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The Premises and Promises of Decision-Making Analysis[*]

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LIKE COUNTRIES in the twentieth century, the sciences of human behavior seem to pass through several stages as they move toward modernization. During the *traditional* stage the practitioners in a field of inquiry rely on ambiguous concepts and untested theories to guide their impressions of the dynamics of their subject matter. Unrestrained by standards of reliability and unconcerned about the relationship of data to theory, the practitioners do not hesitate to attribute human characteristics to abstract entities and then to equate their insights into the behavior of these entities with human behavior itself. At this stage, consequently, knowledge is not cumulative. Being free to pursue their own interests in their own way, the various researchers do not build on each other's work. Case studies proliferate, but do not converge. New concepts and theories are advanced, only to go unheeded. What stands out are practitioners with a capacity for impressive insights, rather than insights with an impressive capacity for explaining an ever-widening range of phenomena.

At a certain point, however, a few practitioners become dissatisfied with the procedures and assumptions of the traditional stage and develop the aspiration to modernize. The absence of progress toward unified knowledge provokes them into protesting the reliance on ambiguous formulations, reified entities, and undisciplined modes of inquiry. Human behavior is not, the modernizing practitioners contend,

abstract, mystical, or capricious, but is undertaken by concrete and identifiable actors whose behavior can be observed. Rather than being capricious, this behavior is the result of causal processes and thus exhibits regularities and patterns. Hence it is capable of being measured and quantified. Measurement and quantification, however, require explicit theory and operationalized concepts. Data do not fall into place on their own, but must be rendered meaningful by models and constructs that clearly identify how the components of behavior are structured and how they relate to each other. What is needed, the protest concludes, is greater attention to the accumulation of quantified data, to the formulation of empirical theories to explain the data, and to the utilization of scientific procedures which make both the data and the theories independent of those who use them.

Although the traditionalists in the field tend to feel threatened by the modernizing practitioners and to dismiss their protests as impracticable and misleading, the appeal of a more empirically based science cannot be denied and as the ranks of the protesters grow, the field moves into the *take-off* stage of development. Hence, as in the countries that move into this stage, the air becomes charged with excitement and commitment. A self-generating sense of change emerges and, with it, a headlong rush into uncharted areas of inquiry. No phenomenon is too minute to be considered; no fact is too established to be questioned; no abstraction is too sacrosanct to be challenged. Previously unrecognized sources of behavior are recognized and explored, giving rise to the identification of previously unidentified actors and the discernment of previously undiscerned relationships. New concepts, theories, models, frameworks, approaches, formulations, and hypotheses are proposed and modified. Schools of thought abound and factions within them emerge. Propositional inventories are compiled and philosophical underpinnings are contested. Sister disciplines are ransacked for relevant materials. Articles and arguments on methodology multiply. Untapped sources of data are discovered and exploited. Seemingly ungainly words are coined to designate the phenomena revealed by the new data or indicated by the new formulations. Diagrammatic presentations, replete with linking arrows and proliferating categories, are introduced to accommodate the new materials and depict their interrelationships.

Like the leaders of protest movements in traditional societies, however, the modernizing practitioners are not able to contain their revolutionary fervor once they overcome the forces of tradition and shoulder the responsibilities of leadership. The surge of innovative activity is too exciting and the vision of its ultimate potential is too exhilarating to temper enthusiasm with perspective, involvement with restraint, and creative formulations with scientific procedures. In the name of greater discipline the field comes to be marked by undisciplined inquiry. Freed

of the traditional rules and as yet unconcerned about the need for modern ones, its newly ascendant practitioners are receptive to almost any innovative framework, irrespective of whether it is capable of yielding reliable empirical findings. Despite the welter of activity, therefore, knowledge is no more cumulative in the take-off stage than in the preceding one. Rather than building on each other's work and converging around accepted concepts and standardized procedures, the practitioners support each other's innovativeness even as they pursue their own. What stand out are insights that encompass an ever-widening range of phenomena, rather than an ever-widening range of phenomena that have been reliably explained.

The take-off stage lasts perhaps a decade or two—long enough for it to become apparent that the initial burst of activity has not resulted in a solid and expanding body of reliable knowledge. To be explicit and innovative about observable phenomena is not to engage in the painstaking task of actually observing them and then making the theoretical revisions that the observations require. Nor does the avoidance of impressionistic and reified analysis lead automatically to the formulation of viable frameworks and researchable propositions. As the modernizing practitioners slowly become aware that a science of human behavior cannot be built overnight and that instead slow, patient, and disciplined inquiry is required, the field moves into the third or *mature* stage of development. The innovative frameworks are scaled down to manageable proportions, the new concepts are rendered operational, and the resulting hypotheses are tested, revised, and tested again. As a result, the school of thought gives way to the empirical finding, the grandiose theory to the rigorous study, the propositional inventory to the research design, the philosophical challenge to quantitative analysis, and the all-encompassing insight to the precise formulation. Equally important, as the field becomes a mature science the criteria of relevance are toughened and the standards for processing data are raised. Where theories proposed during the take-off stage were accepted or rejected on the basis of speculation about their utility, those offered in the mature stage are broken down into their component parts and subjected to the test of empirical validation. Where journals were once filled with diagrammatic presentations, now they are characterized by tabular data tested for statistical significance. And, with this greater discipline, the practitioners begin to take cognizance of each other's hypotheses, to use each other's methods, to carry each other's work one step further, to replicate each other's findings—in short, to build on each other's research. Consequently, knowledge cumulates, even explodes, and the practitioners settle into a sustained period of growth that is satisfying even if not exhilarating.

Since it is crucial to the central theme of the ensuing discussion,

stress must be laid on the necessity for the take-off stage to intervene between the traditional and mature stages. It cannot be by-passed. There is no shortcut. The creativity must precede the discipline, the seminal thinker must precede the patient researcher, and the compelling scheme must precede the refined theory. Ofttimes the premises, concepts, and procedures that permitted the take-off are so thoroughly reworked as to be unrecognizable in the later stage, but without them maturity could not ensue.

The Paradox of
the Decision-Making Approach

The foregoing considerations have not only helped me to resolve my personal ambivalence (noted below) toward the concept of decision-making, but, more importantly, they also serve to summarize the paradox and controversy that have marked the concept since its introduction into American political science after World War II. Stated most succinctly, the paradox is that as a wide consensus formed over the utility of the concept, so did a deep dissensus develop over its contents, boundaries, and premises. Unlike, say, the extensive efforts at empirical validation that followed the initial enthusiasm which the introduction of the theory of cognitive dissonance aroused in social psychology,[1] the advent of the decision-making approach in political science evoked immediate attention and provoked considerable excitement that were not accompanied by endeavors to clarify its contents, eliminate its ambiguities, and trace the limits of its relevance. Rather than perfecting the concept of decision-making and narrowing its empirical meaning through subsequent inquiry, political scientists found it to be relevant in a variety of contexts. As a result, the concept has come to stand for an inconsistent set of diverse individual and group processes. For some, especially those attracted to game-theoretical formulations, decision-making phenomena connote rational calculations undertaken by hypothetical political actors. For those who find psychoanalytical notions persuasive, such phenomena pertain to the irrational drives that underlie the choices of real political actors. For still others, including both the probers of historical documents and the users of simulation techniques, the concept embraces all the factors, both rational and irrational, that enter into the process whereby empirical

1. The theory was introduced in Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (New York: Harper, 1957). For a summary of the extensive efforts at empirical validation that followed, see Jack W. Brehm and Arthur R. Cohen, *Explorations in Cognitive Dissonance* (New York: Wiley, 1962).

political actors select one course of action from among several possible alternatives.

For me both the history and the contents of the concept have always had a special meaning. In the early 1950's I had the good fortune of closely observing, as a graduate student at Princeton, Richard C. Snyder's attempts to develop what subsequently became the first systematic treatment of decision-making phenomena in the study of foreign policy and international politics.[2] Those were exciting days. Over and beyond the usual enthusiasm of a graduate student for a stimulating teacher, one was keenly aware of being in the presence of a modernizing practitioner at the very moment when his protest against traditional modes was being launched. Snyder went out of his way to be tactful and to avoid offense to the traditionalists. The emphasis was on the worth and potential of new concepts, not on the ambiguous and misleading nature of old ones. Yet there was no mistaking that a major skirmish in the battle for modernization was being joined. This was not to be merely a reformulation of a few marginal concepts. Rather the new concepts were conceived to be inextricably interrelated and, as such, to constitute nothing less than a full-fledged "approach" to the study of international political phenomena. The inexperienced graduate student may have been perplexed by the virulence of the controversy that the approach occasionally aroused in the Princeton community even before its publication, but he could hardly fail to recognize that Snyder's assumptions were a departure from the past and that acceptance of them necessitated a rejection of certain long-standing ways of thinking about international actors and processes.

Having had the introduction of the concept of foreign policy decision-making into American political science conjoined with the start

2. After initially formulating an approach to decision-making processes in foreign policy and international politics, Snyder outlined ways in which it might be broadened to encompass virtually any political process. However, I have confined my attention here mainly to the initial formulation, since it is the more elaborate of the two versions and has occasioned much more discussion than the broadened outline. In addition, since Snyder was the main creator of the approach, I have not included in the analysis references to the two junior colleagues who assisted him in developing the initial formulation and who are also listed as its authors. For the initial formulation, see Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin, *Decision-making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics* (Princeton: Foreign Policy Analysis Project, Organizational Behavior Section, Princeton University, June 1954), later reprinted in Richard C. Snyder, H. W. Bruck, and Burton Sapin, (eds.), *Foreign Policy Decision-Making: An Approach to the Study of International Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1962), pp. 14–185. For the broadened version of the formulation, see Richard C. Snyder, "A Decision-Making Approach to the Study of Political Phenomena," in Roland Young (ed.), *Approaches to the Study of Politics* (Evanston: Northwestern U. P., 1958), pp. 3–38. Still another version, simplified for comprehension by undergraduate students, can be found in Richard C. Snyder and Edgar S. Furniss, Jr., *American Foreign Policy: Formulation, Principles, and Programs* (New York: Holt, 1954), Chap. 3.

of my own professional career, I have followed the evolution of the concept subsequent to its publication with particular care, rejoicing when a consensus formed and lamenting when dissensus also developed. Even more personally, the history of the concept since its publication has been the cause of considerable ambivalence. On the one hand, Snyder's framework so brilliantly clarified for me the nature of certain key aspects of international politics that I feel an enormous indebtedness to it and still fall back on it for stimulation. On the other hand, only one empirical application of the framework has ever found its way into the literature of the field,[3] and with each passing year I have increasingly come to doubt the merits of a framework that fails to spark empirical inquiry and thereby to meet the ultimate test by which any analytic scheme must be assessed. Only lately, and with the help of the analogy between the modernization of nations and intellectual disciplines, have I been able to resolve this ambivalence and evaluate the history and utility of the concept in a coherent way. What follows are the essential elements of this evaluation. The format is somewhat autobiographical and the tone is occasionally aggressive, but the commitment is to accuracy and balance. To anticipate the main thrust of the analysis, the decision-making approach is conceived as having been a crucial front in the behavioral revolution in political science and, like its parent movement, to have become the victim of its own achievements.[4] In effect the ensuing pages etch another epitaph onto another monument to the same successful protest.

Decision-Making Variables

At the heart of Snyder's original decision-making framework is the simple notion that political action is undertaken by concrete human beings and that comprehension of the dynamics of this action requires viewing the world from the perspective of these identifiable actors. The observer may regard the action as unwise and it may in fact prove disastrous, but neither the judgment nor the outcome serves to explain why the actors proceeded as they did. Only by transcending his own judgments and adopting the perspective of the actors can the observer engage in explanatory analysis. To facilitate reconstruction of the world

of the actors, Snyder suggested that all their activities can be examined in terms of one main form of behavior, the decision to pursue one course of action rather than many others that might be pursued. Whatever the actors do, and however sound their actions may be, they proceed on the basis of prior choices, and the presence of this decision-making activity at the core of all political action provides a common focus for the analysis of otherwise disparate political actors, situations, and processes. Decision-making sustains bureaucracies, dominates legislatures, preoccupies chief executives, and characterizes judicial bodies. Decisions lead to policy, produce conflict, and foster cooperation. They differentiate political parties and underlie foreign policies, activate local governments and maintain federal authorities, guide armies and stir international organizations. To explain any sequence of political actions, therefore, the analyst must ascertain who made the key decisions that gave rise to the action and then assess the intellectual and interactive processes whereby the decision-makers reached their conclusions.

To facilitate further the reconstruction of the world decision-makers, Snyder outlined and categorized the main factors that operate on them and give structure and content to their choices. In the case of foreign-policy choices, he subdivided the world of officials into three main sets of stimuli—those that emanate from the society for whom officials make decisions, those that arise out of circumstances or actions abroad, and those that are generated within the governmental organizations of which they are a part. Labeled, respectively, the "internal setting," the "external setting," and the "decision-making process," these categories were further subdivided in terms of certain major types of factors —nonhuman as well as human, attitudinal as well as behavioral—that each encompassed.[5] The internal setting was conceived to subsume not only such standard political phenomena as public opinion, but also much more fundamental categories: major common-value orientations, major characteristics of social organization, group structures and function, major institutional patterns, basic social processes (adult socialization and opinion formation), and social differentiation and specialization."[6] The external setting was posited as comprising such phenomena as "the actions and reactions of other states (their decision-makers), the societies for which they act, and the physical world."[7] The decision-making process was envisioned to consist of three main

3. Richard C. Snyder and Glenn D. Paige, "The United States Decision to Resist Aggression in Korea: The Application of an Analytic Scheme," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 3 (December 1958), pp. 342–378.

4. For a history and analysis of the behavioral revolution, see Robert A. Dahl, "The Behavioral Approach to Political Science: Epitaph for a Monument to a Successful Protest," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. LV (December 1961), pp. 763–772.

5. When he recast the framework to account for decision-making at any governmental level, Snyder understandably abandoned the external-internal distinction and referred instead to the "social" and "political institutional" settings (cf., Young, *op. cit.*, p. 22). Here I have chosen to confine myself to the framework for the analysis of foreign-policy decisions because it has been more fully elaborated.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin (eds.), *op. cit.*, p. 67.

subcategories: spheres of competence, communication and information, and motivation. Taken together, these decision-making subcategories include the roles, norms, goals, and functions within both the government in general and the particular unit making the decisions being subjected to analysis. In a diagrammatic presentation of the main categories and subcategories, and using a series of two-way arrows to link them together, Snyder demonstrated that the framework embraces a complex and interdependent set of social, political, and psychological processes. Most notably, he drew on a vast array of concepts developed in sociology, social psychology and psychology to show how the internal, external, and organizational worlds acquire structure and content—as well as how the links among them are fashioned—through the perceptions, motives, experiences, and interactions of the decision-makers.

Many years later all of this may seem so obvious as to be trite. But when photo-offset copies of the original formulation of the decision-making approach were distributed to a selected list of political scientists in the field of international politics in June, 1954, its basic premises were neither obvious nor trite. At that time, for example, precision about the identity of international actors and the sources of their behavior was not a dominant characteristic of research. Instead, the prevalent tendency was to regard the state as the prime actor and to look for the sources of its behavior in what were regarded as the objective realities of its position in the world. But who or what was the state? And how could the analyst, who inevitably had to rely on some degree of subjective interpretation, ever know what constituted the objective reality of its position? These troublesome questions had long been ignored. Many analysts were still quite content to treat the abstract state as if it were a concrete person and, in so doing, to impute to it the entire range of aspirations and traits normally associated with individual human actors. The fears of France and the hopes of India were treated as no less real and empirical than the quirks of a Charles de Gaulle and the idealism of a Jawaharlal Nehru.

Similarly, not being inclined to examine the attitudes and actions of concrete human beings, researchers still tended to search for the goals and sources of a state's behavior in geographic, historical, political, and technological circumstances, and these circumstances always seemed so unmistakable that the state was conceived to be subservient to them. Geography, history, politics, and technology were not conditions to be subjectively evaluated by officials, but rather were objective realities to which they had to pay heed. To know the goals of a state and identify its national interest, therefore, the analyst had only to discover the objective circumstances in which it was situated at any moment in time. That the "discovered" circumstances might be nothing more than the analyst's own subjective interpretation never gave much pause: in the

absence of procedures for rendering findings independent of those who uncovered them, the inclination to equate reality with one's perceptions of it exerted a powerful and understandable hold on even the most dispassionate observers.[8]

With the publication of the decision-making approach, however, these long-standing habits of analysis could no longer be practiced with blissful unconcern. Whatever one may have thought of Snyder's scheme, there was no denying that it constituted a serious challenge to prevailing assumptions. In a decision-making context, reification of the state and objectification of its circumstances are neither necessary nor desirable. By definition, the state becomes its decision-makers, those officials of a society who have the authority and responsibility for preserving its integrity and enhancing its values through the selection of appropriate courses of action. To be sure, officials speak in the name of abstract entities and many may even act as if such entities do have a concrete existence, but whatever the content of the speeches and actions, they constitute empirical phenomena that allow the analyst to come down from the rarefied atmosphere of abstractions to the observable world of interacting human beings.

In searching for the goals and interests of a state, moreover, analysts no longer had to run the risk of equating their subjective interpretations with objective realities. The decision-making approach offered a clear-cut operational solution to the problem: national interests and aspirations are neither more nor less than what the duly constituted decision-makers conceive them to be, and while ascertaining the aims and values of officials can be extremely difficult, at least it is possible.[9] Stated differently, the reality of any situation is what the decision-makers, as aware (or unaware) of geographic, historical, political, and technological considerations as they may be, perceive it to be, and while the actions resulting from their perceptions may prove to be disastrous, such an outcome is due to the observable miscalculations of fallible men and not to the unknowable impact of inexorable forces.

Does this mean that the decision-making approach compels the analyst to ignore all the needs and wants of the members of the society and thus to posit a national interest that bears no relation to the hopes and fears of either the public in general or the particular segments of which it is comprised? Not at all, as no group of decision-makers that in fact has the authority to bind the society to a course of action can ever be totally cut off from its demands and aspirations (or else it will

8. For an elaboration of this reasoning, see Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 2nd ed (New York: Knopf, 1954), Chap. 1.

9. For an elaboration of this conception, see my "The Concept of National Interest," in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, in press.

lose the authority). Indeed, one of the innovative virtues of the decision-making approach was that it provided a way of empirically tracing the role of domestic variables as sources of foreign-policy behavior. Traditionally, students of the subject tended to assume that international actors were moved primarily by each other and, as a result, they dealt only superficially, if at all, with the processes whereby the history, composition, structure, and dynamics of a society condition its international position, structure, and dynamics of a society condition its international behavior. Viewed in a decision-making context, however, domestic factors are, along with those located in the external setting and the decision-making organization, a major source of foreign policy and cannot be ignored. Just as the analyst is led to ask how perceptions of events abroad condition the choices that decision-makers make, so is he inclined to probe how developments at home enter into the formulation and selection of policy alternatives.

The fact that the decision-making process is itself treated as a major source of the policies adopted constituted still another clarifying innovation fostered by Snyder's framework. Previously analysts had been inclined to assume a simple one-to-one relationship between the stimuli to which officials are exposed and the decisions whereby they respond. But, Snyder contended, what the contents of a decision are, depends partly—and sometimes crucially—on how it is formulated as well as on the circumstances to which it is a response. At least in large industrial societies, which necessarily have evolved complex bureaucratic structures for making decisions, external events and internal demands must be processed as well as perceived by officialdom if decisions are to be made, and in this processing—in the rivalries of agencies, the procedures for convening and conducting committees, the techniques for collecting and distributing intelligence, the role requirements of particular policy-makers, the general structure of authority, the accepted style of framing and winnowing alternatives, the precedents for resolving conflicts, the modal backgrounds and career motivations of top officials—factors are introduced that shape the contents, direction, and adequacy of the resulting decisions. Most of Snyder's framework is devoted to an elaboration of these organizational variables and the many ways in which they can affect the choices that emerge from a decision-making organization.

Reasoning and Motivation
in Decision-Making Analysis

That the decision-making approach constituted a radical departure from traditional practices at the time of its publication is perhaps best demonstrated by the nature of the criticisms it evoked. While some

critics properly noted that the framework suffered from an absence of theory,[10] others were so provoked that they misunderstood its basic premises and criticized the scheme for proposing research strategies that in fact it explicitly rejected. As noted below, the approach is not lacking in severe limitations, but to criticize it for the assumptions it makes about the rationality or irrationality of officials and the policy-making process is to fail, in the most profound way, to grasp the central thrust of the analysis. Indeed, it is a measure of the extent of this failure that some of Snyder's least sympathetic critics rejected his approach on the grounds that it posited the decision-making process as too rational and that some condemned it for exaggerating the irrationality of the process. The former, apparently appalled by the proliferation of categories and subcategories in the discussion of the decision-making process, somehow concluded that the scheme viewed decision-makers as carefully weighing the pros and cons subsumed in each subcategory before framing alternative courses of action and of then giving serious consideration to every possible alternative before finally choosing one of them. Such a process, the critics rightly noted, involves a degree of rationality that bears little relationship to the world in which officials conduct their deliberations. Neither the time nor the resources are available to identify and relate all the ends and means that might be relevant when a situation requiring a decision arises.[11] As I read it, however, Snyder's formulation does not suggest that foreign-policy decision-making necessarily unfolds in a rational and conscious fashion. It merely asserts that officials have some notion, conscious or unconscious, of a priority of values; that they possess some conceptions, elegant or crude, of the means available and their potential effectiveness; that they engage in some effort, extensive or brief, to relate means to ends; and that, therefore, at some point they select some alternative, clear-cut or confused, as the course of action that seems most likely to cope with the immediate situation. Game theory may posit rational actors, but the decision-making approach does not. In effect, Snyder left the question open. In his approach it is an empirical question: intellectual and interactive processes necessarily precede decision, but whether they do so rationally or irrationally is a matter to be determined through the gathering and analysis of data.

Much the same can be said about the proliferation of categories.

10 Cf. Herbert McClosky, "Concerning Strategies for a Science of International Politics," *World Politics*, Vol. VIII (January 1956), pp. 281–95; and Vernon Van Dyke, *Political Science: A Philosophical Analysis* (Stanford: Stanford U. P., 1960), p. 153.

11 For a specific criticism of Snyder for positing "highly conscious moves and choices which can be analyzed in terms of neat categories," see Stanley H. Hoffmann, "International Relations: The Long Road to Theory," *World Politics*, Vol. XI (April 1959), p. 364. For a general critique of the decision-making literature that elaborates this theme, see Charles E. Lindblom, "The Science of 'Muddling Through,'" *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 29 (Spring 1959), pp. 79–88.

While the decision-making approach assumes that the antecedents of decision do occur in terms of a wide variety of role requirements, communication processes, and motivational determinants, the relevance of these variables to the choices that are made is not assumed in advance. If empirical investigation indicates that some of the subcategories will not yield particularly significant findings, then they are passed over and more fruitful matters considered. For example, if in certain situations stimuli in the external setting prove more central to the responses of officials than those arising within the decision-making organization or internal setting, then in those situations the latter are not examined as thoroughly as the former. By calculating the relative strength of the different sets of variables, however, the analyst has at least made sure that he searches for the sources of behavior in the only place where they can be found, namely, in the responses of officials to the external setting and not in the external setting itself. To proliferate categories is not to make a commitment to divide attention equally among them. Rather it is to ensure that no relevant considerations are overlooked.

While some analysts discerned an assumption of rationality in the fact that stimuli inherent in the decision-making process received considerably more attention than those located in the internal or external settings, others responded to this perceived imbalance by objecting to Snyder's framework for exactly opposite reasons. These critics concluded that the decision-making approach required the researcher to proceed as an amateur psychoanalyst in search of personality traits, private prejudices, and uncontrolled drives that might underlie the behavior of officials.[12] This line of criticism seems even more unwarranted than the one which posits the decision-making approach as overly preoccupied with rational actors. For not only did Snyder avoid an assumption of irrationality, he explicitly and emphatically rejected it. In what is unquestionably one of the most incisive and thorough translations of the psychological literature on motivation into a political context,[13] Snyder stresses that while students of foreign policy cannot afford to ignore motivational factors if they are to explain the behavior of concrete international actors, they need not be concerned with the entire range of motives that might be operative. Motives are conceived to be of two kinds, those that an official acquires through membership and participation in the decision-making organization and those he develops as an individual in a vast array of prior experiences during childhood and adulthood. The former are what Snyder calls *in order to* motives, since

12. For an example of a critic who concluded that "those who hold to the decision-making approach . . . consider it necessary to probe into the personal events that take place within the psyches of men," see Arnold Wolfers, "The Actors in International Politics," in William T. R. Fox (ed.), *Theoretical Aspects of International Relations* (Notre Dame, Ind.: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1959), esp. p. 92.

13. Snyder, Bruck, and Sapin (eds.), *op. cit.*, pp. 137–173.

they impel officials to act in order to achieve or maintain a future state of affairs in the decision-making organization, in the internal setting, or in the external setting. The latter are labeled *because of* motives, since the behavior to which they lead can be said to occur because of idiosyncratic predispositions acquired in the course of past experience. Political scientists, Snyder emphasized, may not have to devote equal attention to both types of motives. Students of foreign policy are not interested in the official as a whole human being, but only in that part of him that gives rise to his behavior as an official. Hence, while psychologists and historians might have reason to examine the idiosyncratic aspects of his personality and past experience, political scientists may be able to develop sufficient explanations of his behavior without ever investigating the "because of" motives that gave rise to it. Indeed, in what comes closest to an explicit theoretical proposition in the entire formulation, Snyder contends that usually the behavior of officials can be satisfactorily explained through an exploration of the motives derived from their decision-making organization, from their interpretations of the society's goals, and from their reactions to demands of situations in the internal and external settings—and that therefore it is usually not necessary to investigate their "because of" motives. Ordinarily, for example, one does not need to know the details of a chief executive's upbringing or the profession in which he was trained after completing his formal education in order to explain his decision to arm allies and otherwise contest the aggressive behavior of a potential enemy. The decision is entirely comprehensible in terms of the perceptions and values which any occupant of the role is likely to have.

Yet this is not a rigid proposition. Even as he asserts it, Snyder acknowledges that the analysis of "in order to" motives may not always yield a satisfactory explanation, that there may be circumstances in which the idiosyncratic variables are so strong that "because of" motives must be investigated if an adequate assessment is to be made. If this should be the case, the decision-making approach does not preclude such an investigation. Snyder argues only that since "because of" motives are likely to be least relevant, considerable time and energy can be saved by examining the "in order to" motives *first*. Idiosyncratic variables, in other words, are treated as a residual category which the researcher considers only if there is a residue of behavior that is unaccounted for. Proceeding in this way the researcher not only avoids in most instances the difficult task of searching for personality data, but he also isolates, in the remaining cases, "what area of behavior must be accounted for in terms of idiosyncratic factors, that is, self-oriented needs not prompted by the system."[14]

14. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

Plainly this reasoning is not the equivalent of assuming that comprehension of the decision-making process requires exploration of the psyches and irrational impulses of officials. Again the question is left open. Motives are operative and they must be examined, but whether they are rational or irrational is a matter to be determined by the accumulation and inspection of empirical data.[15]

The Impact of the Decision-Making Approach

Despite the critical preoccupation with the rationality problem, Snyder's emphasis upon decisional phenomena stirred widespread thought among political scientists, especially those in the fields of international politics and foreign policy. Of course, it would be patently false to argue that he was alone responsible for the shift away from the analysis of reified abstractions and toward the investigation of empirical choices. Intellectual ferment never stems from only one source, and there was no lack of protest against the traditional modes of analyzing international actors prior to 1954. Not until the decision-making approach was published in that year, however, did a shift in analytic practice become manifest. Perhaps the shift and the publication of the approach were mere coincidence, but I have always felt that the coherence and thoughtfulness of Snyder's formulation served to crystallize the ferment and to provide guidance—or at least legitimacy—for those who had become disenchanted with a world composed of abstract states and with a mystical quest for single-cause explanations of objective reality.

In any event, whatever the historical relation between the publication of the decision-making approach in 1954 and subsequent practice, in the ensuing years decisional phenomena did become a central concern of students of politics. Signs of this shift were everywhere—in the language analysts employed, in the phenomena that they studied, in

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15. Furthermore, there is nothing in the decision-making approach which suggests that "in order to" motives are rational and "because of" motives irrational. It was the critics of the approach that introduced the criterion of rationality. Snyder himself never distinguished between the two types of motives in terms of this criterion nor even implied that one type is likely to be more rational than the other. On the contrary, the dynamics of organizational decision-making are conceived to be just as capable of fostering inappropriate behavior as are the psychological processes of individuals. One can readily imagine circumstances under which the idiosyncratic experiences of an official will give rise to choices that are more consistent with the analyst's criterion of rationality than are the choices provided the official by his organization. For a cogent discussion of these matters, see Sidney Verba, "Assumptions of Rationality and Non-Rationality in Models of the International System," *World Politics*, Vol. XIV (October 1961), pp. 93–117.

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the concepts they developed, and in the methods they used to generate data. The most obvious of these signs, of course, was the acceptance of the terminology of decision-making. The phrase itself began to appear in the titles of books and articles as well as in their contents,[16] and soon became a permanent fixture in the vocabulary of political analysis. Indeed, the phrase even overcame the layman's tendency to dismiss the scholar's terminology as unnecessary jargon and found its way into the vocabulary of politics. It is one of the few technical terms of political science that occasionally appears in the speeches of presidents, the appeals of candidates, the debates of Congressmen, and the editorials and headlines of newspapers. It seems more than a mere accident of style that led a recent President of the United States to refer to "the dark and tangled stretches in the decision-making process."[17] Like political scientists—and, I believe, because of them—many top officials have been attracted by the substance as well as the terminology of decision-making analysis.[18]

The impact of the decision-making approach could even be discerned in the work of scholars who continue to use some of the traditional terminology. For several years subsequent to 1954 it became quite commonplace for analysts to preface their use of abstract terms with qualifying footnotes that took note of the dangers of reification and that recast the traditional language into a decision-making context. The following is a typical expression of this qualification:

Although there are frequent references in this study to such collective nouns as the "nation," "country," "state," and "government," it is to be clearly understood throughout that these terms are used merely for the sake of convenient exposition. Only individuals have motives, expectations, and interests, and only they act or behave. Strictly speaking, it is not the "state," in the above reference, which substitutes its schedule for that of private persons, but certain officials who, with the acquiescence of other persons, shift resources to new goals and away from others valued highly in peacetime.[19]

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16. For example, see Donald R. Matthews, *The Social Background of Political Decision-Makers* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1954); Dwaine Marvick (ed.), *Political Decision-Makers* (New York: Free Press, 1961); and Karl W. Deutsch, "Mass Communications and the Loss of Freedom in National Decision-Making: A Possible Research Approach to Interstate Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. I (June 1957), pp. 200–211.

17. John F. Kennedy, "Foreword," in Theodore C. Sorensen, *Decision-Making in the White House: The Olive Branch or the Arrows* (New York: Columbia U. P., 1963), p. xiii.

18. For a multitude of evidence along this line, see U.S. Senate, Committee on Government Operations, Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery, *Organizing for National Security* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1961), Vols. I–III; and Charles J. Hitch, *Decision-Making for Defense* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1965), *passim*.

19. Klaus Knorr, *The War Potential of Nations* (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 1956), p. 64.

More significantly, the terminological shifts were accompanied by changes in the way political scientists structured their subject matter and the concepts they used to probe it. The substantive shifts were subtle and gradual, but in retrospect they are clearly discernible. Students of foreign policy, for example, were not only less disposed to posit abstract actors, but they also spoke less of compelling realities and more of conflicting alternatives, less of the formalities of diplomacy and more of the dilemmas of diplomats, less of the demands of situations and more of their limits and opportunities, less of the primacy of international affairs and more of the competition between domestic and foreign-policy goals. To be more specific, during the decade subsequent to 1954 the literature of the field was swollen by a veritable flood of new inquiries that, coincidentally or otherwise, reflected the premises of the decision-making approach: the origins of World War I were probed in terms of the perceptions which key officials in the various countries had of their capabilities and their adversaries;[20] the production of information for the makers of foreign policy was examined in terms of a conflict between the perspectives of the gatherers and users of intelligence;[21] the capabilities available to policy-makers were conceived in terms of a distinction between those perceived by officials (the "psychological environment") and those that existed irrespective of whether they were perceived (the "operational environment");[22] the evolution and choice of policy alternatives were analyzed in terms of the requirements and processes of consensus-building among executive agencies,[23] military services,[24] and nongovernmental leaders;[25] the development and change of policy goals were assessed in terms of shifting motivational patterns among participating officials;[26] the relationship between executive and legislative policy-makers and agencies was posited and probed as a communications process,[27] as were the relations

20. Dina A. Zinnes, Robert C. North, and Howard E. Koch, Jr., "Capability, Threat, and the Outbreak of War," in James N. Rosenau (ed.), *International Politics and Foreign Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1961), pp. 469–482.

21. Cf. Roger Hilsman, *Strategic Intelligence and National Decisions* (New York: Free Press, 1956).

22. Harold and Margaret Sprout, "Environmental Factors in the Study of International Politics," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 1 (December 1957), pp. 309–328.

23. Roger Hilsman, "The Foreign-Policy Consensus: An Interim Research Report," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. III (December 1959), pp. 361–382.

24. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Common Defense: Strategic Programs in National Politics* (New York: Columbia U. P., 1961).

25. James N. Rosenau, *National Leadership and Foreign Policy: A Case Study in the Mobilization of Public Support* (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 1963).

26. Vernon Van Dyke, *Pride and Power: The Rationale of the Space Program* (Urbana: U. of Illinois Press, 1964).

27. James A. Robinson, *Congress and Foreign-Policy Making: A Study in Legislative Influence and Initiative* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1962).

between policy-makers and their publics,[28] between officials and the press,[29] and between legislators and interest groups;[30] psychological warfare was seen in terms of the intellectual and organizational context of those who conduct it as well as those toward whom it is directed;[31] the role of delegate to the United Nations was conceived in terms of the stimuli experienced by its occupants;[32] the role of legislator was conceptualized in terms of the conflicts between internal and external variables[33] and between role and idiosyncratic variables;[34] the relevance of personal experience and professional training for the foreign policy outlooks of academics,[35] scientists,[36] military officers,[37] Southerners,[38] and other role occupants[39] was subjected to searching inquiry, as was the socialization of legislators,[40] foreign-service officers,[41] and secretaries of state[42] into their roles; and the relevance of goals in different

28. Bernard C. Cohen, *The Political Process and Foreign Policy: The Making of the Japanese Peace Settlement* (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 1957); also see Karl W. Deutsch and Lewis J. Edinger, *Germany Rejoins the Powers: Mass Opinion, Interest Groups, and Elites in Contemporary German Foreign Policy* (Stanford: Stanford U. P., 1959).

29. Bernard C. Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 1963).

30. Raymond A. Bauer, Ithiel de Sola Pool, and Lewis Anthony Dexter, *American Business and Public Policy: The Politics of Foreign Trade* (New York: Atherton, 1963).

31. Robert T. Holt and Robert W. van de Velde, *Strategic Psychological Operations and American Foreign Policy* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1960).

32. Chadwick F. Alger, "United Nations Participation as a Learning Experience," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Vol. XXVII (Fall 1963), pp. 411–426.

33. Roland Young, *The American Congress* (New York: Harper, 1958).

34. James N. Rosenau, "Private Preferences and Political Responsibilities: The Relative Potency of Individual and Role Variables in the Behavior of U.S. Senators," in J. David Singer (ed.), *Quantitative International Politics: Insights and Evidence* (New York: Free Press, 1967).

35. Gene M. Lyons and Louis Morton, *Schools for Strategy: Education and Research in International Security Affairs* (New York: Praeger, 1965).

36. Robert Gilpin, *American Scientists and Nuclear Weapons Policy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962). See also Robert Gilpin and Christopher Wright (eds.), *Scientists and National Policy-Making* (Columbia U. P., 1964).

37. Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1960), and John W. Masland and Laurence I. Radway, *Soldiers and Scholars: Military Education and National Policy* (Princeton: Princeton U. P., 1957).

38. Alfred O. Hero, Jr., *The Southerner and World Affairs* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U. P., 1965).

39. R. Joseph Monson, Jr., and Mark W. Cannon, *The Makers of Public Policy: American Power Groups and Their Ideologies* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965); and Hans Speier and W. Phillips Davison (eds.), *West German Leadership and Foreign Policy* (New York: Harper, 1957).

40. James David Barber, *The Lawmakers: Recruitment and Adaptation to Legislative Life* (New Haven: Yale U. P., 1965).

41. James L. McCamy, *Conduct of the New Diplomacy* (New York: Harper, 1964), Part III.

42. W. Lloyd Warner, Norman H. Martin, Paul P. Van Riper, and Orvis F. Collins, *The American Federal Executive: A Study of the Social and Personal*

issues-areas as a source of differential behavior on the part of the same actors was explored.[43]

As even this small sample of illustrations indicates, however, the post-1954 concern with decisional phenomena was scattered over a vast range of diverse and unrelated problems. Decisional phenomena served as a common concern, but they did not serve to foster coherence in research. Few analysts probed different aspects of the same problem and even fewer built upon the findings of others. Comparison of the foreign-policy-making of different nations became a widespread pre-occupation,[44] but the comparisons generally lacked uniformity and, in effect, were little more than single-nation analyses juxtaposed with each other.[45] Spurred by the application of game theory to the problems of deterrence in a world of nuclear superpowers, efforts to develop formal models of the utility-probability calculations made by foreign-policy actors also attracted a number of practitioners,[46] but these too failed to achieve uniformity as many of the analysts became restless in face of the difficulty of estimating the subconscious and subjective factors that underlie the calculations of utilities and probabilities in a particular situation.[47] Anxious to account for these subjective factors under various circumstances, other analysts turned to simulating international phenomena in a laboratory,[48] but the wide use of the technique of simulation has yet to yield a coherent body of findings.

Characteristics of the Civilian and Military Leaders of the United States Federal Government (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), and Dean E. Mann, with Jameson W. Doig, *The Assistant Secretaries: Problems and Processes of Appointment* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1965).

43. Theodore J. Lowi, "American Business, Public Policy, Case-Studies, and Political Theory," *World Politics*, Vol. XVI (July 1964), pp. 677–715. See also James N. Rosenau (ed.), *Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy* (New York: Free Press, 1967), *passim*.

44. For example, see Joseph E. Black and Kenneth W. Thompson (eds.), *Foreign Policies in a World of Change* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963); Roy C. Macridis (ed.), *Foreign Policy in World Politics*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1962; and Kurt London, *The Making of Foreign Policy: East and West* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1965).

45. For an elaboration of this point, see James N. Rosenau, "Pre-Theories and Theories of Foreign Policy," in R. Barry Farrell (ed.), *Approaches to Comparative and International Politics* (Evanston: Northwestern U. P., 1966), pp. 34–37.

46. For example, see Bruce M. Russett, "The Calculus of Deterrence," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. VII (June 1963), pp. 97–109; and J. David Singer, "Inter-Nation Influence: A Formal Model," *American Political Science Review*, Vol. LVII (June 1965), pp. 420–430.

47. Cf. Martin Patchen, "Decision Theory in the Study of National Action: Problems and a Proposal," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. IX (June 1965), pp. 164–176; and Bruce M. Russett, "Pearl Harbor: Deterrence Theory and Decision Theory" (mimeo., n.d.).

48. Among the many who moved in this direction was the main author of the decision-making approach himself: see Richard C. Snyder, "Experimental Techniques and Political Analysis: Some Reflections in the Context of Concern Over Behavioral Approaches," in James C. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Limits of Behavior-*

Least of all did the post-1954 lines of inquiry yield any extension of the original decision-making approach itself. Stimulating as Snyder's scheme was, as of this writing (May 1966) it has yet to arouse widespread attempts at conceptual modification or empirical validation. Thought was provoked and decisional phenomena came to be emphasized, but the approach itself remains unamplified. There has been no rush of graduate students to expand its propositions in Ph.D. dissertations and no accumulation of case studies utilizing its categories. As previously noted, only one direct effort to apply the approach has been undertaken and even this failed to yield amplification or clarification of foreign-policy decision-making process in other than the single situation to which it was applied. To be sure, the approach has been widely excerpted in anthologies[49] and students in undergraduate and graduate programs still receive an introduction to its premises. Otherwise, however, the approach as such has tended to disappear from sight. The original formulation no longer recurs in the footnotes of professional articles or in discussions at professional conferences.

The Need for Theory

How can we explain the decision-making approach's apparent lack of durability? How do we resolve the contradiction between the claim that its impact was pervasive and the conclusion that it failed to generate theoretical elaboration or even empirical case studies? If the impact was so extensive, why are traces of the original formulation vanishing from present-day literature and research? Is it that Snyder was so far ahead of the field that it is still catching up and that the *next* decade will witness attempts to apply and expand his formulation? Or, more personally, is it that I have engaged in wishful thinking and allowed my assessment of the merits and impact of the decision-making approach to be distorted by the way it enriched my own graduate training? Could it be that the approach never was capable of elaboration and that I have been blinded by attachments to a favored teacher?

alism in Political Science (Philadelphia: American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1962), pp. 94–123; and Harold Guetzkow, Chadwick F. Alger, Richard A. Brody, Robert C. Noel and Richard C. Snyder, *Simulation in International Relations* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963).

49. For example, see Heinz Eulau, Samuel J. Eldersveld, and Morris Janowitz (eds.), *Political Behavior: A Reader in Theory and Research* (New York: Free Press, 1956), pp. 352–359; Stanley H. Hoffmann (ed.), *Contemporary Theory in International Relations* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960), pp. 150–165; and James N. Rosenau (ed.), *International Politics and Foreign Policy: A Reader in Research and Theory* (New York: Free Press, 1961), pp. 186–192, 247–253.

The answer to these questions has two dimensions which, taken together, serve both to explain the discrepancies in the previous analysis and to justify indebtedness to Snyder and his approach. One dimension concerns the lack of theory in the original formulation and the other posits a justification for this lack. While many of the criticisms of the approach were ill-founded, it is certainly true that Snyder identified the existence of a number of relationships without attempting to theorize about their components and structure. Nothwithstanding the vast array of categories and subcategories, the links among them remain unspecified. As previously indicated, only the place of idiosyncratic variables —"because of" motives—are the subject of predictive assessment and even here the prediction is cast in such broad terms as to have little relevance for specific situations. To posit decision-making as a central activity and the internal, external, and organizational settings as prime sources of this activity is not to suggest the relative strength of these sources under varying conditions or the interaction between them. To indicate that the strengths of the relevant variables have to be assessed and compared is not to outline a method for assessing them or a basis for comparing them. Yet, self-admittedly, Snyder did not carry his analysis to these lengths. He identified unexplored phenomena, but did not indicate how they might unfold. He called attention to new premises and concepts, but did not specify when, where, and how they might be used. He suggested problems that could be fruitfully researched, but did not provide substantive guidance as to how the researcher should proceed.[50]

Conspicuously missing from the decision-making approach, in other words, are any "if-then" hypotheses—propositions which indicate that *if* certain circumstances are operative, *then* certain decisions and actions are likely to ensue. The difficulty with all the categories and subcategories subsumed by the approach is not that they have been proliferated, but rather that they have been isolated from each other. Our computer technology is fully capable of coping with the proliferation problem. But the computer has to be programmed. It cannot in itself handle the problem of cross-tabulating and analyzing the subcategorized data. For this, theory—or, if theory is too stringent a requirement, simple if-then propositions—is needed that instructs the computer how to process the

50. Some years later Snyder, with another colleague, somewhat offset this deficiency by outlining fifty-six research projects that could usefully be undertaken. However, again there was a shortage of theoretical propositions and the guidance provided for carrying out each project was mainly in the form of questions that might be considered and bibliographical sources that might be consulted. Cf. Richard C. Snyder and James A. Robinson, *National and International Decision-Making: A Report to the Committee on Research for Peace* (New York: Institute for International Order, 1961).

data in terms of the interaction that is presumed to take place within and among the categories.

The main reason for the lack of theory is clear. While the organization variables are elaborated at length, those in the internal and external settings are merely identified. Anxious to demonstrate the relevance of the decision-making process to the contents of foreign-policy decisions, Snyder explicitly passed quickly over the domestic and foreign sources of motivation, pausing only long enough to note their existence and the necessity of viewing them from the perspective of officials in an organizational context. But to theorize about the decisions that officials are likely to make, one must have some notion of the nature of the stimuli to which they are exposed. Variables within the decision-making organization may be crucial, but they are variables, and events or trends outside the organization are key determinants of the way in which they vary. Domestic demands and national aspirations may be increasingly important sources of foreign policy, but the conditions under which they are salient for officials can fluctuate markedly. External demands are perhaps subject to even wider and more erratic fluctuation. Since Snyder did not enumerate any of the factors in the internal and external settings to which decision-makers might respond, naturally he was not led to hypothesize about the choices that they might make in different types of situations.

Theories of political decision-making, in other words, can never be exclusively comprised of propositions about the officials who make choices. Processes located in the environment toward which officials direct their decisions are no less relevant than those which occur in their minds and interactions. To reconstruct the world from the perspective of the decision-maker, the researcher must examine the world itself in order to comprehend the dynamics and limits of the decision-maker's perspective. To predict the direction, timing and nature of political decisions, one must include and interrelate variables pertaining to the targets of the decisions, the actors making them, and the relationship between the targets and the actions. To expect decisional phenomena to provide the sole basis for if-then propositions about politics is thus to establish an unattainable goal. There can be no theory of political decision-making that is divorced from the political environment with respect to which decisions are made. The decision-maker may serve as the organizing focus, but propositions about his behavior are bound to be as diverse and discontinuous as the targets of his behavior and the circumstances under which he makes his choices. A unified theory of political decision-making would be nothing less than a theory of the entire political process.

Little wonder, then, that students of foreign policy did not converge

upon the decision-making approach in an effort to apply and extend it. Lacking theoretical propositions and all the materials out of which such propositions must be fashioned, it contained no encouragement to application and extension. The premises were clarifying and the concepts new and useful, but there were no loose ends to tie, no intriguing hypotheses to challenge or empirical observations to test. One could only adapt the premises and concepts to whatever substantive problems and phenomena one might be interested in—say, to the origins of World War I, to the conflicts between gatherers and users of intelligence, to the analysis of capabilities, to the role of UN delegate.

But hindsight is easy. Reconstructing the world of political science from the perspective of its author, another, more justifiable reason emerges as an explanation of why Snyder settled for the decision-making approach rather than attempting a theory of international politics and foreign policy. Comprehension of international phenomena at the time he developed his scheme was rudimentary. Since international action had previously been conceived to be undertaken by abstract actors, data on interaction among decision-makers, their organizations, and their internal and external settings had not been systematically developed. For Snyder to have enumerated, assessed, and compared the strength of the relevant variables in 1954 would thus have been to engage in sheer guesswork. He could not turn to a body of reliable findings as a basis for articulating theoretical propositions. For such findings to come into existence a break with traditional modes of analysis had to be made. Reification had to be undermined. The quest for insight into reality had to be redirected. The nature of decisional phenomena had to be brought into focus. The existence of organizational and domestic variables had to be established. The case for inquiring into motivation had to be made and the legitimacy of importing concepts from other social sciences had to be demonstrated. In short, the field had to pass into and through the take-off stage before its practitioners would be in a situation to evolve theoretical propositions that would assess and compare the relevant organizational, internal, and external variables.

The study of foreign policy has since advanced well into the take-off stage and is rapidly approaching the transition to maturity. Almost every day—or at least every issue of the professional journals—brings fresh evidence that practitioners are beginning to assess the relative strength of internal and external variables as sources of international behavior undertaken by officials whose deliberations occur in different types of governments and societies. In so doing they take for granted that action is sustained by concrete and identifiable persons, that the goals of this action arise out of a need to balance internal and external demands, that the way in which officials experience these demands is a consequence of organizational as well as intellectual processes, and

that therefore the researcher must investigate both the nature and processing of the demands if he is to comprehend, explain, and predict the quality and direction of the action.

The decision-making approach, in other words, had been absorbed into the practice of foreign-policy analysis. The habits it challenged have been largely abandoned and the new ones it proposed have become so fully incorporated into the working assumptions of practitioners that they no longer need to be explicated or the original formulation from which they came cited. Unencumbered by mystical concepts, unconcerned about reified abstractions, disinclined to search for objective reality, and willing to settle for replicable findings, practitioners are now free to devote themselves to the painstaking tasks of constructing and testing hypotheses about the behavior of international actors. Now they can utilize the technique of simulation and pursue the logic of game theory in meaningful and productive ways. Now they are free to enjoy the prime pleasure of empirical research: that endless sequence whereby new theoretical propositions exert pressure to gather new data which, in turn, initiate pressure for still newer theory. None of these opportunities or pleasures would have been available if an earlier generation had not cleared the way by calling attention to the centrality of decision-making phenomena.