarding the relationship between development and security. Policymakers who used the analogy demonstrated little regard for the critical distinctions between post-war European reconstruction and nation building in less-developed states lacking full operational sovereignty and often dogged by insurgencies.

Evidence that suggests policy outcomes, in terms of formulation and evaluation, were tangibly affected by the analogies of European reconstruction would be a highly suggestive indicator of the significance of historical analogies as an intervening variable in the conduct of nation building. Given the stark superficial differences in both context and policy between the contemporary event and its analogue, we should expect the role of historical analogies in this case more than others to be little more than *ex post facto* justification.

Whereas the Kennedy administration was highly constrained in Southeast Asia, bound to ensuring the legitimacy and viability of the Diem regime in Vietnam, for example, by any means necessary, the U.S. lacked constraining political commitments of a similar scale in Latin America. Thus, administration officials considered it at once a "laboratory" and a proving

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[103] David Halberstam, *The Best and the Brightest* (New York: Random House, 1972).

ground of their approach to third world insurgencies. As Arthur Schlesinger said, it was the

"region of greatest experiment…. If we cannot succeed there, we might as well give up."[104]

Kennedy's experience in Latin America, then, can provide a greater window into the beliefs

harbored by his administration than can other regions.

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[104] Meeting minutes, Alliance for Progress Study Group, 28 December 1962, Files of Arturo Morales-Carrión, Box 6, A1/3149, RG 59, NARA-CP; "Highlights from the Secretary's Policy Planning Meeting Held July 9, 1963"; Memorandum of conversation, 16 February 1962, FRUS 1961-1963 XII: 41.

Chapter 3
Nation Building as Containment:
The Case of the Alliance for Progress

Introduction

Having established hypotheses on the role of historical analogies in the conduct of nation

building, I now set out to test them in a case study of the Kennedy administration's Alliance for

Progress. Despite the United States' substantial investment in the program, nation building goals

went unrealized and often produced unintended consequences. In this chapter, I establish the

origins of the Alliance for Progress. The policy emerged out of a convergence of a specific early

Cold War-era intellectual milieu and political circumstances in Latin America. This information

is critical to contextualizing the decision makers who are the central characters in the hypothesis

testing chapter that follows. This chapter then notes both quantitative and qualitative outcomes

of the Alliance and its unintended consequences as they compare to the Alliance's goals.

Building upon this foundation, the following chapter will unpack the Marshall Plan analogy as it

was used in the context of the Alliance to test my hypotheses regarding the role historical

analogies played in the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of nation building policy.

The Alliance for Progress

John Fitzgerald Kennedy came into office in 1961, perceiving grave threats to American

national security in Latin America. Leftist insurgencies threatened to topple several Latin

American republics. In Venezuela, the stability of Rómulo Betancort's government appeared to

be so precarious that "Kennedy asked Defense Secretary Robert McNamara how quickly the

Marines could arrive…should things get out of hand."[1] The insurgency there was eventually

contained and controlled, though not fully defeated, as was the case in Colombia. The military in

Peru successfully eradicated its insurgency during this period. Other states fared poorly by

comparison: Guatemala and Bolivia proved incapable of containing theirs.[2]

Authoritarians sought to curry favor with the United States by arguing that they alone

could stanch insurgencies, but their argument was undermined by the success of Fidel Castro's

guerrilla forces in toppling Fulgencio Batista's U.S.-backed regime. In the eyes of Kennedy and

his advisers, embattled republics offered opportunities for the Soviet Union to extend its

influence in the Western hemisphere. Meanwhile, the Cuban revolution suggested that

authoritarian regimes or military juntas offered at best a veneer of stability. The "loss of Cuba"

was humiliating and threatening. The specter of a "second Cuba" was utterly intolerable. To

combat the threats posed by indigenous leftist movements and Soviet influence, a "new approach

to Latin America" was urgently needed to combat the root causes of unrest.[3]

This new approach came to be known as the Alliance for Progress, or *Alianza para el

Progreso*. It embodied a tripartite strategy by which the United States sought to defeat

insurgencies and contain the Soviet Union's influence in the Western hemisphere: the U.S.

would simultaneously stimulate economic development, foster social and political reforms, and

improve the internal security capacities of Latin American militaries and polices forces. In so

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[1] Hal Brands, "Reform, democratization, and counter-insurgency: evaluating the US experience in Cold War-era Latin America," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 22 (2011), 290-321.

[2] Edwin Lieuwen, "The Latin American Military," in United States Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, *Survey of the Alliance for Progress* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1967).

[3] Stephen G. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 215.

doing, it was believed, the sources of popular appeal of leftist insurgencies would be undermined while insurgents would be defeated militarily.[4]

In practice, however, aid and military assistance under the Alliance unleashed a spate of unintended consequences, often exacerbating the very socioeconomic issues the U.S. sought to mitigate. Particularly concerned with regressive tax systems and the high concentration of arable lands in the hands of a small elite, American planners predicated the Alliance on the idea that more inclusive and more just governments would diminish the appeal of leftist movements. In countries in which the interests of the government were not in sync with those of the United States, however, regimes paid little but lip-service to the reforms on which funds were conditioned. Meanwhile, the overwhelming fear of empowering the radical left meant that the U.S. was in practice quite ambivalent in pushing for these reforms. As has frequently been the case in U.S. foreign policy, short-term security concerns frequently took precedence over these longer-term aspirations. Reform-minded aspects of the Alliance were at best pursued inconsistently. Having sacrificed many commitments to reform, economic growth perversely served to increase the disparity of wealth in many countries that were recipients of Alliance grants and loans, while militaries reoriented toward internal security engaged in political violence, frequently alienating populations rather than winning their hearts and minds.[5]

A Marshall Plan for Latin America?

The Marshall Plan analogy was ubiquitous in the administration's public and private discourse from the Alliance's inception through its implementation. On one level, this should not be surprising: through American funds and technical assistance, the Marshall Plan was widely

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[4] Hal Brands, *Latin America's Cold War* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010), 45-49; Mark Haefele, "Walt Rostow, Modernization, and Vietnam: Stages of theoretical growth" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2000), 242; Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Thousand Days: John F. Kennedy in the White House* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), 586-589; John F. Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace* (New York: Harper, 1960), 63-64.
[5] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 57-63.

perceived as having successfully brought economic growth, prosperity, and perhaps most importantly, an ensuing "political-psychological boost" to Western Europe in the aftermath of World War II. It was credited with stabilizing the region and setting Western Europe firmly on the American side in the emerging Cold War.[6] By jump-starting the Western European economy, further, it brought about dividends for American trade. While scholars have debated the extent to which the Marshall Plan should be credited for achieving these outcomes, this certainly was— and continues to be—the dominant narrative.[7] Thus, for the Kennedy administration, the Marshall Plan represented a recent and successful attempt at using economic aid and technical assistance to achieve Cold War-era economic and security objectives. The successor agencies of the Marshall Plan, meanwhile, made up the United States' foreign aid apparatus. Under Kennedy's Foreign Assistance Act, these various agencies were consolidated in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through which the Alliance for Progress was implemented.[8]

Yet for all the appeal of the Marshall Plan analogy, key differences between post-war Europe and Latin America should have given pause to those Kennedy administration officials who invoked the analogy, and indeed they did for a handful of officials in the White House and US Foreign Service. Western Europe had consisted of industrialized countries whose infrastructure was damaged by years of war. Except for Germany, its countries had long democratic traditions, including vibrant civil society. By contrast, Latin America suffered from widespread "underdevelopment," to use the terminology of the era. It had low levels of industrialization, and most countries were economically dependent on just a handful of

[6] John Agnew and J. Nicholas Entrikin, "Introduction: The Marshall Plan as Model and Metaphor," in *The Marshall Plan Today: Model and Metaphor*, John Agnew and J. Nicholas Entrikin, eds. (London: Routledge, 2004), 2.
[7] *Ibid.*, 1-5, 9-18; Walt W. Rostow, "Lessons of the Plan: Looking Forward to the Next Century," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (1997), 205-212.
[8] USAID, "USAID History," accessed 19 March 2012, http://www.usaid.gov/about_usaid/usaidhist.html.

commodities.[9] While by 1961, only one of the nineteen Latin American republics (excluding Cuba) was ruled by a military regime, democracy was a relative newcomer to the region. Twelve of these republics had emerged from military regimes toppled during the previous decade. Most states had neither the long-term democratic traditions nor the consolidation of power that characterized their Western European counterparts. Lastly, insurgencies were not a concern in the Western European context, whereas they were the overriding concern in Latin America.[10]

Paul Hoffman, who as Director of the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) administered the Marshall Plan, was in a position to recognize these distinctions. He commented to Teodoro Moscoso, the USAID deputy appointed by Kennedy to administer the Alliance for Progress, "People don't seem to understand that this is a development program and not a rehabilitation program."[11] Likewise, Walt W. Rostow, who had served Kennedy as Deputy Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, retrospectively noted:

> The success of the Marshall Plan has generated the false hope that the application of capital and technology could do for Third World countries…what was achieved in Western Europe in the wake of World War II. Unlike these areas, *Western Europe did not need to be invented; it simply had to be recalled.*[12]

Despite fundamental differences in the political and socioeconomic conditions of Western Europe and Latin America, administration officials who pointed out incongruities between the Marshall Plan and the Alliance for Progress were sidelined or ignored, and the analogy remained ubiquitous in both public and private discourse throughout the Kennedy administration's thousand days. The United States frequently overestimated the leverage—the power to influence other governments to do as it wished—that it had over Latin American governments, largely because of misplaced assumptions that Latin American leaders shared in

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[9] E.g. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 152.
[10] Edwin Lieuwen, *Generals vs. Presidents: Neomilitarism in Latin America* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1964), 3-4.
[11] Quoted in Teodoro Moscoso, Oral History, JFKL, 89
[12] Rostow, "Lessons of the Plan," 210. Emphasis added.

the United States' strategic assumptions. Where the U.S. did possess leverage, it was ambivalent about how to wield it, frequently conflicted between pursuing its stated goals of democratization and social justice and short-term preferences for regional stability.

A Brief History of the Alliance for Progress

Less than two months after his inauguration, John F. Kennedy assembled the Latin American diplomatic corps in the East Room of the White House. Appealing to the common revolutionary heritage of the United States and its Latin American neighbors, the president formally announced the Alliance for Progress, an economic aid program that was unprecedented in terms of both its financial commitment and reformist ambitions. Promising a new era of inter-American cooperation, the president declared: "Our unfulfilled task is to demonstrate to the entire world that man's unsatisfied aspiration for economic progress and social justice can best be achieved by free men working within a framework of democratic institutions." Inflecting bits of Spanish with his Boston twang, Kennedy continued:

> I have called on all people of the hemisphere to join in a new Alliance for Progress—*Alianza para el Progreso*—a vast cooperative effort, unparalleled in magnitude and nobility of purpose, to satisfy the basic needs of the American people for homes, work and land, health and schools—*techo, trabajo y tierra, salud y escuela*.[13]

Kennedy's proposal was a ten-year, $20 billion commitment to transform Latin American society from within, simultaneously promoting economic growth and social and political reform.[14] The Alliance can be viewed as part of a broader strategy of "flexible response."

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[13] Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States [hereafter, PPP], (Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office) 1961: 170-175; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 205; Richard N. Goodwin, *Remembering America: A Voice from the Sixties* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988), 155-158; Jerome I. Levinson and Juan de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), 34-36.

[14] For perspective, $20 billion in 1960 dollars is equivalent to over $100 billion in 2004 dollars. Altogether, Latin America received $22.3 billion from the United States over the 1960s, 70% of which were in the form of loans. Jeffrey Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 5. For a statistical breakdown of Alliance authorizations, by year and by agency, see L. Ronald Scheman,

Recognizing the limited "utility of nuclear weapons" and believing that the Third World would

be "the principle battleground of for Cold War competition," Kennedy sought the development

of new kinetic and non-kinetic methods to combat guerrilla warfare. While his administration

prioritized the development of counterinsurgency doctrine and its adoption by the military, it also

"pushed for economic and technical assistance programs to eliminate the conditions in which

Communism flourished and channel revolutionary forces along democratic paths."[15]

Since the Marshall Plan, economic development and technical assistance had been

viewed as critical aspects of Cold War foreign policy. These aspects of strategy were reinforced

in the late 1950s by a growing anxiety that the Soviets were outcompeting the United States for

hearts and minds throughout the developing world. This fear was articulated by the best-selling

novel *The Ugly American*, which argued that the United States was losing the battle for hearts

and minds in non-aligned nations, but that with cultural sensitivity and simple but effective

development schemes, the U.S. could win this front of the Cold War.[16] Kennedy had a copy sent

to every member of the Senate.[17]

Similarly, Kennedy was drawn to the issue of the economic aid gap, which suggested that

the Soviet Union was outspending the United States in foreign aid to the non-aligned Third

World, and thus had a distinct advantage in the global ideological struggle for hearts and minds.[18]

"The Alliance for Progress: Concept and Creativity," in *The Alliance for Progress: A Retrospective*, L. Ronald Scheman, ed. (New York: Praeger, 1988), 10-11.

[15] George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 768. For an overview of Kennedy's aid program and its relationship with national security strategy, see: Robert A. Packenham, *Liberal America and the Third World: Political Development ideas in Foreign Aid and Social Science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

[16] William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, *The Ugly American* (New York: Norton, 1958); Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 135-136.

[17]*Ibid.* (Latham). On the novel's influence on Kennedy, see Michael Meyer, "Still 'Ugly' After All These Years," *New York Times*, 10 July 2009, BR23; and "Foreign Policy: The Ugly American," box 718, Pre-Presidential (Senate) Papers, John F. Kennedy Library (JFKL).

[18] Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 590-591; Walt W. Rostow, *Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Foreign Aid* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985), 156-157.

The economic aid gap was analogous to the "missile gap," in which it was alleged in the late 1950s that by the early 1960s the Soviet Union would possess more inter-continental ballistic missiles than the United States. The missile gap had potentially existential consequences for the US, as its proponents—Senator Kennedy among them—believed that "American strategic forces could be eliminated in a single massive attack."[19] Kennedy would use the issue of the aid gap to distinguish himself in the Senate and on the campaign trail, and both the anxieties and the prescriptive potential embedded within it would become the basis for much of his foreign policy—including the establishment of USAID, the Alliance for Progress, and the Peace Corps.[20]

Intellectual Origins

Though the Alliance for Progress embodied assumptions about the relationship between development, counterinsurgency, and stability that continue to resonate through the present, the ways in which these assumptions were translated into specific policy are firmly rooted in the intellectual milieu and political context of its era.

The early Cold War academy produced a broad body of literature across the social sciences, collectively known as modernization theory, that posited a dichotomy between "traditional" and "modern" societies and provided prescriptions for how societies might be moved from the former to the latter in a process that would encompass all aspects of society. Economists such as Walt W. Rostow and Max Millikan developed and popularized a theory of

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[19] Preble notes that even after the missile gap myth was discredited in early 1961, Kennedy continued to use it both to justify a defense build-up and "to avoid the embarrassment of having to admit that he had been wrong all along." Roy E. Licklider, "The Missile Gap Controversy," *Political Science Quarterly* 85 (1970), 600; Christopher A. Preble, "'Who Ever Believed in the 'Missile Gap'?': John F. Kennedy and the Politics of National Security," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 33 (2003), 826.

[20] On the myth of the economic aid gap, and Kennedy's use of it as a campaign issue, see Haefele, "Walt Rostow, Modernization, and Vietnam," 258-260. See also: Rostow, "Approximate Proportion of Soviet/U.S. Aid Since 1954," 27 September 1961, 27 September 1961, Box WH-2, Personal Papers of Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. [hereafter, PP-AMS], JFKL; "A New Approach to Latin America," Box 916, Speech Series, Senate Files, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

economic "take-off into self-sustaining growth," positing that with an infusion of capital and technical assistance, "backward" countries would be propelled to "maturity." Beyond economic transitions, such as a shift away from agriculture and toward industry, "take-off" would bring about "deep changes to ways of life" socially, politically, and culturally.[21] Such scholarship was heavily subsidized by the Carnegie and Ford Foundations, among others, and highly sought after by policymakers. Thus, modernization theory became nearly ubiquitous over the course of the 1950s, providing a prescription for how the U.S. might positively engage with the Third World and compete with the Soviet Union for the hearts and minds of third world peoples.[22]

Ideas only flourish in the political realm, however, when political circumstances are conducive to them.[23] Modernization theory—specifically, the strand developed at MIT's Center for International Studies (then known as CENIS)[24]—emerged as a dominant force in foreign policy in no small part because it was embraced by a young and ambitious junior senator from Massachusetts. John F. Kennedy was a "liberal anti-communist" by inclination and, harboring presidential ambitions, sought to distinguish himself in the Senate chamber and on the national stage. Kennedy and CENIS began a symbiotic relationship. Theories of modernization, particularly the theory of economic "take-off" proffered by CENIS scholars, such as Rostow,

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[21] Walt W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960); Nils Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003), 193-194.
[22] For an "academic sociology" of modernization theory, see Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future*. On the relationship of social scientists and the national security state during the Cold War, see Christopher Simpson, "Introduction," in *Universities and Empire: Money and Politics in the Social Sciences During the Cold War*, Christopher Simpson, ed. (New York: The New Press, 1988), xi-xxiii. For a tongue-in-cheek look at CENIS, the proliferation of international studies research centers at universities, and the relationship between Cold War-era universities and the national security establishment, see Christopher Rand, "Center of a New World," Part III, *The New Yorker*, 25 April 1964, 55-129. On modernization theory's broad contributions to the making of U.S. foreign policy, see Packenham, *Liberal America and the Third World*. On the global Cold War, see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[23] Judith Goldstein and Robert O. Keohane, "Ideas and Foreign Policy: An Analytical Framework," in *Ideas and Foreign Policy: Beliefs, Institutions, and Political Change*, Goldstein and Keohane, eds. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 3-30.
[24] Though the Center for International Studies is now known by its acronym, CIS, it was known as CENIS during its formative years, the period under investigation.

Millikan, and Paul Rosenstein-Rodan, were consistent with the senator's general worldview, to

which they contributed theoretical and prescriptive clarity.[25] Kennedy's distinctive approach to

foreign aid was forged in this collaboration. Rostow was a particularly influential figure. He left

MIT to advise Kennedy's presidential campaign, and later served as National Security Adviser

McGeorge Bundy's deputy and Chair of the State Department's Policy Planning Council. He

was the physical embodiment of the link between the theory of modernization and its

implementation by the Kennedy White House.[26] Yet while modernization theory provided the

intellectual framework for foreign aid as an indispensable tool of national security policy,

American perceptions of political circumstances in Latin America opened up the opportunity for

theory to be put into practice.

Latin America, Underdevelopment, and the Global Cold War

In Latin America, the task as the Kennedy administration saw it was to steward broad-

based discontent with the *status quo* into a "middle-class revolution" that would empower the

democratic left.[27] Societies dominated by oligarchic politics and feudal land structures would be

made into vibrant, middle-class democracies, while an infusion of aid would catalyze economic

growth. This would, as Kennedy advisor Adolf Berle wrote, "divorce the inevitable and

necessary Latin American social transformation from connection with and prevent its capture by

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[25] Millikan and Rostow were particularly savvy advocates, bringing modernization to the political and popular consciousness. For an early articulation of their theory and policy prescriptions, see Max F. Millikan and Walt W. Rostow, *A Proposal: Key to an Effective Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper, 1957). Millikan too advised Kennedy in Washington, where he served as a consultant on the Foreign Assistance Act.

[26] On the particular influence of modernization theory on the Kennedy Administration, see Piki Ish-Shalom, "Theory Gets Real, and the Case for a Normative Ethic: Rostow, Modernization Theory, and the Alliance for Progress," *International Studies Quarterly* 50 (2006): 287-311; Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation Building" in the Kennedy Era* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000); Mark H. Haefele, "Walt Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth: Ideas and Action," in *Staging Growth: Modernization, Development, and the Global Cold War*, David C. Engerman et al., eds. (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003); Haefele, "Walt Rostow, Modernization, and Vietnam"; and Kimber Charles Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy, and the Rhetoric of Foreign Aid* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2001).

[27] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 24.

overseas Communist Power politics."[28] Economic growth combined with social and political

reform would undermine the popular appeal of indigenous communist movements and

demonstrate that improved welfare and governance might be achieved by means other than

revolution. Meanwhile, counterinsurgency operations would defeat leftist insurgencies

militarily. Thus, the prospects of a "second Cuba" would be mitigated, and Soviet influence in

the Western hemisphere contained.[29]

The Latin America diplomatic corps eagerly welcomed Kennedy's new policy proposal;

they had clamored for substantial economic aid from the United States since the aftermath of

World War II, when Secretary of State George C. Marshall told dignitaries that Latin America

would have to wait for aid for their own economic development while the United States focused

on European reconstruction. In the early days of the Cold War, U.S. foreign policy remained

primarily preoccupied with Europe. Though calls for a "Marshall Plan for Latin America," often

made by Latin American leaders, long preceded Kennedy, they would continue to fall on deaf

ears in Washington. Latin America remained an economic but not strategic priority for American

policymakers until anti-American tumult erupted during the final years of the Eisenhower

administration.[30]

Eisenhower and Latin America

The Eisenhower administration's twin strategic interests in the region were hard-line anti-

communism—promoting stability rather than reform—and the protection of U.S. commercial

interests through free market capitalism. The culmination of this strategy can be seen in the

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[28] Report to the President-Elect of the Task Force on Immediate Latin American Problems, Box 1074, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

[29] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 45; Howard J. Wiarda, "Did the Alliance 'Lose Its Way,' or Were Its Assumptions All Wrong from the Beginning and Are Those Assumptions Still with Us?," in *The Alliance for Progress: A Retrospective*, L. Ronald Scheman, ed. (New York: Praeger, 1988), 95-118.

[30] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 36-49; Michael E. Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 75-77; Taffet, Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy, 13-19.

nascent CIA's covert support for the overthrow of the democratically-elected government of

Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán in Guatemala in 1954.[31]

However, the tide began to change in the waning years of the Eisenhower administration.

The late 1950s were presumed to be the "twilight of the tyrants." Between 1956 and 1960, ten

military dictators in the region had fallen from power, replaced by constitutional, civilian

regimes.[32] Americans believed that a "revolution of rising expectations" was permeating Latin

America. If widespread demands for improved socioeconomic conditions were not met by

evolutionary means, they would be achieved by revolutionary means.[33]

Americans interpreted rising anti-American sentiment in Latin America through these

twin lenses of the political necessity of democratic governance and rising expectations. They

believed that absent these conditions the door was open to left-wing subversion or revolution

vulnerable to Soviet exploitation. Vice President Richard Nixon, on a goodwill tour of the

region, confronted rioting students chanting "*¡Muera Nixon!*" ("Death to Nixon") and a rock-

throwing mob in Lima. In Caracas, mobs attacked his motorcade. Eisenhower prepared troops

for a military rescue codenamed Operation Poor Richard.[34] Of the rioters Nixon encountered,

Time reported "half never went to school" and "half never had enough to eat." Nixon himself

said, "The riots were a symptom [of] the Reds" co-opting "the revolution of expectations."[35]

Throughout Washington, the event served as a rude wake-up call to conditions that had long

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[31] Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 127-128.

[32] Only one military regime—that of Paraguay—remained by mid-1961 until the pendulum began swinging in the other direction. Lieuwen, *Generals vs. Presidents*, 3-4.

[33] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 23.

[34] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 15-17; Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost its Way*, 44-46.

[35] "The Americas," *Time*, 26 May 1958, 36-37.

been simmering. The Senate quickly took up a re-evaluation of U.S. economic aid to the region, although their report ultimately had "little impact."[36]

Brazilian President Juscelino Kubitschek saw an opportunity in the Nixon incident and the subsequent disquiet that reverberated in Washington. Playing on the fears of the Eisenhower administration that Latin America was ripe for revolution and arguing that economic aid could improve popular perceptions of the U.S. throughout the region, he called on the United States to provide financial support for Operation Pan America. A "Marshall Plan for Latin America," the program would fight regional "underdevelopment." Eisenhower, however, was not quite persuaded.[37]

Less than a year later—and even more threatening to the United States—Fidel Castro toppled the regime of Fulgencio Batista, the U.S.-backed Cuban military dictator. Castro's nearly unimpeded march to Havana seemed to confirm Washington's worst fears: Latin America was ripe for indigenous leftist and nationalist revolutions, which were vulnerable to being co-opted by the Soviet Union. These fears were stoked just a few weeks prior to Kennedy's speech when Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev promised to exploit "wars of national liberation" taking place across the decolonizing Third World. Latin America, it was presumed, would be a critical front of the global Cold War, and Cuba would be the base of Soviet (or "Sino-Soviet") operations in the Western Hemisphere. As Berle said, "While the Great Cold War could not be won in the Latin American theater, it obviously could be lost there."[38]

A widely accepted thesis in American foreign policy circles at the turn of the decade was that Latin America was "one minute to midnight." A superficial analysis of political and

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[36] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 17-18.
[37] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost its Way*, 45; "Operation Pan American," *Time*, 30 June 1958, 27-28. Kubitschek was not alone among Latin American leaders invoking the Marshall Plan. See, e.g., Frondizi to Kennedy, 7 April 1961, Box 290A, National Security File (NSF), JFKL.
[38] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 87.

socioeconomic conditions throughout the region suggested "all of Latin America would soon explode in a Cuba-like revolution."[39] Thus, Washington's "growing anxiety…spurred it to positive action."[40] If rioting and the Cuban revolutions were symptoms, Eisenhower belatedly sought to address their root causes. Eisenhower responded to Latin American calls for urgent economic aid by committing $500 million to the Social Progress Trust Fund, which would provide loans for "low-cost housing, public primary education, rural waterworks, health services, and other social projects in Latin America that had never before been eligible of U.S. public loans."[41]

Kennedy's Response

While Kennedy based his policy on assumptions similar to those on which Eisenhower had based his policy after the Nixon incident and Cuban Revolution, Eisenhower's commitments paled in comparison to those of Kennedy, both in terms of financial commitment and the scope of his ambitions. Kennedy envisioned the Alliance as a strategic response to threats emanating from Latin America, a moral alternative to a more coercive anti-communist policy, and a tactic that would serve his domestic political interests by distinguishing himself from Nixon in the 1960 election.[42] Eisenhower's approach to Latin America had been a strategic failure, Kennedy argued, as demonstrated by growing anti-American sentiment in the region and the traumatic "loss of Cuba."[43] A Nixon administration, Kennedy suggested, would represent more of the same ineffective foreign policy. Kennedy framed his foreign policy as the antithesis to that of the

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[39] Wiarda, "Did the Alliance Lose Its Way," 101; Report to the President on Latin American Mission, February 12-March 3, 1961, box WH-14, PP-AMS, JFKL.

[40] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 48; Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 26-27; and Wiarda, "Did the Alliance 'Lose Its Way,'" 99.

[41] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 48; Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 18-19.

[42] Haefele, "Walt Rostow, Modernization, and Vietnam," 251; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 174-202 *passim*.

[43] See, e.g., Schlesinger to Dungan, 15 October 1962, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter, FRUS] 1961-1963, XII: 47. Available history.state.gov.

Eisenhower administration and a prospective Nixon administration, arguing that policies

reflecting "enlightened anti-communism" would be required to address the root causes of

instability in Latin America.[44]

Assumptions of the Alliance

The widely-held "revolution of rising expectations" hypothesis held that if popular

discontent with unjust economic and political structures were not met through evolutionary

change, indigenous leftist revolutions resembling Cuba would break out. These revolutions, then,

would be vulnerable to communist capture by the Cubans or Soviets. The concomitant "one

minute to midnight" hypothesis fostered a "genuine sense of urgency" for a proactive American

response to "stave off shattering violence."[45] Cuba, for its part, was widely believed to be a base

of Soviet, or "Sino-Soviet," operations in the Western hemisphere, the link between Moscow and

indigenous leftist movements throughout the region.[46]

Taken together, policymakers concluded from these assumptions that a far-reaching

program of economic development and democratization would be needed to promote

containment in the region. The Cuban Revolution was symptomatic; policy would have to

address its root causes. By addressing the sources of discontent—widespread poverty reinforced

by unjust economic and land structures and unrepresentative governments—future Cubas might

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[44] Haefele, "Walt Rostow, Modernization, and Vietnam," 252.
[45] Lowenthal, "Alliance Rhetoric versus Latin American Reality," 495. Wiarda argues that in 1961-1962, this was a gross misperception: "not even a single country in Latin America had even a slight possibility of going the way of Castro's Cuba." Wiarda, "Did the Alliance Lose Its Way?," 101-102. See also: Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 88; Report to the President-Elect of the Task Force in Immediate Latin American Problems, Box 1074, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL; Report to the President on Latin American Mission, February 12-March 3, 1961, Box WH-14, PP-AMS, JFKL.
[46] Quoted in Smith, *America's Mission*, 226.

be avoided.[47] With such reforms, Americans hoped to achieve "a revolution that would surpass the Cuban revolution."[48]

Economic Growth and Socioeconomic Reform

Investment in economic growth, which had stagnated in Latin America in relation to population growth, would be necessary but not sufficient to head off potential revolution; if not coupled with far-reaching reforms, economic growth would only enrich—and further empower—entrenched elites. Thus, as Kennedy saw it, any approach to Latin America would have to go beyond quantitative economic objectives. As the president said: "Unless necessary social reforms, including land and tax reforms, are freely made—unless we broaden the opportunity of all our people—unless the great mass of Americans share in increasing prosperity—than our alliance, our revolution, our dream will have failed."[49] Tax reform and agrarian reform would be particular focal points of Alliance efforts.[50] The administration noted that "more than 70% of Latin America's population are agricultural laborers living as peasants or worse," and they were particularly vulnerable to communist propaganda. Agrarian reform was among the administration's most urgent priorities as they sought to create "a new relation of men to land."[51]

These reforms ran counter to the interests of the economic elites that dominated the political structures of many Latin American countries, particularly the *latifundistas* who owned vast tracts of land.[52] Nevertheless, policymakers in the Kennedy administration believed such

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[47] *Ibid*., 216,
[48] Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 86.
[49] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 34.
[50] See, e.g., Smith, *America's Mission*, 217-220.
[51] Report to the President-Elect of the Task Force on Immediate Latin American Problems, Box 1074, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.
[52] Victor Alba charged that the landed oligarchy simultaneously interfered with and exploited the Alliance for their own gain. For an extensive catalog of the oligarchy's interference with the Alliance, see, e.g, Victor Alba, *Alliance*

obstacles to reform to be surmountable. To avoid revolution, elites would advance evolutionary reforms—a "middle class revolution"—replete with democratization and socioeconomic reforms. In other words, they would sacrifice some of their power in the short-term to the fate of Batista, or worse, Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo, avoid in the long-term.[53] Channeling this assumption, Kennedy famously said: "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible make violent revolution inevitable."[54] Landed elites were expected to read the proverbial "handwriting on the wall" and see that reforms were in their enlightened self-interest.[55]

Counterinsurgency

Administration officials believed that economic growth and social reforms alone could not stave off revolution; as Secretary of State Dean Rusk said, "vitamin tablets will not save a man set upon by hoodlums."[56] Improving the internal security capacities of third world states was a necessary component of the modernization process as stability was a prerequisite for nation building.[57] Addressing an international cohort of graduates of the U.S. Army's Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg, N.C., Rostow—who in addition to his aforementioned credentials was also an early enthusiast of counterinsurgency doctrine—said: "Our central task in the underdeveloped areas, as we see it, is to protect the independence of the revolutionary process now going forward." He continued:

Without Allies: The Mythology of Progress in Latin America (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1965), ch. 1. See also: Victor Alba, "The Alliance for Progress is Dead," *The New Republic*, 5 September 1964, 17-18.
[53] Batista fled Havana, seeking refuge in the Dominican Republic. In May, 1961, Trujillo was assassinated. Abraham F. Lowenthal, "Alliance Rhetoric versus Latin American Reality," *Foreign Affairs* 48 (1970), 494-508; Smith, *America's Mission*, 221; Wiarda, "Did the Alliance 'Lose Its Way,'" 101-109; Report to the President on Latin American Mission, February 12-March 3, 1961, Box WH-14, PP-AMS, JFKL.
[54] Quoted in Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 7.
[55] Smith, *America's Mission*, 221.
[56] Quoted in Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 48.
[57] For a general overview of the development of counterinsurgency doctrine in the Kennedy administration, see Douglas S. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: U.S. Doctrine and Performance* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), 52-88.

> I salute you as I would a group of doctors, teachers, economic planners, agricultural experts, civil servants, or those others who are now leading the way in the whole southern half of the globe in fashioning new nations and societies that will stand up straight and assume in time their rightful place of dignity and responsibility in the world community; for this is our common mission.[58]

Armed forces in the third world would not just be enablers of modernization by providing stability, a prerequisite of the process; they would be agents themselves of modernization, carrying out "civic action" projects—infrastructure development and literacy drives, for example—in rural areas.[59] This would simultaneously win hearts and minds while extending government control to areas where it had not previously existed.[60] Thus, "counterinsurgency was less a replacement for than a complement to the Alliance."[61]

The Alliance in Practice

The Alliance for Progress fell far short of its lofty ambitions. Economic growth during the early 1960s was stagnant, failing to match performance of the 1950s, much less the ambitious objectives of the Alliance set forth in the Charter of Punta del Este. Declining terms of trade as well as significant drops in commodity prices contributed to economic stagnation. Rapid population growth further hampered economic growth in per capita terms: at 2.9% annual rate of increase, Latin America was the fastest growing region in the world in the 1960s. Such demographic trends had effects in ambits of the Alliance beyond economic growth. Despite the number of schools and hospitals built across Latin America assisted by U.S. aid, in absolute terms, the number of children not attending school actually increased over the Alliance decade.

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[58] W.W. Rostow, "Guerrilla Warfare in the Underdeveloped Areas," *Department of State Bulletin* 45 (1961), 235.
[59] See, e.g., Guidelines of United States Policy Toward Latin America, 26 May 1961, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Office of Inter-American Regional Economic Affairs, A1/3178, RG 59, NARA-CP.
[60] For a general view of this aspect of counterinsurgency in the Kennedy era, see Douglas S. Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era* (New York: The Free Press, 1977), ch. 3; and D. Michael Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 123.
[61] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 48. See also Brands, "Reform, democratization, and counter-insurgency," 290-321; U. Alexis Johnson, "Internal Defense and the Foreign Service," *Foreign Service Journal*, July 1962, 20-23.

Likewise, the number of hospital beds per capita declined despite the actual number of beds increasing by 151,670 over the course of the decade.[62]

Population control was one aspect of development that Kennedy never entertained. Though by the mid-1960s there had emerged a broad-based, bipartisan consensus in the United States that population control was both appropriate and necessary for the developing world,[63] Kennedy "believ[ed] it to be politically and medically impractical and morally dubious," and indeed, no Latin American leader took up the issue with him.[64] Ultimately, this was likely a politically savvy move. In Bolivia, for example, a family planning program contributed to the expulsion of Peace Corps volunteers there in 1971, despite the fact that the program was "nonaggressive, small, and voluntary." The political left "argued that limiting population growth was part of a U.S. conspiracy to reduce what little geopolitical power Bolivia had."[65] Yet even if the decision to forego population control was politically necessary, it undermined the Alliance's ability to achieve its economic and social goals.

Improvements to life expectancy, infant mortality, and illiteracy were negligible, while benchmarks set for education, health, housing, and water and went unrealized. Agricultural productivity grew just enough to keep pace with population growth.[66] Prospects for democratization and reform fared even worse in most countries; numerous coups brought military regimes to power, and throughout the region, little progress was made in such critical areas as agrarian reform.[67] Meanwhile, from the strategic point of view, no communist revolutions broke out over the course of the Alliance decade, but U.S. policy has been linked to

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[62] Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 90-94.
[63] James F. Siekmeier, "A Sacrificial Llama? The Expulsion of the Peace Corps from Bolivia in 1971," *Pacific Historical Review* 69 (2000), 77.
[64] Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 93.
[65] Siekmeier, "A Sacrificial Llama?" 78.
[66] See, e.g, Perloff, *Alliance for Progress*, 69-70.
[67] Smith, *America's Mission*, 223-228.

such unintended consequences as increasing corruption, political violence, and instability.[68]

Thus, Jerome Levinson, who had served as a USAID officer, and Juan de Onís, a *New York Times* reporter, concluded in their authoritative book on the Alliance: "In retrospect, the program designed to kill two birds with one stone has hit neither squarely."[69]

The program could claim modest successes, especially in those countries with strong center-left governments. Venezuela, led by Ernesto Betancourt, was a poster child of the Alliance; there, Washington's economic assistance bolstered a pre-existing agrarian reform agenda. Access to education was expanded, slums were cleared and urban housing built, and a modest agrarian reform was carried out. The military successfully contained some 2,000-4,000 insurgents. Betancourt's success in these areas allowed him to build a broadly inclusive center-left coalition and persuaded potential conservative spoilers that their interests were best served by pursuing them through official rather than extra-constitutional channels.[70] Yet even Venezuela, along with the other modest successes of the *Alianza*—Colombia, where a locality of Bogotá built with Alliance support was renamed Ciudad Kennedy after the president's assassination, and Chile, which enacted a modest land reform—failed to achieve the Alliance's objectives.[71]

All told, no country achieved the quantitative objectives set forth by the Charter of Punta del Este [see fig. 3.1]. Economic growth fell far short of what had been predicted by Rostow, Millikan, and Rosenstein-Rodan.[72] Moreover, a critical feature of the Alliance was that it was

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[68] See, e.g., Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution*, 124-133; and Stephen M. Streeter, "Nation-building in the land of eternal counter-insurgency: Guatemala and the contradictions of the Alliance for Progress," *Third World Quarterly* 27 (2006), 57-68.

[69] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 307.

[70] Brands, "Reform, democratization, and counter-insurgency," 294-297.

[71] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 157-160; "Reseña Histórica," available http://www.integracionsocial.gov.co/modulos/contenido/default.asp?idmodulo=772.

[72] Their original projections can be found in Adlai E. Stevenson Report 11/60, Box 1074, Transition Task Force Files, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

concerned not just with gross economic figures, such as GNP per capita, but also economic

justice issues such as wealth disparity. Yet economic growth under the Alliance did not foster the

growth of a politically active middle class, but rather, quite counterproductively, further enriched

those who were already wealthy.[73]

	PUNTA DEL ESTE GOALS	ACTUAL PERFORMANCE
Economic Growth	• Not less than 2.5% per capita per year, to achieve self-sustaining growth and close the gap with industrialized nations • Reduce income disparity • Diversify commodities-based economies • Reduced unemployment • Maintenance of a low rate of inflation • Strengthened regional economic integration, towards the creation of a Latin American common market • Maintenance of a healthy balance of payments	• "Between 1961 and 1967 the actual average increase per year was only 1.5%, and only in 1968 did the region as a whole reach the target." • No change in income distribution, except for Chile • Shift toward diversified economies, with less reliance on single commodities • Job growth slower than in the 1950s; unemployment, in absolute terms, rose • Major countries "somewhat better record" in reducing inflation • "Economic integration in Latin America has reached a plateau" • OAS: "During the period covered by the Alliance for Progress, Latin America seems to have been contributing to an appreciable degree to strengthening the balance of payments position of the United States without the foreign aid provided by that country being sufficient to compensate fully for the deficit accumulated by Latin America in other transactions with the United States."
Agriculture	• Increase output per capita • Improve distribution	• Food production kept pace with population growth (3%)
Land reform	• Reform of "unjust structures and systems of land tenure and use" so that "the land will become for the man who works it the basis of his economic stability, the foundation of his increasing welfare, and the guarantee of his freedom and dignity"	• Mexico, Venezuela, and Bolivia made progress on programs that pre-dated the Alliance • Some progress made by Chile and Colombia • Others, notably Brazil, have made no efforts • "The number of peasants seeking land has grown more rapidly than the number of family lots provided…"
Education	• Improved access to and quality of education • Six years of compulsory primary education • Elimination of illiteracy by 1970	• Between 1960 and 1967, decline of children not enrolled in primary school from 52 to 43%; increase in absolute numbers • More impressive gains in secondary education • No significant decrease in adult literacy (~67% in 1967)

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[73] See, e.g., Perloff, *Alliance for Progress*, 69.

Health	• Increased life expectance at birth "by a minimum of five years" • Improvements to public health • "Adequate potable water supply and sewage disposal to not less than 70% of the urban and 50% of the rural population" • "To reduce the present mortality rate of children less than five years of age by at least one-half"	• Life expectancy "extended somewhat" • Infant mortality rate "has been somewhat reduced" • "Some water systems have been built" • "But the specific goals are still remote"
Housing	• Construction of low-cost housing	"Housing construction during the Alliance decade has not come close to meeting the needs of the growing number of families seeking living space, and urban squatters in Latin America have erected many more square feet of housing than the Alliance has built."
Financing the Alliance	• Tax reforms "demanding more from those who have the most" • $20 billion from the United States, with the greater part in public funds • Foreign private investment	• "Tax collections, primarily as a result of improved administrative techniques and organizations rather than structural reforms, had increased in real terms by 35 percent since 1961. This increase is about the same as the region's cumulative growth of domestic product and thus is far from spectacular" • $18 billion received; "However, more than half of its foreign long-term credits were offset by the cost of servicing past foreign loans" • During the early years, private investment "declined considerably" until the Mann Doctrine (1964)
	Source: "The Charter of Punta del Este, Establishing an Alliance for Progress Within the Framework of Operation Pan America," available <http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/intam16.asp>.	Compiled from Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, and Harvey S. Perloff, *Alliance for Progress: A Social Invention in the Making* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969).

Figure 3.1: Economic and Social Goals and Outcomes of the Alliance for Progress

The Kennedy administration sought to offer "a revolution—a political, economic, and social revolution far superior to anything the communists can offer—far more peaceful, far more democratic, and far more locally controlled," but quickly found its leverage throughout the region to be quite limited.[74] Even before the Cuban Missile Crisis discredited Castro throughout

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[74] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 25.

the region,[75] Latin American countries across the political spectrum did not always share in the Kennedy administration's assumption that the tiny, Caribbean island nation of Cuba posed a great threat to security in the Western hemisphere.[76] Therefore, the logic of the imperative of reform, embodied by the dictum "those who make peaceful revolution impossible make violent revolution inevitable," did not hold the salience Washington believed it would with local leaders. Latin American leaders across the political spectrum nevertheless stoked Washington's fears about popular unrest and communist insurgents to secure development aid that, in the absence of such a perceived threat, would not have been forthcoming.[77]

Obstacles to Reform

A dominant criticism from 1961 on was that the political and social reforms that formed the core of the Alliance for Progress could not be implemented where the U.S. relied on the very elites who were most threatened by reform to implement the Alliance. This contradiction was widely recognized as early as 1961. Ernesto "Che" Guevara, Castro's second-in-command who spearheaded Cuban efforts to export the revolution, famously pressed this point at the Punta del Este conference in which the Alliance was formally established,[78] but it was repeatedly made as well by actors that should have been far more credible to the Kennedy administration: U.S.

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[75] Castro reaped the benefits of rising anti-Americanism throughout Latin America, and was popular with nationalist groups throughout the region. After the Cuban Missile Crisis, however, "Castro's alliance with Moscow and attempts to subvert Latin American governments soon convinced many observers that Cuban imperialism was more dangerous than the U.S. variant." Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 51. See also, Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 82-83.

[76] See, e.g., Wiarda, "Did the Alliance Lose Its Way," 101-102; Alba, "The Alliance for Progress Is Dead," 18; and Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 95.

[77] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area*, 58, 111; Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 45; Lowenthal, "Alliance Rhetoric vs. Latin American Reality," 497.

[78] Richard N. Goodwin, Memorandum for the President, 22 August 1961, The National Security Archive, available http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/nsa/documents/CU/00203/all.pdf; Richard N. Goodwin, "A Footnote," *The New Yorker*, 25 May 1968, 93-115; Ernesto Che Guevara, *Our America and Theirs: Kennedy and the Alliance for Progress—The Debate at Punta del Este* (Melbourne, Ocean Press, 2006).

officials,[79] the American press,[80] and members of Latin American civil society among them.[81] As Schlesinger wrote to Kennedy, "Unfortunately the Latin America's [sic] landed oligarchy does not understand the gravity of its own situation. It constitutes the chief barrier to the middle-class revolution and, by thwarting the middle-class revolution, may well bring about the proletarian revolution."[82] The Kennedy administration had no way of surmounting the problem of working with political elites disinclined to carry out the social and political aspects of *Alianza*, so they largely ignored it, shifting focus from reforms to providing funds and technical assistance.[83]

The U.S. could not conjure moderate left coalitions with stable political bases where they did not already exist, and so frequently found itself attempting to implement the Alliance for Progress through governments that were either hostile to its goals or lacking in capacity. The United States' leverage to compel conservative regimes to adopt polices contrary to their self-interest was far less than the Kennedy administration anticipated.[84] Many regimes did not buy Washington's "one minute to midnight" hypothesis that suggested their political survival depended on improving democratic governance and so paid little but lip-service to reformist

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[79] Bowles to Department of State, FRUS 1961-1963 XII: 34; Highlights of Discussion at the Secretary of State's Policy Planning Committee, FRUS 1961-1963 XII: 40; Research Memo RAR-6, Alliance for Progress Goals Linked With Presidential Upsets, 17 November 1962, box WH-40, PP-AMS, JFKL; Research Memo INR-35, Creating Allies for Socio-Economic Progress With Political Stability in Latin America, 19 January 1962, box WH-2, PP-AMS, JFKL; Loeb to Dungan, 7 March 1963, box W-1, PP-AMS, JFKL; Ernest Gruening, "Why the Alianza May Fail," *The New Republic*, 30 March 1963, 11.

[80] "For Alianza, a Warning," *Life*, 16 March 1962; Victor Alba, "The Alliance for Progress is Dead," *The New Republic*, 5 September 1964, 17-18.

[81] E.g., a labor attaché in São Paulo reported that while Brazilian labor leaders want the Alliance to succeed, they doubted it would:

> Practically no local labor leader believes that the Brazilian economic and political elite will of its own volition initiate the structural reforms mentioned… They have been fighting in vain for such reformed for many years. They add that only massive continuous pressure from the U.S. on the Brazilian elite can possibly force the latter to make *effective*, as distinguished from *paper*, reforms. However, the consensus of opinion seems to be that U.S. officials lack sufficient genuine interests in such reform to take the necessary steps to achieve it or, when genuine interest is present, lack the fortitude needed to bring sufficient pressure to bear…

Foreign Service Dispatch, 23 April 1962, Box 290A, NSF, JFKL.

[82] Schlesinger to Kennedy, 10 March 1961, Box WH-14, PP-AMS, JFKL.

[83] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 169-170.

[84] Lowenthal, "Alliance Rhetoric vs. Latin American Reality"

agendas, benefitting from Alliance funds without pursuing the reforms on which they were ostensibly committed.[85] Undersecretary of State Chester Bowles presciently warned that many governments "would make no more than a gesture" in the realm of agrarian reform.[86] Where a political base for reform existed, Washington could be effective—but it was unlikely to succeed at "creat[ing] an impetus to improved governance where it does not yet exist."[87]

The U.S. feared alienating right-wing regimes on which it relied to maintain stability, a phenomenon that political scientists have called the "dilemma of reciprocal dependency."[88] Moral hazard insulated these regimes from having to make the sort of reforms that Washington believed essential to their political survival: "For elites already inclined to resist far-reaching reforms, the knowledge that Marines would come to the rescue helped weaken the fear of revolution and, by extension, the imperative to liberalize."[89]

Meanwhile, the Kennedy administration considered many center-left coalitions too weak or incompetent to stand up to leftist parties, or else not sufficiently hostile to them.[90] Thus they undermined popularly elected left-leaning politicians, who in theory should have been the bedrock of the Alliance. In Brazil, for example, the United States sought to undermine the democratically elected president, João Goulart , who angered Kennedy in large part because he tolerated the radical left at home and maintained diplomatic and trade relations with Cuba and the Soviet Union. While laying the groundwork for a military coup, the U.S. worked with regional governors who were political opponents of Goulart to implement the Alliance in the

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[85] "For *Alianza*, a Warning," *Life*, 16 March 1962, 4; Survey of the Alliance for Progress in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Bolivia, Box 290A, NSF, JFKL.
[86] Quoted in Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 62.
[87] Brands, "Reform, democratization, and counter-insurgency," 313.
[88] *Ibid.*, 312. See also Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms*, 119-120, on "reverse leverage."
[89] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 60.
[90] E.g., Smith, *America's Mission*, 227.

Northeast, a particular locus of instability and Alliance activity. Kennedy, laying the groundwork for a military coup, "used aid to undermine the national government."[91]

Land reform was considered critical to the democratization of Latin America, as 5-10% of the population owned 70-90% of the land. Yet the administration reneged on its prioritization of land reform, long considered critical to democratization of the region, fearing that local communists might benefit politically.[92] This was "a worry vigorously fanned by the established Latin landed elite," often in cahoots with U.S. corporate interests.[93]

The United States' reluctance to wholeheartedly pursue land reform is representative of a broader ambivalence toward democratization and its attendant reforms: "Washington was unwilling to push Latin American leaders too hard for fear that the crusade to prevent communism might engender the very communist takeover the Alliance was designed to forestall."[94] Channeling the administration's fears, Secretary of State Rusk worried: "We will so arouse mass impatience that we will release forces we cannot control"[95] Funds, meanwhile, were largely appropriated out of expediency, both to give the Alliance a veneer of success with "high-impact, visible projects" and to keep the radical left out of office.[96]

Political & Military Aspects

The Kennedy administration would come to give support to military regimes ranging from the tacit to the enthusiastic; six coups d'etat overthrew duly elected, constitutional

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[91] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 95. See also Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 104-108.

[92] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 39; Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 168.

[93] By contrast, Truman worked closely with the private sector in carrying out the Marshall Plan. Smith, *America's Mission*, 225; Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 166; "For 'Alianza' a Warning," *Life*, 16 March 1962, 4. For a detailed account of endogenous political obstacles to implementing agrarian reform laws, see: Pan American Union, Department of Economic Affairs, *Economic Survey of Latin America, 1962* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964), 209-236.

[94] Smith, *America's Mission*, 225.

[95] Quoted in Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 157.

[96] Quoted in *Ibid.*, 159.

presidents during the Kennedy administration's thousand days alone.[97] Reflecting a realist turn, Kennedy said, "There are three possibilities in descending order of preference: a decent democratic regime, a continuation of the Trujillo regime, or a Castro regime. We ought to aim at the first, but we can't renounce the second until we are sure we can avoid the third."[98] These coups may not just have been incidental to the Alliance however. Bowles warned that counterinsurgency programs were "creating armed forces capable of seizing power,"[99] and the State Department's intelligence bureau argued that Latin American leaders attempting to implement the Alliance provoked both the extreme right and revolutionary left, precipitating coups d'etat.[100] With a few years' hindsight, Edwin Lieuwen, a scholar of Latin American civil-military relations, reported to the Senate:

> The Alliance for Progress may have also contributed to the current wave of military interventions. For it was the view of many Latin American military leaders that the U.S. Government's public advocacy and support for crash programs of material development and social change conducted through the medium of authentically democratic regimes was tantamount to encouraging political instability and social disintegration.[101]

While the Latin American armed forces, largely consisting of lower middle class officers, were acting on their own institutional interests as well as the "morbid fear of social upheaval," they inevitably collaborated with right-wing political parties that represented the interests of the business community and the landed elite.[102]

Lieuwen goes on to suggest that U.S. ambivalence regarding military regimes might produce unintended consequences. He writes: "The principal threat to internal stability in Latin America comes from suppressed populist forces, and the U.S. military assistance program is

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[97] Lieuwen, *Generals vs. Presidents*.
[98] Quoted in Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 41.
[99] Quoted in *Ibid.*, 119.
[100] Research Memo RAR-6, Alliance for Progress Goals Linked With Presidential Upsets, 17 November 1962, Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, folder no. 1, box WH-40, PP-AMS, JFKL.
[101] Edwin Lieuwen, "The Latin American Military," in United States Senate. Committee on Foreign Relations, *Survey of the Alliance for Progress* (Washington: GPO, 1967), 6.
[102] *Ibid.*, 6-7.

contributing to that suppression in all those countries with military regimes, or with unrepresentative civilian regimes sustained by the military."[103]

As the imperative reforms suggested by the "revolution of rising expectations" empowered the reformist left, the United States' ambivalence toward democratization and support for counterinsurgency capacities simultaneously empowered the reactionary right. Thus, some scholars of U.S.-Latin American relations have concluded that the Alliance perversely politicized armed forces and *increased* instability in Latin America over the course of the 1960s, while its emphasis on counterinsurgency undermined the Alliance's commitments to democratic reforms.[104] "The security services used violence and terror not simply against the guerrillas, but against anyone that challenged the privileges of the dominant elite."[105] Generally speaking, the U.S. did not *cause*, but rather *enabled*, subsequent political violence.[106]

Over the Alliance decade, the United States trained an average of 3,500 Latin Americans in counterinsurgency doctrine and operations annually, and over 9,000 officers and enlisted men in its peak year, FY 1962, alone. Latin Americans trained alongside U.S. Green Berets at Fort Bragg's Special Warfare School, where the most elite soldiers trained in special forces, psychological operations, and counterinsurgency.[107] Far more officers and enlisted men were trained in Spanish by the United States at the Inter-American Defense College in Washington, D.C. and the School of the Americas in the Panama Canal Zone.[108]

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[103] *Ibid.*, 30.
[104] See, e.g, Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, ch. 6-7.
[105] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 61.
[106] *Ibid*., 258-269; Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993), 154-155.
[107] The school has since been named after Kennedy. "About the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School," available http://www.soc.mil/swcs/about.html.
Streeter, "Nation-building in the land of eternal counter-insurgency"; Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 60.
[108] To the best of my knowledge, there are no comprehensive statistics available for the period before 1981 that would put U.S. training of Latin American forces, either in terms of expenditures or number of troops trained, in the context of U.S. military and police training worldwide. For comparison, it is estimated that Cuba trained 1,000-

A central aim of military training under the Alliance was to "develop a high sense of professionalism and thereby devote themselves less to politics and more to the performance of military functions" among the Latin American military, including deference to "civilian authority and constitutional government." Yet Lieuwen notes that "most of the Latin American military leaders who conducted the nine coups between 1962 and 1966 had been recipients of U.S. training."[109] As a response to the number of American-trained troops that participated in extra-constitutional changes of government, "the School of the Americas became known as the School of the *Golpes*."[110]

Under the aegis of USAID, the Office of Public Safety (OPS) was tasked with training foreign police forces in maintaining internal security, especially in urban areas. The United States spent $43.6 million during the Alliance decade training over 3,000 Latin American officers Inter-American Police Academy in the Canal Zone and the International Police Academy in Washington, D.C.[111]

The Kennedy administration increased military aid to Latin America 50% over Eisenhower-era levels, averaging $77 million per year. Funds were frequently made available on the condition that they be used to bolster internal security capacities.[112] Military aid provided "helicopters, infantry weapons, advanced communications technology, and other supplies," to assist in counterinsurgency.[113] Journalist Seymour Hersh notes that "for many Latin Americans,

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1,500 Latin American guerrillas during 1962. Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 83. Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 42. See also William F. Barber and C. Neale Ronning, *Internal Security and Military Power: Counterinsurgency and Civic Action in Latin America* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1966), ch. 5.
[109] Lieuwen, "The Latin American Military," 28-30.
[110] LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions*, 154.
[111] Jeremy Kuzmarov, "Modernizing Repression: Police Training, Political Violence, and Nation-Building in the 'American Century,'" *Diplomatic History* 33 (2009), 191-221; Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 133.
[112] Barber and Ronning, *Internal Security and Military Power;* Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 130-131; "Guidelines of United States Policy Toward Latin America," 26 May 1961, RG59 A1/3178, folder no. 2, NARA-CP.
[113] Brands, "Reform, democratization, and counter-insurgency," 292.

the Alliance was little more than a cynical means of providing arms for a regional war against communism, domestic opposition, and Fidel Castro."[114]

Looking Ahead

It remains an article of faith among many of Kennedy's New Frontiersmen that the Alliance might have succeeded in achieving the goals set forth in the Charter of Punta del Este had Kennedy not been assassinated.[115] It is true that President Lyndon Baines Johnson, who succeeded Kennedy, fundamentally changed the nature of the Alliance by shifting focus from democratization and economic development to a pro-investment, pro-stability agenda.[116] Nevertheless, the tendency for Kennedy's loyal New Frontiersmen, as members of his inner-circle were called, to retrospectively shift blame for *Alianza*'s failure entirely to the Johnson administration does not square with the historical record. The documentary record from Kennedy's thousand days in office show that the president and his aides were frustrated with the unsteady implementation of the Alliance from its earliest days as well as its consistent failure to meet planners' expectations. Despite indications that the Alliance was plagued not just by unsteady implementation from both the U.S. and recipient ends, but also, far more intractable structural obstacles, key American officials including the president discouraged meaningful self-evaluation. This phenomenon is the subject of the next section, analyzed through the lens of the Marshall Plan analogy.

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[114] Seymour M. Hersh, *The Dark Side of Camelot* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1997), 440.

[115] E.g. Schlesinger rhetorically asked: "Was the *Alianza* a failure? Who knows? It was never really tried. It lasted around a thousand days, not a sufficient test, and thereafter only the name remained," Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. "Myth and Reality," in *The Alliance for Progress: A Retrospective*, L. Ronald Scheman, ed. (New York: Praeger1988), 71. Lincoln Gordon would call such allegations "Camelot myth-making." Quoted in Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World,* 177.

[116] See, e.g., Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 59-65. Johnson's approach to the Alliance was encapsulated in the Mann Doctrine. See, e.g., "What is the Mann Doctrine?" *New York Times*, 21 March 1964, A24; and Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 87-88.

Chapter 4

A Marshall Plan for Latin America?

We are tied on tight with the *Alianza* and will go up or down with its fortunes.

– McGEORGE BUNDY[1]

Introduction

Having established the background of Kennedy's Alliance for Progress, this chapter tests

my hypotheses in the context of this case study. The Marshall Plan analogy frequently appeared

in both the administration's public and private discourse. Here I test just how consequential the

analogy was in determining the administration's approach to policy using Alexander George's

method of process tracing.[2] With special attention to how reasoning by historical analogy might

have affected the Kennedy administration's approach to the formulation, implementation, and

evaluation of the Alliance for Progress, I find that the Marshall Plan analogy was not

determinative in the administration's approach to Alliance policy—rather, aspects related to

domestic politics appear to be the predominant concern—yet the analogy appears to have had

some impact on the margins of policymaking.

H1: Confirmation & Expectations

Hypothesis 1 predicts that policymakers advocating for nation building will search for

and use historical analogies that suggest nation building is politically desirable, morally sound,

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[1] McGeorge Bundy, Memorandum for the President, 21 January 1963, NSC Meeting 1/22/63, Box 314, NSF, JFKL.

[2] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), ch. 10.

and likely to be efficacious. Accordingly, the Marshall Plan embodied the worldview harbored

by many of the officials charged with overseeing the Alliance, embodying the assumption that

economic assistance could bring stability and thus be a bulwark against communist advances.

The Marshall Plan represented a faith in national planning and the technical capacities of

governments, as well as in the potential synergy of public-private partnership.[3]

The Alliance for Progress was believed to represent "a moral equivalent of the Marshall

Plan," a foil to the reliance on dictatorial strongmen that had been characteristic of Eisenhower's

approach to Latin America.[4] As had been the case in the reconstruction of Europe, the U.S.

would provide the means for recipient nations to achieve economic "take-off," but it was

incumbent upon the recipients themselves to plan and implement programs of economic

development and social and political reform—what was known, in the terminology of the era, as

"self-help."[5]

The Marshall Plan analogy embodied not just a belief in state capacity and morality, but

also a keen sense of urgency. As John Kenneth Galbraith, a highly visible and politically active

Harvard economist recalled, it had become conventional wisdom over the course of the 1950s

that "if the poor countries were not rescued from their poverty, the Communists would take

over." In the perceived success of the Marshall Plan, then, lay a broadly-resonant prescription, as

"many policymakers and would-be policymakers believed that a similar economic aid program

could work in the postcolonial world."[6]

Yet this choice of analogy was not without unintended consequences; as veteran diplomat

Bissell retrospectively noted about the dominant historical analogy, "Perhaps the one disservice

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[3] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 93; Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 47.
[4] Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 202.
[5] See, e.g., "Guidelines of United States Policy Toward Latin America," 26 May 1961, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, A1/3178, RG 59, NARA-CP.
[6] Haefele, "Walt Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth," 84.

rendered to the world by the Marshall Plan was the arousing of false hopes that quick and dramatic accomplishments would be possible elsewhere."[7] All of these characteristics of the Marshall Plan analogy were present as the Kennedy administration formulated and implemented the Alliance for Progress.

Pre-Presidential Uses

The Marshall Plan analogy and its embedded assumptions resonated with Kennedy in a way that it had not with previous administration. Kennedy latched onto this analogy in his days in the Senate, which corresponded to his embrace of CENIS and the "Charles River Action Intellectuals," as many of the academics who followed Kennedy to Washington were known. Kennedy "readily accepted the Cambridge thesis that the American interests would be best served by the development of strong and independent states" in the third world, and simultaneously "began to compare the development of the postcolonial regions and the rebuilding of Europe after World War II."[8] As a junior senator harboring presidential ambitions, Kennedy articulated an ambitious vision of foreign aid: "By means such as the Marshall Plan and the Point Four Program, we had no competition from the Russians as we restored or strengthened the economic foundations, and hence the social and political foundations, of nations menaced from within by Communist subversion."[9] These programs, he suggest, provided a model to be emulated throughout the non-aligned developing world.[10]

The Alliance was first formulated by a task force of academics, business leaders, and policymakers during the presidential transition. The task force framed their proposal in the

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[7] Richard M. Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior: From Yalta to the Bay of Pigs* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 71.

[8] Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 589; quoted in Haefele, "Walt Rostow, Modernization, and Vietnam," 242.

[9] John F. Kennedy, *The Strategy of Peace* (New York: Harper, 1960), 4.

[10] On the historical debate about Kennedy's motivces, see Haefele, "Walt Rostow, Modernization, and Vietnam," 242-244.

context of the Marshall Plan, and notably, several of the task force's members went on to hold key positions in the Kennedy administration, where they played various roles in implementing the Alliance. The task force included Lincoln Gordon, "one of the senior U.S. officials who had taken the Marshall Plan from blueprint to reality," and Teodoro Moscoso and Arturo Morales Carrión, both of the Puerto Rico Development Agency. Richard Goodwin was the task force's link to Kennedy.[11] Goodwin would go on to oversee the Alliance as Kennedy's aide in the White House. Moscoso served as the Coordinator of the Alliance, a semi-autonomous position in USAID. Gordon served as ambassador to Brazil, and Morales Carrión as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs.[12]

Applying the modernization paradigm to the perceived security threat in Latin America in their report to the president-elect, the task force argued: "The initiative should be undertaken in a manner that will produce an impact comparable to General Marshall's historic offer [to Europe]."[13] A subsequent report of the task force reiterated the need for a project "reminiscent of the Marshall Plan."[14] The task force asserted that most of Latin America could achieve self-sustaining growth, to use the terminology of the era, within a decade.[15] As Kennedy assumed office, the task force's recommendations were codified nearly unaltered in policy and the Alliance was designed as a decade-long initiative.[16]

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[11] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 53-54.
[12] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 247-248.
[13] Quoted in Willard L. Beaulac, *The Fractured Continent: Latin America in Close-Up* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1980), 165.
[14] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 22.
[15] Report to the President-Elect of the Task Force on Immediate Latin American Problems, Task Force Report—Latin America, Pre-Presidential Papers, box 1074, folder 7, JFKL.
[16] *Ibid.*; Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 52-58.

Policy advocacy

Just as the Alliance for Progress was seen in terms of the Marshall Plan within private

deliberations, so too did the analogy frame public rhetoric. Kennedy sought funding for his

ambitious re-conceptualization of the American foreign aid program in his first State of the

Union. Highlighting in particular the still inchoate program for Latin America, the President

said:

> Our role is essential and unavoidable in the construction of a sound and expanding economy for
> the entire non-communist world, helping other nations build the strength to meet their own
> problems, to satisfy their own aspirations—to surmount their own dangers. The problems of
> achieving this goal are towering and unprecedented—the response must be towering and
> unprecedented as well, much as Lend-Lease and the Marshall Plan were in earlier years, which
> brought such fruitful results.[17]

The Alliance for Progress, then, was sold to the American public and a reluctant Congress in no

small part through the expectations set by the Marshall Plan analogy.[18]

The success of the Marshall Plan in bringing stability to Europe in the aftermath of WWII

even came to be seen as validation of counterinsurgency as an aspect of nation building

throughout the third world. U. Alexis Johnson, the Deputy Undersecretary of State for Political

Affairs, was a key figure in developing Kennedy-era counterinsurgency doctrine. With

particular emphasis on Southeast Asia and Latin America, Johnson articulated counterinsurgency

as an integral component of a broader strategy of modernization. He emphasized, as Rostow had,

the role of the counterinsurgent as an agent of modernization, especially as the process of

modernization was itself inherently destabilizing. "There is no line of demarcation between

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[17] John F. Kennedy, "Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, 30 January 1961," The American
Presidency Project, available http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=8045#axzz1r8z9StgE/.
[18] Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy, and the Rhetoric of Foreign Aid*, 92-94.

military and non-military measures," he wrote. Johnson cited the Marshall Plan as an early,

successful solution to "the insurgency problem."[19]

Dissenters

It appears that the few officials who dissented from the mainstream view that the

modernization of Latin America was a strategic imperative worked on the periphery of the

administration's decision-making. While Undersecretary of State Chester Bowles questioned the

administration's high expectations of quick and easy success, he nevertheless supported the

overall ambitions of the Alliance. His successor, George Ball, is the only member of the

Kennedy administration who appears to have challenged the very premise of the Alliance.

Criticizing the "cult of development economics" that had taken root in Kennedy-era Washington,

he reflected: "The most presumptuous undertaking of all was 'nation-building,' which suggested

that American professors could make bricks without the straw of experience and with indifferent

and infinitely various kinds of clay. *Hubris* was endemic in Washington."[20] Neither Latin

American affairs nor economic development was in Ball's portfolio, however, and he was in

little better position than Bowles to *shape*, rather than *implement*, these aspects of Kennedy's

foreign policy.[21]

Lincoln Gordon appears to be the only major player within Kennedy's inner circle to

have registered a strenuous objection to the Marshall Plan analogy as a guide to policy, a

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[19] This reframing of the Marshall Plan as successful counterinsurgency is belied by the fact that there was no organized resistance to the United States in Europe in the aftermath of World War II. In occupied Germany, insurgent S.S. officers known as "werewolves" were said to target both occupation forces and sympathetic local populations. Such claims, however, amounted to little more than rumor. Johnson, "Internal Defense and the Foreign Service," 20; Daniel Benjamin, "Condi's Phony History," *Slate*, 29 August 2003, Available http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/history_lesson/2003/08/condis_phony_history.2.html.

[20] George W. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs* (New York: Norton, 1982), 183. Emphasis original.

[21] Likewise, Ball unsuccessfully dissented from escalation in Vietnam. James A. Bill, *George Ball: Behind the Scenes in U.S. Foreign Policy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 19970, esp. 65; Stanley Karnow, *Vietnam: A History* (New York: The Viking Press, 1983), 249

position likely influenced at least in part by his past experience as a former administrator of the Marshall Plan.[22] In an internal memo, he wrote:

> The concept of a long-term development program for Latin America inevitably brings to mind the post-war European Recovery Program. Many people, indeed, have spoken of the need for a "Latin American Marshall Plan." In most respects, this is a misleading analogy. The problems of overcoming an ancient heritage of poverty, widespread illiteracy, and grave social, economic and geographical imbalances in the development process are fundamentally different from those of engendering economic recovery in industrially advanced nations temporarily crippled by war. In Latin America, much greater emphasis must be placed on the necessarily slow processes of institutional reform. The effort will take much longer. The volume of annual outside assistance measured in financial terms will be smaller and technical cooperation in various fields will play a greater role.[23]

Gordon did not doubt in the fundamental soundness of the Alliance, however. He had, in fact, been one of its earliest proponents as a member of the task force. Rather, Gordon's chosen analogy, the New Deal, suggested even more ambitious goals for the Alliance:

> [The New Deal] asserted the self-confidence of the nation in its capacity to cope constructively with its economic and social problems. It expressed a passion to include fully in the national society certain formerly forgotten groups—the Negroes, the migratory farm workers, the marginal farmers of the South, and the urban workers not yet organized into trade unions. And it applied a highly pragmatic and realistic approach to specific problems of social engineering. All these elements seem to me very relevant indeed to the contemporary Latin American scene.[24]

The New Deal fundamentally altered the relationship of the American people to the United States government. Gordon's use of the analogy in the early days of the Alliance suggests that he supported the most ambitious, reformist aspects of the Alliance, those that stressed not just economic and technical assistance but socioeconomic justice as well.

H1: Conclusions

The perceived success of the Marshall Plan in stabilizing Western Europe and keeping it firmly in the American camp during the emerging Cold War seemed to validate the Kennedy administration's modernizing ambitions for Latin America, particularly for the pre-presidential

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[22] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 53-54.
[23] Gordon to Goodwin, 6 March 1961, FRUS 1961-1963, XII:5.
[24] Quoted in Lincoln Gordon, *A New Deal for Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 105-108.

task force charged with formulating the administration's initial policy. By understating the significance of structural differences between Western Europe and Latin America, American planners who subscribed to the Marshall Plan analogy suggested as the task force had that a program mixing capital infusions and technical assistance—and supported by anti-guerrilla measures—could achieve American goals of regional stability and containment. This was not without risks, as Bowles warned: by raising expectations that might then go unfulfilled, the US risked exacerbating the mass discontent it so feared.[25] Gordon's challenge to the basic applicability of the Marshall Plan analogy, meanwhile, seems to have had little effect. As subsequent sections will demonstrate, the analogy continued to frame both the administration's rhetoric and internal deliberations.

H2: Constraints on Implementation

Hypothesis 2 predicts that once nation building is underway, policymakers' chosen historical analogies may encourage them to overlook obstacles standing in the way of a policy's full implementation. As Bissell noted of the Marshall Plan analogy in this context:

> There was no more unfortunate heritage of the Marshall Plan than this view—that economic development can be conducted as a nonpolitical activity involving the furnishing of quantifiable inputs calculated to yield predictable and measurable results within a reasonably short span of time.[26]

While the Marshall Plan analogy channeled the Kennedy administration's inflated expectations of what the Alliance might be capable of achieving, it also reflected and reinforced two key constraints on the implementation of the Alliance: the necessity that the program be temporary, achieving transformative effects over the course of a decade—a commitment considered necessary to securing Congressional support—and a failure to grapple with the social and

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[25] Bowles to Rusk, 25 July 1961, FRUS XII: 17.
[26] Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 71-72.

political reforms considered necessary to achieving the aims of the Alliance, focusing instead on economic development and technical assistance.

The Alliance as a temporary commitment

One consequence of viewing the Alliance for Progress within the frame of the Marshall Plan was that planners believed that it could achieve the ambitious objectives laid out in the previous chapter in little time. As was previously mentioned, the Latin American task force asserted the need for a program "reminiscent of the Marshall Plan," and informed the president-elect: "For most of Latin America, it is a realistic objective to bring the area within a decade into economic step with the modern world and to rely for further grown on its own resources and the normal flows of outside public and political capital."[27]

Kimber Charles Pearce, a communications scholar, notes: "The fact that the president defined his foreign aid policy as both an anti-Communist crusade and a transitory commitment of ten years made it more palatable to fiscal conservatives than the prospect of funding and conducting limited wars in developing areas."[28] These dual imperatives were reflected in the Marshall Plan analogy. The Marshall Plan, after all, had been in effect for just four years, in which time it was perceived to have achieved spectacular outcomes, even if U.S. aid to Western Europe continued for years after under the program's successor agencies.[29] As the President sought to sell his foreign aid program for the developing world on the strengths of the Marshall Plan and subsequent efforts, the implication was that aid commitments could achieve impressive results in a finite period of time. Thus, Kennedy dubbed the 1960s the "Decade of

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[27] Report to the President-Elect of the Task Force on Immediate Latin American Problems, Task Force Report—Latin America, Pre-Presidential Papers, box 1074, folder 7, JFKL.

[28] Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy, and the Rhetoric of Foreign Aid*, 94; Haefele, "Walt Rostow's Stages of Economic Growth," 95.

[29] Walt W. Rostow, "Lessons of the Plan: Looking Forward to the Next Century," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (1997), 208.

Development," a catchy motto that emphasized the belief that modernization of the developing world could be achieved rapidly.[30]

Richard N. Goodwin, the presidential speechwriter who became Kennedy's point person on Latin American affairs and particularly the Alliance, was chief among those who propagated the analogy. Despite his lack of experience with Latin America, at twenty-eight years old, he was "by far the most influential" of Kennedy's aides on Latin American matters.[31] Goodwin's inexperience was little secret to those charged with carrying out Latin American policy, and his comments smack at once of naïveté and cynicism. Gordon reflected: "He accepted too easily some stereotypes… One was the supposed ease with which one could find everywhere in Latin America some center-left group" willing and able to implement the political aspects of the Alliance.[32]

Gordon's objection to the Marshall Plan analogy, noted above, came in response to a draft Goodwin had prepared of a speech to the Latin American diplomatic corps. Latin America's sociopolitical and economic conditions were fundamentally different than those of post-war Europe; hence, progress on the Alliance would be slower than had been the case in the Marshall Plan. He believed that it was a grave mistake to draft a "peroration phrase about how in ten years the gap [between Latin America and the West] might be closed"; though the task force estimated ten years would be sufficient for Latin America to achieve self-sufficient growth, political and social catch up to modernity, in the parlance of modernization, would take longer.[33] Gordon argued as Bowles had that it was "bad doctrine to hold out expectations that are

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[30] See., e.g., John F. Kennedy, "Special Message to the Congress on Foreign Aid," 22 March 1961, available < http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=8545&st=marshall&st1=#axzz1tIonV87j>.
[31] On Goodwin's outsize influence on—and inexperience with—Latin American affairs, see Lincoln Gordon, recorded interview by John E. Rielly, 30 May 1964, 72-73, John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program; "Alianza Si, Progreso No," *Time*, 16 March, 1962; "For 'Alianza,' a Warning," *Life*, 16 March 1962.
[32] Lincoln Gordon, Oral History, JFKL, 73-74; see also, Adolf A. Berle, Jr., recorded interview by Joseph E. O'Connor, July 6, 1967, JFKL Oral History Program, 53.
[33] Gordon, Oral History, JFKL, 79; Pearce, *Rostow, Kennedy and the Rhetoric of Foreign Aid*, 96.

obviously unrealizable."[34] Schlesinger raised similar objections, writing to Goodwin: "I think it important not to make it all sound too easy. I doubt very much, for example, whether any aid program can put every child in the hemisphere effectively in school in ten years."[35]

Yet Goodwin prevailed in the debate. Kennedy decided to include the analogy and its associated peroration phrase in the speech:

> Thus if the countries of Latin America area ready to do their part, and I am sure they are, then I believe the United States, for its part, should help provide resources of a scope and magnitude sufficient to make this bold development plan a success—just as we helped to provide, against equal odds nearly, the resources adequate to help rebuild the economies of Western Europe. For only an effort of towering dimensions can ensure fulfillment of our plan for a decade of progress.[36]

Goodwin would later recall: "The analogy to the Marshall Plan was deliberate. In Latin America as in Europe we could provide resources; but direction, planning, social change must be the responsibility of the Latin republics themselves."[37] More cynical motives appear to also weighed in on Goodwin's calculations. He reportedly advised Kennedy: "Ten years—well, that's after your second term. You don't have to worry about that, and everybody will have forgotten."[38]

The political strategy devised by Rostow and advocated for by Goodwin was "shooting high to maximize the psychological and political [*sic*] in under-developed areas as well as to hedge against Congressional trimming." The Marshall Plan analogy, then, served to exaggerate the claim that the Alliance for Progress could achieve modernization rapidly, with a finite American financial commitment. In making the case to Congress that the Marshall Plan demonstrated the viability of a modernization program capped at ten years, the instrumental use

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[34] Gordon, Oral History, JFKL, 80.
[35] Schlesinger to Goodwin, 8 March 1961, FRUS 1961-1963 XII: 6.
[36] John F. Kennedy, "Address at a White House Reception for Members of Congress and for the Diplomatic Corps of the Latin American Republics," The American Presidency Project, available http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=8531&st=&st1=#axzz1r8z9StgE.
[37] Richard N. Goodwin, *Remembering America: A Voice from the Sixties* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1988), 157.
[38] Quoted in Gordon, Oral History, JFKL, 79.

of the Marshall Plan analogy may actually have acted as a political constraint on the Administration's policy.[39]

Undersecretary of State Bowles, who frequently found himself at odds with the Kennedy White House, offered one of the most powerful objections to the idea that JFK's proposed modernizing agenda could be achieved within a decade: "What we are asking is that the philosophy of Jefferson and the social reforms of F.D.R. be telescoped into a few years in Latin America."[40] Like Gordon, he did not doubt the fundamental soundness of the concept of the Alliance; rather, he doubted that the Kennedy administration had the mettle and the bureaucracy the capacity to execute it, especially given the dilemma that the timeframe determined to be necessary for its domestic political viability might compromise its potential efficacy.[41]

Financial and technical assistance eclipse reformist ambitions

Another legacy of the Marshall Plan carried over to the Kennedy administration was the belief that technical and economic assistance could be a panacea in addressing the root causes of instability. Prior to the Alliance, the United States' post-World War II experience with foreign aid was by and large drawn from the Marshall Plan and its associated institutions. Institutional capacities within the U.S. bureaucracy were accordingly oriented toward technical assistance rather than reform. Neither the aid infrastructure nor the bureaucratic attitudes inherited from the Marshall Plan and consolidated in the nascent USAID were conducive to pursuing all-encompassing national development plans, as was envisioned by the Alliance, rather than military and technical assistance and a focus on macroeconomic outcomes.[42] Thus, Washington lacked the capacity to pursue the reformist program—such as strengthening democracies and

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[39] Rostow to Kennedy, "Foreign Aid Strategy Report, 1961," Box 1074, Transition Files, Pre-Presidential Files, JFKL.
[40] Meeting minutes, 29 November 1961, FRUS 1961-1963, XII:35.
[41] *Ibid.*
[42] USAID, "USAID History."

pressing ahead with land reform—that it considered critical to the Alliance.[43] The Marshall Plan

analogy embodied this reluctance, as Bissell noted:

> Another view carried over from the Marshall Plan was that economic and political problems could somehow be separated and that it was going to be possible to rely solely on economic criteria to devise programs of technical and economic assistance to the underdeveloped nations; somehow, it was thought, the ugly problems of their internal factionalism and external allegiances would be circumvented.[44]

Levinson and de Onís argue that Bissell's observations were particularly apt in Latin

America: "the tendency to focus on economic criteria is a habit that certain key U.S. officials had

acquired while working on development problems in other parts of the world."[45] Once again,

Lincoln Gordon—now serving as ambassador to Brazil—provides an instructive example.

Gordon's analogy of choice for the Alliance had been the New Deal, a program that radically

altered the relationship between the American people and the United States government. Thus, it

suggested that Gordon would be committed to the Alliance not just with regard to economic and

technical assistance, but rather, its broader reformist agenda, emphasizing democratic institutions

and social justice.[46] Nevertheless, Levinson and de Onís assert that Gordon's work on the

Marshall Plan shaped the way in which he approached implementing the Alliance as ambassador,

which was characterized by timidity with regard to reform:

> Working on the Marshall Plan had familiarized Gordon and [Donald] Palmer [Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Latin American Economic Affairs] with various techniques for increasing agricultural productivity. It had not given them any experience in tampering with the social and political supports of an underdeveloped agricultural sector. Gordon and Palmer therefore supported an agricultural policy involving removal of production disincentives, such as price controls on foodstuffs and the extension of credit to the commercial agricultural sector--that is to say, the larger farmers. Gordon was cool toward agrarian reforms that seemed likely to lead to social or political disruption and could not be shown to have a direct relationship to improved economic efficiency.[47]

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[43] Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 587.
[44] Bissell, *Reflections of a Cold Warrior*, 71-72.
[45] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 200-201.
[46] Gordon, *A New Deal for Latin America*, 105-108.
[47] *Ibid.*

In later years, the USAID program continued "to emphasize financial considerations" over social and political ones in Latin America.[48]

The broader consequences of such an attitude undermined the Alliance concept: economic growth in the absence of distributive reforms served to further enrich the wealthiest members of society rather than expand and empower a nascent middle class.[49] Most notably, Kennedy reneged on his commitments to land reforms. Despite his promises to make "a new relation of men to land,"[50] he quickly backed down. Kennedy emphasized the "technical modernization and commercialization" of agriculture rather than make concrete efforts at pushing land reform, such as making reforms a condition of loans.[51] While Chile and Colombia had governments responsive to the Alliance's expectations of land redistribution and thus made progress, elsewhere the commitment was little more than rhetorical, hyping popular expectations among Latin American publics but ultimately failing to deliver on its promises.[52]

The Bureau of the Budget noted that ambassadors and AID officers were expected to "move overnight from the position of political observers…to the role of active engagement with conflicting political and social forces." Diplomats and technical advisers, expected to "shift from the technical cooperation approach of carefully applied pilot projects and gingerly-handled advisory roles to activist administrative and judgmental activities," were unprepared to take on

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[48] *Ibid.*

[49] *Ibid.*, 248-249.

[50] Report to the President-Elect of the Task Force on Immediate Latin American Problems, Box 1074, Pre-Presidential Papers, JFKL.

[51] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 247-250. Conditionality was not uncommon on USAID loans during the period in which the Alliance for Progress was in operation. See USAID, "The Use of Program Loans to Influence Policy," 24 August 1977, available < http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNAAQ813.pdf>.

[52] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area of the World*, 168-169; Harvey S. Perloff, *Alliance for Progress: A Social Invention in the Making* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), 69-71.

"role of hard bargaining in the most sensitive areas of national sovereignty—justice, land

ownership and distribution, tax policy, military alignments, and expenditures."[53]

Some administration officials were quite explicit in recognizing that a focus on the

application of capital and technical assistance masked deeper obstacles to modernization that the

U.S. more often than not lacked the leverage to address.[54] Teodoro Moscoso, the administrator of

the Alliance, asserted that in principle the Alliance transcended technical and economic

assistance. He told the *New York Times*: "This job is not just the administration of billions of

dollars. It is a job of evangelizing."[55] If such evangelizing of social and political models similar

to that of the United States' to the governments and peoples of Latin America was indeed

possible, Moscoso was never given the support to find out. The U.S. failed to muster either the

political will or the institutional capacity to act on it, most notably in the area of agrarian reform.

Kennedy declined, for example, to make loans conditional on land reform measures, as had been

floated.[56]

In short, the perceived success of the Marshall Plan and its assumed applicability to Latin

America enabled American policymakers may have contributed to the dilemma that the

peroration period considered necessary to ensure the Alliance's domestic political viability could

not provide enough time for the Alliance to achieve the transformative goals it had for Latin

America. Meanwhile, the legacy of the Marshall Plan encouraged a focus on technical and

financial aspects of development, leaving agencies ill-equipped to develop the capacities

required by the fundamentally political aspects of the Alliance. Officials such as Gordon,

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[53] Quoted in Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 102; see also, Bureau of the Budget, Memorandum for the Director, "Survey of the Alliance for Progress Program in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Bolivia," 7 August 1962, Box 290A, NSF, JFKL.
[54] See, e.g., Gordon to Goodwin, FRUS XII:5; Mann [Mexico] to Department of State; Meeting minutes, Alliance for Progress Study Group; Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 91; and Moscoso, Oral History, JFKL, 89;
[55] Tad Szulc, "Selling a Revolution to Latin America," *New York Times*, 17 December 1961, SM10.
[56] Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 224-254; Perloff, *Alliance for Progress*, 69-71.

meanwhile, were inured to the issue that economic growth lacking in simultaneous measures in socioeconomic reforms could perversely be destabilizing, at least in part due to the influence of the Marshall Plan.

H3: Perseverance

Hypothesis 3 predicts that once nation building projects are underway, historical analogies—or the beliefs for which they might be seen as a proxy—will engender stubbornness in strategy and tactics. As evaluations calling into question the United States' ability to implement fundamental aspects of the Alliance arrived at the White House, the Kennedy administration remained committed to the modernization paradigm. As the Alliance for Progress during the Kennedy administration was judged to be stagnant, the Marshall Plan analogy was invoked to suggest that superficial fixes might remedy issues caused by structural flaws, and therefore, that critical self-evaluations need not be pressed.

Superficial fixes for fatal flaws

As early as January of 1962, the Kennedy administration was keenly aware that the Alliance for Progress was failing to deliver its promised results. The president established the Working Group on the Problems of the Alliance for Progress, bringing together officials from the West Wing and the State Department in an effort to bring strategic coherence to the program.[57] Meanwhile, throughout the second half of 1962, the Brookings Institution hosted an

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[57] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 47, 72-73; Highlights of the First Meeting of the Working Group on Problems of the Alliance for Progress, 16 January 1962, FRUS 1961-1963 XII: 37.

Alliance for Progress Study Group, bringing White House and State Department officials together with scholars and private sector leaders.[58]

Both groups came to the conclusion that Alliance funds could be better spent inducing reforms rather than rewarding them, and bolstering center-left coalitions that would be supportive of Alliance goals. After all, neither traditional elites nor the radical left had much interest in the Alliance. Both groups were also concerned with popular perceptions of the Alliance, and associated propaganda efforts.[59] Latin American public opinion was a frequent preoccupation of the Alliance planners, who noted that many in Latin America saw the notion of "partnership" as a farce; a key challenge, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Arturo Morales-Carrión noted, was to persuade Latin Americans that the Alliance was viewed as "autochthonous" rather than "'foreign' and 'imported'…a 'Made in U.S.A.' product."[60] Others, however, worried that propaganda would be of little benefit in the struggle for hearts and minds if it were not reflective of substantive progress.[61]

Kennedy's response to these critiques, as well as those of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council (IA-ECOSOC), was to form a "supercommittee" [sic] chaired by Juscelino Kubitschek and Alberto Lleras Camargo, former presidents of Brazil and Colombia, respectively. Respected statesmen, their participation was meant to refute perceptions of American dominance of the *Alianza*. Another committee, the Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress (CIAP) would recommend, review, and approve of nation development plans. The administration self-consciously modeled the CIAP was modeled after a similar Marshall Plan institution,

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[58] Meeting Minutes of the Alliance for Progress Study Group, 28 December 1962, Files of Arturo Morales-Carrión, Box 6, A1/3149, RG 59, NARA-CP; Memorandum, 11 January 1963, Files of Arturo Morales-Carrión, Box 6, A1/3149, RG 59, NARA-CP.
[59] *Ibid.* (fn. 51-52).
[60] Arturo Morales-Carrión, "The Alliance for Progress—a Political and Ideological Force in the Hemisphere," 9 April 1962, Box 290A, NSF, JFKL.
[61] E.g. Moscoso, Oral History, 90.

designed to give a sense of autonomy and ownership of the Alliance to the participating

countries. These committees, it was believed, would streamline the bureaucratic chaos that was

perceived to be a chief stumbling block of Alliance policy and placate Latin American officials

who were dissatisfied with their lack of influence on political aspects and the allocations of

funds.[62]

In practice if not design, however, the CIAP fell far short of its European predecessor.

U.S. institutions were not willing to sacrifice their power of the purse to dictate the uses of

American funds. Both the supercommittee and CIAP were neutered from the beginning as the

White House and various U.S. agencies refused to give up any significant control in determining

how much funding would be disbursed to individual countries and for what projects. Thus, these

"powerless committees" were little more than a "marketing effort" to give a veneer of Latin

American control to an American-dominated program.[63]

Such superficial fixes to acknowledged problems reflect broader tendencies in the

administration's approach to the Alliance. Through the last days of his administration, Kennedy

and his inner circle remained committed to the concept of the Alliance, finding problems in its

implementation instead.[64] They criticized the "Latin attitude of mind" and "indolent, inefficient

and uninterested governments," rather than take seriously the possibility, so often the case, that

the chief obstacles to reform had at least as much to do with the *interests* of Latin American

political elites as their *capacities*.[65] They expressed similar disdain for the Foreign Service, the

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[62] Lincoln Gordon, Oral History, 80; Lincoln Gordon, "The Alliance at Birth: Hopes and Fears," in *The Alliance for Progress: A Retrospective*, 76; Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 128-129.
[63] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 52-58; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 792,1000; Alberto Lleras Camargo, "The Alliance for Progress: Aims, Distortions, Obstacles," *Foreign Affairs* 42 (1963), 25-37; Levinson and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 129-131; "Highlights from the Secretary's Policy Planning Meeting Held July 9, 1963," Box 2, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, A1-5763, RG 59, NARA.
[64] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 102-103; Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 91.
[65] Survey of the Alliance for Progress in Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Bolivia, Box 290A, NSF, JFKL; Schlesinger to Dungan, 15 October 1962, FRUS 1961-1963, XII: 47.

bureaucracy, and a stingy Congress, and heaped particular blame on Moscoso for what they

considered to be inept administration.[66] Kennedy for a long time sought to elevate the official at

the State Department in charge of Inter-American Affairs to the rank of undersecretary,

implicitly devaluing all other regions. "Each analysis presented the alliance as troubled by a

discrete obstacle that, if remedied, would unlock the program's real modernizing potential."

Thus, "setting the alliance straight did not seem to require an analysis of underlying

objectives."[67]

Lowering expectations

In the days prior to his assassination, presidential speechwriter Theodore Sorensen

recalled that Kennedy, "us[ing] a word rare in his vocabulary," said he felt:

> depressed…by the course of the Alliance, by the size of the problems that we face.… The
> Alliance for Progress…has failed to some degree because the problems are almost insuperable,
> and for years the United States ignored them and …so did some of the groups in Latin America…
> In some ways the road seems longer than it was when the journey started. *But I think we ought to
> keep at it*.[68]

Invoking the Marshall Plan analogy, the president struck a similar tone while addressing

the Inter-American Press Association about a review of the Alliance that had just been concluded

in São Paulo. Kennedy sought to lower expectations for the timespan in which the Alliance

might achieve its goals, saying that "the harsh facts of poverty and social injustice" could only be

solved over a long period of time; "the development of an entire continent is a far greater task

than any we have ever undertaken in our history." Nevertheless, he maintained a commitment to

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[66] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 102-103; Notes on the Progress of the Alliance, 6 April 1962, NSF 290A, JFKL; "For 'Alianza' a Warning," *Life*, 16 March 1962, 4; Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 790-791; Lincoln Gordon, Oral History, 74.

[67] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 102-103; Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 175.

[68] Quoted in Theodore C. Sorensen, *Kennedy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 535. Emphasis added. Likewise, RFK recalled in 1964, "The President thought we were moving in the right direction, thought it was the right concept, and was disappointed that it didn't work better. He thought that he could get it to work well." Robert F. Kennedy, *Robert Kennedy, In His Own Words: The Unpublished Recollections of the Kennedy Years*, Edwin O. Guthman and Jeffrey Shulman, eds. (New York: Bantam, 1988), 298.

"the soundness, the urgency, and, I believe, the inevitability of the *Alianza para el Progreso*." [69]

Kennedy continued:

> In 1948 a distinguished Senator rose on the floor of the American Congress and said of the Marshall Plan, "If I believed there were any good chance [*sic*] of accomplishing these purposes, I should support the bill, but in the light of history, in the light of the history of this very Congress and its predecessors, we cannot say there is a chance of success. All the evidence points to failure."
>
> Despite this, we pressed ahead. The result is modern Europe. I do not discount the difficulties of the Alliance for Progress, difficulties far greater than those confronted by the Marshall Plan. Then we helped rebuild a shattered economy whose human and social foundation remained. Today we are trying to create a basic new foundation, capable of reshaping the centuries-old societies and economies of half a hemisphere. But those who know our hemisphere, like those who knew Europe in 1948, have little doubt that, if we do not lose heart, the gloomy prophecies of today can once again fade in the achievements of tomorrow; for although the problems are huge, the greatest danger is not in our circumstances or in our enemies but in our own doubts and fears. [70]

Just as the Marshall Plan took time to come to fruition, Kennedy implied, the Alliance too would require time—likely far longer than what was required in post-war Europe—to achieve its lofty ambitions. It is ironic that the very analogy previously evoked to heighten expectations that transformative effects could be achieved in short order was now being deployed to argue just the opposite: that such transformative effects could be achieved, if the U.S. and Latin American nations alike exhibited great patience.

This reinterpretation of the Marshall Plan analogy was not merely a rhetorical gesture for Latin American audiences. Rather it reflected the Administration's thinking as the Alliance appeared to be stalled. Four months prior, a meeting of top officials in the State Department concluded:

> As the first two years of the Marshall Plan seemed to many to be a wasted effort, so the Alliance has been moving quietly forward to a more dramatic moment in the future. Because of the differences between early post-war Europe and present-day Latin America, this period of seeming inertia may last twice as long before the Alliance comes to more obvious fruition. [71]

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[69] John F. Kennedy, "The Battle for Progress With Freedom in the Western Hemisphere," *Department of State Bulletin* 49 (1963), 900-901.

[70] *Ibid.*, 904.

[71] "Highlights from the Secretary's Policy Planning Meeting Held July 9, 1963." Schlesinger, citing MIT economist Paul Rosenstein-Rodan's evaluation of the Marshall Plan, similarly commented:

The memo identifies several "Problems and Pitfalls" in the Alliance, some of them lying with ambiguity in American policy, others in structural features of Latin American society. Nevertheless, the memo invokes the Marshall Plan in reaffirming a commitment to self-help, reform, and the fundamental tenets of modernization—as well as the recurring belief that lessons learned from the Alliance can provide a foreign policy model "valid for underdeveloped countries everywhere." Administration officials, then, continued to understand the Alliance for Progress in relation to the Marshall Plan, even as the distinctions grew ever more obvious.[72]

Why stay the course?

Some observers of the Alliance have suggested that the failure of the Kennedy administration to engage in self-evaluation can be attributed to the changing strategic priorities of the Kennedy administration beginning in mid-1962. First, the threat Castro posed to the Western hemisphere was perceived to have decreased. This was in part due to recent military coups and strengthened internal security capacities among many Latin American governments.[73]

The first, and most significant, change to the regional balance of power, however, occurred due to the Cuban Missile Crisis. Castro's anti-Americanism had appealed to nationalists, including moderates, throughout the region. His "ideological capital…steadily eroded," however, in the aftermath of the crisis. Castro no longer appeared as an autonomous actor in the region, but rather a puppet of the Soviets. Further, many Latin American nationalists

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The Marshall Plan, with all its resources of experienced entrepreneurs, veteran public administrators and skilled labor, had not wrought miracles in its first few months. P. N. Rosenstein-Rodan, now on of the OAS [Organization of American States] Panel of Experts, recalled that as late as the third year of the Marshall Plan, when the Organization for European Economic Cooperation asked its member governments to consider the consequences of a 5 per cent growth rate, practical men regarded the projection as absurd; yet all the Common Market countries achieved the rate almost at once. Given the most favorable circumstances, the seeds planted by the Alliance in 1961 and 1962 could not hope to bear visible fruit before 1964 or 1965.

Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days*, 789.

[72] "Highlights from the Secretary's Policy Planning Meeting Held July 9, 1963."

[73] Argentina and Peru faced military coups in 1962; the following year, Guatemala, Ecuador, the Dominican Republic, and Honduras followed. Lieuwen, *Generals vs. Presidents*.

came to see "Cuban imperialism as more dangerous than the U.S. variant." As the Cuban model

lost its appeal, American hegemony in the region no longer appeared to be so precarious.[74] As the

threat of a "second Cuba" diminished, so too did the urgency of the *Alianza* in the eyes of

American strategists.[75]

Second, Vietnam came to be an increasing preoccupation of the White House as

American commitments there gradually escalated, absorbing both attention and resources that

might otherwise have been dedicated to other parts of the world.[76] Implicit in this argument is

that the president's personal interest in the Alliance waned, and so the Alliance stagnated due to

bureaucratic inertia. This argument does not sufficiently explain the administration's failure to

self-evaluate, however.

Though military assistance to the region declined both in absolute terms and as a

percentage of global military assistance expenditures by approximately 35% between fiscal years

1962 and 1963, economic assistance to the region actually increased slightly.[77] Kennedy

personally kept abreast of developments regarding the Alliance throughout his administration,[78]

persisted in his attempt to elevate Inter-American Affairs above all the other regions in the State

Department bureaucracy by creating an undersecretary of state for inter-American affairs,[79] and

continued to speak of the centrality of the Alliance in his foreign policy, for reasons both

strategic and domestic. Arguments about the changing strategic climate, then, should not be

overstated in explaining why the aforementioned acknowledgements that the Alliance was

failing to meet expectations and that substantial unanticipated obstacles to the Alliance's

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[74] Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 51
[75] Lowenthal, "Alliance Rhetoric vs. Latin American Reality," 497.
[76] Levison and de Onís, *The Alliance That Lost Its Way*, 15, 83; Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 50-51.
[77] USAID Greenbook Data, available http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov/data/detailed.html.
[78] See Box 291, NSF, JFKL for bi-weekly progress reports to the president.
[79] Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 59.

implementation persisted did not provoke substantial self-evaluation. A more plausible explanation involves the tremendous political capital Kennedy had invested in the program, especially as the President had framed the Alliance for Progress as the exemplar of his "liberal anti-communism" and a model for his foreign aid program.[80]

Kennedy had purposefully made the Alliance a centerpiece of the administration's agenda. He believed that the prestige of his administration hinged on its success or failure, as did experimentation with and validation of the administration's reorientation and expansion of the foreign aid program.[81] Goodwin, now a Peace Corps official, wrote to the president in late 1963: "It is increasingly disappointing that a program which is sound in conception and historically right is operating at about one-half effectiveness. (And that may be a generous estimate.)" Anticipating that the Alliance would be vulnerable to further Congressional appropriations cuts as well as a foreign policy issue in the upcoming election, Goodwin called for the president to "break up a losing ball club" and make "radical organizational and personnel changes."[82]

Even if the Cuban Missile Crisis dampened the sense of urgency that originally accompanied the Alliance, its national security rationale nevertheless continued to resonate with the administration.[83] Multiple times in 1963, Kennedy reiterated his belief that Latin America was "the most dangerous area in the world."[84] Evidence from beyond Latin America, meanwhile,

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[80] Meeting minutes, Alliance for Progress Study Group, 28 December 1962, Files of Arturo Morales-Carrión, Box 6, A1/3149, RG 59, NARA-CP; Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 91; "Highlights from the Secretary's Policy Planning Meeting Held July 9, 1963"; Telegram from the Embassy in Mexico to the Department of State, 19 October 1961, FRUS 1961-1963 XII: 34; Memorandum of conversation, 16 February 1962, FRUS 1961-1963 XII: 41.
[81] *Ibid.*
[82] Goodwin to Kennedy, 10 September 1963, FRUS 1961-1963 XII:63; Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 102-103.
[83] See, e.g., Statement of the Honorable Edwin M. Martin, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, 15 May 1963, Box 2, Subject & Country Files 1963-1975, Assistant Secretary and U.S. Coordinator Alliance for Progress, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, RG 59, NARA-CP.
[84] Memorandum of Conversation, 30 June 1963, FRUS 1961-1963 XII: 205. See also Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 89, and Moscoso, Oral History, 97, for other instances of this threat evaluation.

suggests that Kennedy remained committed to modernization as a template for undermining leftist insurgencies and thus promoting regional stability.

As noted in the previous chapter, the Alliance for Progress was largely premised on Rostow's "take-off" theory of economic (and social and political) development. Yet Rostow, once he made the shift from professor to deputy national security adviser—or from "ideas to action," as he put it—soon acknowledged the limits of his theory of modernization and its presumptive security benefits. Though he was not actively engaged in Latin American policy, his work with regard to Vietnam is telling. There he became convinced that military action rather than a modernization program was necessary to defeating the insurgency and entrenching the Diem regime. Kennedy nevertheless remained committed to a nation building strategy in Vietnam, equal parts economic and military assistance, and had Rostow transferred out of the White House. Appointed chairman of the State Department's Policy Planning Council, Rostow lamented: "I am going from being a priest in Rome to being a bishop in the provinces."[85] The Kennedy administration remained committed to the modernization paradigm, then, even after its original proponent had spurned it. Taken together, Kennedy's ongoing commitment to modernization in Southeast Asia and his continuing perception of threat in Latin America are suggestive of his commitment to a modernizing agenda in Latin America.[86]

We can only speculate as to whether the Kennedy administration remained *cognitively* constrained by the modernization paradigm as a strategic imperative in fighting the global Cold War. There is little doubt, however, that the administration felt itself to be *politically* constrained, bound to a sweeping policy on which they had invested much political capital and promised extraordinary returns, in no small part due to the Marshall Plan analogy. "We are tied on tight

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[85] Quoted in Haefele, "Walt Rostow, Modernization, and Vietnam," 239-240.
[86] Ish-Shalom emphasizes how the agency of a theory may be distinct from that of its theoretician. On the "political life cycle" of modernization theory in the Kennedy White House, see Ish-Shalom, "Theory Gets Real."

with the *Alianza* and will go up or down with its fortunes," National Security Adviser McGeorge Bundy said.[87] Ambassador Mann wrote that in Latin America "the prestige and integrity of the Kennedy Administration are deeply committed to an all out effort to make this program successful."[88] Meanwhile, the domestic stakes were even higher. Kennedy himself believed that the "fate of the entire aid program rests on the success of the Alliance for Progress and that operations and activities connected with the Alliance for Progress should be given the highest priority."[89]

The administration made little more than superficial changes to the Alliance for Progress as it came under increasing skepticism as to its soundness and efficacy.[90] With extensive political capital at stake, the administration remained committed to its original course, failing to appreciably modify or re-evaluate policy though reports from the field suggested this was necessary.

Conclusions

The Alliance for Progress was hardly inevitable; President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy and Eisenhower's support for conservative regimes provide models of two obvious alternatives. The Good Neighbor Policy, in which the United States pledged non-intervention in the internal affairs of its Latin American affairs, was hailed by many members of the Kennedy administration as a monumental turning point in U.S.-Latin American relations—one to which the *Alianza* would be sized up. The other obvious alternative would have been to maintain consistency with the Latin American policy of the Eisenhower administration, relying

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[87] McGeorge Bundy, Memorandum for the President, 21 January 1963, NSC Meeting 1/22/63, Box 314, NSF, JFKL.
[88] Telegram from the Embassy in Mexico to the Department of State, 19 October 1961, FRUS 1961-1963 XII:34.
[89] Memorandum of conversation, 16 February 1962, FRUS 1961-1963 XII:41.
[90] Latham, *Modernization as Ideology*, 102-103.

on conservative regimes to maintain stability and a favorable climate for U.S. private investment. (Despite Kennedy's claims to the contrary, this should be considered a generally bipartisan stance; Johnson would by and large reinstate this approach to the region.)[91]

With Kennedy, however, perceived threats in Latin America converged with a broadly "liberal anti-communist" worldview, which was itself articulated through the lens of modernization theory. The result was the Alliance for Progress, an unprecedented strategic approach to Latin America. Kennedy envisioned the Alliance for Progress serving both as a laboratory in developing the hearts and minds approach for global application and as validation of Kennedy's consolidation, expansion, and reorientation of the foreign aid program under the aegis of USAID.[92]

The Marshall Plan established the worldview through which many officials interpreted the Alliance for Progress. Even when they acknowledged fundamental differences between post-war Europe and Latin America (which, it should be noted, was itself hardly a homogenous region), the Marshall Plan was nevertheless invoked, channeling deeper assumptions about American interests and capacities. The analogy, promising policy success, led policymakers to believe that bounded commitments deemed necessary to securing the domestic political viability of the program would not jeopardize its ability to achieve its objectives abroad. Further, attitudes and capacities that privileged financial and technical assistance over socioeconomic reforms

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[91] Johnson's approach to the Alliance was characterized by the Mann Doctrine, which emphasized the protection of U.S. business interests and promoting economic growth and political stability rather than socioeconomic reform. Taking a broader view, Packenham suggests that the Kennedy years were a brief aberration from a broader trend of aid used for *explicitly* security-related concerns (as opposed to aid used for economic development and democracy promotion, thereby *indirectly* enhancing American security interests) from the 1950s through the late 1960s. "What is the Mann Doctrine?" *New York Times*, 21 March 1964, A24; Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy*, 60, 134; Packenham, *Liberal American and the Third World*, 109-110.

[92] This is consistent with Grandin's thesis that Latin America has consistently served as a laboratory in which the United States tested its imperial strategies before deploying them elsewhere. Meeting minutes, Alliance for Progress Study Group, December 28, 1962, Bureau of Inter-American Affairs, Department of State, Box 6, A1/3149, RG 59, NARA-CP; Highlights from the Secretary's Policy Planning Meeting held July 9, 1963, Subject & Country Files, Department of State, Box 2, A1/5763, RG 59, NARA-CP; Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006).

were reinforced by experience with the Marshall Plan, even though in so doing they failed to address the very concerns that motivated the Alliance, viz. popular unrest. Lastly, the presumptive lessons of the Marshall Plan justified the failure to engage in meaningful self-evaluation, largely with superfixes. Domestic politics necessitated each of these factors, but at a minimum the Marshall Plan appeared to rationalize them.

Kennedy himself admitted to Latin American dignitaries that he could not give funds on a per capita basis nearly equivalent to that given under the Marshall Plan, owing to global commitments and a reluctant Congress. Yet more substantial differences between the Alliance and its predominant analogue went unacknowledged. For example, 90% of Marshall Plan funds came in the form of grants, but 70% of Alliance for Progress funds were given in loans, and much of Alliance funds went toward servicing previously incurred debts. Net gains, then, were lower than that suggested by the $20 billion figure.[93]

The Marshall Plan primarily stabilized economies and offered technical assistance; it was neither an instrument of reform nor a strategy of counterinsurgency.[94] It is worth noting that a more apt analogy for the socioeconomic and political reform that Kennedy sought in Latin America might be the military occupations of West Germany and Japan. It is not surprising that these historical analogies do not appear in the documentary record, as military occupation of that sort would not have been politically desirable, or even plausible, in Latin America.[95]

The language of modernization belied the more coercive elements of U.S. policy in the region, creating a myth of a kinder, gentler anti-communism that held broad appeal to both

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[93] Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World*, 153-155.
[94] Agnew and Entrikin, "Introduction," 9-14.
[95] Rabe, *The Killing Zone*, 91. On the diversion of funds to service debt rather than fund development programs, see: Pan American Union, , *Economic Survey of Latin America, 1962*, 196.

American and foreign audiences but was largely misleading.[96] Counterinsurgency is typically an ugly affair, and in the case of the Alliance produced unintended consequences that reverberated long after the Alliance faded from American foreign policy. The means of violence and terror employed by Central American paramilitaries and Southern Cone death squads in the decades that followed drew a direct line of descent from internal security aspects of the Alliance for Progress.[97] With its emphasis on economic growth and social and political reforms, the liberal discourse surrounding the Alliance obscured the program's dark underbelly.

U.S. policy over the Alliance decade contributed to the retreat of Latin American democracy, by undermining democratically-elected leaders who were thought to have weak bases of power or leaned dangerously far to the left; reneging on the demands of agrarian reform and other measures promoting distributive justice, for fear of alienating elites and fomenting the very revolutions they sought to hold at bay; and politicizing and strengthening the counterinsurgency capacities of Latin American militaries and police forces, who in many cases would come to defend repressive, undemocratic regimes and economic interests.[98]

The Alliance for Progress is not a unique case. The U.S. occupation of Iraq too would be plagued by gross underestimations of risks, costs, and the likelihood of success.[99] Meanwhile, in Iraq as well as Afghanistan, policymakers interpreted events and created policy through the lens of similar post-World War II analogies: the Marshall Plan, as well as the occupations of Germany and Japan. This will be explored in the following chapter.[100]

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[96] On a similar phenomenon in contemporary COIN discourse, see Michael A. Cohen, "The Myth of a Kinder, Gentler War," *World Policy Journal* 27 (2010), 75-86.
[97] See, e.g., Brands, *Latin America's Cold War*, 61, 258-259; Rabe, *The Killing Zone*; Grandin, *Empire's Workshop*, 47-49.
[98] Brands (*Ibid.*).
[99] Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution*, 214.
[100] See, e.g., *Ibid.*, 208; James Surowiecki, "The Marshall Plan Myth," *The New Yorker*, 10 December 2001.

Chapter 5

Conclusions: The War in Iraq, Avenues for

Further Research, and Policy Prescriptions

> As we known, there are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. We also know there are known unknowns. That is to say, we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns, the ones we don't know we don't know.
>
> — DONALD H. RUMSFELD[1]

> Unknown knowns were things that were not at all inevitable, and were easily knowable, or indeed known, but which people chose to "unknow."
>
> — GEOFFREY WHEATCROFT, PARAPHRASING SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK'S ADDENDUM TO RUMSFELD[2]

Are historical analogies germane to the conduct of nation building campaigns?

This study has investigated the role of historical analogies in decision making regarding nation building. A case study of the Alliance for Progress was a preliminary step in testing hypotheses related to the ways in which reasoning by historical analogy might distort the decision making process at the stages of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. Process tracing in the Alliance for Progress is suggestive that historical analogies did not have a determinative impact on the trajectory of the policy, although it seems that these analogies may have made differences at the margins, particularly in shaping decision makers' expectations.

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[1] Department of Defense news briefing, 12 February 2002. Quoted in Hart Seely, "The Poetry of D.H. Rumsfeld," *Slate*, 2 April 2003 <http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/low_concept/2003/04/the_poetry_of_dh_rumsfeld.single.html> (Accessed 3 January 2012).

[2] Geoffrey Wheatcroft, "A World in Denial of What It Knows," *New York Times*, 31 December 2011, SR 5; see also, Slavoj Žižek, "What Rumsfeld Doesn't Know that He Knows About Abu Ghraib," *In These Times*, 21 May 2004, <http://www.lacan.com/zizekrumsfeld.htm> (Accessed 3 January 2012).

The underwhelming and at times perverse outcomes of the Alliance vis-à-vis the Kennedy administration's stated objectives may be attributed primarily to constraints posed by domestic politics. Strategic miscalculations also played a role. This study has only tested one case—and further, one that I argued was a difficult one for my hypotheses—so we should be wary of conclusions regarding the broader utility of the proposed hypotheses. In this final chapter, I propose a shadow case, the United States' occupation of Iraq, which offers suggestive evidence that historical analogies do play an intervening role in the conduct of nation building. After arguing that the analogical approach may help elucidate decision making in that case, I suggest avenues for further research and policy prescriptions.

Extending the argument: The case of Iraq

Planners of the war in Iraq expected regime change to be a "cakewalk." Oil revenue would subsidize the costs of reconstruction, a functioning democracy would quickly take root, and a free market Iraq would soon thrive in international markets.[3] American troops, Vice President Richard Cheney famously said, would be "greeted as liberators."[4] The occupation would be brief, lasting "months, not years," according to General Jay Garner, the official at the Pentagon's Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid (ORHA) in charge of the initial post-war occupation. This was a view oft repeated by administration officials and reinforced rather uncritically by the media in the lead-up to the war.[5] The war and occupation would be

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[3] Janine Davidson, *Lifting the Fog of Peace: How Americans Learned to Fight Modern War* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 162-163; Ken Adelman, "Cakewalk in Iraq," *The Washington Post*, 13 February 2002, A27. For a mea culpa (of sorts), see Ken Adelman, "'Cakewalk' Revisited," *The Washington Post*, 10 April 2003, A29.

[4] Quoted in Eric Schmitt and David E. Sanger, "Aftereffects: Reconstruction Policy; Looting Disrupts Detailed U.S. Plan to Restore Iraq," *New York Times*, 19 May 2003.

[5] Jonathan Weisman and Mike Allen, "Officials Argue for Fast U.S. Exit From Iraq," *Washington Post*, 21 April 2003, A1; Hendrik Hertzberg, "Cakewalk," *The New Yorker*, 14 April 2003, 25.

inexpensive, costing the United States $50-60 billion altogether.[6] Andrew Natsios, the

administrator of USAID, estimated that reconstruction would cost a mere $1.7 billion, as

coalition partners were expected to pick up the tab and Iraqi oil revenue would finance the

remainder.[7] "We have no plans for any further-on funding for this," Natsios said. The White

House Office of Management and Budget concurred, saying: "Iraq will not require sustained

aid." Yet just five months after Natsios released his estimate, the White House asked Congress

for an additional $20 billion to fund reconstruction. As costs of reconstruction for 2004 alone

were estimated at $75 billion, an embarrassed White House was caught scrubbing the transcript

of Natsios' interview from the USAID website.[8]

The planning and execution of the occupation of Iraq exemplifies Žižek's concept of

"unknown knowns," the phenomenon in which inconvenient truths are, by processes conscious

and rational or otherwise, suppressed. James Fallows of *The Atlantic* asserts that the United

States' utter unpreparedness in Iraq was not due to a lack of planning, but rather because

extensive planning was "willfully ignored." For example, the State Department's Future of Iraq

project, led by Thomas Warrick, produced a report spanning thirteen volumes and 2,500 pages as

policymakers contemplated war. Its predictions of problems that would plague post-war Iraq

were prescient. The report anticipated, for example, the chaotic looting that ensued soon after

Saddam Hussein's government was toppled.[9] The project, however, was wholly ignored by the

Pentagon's Office of Special Plans, which took responsibility for Iraq.[10] In fact, Rumsfeld

specifically instructed Garner not to use the Future of Iraq material and directed him to remove

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[6] David M. Herszenhorn, "Estimates of Iraq War Cost Were Not Close to Ballpark," *New York Times*, 19 March 2008, A9.

[7] James Fallows, "Blind into Baghdad," *The Atlantic*, January/February 2004, available http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2004/01/blind-into-baghdad/2860/ (Accessed 16 January 2012).

[8] Dana Milbank and Robin Wright, "Off the Mark on Cost of War, Reception by Iraqis," *Washington Post*, 19 March 2004, A1.

[9] Fallows, "Blind into Baghdad."

[10] *Ibid.*; David Rieff, "Blueprint for a Mess," *New York Times Magazine*, 2 November 2003.

Warrick from his planning staff.[11] The U.S. was similarly unprepared for the insurgency and sectarian violence that followed the early success of the invasion. One administration official said, "guerrilla war wasn't in the plan," even though such post-conflict dynamics were anticipated by the CIA.[12] In short, any prognostications that suggested post-invasion Iraq might be anything but a cakewalk were suppressed. This ensured that the war, on which the neoconservative element in the Bush administration was dead set on pursuing, remained politically viable.[13] But it also set up the U.S. for a costly occupation for which it was wholly unprepared.

Bush had long abjured nation building, a position he articulated during the 2000 presidential campaign to distinguish his foreign policy from that of his Democratic rival, Al Gore. At one of the presidential debates, Bush declared: "I don't think our troops ought to be used for what's called nation building. I think our troops ought to be used to fight and win war."[14] Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld was even more steadfast in his opposition to nation building. Peacekeeping was "a dirty word in the Rumsfeld Pentagon," and those who insisted on the importance of "Phase IV," or post-conflict, operations in the war in Iraq were "systematically excluded" from policy debates.[15] By this point, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) had replaced ORHA in administering Iraq. Reflecting dissonance between the CPA and the Pentagon, and indeed the White House and the Pentagon, Rumsfeld told reporters, "I don't

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[11] Fallows, "Blind into Baghdad."

[12] David E. Sanger, "Trying to Figure Out When to Say It's Over," *New York Times*, 14 September 2003, WR1; Scott Shane, "Senate Democrats Say Bush Ignored Spy Agencies' Prewar Warnings of Iraq Perils," *New York Times*, 26 May 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/05/26/washington/26intel.html.

[13] Janine R. Wedel, *Shadow Elite: How the World's New Power Brokers Undermine Democracy, Government, and the Free Market* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), ch. 6.

[14] "Bush/Gore Second Presidential Debate," available http://www.fas.org/news/usa/2000/usa-001011.htm.

[15] George Packer, *The Assassain's Gate: America in Iraq* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), 113-114; John DeBlasio, "The War: What We're Missing," *Washington Post*, 18 April 2004, B1.

believe it's our job to reconstruct the country" even as the Bush administration was requesting $13 billion so the CPA could do just that.[16]

Numerous causes can be attributed for the Administration's failure to plan for a lengthy occupation and costly reconstruction of Iraq. For example, intelligence estimates underestimated the degradation of Iraqi physical infrastructure, overestimated the resilience of Iraqi administrative institutions, and failed to consider how sectarian dynamics might affect the prospects for liberal democracy.[17] More fundamentally, however, the Administration refused to entertain possibilities that might have undermined the political viability of their desired end, regime change.[18]

Intolerance for politically inconvenient views can be seen not just in the administration's disregard for the State Department and CIA's planning but also in its treatment of two officials who publicly dissented from the official view managed by the White House. When General Eric Shinseki was asked about troop requirements in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, he answered that "something on the order of several hundred thousand soldiers" would be required. Paul Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld's deputy at the Pentagon, immediately refuted this, telling another Congressional panel that Shinseki's testimony was "wildly off the mark."[19] Regime change would be accomplished with a light troop footprint, which seemed viable as long as the administration framed its mission as liberation rather than occupation.

Such message discipline was also enforced with regard to the cost of war. Lawrence Lindsay, Bush's economic advisor, candidly estimated that the war might cost as much as $200 billion—orders of magnitude greater than the White House's initial projections of $50-60 billion

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[16] Sanger, "Trying to Figure Out When Its Over."
[17] See, e.g., Schmitt and Sanger, "Aftereffects"; Bob Woodward, *State of Denial* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2006).
[18] Fallows, "Blind into Baghdad"; Rieff, "Blueprint for a Mess."
[19] Packer, *The Assassain's Gate*, 114-115.

"to oust Saddam Hussein, restore order, and install a new government." Lindsay was forced out of the administration. With hindsight, we know that even Lindsay's projections were a vast underestimation as he did not anticipate just how long the occupation would last.[20]

With so much knowledge generated by the State Department, CIA, and officials such as Shinseki and Lindsay, how did the administration allow the situation in Iraq to go so horribly awry?

Iraq & analogies

As had been the case four decades before, the post-World War II analogies of reconstruction—the reconstruction of Germany and Japan and the Marshall Plan—were ubiquitous in political discourse throughout the planning for and occupation of Iraq.[21] That they came to dominate discourse should not be surprising: the threat posed by Nazi Germany was central to the worldview of the neoconservative core that came to dominate Bush's foreign policy in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. American dominance, success at democracy promotion, and the ability to "refashion the world" in the aftermath of World War II provided an appealing model for American hegemony.[22] The various ways in which these analogies were used can be seen here, as with the Alliance for Progress, as an imperfect proxy for both the administration's beliefs and rhetorical strategies. Notably, these analogies persisted in political discourse despite major criticisms of their inapplicability.

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[20] Herszenhorn, "Estimates of Iraq War"; Fallows, "Blind into Baghdad."

[21] As a crude metric, a LexisNexis search of (iraq AND reconstruction AND germany OR japan) for articles published between 1 January 2003 and 1 January 2006 yielded 449 hits in the *New York Times* and 385 in the *Washington Post*. In the same period (iraq AND marshall plan) yielded 77 hits in the *New York Times* and 53 in the *Washington Post*.

[22] Wedel, *Shadow Elite*, esp. 155-156.

While the administration invoked Germany and Japan from the very beginning to suggest that democracy could be transferred to Iraq,[23] they initially "scoff[ed]" at those same analogies in relation to nation building. The occupations lasted four years and seven years, respectively, which ran counter to the administration's argument that "liberation" would not necessitate a lengthy occupation.[24] Yet by the late summer of 2003, certain political realities of the United States' engagement in Iraq set in and the Bush administration belatedly embraced a nation building agenda. Garner had neither secured Iraq nor set it on the path to liberal democracy as had been expected. The White House replaced him with L. Paul Bremer, who took charge as administrator of the CPA. Bremer immediately set:

> goals and timetables for the training of Iraqi security forces, the writing of a constitution, the creation of new government structures, economic reform, legal reform, education reform: nothing short of an overhaul of Iraqi society from top to bottom, culminating in the return to sovereignty at an indeterminate date.[25]

In short, Bremer would attempt a comprehensive nation building agenda. One consultant to the CPA distinguished between these periods as the "arrogance" and "hubris" phases of the occupation.[26]

The administration embraced the occupations of Germany and Japan, and to a lesser extent, the Marshall Plan, in its rhetoric as this transition was taking place. The message was "counseling patience"[27] as, by mid-August, Bush was saying that the occupation may last "years, not months," and could "take a generation or more." Analogies justified the long haul. As the *Los Angeles Times* noted, several messages were embedded in the comparison to postwar Germany: "First, that the Iraq War was a noble cause, as noble as fighting the Nazis. Second,

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[23] See, e.g., "George W. Bush's speech to the American Enterprise Institute" *The Guardian*, 27 February 2003, http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2003/feb/27/usa.iraq2 (Accessed 8 December 2011).
[24] David E. Sanger, "Over There: Trying to Figure Out When to Say Its Over," *New York Times*, 14 September 2003, WR1.
[25] Packer, *Assassains Gate*, 186.
[26] Quoted in *Ibid.*, 186-187.
[27] Sanger, "Over There," WR1.

that the rebuilding will be lengthy, costly and complicated. And third, that despite the difficulties, the United States can be successful in Iraq, just as it was ultimately successful in Germany."[28] The *Washington Post*'s editorial page cautioned, however, "The danger is that have adjusted rhetoric to reality, the administration will nevertheless fail to adjust policy. In Iraq, U.S. operations still correspond more to the illusion of a quick and cheap transition than to a project comparable to the occupation of Japan or Germany."[29]

Washington increasingly spoke of the occupations of Germany and Japan to maintain high levels of public support as initial estimates of a quick and inexpensive occupation came to be discredited. Meanwhile, evidence from Baghdad suggests these historical analogies were not just rhetorically useful; rather, it appears that the "lessons" of the occupations might have in fact been internalized by the CPA, and particularly Bremer, its chief, as the occupation authorities embraced a broad nation building mandate.

The RAND manual

As the transition in the United States' conception of its mission in Iraq was occurring, the RAND Corporation released a book-length report entitled *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq*.[30] Its lead author, the veteran diplomat James Dobbins, and his research team argued that the "occupations of Germany and Japan set standards for post-conflict nation-building that have never again been matched," and compared lessons from those cases with those from the decidedly less successful cases of Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.[31]

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[28] Maura Reynolds, "White House Likens Iraq to Postwar Germany to Retain Support," *Los Angeles Times*, available <articles.latimes.com/print/2003/sep/01/world/fg-commit1> (Accessed 29 March 2012).
[29] "A New Plan for Iraq," *Washington Post*, 28 August 2003, A26.
[30] James Dobbins, et al., *America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2003).
[31] By contrast, Rumsfeld invoked the lessons of the Balkans to abjure nation building roles for the U.S. altogether. *Ibid.*; "Monograph Reports," RAND, available http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR1753.html;

The study took the view that the factor most critical in determining the success in a nation building campaign is the volition of the occupier, rather than any social, political, or economic characteristics of the occupied country. Volition is "measured in time, manpower, and money." The authors conclude that successful nation building requires a large troop footprint and that "five years seems the minimum required to enforce an enduring transition to democracy."[32]

Bremer invited Dobbins, a friend of his, to work at the CPA. Dobbins declined, sending in his stead an advance copy of the RAND manual. The study's recommendations, which "ran directly counter to the Bush administration's [original] policy for securing postwar Iraq," were taken up immediately, if incompletely, by Bremer as he took the reins from Garner and formed the CPA.[33] Bremer praised the RAND report as "a marvelous how-to manual for post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction." He continued: "I have kept a copy handy since my arrival in Baghdad and recommend it to anyone who wishes to understand or engage in such activities."[34] His successor in Baghdad, John Negroponte, similarly heaped praise on the manual, calling it a "blueprint for success."[35]

Yet the RAND study's own data fail to support its commitment hypothesis: post-conflict economic assistance per capita to both Germany and Japan, the study's two unambiguous successes, pale in comparison to Bosnia and Kosovo, coded as mixed and modest successes, respectively; occupied Japan had far fewer troops per capita than did Bosnia and Kosovo; and the authors argue that the reconstruction and democratization of Germany could have been

Donald Rumsfeld, "Beyond Nation Building," 14 February 2003, available http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=337; Packer, *The Assassain's Gate*, 114.
[32] Dobbins, et al., *America's Role in Nation-Building*, 165-166.
[33] Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2006), 477-479.
[34] Quoted in Dominique Vidal, "A guide to nation-building," *Le monde diplomatique*, December 2003; cited in Robert K. Brigham, *Is Iraq Another Vietnam?* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2006), 72-73.
[35] Quoted in *ibid.*

achieved far more rapidly if not for complications raised by multilateral administration.[36] In short, factors beyond volition—and largely beyond the control of the occupying power—would seem to make the difference between success and failure.

Meanwhile, case selection bias casts further doubt on their study. The Second Indo-China (or South Vietnam) War, for instance, is excluded from the study, ostensibly because it was a "status quo" war, serving to entrench an existing regime rather than put in place a new, democratic regime. However, this ignores the massive investments in social and political transformation invested by successive American administrations to undermine the insurgency and bolster the Diem regime in Saigon. Thus, "the authors beg the question of whether the United States could have won Vietnam had we poured in more troops and cash, and were prepared to stay indefinitely."[37] Indeed, the study skips over the Cold War period entirely, jumping from the immediate aftermath of World War II to the interventions of the 1990s.[38]

Even if one were to exclude South Vietnam, it would still be reasonable to conclude that the most important independent variable might not be the occupiers' volition, but rather, "preexisting bureaucratic and parliamentary institutions in the target society."[39] Germany, for example, had some experience with constitutional rule prior to Hitler's regime, and democracy was quickly adopted by the German people during the occupation. In Japan, meanwhile, existing institutions were co-opted rather than destroyed and built from scratch. In both cases, "the U.S. relied on local actors and institutions capable of governing the society in question."[40] It should also be noted that in the cases of both Germany and Japan, the occupied state had been defeated

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[36] Dobbins et al., *America's Role in Nation-Building*, ch.9, esp. 150 and 165-166.
[37] Douglas Porch, Review of *America's Role in Nation-Building*, *Strategic Insights* 3 (2004), available www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA485175 (accessed 12 December 2011).
[38] On problematic case selection and conclusions in the RAND study, see Jason Brownlee, "Review Article: Can America Nation-Build?" *World Politics* 59 (January 2007), esp. 322-323 fn. 30, 329.
[39] *Ibid.,* 332.
[40] *Ibid.*, 323

absolutely, both societies were free of sectarian conflicts, and no insurgencies emerged to

challenge the occupation.

The RAND study's commitment thesis is undermined by a perpetual dilemma of military

occupations identified by political scientist David Edelstein. As occupations wear on, patience

runs short on the part of both the occupiers and the occupied. It is always easier to persuade

Americans to invade than to sustain their commitment as an occupation drags on and costs, in

terms of both blood and treasure, mount.[41] Dominic Tierney argues that these two phases—

invasion and nation building—can broadly be said to represent the uniquely American crusade

and quagmire traditions, respectively. The American public has great zeal for the former but little

patience for the latter. War weariness quickly pervades public opinion of stabilization operations

and defeat can become a self-fulfilling prophecy.[42] Meanwhile, long occupations provoke the

nationalist resentments of the occupied, often resulting in insurgencies.[43]

The critical variable, according to Edelstein, is the "threat condition." A favorable threat

condition exists when "a third-party external threat to the territory is present and perceived as

such by the occupied population and the occupying power."[44] He attributes American successes

in both West Germany and Japan to the occupied population and the occupying power mutually

recognizing the Soviet Union as a threat. Thus, the occupation dilemma was avoided, U.S.

commitments maximized, and the nationalist resentments of the occupied population minimized.

In the absence of such an external threat—when there either is no threat, or the primary threat is

internal—the occupation dilemma will be pronounced.[45] In Iraq, there was no such external

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[41] David Edelstein, *Occupational Hazards: Success and Failure in Military Occupation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

[42] Dominic Tierney, *How We Fight: Crusades, Quagmires, and the American Way of War* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2010), 34-54.

[43] Edelstein, *Occupational Hazards*.

[44] *Ibid.*, 14.

[45] *Ibid.*, 22-25.

threat agreed upon by the United States and the Iraqi population writ large. Rather, sectarian differences within Iraq—combined with various external allegiances—exacerbated the occupation dilemma.[46]

De-Ba'athification and the lessons of post-war Germany

While the RAND manual advanced problematic conclusions about occupation and nation building based in large part on the presumptive lessons of Germany and Japan, Bremer's first official act as administrator of the CPA, de-Ba'athification, was quite self-consciously modeled on the German model. The policy was originally formulated in the Pentagon's Office of Special Plans, run by Douglas Feith. Feith, in turn, had been influenced by a paper written by Ahmed Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress (INC) on de-Nazification during the Allied occupation of Germany.[47] Chalabi, a controversial figure, had argued that employing ex-Ba'athists was akin to "allowing Nazis into the German government immediately after World War II."[48] Bremer implemented these plans over the objections of the State Department and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice. The CPA "disenfranchised more than 30,000 people" nearly overnight. Many of them were armed, laying the groundwork for the instability that followed.[49]

For reasons likely owing to rudimentary historical knowledge exacerbated by politically motivated mis-remembering, de-Ba'athification was in fact far more radical than anything that had been attempted in post-war Germany and Japan; thus, the instability that followed should not have been surprising. As legal scholar Eric Posner noted, in post-war Germany, only "the worst Nazis were punished," while far more were "given amnesty and went to work on reconstruction."

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[46] *Ibid.*, 191-192.
[47] Rajiv Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life in the Emerald City: Inside Iraq's Green Zone* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 68-73.
[48] Quoted in Eric Posner, "Bring Back the Baathists," *New York Times*, 28 April 2004, A21.
[49] Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra II*, 479; Chandrasekaran, *Imperial Life*, 68-73.

In Japan, "transitional justice was even more perfunctory," symbolized by the United States'
decision to retain Hirohito as emperor. This pattern of transitional justice—of punishing only the
worst transgressors while giving amnesty to the vast majority of individuals bearing lesser
responsibility for the crimes of the ousted regime—had been employed many times since. Only
belatedly did Bremer appear to learn these lessons as he began to reverse the blacklisting of low-
level ex-Ba'athists.[50]

Challenging the analogy

Even prior to the invasion, when the cases of post-war Germany and Japan were invoked
to support the proposition that democracy could be seamlessly transferred to Iraq, scholars began
publicly disputing the applicability of these analogies. Scholars debunked the basic applicability
of the Germany and Japan models to Iraq and even challenged popular memory regarding those
occupations. Military historian Douglas Porch, writing in the *National Interest*, critiqued the
"silvery haze" by which these occupations are now remembered and argued that the United
States would face in Iraq many of the same obstacles faced by Douglas MacArthur and Lucius
Clay in Japan and Germany, respectively, but not benefit from any of the conditions that
ultimately enabled these countries to be successful cases of nation building.[51]

John Dower, a scholar of Japanese history at MIT, disputed the transferability of the
lessons of Japan to Iraq in a much-discussed piece in the *Boston Review*. First and foremost, he
argued, the U.S. occupation of Japan benefited from "virtually unquestioned *legitimacy*—moral
as well as legal—in the eyes of not merely the victors but all of Japan's Asian neighbors and
most Japanese themselves." Japan was conducive to democratic nation building, Dower argues,

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[50] Posner, "Bring Back the Baathists," A21.
[51] Douglas Porch, "Occupational Hazards: Myths of 1945 and U.S. Iraq Policy," *The National Interest* 72 (Summer 2003), 35-47.

for a variety of reasons—ideological, strategic, and logistical—lying with both the Japanese and the United States. These factors, he continued, were absent in the case of Iraq.[52] Political scientist Eva Bellin raised similar critiques of the applicability of the lessons of Germany and Japan to Iraq. She also raised the question of case selection bias, which is to say the questionable practice of overlooking other potential nation building cases that would give cause for caution.[53]

Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies called into question the assumption that the U.S. would be "perceived [by Iraqis] as liberators" by challenging the applicability of the Germany and Japan models before Congress. In February, 2003, he testified:

> A little self-honesty on our past mistakes in nation building and occupation would help; especially when we perpetuate the myth we did so splendidly in Germany and Japan. Things eventually worked out in Germany and Japan because we enforced minimum change and took advantage of existing institutions. We only adopted this approach under duress, however, and because the Cold War forced us to reverse many of our initial plans and policies. Economic recovery took five years. For the first year, people died for lack of medical attention, starved, and suffered. We could get away with because most of the world was suffering and because of the legacy of anger towards Germany and Japan coming out of the war. We cannot possibly expect such tolerance today.[54]

Cordesman suggested that lessons from Lebanon ("hero to enemy in less than a year") and "Bosnia/Kosovo" ("where internal divisions leave no options other than stay and police or leave and watch civil conflict emerge") might be more applicable to the impending invasion of Iraq. He emphasized that the certitude that events would unfold as they did in Germany and Japan was misplaced; that it belied a fundamental uncertainty in that the U.S. could not know just how it

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[52] John W. Dower, "A Warning from History: Don't Expect Democracy in Iraq," *Boston Review*, February/March 2003, available http://www.bostonreview.net/BR28.1/dower.html. See also John W. Dower, "Lessons from Japan About War's Aftermath," *New York Times*, 27 October 2002, WIR13; David Wallis, "Occupation Preoccupation," *The New York Times Magazine*, 30 March 2003, 9.
[53] See, e.g., Eva Bellin, "The Iraqi Intervention and Democracy in Comparative Historical Perspective," *Political Science Quarterly* 119 (2004/2005), 595-608.
[54] Anthony H. Cordesman, Prepared testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 11 February 2003, LexisNexis Academic.

would be greeted in Iraq.[55] Despite the public venues in which these scholarly rebuttals were placed, they do not seem to have altered the subsequent rhetoric coming from the Bush administration. Whether or not they had any impact on the administration's private deliberations remains for the time being a "known unknown."

Lingering questions about Iraq

Anecdotal evidence and the Bush administration's own rhetoric suggests that the post-World War II analogies of nation building were very much on the minds of Bush administration officials, including Feith, Bremer, and Rice.[56] The extent to which members of the Bush administration actually were influenced by these analogies in shaping both their expectations and practice remains an open question. Perhaps the analogy of the reconstruction of Germany and Japan really was little more than a cynical means of *ex post facto* policy advocacy and justification in the spirit of the Bush White House's impressive monopoly on message control. The reception of the RAND manual and prioritization of de-Ba'athification, however, suggests that the analogy did tangibly influence policy—possibly the very trajectory of the occupation. As materials from the Bush administration are opened to researchers in the decades to come, it will remain to be seen just how ubiquitous these analogies were within White House and Pentagon deliberations, to what extent officials within the administration dissented from these analogies, how these dissensions were met by the president and other top officials, and lastly, just what were the analogies' impacts on the preparation for and conduct of the war in Iraq and subsequent occupation.

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[55] *Ibid.*
[56] On the analogy's influence on Rice, see Packer, *The Assassin's Gate*, 385.

Directions for further research

While the war in Iraq provides an interesting empirical case with direct policy consequences, this study has also raised a number of theoretical questions that remain to be explored. The first is to investigate how much weight we should attach to reasoning by historical analogy. If there is variation across cases, under what conditions are policies more likely to be affected by historical analogizing? Are these conditions tied to the nature of the individuals or the group making decisions, or are there other factors that matter?

The literature on the role of historical analogies would benefit by scholars refining the arguments proffered by Houghton and MacMillan on the political motivations underlying analogy choice. Just how prevalent are these cases? Scholars may also wish to investigate if and how theories that privilege political motivations might be profitably integrated with those, such as Khong's, that privilege cognitive mechanisms.

Another open question concerns which individuals are most likely to use analogies poorly. I would hypothesize that those policymakers who have the least knowledge of or experience with a given region are more likely to resort to analogical reasoning, and to do so based on superficial rather than structural commonalities. We should expect those with greater knowledge and experience specific to the case at hand to rely less on analogies as a source of diagnosis, inference, and prescription, and that when they do use analogies, they do so with nuance and a proverbial grain of salt. In the case of the Alliance for Progress, Goodwin was one of the major propagators of the Marshall Plan analogy. He was given the Latin America portfolio in the West Wing despite having minimal knowledge of Latin America prior to joining the Kennedy administration.[57] By contrast, Teodoro Moscoso had perhaps the greatest administrative

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[57] See, e.g., Gordon, Oral History, 55A.

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and diplomatic experience with regard to Latin America of the figures I have looked into. He spoke of the Alliance in terms quite distinct from those of "mere" economic and technical assistance suggested by the Marshall Plan. In the case of Iraq, meanwhile, it is notable how isolated the upper echelons of decision makers were from State Department Arabists; one wonders if outcomes might have been different had the regional experts not been marginalized.[58] As the data I gathered on the Alliance for Progress was insufficient to test this hypothesis, it remains a potential puzzle for future research.

Policy prescriptions

Consistent with James Bryce's adage that "the chief practical use of history is to deliver us from plausible historical analogies,"[59] May suggests that more prudential policy making might occur if historians are included in policy deliberations.[60] May revisited the subject with political scientist and presidential adviser Richard E. Neustadt just over a decade later. They propose a methodology for presidential aides to cull potential analogies, having them distinguish "the *Known* from the *Presumed*," and, taking proposed analogies into account, distinguishing "the *Likeness* from the *Difference*." They argue that "putting [analogies] on the table" should spur discussion in which individuals interrogate the applicability of various analogies. Thus policy makers will not be held captive by the most "allur[ing]" analogies, but may instead engage in a more prudential decision making process.[61] Neustadt and May acknowledge the inevitability of historical analogies in decision making, but suggest that "through thorough and meticulous analysis, decision-makers and their aides should be better equipped to ferret out fallacious

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[58] See, e.g., Stephen Glain, "Freeze-Out of the Arabists," *The Nation*, 14 October 2004, available http://www.thenation.com/article/freeze-out-arabists.
[59] Quoted in Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies*, 243.
[60] May, *"Lessons" of the Past*, 178.
[61] Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, *Thinking in Time: The Uses of History for Decision-Makers* (New York: Free Press, 1986), 34-48, 273-283.

analogies and perhaps even propose better ones."[62] Khong notes: "Neustadt and May are modest about the potential returns of their recommendations, but they argue convincingly that such marginal improvements are worth seeking."[63]

As Khong's account draws heavily on immutable features of human cognition, he consequently takes a more pessimistic view with regard to the possibility of improving the use of historical analogies in decision making. Drawing on schema theory and particularly the perseverance effect, he notes: "policymakers treat analogy-consistent information with kid gloves while information inconsistent with their preferred analogy is either ignored or mauled." Those dissenters who challenge the applicability of predominant analogies or who propose counter-analogies "will have difficulty convincing other policymakers to transcend their preferred analogies or the dominant analogies of their time."[64] When schema are so deeply entrenched, he suggests, analogies serve as cognitive blinders and are not easily relinquished, even in the face of compelling arguments against them. As human mechanisms of cognition are static, for Khong, the prospects of avoiding fallacious analogies in decision making are far more grim than Neustadt and May would suggest.

Houghton, whose account essentially supplements Khong's cognitive approach with greater attention to political interests and contexts, does not devote any space to the question to prescriptions for more prudential decision making. He laments the "paradox of analogical reasoning," which is that "such reasoning is both essential in politics *and* inherently dangerous."[65] In his account, historical analogies function due to a combination of cognitive needs and political interests. Politicians in foreign policy situations, unlike, for example,

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[62] Khong, *Analogies at War*, 255.
[63] *Ibid.*, 255-256.
[64] *Ibid.*, 257.
[65] Houghton, *US Foreign Policy and the Iran Hostage Crisis*, 220.

undergraduates participating in psychological studies, have tremendous vested interests at stake in the outcomes of any process of analogical reasoning. In Houghton's account, then, we should expect politicians to be at least as resistant to challenges to a chosen analogy than even Khong would suggest.[66]

My own view is cautiously optimistic. All things being equal, it is better for policymakers to be aware of the tendency to analogize, and to be made conscious of the process as they engage in it. As Neustadt and May suggest, aides should unpack analogies as they are raised and interrogate their strengths and weaknesses. Yet for the inherent cognitive and political features of reasoning by historical analogy raised by Khong and Houghton, I am doubtful that such practices, even if they were habitually practiced by decision makers and their aides, would be of more than marginal use in advancing more prudential decision-making.

When policy makers use analogies in advocating for their desired foreign policies, vigorous public debate, all things being equal, should be beneficial—but again, one would imagine that at best the effect would be marginal. Public discourse should include not just the appropriateness—i.e. the structural similarities—of a given historical analogy to the case at hand, but also, whether the presumptive lessons from the analogy are valid ones, or the only ones.

The news media should consider its role in this process. Arthur Brisbane, the *New York Times'* ombudsman, recently provoked a debate about whether journalists have a responsibility to "fact check" the campaign rhetoric of political candidates. The debate centered on whether the media should "correct falsehood" when candidates make erroneous factual claims or "just balance it."[67] James Fallows, for one, argues for the former: "If the reporter doesn't do that, he or

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[66] Houghton, "The Role of Analogical Reasoning," 551-552.
[67] Arthur S. Brisbane, "Keeping Them Honest," *New York Times*, 21 January 2012, available http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/22/opinion/sunday/keeping-them-honest.html.

she implicitly becomes part of a disinformation system that treats all statements as equally plausible claims and gives the reader help in sorting them out."[68]

This debate should be extended to political rhetoric more broadly, in which case historical analogies might fall into the mix. An objective reporter might understandably be loathe to weigh in on whether a given analogy is "good" or "bad," which is to say whether or not the lessons drawn from history are valid and applicable. Such reporting would verge on editorializing. Further, most historical analogies are neither nearly perfect fits nor blatantly preposterous or self-serving; rather, their applicability is generally ambiguous and contestable. Often, without the benefit of hindsight, "distinguishing between structural and superficial commonalities is…exceptionally difficult."[69] Though reporters need not call political figures on "bad" analogies, they might nevertheless bring attention to analogies as they are invoked and, perhaps turning to professional historians for assistance, unpack them and juxtapose their component elements with the facts as they relate to current events. Reporters might also note which individuals are propagating the analogy and what their interests are. Readers would be left to draw their own conclusions.

Standard marketplace of ideas theory would support the contention that all things being equal, greater awareness and discourse would refute "bad" analogies over time. The standard view asserts that "the marketplace of ideas helps to weed out unfounded, mendacious, or self-serving foreign policy arguments because their proponents cannot avoid wide-ranging debate in which their reasoning and evidence are subject to public scrutiny."[70] In this conventional view:

> Political elites have strong incentives to tell the truth because publics have strong preferences for truth over falsehood and because the media provide a free marketplace that allows the public to

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[68] Quoted in *Ibid.*
[69] Houghton, *US Foreign Policy and the Iran Hostage Crisis*, 222.
[70] Chaim Kaufmann, "Threat Inflation and the Fialure of the Marketplace of Ideas," *International Security* 29 (2004), 5.

test claims against one another. The result is that over time, the public identifies and supports truth and good ideas over falsehoods and bad ideas. As Mill wrote, "Wrong opinions and practices gradually yield to fact and argument..." In this view, the invisible hand of the market guides the public toward truth and honest public debate about the conditions of the day, with sound policy resulting from the interplay of ideas and argument.[71]

If we posit that mature democracies do act as properly functioning marketplaces in the realm of ideas, this still would not obviate the problem: the theory holds that distortions are only corrected in the long-term.[72] By contrast, critical foreign policy decisions are debated, if at all, in very short windows of time. Further, recent research has brought attention to various sorts of distortions in the proverbial marketplace, calling into question the assumption that mature democracies serve as well-functioning marketplaces of ideas.[73]

Shifting focus from public discourse to decision making elites, Khong notes: "pointing out to policymakers the nonparallels between their favorite analogue and the actual situation is unlikely to erode their faith in the analogy."[74] As has been argued in previous chapters, such clinging is likely due to a combination of cognitive needs and political motivations. Thus, while increased discourse may be unlikely to encourage worse use of historical analogies among policy makers, it also seems unlikely that in most cases it would result in substantially improved outcomes.

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[71] A. Trevor Thrall, "A Bear in the Woods? Threat Framing and the Marketplace of Values," *Security Studies* 16 (2007), 454-455.

[72] However, for a contrary perspective—i.e., that markets may not correct even over the long term—see Kelly M. Greenhill, "Whispers of War, Mongers of Fear: Origins of Threat Perception and Proliferation" (working title, ms in progress, 2012), ch. 1, pp. 7-15.

[73] For an account laying out certain conditions under which the marketplace of ideas is vulnerable to distortion, see Kaufmann, "Threat Inflation." For an alternative account arguing that the proverbial marketplace is inherently imperfect, see Greenhill, *ibid.*.

[74] Khong, *Analogies at War*, 39.