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INTELLIGENCE AND WARNING: Implications and Lessons of the Falkland Islands War

By GERALD W. HOPPLE*

WAS the Falkland Islands War preventable? Was it foreseeable? Almost inevitably, these two questions arise when a war erupts. The focus here is on political and strategic rather than tactical warning. What kinds of political preconceptions and strategic assumptions impinged on and shaped the decisions and actions of the two protagonists?

The potential lessons are manifold, but we must guard against premature or misapplied lessons. The basic theme of this essay is that the conflict was essentially not foreseeable. Whether it was preventable is another and more difficult question. In the short term, it was probably not avoidable, but long-term British defense policy and posture decisions as well as strategic assumptions on both sides led to what may have been an unnecessary war. In addition, the lessons of the war must be viewed in the context of the changing nature of the international system and in light of the prospects for crisis and conflict between allies and in the third world in the 1980s. Modern history demonstrates that conflict and war between formal allies are neither impossible nor especially rare; in this sense, the Falkland Islands War was not at all "deviant." These central issues will be explored in some detail, and more general implications for intelligence and warning will also be considered.

THE CENTRAL ISSUES

Major wars often begin with sudden attacks.¹ In the aftermath of such an armed conflict, a postmortem is often conducted and the conclusion is advanced that there was an "intelligence failure." Any national

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¹ Richard K. Betts, *Surprise Attack: Lessons for Defense Planning* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1982).

intelligence bureaucracy includes one or more components tasked with tracking current affairs and trying to anticipate the threatening behavior of actual or potential adversaries. Therefore, if the other side attacks, the warning analyst has failed to warn.

This plausible generalization is quite frequently wrong. A pervasive fallacy—the hindsight bias—encourages us to assume that what we know after the fact could have been foreseen.² Nothing could be further from the truth; what Baruch Fischhoff calls the “silly certainty of hindsight” is an insidious manifestation of a common failure in human thinking and perceiving. It is only one of many cognitive psychological obstacles to effective and error-free inference and analysis.

There have been many case studies of warning or intelligence failure.³ All of the cases, it should be emphasized, are potentially susceptible to the hindsight bias. They also tend to share other characteristics. For example, in retrospect we can see that many military attacks featured a variety of warning signals—embedded in a maze of both noise and deception. Furthermore, most occurred in the context of heightened tension that had been building up for some time. Often, there were several previous alerts that turned out to be false alarms. The Pearl Harbor case illustrates this pattern vividly; after June 1940, there were three distinct periods of very high tension and alerts in U.S.-Japanese relations (including November 1941, the month prior to the attack).

There has been some movement toward a “theory” of surprise and warning. Several explicitly comparative analyses have attempted to develop a portrait of prewar warning and response. One focuses on deception and the other, Betts’s study, is more ambitious.⁴

The Falklands case seems to fit into the reconstructed general pattern. Like Pearl Harbor, the German attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950 and the Chinese intervention in November, and many other comparable attacks during World War

² Baruch Fischhoff, “Hindsight ≠ Foresight: The Effect of Outcome Knowledge on Judgment Under Certainty,” *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance* 1 (No. 2, 1975), 288-99; Fischhoff, “The Silly Certainty of Hindsight,” *Psychology Today* 8 (April 1975), 70-76; Fischhoff and Ruth Beyth, “I Knew It Would Happen: Remembered Probabilities of Once-Future Things,” *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance* 13 (February 1975), 1-16.

³ The major case studies are cited in Steve Chan, “The Intelligence of Stupidity: Understanding Failures in Strategic Warning,” *American Political Science Review* 73 (March 1979), 171-80. The warning aspect of the Falklands conflict is covered in the Rt. Hon. the Lord Franks, *Falkland Islands Review: Report of a Committee of Privy Counselors* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, January 1983).

⁴ See, respectively, Betts (fn. 1); Barton Whaley, “Stratagem: Deception and Surprise in War” (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, unpub., 1969). Roberta Wohlstetter’s “Cuba and Pearl Harbor: Hindsight and Foresight,” *Foreign Affairs* 43 (July 1965), 691-707, is a useful comparative case study.

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⁶ Betts (fn. 1), 4.

II and since, warning signals preceded the Argentine invasion. If we take the extended historical record as our frame of reference, the Anglo-Argentine conflict dates back in an active sense to 1965 (when the United Nations urged Britain and Argentina to negotiate) and ultimately to 1833 (when the British occupied the Falklands after a brief period of Argentine rule). There had been a number of previous invasion threats (particularly in 1977) and Argentina almost routinely indulged in sabre-rattling prior to yearly rounds of negotiations with the British. The attack itself was the culmination of several weeks of tension.

In a more fundamental sense, the genesis of the war can be attributed to an intellectual syndrome in which one or both sides relies on certain reassuring but misleading political and/or strategic assumptions. The preconceptions typically refer to "facts" about one's own capabilities and the other's capabilities, intentions, and risk calculations.

Perhaps the most dramatic recent illustration of the disastrous impact of such strategic assumptions was the Israeli belief in 1973 that Egypt would not attack until it had attained air superiority.⁵ This central premise (the master belief in the Israeli strategic calculus) was accompanied by a secondary belief: Syria would not attack unless Egypt did. These two assumptions formed the Israeli "conception." Together, the two core assumptions operated as a strategic conceptual straitjacket, suppressing and biasing the interpretation of an incoming stream of contrary tactical indications.

To what extent did analogous political/strategic assumptions dominate the Argentine and British decision processes in the eight weeks preceding the invasion on April 2, 1982? This is the central analytical issue in the "postmortem" below.

STRATEGIC WARNING: AN ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE

Most analysts of strategic warning agree that we can never eliminate surprise, banish deception, or develop a foolproof system of indicators. Even if consensus crystallizes around a forecast that X will attack, whether someone will launch war is only the most general analytical question. We must also confront the multiple and vexing issues of when, where, and how.⁶

Roberta Wohlstetter's masterful retrospective analysis of the Pearl Harbor case starts out with the fundamental and quite illuminating

⁵ Janice Gross Stein, "'Intelligence' and 'Stupidity' Reconsidered: Estimation and Decision in Israel, 1973," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 3 (September 1980), 155.

⁶ Betts (fn. 1), 4.

point that a Japanese attack was fully expected.⁷ The other side was expectant in late 1941, but when, how, and even where were open questions. Siberia, Southeast Asia, and the Philippines were among the many potential Japanese targets.

Perhaps more than anyone else, Richard Betts has written about strategic warning cogently, systematically, and theoretically.⁸ While work on intelligence and warning tends to be narrowly case-specific, Betts has pursued an explicitly comparative research approach. He has tried to extract relevant lessons and theoretical generalizations from past cases while remaining sensitive to the subtleties and ultimately unresolvable trade-offs involved in strategic warning analysis. He has surveyed and assessed the nature and costs and benefits of alternative intellectual and organizational solutions, recognizing that few of them offer permanent panaceas, almost all of them reduce one vulnerability at the cost of increasing another, and some intelligence failure is inevitable. Furthermore, what we think of as an intelligence failure is often political failure. In searching for culprits, Betts advises us to subpoena the decision maker as well as—and probably with more justification than—the intelligence analyst.

In his book *Surprise Attack*, Betts puts forth three propositions that define the parameters of his theoretical argument. First, the key cause of surprise is political failure, not intelligence failure. Secondly, sudden attacks occur in situations of prolonged tension; there have been no significant cases of "bolts from the blue" in the twentieth century. Thirdly, the victim's strategic assumptions trigger the critical miscalculations that produce surprise.

These three propositions constitute a useful point of departure for analyzing the Falklands war from the vantage point of warning and intelligence. The first is the most crucial from the perspective of the discussion here. Betts demonstrates conclusively that military attacks that start wars are often "surprises," but the defender has nevertheless received significant warnings during both the political and strategic phases of warning. Sometimes, there are literally hundreds of incidents and other indicators as well as several major alert false alarms.⁹

Is a surprise attack an intelligence failure or a political failure? To

⁷ Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1962).

⁸ In addition to his book (fn. 1), see "Analysis, War, and Decision: Why Intelligence Failures Are Inevitable," *World Politics* 31 (October 1978), 61-89.

⁹ For example, there was a major invasion alert in South Korea on May 7, 1950, prior to the real North Korean attack in late June. During 1949, there had been 874 border violations in the Korean arena (Betts, fn. 1, 53-54).

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¹⁰ For example, see the article 19-25, 1982, 12.

¹¹ Robert Jervis, *Perception and* Princeton University Press, 1976.

¹² The most extreme example from intelligence. A much less is "good" but policy turns out to that are fairly accurate and offer for perfectly justifiable policy inputs. Then, the disaster is a Betts, "Intelligence for Policymakers," Amos Freedman, eds., *National Security* Westview, 1983).

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an extent, many failures of warning undoubtedly mix the two dimensions in an indissoluble blend. For most cases he examines, Betts exaggerates the extent to which genuine warnings emanated from the intelligence bureaucracy. Typically, intelligence analysts reflect the political premises and biases of decision makers—either because they have no choice (dissent from official preconceptions would be ridiculed or punished) or they share central beliefs with the policy community.

We should distinguish between political failure that is a direct outgrowth of a nation's defense posture (and other policy flaws) and pure analysis or technical warning failure. From the British viewpoint, fundamental policy errors seemed to contribute disproportionately to the outbreak of the war.¹⁰ The case of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, in contrast, seems to have been more of an analysis failure (from the Western perspective). Technical warning failure, when the relevant information is simply not collected or processed quickly enough, is relatively rare with respect to major military attacks, although processing and distribution snafus are far from irrelevant. Essentially, policy failure probably arises most blatantly when the deterrence-provocation dilemma is incorrectly diagnosed. Using Robert Jervis' deterrence (Munich) and spiral (World War I) models,¹¹ we can classify World War II as a policy failure and World War I as an analysis failure.

Obviously, the typology of policy failure, analysis failure, and technical warning failure is simplistic and misleading. Very few real-world cases would fall unambiguously into one of the three categories. Even with hindsight, people will disagree vehemently about particular cases. But the ideal types of pure policy failure and pure analysis failure at least alert us to the fact that policy without intelligence can be the real cause of what is labeled an intelligence failure.¹²

The distinction between analysis failure and technical warning failure, which is also simplistic, is nevertheless of undeniable value for the purpose of assessing intelligence performance. Warning is not just sen-

¹⁰ For example, see the article "The Inquest Into How It Began," *The Economist*, June 19-25, 1982, 12.

¹¹ Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976).

¹² The most extreme example is policy making without regular and meaningful inputs from intelligence. A much less extreme example of policy failure occurs when intelligence is "good" but policy turns out to be "bad." For example, intelligence may generate estimates that are fairly accurate and offer relatively valid warnings, but the decision maker may—for perfectly justifiable policy reasons—feel obligated to take action inconsistent with the inputs. Then, the disaster is a policy failure, not an intelligence failure. See Richard K. Betts, "Intelligence for Policymaking," in Gerald W. Hopple, Stephen J. Andriole, and Amos Freed, eds., *National Security Crisis Forecasting and Management* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1983).

sors and hardware; it is also analysis. More generally, intelligence is not simply facts in the form of data; it is also analysis and interpretation. Intelligence failures typically lead to injunctions about the need to collect more data. This is a myth; the problem is not generally the need for more data (analysts are often inundated with data), but the absolutely indispensable necessity for more and better analysis.

We need to emphasize what analysis can contribute to minimizing warning failure. Consumers want answers; producers, however, can often contribute most by posing questions.¹³ In addition to asking the most relevant and difficult questions, warning intelligence should highlight the critical gaps in the knowledge of decision makers, illuminate the key uncertainties, clarify the ambiguities to the extent possible, and provoke debate whenever necessary.

The second proposition, that there have been no real "bolts from the blue" in the case of modern wars, is fundamentally valid and frequently ignored. As the next section will show, the Falklands case fits this pattern. The problem for the intelligence analyst, however, is twofold. One is the hindsight bias: Can we ever distinguish between the X case when war does occur and the few or many earlier Xs when tension rose, indicators were fully consistent with a reading of "significant danger of hostilities," but peace prevailed? The second is the challenge of attempting to analyze and forecast improbable but highly consequential events. On any given day, there are many potential crises that could escalate into wars. There have been thirty long-term bilateral conflict situations in Latin America alone since 1945, many of which are still active.¹⁴ Coupled with the hindsight bias, the methodological difficulties of trying to explain and forecast rare but catastrophic events makes the job of the warning analyst more than challenging.

The third proposition identified above is that surprise attack is linked intimately with the victim's strategic assumptions. In one sense, this proposition is simultaneously unobjectionable and patently obvious. The attacker exploits the opponent's strategic premises; aside from instances in which the capability differential is extreme, if such assumptions did not exist, there would be nothing to exploit and no basis for launching a successful surprise attack. But in a more basic sense, strategic assumptions often emerge as genuine causal forces in a nontrivial way. When strategic assumptions account for surprise attack, they do so as

¹³ Betts (fn. 8), 88.

¹⁴ Wolf Grabendorff, "Interstate Conflict Behavior and Regional Potential for Conflict in Latin America," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 24 (August 1982), 267-94.

necessary (if not sufficient) would not attack unless it had in 1973 and was in 1941 that Hitler would have assumed that a Ne an adjunct to a more ge

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¹⁵ The historical background Confrontation in the Falklands Forward, 1968-1981," *Journal* 37-58; Peter Calvert, *The Falklands Press*, 1982); and Lawrence *Affairs* 61 (Fall 1982), 196-21.

necessary (if not sufficient) determinants. The Israelis *assumed* that Egypt would not attack unless it had achieved air superiority, which it did not have in 1973 and was not expected to have until 1975. Stalin *assumed* in 1941 that Hitler would present an ultimatum before attacking. The West *assumed* that a North Korean attack in 1950 would inevitably be an adjunct to a more general war.

Strategic assumptions are almost invariably plausible (at least before the fact). They are also reinforced by the other side's active deception. Strategic assumptions may refer to capabilities or intentions (or both); they may concern basic defense postures and often reflect sensible but ultimately wrong recipes for preventing war. For example, Stalin tried to deter Hitler by avoiding provocation. In other cases, warning stimuli are simply rejected because they do not conform to the prevailing belief system.

People naturally become wedded to their basic beliefs and vigorously resist their elimination. This unwillingness to look at evidence in the light of alternative beliefs leads to warning disasters. The situation becomes even more problematic when, as is often the case, previous false alarms dull sensitivity and leave the strategic assumptions intact.

THE FALKLANDS WAR: THE WARNING CONTEXT

The Falklands conflict began on April 2, 1982.¹⁵ Although the immediate pre-crisis period spanned only the preceding month, Argentina had consistently demonstrated the seriousness of its purpose and shown its willingness to consider a resort to force since 1945.

In 1965 the United Nations General Assembly invited Britain and Argentina to negotiate for a peaceful solution to the dispute. There have been many rounds of negotiation since 1965, with the period since 1976 being characterized by a more determined effort, especially on the part of the British, to achieve a negotiated settlement.

The Falklands dispute has had many periods of relative quiet since the serious reassertion of Argentine sovereignty in the 1880s. Occasional crises, such as in 1927-1928, 1933, 1966, and 1976, have interrupted the sometimes long periods of quiescence.

¹⁵ The historical background is provided in: Franks (fn. 3); Peter J. Beck, "Cooperative Confrontation in the Falkland Islands Dispute: The Anglo-Argentine Search for a Way Forward, 1968-1981," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 24 (February 1982), 37-58; Peter Calvert, *The Falklands Crisis: The Rights and the Wrongs* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982); and Lawrence Freedman, "The War of the Falkland Islands, 1982," *Foreign Affairs* 61 (Fall 1982), 196-210.

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There was a particularly serious invasion threat in late 1977. Relations between Argentina and Britain were very strained, a British ship had been fired upon, and fuel supplies to the islands (which had become the province of Argentina several years earlier) had been cut off. Intelligence reports highlighted both Belize and the Falklands as potential flash-points. The British secretly sent a submarine as a precaution. The ensuing negotiations progressed well enough for the threat of invasion to subside. The false alarm is particularly important in the light of the events and interpretations of March 1982 because the Foreign Office had cried wolf once and had thereby weakened its case for the next time around.¹⁶

Since 1976, frequent Anglo-Argentine talks have occurred in New York, Lima, and Geneva. Exploratory negotiations in New York in April 1980 provided the background for a British policy initiative in November of that year and facilitated further talks during February 1981. The initiative constituted a significant breakthrough since the British publicly proclaimed their willingness to consider a solution that would involve Argentine sovereignty.

The February talks, scheduled for resumption in December 1981, were postponed by the fall of General Viola as head of the junta and his replacement by General Galtieri. The negotiations were held in February 1982 in New York.¹⁷ On February 26, the two sides agreed to a compromise for a negotiating commission that would meet on a regular basis and the talks ended with a communiqué which referred to the "positive and cordial atmosphere." The war itself started a little over a month afterwards, with a successful Argentine invasion on April 2. Ten weeks later, Argentina surrendered to the British and conflict ended.

What went wrong? What happened between February 26 and April 2? Initially, the Argentine junta virtually repudiated its negotiator. War fever intensified in the press. The British representative to the New York talks, Richard Luce, conveyed his concern about the reaction in Buenos Aires to Lord Carrington. However, neither Luce nor Carrington felt that the situation warranted a formal request to send a tripwire or deterrent force. Indeed, in June 1981 a decision had been made to scrap the ice-patrol ship H.M.S. *Endurance*, the only regular British naval presence in the South Atlantic.¹⁸

¹⁶ The Franks report (fn. 3, 87) points out that, at the time, the most serious risk was action against British shipping. The two frigates and the submarine were sent prior to the December 1977 talks, when it was believed that a breakdown in the negotiations was very possible. The circumstances surrounding the February 1982 talks were not analogous.

¹⁷ Argentine press comment leading up to the New York talks stressed that a resort to military means was very possible during 1982. This was emphasized in *La Prensa* on January 24, 1982 and February 7, 1982 as well as in other newspapers and journals.

¹⁸ At the time, the Foreign Office warned that this decision "could well be misread in Buenos Aires. This [action] left a garrison of some 70 Royal Marines to deter Argentina

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Two factors probably accounted for the failure to request a deterrent force.¹⁹ One was budgetary, a climate of "total obsession with money," with the defense ministry "under perpetual siege."²⁰ The second was the absence of intelligence data that would have supported such an action. Apparently, neither the relevant Foreign Office analysts nor the Joint Intelligence Committee, an institutionally separate group within the Cabinet Office, produced assessments that would have justified a deterrent force decision.

Intelligence sources have since asserted that their raw material was significantly more alarmist than the assessment of it that went to the ministers. The assessments minimized the probability of an invasion, drawing on

the old-hat nature of the threats, General Galtieri's preoccupation with domestic issues, improved relations between his regime and Europe and America, the "cordiality" of the New York talks and their one-year deadline. This was used to explain even the statement issued in Buenos Aires on March 3rd that the regime was about to "seek other means" of regaining the Falklands. This statement itself suggests the junta had not yet made any decision to invade—or it would surely not have issued it.²¹

The Economist concludes that a recommendation for a precautionary expedition would have required considerably more than circumstantial evidence. This was not available until March 29, the Monday before the invasion. By then, warning indicators had proliferated. The British reacted by sending a submarine plus support ships from the Mediterranean to the South Atlantic. By the time Prime Minister Thatcher called the first crisis meeting on Wednesday evening, deterrence by verbiage alone was clearly out of the question.

In contrast to many wars, the active prewar crisis period was unusually abbreviated. Furthermore, the British and Americans have since concluded that the junta had not made a definite decision to invade even on Monday. It was still an active option, but no final decision had been reached.²²

from attempting to retake the Falkland Islands by force" (Freedman, fn. 15, 198). See also Calvert (fn. 15), 66. Several Argentine newspapers featured versions of an article in the *Daily Telegraph* regarding this decision, with an emphasis on the theme that Britain was "abandoning the protection of the Falkland Islands" (Franks, fn. 3, 34).

¹⁹ "Falkland Islands: The Origins of a War," *The Economist*, June 19-25, 1982, 36.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 38.

²¹ *Ibid.* The Franks report (fn. 3) discusses the intelligence assessments, but not the raw data.

²² Admiral Jorge Anaya, the chief of the Argentine navy and the architect of the invasion, was actively lobbying for such an option. The invasion may have been triggered by the incident on March 19, when some Argentine scrap metal merchants raised the Argentine flag on the dependency of South Georgia. The *Endurance*, which was already scheduled to be withdrawn from the area, was sent with a detachment of 21 Marines from Port Stanley

As in so many other crises of this nature, the victim was at least somewhat distracted by other issues. The foreign secretary's trip to Israel and another battle about the European Communities' budget both diverted attention from the Falklands.²³ In October 1973, the Israelis had been similarly distracted by a P.L.O. attack on Russian Jewish emigrants in Vienna. In November and December 1941, the war in Europe and other potential Japanese targets had preoccupied U.S. decision makers. In addition to false alarms, then, which reduce sensitivity through the false alarm effect, distraction militates against warning by diffusing attention.

Strategic assumptions played a role on both sides. The British assumed that Argentina would not try to take by force what it could not achieve by negotiations. This assumption was reinforced by the length of the dispute, the earlier false alarms, and the consistently strident Argentine rhetoric. Verbally, Argentina had repeatedly threatened invasion; this rhetoric came to be perceived as meaningless diplomatic posturing (and also as a flourish for domestic consumption). If anything, General Galtieri, with his Anglophile foreign minister, less draconian human rights policy, total neglect of the Falklands issue in his initial speeches, and decision to combat inflation by cutting defense spending (with the navy sustaining the largest reduction) seemed to offer a respite rather than a threat.

Another analytical flaw in the British perception of the situation was the serious underestimation of the strength of Argentina's feelings about the Falklands.²⁴ The British pursued a policy in which they attempted to substitute bluff for a credible defense posture vis-à-vis Argentina. The reason for this (and the consistent roadblock to a mutually acceptable solution of the conflict all along) was the feelings of the islanders, who were avowedly British in attitude and psychological identification and equally adamant in their opposition to any form of Argentine rule. The Foreign Office was further straitjacketed by Parliament, which backed the islanders without reservation. By early 1982, the British "could offer neither compromise to Argentina nor a credible long-term commitment

to South Georgia. There has been speculation that this incident occurred with the knowledge and possible involvement of Anaya ("Falkland Islands," fn. 19, 43; Freedman, fn. 15, 199). Galtieri had pledged privately to take control of the Falklands by the time of the highly symbolic 150th anniversary of Britain's occupation (that is, by January 3, 1983) and the junta had made plans prior to the February talks to prepare for an effective occupation (Calvert, fn. 15, 56). See also Franks (fn. 3).

²³ Freedman (fn. 15), 200. Well into 1981, Britain had been preoccupied with another potential flashpoint in Latin America: the Guatemala-Belize crisis (Calvert, fn. 15, 68-69).

²⁴ "Falkland Islands" (fn. 19), 35; Jeffrey Record, "The Falklands War," *Washington Quarterly* 5 (Autumn 1982), 45.

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Intensity is a far intentions and their clearly felt much motives may have the islands militarily in comparison to British and ambivalent—The fact that the in January 1983 Argentine emotional

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- Examination of options available
- Consideration of
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²⁵ Freedman (fn. 15).

²⁶ Freedman (fn. 15).

²⁷ Stein (fn. 5), 152.

²⁸ According to Franks. Earlier plans had featured plans (*ibid.*, 31-32).

²⁹ Stein (fn. 5), 152.

to the Falkland Islands. The only negotiating posture left was prevarication."²⁵ Bluff and stalling were hardly ideal negotiating postures for preventing a blowup when the other side felt as intensely as did Argentina.

Intensity is a far from infallible but nevertheless very useful guide to intentions and their link with behavior. Prior to the invasion, Argentina clearly felt much more intensely than the British. Although the Argentines may have thought that the British lacked the capability to retake the islands militarily,²⁶ the sheer intensity of their grievance—especially in comparison to Britain's commitment, which was reluctant, halfhearted, and ambivalent—undoubtedly played a role in the junta's final decision. The fact that the 150th anniversary of the British seizure would come in January 1983 must have added a powerful symbolic variable to the Argentine emotional equation.

Deterrence, defense, and escalation through miscalculation are three intertwined strategic concepts.²⁷ In her analysis of Israeli intelligence and decision making in the prewar environment in 1973, Stein explores the assumptions that govern the assessment and interpretation of information. As she notes, strategic arguments about deterrence, defense, and miscalculated escalation revolve around five distinct factors and their interrelationships:

- Evaluation of the interests at stake
- Assessment of the challenge to be deterred
- Examination of the adversary's intentions and calculations of the options available
- Consideration of the credibility of the commitment to respond
- Discussion of the appropriate response to the failure of deterrence

Based on the available evidence, it can be concluded that the quality of the British strategic concept was abysmal.²⁸ As Stein points out, the basic problem is not the use of some kind of organizing concept, which is absolutely necessary for both analysis and decision making.²⁹ The real issue is the concept's logical coherence and completeness, its relationship to other concepts in the larger systems of beliefs, and the way in which the concept is used. If, as Stein concludes, the Israeli concept in 1973 was incompletely articulated and this led to poor problem diagnosis and

²⁵ Freedman (fn. 15), 198. See also Franks (fn. 3), 79.

²⁶ Freedman (fn. 15), 199. See also Franks (fn. 3), 77.

²⁷ Stein (fn. 5), 152.

²⁸ According to Franks (fn. 3, 80), there were no detailed military contingency plans. Earlier plans had featured a "concept of operations," but were not detailed contingency plans (*ibid.*, 31-32).

²⁹ Stein (fn. 5), 152.

suboptimal consideration of options (as well as aggravating biased information processing), then from this perspective the Argentine attack was perfectly understandable since, for all practical purposes, the British did not have a meaningful or workable strategic concept.

Why was this so? The easy answer is because the basic British assumption was that Argentina would not go to war. But this is the kind of assumption, both crude and derived from wishful thinking, that suggests a decidedly epiphenomenal character. A higher order assumption—or set of assumptions—beyond the Anglo-Argentine strategic context may be discerned. This refers to the fundamental British defense strategy and posture with respect to the conflict and, even more primordial, to the shopworn but valid adage that a nation must be sure that its "political objectives can be achieved with the available military forces and strategy."³⁰

The British refused to cede the Falklands or make a real defense commitment to them. The latter would have required a decision that would have been perceived as politically damaging (if not suicidal) and economically unthinkable. But by early March, it was too late anyway; a decision to send a deterrent force at that time would not have sufficed.³¹ An attack could have been deterred only by an earlier and substantial military commitment in the South Atlantic and preferably on the islands.

From the British perspective, the Falklands war is an almost classic decision disaster or policy failure. There were also analytical failures lockstitched into the fabric of the fiasco, but they were the kind of flaws that fall almost exclusively in the province of policy makers (e.g., establishing and assessing one's own detailed defense-deterrence strategy in a conflict arena).

Surprise attacks can be made *least* likely by overinsurance in force levels or very high levels of readiness; both are extremely expensive and neither is palatable.³² However, British deterrence would have required neither overinsurance nor an unacceptably high readiness level. A credible deterrent force might have been sufficient and, if an extremely

³⁰ Michael Moodie, "Six Months of Conflict," *Washington Quarterly* 5 (Autumn 1982), 32. See also: Freedman (fn. 15), 198; Sir James Cable "The Falklands Conflict," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 108 (September 1982), 72; Admiral Thomas H. Moorer and Alvin J. Cottrell, "In the Wake of the Falklands Battle," *Strategic Review* 10 (Summer 1982), 27; James D. Hessman, "The Lessons of the Falklands," *Sea Power* 25 (July 1982), 16.

³¹ In fact, at that point, a deterrent force would have ignited a preemptive Argentine attack (forcing them to advance their timetable slightly). If it had been too small to be noticed or had been sent secretly (as occurred in response to the 1977 invasion scare), it would not have prevented the desperate junta from invading. See "Falkland Islands" (n. 19), 43. See also Franks (fn. 3), 87.

³² Betts (fn. 1), 309-10.

improbable attack had been the defense of the islands.

Deterrence may be a miscalculated escalation of certain defense situations, but it is probably strongly analogous to the situation in which deterrence is insufficient to deter.

The argument about the sense of weighing costs against expected utility). We can see that Argentina's decision was clearly, however, that the decision as much as a failure to anticipate that the other side would be considerably more just the equivalent assumption go to war.

Argentina was really neither make a long resolve the issue diplomatically from the area, which is a semicomical South American significant message to the physical signals and undoubtedly picked up.

The timing of the Britain's ability to respond that the junta assumed satisfied itself with fact. Much of the British force invaded, a fact that led to the British task force. If the fleet would have been off as the Indian Ocean.

If Argentina had would have faced a The aircraft carrier

³³ *Ibid.*, 273.

improbable attack had occurred, would have greatly facilitated the defense of the islands.

Deterrence may be provocative in certain contexts. The deterrence-miscalculated escalation trade-off is particularly relevant to the analysis of certain defense situations. However, the Falklands situation was probably strongly analogous to the Korean arena today, where the danger is insufficient deterrence of a North Korean attack, not provocation.³³

The argument above assumes a rational opponent (rational in the sense of weighing comparative capabilities and trying to maximize one's expected utility). We have very little knowledge of the process that led to Argentina's decision to invade. Extensive evidence indicates rather clearly, however, that inaccurate strategic assumptions shaped the junta's decision as much as equally wrong assumptions accounted for the British failure to anticipate war. If anything, the premise in Buenos Aires that the other side would not fight was held more strongly and perhaps with considerably more justification (based on signals and indications) than the equivalent assumption in London that Argentina simply would not go to war.

Argentina was reacting to the many British signals that they would neither make a long-term military commitment to the Falklands nor resolve the issue diplomatically. The decision to withdraw the *Endurance* from the area, which was postponed only because of the strange and semicomical South Georgia incident on March 19, had conveyed a significant message to Foreign Minister Costa Mendes. Other verbal and physical signals and indications emanated from London and were undoubtedly picked up in Buenos Aires.

The timing of the invasion shows a lack of concern for minimizing Britain's ability to react, underlining the plausibility of the argument that the junta assumed that Britain would not go to war (or would have satisfied itself with face-saving but essentially meaningless harassment).³⁴ Much of the British fleet was back home for Easter when the Argentines invaded, a fact that later facilitated the very rapid assembly of a powerful British task force. If Argentina had waited for only two more months, the fleet would have been dispersed (with a group of warships as far off as the Indian Ocean).

If Argentina had been willing to wait for eighteen months, its forces would have faced a Royal Navy stripped of any sea-based air power.³⁵ The aircraft carriers *Hermes* and *Invincible*, the backbone of the suc-

³³ *Ibid.*, 273.

³⁴ Freedman (fn. 15), 199.

³⁵ Record (fn. 24), 44.

successful British attempt to retake the islands, were slated for retirement and sale to Australia; the government had canceled plans and contracts for any new carrier construction. Furthermore, Argentina was in the process of acquiring new arms and would have been much better equipped a few months later. The latter fact and the concentration of the British fleet at home both point to a decision resting on a firm—and logical—conviction that the British would not fight.

A second assumption, ancillary to the first, was that the United States would prevent the British from going to war. As was the case with Israel's two linked assumptions in 1973, these two premises were plausible, interrelated, and powerful enough to drive out any second thoughts that may have materialized. When war broke out, *The Economist* depicted the U.S. as trying to play the role of "everybody's friend."³⁶

Militarily, there was another key Argentine strategic error: the failure to move its air power from the mainland to the Falklands.³⁷ Because of this failure, the potential superiority of the Argentine air force was canceled out since it was forced to operate from the mainland, 400 miles from the Falklands. The war could have turned out quite differently if the air force had been moved to the islands, adding further support to the hypothesis that Argentina simply assumed that Britain did not intend to go to war.

Argentina also probably reasoned that its gunboat diplomacy would succeed. This was a lesson of recent history that was very well grounded and, in fact, made the invasion decision seem like a prospect with a very low cost, an extremely low probability of failure, and, given the intensity of Argentine feeling, a very high payoff. Throughout the world during the 1970s, five islands, groups of islands, or parts of islands had been seized successfully through an application of force that was "appropriate, limited, and naval."³⁸ Iran took several islands at the mouth of the Persian Gulf; China seized the Paracels; Vietnam occupied the Spratleys; Indonesia assumed control of East Timor; and Turkey took over a part of Cyprus. Protest greeted all of these operations and reversed none of

³⁶ "Falkland Islands: Will Two Weeks' Steaming Let Off the Pressure?" *The Economist*, April 10, 1983, 22; see also Franks (fn. 3), 75-76. Former President Leopoldo Galtieri, the leader of the military junta during the war, maintained that Argentina would not have invaded if the junta had known that the U.S. would support Britain ("Argentine Military Arrests Chief During Falklands War," *Washington Post*, April 13, 1983, A27). Prior to the invasion, the clear perception in Argentina was that the U.S. would not react. In fact, when the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Affairs unilaterally issued a communiqué on the New York talks, Iglesias Rouco in *La Prensa* discussed the advantages of a direct seizure of the Falklands, an act which he believed would be "understood" by the United States, which could be placated with an offer of joint naval facilities.

³⁷ Record (fn. 24), 44-45.

³⁸ Cable (fn. 30), 73.

them. Precedents to such a venture.

For the British, there have been distinguishing faulty assumptions ransack history's writings as the prelude to hostilities.

We know that the colors of our reactions to the vantage point of 1982, what would we see the following year?

The Falkland Islands bilateral conflicts to a majority of these and some have tottered since 1961, Guatemala into warfare (e.g., in fact, there have been three before 1945).

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For the British, then, warning signals existed but probably could not have been distinguished from previous invasion scares. For both sides, faulty assumptions were discernible (at least retrospectively). But we can ransack history's wars and ferret out fundamental but wrong assumptions as the preludes to almost every dyadic case that evolves into armed hostilities.

We know that the Falklands conflict occurred and that inevitably colors our reactions and interpretations. But if we look at the case from the vantage point of a British or even an Argentine analyst in January 1982, what would the analytical landscape have looked like? We would see the following general picture.

The Falkland Islands are a permanent crisis arena, one of about thirty bilateral conflicts that have arisen in Latin America since 1945. The majority of these are still active at some level; few have been resolved; some have tottered on the brink of war (such as Cuba and the U.S. in 1961, Guatemala and Belize from 1975 to 1977); a few have escalated into warfare (e.g., El Salvador and Honduras in 1969). Since 1832, in fact, there have been ten wars in the general area (five in the 1800s, three before 1945, and two since).³⁹

In the period between 1965 and 1981, there has been more overt conflict, a fact which is unarguably related to the perceptible decline of U.S. hegemony in the region and the passing of the dominance of cold-war issues (compared to the 1948–1965 period). A new type of military regime has appeared in South America, one that actively promotes modernization. The former emphasis on internal security has been replaced by the achievement of an irreducible core of internal control and the advent of sharper interstate competition, heralding the transition from the doctrine to the diplomacy of national security.

Territorial claims and resource competition fuel many of these conflicts. Ideological and hegemonic conflict have been decreasing.⁴⁰ Conflicts oriented around migration can be expected to increase in number and intensity. Many conflict constellations are a mix of all five types. The Anglo-Argentine conflict is hegemonic, territorial, and resource-oriented in character.

We can portray the general contours of the Latin American conflict

³⁹ Grabendorff (fn. 14).

⁴⁰ Ideological conflicts include disputes between dictatorships and democracies, civilian and military regimes, and capitalist and socialist alternatives. Big power claims to supremacy or hegemonic conflicts include as special cases the hegemony of a colonial power (Britain) and the hegemony of a regional power (Brazil).

environment in early 1982 fairly well. But this is a considerable distance from being able to estimate the probability that any specific conflict will escalate into a war. If we descend to the level of the Anglo-Argentine dyad, we soon discover that our ability to profile the relationship accurately does not provide any real basis for reliable, valid prediction.

A scholarly essay on the Anglo-Argentine conflict, which appeared in print several months prior to the war and covered the period from 1968 through 1981, characterized the dispute as one of "cooperative confrontation."⁴¹ The overall assessment was that there were

clear signs that both disputants are imbued with a willingness to settle in order to provide a foundation both for improved Anglo-Argentine relations and for the cooperative development of the islands' offshore economic potential. In practice, however, certain factors militate against a settlement. . . .⁴²

At the same time, it was emphasized that

there is still the matter of whether Argentina, which has proved more inflexible throughout the dispute, interprets Britain's search for a detente as a genuine gesture of conciliation rather than a sign of weakness to be exploited.⁴³

It is highly unlikely that a current intelligence assessment in January 1982 would have been fundamentally different from the above academic account. Nor would the February negotiations have necessarily changed the outlook. British intelligence reports in the middle of March suggested that senior Argentine naval officers, consistently the most bellicose element of the military on the Falklands, "doubted that Argentina would invade the Falklands."⁴⁴ Whether attack warning indicators—immediate pre-crisis signals—could have penetrated the fog of wishful thinking on both sides is debatable. Clearly, trying to put oneself in the seat of the analyst with foresight responsibilities rather than hindsight knowledge invests "intelligence failures," the term that so many use so loosely, with a completely different aura.

Improvement must concentrate on doing whatever helps to make analysis better at the margin. One idea that is directly relevant to the Falklands case and also has much more general applicability concerns strategic assumptions and arguments. Stein, for instance, in assessing the quality of strategic analysis in Israel in 1973, focused on the logic of the prevailing strategic argument.⁴⁵

The discussion of the 1973 war above, which is admittedly quite

⁴¹ Beck (fn. 15).

⁴² Franks (fn. 3), 47.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴⁴ Stein (fn. 5), 168.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

tentative and ad hoc played a significant role. As Stein points out, it is not surprising that the need to respond rapidly in a threat-situation was able to

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Although the experience is impressive, Stein's logic compared to other analysis has yet to be assessed applies with even more lands case.

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⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

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⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 54.

tentative and ad hoc in nature, does suggest that strategic assumptions played a significant role in the prewar analysis and decision processes. As Stein points out, flaws in the Israeli strategic logic were not attributable to the need to develop or flesh out the structure of the argument rapidly in a threat-saturated crisis context. The process of conceptualization was able to unfold at a leisurely pace.

With respect to the British and the Falklands, the same is true. In fact, compared to the Israelis, their political and military leaders had an appreciably longer period of time to develop, analyze, assess, and modify as necessary their strategic conceptual tools and the accompanying logic. The almost ritualistic quality of the assumption that Argentina would not resort to war and the lack of evidence that other assumptions and conceptual structures were considered worthy of sustained and careful (and comparative) analysis cannot be blamed on time pressures. However we might wish to characterize the origins, the conflict dates back a long time (to 1965, 1945, the 1880s, 1833, or the 1770s, depending on one's perspective). Stein's conclusion is clearly generalizable to this case: "Strategic arguments developed over time can be remedied over time and, if they can be, error may be at least partly avoidable."⁴⁶

Although the explanatory power of strategic concepts seems to be impressive, Stein readily acknowledges that the relative impact of poor logic compared to other determinants of failures in estimation and analysis has yet to be ascertained for the prewar 1973 Israeli case. This caveat applies with even more force to this preliminary discussion of the Falklands case.

IMPLICATIONS, CAVEATS, AND LESSONS

The Falklands war has made a solution of the dispute that led to it less likely than ever. Attitudes on both sides have hardened and the islanders, never supportive of any kind of a settlement that might introduce Argentine sovereignty, are even more negatively disposed toward Buenos Aires than before the conflict. The British had tried to substitute bluffing for a credible commitment and ended up with the very commitment they had consistently avoided. The Argentines attempted to seize what they saw as rightfully theirs and are now much further from the goal than before. If the war was launched to prop up General Galtieri's regime, as some have speculated, the outcome and its aftermath were about as inconsistent with that goal as could be imagined.

Warning intelligence functions to provide foresight and thereby pre-

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

vent war (if possible). It succeeded in accomplishing neither objective in this instance, although intelligence per se may not have been the primary or real culprit. While the analysis here has focused on attack warning, ignored wartime intelligence, and only touched on planning,⁴⁷ the Israeli-P.L.O. war of June 1982, the Falklands, and the ongoing Iran-Iraq conflict all reaffirm the importance of intelligence both prior to and during a conflict.⁴⁸

Iraqi President Hussein's intelligence miscalculations included the capability of Iran's forces as well as his own and also the expected impact of his attack on Iran's domestic situation. For Israel, electronic intelligence was vital in determining how to destroy Syria's missiles in the Bekaa valley. In the Falklands, the British skillfully meshed analysis of photo reconnaissance pictures and reports from small units as the basis for their decision about the best possible landing site.

Defense planning, including the realistic assessment of one's own capabilities and the capabilities and intentions of the opposition, turned out to be crucial in these recent wars. Careful and honest net assessments and attention to strategy (both in the political and military senses of the concept) both proved absolutely indispensable. Neither Iraq nor, apparently, Argentina devoted enough thought to these issues.

The lessons and implications of the Falklands War have relevance beyond the direct participants. All of the evidence we have about international crises and wars since 1945 points to the conclusion that there was nothing that unique about this particular war. Images of the international crisis that draw on the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 or associate crises with the superpowers or the East-West conflict axis are not representative of the range or variety of crises in the contemporary international arena. Crises have occurred throughout the world and have involved confrontations between nations of all types. Especially within the third world, endemic conflicts have often erupted into crises and some have led to actual warfare.

Table 1 presents forty-eight crisis dyads from 1966 through 1978. These pairs of international crisis actors constituted the empirical database for a computerized crisis warning and monitoring system developed and tested by the U.S. Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.⁴⁹ This list reflects a Western bias; crisis chronologies of Soviet,

⁴⁷ Betts (fn. 8, 63-65) makes this tripartite breakdown.

⁴⁸ Moodie (fn. 30), 31-32.

⁴⁹ Gerald W. Hopple, "Internal and External Crisis Early Warning and Monitoring," Technical Report (McLean, Va.: International Public Policy Research Corporation, 1980).

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Israel-Jordan
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Turkey-Cyprus
Israel-Jordan
U.S.A.-North Korea
U.S.S.R.-Czechoslov
Israel-Egypt
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Honduras-El Salva
North Vietnam-U.S.
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Jordan-Syria
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India-Pakistan
Uganda-Tanzania
Rhodesia-Zambia
Israel-Egypt

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TABLE 1 (cont.)

<i>Dyad</i>	<i>Starting Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Israel-Syria		
U.S.A.-U.S.S.R.	10/24/73	Global alert
Greece-Turkey	7/15/74	
Cyprus-Cyprus (Turkey)		
U.S.A.-Cambodia	5/12/75	<i>Mayaguez</i>
Morocco-Spain	5/27/75	
Morocco-Algeria	12/9/75	
Syria-Lebanon	6/1/76	
Syria-P.L.O.		
Syria-Israel		
Angola-Zaire	3/10/77	
Egypt-Libya	7/19/77	
Somalia-Ethiopia	8/8/77	
Israel-Syria	9/19/77	
Israel-P.L.O.		
Uganda-Tanzania	10/31/77	
Cambodia-Vietnam	12/28/78	

as crisis contexts involving Israel and one or more Arab opponents as well as related conflict episodes, such as the Syria-Jordan and P.L.O.-Jordan pairs in 1970) dominates the empirical universe of world crisis in the 1966 to 1978 period. The next most frequent type of crisis occurred between nonaligned third world opponents (a total of fourteen, including five Middle East cases). Included are the Honduras-El Salvador war (1969), several significant crises between Uganda and Tanzania, several additional crises involving African nations, and India and Pakistan.

In contrast, other crisis types are relatively rare. Only four cases of superpower crisis appear on the list (two between the United States and the Soviet Union and two between the Soviet Union and China). There are eight East-West crises and four involving internecine disputes within the communist world. All five Western crises are accounted for by dyads in the Greece-Turkey-Cyprus arena. Finally, two West-South crises (U.S.-Syria in 1973 and Morocco-Spain in 1975) occurred during the period. There were no East-South crises.

All of this reflects an international system in which power has become significantly more dispersed. The tight and loose bipolar systems of the 1945 to 1960 period enabled the superpowers to orchestrate international political trends to a much greater extent and forced a considerable amount of international crisis and conflict into the cold-war channel.

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The logic of the de Mesquita's initiative shocking.⁵¹ He analyzed from 1816 to 1974, had at least one already preexisting formal fifteen instances of the seventy-six wars

⁵¹ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *Power and Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1981), 160.

Comment

Global alert

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As bipolarity eroded, conflicts within the West and East surfaced and intensified. The international system became multipolar in the 1960s and this polycentric pattern accelerated in the 1970s, increasing the probability and incidence of crises within the West, East, and South (as well as between the West and East). The diffusion of power process is continuing and the world is becoming increasingly complex; almost invariably, this pattern will dominate the 1980s. Our expectations about conflict and crisis must flow initially from this fundamental structural configuration.

The Anglo-Argentine crisis, then, was neither deviant nor unprecedented. Of the larger implications, two warrant mention. First, U.S. policy makers and analysts can expect to continue to confront secondary crises, including ones between friendly powers or allies. High priority will have to be given to analyzing and anticipating such possibilities. The goal should not be to achieve an impossible degree of perfect warning, but to enhance the ability to react rapidly and decisively. One way to do this is by more explicitly and systematically monitoring and analyzing potential and actual conflict and crisis arenas, thereby providing for more rational and effective contingency planning.

Wars between allies can be projected for the future. In fact, this is one of the predictable consequences of a transition from a bipolar to a polycentric system. Not surprisingly in the light of trends in the international system, the Sino-Soviet and French-American conflicts both became overt and then escalated in the 1960s. The Western European reaction to pressure from the U.S. on the Soviet pipeline deal, probes to the West for arms or economic aid and investment from Angola, Mozambique, and Iraq, daily pronouncements in Rumania and Israel, and a multitude of other messages and events, both subtle and blatant, constantly remind decision makers in the Kremlin and Washington that allies can be a decidedly mixed blessing. In addition, if people are close friends, their relationship has nowhere to go but down.

The logic of the latter statement provides the basis for Bruce Bueno de Mesquita's initial argument that war between allies should not be shocking.⁵¹ He analyzes seventy-six outbreaks of war between states from 1816 to 1974, discovering that in twenty-three cases, each belligerent had at least one ally. Of these twenty-three cases, fifteen involved a preexisting formal military agreement between the states at war. The fifteen instances of formal allies going to war represent 20 percent of the seventy-six wars. Even more revealing, allied dyads constituted only

⁵¹ Bruce Bueno de Mesquita, *The War Trap* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), 160.

about 7 percent of all total annual country pairs in the international system from 1816 to 1974. Thus, wars between allies are about three times more likely than would be expected on the basis of the distribution of bilateral military agreements.

The second implication concerns the third world. A central arena for conflict, crisis, and war in the 1970s, the third world will undoubtedly be a more dangerous environment in the 1980s.⁵² For many reasons, domestic stresses and strains on third-world societies will probably experience a significant growth. To mention just one cluster of potent causal factors, the debt structure and other international economic aspects of the domestic reality confronted by most countries of the South are currently deteriorating and are quite ominous in their implications for the future.

We can expect an upsurge of both internal and external crises and violence. Much of the growth of world military spending since 1968 can be attributed to developing states.⁵³ Every conceivable index—military expenditures (total and per capita), armed forces (total and per 1,000 of population), number of developing countries with advanced military systems (supersonic aircraft, missiles, armored fighting vehicles, modern warships), arms imports, and domestic defense production—dramatically highlights the increasing role and prominence of the third world in international security affairs. Given the runaway military trends and the expanding array and heightened lethality of weapons and armaments obtained by developing societies (and increasingly produced indigenously as well), conflict will probably not only be far more frequent—it will probably be much more destructive.⁵⁴

No part of the third world is free from endemic internal and external conflict. This impacts directly on U.S. concerns both because the U.S. is a superpower with global interests and because the developing world has been and will continue to be the primary surrogate arena of competition between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.⁵⁵ The victory since 1975 of seven pro-Soviet communist parties in Asia and Africa only exac-

⁵² Theodore H. Moran, "North-South Relations in the 1980s," *Naval War College Review* 35 (September-October 1982), 29-30.

⁵³ Edward A. Kolodziej and Robert Harkavy, "Developing States and the International Security System," in John J. Stremlau, ed., *The Foreign Policy Priorities of Third World States* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1982), 19-47.

⁵⁴ Moodie (fn. 30) amends this proposition slightly by arguing that arms inventories of LDCs are likely to feature a combination of simple and sophisticated weaponry.

⁵⁵ For a particularly lucid and sophisticated analysis of recent Soviet activity in the third world, see Donald S. Zagoria, "Into the Breach: New Soviet Alliances in the Third World," in Erik P. Hoffman and Frederic J. Flernon, eds., *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy* (New York: Aldine, 1980), 495-514.

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⁵⁶ Stein (fn. 5), 151.

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erbates the dangers and the potential for serious conflict and upheaval in strategically vital areas of the third world.

Was the Falklands war foreseeable and preventable? To what extent is any war predictable? The concept of analysis failure suggests that better analysis could have averted the outbreak of hostilities. Of course, we can never know this in a definitive sense. But the evidence of flawed analysis on both sides, the critical miscalculations made by both governments, and the wrong but reassuring assumptions that governed the two decision-making processes all point to such a failure.

Stein's juxtaposition of the intelligence and stupidity explanations for intelligence failure relates to this point.⁵⁶ The intelligence explanation emphasizes the intrinsically and inescapably complex, uncertain, and ambiguous nature of the task of intelligence and estimation. In contrast, interpretations that attribute failure to the "stupidity" of analysts or leaders stress endemic information-processing biases or the suboptimal performance of leaders in a particular situation. The second version of the stupidity argument relies on evidence of cognitive rigidity, excessive commitment to only one interpretation, or the inappropriate utilization of a single concept or indicator.

The emphasis here has been on suboptimal analytical performance. This is the one area where we have some room (if only a little) for improvement. We cannot wish or define ambiguity and uncertainty out of existence. Nor, apparently, can we fundamentally affect or reform cognitive psychological processes; the extensive experimental evidence from psychology demonstrates that people continue to rely on biased heuristics and other suboptimal information-processing routines even if they are informed and warned about them. But we can encourage better analysis when there is evidence of poor logic and other remediable shortcomings. People can be urged to think in terms of the multiple and competing hypotheses, especially in the area of strategic assumptions and concepts, that usually emerge in a long-term and relatively stress-free environment.

⁵⁶ Stein (fn. 5), 151.

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Chinese, and other actors would differ appreciably.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the database is not designed to be exhaustive in coverage; only the most salient international crises during the time frame are featured.

Despite these qualifications, the list in Table 1 clearly depicts the volume and variety of crises in the global arena. The Middle East (defined

TABLE 1
CRISIS LISTS: 48 CRISIS DYADS, 1966-1978

<i>Dyad</i>	<i>Starting Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Syria-Jordan	12/1/66	
P.L.O.-Jordan		
U.S.S.R.-China	1/11/67	
Israel-Syria	6/5/67	
Israel-Egypt		
Israel-Jordan		
U.K.-China	6/27/67	Hong Kong dispute
Greece-Turkey	11/15/67	
Greece-Cyprus (Turkey)		
Turkey-Cyprus		
Israel-Jordan	1/2/68	Pueblo
U.S.A.-North Korea	1/23/68	
U.S.S.R.-Czechoslovakia	8/20/68	
Israel-Egypt	2/24/69	
Israel-Syria		
U.S.S.R.-China	3/2/69	
Honduras-El Salvador	6/30/69	
North Vietnam-U.S.A.	3/18/70	
North Vietnam-Cambodia		
North Vietnam-South Vietnam		
Uganda-Tanzania	7/9/70	
Jordan-Syria	9/1/70	
Jordan-P.L.O.		
Jordan-Iraq		
U.S.A.-Syria		
U.S.A.-U.S.S.R.		
India-Pakistan	11/21/71	
Uganda-Tanzania	9/17/72	
Rhodesia-Zambia	1/9/73	
Israel-Egypt	1/6/73	

⁵⁰ DARPA sponsored research on international crises as perceived by both the Chinese and the Soviets (in addition to crises as defined from the U.S. perspective); see Robert Mahoney, Jr., "Crisis Management: A Survey of Findings and Unresolved Problems," in Hopple and others (fn. 12).

TABLE 1 (cont.)

<i>Dyad</i>	<i>Starting Date</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Israel-Syria	li	
U.S.A.-U.S.S.R.	b 10/24/73	Global alert
Greece-Turkey	b 7/15/74	
Cyprus-Cyprus (Turkey)		
U.S.A.-Cambodia	5/12/75	Mayaguez
Morocco-Spain	LI 5/27/75	
Morocco-Algeria	is 12/9/75	
Syria-Lebanon	= 6/1/76	
Syria-P.L.O.	Si	
Syria-Israel	—	
Angola-Zaire	3/10/77	
Egypt-Libya	7/19/77	
Somalia-Ethiopia	8/8/77	
Israel-Syria	9/19/77	
Israel-P.L.O.		
Uganda-Tanzania	10/31/77	
Cambodia-Vietnam	12/28/78	

as crisis contexts involving Israel and one or more Arab opponents as well as related conflict episodes, such as the Syria-Jordan and P.L.O.-Jordan pairs in 1970) dominates the empirical universe of world crisis in the 1966 to 1978 period. The next most frequent type of crisis occurred between nonaligned third world opponents (a total of fourteen, including five Middle East cases). Included are the Honduras-El Salvador war (1969), several significant crises between Uganda and Tanzania, several additional crises involving African nations, and India and Pakistan.

In contrast, other crisis types are relatively rare. Only four cases of superpower crisis appear on the list (two between the United States and the Soviet Union and two between the Soviet Union and China). There are eight East-West crises and four involving internecine disputes within the communist world. All five Western crises are accounted for by dyads in the Greece-Turkey-Cyprus arena. Finally, two West-South crises (U.S.-Syria in 1973 and Morocco-Spain in 1975) occurred during the period. There were no East-South crises.

All of this reflects an international system in which power has become significantly more dispersed. The tight and loose bipolar systems of the 1945 to 1960 period enabled the superpowers to orchestrate international political trends to a much greater extent and forced a considerable amount of international crisis and conflict into the cold-war channel.