

A COMPARISON OF THE EFFECTS ON PUBLIC OPINION OF
PERSUASIVE RHETORIC UTILIZED IN SELECTED
PRESIDENTIAL WAR CRISIS ADDRESSES

by

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL

Some of the speech of international diplomacy is intended to prevent wars; in a sense the traditional view is that the job of a diplomat ends where the job of the general begins. Some diplomatic speech is intended to lay a basis for starting a war--to mobilize public opinion for an approaching conflict.¹

The above statement, expressed by Robert T. Oliver in his book, Culture and Communication, is representative of much of what this thesis is all about. When the top diplomat of our country, the President, chooses to make a speech concerning a war crisis, he does so with one principal purpose in mind: to sway opinion (and where necessary, to prompt action) in the direction he advocates.

If the intent of the speech is to prevent a war, the principal audience consists of those individuals of the adversary nation(s) who are influential in the war decision-making process. If the intent of the speech is either to prepare for war or to escalate an existing one, the principal audience is those individuals or groups who have the capability to accomplish the desired objectives--to

¹Robert T. Oliver, Culture and Communication (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1962), p. 3.

pass legislation, to increase production, etc. In either case, there is one other element of the audience that an American President cannot afford to disregard: the American public. One reason that it cannot be overlooked is that in any war crisis the President, as Commander in Chief, has a responsibility to keep the people informed. The other reason is that, regardless of the nature of the crisis, the public has a role to play.

In a situation where war is imminent but not desired, the President's hope is that the public will present a united front of opinion determined to back him in any course of action he may deem appropriate. Although this alone is usually not the determining factor in whether or not our leaders, or those of an opposing nation, decide to go to war, it is something that they must consider. For example, if the American public had not supported President John F. Kennedy during the early days of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the actions that he and Soviet Chairman Nikita Krushchev took might have been different. An even more current example is the role of public opinion in the Vietnam War. According to North Vietnamese guerrilla warfare doctrine, an insurgency can be brought to a successful conclusion only after the majority of the people of the supporting power (in this case, the United States) are no longer in favor of prosecuting the war any further. In light of the serious division of opinion in our country

about the war, if the North Vietnamese had not believed the psychological objective obtainable, it is doubtful that they would have resisted a negotiated settlement for so long. Similarly, if President Richard M. Nixon had not had the support of the "silent majority," it is also doubtful that he would have kept his negotiating terms as rigid as he did for so long a period of time.

In a situation where the intent of a speech is to lay the basis for starting or escalating a war, the role of the public is larger for it is they who eventually must make the necessary sacrifices---to work harder and longer, to pay higher taxes, to do the actual fighting, etc. Another important function of the public in this situation is to apply pressure on their Congressional representatives. The Congress is the governmental body that adopts resolutions and passes laws which make wars "legal" and appropriates funds to start wars and keep them going. If Congressmen want to keep their job, they vote for such measures as their constituents indicate.

Realizing this "power of the people," having an interest in persuasion, and being an officer in the Army are the three principal factors which first caused this writer to become interested in the relative effect on public opinion of the rhetoric utilized by a President of the United States in a time of war crisis. A belief commonly held on this matter is that in such a situation the

President can always count on the backing of the people. But is this really so? This author was unable to uncover in his research any studies which supported this conclusion.

Of importance to an understanding of the issue is the recognition that a war crisis represents a special kind of situation. As defined in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, a crisis is "the decisive moment; turning point; . . . a crucial time."² Since the war crises to be considered in this thesis are international in nature, a somewhat more useful definition is that offered by Oran R. Young in his book, The Intermediaries: Third Parties in International Crisis:

An international crisis, then, is a set of rapidly unfolding events which raises the impact of destabilizing forces in the general international system or any of its subsystems substantially above "normal" (i.e., average) levels and increases the likelihood of violence occurring in the system.³

Although these definitions are adequate for general conversation, they still lack sufficient substance for use as an operational definition, especially in the sense of how a war crisis affects rhetoric at the Presidential level. For this, a more useful approach is to review the

²John P. Bethel (ed.), Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (6th ed.; Springfield: G. & C. Merriam Company, 1961), p. 179.

³Oran R. Young, The Intermediaries: Third Parties in International Crisis (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 10.

characteristics of crisis in light of these effects on decision-making. Based on research done at the United States Army's Command and General Staff College, these characteristics are as follows:

(1) The potential or actual event(s) that precipitated the crisis must have come as a relative surprise to the decision-making body.

(2) To qualify as an international crisis, the potential or actual event(s) must involve two or more nations.

(3) At least one of the nations involved must perceive a real or potential threat to its national security (or national interests).⁴

(4) Relatively little time is available for a decision to be made.

(5) The decision must usually be made with a less-than-desired amount of information available; i.e., a degree of uncertainty is involved.⁵

The seriousness of the situation, the degree of uncertainty involved, and the lack of direct contact with

⁴For an excellent discussion of national security/interests/goals from a power aspect, consult the following source: Hans J. Morgenthau, Dilemmas of Politics (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 54-87.

⁵Ralph W. Broman, "Development of United States Strategy," lesson plan for subject R2526/2, U. S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, October, 1971, pp. 34-41 (mimeographed).

decision-makers during a war crisis also place emotional pressures on the public. The two most common emotions evoked are fear and a general feeling of helplessness. The usual result is that the public becomes more susceptible to persuasion. Of course, the degree to which they become more susceptible depends on a number of factors such as the psychological effect of historical events leading up to and precipitating the crisis, the nature of the crisis, opinions they held prior to the crisis, and the credibility of the speaker.

NATURE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this thesis is to answer the question, "How has the persuasive rhetoric utilized by a President of the United States in a time of war crisis affected public opinion?" Based on the results of preliminary research, the following were accepted as working hypotheses: (1) providing the rhetoric employed by the President is appropriate to the situation,⁶ his public support will increase over that prior to the crisis; and (2) the nature of the crisis and the mood of the nation at the time of the crisis are major determinants of the amount of increased public support the President will receive for his decision.

⁶See pages 9-12 for a discussion of the method of analysis used to determine whether or not a speech is "fitting."

Since it is not possible to "schedule" a war crisis for research purposes, the historical approach was selected as the method of research for this thesis. This approach also provides the advantage of being able to evaluate a number of war crises, thus increasing the probability that the conclusions reached will be more generalizable. With this in mind, four speeches have been selected for analysis. Each speech selected was made by a different President and each war crisis considered contains significant contextual differences. The following chart highlights these differences:

<u>President Making Address</u>	<u>International Crisis Prompting Speech</u>	<u>Context of Crisis</u>
Franklin D. Roosevelt	Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor	Involved a deliberate and overt attack on U. S. territory; perceived threat to national security extremely high. Resulted in war.
John F. Kennedy	Cuban Missile Crisis	Did not involve an overt attack on any nation; perceived threat to national security extremely high; military action by U. S. and subsequent response by enemy resulted in dissolution of threat without resort to war.
Lyndon B. Johnson	Tonkin Gulf Incident	Involved a direct attack by an enemy on American ships and personnel at sea; degree of threat to national security not clear; represented an escalation of an existing conflict.
Richard M. Nixon	Mining of Haiphong Harbor	Crisis precipitated by U. S.; was an overt military action representing an escalation of an

existing war; public support for war prior to and immediately after crisis not high.

The search for information of relevance to this thesis was focused in five general areas: (1) war crisis theory; (2) historical events leading up to and precipitating the crises; (3) details of the crises; (4) content of the war crisis addresses; and (5) public opinion prior to and following the crises. Information concerning war crisis theory, a compilation of which is included in this chapter, was obtained from a U. S. Army Command and Staff College paper and from source books on that subject. Historical events relating to and details of the crises were located in newspapers, periodicals, and government documents published around the time of the crisis. Other helpful sources were books relating to the individual crises; however, the more recent the crisis, the fewer such sources are available. To increase the probability that the war crisis addresses analyzed were "as-delivered," copies from a minimum of two independent sources were obtained and compared to each other. In each case, the recording transcription as published in The New York Times was utilized. The most difficult research task was locating useful information relating to public opinion. One of the most profitable sources for such information was a three-volume set of statistics compiled by the American Institute of Public Opinion. These books give the results of all Gallup

surveys taken between 1935 and 1971. Fortune magazine, other periodicals, The New York Times, and personal correspondence with Louis Harris and Associates were also of benefit.

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS THEORY

The means chosen to determine if the speeches treated in this thesis are appropriate to the situation is the theory of rhetorical analysis advanced by Lloyd Bitzer. His theory proposes that all rhetoric is situational. By this he means that rhetorical discourse constitutes a response to the existence of a situation which invites discourse; if such a situation does not exist, the discourse cannot then be classified as rhetorical. As related to this thesis, Bitzer would maintain that each of the speeches (the discourse) was formulated as a response to an existing war crisis (the situation) and that if the war crises did not exist, the speeches would then be meaningless.

A more complete comprehension of this theory necessitates an understanding of what Bitzer means by "rhetorical situation." He defines this as being:

. . . a complex of persons, events, objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the situation, can so

constrain human decision or action as to bring about the significant modification of the exigence.⁷

Again relating to this thesis, the situation is the complex of everyone, everything, every emotion, and every event involved in the war crisis which, when combined, present an actual or potential exigence. If the war crisis situation is such that discourse (e.g., a Presidential speech) when introduced, can affect human decision or action so as to significantly modify the exigence (e.g., to reduce world tension), the situation is then rhetorical.

All of the war crises considered in this study are rhetorical situations. How then can they be analyzed to see if the Presidential addresses constitute a "fitting response"? To arrive at this end involves an examination of the five constituents of a rhetorical situation. Three of these, exigence, constraints, and audience, are already present before the speech is introduced. The other two constituents are the discourse itself and the orator.⁸

Any exigence, according to Bitzer, is "an imperfection marked by urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be."⁹ An exigence is rhetorical when it can be

⁷Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, Vol. I, No. 1 (January, 1968), p. 6.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., pp. 6-7.

changed in a positive direction by discourse. As will become evident in the chapters to follow, the various Presidents responded to what they perceived to be the rhetorical exigence. Had they believed that nothing could be accomplished by their speeches, they would not have chosen to use a portion of the small amount of time that was available for speechmaking.

The second constituent is the audience. When considering this particular constituent, it is important to identify who, among all those to gain access to the speech, are capable of being influenced by the discourse and who also have the power to mediate change. This body of people is called the rhetorical audience.¹⁰ It is necessary to recognize that the rhetorical audience in a war crisis situation, depending on the type of change desired, can consist of individuals (e.g., the Soviet Chairman), power groups (e.g., Congress and the press), and/or large bodies of people (e.g., the "silent majority"). "Mr. Average Citizen," when considered as an individual, is not part of the rhetorical audience; however, he becomes a part if he is a member of a larger body of people who can be influenced and who possess the power to mediate change.

The third constituent, constraints, consists of "persons, events, objects, and relations which are parts

¹⁰Ibid., p. 8.

of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence." Included are sources such as beliefs, attitudes, motives, documents, images, etc.¹¹ When considering constraints, it should be remembered that they consist not only of that which limits or restrains decision and action; they also consist of that which forces or compels decision and action.

The function of the final two constituents of a rhetorical situation is explained by Bitzer as follows:

. . . when the orator enters the situation, his discourse not only harnesses constraints given by situation but provides additional important constraints-- for example his personal character, his logical proofs, and his style.¹²

Returning to the question of what constitutes a "fitting response," the answer which can now be given is that it is one which, by itself or combined with action: (1) contains that which is necessary to modify the exigence; (2) addresses that part of the audience which can be influenced and mediate change; and (3) takes into account the constraints present, including those imposed by the orator and the speech itself. In short, it is one that is appropriate to the particular situation in existence.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

ORGANIZATION OF CHAPTERS

Chapters 2-5 cover the selected crises in chronological order. Each of these chapters is identically organized into five sections. Section I gives the details of the crisis under consideration. In order to acquaint the reader with those historical events which had an influence on the rhetorical situation, Section II provides an analysis of history leading up to and precipitating the crisis. Section III is a rhetorical analysis of the Presidential address being considered using Bitzer's five constituents--exigence, constraints, audience, orator, and discourse. The discourse is treated in the discussion of the other four. Section IV consists of this author's conclusions as to whether or not the speech was fitting and the reasons therefor. Section V deals with the effects of each speech on public opinion. The effects of primary interest covered in this section are: (1) whether or not the speech had a significant effect on public opinion; and (2) the amount of shift in public opinion that occurred.

Chapter 6 is a comparison of the effects of the speeches on public opinion and leads to conclusions as to the probable validity of the working hypotheses.

CHAPTER 2

THE PEARL HARBOR CRISIS

THE CRISIS

Although Americans were unaware of it at the time, the story of the attack on Pearl Harbor began at 6:00 a.m. (11:00 a.m. Washington, D. C. time) on Sunday, December 7, 1941. At that hour 184 planes of the Japanese striking force took off from their carriers and set course for their objective, 275 miles to the south.¹ At 6:45 a.m., the first shots of the war were fired when the U. S. destroyer Ward, on patrol off the island of Oahu, spotted the conning tower of a submarine where none was supposed to be and subsequently destroyed it. The Ward immediately radioed its report to its headquarters at Pearl Harbor. Because of frequent false alarms in the past, however, the message did not serve to put the American fleet or the naval base on full alert.²

At 7:02 a.m., two Army privates manning a radar station off the northern tip of Oahu spotted a huge

¹Charles Bateson, The War with Japan (London: The Cresset Press, 1968), p. 22.

²Roberta Wohlstetter, Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962), pp. 16-17.

formation of aircraft approaching and telephoned a report of the sighting to the Army Information Center at Fort Shafter. The Army Air Corps lieutenant on duty dismissed the report as insignificant, guessing the aircraft to be friendly.³

The Japanese commenced their attack on the island at 7:55 a.m. Protected by fighter aircraft, torpedo bombers attacked the ships in the harbor and dive bombers concentrated on U. S. military planes lined up on airfields. Other parts of the island, including the town of Wahiawa, were also attacked when the second wave, consisting of 169 aircraft, arrived on station. When the raid terminated (approximately 10:00 a.m.), it was evident that the attack was a disaster for the Americans: 2,403 persons were dead (2,335 military, 68 civilians) and more than 1,000 were wounded (1,143 military, 35 civilians); the Army and Navy lost 188 of their 476 aircraft; and 19 American warships were hit, including every one of the eight battleships in the Pacific fleet.⁴

Two and a half hours after the attack on Oahu, Emperor Hirohito issued a proclamation to his people which

³Ibid., pp. 11-12.

⁴Henry B. Parkes and Vincent P. Carosso, Recent America: A History (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1963), p. 187. Note: All but two battleships were later salvaged, repaired, and returned to service.

began with the following words:

We, by grace of Heaven, Emperor of Japan and seated on the throne of a line unbroken for ages eternal, enjoin upon thee, our loyal and brave subjects. We hereby declare war upon⁵ the United States of America and the British Empire.

The American administration and the public had suspected that war with Japan was imminent, but few persons believed that the Japanese would be daring enough to attack a United States territory. When the news of Pearl Harbor arrived, their reaction was one of stunned surprise followed quickly by anger. Once he was able to gain confirmation of the attack, the President began to take action. The armed forces were placed on full alert. A meeting of the War Council was convened that afternoon, and sessions with the Cabinet and congressional leaders were held that evening. News censorship was quickly imposed. The Federal Bureau of Investigation was ordered to begin a roundup of Japanese nationals, in part for perceived reasons of national security and partly for their own protection.

At 12:30 p.m. on December 8, President Roosevelt addressed the members of Congress, the Supreme Court, and the Cabinet, all of whom were assembled in the House of Representatives. Six minutes later he terminated his speech with the following statement:

⁵Unofficial translation, The New York Times, December 8, 1941, p. 2, cols. 2-4.

I ask that the Congress declare that since the unprovoked and dastardly attack by Japan on Sunday, December 7, a state of war has existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire.⁶

The rapid action and display of unity that followed was a reflection of the mood of the public at the time. The joint session was dissolved at 12:40 p.m. A resolution of war was adopted unanimously by the Senate at 1:00 p.m. The House of Representatives adopted it at 1:10 p.m. with a vote of 388 to 1. The resolution was then drafted in formal terms and signed by the President at 4:10 p.m.⁷

Meanwhile, additional reports of Japan's offensive continued to pour in. By the time that December 8 drew to a close the Japanese had, in addition to raiding Pearl Harbor:

-Seized control of Thailand and the waterfront of Shanghai, and captured approximately 200 U. S. Marines stationed in Peiping and Tientsin, China.

-Attacked by air, Manila, Singapore, Penang, Guam, Midway and Wake Islands, and the Australian mandate of Nauru.

-Landed troops in Hong Kong and northeast Malaya.⁸

⁶Recording transcription, The New York Times, December 9, 1941, p. 6, cols. 2-5.

⁷The New York Times, December 9, 1941, p. 3, col. 5.

⁸"The U. S. at War," Time, December 15, 1941, pp. 20-21; "Blitz Chronology," Newsweek, December 15, 1941, pp. 19-20; Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chronology of the Second World War (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 92-93.

It soon became evident that the attack on Pearl Harbor was an attempt by the Japanese to gain air and naval superiority so that they could seize control of most of the Pacific area.

At 10:00 p.m. on December 9 the President, speaking from the Oval Room of the White House, delivered his address to the American public. With this act the President personally confirmed to the American public and the world that as of December 7, 1942, the United States, after 22 years and 25 days of peace, was once again at war.

ANALYSIS OF HISTORY LEADING UP TO AND PRECIPITATING THE CRISIS

The Situation in Europe

No historical account leading up to the raid on Pearl Harbor is complete without mention of the events which had occurred in Europe. As will be seen later in this discussion, the activities of the other Axis powers, Germany and Italy, had a strong influence on Japan's actions in the Pacific and on United States' policy toward the Japanese.

The Nazi dictatorship was established in 1933 under the leadership of Adolph Hitler. Although in the years that followed Hitler often spoke of a desire for peace, in fact he was busy making preparations for war. His aim was to avenge his country's defeat in World War I and to achieve world domination. In 1935 he announced that Germany

was beginning universal military service. This signalled the beginning of a powerful war machine which would remain in existence for ten years.

In March, 1935, another European dictator, Benito Mussolini, ordered his country into war with Ethiopia. This conflict was concluded within two months, Italy emerging as the victor. Meanwhile, the United States in the fear of being drawn into another war declared itself neutral. Hitler, who was anxious to gain an ally, signed a secret protocol with the Italians in May, 1935. Thus, the original Axis was born.

Hitler began the implementation of his five years of war planning in 1938. In March of that year he gained control of his first foreign territory, Austria, by incorporation. His first overt act of aggression occurred on September 1, 1939--the date commonly recognized as the beginning of the war in Europe--when the forces of the Third Reich began the invasion of Poland. Ten months later, the Nazi dictator had become the virtual master of most of Western Europe. By then he was in control of Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and France.

Prior to this time, those Americans advocating isolationism had public opinion on their side. The horrors of World War I remained strong in the minds of the American people. However, as Hitler next set his sights on the last

remaining power in Western Europe, Great Britain, sympathy swung rapidly to the side of those advocating a policy of intervention. Reinforcement for this line of thinking was provided by the British who resisted bravely and with success a Nazi aerial blitzkrieg on their country in the fall of 1940. When President Roosevelt signed the Lend-Lease bill on March 11, 1941, he had the support of a disturbed and concerned American public. This bill allowed for the extensive supply of war articles to any country whose defense the President deemed vital to the defense of the United States. Its implementation required American merchant vessels to sail into the war zone to supply the British. This action committed the United States to the war in Europe, albeit not yet on an active combat basis.

In May, 1941, fear became reality--an American freighter, the Robin Moor, was sunk by a submarine. On September 4 the U. S. naval destroyer Greer was also attacked by a submarine while enroute to Iceland. President Roosevelt decided the time had come for action. During a fireside chat to the nation one week later, he posed the dilemma thusly:

. . . when you see a rattlesnake poised to strike, you do not wait until he has struck before you crush him. . . let this warning be clear. From now on, if German or Italian vessels of war enter the waters, the protection of which is necessary for American defense, they do so at their own peril.⁹

⁹Ben D. Zevin (ed.), Nothing to Fear: The Selected Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt (New York: Popular Library, 1961), pp. 303-304.

Now the Navy was authorized to shoot first!

Around this same time the Germans were about to encounter their first real difficulty of the war on the ground. Back in late June, 1941, only nine months after signing a nonaggression pact with the Soviet Union, the Germans began an invasion of Russia. Their advance was swift and they were soon to occupy half a million square miles of Russian territory.¹⁰ But as the bitter cold of the fall months began to settle in, Hitler learned that he had made a mistake. He had underestimated both the determination of the Russian people to defend their homeland and the cold weather fighting efficiency of the Soviet armed forces. By November, the German advance was brought to a standstill. By the time that the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor occurred, the German Army had begun to lose ground.

The Situation in the Pacific

The military and political situation on the western flank of the United States was almost as bad. The dangers in the Atlantic area had to be constantly weighed against those appearing in the Pacific. Japan, beset by economic and social problems, undertook a policy of foreign expansion. Her goal was a united "Asia for the Asians."¹¹

¹⁰Parkes and Carosso, Recent America: A History, p. 172.

¹¹Martha B. Hoyle, A World in Flames (New York: Atheneum, 1970), p. 4.

Six years after seizing control of Manchuria in 1931, the Japanese began a full-scale invasion of China. American sympathy lay with the Chinese, and the Roosevelt administration began giving the Chinese limited materiel assistance. It was joined in the support efforts by Britain, France, and Russia. In 1938 the war came to a stalemate with most of Chiang Kai-shek's forces withdrawing to the interior portions of China.

When the war broke out in Europe in 1939, Japan hoped that world attention would be drawn from her activities--and it was. However, the war in Europe did not so preoccupy President Roosevelt that he forgot about Japanese aggression. On January 26, 1940, the United States refused to renew the trade treaty of 1911 between the two nations, thus placing an economic embargo upon Japan. The purpose of this embargo (which did not include fuel oils) was to worsen Japan's economic situation, thereby making it more difficult for her to wage war. Unforeseen by American policymakers, it also had the negative effect of convincing Japan even more that only through a policy of expansionism could she control her own destiny. When the Netherlands fell to the Germans in the spring of 1940, Japan began pressuring the East Indies to sell her oil. When the French capitulated, Japan demanded that French Indochina close supply routes leading to China, grant them air bases, and allow the right of troop passage through Indochina.

Vichy France acceded to those demands. When Great Britain got into serious trouble, the Japanese demanded the closing of the Burma Road, a supply route to China from the west. The United States viewed these moves by Japan with alarm and responded by placing even more items on the embargo list.¹²

By the end of the summer of 1940, Japan had decided that her interests could best be served if she had some allies. Consequently, on September 27, 1940, she signed the Tri-Partite Pact with Germany and Italy. This pact provided that Japan recognize and respect Italy and Germany in the establishment of "a new order in Europe," that Germany and Italy recognize and respect Japan in the establishment of "a new order in Greater East Asia," and that all agree to assist one another with "all political, economic and military means" if any or all were attacked by "a power at present not involved in the European War or in the Chinese-Japanese conflict."¹³ Japan was now the third member of the Axis. From the German point of view the pact was beneficial in that, if the United States ever entered the war, it would be forced to fight in two different theaters. For the Japanese the purpose of the alliance

¹²Ibid., p. 71.

¹³Walter Millis, This Is Pearl (New York: William Morrow, 1947), p. 18.

was to deter the United States from entering the war and to recognize Japan's interests in Greater East Asia. It was a failure in this respect because the pact only served to convince many Americans that the Axis powers were out to take over the world in total disregard of the security and legitimate interests of the United States.¹⁴ By the end of 1940 the possibility of war between Japan and the United States in the near future seemed very real. Noting the same mood in Japan, the American ambassador in Tokyo advised the President in a personal letter, ". . . let us keep our powder dry and be ready--for anything."¹⁵

Until the raid on Pearl Harbor, the principal activity between the Americans and the Japanese in 1941 was one of intense diplomatic negotiations. Between March 4 and December 7 the U. S. Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, and the Japanese Ambassador in Washington, Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura, met with each other about fifty times. The United States' position during these meetings was that Japan must agree to four fundamental principles:

(1) Respect for the territorial integrity and the sovereignty of each and all nations.

¹⁴Henry B. Parkes and Vincent P. Carosso, Recent America: A History, p. 162, citing Cordell Hull to Gaston Henry-Haye, September 11, 1940, in U. S. Department of State, Peace and War: United States Foreign Policy, 1931-1941 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943), p. 568.

¹⁵Millis, This Is Pearl, p. 25.

(2) Support for the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

(3) Support for the principle of equality, including equality of commercial opportunity.

(4) Non-disturbance of the status quo in the Pacific except as the status quo may be altered by peaceful means.¹⁶

In turn, Japan asked that the United States: (1) stop giving support to China; (2) allow Japan to establish a commanding position in the Pacific; and (3) give to Japan certain political and economic concessions.¹⁷

When the Russians became thoroughly occupied with the German invasion in June, 1941, Japan considered that her western flank in China was now relatively secure. She seized upon this advantage to make another move. In late July, Japanese forces completed the occupation of Indochina. In retaliation, President Roosevelt froze all Japanese assets in the United States, closed all American ports to Japanese ships, and added oil to the embargo list. Britain and the Netherlands quickly followed suit. This

¹⁶Written statement handed by President Roosevelt to Japanese Ambassador Nomura on September 3, 1941, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: Japan, 1931-1941, Department of State Publication 2016 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943), Vol. II, pp. 131-133, cited in Paul S. Burtness and Warren U. Ober (eds.), The Puzzle of Pearl Harbor (Evanston: Row Peterson and Company, 1962), p. 27.

¹⁷Hoyle, A World in Flames, p. 97.

action, which severely hampered Japan's economy, was to have far-reaching consequences. It caused a crisis in the Japanese administration in favor of the militarists, and on October 16 the former War Minister, General Hideki Tojo, became the new prime minister.

The new Japanese administration indorsed the course of action decided upon by the Japanese Imperial Conference on September 6--that if agreement was not reached on a new negotiating proposal by early October, war would be declared on the United States. The "new" proposal, which was handed to Washington on August 6, specified that Japan would not advance beyond Indochina and would evacuate Indochina as soon as the incident with China was terminated, providing that the United States: (1) discontinued aid to China, (2) pressured China into making a treaty favorable to Japan, (3) restored free trade with Japan, and (4) recognized Japan's special interests in Indochina.¹⁸

This proposal was not acceptable to the United States, and on November 26 Secretary of State Hull offered a ten-point counterproposal which reiterated all of the American principles. The Japanese now realized that an impasse had been reached. On December 1, 1941, the Japanese Privy Council, meeting in the presence of the Emperor,

¹⁸Paul S. Burtness and Warren U. Ober (eds.), The Puzzle of Pearl Harbor (Evanston: Row Peterson and Company, 1962), pp. 238-239.

authorized the strike on Pearl Harbor.¹⁹ Six days later, Japan and the United States were at war.

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT
ROOSEVELT'S ADDRESS

The Exigence

It is sometimes difficult to pinpoint the exigence in a rhetorical situation because a series of significant events occur within a short time. In this particular instance the exigence clearly stands out--that which prompted President Roosevelt to speak to the nation was the December 7, 1941, attack by the Japanese on Pearl Harbor.

A practice which appears to be common in war crisis speaking is for Presidents to include a statement about the exigence early in the speech. This serves to quickly introduce the audience to the subject of the speech, as well as capturing their interest because of the gravity of the situation. President Roosevelt evidently thought this practice was appropriate in this instance. He began his remarks to the American people with the words, "The sudden criminal attacks perpetrated by the Japanese in the Pacific provide the climax of a decade of international immorality."²⁰

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 242.

²⁰ Zevin, Nothing to Fear: The Selected Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, p. 315; Recording transcription, The New York Times, December 10, 1941, p. 1, cols. 5-6, and p. 4, cols. 2-6. Note: No pertinent differences in the speech, as printed in the above references, exist. From

Contrary to what is sometimes called for, this statement was very general and included almost no details. It did not include the date, the time, or specifics about the location and what occurred. In this case the exigence statement was sufficient because by the time that the address was given (10:00 p.m., December 9), virtually everyone in the United States had heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor and was following events as they were made known in the press and over the radio. In short, it was the major subject of discussion in every home and place of business.

As he continued with his speech, the President did furnish his listeners with a few more details of the incident. For example, he mentioned that "many American soldiers have been killed by enemy action," and that "American ships have been sunk, American airplanes have been destroyed."²¹ The information itself was superfluous; its only purpose was to confirm what the nation had already been told by the mass media: that the attack on Pearl Harbor presented the United States with a very serious situation.

The Constraints

When the purpose of a speech is to convince the people of a nation that they must go to war--especially a

this point forward only the first reference will be cited.

²¹Zevin, Nothing to Fear: The Selected Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, p. 315.

war as all-involving as that which President Roosevelt envisioned--the major rhetorical task facing the speech-maker is to gain such solid public support for the decision that the people are willing to make considerable sacrifices until the advocated goal is achieved. In this regard, the situation facing President Roosevelt was such that he had to: (1) place the blame for the Pearl Harbor incident on the Japanese; (2) represent the threat as coming not only from the Japanese, but also from the other Axis powers; (3) justify to the American public his decision to wage war; and (4) mentally prepare them for the sacrifices that he envisioned to lie ahead.

The first of these tasks--that of placing the blame for the Pearl Harbor incident on the Japanese--was a relatively simple one in that most Americans had already come to this conclusion. Although this author was unable to uncover any public opinion surveys which would support this contention one way or the other, all of the literature consulted indicates that the public as a whole was indignant over the Japanese attack. One of the more colorful descriptions of this was given in Time magazine:

What would the people, the 132,000,000, say in the face of the mightiest event of their time? What they said--tens of thousands of them--was: "Why, the yellow bastards!" Hundreds of thousands of others said the same thing in different ways, with varying degrees of expression.²²

²²"What the People Said," Time, December 15, 1941, p. 17.

In spite of this type of opinion, the President still chose to make the point. When referring to the incident, he used terms such as "the sudden criminal attacks perpetrated by the Japanese" and the "Japanese treachery." To justify the term treachery he pointed out that the attack had been conducted "under the very shadow of the flag of peace borne by their special envoys in our midst."²³

Far more difficult to accomplish was his second task--representing the threat as coming not only from the Japanese, but also from the other Axis powers. Mr. Roosevelt realized that it was only a matter of time before the United States would also be embroiled in an active war with Germany and Italy. Since the nation was already up in arms over the attack on Pearl Harbor, the President recognized this as a unique opportunity to transfer some of the angry emotion to the other Axis powers. To accomplish this he went to great lengths to convince Americans that the raid on Pearl Harbor was just one part of an overall Axis strategy for world domination. He made the first extensive allegation of this after about two minutes of speaking:

The course that Japan has followed over the past ten years in Asia has paralleled the course of Hitler and Mussolini in Europe and Africa. Today it has become far more than a parallel. It is collaboration so well calculated that all the continents of the world, and all the oceans, are now considered by the Axis strategists as one gigantic battlefield.²⁴

²³Zevin, Nothing to Fear: The Selected Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, p. 316.

²⁴Ibid.

The President then proceeded to list those aggressive acts undertaken by the Axis powers from 1931-41 which resulted in their taking control of foreign nations. He ended with the statement, "It is all of one pattern."²⁵ From that point on, he continually linked one or both of the other Axis powers to Japan when referring to the enemy threat. This was done so smoothly that the raid on Pearl Harbor seemed almost incidental to the last three-fourths of the address.

His third task--that of justifying to the American public his decision to commit the nation to war--was also a simple one because by the time that the President addressed the nation, the press had already done most of the work for him. A review of the editorial comments published in the country's major daily newspapers on December 8 reveals that they considered any forthcoming declaration of war a mere formality.²⁶ Even the Republican-oriented, anti-interventionist Chicago Tribune yielded in this time of crisis:

War has been forced on America by an insane clique of Japanese militarists. . . . Thus the thing that we all feared, that so many of us have worked with all our hearts to avert, has happened. That is all that

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶The December 8, 1941, issue of The New York Times (p. 5, cols. 1-2) carries a review of editorial comment from twelve major U. S. newspapers under the heading, "Newspapers Call for Meeting Foe."

counts. . . . All of us, from this day forth, have but one task. That is to strike with all our might to protect and preserve the American freedom that we all hold dear.²⁷

In spite of assists like this, the President knew that the intense emotion which gripped the people at the moment would begin to cool in the near future. Revenge is a sweet thought on a short-term basis; it often loses flavor as time progresses. He therefore assumed the task of supplying rationale that the public could cling to when reason replaced emotion. President Roosevelt's stated goal was "victory, final and complete." The two themes he chose to channel thought in the direction of his goal were: (1) "the enemy is evil and wages war so that he can impose his will on the entire world," and (2) "we are good and wage war only to protect ourselves and to fashion a world in which peace will be assured." These themes are found in various forms throughout the entire speech. He brought the two of them together in the closing moments of his address:

The true goal we seek is far above and beyond the ugly field of battle. When we resort to force, as now we must, we are determined that this force shall be directed toward ultimate good as well as against immediate evil. We Americans are not destroyers-- we are builders.

We are now in the midst of a war, not for conquest, not for vengeance, but for a world in which this Nation,

²⁷The New York Times, December 8, 1941, p. 5, col. 2, citing editorial comment from the Chicago Tribune, December 8, 1941.

and all that this Nation represents, will be safe for our children. We expect to eliminate the danger from Japan, but it would serve us ill if we accomplished that and found that the rest of the world was dominated by Hitler and Mussolini.

We are going to win the war, and we are going to win the peace that follows.²⁸

President Roosevelt devoted a major portion of his address to the accomplishment of the fourth task--preparing the public for the sacrifices that lay ahead. The problem that faced him in this regard was not merely to talk about sacrifice; rather it was to persuade the American people that sacrifice equated to patriotism--that to do any less was simply un-American. He went about this in the following manner:

I was about to add that ahead there lies sacrifice for all of us.

But it is not correct to use that word. The United States does not consider it a sacrifice to do all one can, to give one's best to our Nation, when the Nation is fighting for its existence and its future life. . . . Rather it is a privilege.²⁹

Not yet mentioned is one other major constraint that the President had to deal with in the planning of his speech: for military intelligence reasons he was limited in what he could say. He knew that the people thirsted for information about the military situation throughout the Pacific, but he also realized that many of these same details could also be useful to the enemy. For this reason

²⁸Zevin, Nothing to Fear: The Selected Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt, p. 322.

²⁹Ibid., p. 319.

his comments concerning U. S. military losses were deliberately couched in general terms. Realizing that this problem would persist as long as the war continued, Mr. Roosevelt decided that this was a good time to talk about the issue of censorship. He began by informing his audience that "our free and rapid communication must be greatly restricted in wartime." He went on to explain the difficulty in receiving speedy and accurate reports, but promised the expeditious release of facts, providing their disclosure would not be of intelligence value to the enemy. Anticipating some problems in this regard with the mass media, he addressed them directly. The President acknowledged their right to object if they thought the government was hiding too much from the public, but warned them "in the ethics of patriotism" not to publish unconfirmed reports. In addition, every citizen was asked to practice self-censorship in the interest of "the lives of our soldiers and sailors."³⁰

The Audience

Bitzer states that a rhetorical audience consists only of those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change. Considering the situation as it existed on the evening of December 9, 1941, who was capable of mediating change? The Japanese could by an immediate cessation of all hostilities;

³⁰Ibid., pp. 317-318.

however, the possibility of this occurrence was almost nil.

The other Axis powers could by ceasing their aggressive acts and somehow exerting influence on the Japanese to do the same. This too was an unlikely possibility. Militarily, the Germans and Italians were in a favorable position and the Japanese attack only increased their advantage. Besides, it is doubtful that the Japanese would have paid much attention to them anyway. Other nations could also help the situation by aligning themselves with the United States. However, most of the nations with significant power were already aligned with one side or the other.

The remaining segment of the audience capable of mediating change was the American public. As will be seen in the discussion of other crises in this thesis, especially those where the nation is not yet at war, the role of the American public as a whole is not always critical. But in this instance, both sides had already declared war on each other and were engaged in active combat. Now the role that the public could play was greatly expanded. As previously stated, the purpose of President Roosevelt's address was to better prepare the nation to conduct war. The executive and legislative bodies of the government had already done their part. What was needed now was positive action by the people. Only they could bring the war to a successful conclusion. As the President specified in his speech, it was they who would have to make the sacrifices--

to work harder and longer, to buy bonds, to limit personal profit, to support news censorship, to not spread rumors, to fight the war.

Accordingly, the tone of the remarks and the words used were personalized to appeal to the emotions of the American citizen. Terms such as "we" and "us" were used much more frequently than third-person ones such as "Americans" or "citizens." Citing professions by name--industrialist, wage-earner, farmer, shopkeeper, trainman, doctor--was a tactic employed to indicate that the speech was meant for "Mr. Average American." Overall, the speech was fashioned to appeal to the emotion of patriotism.

As previously noted, the one segment of the American society directly addressed was the staffs of newspapers and radio stations. The President realized that they had a special role to play in wartime communication and that they were especially sensitive to the issues of a free press and free speech.

The above discussion does not imply that the President completely disregarded the fact that other nations would have access to the contents of his remarks. The address, when considered in its entire context, is a statement of the political position of the United States in the conflict. The rhetoric used is that which he wanted our enemies and our allies to hear. To Japan it was intended as a reaffirmation that we were ready to engage them in

active combat. To Germany and Italy it was a warning that we considered them as being in the same camp with the Japanese. And to our allies it represented a renewed pledge of continued support.

The Orator

The American Public's image of Franklin Delano Roosevelt around the time of his speech was very favorable. He was recognized as a good politician and according to a Fortune magazine survey published in October, 1941, the people generally approved of his policies, both domestic and foreign.³¹ In the last Gallup poll taken before he delivered his war address, 73% of the nation approved of the way he was handling his job as President.³² He also had a reputation as a good speaker and was blessed by an ability to relate well with the average American citizen. His "fireside chats," of which this was one, were popular with the people.

As the orator in this rhetorical situation, President Roosevelt had a favorable image with the people. They listened to him and had faith in the wisdom of his policies and actions.

³¹"The Fortune Survey," Fortune, October, 1941, p. 6. In the survey cited, 63.5% of those interviewed approved of his foreign policy and 59.1% approved of his domestic policy.

³²George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971, Vol. I (New York: Random House, 1972), p. 295.

Conclusion

As President Roosevelt began speaking into the microphone on the evening of December 9, 1941, the situation with which he had to contend was a grim one. To the West, the Japanese had inflicted serious damage on the U. S. air and naval fleets in the Pacific, and had gained for the Axis powers a significant military advantage. The military situation throughout the Pacific Theater was bad, but how bad he could not be sure. To the east, the situation was even worse. Although the German forces appeared to be in some trouble in Russia, they still controlled the majority of western Europe and North Africa. On the home front, the United States was not yet ready to enter another World War. Although production had been stepped up for almost a year and a half, the armed forces were not yet equipped with all of the munitions, vehicles, and aircraft they required. Many of our allies were also in need of the same things from the United States. The American Army was but a skeleton force and needed many more men and the time to train them. In short, the nation had to mobilize for war, and fast.

Working in the President's favor was the mood of the nation. The people were tense over the uncertainty of the situation and angry at the Japanese. They wanted to see some action but were not really sure what had to be done. In this regard the situation was ideal. The public was

highly susceptible to influence at the moment--all that was needed was for a leader to step forward.

President Roosevelt assured that role. His speech was designed to prompt them into action--to give them something to do. It capitalized on their patriotic feelings. It described the situation as serious, but one that could be overcome through unified action. And most important, it was fashioned to consider the entire Axis threat and not just that posed by the Japanese. It was a fitting response.

EFFECT OF PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S SPEECH ON PUBLIC OPINION

When attempting to gauge the direction and amount of opinion change resulting from President Roosevelt's war address, it is first necessary to recognize that in this particular crisis the nations involved had been in the forefront of public attention for a considerable time. When Germany invaded Poland in 1939, the news was of such magnitude that the majority of the American people sat up and took notice. Over one-third of the nation wanted to begin supplying substantial aid to the European nations opposing Hitler.³³ By October, 1941, anti-German sentiments had risen to such a height that when asked whether it was more important that the United States keep out of war or that

³³"The Fortune Survey, Fortune, Supplement No. 4, January, 1942. (Unnumbered pages).

Germany be defeated, 68% of those polled were in favor of the latter.³⁴

When the Japanese invaded China in 1937, American sympathies lay primarily with the Chiang Kai-shek government. But except for providing the Chinese with limited material assistance, Americans were not willing to become involved. However, by the time that Japan joined the Axis in 1940, 49.4% of those surveyed were in favor of the United States taking strong measures against Japan.³⁵

Anti-Japanese feelings continued to mount to the point that when asked during an end-October, 1941, survey if the United States should take immediate steps to prevent Japan from becoming more powerful, even at the risk of war, 64% answered yes.³⁶

Comments in the mass media solidly indicate that when Americans first heard of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the common sentiment expressed was that of extreme anger against the Japanese. Of those feeling such an emotion, it appears that the majority were in favor of retaliatory action against the Japanese; however, there are no known

³⁴Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971, p. 304.

³⁵"The Fortune Survey," Fortune, Supplement No. 4, January, 1942. (Unnumbered page.)

³⁶Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971, p. 306.

statistics available to support this contention. What is made clear by the source material is that the threat posed by the other two Axis powers was temporarily forgotten. Everyone's attention and emotions were focused on events in the Pacific.

Concerning the question of the direction of change in public opinion resulting from the December 9 address, available evidence strongly suggests that the American public responded in the direction that the President desired. Regarding the President's decision to enter into active combat against the Japanese, except for the reference to the one dissenting vote in Congress, this author was unable to locate in the source material consulted even a hint of dissent by anyone or any group. As stated in Newsweek, "isolationist senators and representatives, groups and organizations, and isolated isolationists agreed that the war was here, and the thing to do was to fight it, without argument."³⁷

President Roosevelt was also successful in his bid to bring the threat posed by the Axis powers in Europe back into perspective. The results listed below were obtained during two nationwide surveys conducted in the week following the President's address. The people were questioned

³⁷"Americans All," Newsweek, December 15, 1941, p. 21.

as to whether they thought Germany or Japan posed the greatest threat to the United States.

	<u>Fortune Magazine Survey</u> ³⁸ <u>(Dec. 10-17, '41)</u>	<u>Gallup Survey</u> ³⁹ <u>(Dec. 12-17 '41)</u>
Germany	47.5%	64%
Japan	10.2	15
Equal threats	32.3	15
No opinion	10.0	6

The evidence further shows that Americans also responded favorably to the President's call for sacrifice in the time of crisis. Fortune magazine found in the week following Japan's attack that 87.2% of those interviewed were in favor of forbidding defense strikes, 80.2% would support a fifty-hour work week with no overtime pay, and 79.2% agreed that profits should be limited. The conclusion reached by the survey analyst was that "there are very few people who have yet to make a drastic readjustment of their ideas to tune in to the requirements of a wartime economy."⁴⁰

³⁸"The Fortune Survey," Fortune, February, 1942, p. 97.

³⁹Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971, p. 312.

⁴⁰"The Fortune Survey," Fortune, February, 1942, p. 98.

The question of the amount of opinion change that occurred as a result of President Roosevelt's war address is much more difficult to answer for two reasons. First, the organizations conducting public opinion surveys at that time did not ask the same questions (of pertinence to this study) after the crisis that they asked prior to its occurrence. Secondly, the event (the attack on Pearl Harbor) was in itself responsible for an unknown amount of attitude change toward the Japanese. The only indicator as to the amount of opinion change which might have taken place is found in two Gallup polls which posed the question, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way Franklin Roosevelt is handling his job as President." In the first survey, which was conducted from August 7-12, 1941, 73% of those interviewed approved, 20% disapproved, and 7% had no opinion.⁴¹ The corresponding statistics for the second survey, taken from January 1-13, 1942, are 84%, 9% and 7%.⁴² Because of the lengthy time period between the two surveys, as well as the fact that a number of significant events occurred in the interim which could have affected the President's popularity, these statistics are of little help in measuring opinion change resulting from the President's address.

⁴¹Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion, 1935-1971, p. 295.

⁴²*Ibid.*, pp. 319-320.

In summary, it appears that the President was able to persuade the public to move in the direction he desired. In this time of crisis they stood solidly behind his decision to go to war and responded very favorably to the proposals he made. Regarding the amount of opinion change that took place, the evidence is inconclusive. Although this author feels that the amount of change which occurred was significant, no conclusive evidence is available to substantiate the claim.

CHAPTER 3

THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

THE CRISIS

Although the Pearl Harbor Crisis resulted in war and the Cuban Missile Crisis did not, many persons would probably rate the latter as being more serious because it brought the United States and the Soviet Union to the brink of a nuclear war--a type of conflict which many Americans regard as being the end of the world. The Cuban Missile Crisis began on October 15, 1962, when the first hard evidence was obtained of Russian deployment of nuclear missiles into Cuba. It ended on October 28, 1962, when Soviet Chairman Nikita S. Khrushchev agreed to comply with American demands. It became one of the most tension-filled periods in the history of the United States during the twentieth century.

The incident which touched off the crisis was the discovery by U. S. intelligence photograph analysts on the evening of October 15, 1962, of the existence of a Russian nuclear missile site under preparation in Cuba. The photography under inspection had been taken earlier that day by an American U-2 aerial reconnaissance aircraft in a flight over the island. The President was awakened early

the next morning with the news.

At 11:45 a.m. the U. S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) made a formal presentation of the photographs to President John F. Kennedy and a number of high officials.

As reported by the late Robert F. Kennedy, brother to the President and then Attorney General, "a general feeling in the beginning was that some form of action was required."¹ The threat, as perceived by the administration, was that the Soviets were attempting to change the balance of world power in their favor by establishing a first-strike nuclear capability on a land mass only 90 miles from the shores of the United States. As such, it represented a danger to the security of not only the United States, but also to the entire western hemisphere. In addition, Cuba is so situated that it sits astride all the main U. S. shipping lanes from the east and Gulf coasts to the Panama Canal.

From the time of the initial meeting the saga began to rapidly unfold. On October 17 the CIA presented the President with more aerial photographs. These photos showed the existence of additional missile installations with at least 16 and possibly 32 intermediate range ballistic missiles of over a thousand-mile range. The experts advised that the missiles could be in operation within a

¹Robert F. Kennedy, Thirteen Days (New York: The New American Library, Inc., 1969), p. 31.

week. Their estimate was that within a few minutes of the missiles being fired eight million Americans would be dead.²

Adding to the frustration of the President was the now-uncovered deception by the Russians--itself an indication of the seriousness of the situation. In an October 17 meeting at the White House with the President, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko not only repeated Russian claims over the past one and a half months that the military equipment being furnished to Cuba was defensive in nature, but also demanded that the United States stop threatening Cuba.

From the outset two courses of action dominated the discussions of what should be done. The first was the suggestion that the United States invade Cuba and remove the missiles by force. The second involved the initiation of a quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba. This action, necessitating the establishment of a naval blockade around the island, would hopefully force the Soviets to dismantle and withdraw the missiles themselves. If the Russians refused, this was then to be followed by an invasion. The possible repercussions from either action were great and the President wanted to delay his decision as long as he could. In the interim he ordered the military to begin preparing for

²Ibid., pp. 35-36.

either contingency. On the weekend of October 19-21 the military implemented that order: missile crews were placed on maximum alert; six divisions increased their readiness status and large numbers of troops and equipment began to pour into Florida and other portions of the southeastern United States; the U. S. naval base at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba was reinforced; the Navy deployed 180 ships into the Caribbean; elements of the Strategic Air Command dispersed to civilian landing fields around the country; and the B-52 bomber force was ordered into the air fully loaded with nuclear weapons. This military activity quickly alerted the American press and the public that something big was in the offing ³

On Sunday, October 21, the President decided in favor of a blockade, and scheduled his address to the nation for the following evening. Now it was the turn of the Department of State to act. A detailed hour-to-hour schedule was arranged to allow for time to inform our allies, to prepare for the meeting of the Organization of American States, and to ready in written form the legal justification for the actions to be taken. As the time for the President's speech (7 p.m.) neared, the activity became even more intense. After attending a Security Council meeting, the President briefed the members of his cabinet

³Ibid., p. 52.

for the first time, and just prior to his speech met with the leaders of Congress. At 6 p.m., Secretary of State Dean Rusk called in Soviet Ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin and informed him of the measures to be taken. At about the same time State Department emissaries personally informed the leaders of France, West Germany, Great Britain and Canada. Other allied nations were informed by a briefing given to their Washington-based ambassadors. On schedule, at 7 p.m., October 22, President Kennedy began his address to the nation via radio and television channels.

The week that followed was punctuated by a series of events that alternately raised and lowered the hopes of American leaders for peace. October 23 started out with a CIA report that no unusual Russian military activity had been observed anywhere in the world. It ended with a message that the Russians had begun to deploy submarines and other types of ships into the Caribbean.⁴

Tension again heightened the following morning. Aerial photographs taken the previous day showed that the Russians had sped up work on the missile sites and that some would be ready for firing within a few days. Adding to this bad news was a report received shortly after the quarantine went into effect (10 a.m.) that Russian ships

⁴"Showdown--Backdown," Newsweek, November 5, 1962, p. 34; Robert F. Kennedy, Thirteen Days, pp. 58 and 61.

were still progressing on course. Shortly thereafter, two Russian ships, the Gagarin and the Komiles, approached to within a few miles of the U. S.' naval barrier and a Russian submarine moved into position between them. Just as the American aircraft carrier Essex was to signal the submarine either to surface and identify itself or be subjected to a depth charge attack, all Russian ships nearest the barrier either stopped dead in the water or turned around.⁵ A few ships were to continue later on, but these were either Soviet tankers or international cargo ships.

In the days that followed there were almost daily communications between Mr. Khrushchev and the President, but little progress was made. Tensions heightened again on Friday, October 26, when the first vessel was stopped and boarded at 7:24 a.m. This ship was the Marucla, Panamanian-owned, registered from Lebanon, and bound for Cuba under a Soviet charter. No weapons were found and she was allowed to sail on. Meanwhile, aerial photography revealed that work on the missiles was still progressing rapidly and that Soviet Ilyushin-28 bombers were rapidly being uncrated and assembled in Cuba. Preparations for an all-out war continued.

During the evening of the 26th, two messages were received from Mr. Khrushchev. The first took a "soft" line

⁵Robert F. Kennedy, Thirteen Days, pp. 68-71.

agreeing to the President's demands. The second took a harder line, demanding that the United States remove its missiles from Turkey in exchange for the U.S.S.R. removing its missiles from Cuba. By the tone of the remarks, analysts believed the first to be written by Khrushchev himself. The second, although signed by the Soviet Chairman, appeared to be written by his administration. The President despaired that Mr. Khrushchev was rapidly losing control. In a final effort to avert war, a response was sent to the first letter.⁶

The pessimistic mood that prevailed on the morning of Saturday, October 27, was reinforced by the news that a U-2 aircraft had been hit by a surface-to-air missile while flying over Cuba and that the pilot had been killed. A military confrontation was now expected by Tuesday, and possibly as early as Sunday. It was not to come to pass. At approximately 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, October 28, word was received that the Russians had agreed to withdraw the missiles from Cuba. The crisis was over.

ANALYSIS OF HISTORY LEADING UP TO AND PRECIPITATING THE CRISIS

From the time of his inauguration Cuba proved to be a constant source of trouble for President Kennedy. His first real encounter with the Cuban Premier, Fidel Castro,

⁶Ibid., pp. 86-90 and 93-94.

occurred in April, 1961, when the President backed an ill-fated invasion of Cuba by a force of Cuban exiles.

His next major problem with the island came in the midsummer of 1962 when Soviet involvement with Cuba became intense. Under the pretext of bolstering the failing Cuban economy, in July the U.S.S.R. created a special economic commission and began sending great numbers of Soviet "technicians" to that country. By early August reports began to filter out of Cuba that some of the technicians were in fact Soviet military personnel and that much of the shipments consisted of military equipment. American intelligence operations confirmed these reports. The significance of this move by the Russians was overshadowed, however, by the extreme propaganda emanating from the Kremlin over Berlin.

The potential of Cuba being a battleground was again brought into focus on August 30, 1962, when a United States Navy aircraft, flying a training mission 15 miles north of Cuba, was fired upon by two naval vessels believed to be Cuban. In response to a White House statement that any such action in the future would be met with appropriate armed force, the Russians demanded the United States stop threatening Cuba. The scope of Russian involvement with that island became clearer to the American public when on September 2 the Soviet Union announced that in response to Havana's request for assistance, Moscow had agreed to supply

arms to Cuba and to provide technical specialists to train Cuban forces. This time the President felt a stronger response was called for. He began by citing highly reliable intelligence reports of Soviet assistance in the form of anti-aircraft missiles, radar equipment, guided-missile torpedo boats, and approximately 3,500 Soviet military technicians. He then warned that the United States would not tolerate the introduction of offensive weapons of any kind into Cuba. He followed by pointing out that "Were it to be otherwise, the gravest issues would arise."⁷ On September 11, Moscow disclaimed publicly any intention of taking such action.

In the interim the Russian buildup continued at a fast rate. Suspicious that the U.S.S.R. might be thinking of trying to use Cuba to threaten the western hemisphere, President Kennedy decided to issue even a stronger warning. During a September 13 news conference he issued the following caveat to a statement that unilateral military intervention was not yet justified:

But let me make this clear once again: If at any time the Communist buildup in Cuba were to endanger or interfere with our security in any way, including our base at Guantanamo, our passage to the Panama Canal, our missile and space activities at Cape Canaveral, or the lives of American citizens in this country, or if Cuba should ever attempt to export its aggressive purposes by force or the threat of force

⁷The New York Times, September 15, 1962, p. 2, cols. 4-5.

against any nation in this hemisphere, or become an offensive military base of significant activity for the Soviet Union, then this country will do whatever must be done to protect its own security and that of its allies.⁸

Soviet and American relations continued to worsen almost daily. Preparing for the worst, President Kennedy asked for and received from Congress on September 24 authority to call to duty 150,000 reservists. On September 25 Fidel Castro announced that the Soviet Union would build a fishing port in Cuba for its Atlantic trawler fleet. This announcement served to strengthen sentiment for the September 27 congressional resolution which authorized the President to "prevent by whatever means may be necessary, including the use of arms, the Marxist-Leninist regime in Cuba from extending by force or threat of force, its aggressive or subversive activities to any part of this hemisphere."⁹

All of the happenings of the past one and a half months were naturally well covered by the American press. The public soon became embroiled with the situation and began to question the apparent hesitancy of their President to take action. In a Gallup poll conducted between

⁸U. S., President, 1961-63 (Kennedy), "The President's News Conference of September 13, 1962," Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 674.

⁹"House Passes Cuba Resolution, 384-7," Congressional Quarterly, September 28, 1962, p. 1691.

September 20-25, 53% of those questioned advocated that some type of action be taken.¹⁰

On October 4 the White House announced that action was forthcoming. Disturbed by the vast amounts of Communist supplies and equipment being shipped to Cuba on allied bottoms, the plan involved a United States request to all Western nations that they refuse to permit their shipping to engage in such trade. This plan had the additional advantage of putting pressure on Cuba's economy.

The Soviet Union appeared to be unperturbed by these events, and the buildup continued at a rapid pace. The issue finally came to a head when the October 15 aerial photography produced the damning evidence of the presence of offensive weapons in Cuba. Thus, the crisis began.

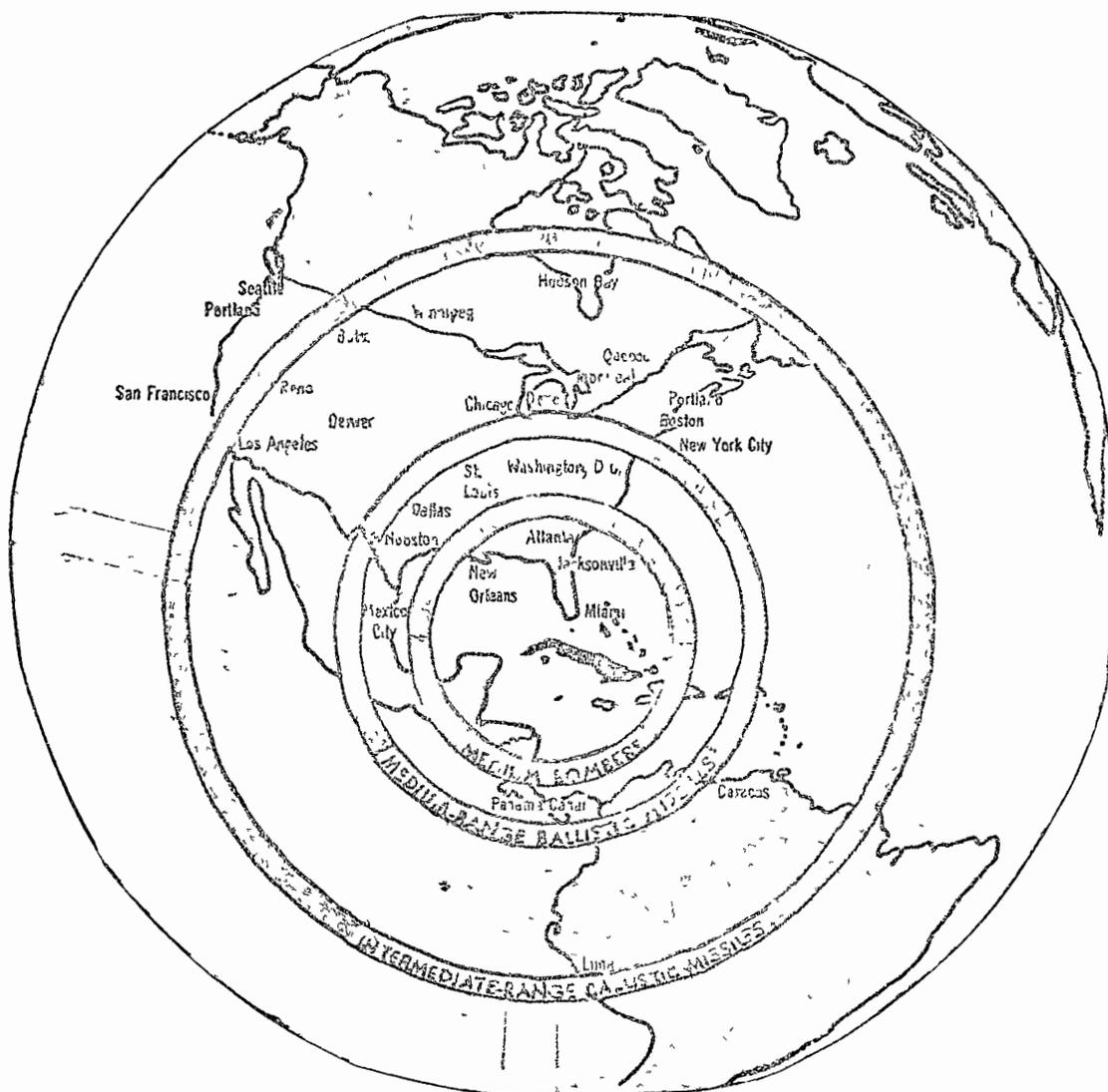
RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S ADDRESS

The Exigence

The exigence which initiated the Cuban Missile Crisis was the perceived threat to the security of the Western Hemisphere caused by the deployment of offensive weapons to Cuba by the Soviet Union. The three types of offensive weapons put into Cuba were Ilyushin-28 jet bombers, medium-range ballistic missiles, and intermediate-

¹⁰George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1971, Vol. III (New York: Random House, 1972), pp. 1786-1787.

range ballistic missiles. The maximum effective range at which each is able to deliver nuclear warheads is 700, 1,000, and 2,000 nautical miles, respectively. The following is a map projection of the threat:¹¹



¹¹When Reds Point Missiles at U.S.--," U. S. News and World Report, November 5, 1962, p. 41.

At 7 p.m. (Eastern Daylight Time) on October 22, 1972, President Kennedy responded to the situation by making a nationwide television and radio address to the American public. Wanting to acquaint his audience as soon as possible with the threat, he included the following statement of the exigence in the first paragraph of his speech:

Within the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series of offensive-missile sites is now in preparation on that imprisoned island. The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear-strike capability against the Western Hemisphere.¹²

Shortly thereafter, he gave more details of the threat, mentioning the existence of both the jet bombers and the missiles. To make the threat easier for his audience to conceptualize, he cited the range of the two types of missiles in both nautical miles and by selected geographical locations.

The Constraints

President Kennedy next turned to the constraints that he had to deal with in the preparation of his speech.

¹²U. S., President, 1961-63 (Kennedy), "Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Soviet Arms Buildup in Cuba. October 22, 1962," Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: John F. Kennedy (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1963), pp. 806-809; "The Threat, the Moves to Meet It--Kennedy's Broadcast on Cuba," U. S. News and World Report, November 5, 1962, p. 108; Transcript of recorded speech, The New York Times, October 23, 1962, p. 18, col. 2. A comparison of the text of the October 22, 1962, address as reported in the above three publications reveals no significant differences. All succeeding footnotes will refer only to the New York Times reference.

With regard to the Russians, his rhetoric had to be so designed as to: (1) force them to remove their offensive weapons from Cuba; (2) discourage them from making a countermove to the blockade (the principal concern being West Berlin); and (3) convince them that the United States really desired peace, but if forced to do so, would go even to the point of nuclear war. In short, he had to leave the Soviets with the clear impression that they had pushed the United States beyond acceptable limits and that they must be the ones to back off.

The most difficult choice facing the President in this regard was the tone in which to address the Russians. He decided upon the use of strong rhetoric. With this in mind the President's first move was to indicate to Chairman Khrushchev that he was especially perturbed over having been deliberately misled about Russian intentions in Cuba. To accomplish this he first quoted the Soviet Union's public statement of September 11, 1962, which was a denial that they had either sent or had any intentions of sending to Cuba armaments and military equipment for offensive purposes. He continued by relating similar statements made personally to him by Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko only four days before the speech. The President then issued his reaction to these statements: "Neither the United States of America nor the world community of nations can tolerate deliberate deception and offensive threats on the part of

any nation, large or small."¹³

Having established his position on this matter, President Kennedy set about dealing directly with the constraints. His announcement of the quarantine to be imposed was the tool with which he hoped to have the offensive weapons dismantled and removed. But how to convince the Soviets that such action was a condition on which the United States would not relent? The President hoped that the inclusion of the following two statements were sufficiently strong to leave no doubt in the minds of the Russian leaders that he was deadly serious:

We will not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of worldwide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our mouth--but neither will we shrink from that risk at any time it may be faced. . . .

That is why this latest Soviet threat--or any other threat which is made either independently or in response to our actions this week--must and will be met with determination. Any hostile move anywhere in the world against the safety and freedom of peoples to whom we are committed--will be met by whatever action is needed.¹⁴

The latter statement served to indicate to the Soviets that the United States was not willing to tolerate a Russian countermove against West Berlin--an action that both the President and the press strongly suspected Mr. Khrushchev might give serious consideration to.

¹³ Transcript of recorded speech, The New York Times, October 23, 1962, p. 18, col. 3.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 18, cols. 5 and 7.

Against this background of threatening language his next task was to allow the Russians room to back out without a complete loss of prestige in the eyes of the rest of the world. For this, the President chose two themes which they could use. The first was the traditional one of peace. Addressing the Soviet Chairman directly, President Kennedy prevailed upon him to "halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless and provocative threat to world peace and to stable relations between our two nations."¹⁵ However, it was the second theme, that of the avoidance of a nuclear conflict, upon which emphasis was laid. Using phrases like "massive destruction," "nuclear threat," "the hazards to all concerned," "perilous arms race," and "the abyss of destruction," the President repeatedly pointed out the risk involved.¹⁶

With regard to our allies, President Kennedy was faced with other major constraints. Within the context of this crisis, the President and his advisors felt it was especially important to gain the support of its allies. To do this, his speech had to be fashioned so that: (1) the

¹⁵Ibid., p. 18, col. 6.

¹⁶Ibid. Of interest is that the two themes chosen by the President were the exact ones utilized by the Soviets. Evidence of this is presented in an interesting article entitled, "What Ivan Knows About Cuba," published on page 27 of the November 12, 1962, issue of Newsweek. This article gives a summary of the news published by a Moscow newspaper, Pravda, during the period of the crisis.

blame for the crisis was placed on the Soviet Union; and (2) our allies would be convinced that the quarantine was also in their own national interests. The first task--that of placing the blame for the crisis on the Soviets--was the easiest, and as stated by Anthony Lewis of the New York Times, a "notable aspect" of the speech. The President had a lot of events to fall back on, and he used them all. He began by giving information about the Soviet deployment of offensive weapons to Cuba. A short time later he reminded his listeners that he had issued public warnings against such actions on September 4 and 13. He then contrasted the Soviet action against the assurances given by the Soviet government on September 11 and by Mr. Gromyko on October 18 that the arms buildup was defensive in nature. Finally, to insure that the focus remained on the Russians, he pictured the Cubans as being a not-so-willing instrument in the hands of the Soviets. Speaking directly to the "captive people of Cuba," he told them that their leaders were "puppets and agents of an international conspiracy."¹⁷

The second task, convincing our allies that the quarantine was in their best interests, was not too difficult with regard to those whose territory falls within the Western Hemisphere. To insure that those so intimidated understood they too were threatened, when depicting the

¹⁷ Transcript of recorded speech, The New York Times, October 23, 1962, p. 18, col. 7.

geographical limits of the weapons, he cited striking ranges in terms of "the Panama Canal," all cities in "Central America or in the Caribbean area," and "ranging as far north as Hudson Bay, Canada, and as far south as Lima, Peru."¹⁸ To bring the other nations onto his side, President Kennedy used the tactic of picturing the Soviet move as having widespread strategic consequences in the Cold War being waged against the spread of Communism. Frequently alluding to the aggressive nature of the Soviet Union, Mr. Kennedy classified the Soviet missile deployment as being "in defiance of American and Hemispheric policy" and as a "deliberately provocative and unjustified change in the status quo."¹⁹ To assure them that their support would have an international legal basis, he reminded them that the transformation of Cuba into a Russian strategic base was in violation of the Rio Pact of 1947 and the charter of the United Nations.

The remaining major constraints dealt particularly with the American people. The first of these constraints was that an acceptable degree of protection be afforded to the military personnel stationed at the Guantanamo Naval Base on the southern tip of Cuba. The President's announcement of the evacuation of dependents from and the military

¹⁸Ibid., p. 18, col. 2.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 18, col. 4.

reinforcement of that base in conjunction with his placing military units on standby alert in the United States to provide immediate assistance if necessary fulfilled that constraint.

The second constraint dealt with the necessity to gain public support for his actions. Although the Soviet move constituted a threat to the entire West, this situation was unique in that the President's decision committed the United States to acting alone. Such being the case, coupled with the risk that the United States might suffer massive nuclear destruction in the process, President Kennedy desperately wanted (and from a psychological standpoint, probably needed) broad public support.

The tactic that President Kennedy used to enlist such support appears to follow the pattern of: first, insuring that the public understood the potential dangers that lay ahead; second, convincing them of the need for action in light of the threat; and third, providing a psychological foundation upon which they could be convinced that such action was correct. To accomplish this, the President devoted the final portion of his speech to his "fellow citizens" and spoke solely in the first person plural. He began by outlining the potential danger in simple terms: "Let no one doubt that this is a difficult and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee precisely what course it will take or what costs

or casualties will be incurred."²⁰

To convince them of the need for action, he used just one phrase: "But the greatest danger of all would be to do nothing."²¹

The remaining two paragraphs of the speech dealt with the rationale traditionally given by U. S. Presidents when war is imminent--freedom, courage, steadfastness in the face of injustice, and the ultimate goal of peace.

The Audience

The principal segment of the audience to whom this speech was directed was the Soviet Chairman, Nikita S. Khrushchev. Although the other leaders of the Soviet Union were also included indirectly, President Kennedy recognized that, like himself, in the crucial days that lay ahead it was Mr. Khrushchev who would be making all of the critical decisions. If the Soviet Chairman could be convinced that Mr. Kennedy was unwilling to back off, then war might be averted. If not, then war was almost certain. With this in mind President Kennedy devoted a portion of his speech specifically to the Soviet leader, calling upon him by name to eliminate the threat, abandon the Soviet course of world domination, and to join with the United States in an effort to end the perilous arms race.

²⁰Ibid., p. 18, col. 7.

²¹Ibid.

The second segment of the audience for whom the speech was meant was the leaders of those nations allied with the United States. This was especially true in the case of most of the nations in the Western Hemisphere in that they, like the United States, were threatened with massive destruction by the Cuban-based missiles. The Rio Pact of 1947 and the United Nations charter afforded all Western nations, regardless of their location, the legal basis to assume their role as an ally of the United States. In conjunction with the private meetings and briefings President Kennedy used his speech as a persuasive attempt which he hoped would convince Western leaders to join him in presenting a united front against the Soviet threat.

As the speech drew to a close, President Kennedy singled out and spoke directly to the Cuban people, telling them that they were not to blame for the situation and they were being used as pawns in the hands of the Russians. Since these remarks did not appear to be in response to a major constraint, this author initially wondered why the President had chosen to include such comments in the address. Upon reflection, it appears that President Kennedy's motive was revealed in his use of the sentence, "Many times in the past the Cuban people have risen to throw out tyrants who destroyed their liberty."²² These words represent

²²Ibid., col. 7.

a gamble by the President that under the new set of circumstances he might be able to prompt such an occurrence. Since it did not come to pass, the President either underestimated Castro's power or overestimated the desire of Cubans to free themselves from Castro. Regardless, it was a gamble worth taking in light of the potential reward to be won.

The remaining segment of the audience consisted of the American people. President Kennedy needed their overwhelming support, both initially and later, if the situation worsened. Although they might not have been aware of it, they too had a crucial role to play with respect to the Soviet Union. It was extremely important that they, the press, and the government present a solid front of angry determination in face of the Russian threat. If a serious division of opinion had occurred among these elements in the early days of the crisis, it is possible that the actions of either Kennedy or Khrushchev might have been different. This, of course, is a point of contention, but nonetheless one worth considering.

The Orator

Judging from comments this author has heard and from articles he has read, a sizeable segment of the American society remember President Kennedy as a beguiling, charismatic, and forceful leader. He is well known as the President who confronted the Russians in a time of crisis and

forced them to back off. Most, however, appear to have forgotten that the "forceful" label did not so readily apply prior to the crisis. As a result of the Bay of Pigs debacle in April, 1961, President Kennedy was severely criticized for not having given the Cuban exiles more than token support. His lack of forcefulness in that situation caused many to think of him as being indecisive and lacking determination when dealing with the Russians. This opinion was reinforced in September and early October, 1962, when Americans became convinced that the Soviets were up to no good in Cuba and could see no decisive action being taken by their President. Mr. Kennedy's dilemma was aptly described in the October 22 issue of Newsweek:

Almost since the day he took office, Cuba has been an albatross draped around the President's neck. No matter what course of action he has taken it often seems to have been the wrong one. . . . Since the invasion decision, Mr. Kennedy has never expressed to the American people a clear-cut forceful policy in Cuba.²³

The President's apparent hesitancy to take decisive action was not lost on the Russians either, and may have been a major influence in the Kremlin decision to move missiles into Cuba. As reported in the October 8 issue of U. S. News and World Report:

Khrushchev is reported, however, to be convinced that there will not be war. Russia's diplomats, in effect, are saying this: "The American people will

²³"How U. S. Voters Feel About Cuba," Newsweek, October 22, 1962, p. 24.

not fight over Cuba, over Berlin, over Laos, or over almost anything else." That word, passed privately to American newspapermen, is said to be having its influence on moves made by the Soviet dictator.²⁴

Such was President Kennedy's image at the beginning of the crisis. Assuming that he also was aware of it, his decision to use threatening language to the Russians in the address was probably meant to modify that image.

Conclusion

All war crises present difficult rhetorical situations because of the consequences involved. In the opinion of this author, the one facing President Kennedy was more difficult than most because the potential cost of failure--the unleashing of nuclear weapons upon the United States from a distance which would have made a protective reaction impossible to implement--was inordinately high. To do nothing would have allowed the Soviet Union to establish a firm position in the Western Hemisphere. An overreaction could have resulted in nuclear holocaust. This was Mr. Kennedy's dilemma.

There was one basic task that had to be accomplished: to force the removal of the offensive weapons from Cuba without resort to war. Considering the personality of the Soviet Chairman, to get this accomplished required a firm response which would quickly unite the West

²⁴"Berlin-Cuba: Soviet Squeeze," U. S. News and World Report, October 8, 1962, p. 41.

and at the same time allow the Russians to back off without a complete loss of prestige. In the opinion of this author, President Kennedy's address accomplished this and was thus a fitting response to the situation.

This is not to say that the October 22 address was solely responsible for the eventual Russian retreat. Of equal importance were a series of messages exchanged between the two leaders during the week-long crisis. What is being claimed is that the address was a proper prelude to these messages and constituted a suitable introduction to the rest of the world of the situation which had developed.

EFFECT OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S SPEECH ON PUBLIC OPINION

The American people are frustrated, angry, deeply upset and somewhat confused by the sudden appearance of Russians and Russian power in Cuba--just a jump from Florida.

A naval blockade of Cuba apparently would command wide popular support. So would active efforts to arm and support anti-Castro refugees.

There is a good deal of sentiment in favor of military action to throw the Russians out--after a warning to leave. Yet invasion most often is spoken of as a last resort, if all else fails, not as something to be taken lightly.

Opinion sounding . . . from one end of the country to the other, reveals that Castro really has Americans stirred up.²⁵

²⁵"Americans Speak Up on Cuba: 'Run Them Out' vs. 'Not Yet,'" U. S. News and World Report, September 24, 1962, p. 47.

The above statement, which was published in the September 24, 1962, issue of U. S. News and World Report, is a summary of a nationwide opinion poll conducted by staff members of that magazine. It represents what this author believes to be an accurate reflection of the feelings of Americans concerning the Soviet buildup in Cuba at that time. Americans were angry over the Russians' effrontery and felt that something had to be done. But at the same time they did not particularly care to get involved in another war--especially a nuclear one. As a result, there was a great deal of confusion over what type of action should be taken. They looked to their President for the answer.

In the absence of a decisive response from him, their frustration continued to mount with every new step that the Russians took. In a Gallup survey conducted from September 20-25, 1962, 53% of those interviewed advocated some type of action be taken. Another 25% admitted they didn't know what to do. Only 22% subscribed to a "keep out, hands off" policy.²⁶ In an early October poll by Newsweek the interviewers found out:

²⁶George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1971. The question asked in the survey was, "Taking everything into account, what action, if any, do you think the United States should take at this time in regard to Cuba?" The results are as follows:

- Bomb, invade, belligerent action 10%
- Trade, embargo, starve them out 13

-That nearly all Americans are deeply concerned--but not panicked--by the presence of Russian arms and "technicians" 90 miles from the Florida Keys.

-That about 90 per cent don't want to invade Cuba now.

-That there is wide confusion about which actions "short of war" would work against Fidel Castro or would be acceptable under international law.²⁷

Such was public opinion just prior to President Kennedy's October 22 speech. Unfortunately, the Gallup Organization failed to conduct a survey on American reaction to the quarantine. However, some indication of public approval can be gleaned from Gallup surveys taken on the question, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way John Kennedy is handling his job as President?" In the poll conducted on that question from September 20-25, 62% of the American public indicated approval.²⁸ That number rose to 74% in a poll taken two weeks after the crisis was over.²⁹

Some credence is lent to the approximate validity of the latter percentage as an indicator of the rise in public opinion resulting from the President's speech by two other polls--one conducted by Newsweek and the other by

-Do something short of actual war	26%
-Keep out, hands off	22
-Other action	4
-Don't know	25

²⁷"How U. S. Voters Feel About Cuba," Newsweek, October 22, 1962, p. 21.

²⁸George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1971, p. 1786.

²⁹Ibid., p. 1793.

U. S. News and World Report. In its November 5, 1962, issue the former publication reported:

U. S. public opinion backed the President. Though some questioned the suddenness of his action and many had qualms about war, the overriding sentiment was one of relief that the line had been drawn in Cuba.³⁰

The latter publication conducted a nationwide survey within a few days after the speech and issued the following summary of results:

Overwhelmingly, Americans across the country backed the action of President Kennedy in the first few days after the U. S. imposed a "quarantine" on Communist Cuba. Most felt that the decision was overdue and hoped that it did not come too late. . . . Few people voiced outright opposition.³¹

In summary, the general mood of the American public just prior to the crisis was one that demanded action but cautioned against war except as a last resort measure. Public reaction to the quarantine was reported to be one of overwhelming approval. Based on Gallup surveys taken, the President's popularity rating rose 12% from late September to early November. A review of newspapers published during this period uncovered no other major event which would appear to have had a significant impact on the President's popularity rating. In the absence of any other pertinent information the 12% figure is accepted as a general

³⁰"Showdown--Backdown," Newsweek, November 5, 1962, p. 34.

³¹"What Americans Think About 'Quarantine' of Cuba," U. S. News and World Report, November 5, 1962, p. 38.

indicator of the amount of shift in public opinion resulting from President Kennedy's October 22, 1962, address.

CHAPTER 4

THE TONKIN GULF CRISIS

THE CRISIS¹

The next war crisis to occur after the confrontation with Russia over her deployment of missiles to Cuba has been coined the "Tonkin Gulf Incident." The Tonkin Gulf Incident actually consisted of two incidents occurring two days apart. The first took place on Sunday, August 2, 1964, and involved an armed attack by three North Vietnamese torpedo boats on a United States destroyer, the U.S.S. Maddox. On that date the Maddox was conducting what was purported to be a "routine" patrol in international waters of the Gulf of Tonkin off the coast of North Vietnam.² At

¹The details of the military actions occurring in the Gulf of Tonkin have been extracted from the following publications: U. S., Department of State, "United States Takes Measures to Repel Attack Against U. S. Forces in Southeast Asia," The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LI, No. 1313 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1964), pp. 265-267; The New York Times, August 3, 1964, p. 1, col. 8 and p. 6, cols. 4-6; The New York Times, August 4, 1964, p. 2, cols. 4-6; and The New York Times, August 5, 1964, p. 1, cols. 4-5, p. 2, col. 3, and p. 3, col. 1.

²The "routine" mission referred to by the administration was the observation of coastal infiltration. In the August, 1967, hearings on the Tonkin Gulf Incident by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara testified that the Maddox was also engaged in the collection of electronic intelligence. For an interesting account on this matter consult: Anthony

approximately 12:00 p. m.³ the three torpedo boats were spotted on the Maddox' radar screen at a distance of over ten miles. They commenced an attack run at the Maddox at 3:08 p. m. After firing three warning shots, the Maddox opened fire with her 5-inch battery. When the North Vietnamese boats had closed to within 5,000 yards, each fired one torpedo and then withdrew. The destroyer immediately took evasive action, and the torpedoes missed their mark by approximately 150 yards. At 3:21 p. m. the third torpedo boat maneuvered to a position abeam of the Maddox. She then loosed one torpedo (which failed to function) and opened fire with her machine guns. Simultaneously, the Maddox fired at and scored a direct hit on the North Vietnamese craft, causing it to lie dead in the water.

In the interim, four F-8E jet aircraft had been dispatched from the carrier, U.S.S. Ticonderoga. Upon arrival in the battle area, they commenced an attack on the other two torpedo boats which by this time were fleeing toward the coast of North Vietnam. Both boats were damaged but not sunk. The Maddox did not suffer any damage.

On Monday, August 3, the President called the White House press corps into his office and read to them the

Austin, The President's War (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1971), pp. 200 and 247-249.

³Except where otherwise indicated, all times cited in this section are Gulf of Tonkin time, which is eleven hours earlier than Eastern Daylight Savings time (E.D.T.).

orders he had issued the day before to the Navy. In addition to beefing up the patrol force by adding an additional destroyer to the one already on patrol and stipulating that a combat air patrol be placed at their disposal, the President also issued orders to the commanders of the combat aircraft and the two destroyers to "attack any force which attacks them in international waters" and "to attack with the objectives not only of driving off the force but of destroying it."⁴

On the same day the State Department issued a note of protest to the government of North Vietnam. The concluding words of this document served notice to the North Vietnamese that any repeat of such action would not be tolerated:

The United States government expects that the authorities of the regime in North Viet-Nam will be under no misapprehension as to the grave consequences which would inevitably result from any further unprovoked offensive military action against United States forces.⁵

The second encounter of the Tonkin Gulf Incident occurred on Tuesday, August 4. On this date the Maddox and another destroyer, the U.S.S. Turner Joy, were again

⁴The New York Times, August 4, 1964, p. 1, col. 8 and p. 2, col. 3.

⁵U. S., Department of State, "United States Takes Measures to Repel Attack Against U. S. Forces in Southeast Asia," The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LI, No. 1313 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 265. (Hereinafter referred to in this chapter as USDSB.)

on patrol in the Gulf of Tonkin approximately 65 miles from the nearest land. At 8:36 p.m. two unidentified surface vessels and three unidentified aircraft appeared on the radar screen of the Maddox. Upon being advised of this contact the commander of the U.S.S. Ticonderoga launched fighter aircraft to provide the required air cover. Although the unidentified aircraft left the area shortly thereafter, at 9:30 p.m. additional small craft arrived and immediately began an attack run in excess of 40 knots on the two destroyers. At 9:52 p.m. both destroyers reported they were under continuous torpedo attack and were engaged in defensive counterfire. When the engagement ended at 1:30 a.m. the following morning, the aircraft from the Ticonderoga had sunk at least two enemy vessels. The destroyers did not suffer any damage.

In Washington the President and his principal advisors went into emergency session. They concluded that a decisive military response was necessary. The response decided upon was to conduct an air attack on the North Vietnamese mainland and to reinforce existing naval and air forces in the Pacific. President Johnson informed the American people of the attacks to be conducted on Tuesday evening (Washington time).

The air attack on North Vietnam began at approximately the same time as the President was speaking to the

nation. Sixty-four attack sorties⁶ were launched against four North Vietnamese patrol boat installations and one petroleum installation.⁷ As a result, 25 patrol boats were destroyed or damaged and 9 percent of North Vietnam's entire oil storage capacity was destroyed. American losses were two aircraft damaged and two destroyed.

Now that the United States had gone to the brink of war, the public could do nothing but wait for reaction by North Vietnam's two major allies, Russia and Communist China. Moscow's reaction, denouncing what it called "aggressive actions of the United States" in the Gulf of Tonkin, was judged by observers to be remarkably restrained.⁸ Peking's rhetoric was more threatening. They charged that the United States had gone "over the brink of war" and spoke of "lending a helping hand." It did not, however, contain any hint as to what action the Chinese might be contemplating.⁹

Preparing for any eventuality, on August 7, 1964, Congress adopted a resolution authorizing the President

⁶A sortie is one mission by one aircraft.

⁷The patrol boat installations attacked were at the coastal cities of Hongay, Loc Chao, Quang Khe, and Phuoc Loi. The oil storage facility targeted was at Vinh.

⁸The New York Times, August 6, 1964, p. 8, col. 5.

⁹The New York Times, August 6, 1964, p. 1, col. 4 and p. 6, col. 6.

". . . as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression."¹⁰ For the moment, however, the crisis was over.

ANALYSIS OF HISTORY LEADING UP TO AND
PRECIPITATING THE CRISIS

The United States' participation in the Vietnam Conflict is officially recognized as having begun in 1961. In response to a request by the South Vietnamese government, the first contingent of a large supplement to the token number of advisors already in South Vietnam began to arrive in the latter portion of that year. In the face of a rapidly expanding threat to the security of South Vietnam by the Viet Cong, the mission of these American representatives was to participate actively in government administration, military planning, the conduct of operations, and intelligence production.¹¹

In February, 1962, the U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, was established to provide overall direction to the expanded threat. By December of 1962 the number of American advisors numbered over 3,000. In addition,

¹⁰USDSB, p. 268. The resolution was passed unanimously by the House of Representatives and by the Senate with a vote of 88 to 2.

¹¹Maxwell D. Taylor, Swords and Plowshares (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1972), p. 242.

large quantities of materiel, to include over 300 American-operated aircraft, had been shipped to that beleaguered country.¹² As a result, the military situation soon stabilized. Nonetheless, the Việt Cong, who were being actively supported and supplied by the North Vietnamese, continued to improve in strength and in the quantity and quality of weapons.

On November 1, 1963, a coup was successfully executed by South Vietnam's military leaders. During the action the South Vietnamese president, Ngo Dinh Diem, was executed. The reins of the government were soon turned over to Diem's vice-president, Nguyen Ngoc Tho; however, a committee of four South Vietnamese generals was formed to provide him with "necessary advice." Although the United States had hoped that the coup would bring about political and military stability, it had the reverse effect--an effect which was to prove negative to the war effort.

The immediate result of the coup was political chaos, both in Saigon and in the outlying provinces. Unsure of their status with the new regime, the province chiefs moved slowly and cautiously. This tendency was also reflected in the conduct of offensive military operations. The Viet Cong were quick to seize upon this lack of activity and dramatically stepped up the tempo of their military

¹²Ibid., p. 288.

operations. On December 21, 1963, the Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara, wrote a memorandum to President Johnson which included the following comments:

. . . this is a summary of my conclusions after my visit to [South] Vietnam on December 19-20. . . . The situation is very disturbing. Current trends, unless reversed in the next 2-3 months, will lead to neutralization at best and more likely to a Communist-controlled state.¹³

Against this background, President Johnson was forced to reevaluate United States policy. He requested from his advisors their recommendations on what steps could be taken to change the trend of the war. The recommendation of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was that the United States should make ready to conduct increasingly bolder actions in Southeast Asia, "not only for its beneficial tactical effect, but to make plain our resolution, both to our friends and to our enemies." The actions which they submitted for consideration ranged from overflights of Laos and Cambodia for operational intelligence to the commitment of American forces as necessary in direct actions against North Vietnam.¹⁴

Following on the heels of this recommendation was more disturbing news from South Vietnam. On January 30, 1964, another coup was staged, this time by Nguyen Khanh,

¹³Neil Sheehan and others, The Pentagon Papers (New York: Quadrangle Books, 1971), p. 279.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 284-285.

the general in charge of military operations in the northern portion of South Vietnam. Although it cannot be proven, it is interesting to speculate if this event, coupled with McNamara's evaluation of the battlefield situation, made the President feel that some type of action was necessary to "get things moving." Regardless, the following month Mr. Johnson took two actions which were later to play a part in the Tonkin Gulf Incident. The first was to approve the immediate implementation of Operation Plan 34A, a program which provided for American support of South Vietnamese clandestine military operations against North Vietnam. The type of activity proposed in the plan included a wide variety of intelligence, sabotage, and psychological warfare operations by South Vietnamese personnel on North Vietnamese soil.¹⁵ The second action by President Johnson was to authorize the employment of destroyer patrols in the Gulf of Tonkin. The primary purpose of these patrols was to observe coastal infiltration and to gather electronic intelligence--intelligence which would be of great value if a bombing campaign against the North was ever initiated. An auxiliary benefit was that some of the information collected could also be of use to 34A operation planners, even though the destroyer patrols were in no way linked to the

¹⁵See footnote 2.

clandestine operations.¹⁶

Meanwhile, the military situation in South Vietnam continued to worsen. Reporting on the results of a just-completed visit to South Vietnam, Secretary McNamara stated in a March 16, 1964, memorandum to the President that "in terms of government control of the countryside, about 40 percent of the territory is under Viet Cong control or predominant influence."¹⁷ In the concluding section of his memorandum he included a listing of twelve recommendations, most of which dealt with actions to strengthen the position of the Khanh government and the fighting posture of the South Vietnamese military and paramilitary forces. Although the Secretary was not in favor of direct military action against North Vietnam at the time, he did recommend that the United States prepare itself for that eventuality. In this regard two of the specific recommendations he made were: (1) that the United States be in a position to take "retaliatory action" against North Vietnam; and (2) that the United States be ready on 30 days notice to initiate a program of "graduated overt military pressure" against North Vietnam.¹⁸ The former included actions such as overt

¹⁶For a detailed account of the type of activities conducted under Operation 34A, see Austin, The President's War, pp. 229-230, and Sheehan, The Pentagon Papers, pp. 311-314.

¹⁷Sheehan, The Pentagon Papers, p. 287.

¹⁸Taylor, Swords and Plowshares, p. 311, and Sheehan, The Pentagon Papers, pp. 290-291.

reconnaissance flights by American pilots over North Vietnam and retaliatory bombing strikes and commando raids by the South Vietnamese against targets inside North Vietnam. As explained by the Secretary, graduated overt military pressure involved offensive action against North Vietnam by both American and South Vietnamese forces:

This program would go beyond reacting on a tit-for-tat basis. It would include air attacks against military and possibly industrial targets. The program would utilize the combined resources of the GVN [Government of South Vietnam] Air Force and the U. S. Farmgate Squadron, with the latter reinforced by three squadrons of B-57's presently in Japan. Before this program could be implemented it would be necessary to provide some additional air defense for South Vietnam and to ready U. S. forces in the Pacific for possible escalation.¹⁹

On March 17, 1964, Mr. Johnson approved National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) 288, a document which incorporated the recommendations of the Secretary of Defense. In the opinion of this author, this event is of special significance. Until this time the criterion upon which President Johnson made decisions concerning Vietnam was, "Is it in accordance with the principle of the Vietnamese fighting their own war?"--a principle which both he and President Kennedy strongly believed in. In one sense NSAM 288 was congruent with this line of thinking. For example, one part of it reads:

¹⁹Sheehan, The Pentagon Papers, p. 288. The reference states that "Farmgate" was the code name for an American air commando squadron operating in South Vietnam with planes bearing South Vietnamese markings.

We are now trying to help South Vietnam defeat the Viet Cong, supported from the North, by means short of the unqualified use of U. S. combat forces. We are not acting against North Vietnam except by a modest "covert" program operated by South Vietnamese. . . .

These were and are some sound reasons for the limits imposed by the present policy--the South Vietnamese must win their own fight. . . .²⁰

In another sense, however, NSAM 288 represents a departure from this criterion. In addition to the inclusion of the recommendation concerning graduated overt military pressure, the document also states that "it is vital that we continue to take every reasonable measure to assure success in South Vietnam." This is the first time that a foreign policy proposal which included an admission that direct offensive action by U. S. forces might someday be necessary in Indochina had been given the blessing of the Commander in Chief. As such, it represented a shift in thinking which was probably influential in the decision to bomb North Vietnamese torpedo boat bases and in the decision reached in early 1965 to begin an escalation of the war.

Military events in the spring and early summer of 1964 were not conducive to a reversal of this new trend in thought. The Viet Cong continued to score one success after another and their degree of control over the countryside and the people increased. Although the political

²⁰Ibid., p. 292.

situation had quieted somewhat and the South Vietnamese Army again began to conduct more offensive operations, the Communist forces were able to retain their momentum. By the end of July, 1964, the situation was definitely poor. The number of South Vietnamese casualties had doubled over the past month, along with the desertion rate and the loss of weapons to the Communists. In the northern coastal region, the government pacification program was virtually at a standstill. In the Central Highlands, security was threatened by a recent Viet Cong offensive. Even more alarming was the fact that the enemy's strength and activity had increased sharply during the last three months in the countryside surrounding Saigon.²¹ In short, news of the ground war just prior to the Tonkin Gulf Incident was not encouraging to the administration.

There is one other historical event which probably had a bearing on the Tonkin Gulf Incident, although to what extent is still unknown. At about midnight on July 30, 1964, an amphibious raid by the South Vietnamese under the auspices of the Operation 34A program was made on the North Vietnamese islands of Hon Me and Hon Ngu in the Gulf of Tonkin. The commanding officer of the Maddox had not been informed of the 34A raids, and about 36 hours later he

²¹"After the Show of Force: Still a Losing War in Vietnam," U. S. News and World Report, p. 31; and personal observations of this author who was in South Vietnam from July 21, 1963, to July 14, 1964.

maneuvered the destroyer in the vicinity of these islands. The intriguing question that now arises is, "Did the North Vietnamese link the Maddox with the island raids and attack the vessel on August 2 for that reason?"

The North Vietnamese themselves intimated that this may have been the case. In a statement acknowledging the attacks on Hon Me and Hon Ngu, they charged that Seventh Fleet warships had on several occasions provided support for South Vietnamese ships carrying out provocative activities against the North.²² If, in fact, this was their reason, why then did they repeat the attack on August 4, especially after having been warned against such action by the State Department note of August 3? The answers to these questions may never be known. Regardless, the fact still remains that the attacks did occur, thus involving the United States in yet another war crisis which necessitated a rhetorical response--a response which President Johnson gave at 11:36 p.m. (E.D.T.) on August 4, 1964.

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S ADDRESS

The Exigence

The exigence--that imperfection marked by urgency--which prompted President Johnson's address to the nation was the war crisis brought about by the August 2 and 4,

²²The New York Times, August 6, 1964, p. 6, col. 7.

1964, incidents in the Tonkin Gulf.

The armed attacks by North Vietnamese torpedo boats on American naval vessels in international waters constituted a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law. By itself, the first attack was not considered sufficient grounds for retaliation. It was an isolated incident, and the possibility existed that it was caused by an error in judgment or identification on the part of a low-level North Vietnamese naval commander. Thus, President Johnson chose only to send a note of protest to the government of North Vietnam. When a similar attack was repeated two days later under the cover of darkness, the President became convinced that the attacks were premeditated and deliberate acts of armed aggression. The issue had now changed to one in which the honor of the United States and the future safety of American personnel and ships at sea were at stake. Accordingly, he ordered the Navy to conduct air strikes against four torpedo boat bases and one petroleum installation on the mainland of North Vietnam and directed that existing U. S. forces in the Pacific be reinforced.

At this point the President felt that it was necessary to inform the American public of the situation. He began his address with a general statement of the exigence:

. . . As President and Commander in Chief, it is my duty to the American people to report that renewed hostile actions against United States ships on the high seas in the Gulf of Tonkin have today required

me to order the military forces of the United States to take action in reply.²³

Since news of the second attack had not yet been printed in the press, he continued by giving more details of the incident which had occurred earlier in the day:

The initial attack on the destroyer Maddox [italics in the original], on August 2, was repeated today by a number of hostile vessels attacking two U. S. destroyers with torpedoes. The destroyers and supporting aircraft acted at once on the orders I gave after the initial act of aggression. We believe at least two of the attacking boats were sunk. There were no U. S. losses.²⁴

The Constraints

There are four major constraints with which the President had to cope. The first of these was to place the blame for the incidents on the North Vietnamese. Since the first attack had already been given extensive coverage by the press for two days running, this was not a difficult task. All that was needed was to point out that the latest incident was again initiated by the North Vietnamese without provocation and that the attack occurred in international waters. Most of the necessary information was

²³USDSB, p. 259; The New York Times, August 5, 1964, p. 1, cols. 6-7; and U. S., President, 1963-69 (Johnson), "Radio and Television Report to the American People Following Renewed Aggression in the Gulf of Tonkin," Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Lyndon B. Johnson, 1963-64, Book II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1965), pp. 927-928. No significant differences exist in the speech as presented in these three references. Hereafter, only the first reference will be quoted.

²⁴USDSB, p. 259.

contained in the exigence statement. In addition, the use of phrases such as "renewed hostile actions," "new act of aggression," and "repeated acts of violence" intimated that the North Vietnamese were at fault. It is interesting to note that the speech did not contain any mention that the attacks were unprovoked; it was left up to the audience to fill in this information. In light of the Operation 34A attacks on Hon Me and Hon Ngu Islands, which from a persuasive standpoint were better left unmentioned, it is wondered if the omission was an oversight, because the President, while speaking at Syracuse University the following day, unequivocally stated that the attacks were unprovoked.²⁵ Secretary of Defense McNamara did the same during an address before the Congress on August 5.

A question that comes to mind is, "Did President Johnson deliberately mislead the American public in this regard?" Although pure speculation, it is guessed that at least the President felt he did not. Any doubts that he may have had as to the influence of the 34A operation on the incident were presumably erased when the second attack occurred.²⁶

²⁵USDSB, pp. 260-261.

²⁶As pointed out in the book, The President's War, the significance of the 34A raids on Hon Me and Hon Ngu became a major point of contention in the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations 1967 investigation of the Tonkin Gulf Incident.

The second constraint with which the President had to deal was the necessity to link the Tonkin Gulf Incident with the war going on in the rest of Southeast Asia. If this could be done, then the event could be more effectively utilized in the future as historical evidence to justify increased U. S. participation in the war, providing that such action became necessary. To make this link Mr. Johnson used the following words:

In the larger sense this new act of aggression, aimed directly at our own forces, again brings home to all of us in the United States the importance of the struggle for peace and security in Southeast Asia. Aggression by terror against the peaceful villagers of South Viet-Nam has now been joined by open aggression on the high seas against the United States of America.²⁷

The third constraint inherent to this particular situation was the necessity to gain the support of both Congress and the general public. Although the President had the legal right in his role as Commander in Chief to order the retaliatory attacks on North Vietnam, Congressional support of such action, even though after the fact, was desirable. Unilateral action of this type by the Chief Executive without involving the Congress can bring painful consequences later on--a lesson that President Nixon was to learn. The role of the general public in this regard was to apply pressures on the Congress. If solid public support could be obtained, Congressional

²⁷USDSB, p. 259.

members would then be much less inclined to vote down the resolution on Vietnam that the President was going to request adoption of the following day.

In his attempts to gain the support needed, President Johnson proved himself worthy of his reputation as a shrewd politician--a reputation he had initially won during his many years in Congress. Prior to making the address, he met with Republican and Democratic leaders in the Congress and quickly gained their support. He next contacted Senator Barry Goldwater, his major rival in the forthcoming election. The senator, who had been advocating a tougher stance be taken against the Communists in Indochina, had little choice but to lend his support to the planned air-strikes. Realizing the persuasive impact of such support, the President made sure that it was included in his speech.

. . . I have today met with the leaders of both parties in the Congress of the United States, and I have informed them that I shall immediately request the Congress to pass a resolution making clear that our Government is united in its determination to take all necessary measures in support of freedom and in defense of Southeast Asia.

I have been given encouraging assurance by these leaders of both parties that such a resolution will be promptly introduced, freely and expeditiously debated, and passed with overwhelming support. And just a few minutes ago I was able to reach Senator Goldwater, and I am glad to say that he has expressed his support of the statement that I am making to you tonight.²⁸

By the inclusion of this statement, Mr. Johnson effectively removed the issue of support for his actions from the

²⁸Ibid.

bipartisan arena.

To complete his appeal for public support President Johnson next turned to justifying the war on a moral basis. Like others before him, he used the principle of ethics which advocates that "the ends justify the means":

It is a solemn responsibility to have to order every limited military action by forces whose overall strength is as vast and as awesome as those of the United States of America, but it is my considered conviction, shared throughout your Government, that firmness in the right is indispensable today for peace. That firmness will be measured. Its mission is peace.²⁹

By this statement Mr. Johnson was able to project himself not only as a leader who wants to keep America strong, but also as one who is equally interested in world peace--a desirable image for an American President to have.

The final major constraint was brought about by the fact that for the first time since the Korean War, the United States was about to attack a Communist territory. Of the two leading Communist powers, the Soviet Union and Communist China, the biggest worry to the administration was the latter. As reported in a military assessment written by Major General (Retired) Max S. Johnson for U. S. News and World Report:

If hostilities are to escalate, the decision will be China's. . . . If mass war, as fought by peasant soldiers with A-frame packs on their backs, is ever

²⁹Ibid.

to secure Southeast Asia for China, the Communist leaders may feel the time has come to seize the initiative. . . .³⁰

Thus, the task now facing the President was to convince the Russian and Chinese leaders that although the United States was determined to support the South Vietnamese, further escalation of the war was not desired. Referring to the act of "open aggression on the high seas," the President stated:

The determination of all Americans to carry out our full commitment to the people and to the Government of South Viet-Nam will be redoubled by this outrage. Yet our response, for the present, will be limited and fitting. We Americans know, although others appear to forget, the risks of spreading conflict. We still seek no wider war.³¹

It is the opinion of this author that this particular portion of the address is weak. Although the position of the United States was expressed, the words used do not sound very "persuasive." There was neither a call for restraint nor an appeal for the use of rational thinking in a time of crisis. Considering the consequences at stake, it is felt that this portion of the speech could have been better formulated with little effort.

The Audience

On the domestic front President Johnson's message was aimed at two levels. The first was to the members of

³⁰Max S. Johnson, "After the Battle of Tonkin Gulf--What Now," U. S. News and World Report, August 14, 1964, p. 25.

³¹USDSB, p. 259.

Congress and the second was to the American public in general. As previously explained, it was important to the President that the Congress adopt the resolution which he was about to propose, not only for the purpose of obtaining Congressional approval for the Tonkin Gulf reaction, but also to "legalize" any actions he might wish to take in the future. Since 1964 was an election year, party politics was a factor in any support given him; hence, his attempt to remove the whole issue from the political arena.

Also pointed out was the role of the public. If the Congressmen observed that their constituents were in favor of the President's actions, then they would be more inclined to vote for adoption. At this particular time in history the mood of the general public was such that they were susceptible to persuasion concerning the role of the United States in Vietnam. The primary reason for this is that the majority of the American people knew very little of what was going on there other than the fact that the United States was involved, primarily on an advisory level, in a struggle against the Communists. Prior to the Tonkin Gulf Incident, it was not an issue to which they paid much attention.

That portion of the foreign audience indirectly addressed in the speech was the leaders of the Communist Bloc countries, particularly Communist China and Russia. As was hoped they did not take direct military action to further

escalate the war. They were not, however, deterred from continuing to provide North Vietnam with materiel assistance.

Except for South Vietnam (which was specifically mentioned in the speech), the message was not addressed to the leaders of the free world nations. The reaction coming from them indicates that it may have been wise to do so. Instead of backing the United States for taking firm action in the face of Communist aggression, the support of some allied nations was tepid or hedged with worry that the Vietnam conflict might quickly escalate into "another Korea."³²

The Orator

At the time that President Johnson delivered the war crisis address, his image with the American public was favorable. In an end-June survey taken by the American Institute of Public Opinion, 68% of those interviewed indicated that there was nothing that they "particularly disliked" about Mr. Johnson--a rather amazing result in light of the tendency of the American public to quickly form opinions about their national leaders.³³ A Louis Harris survey conducted in August, 1964, concluded that "Mr.

³²The New York Times, August 7, 1964, p. 8, col. 1.

³³George H. Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1971, Vol. III (New York: Random House, 1972), p. 1887.

Johnson, as the public sees him, is a hard-working President, bright and clever, a friendly, warm, earthy person." In this same poll he received a favorable rating by 75% of those questioned, which represents a 3% rise over the previous month.³⁴

As it turned out, this public image worked in favor of President Johnson in his persuasive attempt. When he described what had happened in the Tonkin Gulf, Americans believed him. When he told of the military response to be taken, they trusted his judgment. When he asked for their support, they gave it to him.

Conclusion

Although President Johnson realized that someday he might have to order an escalation of the war in Vietnam, he had hoped that this would not become a necessity. When the North Vietnamese attacked the Maddox on August 2, 1964, the President was put into a somewhat difficult position. On one side he was receiving pressure from the Defense establishment urging him to make a decisive military response to the attack. On the other were his personal fears that such a response might provide an excuse for the Chinese or the Russians to enter the conflict. In addition, direct U. S. involvement was contrary to his belief that

³⁴"The LBJ Image," Newsweek, August 31, 1964, p. 27.

the South Vietnamese must fight their own war. In accordance with his own feelings, Mr. Johnson decided that a warning to the North Vietnamese would be sufficient. With the advent of the second attack two days later, the situation changed. Now the safety of American personnel and ships at sea was not the only issue; the prestige of the country was also at stake. This time he decided in favor of direct American involvement, albeit on a limited scale.

The two principal rhetorical tasks that the President had to accomplish were to gain Congressional and public support for his proposed resolution on Vietnam and to convince the Communists not to further escalate the war. In the opinion of this author, President Johnson's rhetorical response was fitting in relation to the former task, but weak in relation to the latter.

EFFECT OF PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S SPEECH ON PUBLIC OPINION

Considering the fact that the threat to the national security of the United States in this incident was not nearly as formidable or clear as that posed during the Pearl Harbor or Cuban Missile Crises, President Johnson did extremely well in his effort to sway American public opinion at all levels. The Congress adopted his Vietnam resolution with only two dissenting votes; editorial reaction in major newspapers across the United States was heavily in

favor;³⁵ and the response of the general public both in the direction and amount of desired change, was impressive. A Louis Harris poll taken just before the crisis indicated that only 42% of the people approved of the President's handling of the war in Vietnam; after the attack approval rose to 72%.³⁶ A similar result was obtained by the Gallup organization. In response to a like question, corresponding statistics were 52% approval before the crisis and 71% immediately thereafter.³⁷

It is therefore concluded that President Johnson was successful in his persuasive attempt on the domestic level. This success on his part is attributed to three principal factors: (1) the Communist attacks appeared to be unprovoked; (2) the favorable public image of the

³⁵For a review of editorial comment from major U. S. newspapers, see The New York Times, August 7, 1964, p. 8, cols. 5-7.

³⁶Excerpt from The Washington Post, August 24, 1964, p. A1, cols. unknown, and p. 7, cols. 1-3 sent to this author from Louis Harris and Associates in response to personal correspondence.

³⁷Gallup, The Gallup Poll: Public Opinion 1935-1971, pp. 1897 and 1899. The question asked is, "Do you think that the United States is handling affairs in South Vietnam as well as could be expected, or do you think we are handling affairs there badly?" The results are as follows:

	<u>July 23-28, 1964</u>	<u>August 6-11, 1964</u>
As well as expected	52%	71%
Badly	38	16
No opinion	10	13

President; and (3) the general lack of knowledge of Americans at this particular time concerning the situation in Vietnam, thus making them more susceptible to persuasion on issues concerning it.

CHAPTER 5

THE HAIPHONG HARBOR CRISIS

THE CRISIS

The final crisis to be discussed differs from those previously analyzed in that this crisis was precipitated by the United States with the assistance of its ally, the Republic of South Vietnam. Even though the actions taken were in response to the North Vietnamese invasion across the demilitarized zone into South Vietnam in early April, 1972, in context it represented a major and surprising escalation of the war.

Commencing at 9:04 a.m. (Saigon time), May 9, 1972, scores of Navy A-6 aircraft based on carriers of the Seventh Fleet began the airborne delivery of underwater mines at entrances to the ports of North Vietnam.¹ This signaled the first phase of yet another escalation of the Vietnam War: the interdiction of the delivery of war supplies to the North Vietnamese.

The most heavily-mined port was the principal one in North Vietnam, the port at the city of Haiphong. The sensitivity of the mission was heightened by the fact that Haiphong was only minutes flying time from the capital city

¹U. S., Department of State, "Secretary of Defense Laird's News Conference of May 10," The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LXVI, No. 1718 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 765.

of Hanoi. Further complicating the raid was the presence of 36 foreign vessels in the harbor: 16 Russian, 5 Communist Chinese, 5 Somalian, 4 flying the flag of British Hong Kong, 3 Polish, 2 Cuban, and 1 East German.² (The nations to which the ships were registered were notified through United Nations and diplomatic channels that they had no more than three daylight periods for their ships to clear the harbor free of risk of damage. The mines were pre-set to activate automatically at 6 p.m. (Saigon time), May 11.)

Even as the mines were still being dropped, the full extent of the new measures to be implemented were being revealed by the President, Richard M. Nixon, in a radio and television broadcast to the nation:

All entrances to North Vietnamese ports will be mined to prevent access to these ports and North Vietnamese naval operations from these ports.

United States forces have been directed to take appropriate measures within the internal and claimed territorial waters of North Vietnam to interdict the delivery of any supplies. [This did not, however, include the use of nuclear weapons or the use of American ground forces.]

Rail and all other communications will be cut off to the maximum extent possible.

Air and naval strikes against military targets in North Vietnam will continue.³

²Ibid.

³The New York Times, May 9, 1972, p. 18, col. 7; see also U. S. Department of State, "Denying Hanoi the Means to Continue Aggression," The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LXVI, No. 1718 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 749. The content of the speech

The President further specified that the actions ordered would cease only when all American prisoners of war were returned and when an internationally supervised ceasefire throughout Indochina had begun. He promised that if these two conditions were met the United States would then stop all acts of force and immediately proceed with a complete withdrawal of all American forces from Vietnam within four months.

Although there were a number of reactions to President Nixon's address, the common question running through the minds of Americans at the time was, "Will such offensive action plunge the nation into a war with the Soviet Union and/or Communist China?" Remembering the human wave attacks made by the Chinese in Korea and cognizant of the nuclear warfare potential possessed by the Russians, the possibility of a conflict with either nation caused most Americans great anxiety.

Since many of the details of the mining have yet to be released to the public, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when the crisis atmosphere came to an end. The principal concern was what response the Communist Chinese and the Russians would make. Concern about the Chinese abated somewhat on May 9 when a statement by their foreign

as reported by these publications is identical. All further footnotes regarding the speech will utilize the New York Times source only.

ministry in Peking, although condemning in tone, was judged by Washington observers to be unusually muted for such an occasion. Similar relief over what the Russians would do appeared to be evident on the part of the administration following a May 11 "courtesy call" to the White House by Nikolai S. Patolichev, the Soviet Foreign Trade Minister, and Anatoly F. Dobrynin, Soviet Ambassador to the United States. During that meeting President Nixon was told that the Moscow Summit Conference, which was to begin on May 23, was still on as far as the Russians were concerned.⁴ As it turned out, no Communist nation ever made an attempt to break through the blockade.

ANALYSIS OF HISTORY LEADING UP TO AND PRECIPITATING THE CRISIS

Johnson Administration

When Congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin resolution in August, 1964, President Johnson was given the authority he needed to escalate the war. By the end of 1964 the number of military advisors stationed in-country had risen to approximately 23,000.⁵ A large scale buildup was begun in early 1965, and on June 27 of that year the first entirely American offensive of the war was launched. At the

⁴The New York Times, May 11, 1972, cols. 6-7, p. 1.

⁵George Post, "Longest U. S. War Had High Price Tag," Army Times, February 7, 1973, col. 1, p. 2.

end of 1965 there were 184,000 men in South Vietnam. By January, 1968, that number had risen to 486,000.⁶

Although the American public always had difficulty understanding the nature of the war in Vietnam, their reaction to President Johnson's escalation measures in response to the Gulf of Tonkin incidents was favorable. This support, however, waned dramatically as a result of the Tet invasion by the Communist forces in January and February, 1968. After having been subjected to a continuous stream of optimistic reports on the progress of the war from the Johnson administration, the unexpected successes of the Communists during the Tet attacks caused the American people to seriously question the credibility of the administration on all facets of the war, including the justifications given for the United States' participation in it. As President Johnson neared the end of his first full term in office, public support for the policies of his administration had fallen to such a low state that he decided not to seek re-election. Mr. Johnson announced this decision to the nation over radio and television on March 31, 1968. During this speech he made two statements which were to prove of special significance in the Vietnam policy of the next administration:

⁶U. S., Department of Defense, Report on the War in Vietnam (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 197.

Our presence there [in South Vietnam] has always rested on this belief: The main burden of preserving their freedom must be carried out by them--by the South Vietnamese themselves. . . .

Yet, I believe that we must always be mindful of this one thing--whatever the trials and the tests ahead, the ultimate strength of our country and our cause will be, not in powerful weapons or infinite resources or boundless wealth, but will lie in the unity of our people.⁷

Nixon Administration

The favorable reception given by the American people to Mr. Johnson's March 31 remarks were apparently not lost on President Nixon. Ten months after he assumed office Nixon announced his program of Vietnamization. Presented as an alternate way to end the war if the Paris peace negotiations (which had begun to take shape as a result of President Johnson's address) should fail, Vietnamization was a plan designed to end direct American involvement by slowly transferring responsibility for fighting the war to South Vietnam's armed forces as soon as they could be made combat-ready. Although the main justification given for such action was the increasing strength and proficiency of the South Vietnamese military, an influencing factor toward the initiation of such a program was the mood of Congress and the American public--continuing impatience with the war. A survey by the Gallup organization taken shortly after the Vietnamization speech revealed that

⁷The New York Times, April 1, 1968, cols. 1, 2, and 5, p. 20.

the President's public approval rating had risen sharply from 56% to 68%.⁸ The road ahead now seemed relatively smooth for the Nixon administration as United States' participation in the war began to wind down.

Such proved to be the case throughout most of 1970 and 1971. Although the public was not particularly happy about the brief employment of American forces in Cambodia and Laos (during mid-1970 and early 1971, respectively) for what was characterized as "protective reaction raids," they were somewhat mollified by the continued withdrawal of troop units from South Vietnam. By mid-1971, the majority of Americans seemed resigned to the notion that it would be the Vietnamization program, and not the Paris peace negotiations, which would eventually result in the end of U. S. involvement. This resignation is reflected in a finding of a nation-wide Gallup survey taken in May, 1971:

What Americans want in the way of troop withdrawals contrasts sharply with their expectations. Large majorities have been found to favor the withdrawal of troops immediately or by the end of this year. However, only 9 per cent in the current survey expect that all troops will actually be withdrawn by this time.⁹

Although doubtful that it was recognized as such at the time, the first indications of real trouble ahead

⁸Gallup Opinion Index, Report No. 84, June, 1972, citing Nixon's popularity statistics since the start of his term; see also "What America Really Thinks of Nixon," Newsweek, August 28, 1972, pp. 16 and 18.

⁹Gallup Opinion Index, Report No. 72, June, 1971.

began to appear in late-1971.¹⁰ In October intelligence reports suggested that the enemy was in the process of a buildup for a major attack. On November 17, the secret negotiation session scheduled for November 20 between Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and Le Duc Tho, Hanoi's chief negotiator, was canceled by the North Vietnamese (purportedly because Le Duc Tho was ill). The United States then began to experience difficulty in getting the secret talks resumed.

On January 25, 1972, President Nixon made a bold attempt to demonstrate to the world that it was the North Vietnamese, and not the United States, which was responsible for the lack of progress in Paris. In a radio and television address to the nation he revealed the existence of the secret talks, cited the intransigence of the North Vietnamese negotiators, and advanced a new proposal for an immediate cease-fire. In exchange for a North Vietnamese withdrawal, the President offered an immediate cease-fire, the exchange of all prisoners of war, the withdrawal of all American forces within six months, internationally-supervised elections with all political elements (including the Communists) participating in and helping to run the elections, and the resignation of the President and Vice

¹⁰ See Appendix A for a summary of significant occurrences during the period January 1 to May 8, 1972.

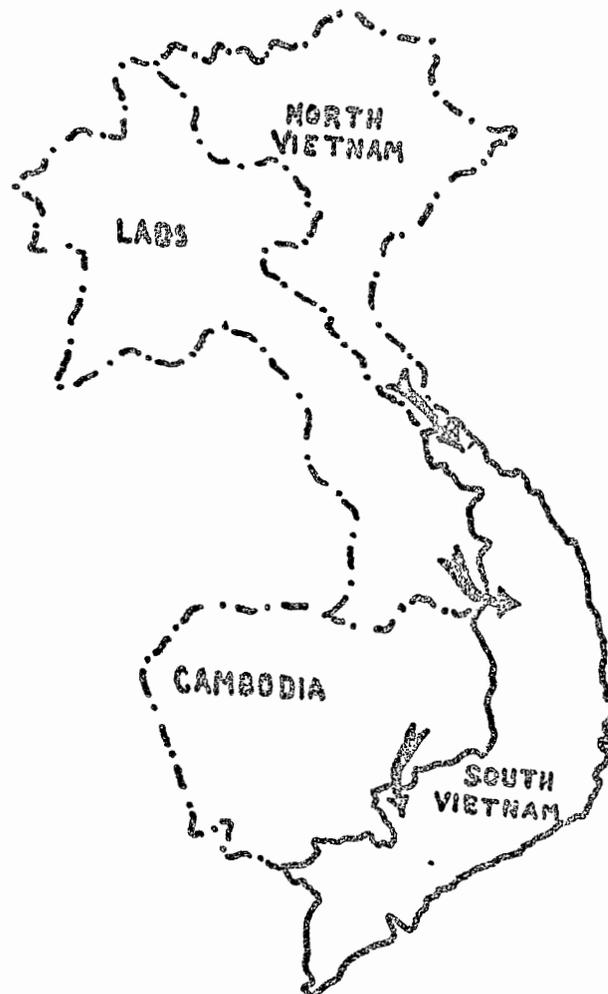
President of South Vietnam one month before such elections.¹¹ Although the North Vietnamese finally bowed to world pressure and agreed to resume the secret talks, they were able to delay such meetings until May 2--a favorable date to them in light of the actions they were to take in the interim period.

One of the highlights in February, 1972, was President Nixon's trip to Communist China. This trip, coupled with the news of a scheduled summit meeting in Moscow during the last week of May between President Nixon, General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev, and other Soviet leaders, once again raised the American public's hopes for peace in Southeast Asia. They would scarcely have been so optimistic had they been privy to the alarming number of reports being received through U. S. and South Vietnamese intelligence channels concerning the continuing military buildup in North Vietnam. The reason for this buildup materialized on March 31 as large North Vietnamese units began to cross through the demilitarized zone (DMZ) separating the two Vietnams. By Easter Sunday (April 2) the administration had positively confirmed that the anticipated invasion was in fact taking place. Of special concern was the discovery that the North Vietnamese units were armed with

¹¹U. S., Department of State, "Indochina: An Equitable Proposal for Peace," The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LXVII, No. 1703 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 181.

sophisticated weapons supplied principally by the Soviet Union and Communist China.

As later became evident, the North Vietnamese invasion consisted of a three-pronged thrust: The first cut across the DMZ to the south in the direction of Quang Tri, Hue, and Da Nang; the second led from Cambodia west to Pleiku, the ultimate objective of which was to continue the drive west to the sea, thus cutting South Vietnam in two; and the third was from Cambodia southwest to An Loc and then toward Saigon. Each was accompanied by devastating fire attacks and the use of armored vehicles.



As the end of April neared, the provincial capital of Quang Tri had fallen and the South Vietnamese units fighting there had retreated in disorder, the city of Pleiku was threatened, and the town of An Loc had been reduced to rubble, having changed hands several times during the fighting. On April 20 Mr. Kissinger went to Moscow for four days to arrange for the forthcoming summit meeting. However, he also went with instructions from the President to express our dismay over the invasion and to emphasize the United States' desire for a rapid solution to the war and our willingness to look at all possible approaches. The Soviet leaders showed interest and urged resumption of negotiations in Paris. (On March 23 the semi-private plenaries had also been interrupted.) The Russians further indicated that they would use their constructive influence with the North Vietnamese.

By April 24, the outcome of the battle raging in the south was still uncertain. What was clear, however, was that the North Vietnamese were bent on victory. Twelve of North Vietnam's thirteen regular combat divisions were in South Vietnam, and military estimates placed the strength of the North Vietnamese forces there at more than 120,000.¹²

¹²U. S., Department of State, "A Report on the Military Situation in Viet-Nam and the Role of the United States," The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LXVI, No. 1716 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 684.

Although the 69,000 American ground troops remaining in South Vietnam were not yet involved in battle, their chances of becoming so were increasing.

A slightly more optimistic viewpoint was contained in an April 25 message to the President from General Creighton W. Abrams, Commander, U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. In that message General Abrams concluded that if the United States continued to provide air and sea support, the North Vietnamese invasion would fail and the South Vietnamese would then have demonstrated their ability to defend themselves on the ground against future enemy attacks.¹³ Based on this assessment and after consultation with his senior advisors, the President made another decision which he transmitted to the nation that evening. This decision contained three elements: (1) to continue with the Vietnamization program by withdrawing 20,000 more Americans over the next two months, (2) to send Ambassador William J. Porter, the chief United States delegate to the plenary sessions, to return to the negotiating table the following day, and (3) a continuation of the air and naval attacks on military installations in North Vietnam until the North Vietnamese stopped their invasion.¹⁴

The North Vietnamese were not to be scared off. The invasion continued and the peace sessions in Paris

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 684-685.

turned out to be a disaster. The plenaries resumed on April 27 but were again interrupted on May 4 due reportedly to North Vietnamese intransigence. At the one private session on May 2 the administration accused the North Vietnamese of refusing to even discuss any American proposal and of not offering any new approach of their own.

When it became apparent that the negotiations would not produce any meaningful results, the President began to consider what actions, if any, should be taken next. Three courses of action were explored: Immediate withdrawal of all American forces, continued attempts at negotiation, and decisive military action. On the afternoon of May 8 he chose the latter and announced his decision to the nation over radio and television that evening.

RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S ADDRESS

The Exigence

The exigence prompting President Nixon's May 8, 1972, address to the nation was the existence of a highly unfavorable military situation in South Vietnam brought about by the massive North Vietnamese invasion. As reported in the press, the northern provinces were in danger of being overrun, control of the Central Highlands was being contested, and the situation northwest of Saigon in the vicinity of An Loc was of deep concern. After a month of hard fighting the South Vietnamese were still in control

of the overall situation, but this was due primarily to the stepped-up U. S. air and naval attacks against North Vietnam. During a May 9 news conference Mr. Kissinger repeatedly alluded to the seriousness of the situation and told reporters that the only safe conclusion to make at that moment was that the outcome of the situation was uncertain.¹⁵

President Nixon had repeatedly assured Americans that if the Paris negotiations failed, the only other honorable alternative which would insure success was his Vietnamization plan. As President Johnson had incurred a giant credibility gap because of the Tet offensive, so now was President Nixon facing the possibility of incurring a similar problem because of this latest North Vietnamese offensive. Because of this development, Mr. Nixon began to draw criticism from all quarters. The Democrats in Congress renewed their demands for immediate withdrawal with increased vigor, campus demonstrations began to start up again, support by other nations was slow in coming, and even the "silent majority" began to question the wisdom of his past actions. For the President, the nation, and the rest of the world, it was a situation which demanded some

¹⁵U. S., Department of State, "Presidential Assistant Kissinger Discusses Considerations Leading to President Nixon's New Decisions on Viet-Nam," The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LXVI, No. 1718 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 757.

type of action along with a public statement of what was to be done.

The May 8 address constituted the President's response to the situation. As was the case in the other speeches discussed, the President identified the exigence for his audience in his address. He began the speech with a statement about the invasion, condemned the North Vietnamese for it, and implicated those nations who were providing them with supplies. Although he did not choose to describe the situation as bleak as it actually was (presumably to maintain some degree of confidence by the public in South Vietnam's armed forces), he did explain it as a serious one which demanded further action.

The Constraints

The major constraints facing President Nixon were basically these:

(1) The Paris negotiations had fallen apart; something had to be done to get them going again.

(2) As a result of the North Vietnamese offensive, American lives were in danger, the Vietnamization program was in trouble, and the defeat of South Vietnam had become a distinct possibility.

(3) Neither the American public nor the administration wanted to be inadvertently pushed into armed conflict with the Soviets or the Chinese.

(4) The credibility of the United States as a world power willing to defend her treaty commitments was at stake.

(5) It was highly desirable that any action taken meet with the general approval of the American public.

Faced with these constraints, the President was forced with the difficult problem of taking some type of action which would be effective and at the same time not too drastic, and also of how to present his case to the audience. The action he decided upon was to take those measures he considered necessary to stop the flow of supplies into North Vietnam in the hope that the result would be a logistical problem with which the North Vietnamese could not cope. The rhetorical strategy he chose was to explain the situation and the reasons for his decision in detail, followed by a plea to all concerned for support.

President Nixon began his speech by outlining selected events in history which led up to the crisis. Once he had dealt with the details of the problem, he continued by commenting on abortive attempts by the United States to negotiate with the North Vietnamese. The purpose of this tactic was two-fold: To establish a historical justification for his decision and to place the blame for the crisis directly on North Vietnam and those of her allies which were providing her with materiel support.

The President was now ready to present to his audience his justifications for his decision. These he

identified as "the only two issues left for us in the war":

First, in the face of a massive invasion do we stand by, jeopardize the lives of 60,000 Americans, and leave the South Vietnamese to a long night of terror? This will not happen. We shall do whatever is required to safeguard American lives and American honor.

Second, in the face of complete intransigence at the conference table do we join with our enemy to install a Communist government in South Vietnam? This, too, will not happen. We will not cross the line from generosity to treachery.¹⁶

As can be readily discerned, these "two" issues in reality include many sub-issues: Firmness in face of crisis, the physical safety of Americans and South Vietnamese, treaty commitments, and the moral issue of honor--all of which were of varying degrees of importance to the American public.

Working within this framework, the President next chose to demonstrate to his audience that the thought process leading to his decision was logical, that he had indeed considered alternate solutions to the problem. To do this he used the technique of outlining those courses of action which were seriously considered. The three he presented were: (1) an immediate withdrawal of all American forces, (2) continued attempts at negotiation, and (3) decisive military action.¹⁷ By outlining the advantages and disadvantages of each, he was thus able to introduce

¹⁶The New York Times, May 9, 1972, cols. 2-3, p. 18.

¹⁷Ibid.

and re-introduce many of his constraints. The first course of action was rejected on the grounds that it would doom the South Vietnamese to a life of "tyranny and terror," would leave the United States with no bargaining leverage to guarantee the return of American prisoners of war, and would invite similar aggression by the Communists all over the world. The second, negotiation, was rejected on the demonstrated unwillingness of the enemy to negotiate. This form of elimination left only the third--decisive military action. While again repeating many of the constraints, Mr. Nixon presented this as being the only course of action considered that would bring peace, a condition for which Americans had a great desire.¹⁸

Having presented these considerations to his audience, the President announced that he had decided in favor of the third course of action. He then proceeded to outline the military measures to be taken and the conditions under which they would be ceased.

The President now turned to the task of convincing the American people that this course of action was appropriate. Many of the key phrases which traditionally had proved sound were used: "withdraw with honor"; "end the killing"; "bring our POW's home"; "works of healing and of peace."

¹⁸The New York Times, May 9, 1972, cols. 3-4, p. 18.

The concluding remarks were directed individually to each of the major parties on both sides involved in the Vietnam war. In addition to adding a personal touch to his speech, this tactic was presumably used to allow the President to comment directly to what he considered to be the two most critical portions of his audience: Soviet leadership and the American public. His remarks to the Soviet Union are particularly interesting. It should be recalled that a major constraint was the need to avoid any armed conflict with either the Chinese Communists or the Soviet Union, especially the latter. The President, although recognizing the necessity to take some action in the face of crisis, wanted to minimize the risk of taunting the Russians into taking counter-measures which might eventually plunge the two nations into an unwanted nuclear war.

With this objective in mind the President constructed this portion of his speech on a base of diplomatic rhetoric, avoiding the use of terms which the Russian leaders could interpret as threatening or "saber-rattling." The comments are especially interesting in that they are clearly a persuasive attempt (as opposed to a demand) to convince the Soviets that they should not become further involved. Anticipating the arguments of those Russian "hawks" who might have access to Soviet Chairman Brezhnev, President Nixon presented what he hoped would be interpreted as rational counterpoints:

We recognize the right of the Soviet Union to defend its interests when they are threatened. The Soviet Union in turn must recognize our right to defend our interests.

No Soviet soldiers are threatened in Viet-Nam. Sixty thousand Americans are threatened. We expect you to help your allies, and you cannot expect us to do other than to continue to help our allies.

After stressing the recent progress that had been made between the two nations, the President ended this portion of the address with a call for restraint in the mutual interest of peace.¹⁹

Before leaving the subject of constraints, I would like to point out what it is felt to be two deliberate omissions. The first is the absence of any attempt to justify the war for reasons of a threat to national security--a justification which in past war crisis speeches was always used. The reason for its omission was that both the Johnson and Nixon administrations had been unable to convince the majority of Americans that this was a viable issue. Hence, President Nixon relied heavily in his speech on the two aspects he knew the American public would respond favorably to: increasing the chances for peace and the safety of Americans already there.

The second omission is any direct mention of the increased risk of a nuclear conflict with the Soviets if they chose to challenge the blockade. Although a great number of Americans suspected that such a threat existed,

¹⁹The New York Times, May 9, 1972, col. 8, p. 18.

it is reasonable to assume that the thought escaped a great many others. The President chose, wisely I believe, not to channel thinking in this direction.

His concluding remarks to the American public constituted a strong appeal for support for his decision in the name of peace. It is probably not happenstance that this word was used six times in the last forty-five seconds of the address. His key position was one commonly used by American Presidents in times of war crises: the hope that the actions to be taken would "win the kind of peace that will last."²⁰

The Audience

To review Bitzer's concept, a rhetorical audience consists only of those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse and of being mediators of change.²¹ As was the case in the other speeches, the foreign audience was made up primarily of the leaders of the other nations somehow involved in the conflict. In his address, President Nixon specifically addressed the leaders of North Vietnam and the Soviet Union. The former had the capability, if they were so willing, to put an immediate end to the conflict. The latter were important, not only because

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric, January, 1968, pp. 7-8.

they were crucial to the success of the forthcoming summit meeting and the ongoing strategic arms limitations (SALT) talks, but also because they could expedite the end of the war by using their constructive influence with the North Vietnamese and by drastically reducing their shipments of supplies to North Vietnam. Of course, the area of highest concern to the United States was that the Soviets respect the blockade.

The remarks to the South Vietnamese were directed to the citizenry as a whole. In reality, they were meant more for the government and the armed forces of that nation. The one thing that the Vietnamese were afraid of was that the Americans would withdraw before they were ready to assume the military burden of the war alone. At the time the invasion took place the Vietnamese had for all practical purposes reached that point on the ground. But they were not yet quite ready in terms of providing adequate air support. Also, in the precarious situation that existed, for purposes of morale the South Vietnamese armed forces needed reassurance that they still had the backing of the United States. Mr. Nixon provided that reassurance by word and deed.

Of interest is that Mr. Nixon chose not to address directly the Communist Chinese. Instead, they were included in the category of "other nations, especially those allied with North Vietnam." That they were of concern was alluded

to by Mr. Kissinger in a news conference which he held on May 9. Nonetheless, it is presumed that the potential Chinese threat, as compared to that posed by the Soviets, was judged to be significantly lower.

Using Bitzer's concept of "rhetorical audience," in the case of some Presidential addresses to the nation it is possible to argue that the general American public is not part of the audience because they are not able to mediate change. In these instances the President is simply fulfilling his responsibility to keep the nation informed. Such was not the case, however, with the May 8 speech. As the resignation of President Johnson bore witness to, public opinion with regard to the Vietnam war was indeed a powerful tool--especially in the hands of liberal Congressmen. But it was President Nixon who gave weight to the concept of a "silent majority"; it was they who gave him support; and it was to them that the speech was primarily directed.

The Orator

To attempt to judge what influence President Nixon personally had on the rhetorical situation, it is first necessary to get a picture of how he appeared to the majority of the American public. Unfortunately, this author was unable to locate any good sources of information originating about the time of the crisis. However, a national survey commissioned by Newsweek and conducted by the Gallup

organization about three months after the crisis is believed to be fairly reliable. To quote from Newsweek:

"Modern, forward-looking," "sticks to his principles" . . . has generated a Presidential aura that has won him the respect, though probably still not the love, of large numbers of his countrymen.

He may not arouse great fervor, but he has come to epitomize a certain safe and solid competence. The cheers he inspires may not raise any roofs but they are cheers nonetheless--for both his performance and his personality.²²

Of the above statements the most pertinent to the part he played in the rhetorical situation is that regarding the public's view of his competence--"safe and solid." This is not to say that the "silent majority" did not have any criticisms of President Nixon. The point, however, is that in a time of crisis they felt that he could be trusted. This was reaffirmed in the minds of many as his image and voice were projected before them on May 8. He spoke slowly and clearly without a trace of anxiety in his voice. His expression radiated concern and sincerity, but he did not appear worried.²³ To those who supported him before the speech, and even to others whose support was wavering, in a time of crisis he was their man.

Conclusion

The invasion of South Vietnam by her neighbor to the north coupled with the failure of the peace negotiators

²²"What America Really Thinks of Nixon," Newsweek, August 28, 1972, p. 16.

²³Personal observation of author.

in Paris presented President Nixon with one basic task that he had to accomplish. This problem was the necessity to take action which would slow down the momentum of the attacking North Vietnamese to the point that the security of American bases in the south would not be jeopardized and that the South Vietnamese armed forces would be able to bring the situation under control. His decision that the United States would continue the bombing and mine the harbors of North Vietnam offered a good chance of resolving this task. Once the President made the announcement in favor of offensive military action, the additional task of convincing Communist China and the Soviet Union (primarily the latter) that they should not become further involved was created. This he attempted to resolve through the use of persuasive rhetoric.

Since his response to these tasks also permitted a continuance of both the withdrawal of American forces and the transferral of combat responsibility over to the South Vietnamese, it is the opinion of this author that the May 8, 1972, address by President Nixon was a fitting response to the rhetorical situation in existence.

EFFECT OF PRESIDENT NIXON'S SPEECH ON PUBLIC OPINION

As was the case in the other speeches discussed, the President's popularity rating with the public increased after the crisis. In a Gallup poll taken in late March,

1972, 53% of the American public approved of the way that President Nixon was handling the duties of his office. On the next Gallup survey taken during the last week of May, Nixon received approval from 61% of the American people.²⁴ Part of this increase, however, was probably due to the President's summit meeting in Russia which began on May 23.

More indicative in this particular case were the results of two Gallup surveys dealing with the question, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way President Nixon is handling the situation in Vietnam?" In an April 21-24 survey, 48% of those interviewed approved, 44% disapproved, and 8% expressed no opinion.²⁵ In the first Gallup survey to be taken after the May 8th speech (May 26-29), 53% approved, 38% disapproved, and 9% expressed no opinion.²⁶ Sadly enough, no Gallup poll was taken immediately after Nixon's speech; therefore, on the basis of this organization's results it is impossible to tell if the 53% approval figure is truly representative of public support for Nixon's decision immediately after his address to the nation. Based on a Harris poll published on May 14, there is reason to believe that the Ebbinghaus Effect--where as time

²⁴Gallup Opinion Index, Report No. 84, June, 1972, citing statistics from surveys conducted during the periods March 24-27, 1972, and May 26-29, 1972.

²⁵Gallup Opinion Index, Report No. 83, May, 1972.

²⁶Gallup Opinion Index, Report No. 84, June, 1972.

progresses, a change in public opinion tends to regress toward that level at which it was prior to the action which produced the change--was taking place by late May. For example, the Harris poll, which asked the question, "Do you approve of the mining of North Vietnamese harbors," indicated 59% approval by Americans, 24% disapproval, and 17% who were not sure.²⁷

Although the poll results are clear and fairly easy to interpret, such is not the case with the American press. In general, most of the newspapers and magazines who were critical of his Vietnam policy prior to the mining of North Vietnam's harbors remained critical after that action and vice versa.

Based on the evidence which has been uncovered, it is concluded that there was a shift in public opinion in the direction that President Nixon desired. The amount of this shift is more difficult to pinpoint. Using the April 21-24 Gallup survey results of 47% public approval as a base for comparison, the May 26-29 Gallup survey shows a 6% rise and the Harris poll, published on May 14, indicates a 12% rise. The advantage of the Harris poll percentage (versus that of the second Gallup survey) is that it was obtained almost immediately after the President's address. Its disadvantage is that the question asked differs

²⁷The New York Times, May 14, 1972, col. 8, p. 28.

slightly in context from that asked in the April 21-24 Gallup survey. For example, it is reasonable to assume that a person could approve of the mining action and still not be satisfied with the President's handling of the Vietnam situation. For this reason, the more conservative 6% figure is accepted for this study as representing the amount of shift in public opinion--despite this author's hunch that the shift which actually occurred was slightly more.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

GENERAL

The objective of this chapter is to synthesize the data presented in Chapters 2-5 in order to answer the question, "How has the persuasive rhetoric used by Presidents in times of war crisis affected public opinion?" In this regard, the dimensions of special interest are the direction and the amount of public opinion change.

HYPOTHESIS 1

The first hypothesis of the thesis was that providing the rhetoric employed by the President is appropriate to the situation, his public support will increase over that prior to the crisis.

To arrive at a conclusion as to the probable validity of this hypothesis, two questions must be answered. The first of these is, "Were each of the Presidential addresses appropriate/fitting responses to the war crisis situations in existence at the time?" Using Bitzer's concept of rhetorical situation, it was concluded that each of the Presidential addresses can be considered to be an appropriate/fitting response. The caveat that was applied to

President Johnson's Tonkin Gulf address is that it was rhetorically weak in its appeal to the Russians and the Communist Chinese to not become further involved in the war; however, this weakness is not of import to a shift in American public opinion.

The second question that must be answered is, "Does sufficient evidence exist in each instance to clearly indicate that public opinion shifted in the direction desired by the President?" Editorial comment appearing in the nation's press and magazines immediately after the crisis is of some assistance in providing proof that public opinion shifted in this direction. For example, in the case of Presidents Roosevelt, Kennedy, and Johnson, editorial comment was overwhelmingly in favor of the President's decisions. Such comment is not helpful, however, in the case of President Nixon since most of the newspapers and magazines which were critical of his Vietnam policy prior to the mining of North Vietnam's harbors remained critical after that action, and vice versa.

Statistical evidence of a favorable shift in public opinion is provided by the results of public opinion polls.¹ For example, President Roosevelt received overwhelming public approval on three issues he advocated in

¹Columns 1-5 of Appendix B2 (Summary of Results of Research) (Comparison of Opinion Polls) provide a comparative summary of the results of public opinion polls.

his speech: forbidding defense strikes, a fifty-hour work week with no overtime pay, and limiting profits. President Johnson's approval rating on his handling of the situation in Vietnam rose 19% in one poll taken immediately after his speech and 30% in another. President Nixon, who had received a rating of only 48% on the same issue prior to the crisis, gained the approval of 59% of those interviewed for his decision to mine North Vietnam's harbors. Finally, on the one survey issue that can be applied to all of the Presidents--public approval of how they were handling their duties--the ratings that each received after his address was higher than that prior to it.²

Considering the combined evidence of editorial comment in the printed media and the results of public opinion surveys, it is concluded that the rhetoric used by the Presidents in times of war crisis affected a change in public opinion in the direction desired by the Presidents.

The question that must now be asked is, "To what extent can this conclusion be generalized?" This author is of the opinion that the crises selected are sufficiently varied in nature³ to permit the conclusion to be consistently used with a high degree of assurance of its validity.

²President Roosevelt's popularity rating rose from 73% to 84%; Kennedy's, from 62% to 74%; Johnson's from 72% to 75%; and Nixon's, from 53% to 61%.

³For a comparison of the nature of the crises, see columns 1-2 of Appendix B1 (Comparison of Crises).

HYPOTHESIS 2

The second hypothesis of the thesis was that the nature of the crisis and the mood of the nation at the time of the crisis are major determinants of the amount of increased public support the President will receive for his decision. In order to arrive at a conclusion as to the probable validity of this hypothesis, a comparison of these factors as they applied to each crisis will be made. Based on this comparison, the author will forecast what he thinks the public opinion statistics will show. This forecast will then be compared to the actual statistics to test its validity.

Nature of the Crises

Of the crises considered, the Pearl Harbor and the Cuban Missile Crises are judged to be the two most serious. Japan's declaration of war on the United States, accompanied by her attack on Pearl Harbor, clearly constituted a formidable threat to the security of the United States. This threat was of such magnitude that for most Americans the only acceptable response was war. Although the Russian deployment of offensive weapons to Cuba did not by itself demand a war response, it, too, constituted an awesome threat to the nation's security. The seriousness of this threat was greatly heightened because nuclear weapons were involved.

Of the remaining two crises--the incidents in the Tonkin Gulf and the mining of North Vietnam's harbors--the latter is considered to be the more serious. The primary reason for this judgment is that the possibility that the United States would end up in a direct confrontation with Russia and/or Communist China is believed to have been much higher in the latter. According to the "ethics of war," the United States' reaction to the North Vietnamese attack on its vessels in international waters is considered a justifiable escalation. However, a response which directly affects other nations not involved in the actual fighting, as was the case with the actions taken by President Nixon, places a strain on those "ethical limits." This is especially true when a state of war has not been formally declared.

In review, the Pearl Harbor and Cuban Missile Crises are considered to have been the most serious in nature, the mining of North Vietnam's harbors as the next most serious, and the Tonkin Gulf Crisis as being the least serious. As related to the amount of opinion change that occurred, this conclusion compares favorably with the results of the surveys taken on the popularity rating of the President. Mr. Roosevelt's rating rose 11%; Kennedy's, 12%; Nixon's, 6%; and Johnson's, 3%.⁴ Unfortunately, no

⁴See columns 1-5 of Appendix B2.

other public opinion polls taken allow such a comparison. The ramifications of this will be discussed later in detail.

Mood of the Nation

The next determinant for consideration is the mood of the American at the time the crises occurred. Any analysis of this matter must eventually concern itself with the question of how attuned psychologically the nation had become toward the possibility of having to go to war (or to become further enmeshed in one). Involved therein are two interacting elements: (1) the public's perception of the threat posed by the enemy to the national security/interests of the United States; and (2) its perception of the seriousness of the incident which prompted the crisis.

The public's perception of the threat the enemy poses to the national security/interests of the nation is formed over a period of time by historical events occurring prior to the crisis. For example, by late October of 1941, Americans judged the past actions of the Japanese in the Pacific to be so inimical to the national interest that 64% of those polled approved of taking immediate steps to prevent Japan from becoming more powerful, even at the risk of war.⁵ Many Americans had reached the point of hoping that something would happen to provide an excuse for the United States to take some type of decisive action against Japan;

⁵See columns 1-5 of Appendix B2.

they were psychologically ready for war even before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

The second element--the public's perception of the seriousness of the incident which prompted the crisis--is that which can serve to quickly heighten the desires of the public to take action against another nation, regardless of their previous opinion regarding the threat posed by that nation. For example, prior to the Tonkin Gulf Incident, many Americans found it difficult to view North Vietnam as posing a serious threat to their security, and would not have lent their support to direct U. S. military action against that nation. This attitude quickly changed when the North Vietnamese twice attacked our destroyers in international waters. Americans became angry overnight and their pride was hurt. As a consequence, most of them readily accepted President Nixon's decision, even though they realized that the United States might end up in a war as a result of it.⁶

Taking the interaction of these two elements into consideration, a forecast of the relative amount of opinion change that should have occurred based solely on the moods of the nation is as follows: The greatest amount of opinion change is expected to have occurred as a result of the Pearl Harbor and Cuban Missile Crises, the next greatest amount

⁶See columns 1 and 5 of Appendix B2.

as a result of the Tonkin Gulf Crisis, and the least amount as a result of the mining of North Vietnam's harbors. The moods of the nation at the time of incidents prompting the Pearl Harbor and Cuban Missile Crises is estimated to be of about equal intensity because in both instances the public viewed the enemy as representing a serious threat to the security of the United States, and in both instances they viewed the incidents prompting the crisis as also quite serious. The reasons that many Americans were susceptible to being persuaded in favor of direct military action against the enemy, even at the risk of war, subsequent to the incidents in the Tonkin Gulf is explained in the preceding paragraph. It is felt that the nation was least psychologically attuned to the possibility of going to war as a result of the mining of North Vietnam's harbors for two reasons. The first is that by the time the North Vietnamese began their full-scale invasion across the demilitarized zone into South Vietnam in April, 1972, a sizeable portion of the American public had decided that the North Vietnamese did not pose a significant threat to the security of the United States. Having made this decision, nothing short of an annihilation of U. S. forces in South Vietnam could have changed many minds. Secondly, it was difficult for many Americans to view the North Vietnamese invasion as being an extremely serious incident. In fact, many were not even sure that the President was telling them the truth.

Based on the results of the poll taken on the popularity rating of the Presidents, the ranking of the first two crises based on the mood of the American public is upheld. Presidents Roosevelt and Kennedy received the highest amounts of opinion change--11% and 12%, respectively. The second half of the forecast is not upheld, however, since President Johnson received only 3% as compared to the 8% received by President Nixon. As was earlier pointed out, this is the only area in which polls were taken that permits a comparison of the amount of public opinion change occurring in the four crises treated in this thesis.

Discussion of Evidence Related to Hypothesis 2

Although sufficient evidence exists to provide a clear indication of the direction of change in opinion resulting from the war crisis addresses, this author has encountered several problems in attempting to reach a conclusion concerning the relative amount of opinion change that took place. One major problem is that of all the survey issues upon which polls were taken, the only one that can be applied to all of the crises considered in this thesis is the popularity rating of the Presidents. Polls were taken on more useful survey issues, but these issues were not treated by the survey organizations in every crisis. For example, a useful question that was asked prior to and immediately after the two crises involving the North Vietnamese was, "Do you approve of the President's handling

of the situation in Vietnam?" No questions of a similar nature were asked both before and after the Pearl Harbor and Cuban Missile Crises. Hence, the difficulty in making a comparative analysis.

Another major problem is that the popularity rating of a President is not an especially good issue upon which to solely base a conclusion of the amount of opinion change resulting from a war crisis address. Involved in that issue is the public's opinion of the President's performance in a host of other areas besides his handling of a crisis; e.g., keeping the economy healthy, handling race problems, getting Congress to act, keeping corruption out of government, implementing other foreign policy, etc.

The third major problem arose when this author came to the realization that the amount of opinion change that occurred was somewhat affected by the percentage level of public opinion on an issue just prior to the occurrence of a crisis. The reason for this is that in the vast majority of all situations there appears to be an upper percentage limit, short of 100%, beyond which public approval will not go. Stated another way, it appears that regardless of what a President says or does, there is a certain percentage of the American public that will not support him. If this is true, then the higher the percentage of public approval the President has on any issue before a crisis, the lesser the percentage of people there are left

for him to persuade. This is an extremely important consideration when attempting to interpret relative amounts of change in public opinion. This can be translated into reality when considering the popularity ratings received by Presidents Johnson and Nixon. Prior to the war crises Johnson and Nixon had popularity ratings of 72% and 53%, respectively; after their speeches they attained ratings of 75% and 61%, reflecting a respective change of 3% and 8%. Assuming that most of the change could be attributed to their handling of the crises, the tendency would be to conclude that Nixon "out-persuaded" Johnson by 5%. More useful statistics suggest the contrary. One poll taken on President Johnson's handling of the situation in Vietnam indicates that he was able to persuade 19% of those interviewed (from 52% to 72%). Another polling organization gave him a favorable opinion change of 30% (from 42% to 72%). In a poll taken on the same issue, it was found that President Nixon was able to change the minds of only 8% of those interviewed (from 53% to 61%). Why the discrepancy? It is suggested that on the popularity rating prior to the occurrence of the crisis, Mr. Johnson was already near the "upper limit" and that Mr. Nixon potentially had a longer way to go.

Incidentally, this same discrepancy is just one more reason that this author cannot with confidence arrive at a conclusion as to the probable validity of the second

hypothesis using only the survey results pertaining to the popularity rating of the Presidents. Again, the problem is that this is the only issue that was treated before and after all of the speeches considered in this thesis.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The question to be answered in this thesis was, "How does the rhetoric used by the Presidents in times of war crisis affect public opinion?" Based on the conclusion reached on the first hypothesis, a partial answer which can be given is that providing the rhetoric employed by the President is appropriate to the situation, the public support rendered to him will represent an increase over that which he had prior to his address.

In this regard, if a situation had been encountered in which the response to the war crises was not appropriate to the situation it might have supported the obverse conclusion that if the rhetoric employed by the President is not appropriate to the situation, the public support rendered to him will represent a decrease over that which he had prior to the crisis. Since no such response was encountered, however, this conclusion cannot be made with certainty.

Because of the inadequacy of the evidence available, it was not possible to reach a conclusion as to the probable validity of the second hypothesis. Nonetheless, this author still believes that the nature of the crisis and the mood of

the nation at the time of the crisis are major determinants of the amount of increased public support that the President will receive for his decision. To anyone with enough interest to tackle the problem further, this author recommends that three criteria be adhered to in the selection of the crises for analysis. First, the crises should be varied enough in nature to permit a generalization of the conclusion(s) reached. Second, appropriate statistics resulting from polls taken a relatively short time prior to and after the crises should be available. In this regard, appropriate statistics should result from a survey dealing with a question similar to the following: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way the President is handling the situation in _____?" Finally, the percentage level of public approval on the polling question prior to the occurrence of each crisis should be approximately the same. This will avoid the "upper limit of public approval" problem.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT OCCURRENCES,
JANUARY 1-MAY 8, 1972

Jan. 25: President Richard M. Nixon delivers radio-television address to nation revealing existence and substance of secret peace talks and advances a new peace proposal, consisting of:

- An immediate cease-fire.
- The exchange of all prisoners of war.
- The withdrawal of all U. S. forces within six months.
- Internationally-supervised elections with all political elements, including the Communists, participating in and helping to run the elections.
- Resignation of the President and Vice President of South Vietnam one month before such elections.

Jan. 26: U. S. sends message to Hanoi indicating readiness to resume private negotiations.

Feb. 14: Hanoi indicates willingness to meet at any time after March 14.

Feb. 17: U. S. accepts Hanoi's proposal and suggests date of March 20.

Feb. 29: Hanoi accepts date of March 20.

Feb. 21-27: President Nixon visits Communist China.

Mar. 6: Hanoi postpones March 20 meeting until April 15.

Mar. 13: U. S. makes counterproposal of April 24. (April 15 unsuitable because of scheduled trip by Mr. Kissinger to Japan.)

Mar. 23: Ambassador William J. Porter interrupts plenaries due to lack of response by North Vietnamese to March 13 message.

March 27: Hanoi accepts date of April 24, contingent on U. S. returning to the plenary sessions.

Mar. 31: Message to Hanoi drafted by U. S. agreeing to resume plenary sessions on April 13, and confirming secret meeting date of April 24.

Mar. 31: - Approximate date the major North Vietnamese ground offensive through the demilitarized zone begins.

Apr. (general): Six messages exchanged between Washington and Hanoi. All revolve around the question of which should be held first--a plenary session or a secret session.

Apr. 2: Easter Sunday. U. S. message based on March 31 draft sent to Hanoi. Administration becomes certain that North Vietnamese invasion is underway.

Apr. 20-24: Mr. Kissinger visits Moscow to arrange for forthcoming summit meeting. Soviet leaders encourage resumption of negotiations.

Apr. 25: President makes radio-television address to nation. Announces continuation of troop withdrawals, directs Ambassador Porter to return to plenary sessions, and continuation of U. S. air and naval attacks on North Vietnam until invasion ceases.

Apr. 27: Plenaries resumed in Paris with 148th session taking place.

May 2: Mr. Kissinger meets with Le Duc Tho in Paris at resumption of secret sessions. North Vietnamese refuse to discuss any U. S. proposal, and instead demand as necessary occurrences for a cease-fire on their part that:

- The President of South Vietnam resign.
- The "machinery of oppression" of the South Vietnamese government be disbanded.
- The pacification program be stopped.
- The Vietnamization program be stopped.
- All political prisoners be released.
- A government composed of those who favor "peace, independence, neutrality, and democracy" be formed in South Vietnam.

May 4: 149th plenary session. Ambassador Porter again interrupts plenaries due to North Vietnamese intransigence.

May 8: President Nixon makes radio-television address to nation, announcing the mining of Haiphong Harbor and other measures designed to interdict the delivery of war supplies to North Vietnam by other nations.

APPENDIX B

SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF RESEARCH

B1. COMPARISON OF CRISES

(1)
CRISIS

(2)
NATURE OF CRISIS

(3)
MOOD OF NATION

PEARL
HARBOR

Involved a deliberate and overt attack on U. S. territory; thousands of Americans killed or wounded; Japan declared war on United States; perceived threat to national security extremely high; U. S. response was war.

(Very Serious)

Toward Japanese: Considered as guilty of aggression in the Pacific; considered as enemy of U. S. because of alliance with Axis powers; seen as threat to national security.

Toward incident: Viewed as extremely serious and as one which demanded a war response.

CUBAN
MISSILE

Involved threat of nuclear attack on the United States; one American pilot killed; no war declared, but involved direct confrontation with Russia; perceived threat to national security extremely high; threat of nuclear war very high.

(Very Serious)

Toward Russia: Considered as adversary of United States for long period of time; thought of as being a world power; seen as a constant threat to the national security.

Toward incident: Viewed as extremely serious and as one which demanded some type of decisive response.

B1. COMPARISON OF CRISES (continued)

(1)
CRISIS

(2)
NATURE OF CRISIS

(3)
MOOD OF NATION

TONKIN
GULF

Involved a direct attack on U. S. ships and personnel in international waters; no American casualties; perceived threat to national security in terms of principle of freedom of the seas considered high; ultimate threat that U. S. would become involved in a war considered as least probable of the four crises considered.

(Least Serious)

HAIPHONG
HARBOR

Crisis initiated by U. S. in response to North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam; undeclared war in existence; possibility existed that U. S. might end up in direct confrontation with Russia or Communist China.

(Serious)

Toward North Vietnamese: Considered an enemy of the U. S., but not a serious one; not thought of as a powerful nation, but had backing of Russia and Communist China.

Toward incidents: First attack viewed as a possible mistake; second attack viewed as deliberate; viewed as serious and as one which demanded a decisive response.

Toward North Vietnamese: By this time considered as an enemy by most, but large segment of American population did not view as a serious threat to national security.

Toward incident: North Vietnamese invasion considered as serious; many Americans approved of U. S. response and many did not; all viewed response as serious.

B2. COMPARISON OF OPINION POLLS
(Percentage of Public Approval)

(4) <u>SURVEY ISSUE</u>	(5) ROOSEVELT (Dec. 7, '41)		(6) KENNEDY (Oct. 22, '62)		(7) JOHNSON (Aug. 4, '64)		(8) NIXON (May 9, '72)	
	<u>Before Crisis</u>	<u>After Crisis</u>	<u>Before Crisis</u>	<u>After Crisis</u>	<u>Before Crisis</u>	<u>After Crisis</u>	<u>Before Crisis</u>	<u>After Crisis</u>
President Popular- ity Rating	73%	84%	62%	74%	72%	75%	53%	61%
Handling Situation in Vietnam					52%	71%	48%	53%

					42%	72%		
Mining of North Vietnamese Harbors								59%
Taking Some Type of Action Against Cuba			52%					
Taking Immediate Steps to Prevent Japan from Becoming More Powerful, Even at the Risk of War	64%							
Forbidding Defense Strikes		87%						
50-hour Work Week with No Overtime Pay		80%						
Limiting Profits		79%						

APPENDIX C

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S WAR CRISIS ADDRESS, DECEMBER 9, 1941¹

My fellow-Americans:

The sudden criminal attacks perpetrated by the Japanese in the Pacific provide the climax of a decade of international immorality.

Powerful and resourceful gangsters have banded together to make war upon the whole human race. Their challenge has now been flung at the United States of America. The Japanese have treacherously violated the long-standing peace between us. Many American soldiers and sailors have been killed by enemy action. American ships have been sunk; American airplanes have been destroyed.

The Congress and the people of the United States have accepted that challenge.

Together with other free peoples, we are now fighting to maintain our right to live among our world neighbors in freedom and in common decency, without fear of assault.

I have prepared the full record of our past relations with Japan, and it will be submitted to the Congress. It begins with the visit of Commodore Perry to Japan eighty-eight years ago. It ends with the visit of two Japanese emissaries to the Secretary of State last Sunday, an hour after Japanese forces had loosed their bombs and machine guns against our flag, our forces and our citizens.

I can say with utmost confidence that no Americans today or a thousand years hence need feel anything but pride in our patience and in our efforts through all the years toward achieving a peace in the Pacific would be fair and honorable to every nation, large or small. And no honest person, today or a thousand years hence, will be able to suppress a sense of indignation and horror at the treachery committed by the military dictators of Japan under the very shadow of the flag of peace borne by their special envoys in our midst.

The course that Japan has followed for the past ten years in Asia has paralleled the course of Hitler and Mussolini in Europe and in Africa. Today, it has become far more than a parallel. It is collaboration, actual collaboration, so

¹Recording transcription, The New York Times, December 10, 1941, p. 1, cols. 506 and p. 4, cols. 206. (Note: Newspaper subtitles placed in square brackets.)

well calculated that all the continents of the world, and all the oceans, are now considered by the Axis strategists as one gigantic battlefield.

In 1931, ten years ago, Japan invaded Manchukuo--without warning.

In 1935, Italy invaded Ethiopia--without warning.

In 1938, Hitler occupied Austria--without warning.

In 1939, Hitler invaded Czecho-Slovakia--without warning.

Later in 1939, Hitler invaded Poland--without warning.

In 1940, Hitler invaded Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg--without warning.

In 1940, Italy attacked France and later Greece--without warning.

And in this year, 1941, the Axis Powers attacked Yugoslavia and Greece and they dominated the Balkans--without warning.

In 1941 also, Hitler invaded Russia--without warning.

And now Japan has attacked Malaya and Thailand--and the United States--without warning.

It is all of one pattern.

We are now in this war. We are all in it--all the way. Every single man, woman and child is a partner in the most tremendous undertaking of our American history. We must share together the bad news and the good news, the defeats and the victories--the changing fortunes of war.

So far, the news has been all bad. We have suffered a serious set-back in Hawaii. Our forces in the Philippines, which include the brave people of that commonwealth, are taking punishment, but are defending themselves vigorously. The reports from Guam and Wake and Midway Islands are still confused, but we must be prepared for the announcement that all these three outposts have been seized.

The casualty lists of these first few days will undoubtedly be large. I deeply feel the anxiety of all of the families of the men in our armed forces and the relatives of people in cities which have been bombed. I can only give them my solemn promise that they will get news just as quickly as possible.

This government will put its trust in the stamina of the American people and will give the facts to the public just as soon as two conditions have been fulfilled; first, that the information has been definitely and officially confirmed; and, second, that the release of the information at the time it is received will not prove valuable to the enemy directly or indirectly.

Most earnestly I urge my countrymen to reject all rumors. These ugly little hints of complete disaster fly thick and fast in wartime. They have to be examined and appraised.

As an example, I can tell you frankly that until further surveys are made, I have not sufficient information to state the exact damage which has been done to our naval vessels at Pearl Harbor. Admittedly the damage is serious. But no

one can say how serious until we know how much of this damage can be repaired and how quickly the necessary repairs can be made.

I cite as another example a statement made on Sunday night that a Japanese carrier had been located and sunk off the Canal Zone. And when you hear statements that are attributed to what they call "an authoritative source," you can be reasonably sure from now on that under these war circumstances the "authoritative source" is not any person in authority.

Many rumors and reports which we now hear originate, of course, with enemy sources. For instance, today the Japanese are claiming that as a result of their one action against Hawaii they have gained naval supremacy in the Pacific. This is an old trick of propaganda which has been used innumerable times by the Nazis. The purposes of such fantastic claims are, of course, to spread fear and confusion among us and to goad us into revealing military information which our enemies are desperately anxious to obtain.

Our government will not be caught in this obvious trap--and neither will the people of the United States.

It must be remembered by each and every one of us that our free and rapid communication these days must be greatly restricted in wartime. It is not possible to receive full, speedy, accurate reports from distant areas of combat. This is particularly true where naval operations are concerned. For in these days of the marvels of radio it is often impossible for the commanders of various units to report their activities by radio, for the very simple reason that this information would become available to the enemy, and would disclose their position and their plan of defense or attack.

[Pledge Concerning Information]

Of necessity there will be delays in officially confirming or denying reports of operations, but we will not hide facts from the country if we know the facts and if the enemy will not be aided by their disclosure.

To all newspapers and radio stations--all those who reach the eyes and ears of the American people--I say this: You have a most grave responsibility to the nation now and for the duration of this war.

If you feel that your government is not disclosing enough of the truth, you have every right to say so. But--in the absence of all the facts, as revealed by official sources--you have no right in the ethics of patriotism to deal out unconfirmed reports in such a way as to make people believe that they are gospel truth.

Every citizen, in every walk of life, shares this same responsibility. The lives of our soldiers and sailors--the whole future of this nation--depend upon the manner in which

each and every one of us fulfills his obligation to our country.

Now a word about the recent past--and the future. A year and a half has elapsed since the fall of France, when the whole world first realized the mechanized might which the Axis nations had been building for so many years. America has used that year and a half to great advantage. Knowing that the attack might reach us in all too short a time, we immediately began greatly to increase our industrial strength and our capacity to meet the demands of modern warfare.

Precious months were gained by sending vast quantities of our war materiel to the nations of the world still able to resist Axis aggression. Our policy rested on the fundamental truth that the defense of any country resisting Hitler or Japan was in the long run the defense of our own country. That policy has been justified. It has given us time, invaluable time, to build our American assembly lines of production.

Assembly lines are now in operation. Others are being rushed to completion. A steady stream of tanks and planes, of guns, ships, and shells and equipment--that is what these eighteen months have given us.

But it is all only a beginning of what still has to be done. We must be set to face a long war against crafty and powerful bandits. The attack at Pearl Harbor can be repeated at any one of many points, points both oceans and along both our coast lines and against all the rest of the hemisphere.

It will not only be a long war, it will be a hard war. That is the basis on which we now lay all our plans. That is the yardstick by which we measure what we shall need and demand money, materials, doubled and quadrupled production--ever increasing. The production must be not only for our own Army and Navy and air forces. It must reinforce the other armies and navies and air forces fighting the Nazis and the war lords of Japan throughout the Americas and throughout the world.

I have been working today on the subject of production. Your government has decided on two broad policies.

The first is to speed up all existing production by working on a seven-day-week basis in every war industry, including the production of essential raw materials.

The second policy, now being put into form, is to rush additions to the capacity of production by building more new plants, by adding to old plants, and by using the many smaller plants for war needs.

Over the hard road of the past months we have at times met obstacles and difficulties, divisions and disputes, indifference and callousness. That is now all past--and, I am sure, forgotten.

The fact is that the country now has an organization in Washington built around men and women who are recognized experts in their own fields. I think the country knows that the people who are actually responsible in each and every one of these many fields are pulling together with a teamwork that has never before been excelled.

On the road ahead there lies hard work--gruelling work--day and night, every hour and every minute.

I was about to add that ahead there lies sacrifice for all of us.

But it is not correct to use that word. The United States does not consider it a sacrifice to do all one can, to give one's best to our nation, when the nation is fighting for its existence and its future life.

It is not a sacrifice for any man, old or young, to be in the Army or the Navy of the United States. Rather is it a privilege.

It is not a sacrifice for the industrialist or the wage-earner, the farmer or the shopkeeper, the trainman or the doctor, to pay more taxes, to buy more bonds, to forego extra profits, to work longer or harder at the task for which he is best fitted. Rather, it is a privilege.

It is not a sacrifice to do without many things to which we are accustomed if the national defense calls for doing without them.

[Summary of Nation's Supplies]

A review this morning leads me to the conclusion that at present we shall not have to curtail the normal use of articles of food. There is enough food today for all of us and enough left over to send to those who are fighting on the same side with us.

But there will be a clear and definite shortage of metals for many kinds for civilian use for the very good reason that in our increased program we shall need for war purposes more than half of that portion of the principal metals which during the past year have gone into articles for civilian use. Yes, we shall have to give up many things entirely.

And I am sure that the people in every part of the nation are prepared in their individual living to win this war. I am sure that they will cheerfully help to pay a large part of its financial cost while it goes on. I am sure they will cheerfully give up those material things that they are asked to give up.

And I am sure that they will retain all those great spiritual things without which we cannot win through.

I repeat that the United States can accept no result save victory, final and complete. Not only must the shame of Japanese treachery be wiped out, but the sources of international brutality, wherever they exist, must be absolutely and finally broken.

In my message to the Congress yesterday I said that we "will make very certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again." In order to achieve that certainty, we must begin the great task that is before us by abandoning once and for all the illusion that we can ever again isolate ourselves from the rest of humanity.

In these past few years--and, most violently, in the past few days--we have learned a terrible lesson.

It is our obligation to our dead--it is our sacred obligation to their children and to our children--that we must never forget what we have learned.

And what we have learned is this:

There is no such thing as security for any nation--or any individual--in a world ruled by the principles of gangsterism.

There is no such thing as impregnable defense against powerful aggressors who sneak up in the dark and strike without warning.

We have learned that our ocean-girt hemisphere is not immune from severe attack--that we cannot measure our safety in terms of miles on any map any more.

[Part of "Dirty Business"]

We may acknowledge that our enemies have performed a brilliant feat of deception, perfectly timed and executed with great skill. It was a thoroughly dishonorable deed, but we must face the fact that modern warfare as conducted in the Nazi manner is a dirty business. We don't like it--we didn't want to get in it--but we are in it and we're going to fight it with everything we've got.

I do not think any American has any doubt of our ability to administer proper punishment to the perpetrators of these crimes.

Your government knows that for weeks Germany has been telling Japan that if Japan did not attack the United States, Japan would not share in dividing the spoils with Germany when peace came. She was promised by Germany that if she came in she would receive the complete and perpetual control of the whole of the Pacific area--and that means not only the Far East, but also all of the islands in the Pacific, and also a stranglehold on the west coast of North and Central and South America.

We now [sic] also that Germany and Japan are conducting their military and naval operations in accordance with a joint plan. That plan considers all peoples and nations which are not helping the Axis powers as common enemies of each and every one of the Axis powers.

That is their simple and obvious grand strategy. That is why the American people must realize that it can be matched only with similar grand strategy.

We must realize, for example, that Japanese successes against the United States in the Pacific are helpful to

German operations in Libya; that any German success against the Caucasus is inevitably an assistance to Japan in her operations against the Dutch East Indies; that a German attack against Algiers or Morocco opens the way to a German attack against South America and the Canal.

[Points to Aid in Fight]

On the other side of the picture, we must learn also to know that guerrilla warfare against the Germans in, let us say, Serbia, or Norway, help us; that a successful Russian offensive against the Germans helps us; and that British success on land or sea in any part of the world strengthen our hands.

Remember always that Germany and Italy, regardless of any formal declaration of war, consider themselves at war with the United States at this moment just as much as they consider themselves at war with Britain or Russia. And Germany puts all the other Republics of the Americas into the same category of enemies. The people of our sister Republics of this Hemisphere can be honored by that fact.

The true goal we seek is far above and beyond the ugly field of battle. When we resort to force, as now we must, we are determined that this force shall be directed toward ultimate good as well as against immediate evil. We Americans are not destroyers--we are builders.

We are now in the midst of a war, not for conquest, not for vengeance, but for a world in which this nation, and all that this nation represents, will be safe for our children. We expect to eliminate the danger from Japan, but it would serve us ill if we accomplished that and found that the rest of the world was dominated by Hitler and Mussolini.

So, we are going to win the war and we are going to win the peace that follows.

And in the difficult hours of this day--and through dark days that may be yet to come--we will know that the vast majority of the members of the human race are on our side. Many of them are fighting with us. All of them are praying for us. For, in representing our cause, we represent theirs as well--our hope and their hope for liberty under God.

APPENDIX D

PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S WAR CRISIS ADDRESS, OCTOBER 22, 1962¹

Good evening, my fellow citizens:

This Government, as promised, has maintained the closest surveillance of the Soviet military buildup on the island of Cuba. Within the past week, unmistakable evidence has established the fact that a series of offensive missile sites is now in preparation on that imprisoned island. The purpose of these bases can be none other than to provide a nuclear strike capability against the Western Hemisphere.

Upon receiving the first preliminary hard information of this nature last Tuesday morning at 9 a.m., I directed that our surveillance be stepped up. And having now confirmed and completed our evaluation of the evidence and our decision on a course of action, this Government feels obliged to report this new crisis to you in fullest detail.

The characteristics of these new missile sites indicate two distinct types of installations. Several of them include medium range ballistic missiles, capable of carrying a nuclear warhead for a distance of more than 1,000 nautical miles. Each of these missiles, in short, is capable of striking Washington, D.C., the Panama Canal, Cape Canaveral, Mexico City, or any other city in the southeastern part of the United States, in Central America, or in the Caribbean area.

Additional sites not yet completed appear to be designed for intermediate range ballistic missiles--capable of traveling more than twice as far--and thus capable of striking most of the major cities in the Western Hemisphere, ranging as far north as Hudson Bay, Canada, and as far south as Lima, Peru. In addition, jet bombers, capable of carrying nuclear weapons, are now being uncrated and assembled in Cuba, while the necessary air bases are being prepared.

This urgent transformation of Cuba into an important strategic base--by the presence of these large, long-range, and clearly offensive weapons of sudden mass destruction--constitutes an explicit threat to the peace and security of all

¹U. S., President, 1961-63 (Kennedy), "Radio and Television Report to the American People on the Soviet Arms Buildup in Cuba. October 22, 1962," Public Papers of the Presidents--John F. Kennedy (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1963), pp. 806-809.

the Americas, in flagrant and deliberate defiance of the Rio Pact of 1947, the traditions of this Nation and hemisphere, the joint resolution of the 87th Congress, the Charter of the United Nations, and my own public warnings to the Soviets on September 4 and 13. This action also contradicts the repeated assurances of Soviet spokesmen, both publicly and privately delivered, that the arms buildup in Cuba would retain its original defensive character, and that the Soviet Union had no need or desire to station strategic missiles on the territory of any other nation.

The size of this undertaking makes clear that it has been planned for some months. Yet only last month, after I had made clear the distinction between any introduction of ground-to-ground missiles and the existence of defensive anti-aircraft missiles, the Soviet Government publicly stated on September 11 that, and I quote, "the armaments and military equipment sent to Cuba are designed exclusively for defensive purposes," that, and I quote the Soviet Government, "there is no need for the Soviet Government to shift its weapons . . . for a retaliatory blow to any other country, for instance Cuba," and that, and I quote their government, "the Soviet Union has so powerful rockets to carry these nuclear warheads that there is no need to search for sites for them beyond the boundaries of the Soviet Union." That statement was false.

Only last Thursday, as evidence of this rapid offensive buildup was already in my hand, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko told me in my office that he was instructed to make it clear once again, as he said his government had already done, that Soviet assistance to Cuba, and I quote, "pursued solely the purpose of contributing to the defense capabilities of Cuba," that, and I quote him, "training by Soviet specialists of Cuban nationals in handling defensive armaments was by no means offensive, and if it were otherwise," Mr. Gromyko went on, "the Soviet Government would never become involved in rendering such assistance." That statement was also false.

Neither the United States of America nor the world community of nations can tolerate deliberate deception and offensive threats on the part of any nation, large or small. We no longer live in a world where only the actual firing of weapons represents a sufficient challenge to a nation's security to constitute maximum peril. Nuclear weapons are so destructive and ballistic missiles are so swift, that any substantially increased possibility of their use or any sudden change in their deployment may well be regarded as a definite threat to peace.

For many years, both the Soviet Union and the United States, recognizing this fact, have deployed strategic nuclear weapons with great care, never upsetting the precarious status quo which insured that these weapons would

not be used in the absence of some vital challenge. Our own strategic missiles have never been transferred to the territory of any other nation under a cloak of secrecy and deception; and our history--unlike that of the Soviets since the end of World War II--demonstrates that we have no desire to dominate or conquer any other nation or impose our system upon its people. Nevertheless, American citizens have become adjusted to living daily on the bull's-eye of Soviet missiles located inside the U.S.S.R. or in submarines.

In that sense, missiles in Cuba add to an already clear and present danger--although it should be noted the nations of Latin America have never previously been subjected to a potential nuclear threat.

But this secret, swift, and extraordinary buildup of Communist missiles--in an area well known to have a special and historical relationship to the United States and the nations of the Western Hemisphere, in violation of Soviet assurances, and in defiance of American and hemispheric policy--this sudden, clandestine decision to station strategic weapons for the first time outside of Soviet soil--is a deliberately provocative and unjustified change in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country, if our courage and our commitments are ever to be trusted again by either friend or foe.

The 1930's taught us a clear lesson: aggressive conduct, if allowed to go unchecked and unchallenged, ultimately leads to war. This nation is opposed to war. We are also true to our word. Our unswerving objective, therefore, must be to prevent the use of these missiles against this or any other country, and to secure their withdrawal or elimination from the Western Hemisphere.

Our policy has been one of patience and restraint, as befits a peaceful and powerful nation, which leads a worldwide alliance. We have been determined not to be diverted from our central concerns by mere irritants and fanatics. But now further action is required--and it is under way; and these actions may only be the beginning. We will not prematurely or unnecessarily risk the costs of worldwide nuclear war in which even the fruits of victory would be ashes in our mouth--but neither will we shrink from that risk at any time it must be faced.

Acting, therefore, in the defense of our own security and of the entire Western Hemisphere, and under the authority entrusted to me by the Constitution as endorsed by the resolution of the Congress, I have directed that the following initial steps be taken immediately:

First: To halt this offensive buildup, a strict quarantine on all offensive military equipment under shipment to Cuba is being initiated. All ships of any kind bound for Cuba from whatever nation or port will, if found to contain cargoes of offensive weapons, be turned back. This quarantine

will be extended, if needed, to other types of cargo and carriers. We are not at this time, however, denying the necessities of life as the Soviets attempted to do in their Berlin blockade of 1948.

Second: I have directed the continued and increased close surveillance of Cuba and its military buildup. The foreign ministers of the OAS, in their communique of October 6, rejected secrecy on such matters in this hemisphere. Should these offensive military preparations continue, thus increasing the threat to the hemisphere, further action will be justified. I have directed the Armed Forces to prepare for any eventualities; and I trust that in the interest of both the Cuban people and the Soviet technicians at the sites, the hazards to all concerned of continuing this threat will be recognized.

Third: It shall be the policy of this Nation to regard any nuclear missile launched from Cuba against any nation in the Western Hemisphere as an attack by the Soviet Union on the United States, requiring a full retaliatory response upon the Soviet Union.

Fourth: As a necessary military precaution, I have reinforced our base at Guantanamo, evacuated today the dependents of our personnel there, and ordered additional military units to be on a standby alert basis.

Fifth: We are calling tonight for an immediate meeting of the Organ of Consultation under the Organization of American States, to consider this threat to hemispheric security and to invoke articles 6 and 8 of the Rio Treaty in support of all necessary action. The United Nations Charter allows for regional security arrangements--and the nations of this hemisphere decided long ago against the military presence of outside powers. Our other allies around the world have also been alerted.

Sixth: Under the Charter of the United Nations, we are asking tonight that an emergency meeting of the Security Council be convoked without delay to take action against this latest Soviet threat to world peace. Our resolution will call for the prompt dismantling and withdrawal of all offensive weapons in Cuba, under the supervision of U.N. observers, before the quarantine can be lifted.

Seventh and finally: I call upon Chairman Khrushchev to halt and eliminate this clandestine, reckless, and provocative threat to world peace and to stable relations between our two nations. I call upon him further to abandon this course of world domination, and to join in an historic effort to end the perilous arms race and to transform the history of man. He has an opportunity now to move the world back from the abyss of destruction--by returning to his government's own words that it had no need to station missiles outside its own territory, and withdrawing these weapons from Cuba--by refraining from any action which will

widen or deepen the present crisis--and then by participating in a search for peaceful and permanent solutions.

This Nation is prepared to present its case against the Soviet threat to peace, and our own proposals for a peaceful world, at any time and in any forum--in the OAS, in the United Nations, or in any other meeting that could be useful--without limiting our freedom of action. We have in the past made strenuous efforts to limit the spread of nuclear weapons. We have proposed the elimination of all arms and military bases in a fair and effective disarmament treaty. We are prepared to discuss new proposals for the removal of tensions on both sides--including the possibilities of a genuinely independent Cuba, free to determine its own destiny. We have no wish to war with the Soviet Union--for we are a peaceful people who desire to live in peace with all other peoples.

But it is difficult to settle or even discuss these problems in an atmosphere of intimidation. That is why this latest Soviet threat--or any other threat which is made either independently or in response to our actions this week--must and will be met with determination. Any hostile move anywhere in the world against the safety and freedom of peoples to whom we are committed--including in particular the brave people of West Berlin--will be met by whatever action is needed.

Finally, I want to say a few words to the captive people of Cuba, to whom this speech is being directly carried by special radio facilities. I speak to you as a friend, as one who knows of your deep attachment to your fatherland, as one who shares your aspirations for liberty and justice for all. And I have watched and the American people have watched with deep sorrow how your nationalist revolution was betrayed--and how your fatherland fell under foreign domination. Now your leaders are no longer Cuban leaders inspired by Cuban ideals. They are puppets and agents of an international conspiracy which has turned Cuba against your friends and neighbors in the Americas--and turned it into the first Latin American country to become a target for nuclear war--the first Latin American country to have these weapons on its soil.

These new weapons are not in your interest. They contribute nothing to your peace and well-being. They can only undermine it. But this country has no wish to cause you to suffer or to impose any system upon you. We know that your lives and land are being used as pawns by those who deny your freedom.

Many times in the past, the Cuban people have risen to throw out tyrants who destroyed their liberty. And I have no doubt that most Cubans today look forward to the time when they will be truly free--free from foreign domination, free to choose their own leaders, free to select their own

system, free to own their own land, free to speak and write and worship without fear or degradation. And then shall Cuba be welcomed back to the society of free nations and to the associations of this hemisphere.

My fellow citizens: let no one doubt that this is a difficult and dangerous effort on which we have set out. No one can foresee precisely what course it will take or what costs or casualties will be incurred. Many months of sacrifice and self-discipline lie ahead--months in which both our patience and our will will be tested--months in which many threats and denunciations will keep us aware of our dangers. But the greatest danger of all would be to do nothing.

The path we have chosen for the present is full of hazards, as all paths are--but it is the one most consistent with our character and courage as a nation and our commitments around the world. The cost of freedom is always high--but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender or submission.

Our goal is not the victory of might, but the vindication of right--not peace at the expense of freedom, but both peace and freedom, here in this hemisphere, and, we hope, around the world. God willing, that goal will be achieved.

Thank you and good night.

APPENDIX E

PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S WAR CRISIS ADDRESS,
AUGUST 4, 1964¹

My fellow Americans: As President and Commander in Chief, it is my duty to the American people to report that renewed hostile actions against United States ships on the high seas in the Gulf of Tonkin have today required me to order the military forces of the United States to take action in reply.

The initial attack on the destroyer Maddox, on August 2, was repeated today by a number of hostile vessels attacking two U.S. destroyers with torpedoes. The destroyers and supporting aircraft acted at once on the orders I gave after the initial act of aggression. We believe at least two of the attacking boats were sunk. There were no U.S. losses.

The performance of commanders and crews in this engagement is in the highest tradition of the United States Navy. But repeated acts of violence against the Armed Forces of the United States must be met not only with alert defense but with positive reply. That reply is being given as I speak to you tonight. Air action is now in execution against gunboats and certain supporting facilities in North Viet-Nam which have been used in these hostile operations.

In the larger sense this new act of aggression, aimed directly at our own forces, again brings home to all of us in the United States the importance of the struggle for peace and security in Southeast Asia. Aggression by terror against the peaceful villagers of South Viet-Nam has now been joined by open aggression on the high seas against the United States of America.

The determination of all Americans to carry out our full commitment to the people and to the Government of South Viet-Nam will be redoubled by this outrage. Yet our response, for the present, will be limited and fitting. We Americans know, although others appear to forget, the risks of spreading the conflict. We still seek no wider war.

I have instructed the Secretary of State to make this position totally clear to friends and to adversaries and,

¹U. S., Department of State, "United States Takes Measures to Repel Attack Against U. S. Forces in Southeast Asia," The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LI, No. 1313 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1964), p. 259.

indeed, to all. I have instructed Ambassador Stevenson to raise this matter immediately and urgently before the Security Council of the United Nations. Finally, I have today met with the leaders of both parties in the Congress of the United States, and I have informed them that I shall immediately request the Congress to pass a resolution making it clear that our Government is united in its determination to take all necessary measures in support of freedom and in defense of peace in Southeast Asia.

I have been given encouraging assurance by these leaders of both parties that such a resolution will be promptly introduced, freely and expeditiously debated, and passed with overwhelming support. And just a few minutes ago I was able to reach Senator Goldwater, and I am glad to say that he has expressed his support of the statement that I am making to you tonight.

It is a solemn responsibility to have to order even limited military action by forces whose overall strength is as vast and as awesome as those of the United States of America, but it is my considered conviction, shared throughout your Government, that firmness in the right is indispensable today for peace. That firmness will always be measured. Its mission is peace.

APPENDIX F

PRESIDENT NIXON'S WAR CRISIS ADDRESS,
MAY 9, 1972¹

Good evening.

Five weeks ago, on Easter weekend, the Communist armies of North Viet-Nam launched a massive invasion of South Viet-Nam, an invasion that was made possible by tanks, artillery, and other advanced offensive weapons supplied to Hanoi by the Soviet Union and other Communist nations.

The South Vietnamese have fought bravely to repel this brutal assault. Casualties on both sides have been very high. Most tragically, there have been over 20,000 civilian casualties, including women and children, in the cities which the North Vietnamese have shelled in wanton disregard of human life.

As I announced in my report to the Nation 12 days ago, the role of the United States in resisting this invasion has been limited to air and naval strikes on military targets in North and South Viet-Nam. As I also pointed out in that report, we have responded to North Viet-Nam's massive military offensive by undertaking wide-ranging new peace efforts aimed at ending the war through negotiation.

On April 20, I sent Dr. Kissinger [Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs] to Moscow for 4 days of meetings with General Secretary Brezhnev and other Soviet leaders. I instructed him to emphasize our desire for a rapid solution to the war and our willingness to look at all possible approaches. At that time, the Soviet leaders showed an interest in bringing the war to an end on a basis just to both sides. They urged resumption of negotiations in Paris, and they indicated they would use their constructive influence.

I authorized Dr. Kissinger to meet privately with the top North Vietnamese negotiator, Le Duc Tho, on Tuesday, May 2, in Paris. Ambassador Porter, as you know, resumed the public peace negotiations in Paris on April 27 and again on May 4. At those meetings, both public and private, all we heard from the enemy was bombastic rhetoric and a replaying

¹U. S., Department of State, "Denying Hanoi the Means to Continue Aggression," The Department of State Bulletin, Vol. LXVI, No. 1718 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972), pp. 747-750.

of their demands for surrender. For example, at the May 2 secret meeting, I authorized Dr. Kissinger to talk about every conceivable avenue toward peace. The North Vietnamese flatly refused to consider any of these approaches. They refused to offer any new approach of their own. Instead, they simply read verbatim their previous public demands.

Here is what over 3 years of public and private negotiations with Hanoi has come down to: The United States, with the full concurrence of our South Vietnamese allies, has offered the maximum of what any President of the United States could offer.

We have offered a deescalation of the fighting. We have offered a cease-fire with a deadline for withdrawal of all American forces. We have offered new elections which would be internationally supervised, with the Communists participating both in the supervisory body and in the elections themselves.

President Thieu has offered to resign 1 month before the elections. We have offered an exchange of prisoners of war in a ratio of 10 North Vietnamese prisoners for every one American prisoner that they release. And North Viet-Nam has met each of these offers with insolence and insult. They have flatly and arrogantly refused to negotiate an end to the war and bring peace. Their answer to every peace offer we have made has been to escalate the war.

In the 2 weeks alone since I offered to resume negotiations, Hanoi has launched three new military offensives in South Viet-Nam. In those 2 weeks the risk that a Communist government may be imposed on the 17 million people of South Viet-Nam has increased, and the Communist offensive has now reached the point that it gravely threatens the lives of 60,000 American troops who are still in Viet-Nam.

There are only two issues left for us in this war:

First, in the face of a massive invasion do we stand by, jeopardize the lives of 60,000 Americans, and leave the South Vietnamese to a long night of terror? This will not happen. We shall do whatever is required to safeguard American lives and American honor.

Second, in the face of complete intransigence at the conference table do we join with our enemy to install a Communist government in South Viet-Nam? This, too, will not happen. We will not cross the line from generosity to treachery.

We now have a clear, hard choice among three courses of action: immediate withdrawal of all American forces, continued attempts at negotiation, or decisive military action to end the war.

I know that many Americans favor the first course of action, immediate withdrawal. They believe the way to end

the war is for the United States to get out and to remove the threat to our remaining forces by simply withdrawing them.

From a political standpoint, this would be a very easy choice for me to accept. After all, I did not send over one-half million Americans to Viet-Nam. I have brought 500,000 men home from Viet-Nam since I took office. But abandoning our commitment in Viet-Nam here and now would mean turning 17 million South Vietnamese over to Communist tyranny and terror. It would mean leaving hundreds of American prisoners in Communist hands with no bargaining leverage to get them released.

An American defeat in Viet-Nam would encourage this kind of aggression all over the world, aggression in which smaller nations armed by their major allies could be tempted to attack neighboring nations at will in the Mideast, in Europe, and other areas. World peace would be in grave jeopardy.

The second course of action is to keep on trying to negotiate a settlement. Now, this is the course we have preferred from the beginning, and we shall continue to pursue it. We want to negotiate, but we have made every reasonable offer and tried every possible path for ending this war at the conference table.

The problem is, as you all know, it takes two to negotiate and now, as throughout the past 4 years, the North Vietnamese arrogantly refuse to negotiate anything but an imposition, an ultimatum that the United States impose a Communist regime on 17 million people in South Viet-Nam who do not want a Communist government.

It is plain then that what appears to be a choice among three courses of action for the United States is really no choice at all. The killing in this tragic war must stop. By simply getting out, we would only worsen the bloodshed. By relying solely on negotiations, we would give an intransigent enemy the time he needs to press his aggression on the battlefield.

There is only one way to stop the killing. That is to keep the weapons of war out of the hands of the international outlaws of North Viet-Nam.

Throughout the war in Viet-Nam, the United States has exercised a degree of restraint unprecedented in the annals of war. That was our responsibility as a great nation, a nation which is interested--and we can be proud of this as Americans--as America has always been, in peace not conquest.

However, when the enemy abandons all restraint, throws its whole army into battle in the territory of its neighbor, refuses to negotiate, we simply face a new situation.

In these circumstances, with 60,000 Americans threatened, any President who failed to act decisively would have betrayed the trust of his country and betrayed the cause of world peace.

I therefore concluded that Hanoi must be denied the weapons and supplies it needs to continue the aggression. In full coordination with the Republic of Viet-Nam I have ordered the following measures, which are being implemented as I am speaking to you:

All entrances to North Vietnamese ports will be mined to prevent access to these ports and North Vietnamese naval operations from these ports.

United States forces have been directed to take appropriate measures within the internal and claimed territorial waters of North Viet-Nam to interdict the delivery of any supplies.

Rail and all other communications will be cut off to the maximum extent possible.

Air and naval strikes against military targets in North Viet-Nam will continue.

These actions are not directed against any other nation. Countries with ships presently in North Vietnamese ports have already been notified that their ships will have three daylight periods to leave in safety. After that time, the mines will become active and any ships attempting to leave or enter these ports will do so at their own risk.

These actions I have ordered will cease when the following conditions are met:

First, all American prisoners of war must be returned.

Second, there must be an internationally supervised cease-fire throughout Indochina.

Once prisoners of war are released, once the internationally supervised cease-fire has begun, we will stop all acts of force throughout Indochina, and at that time we will proceed with a complete withdrawal of all American forces from Viet-Nam within 4 months.

Now, these terms are generous terms. They are terms which would not require surrender and humiliation on the part of anybody. They would permit the United States to withdraw with honor. They would end the killing. They would bring our POW's home. They would allow negotiations on a political settlement between the Vietnamese themselves. They would permit all the nations which have suffered in this long war--Cambodia, Laos, North Viet-Nam, South Viet-Nam--to turn at last to the urgent works of healing and of peace. They deserve immediate acceptance by North Viet-Nam.

It is appropriate to conclude my remarks tonight with some comments directed individually to each of the major parties involved in the continuing tragedy of the Viet-Nam war.

First, to the leaders of Hanoi: Your people have already suffered too much in your pursuit of conquest. Do not compound their agony with continued arrogance; choose instead

the path of a peace that redeems your sacrifices, guarantees true independence for your country, and ushers in an era of reconciliation.

To the people of South Viet-Nam: You shall continue to have our firm support in your resistance against aggression. It is your spirit that will determine the outcome of the battle. It is your will that will shape the future of your country.

To other nations, especially those which are allied with North Viet-Nam: The actions I have announced tonight are not directed against you. Their sole purpose is to protect the lives of 60,000 Americans who would be gravely endangered in the event that the Communist offensive continues to roll forward and to prevent the imposition of a Communist government by brutal aggression upon 17 million people.

I particularly direct my comments tonight to the Soviet Union. We respect the Soviet Union as a great power. We recognize the right of the Soviet Union to defend its interests when they are threatened. The Soviet Union in turn must recognize our right to defend our interests.

No Soviet soldiers are threatened in Viet-Nam. Sixty thousand Americans are threatened. We expect you to help your allies, and you cannot expect us to do other than to continue to help our allies. But let us, and let all great powers, help our allies only for the purpose of their defense, not for the purpose of launching invasions against their neighbors.

Otherwise the cause of peace, the cause in which we both have so great a stake, will be seriously jeopardized.

Our two nations have made significant progress in our negotiations in recent months. We are near major agreements on nuclear arms limitation, on trade, on a host of other issues.

Let us not slide back toward the dark shadows of a previous age. We do not ask you to sacrifice your principles, or your friends, but neither should you permit Hanoi's intransigence to blot out the prospects we together have so patiently prepared.

We, the United States and the Soviet Union, are on the threshold of a new relationship that can serve not only the interests of our two countries but the cause of world peace. We are prepared to continue to build this relationship. The responsibility is yours if we fail to do so.

And finally, may I say to the American people: I ask you for the same strong support you have always given your President in difficult moments. It is you most of all that the world will be watching.

I know how much you want to end this war. I know how much you want to bring our men home, and I think you know from all that I have said and done these past 3 1/2 years how much I, too, want to end the war, to bring your men home.

You want peace, I want peace. But you also want honor and not defeat. You want a genuine peace, not a peace that is merely a prelude to another war.

At this moment we stand together in purpose and resolve. As so often in the past, we Americans did not choose to resort to war. It has been forced upon us by an enemy that has shown utter contempt toward every overture we have made for peace.

And that is why, my fellow Americans, tonight I ask for your support of this decision, a decision which has only one purpose, not to expand the war, not to escalate the war, but to end this war and to win the kind of peace that will last. With God's help, with your support, we will accomplish that great goal.

Thank you and good night.