

AN ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

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Introduction

Perhaps no technological innovation in modern history made more of an impact on the course of international relations than the creation of the nuclear bomb. The question of its precise influence on international affairs, particularly over the benefits and negatives of their impact, is an important one that this thesis will discuss and analyze. The topic has been debated and discussed by historians, military experts, diplomats, and many others.

Historically there are many arguments both for and against the use and the creation of nuclear weapons. Many political scientists and military figures agree that the use of atomic weapons, the precursor to the nuclear weapon, on the cities of Hiroshima and Japan was crucial to ending the war more swiftly than the alternate plan of a ground invasion, while simultaneously causing fewer casualties than the estimates from a ground invasion.

Professor William Miscamble of Notre Dame emphasized that the atomic bombs caused far fewer casualties to both Japanese civilians and military, and also spared American military and American POWs imprisoned on the Japanese home islands who had been threatened with execution should the United States invade (Miscamble 2011). Miscamble also notes that though the Japanese home islands were being threatened, much of Manchuria was still occupied by the vicious Japanese invaders, and that in the final months of the war, on average over 250,000 civilians per month were being slaughtered by the Japanese, and this trend showed no signs of slowing down. The longer the war continued, the more innocents in Manchuria would die (Miscamble 2011). Political author and historian William Manchester, when contemplating the

devastation which an invasion of the Japanese home islands would wreak, stated quite emphatically “thank God for the atomic bomb” (Fussel 1988, 20).

Other political scientists such as Bernard Brodie and Thomas Schelling support nuclear weapons through the theory of nuclear deterrence. Deterrence theory is essentially the military doctrine that a state will not attack another state with nuclear weapons when the consequence will be the aggressor’s destruction when the attacked state launches its own nuclear weapons (Brodie 1958, 1). Brodie stated that in order for deterrence to be successful, a state must always have a credible deterrent ready, but never actually used it (Brodie 1958, 1). In his work, *The Diplomacy of Violence*, Thomas Schelling explained how deterrence has not only become a form of military strategy, it has actually become one of the more dominant forms of military strategy (Schelling 1966).

There are also several arguments against the possession and use of nuclear weapons. Renowned political scientist Dr. Graham T. Allison believes that if nuclear weapons continue to be prevalent throughout the world, a nuclear terrorist attack on the United States is not only likely, but inevitable (Graham et al 1985, 59). Henry Kissinger reversed his previous, pro-nuclear stance and is now staunchly against the weapons. During the Cold War, Kissinger was one of the biggest supporters of nuclear deterrence for maintaining peace. However, in an essay he published, along with George Shultz, William Perry, and Sam Nunn, Kissinger argues that while nuclear weapons were useful during the Cold War, in modern day they only present instability (Kissinger 2007).

Development of Atomic/Nuclear Weapons

The potential for a devastating new weapon in the form of an atomic weapon began to be recognized by scientists throughout the world in 1938 when German physicist Otto Hahn discovered how to split the uranium atom (Newhouse 1988, 8). In August of 1939, only a short time before the outbreak of World War II, President Franklin Roosevelt was warned by Albert Einstein, along with several other scientists, that Nazi Germany was beginning to study the first step in creating an atomic weapon; discovering how to purify uranium-235 (Johnson 1995). Though Roosevelt appointed the Briggs Committee in October of 1939 to study and investigate nuclear fission, no intensive research began until after both promising results from British studies on nuclear fission, and the devastating attack on Pearl Harbor (Johnson 1995). Spurred by these two events, President Roosevelt commissioned the organized project towards researching the atomic weapon in 1942, known as The Manhattan Project (Johnson 1995).

From 1942 to 1947, The Manhattan Project was an extensive research study of atomic weapons that was spread throughout the United States, employed over 120,000 Americans, and cost over the value of \$2 billion dollars in the 1940's (Newhouse 1988, 27). While there were research sites across the country, the main lab was located in Los Alamos, New Mexico, and though over 120,000 were employed from the project, secrecy was of paramount importance, so only a few inner scientists and political officials knew of the project's true purpose of developing an atomic weapon (Newhouse 1988, 28). Though many great scientists, such as Niels Bohr, David Bohm, Felix Bolch, and Otto Frisch, were involved in the project, the one chosen to run the main assembly site in Los Alamos was Robert Oppenheimer (Newhouse 1988, 28).

Robert Oppenheimer (1904-1967), as the director of the Los Alamos site of the Manhattan Project, was a very crucial piece to the successful development of the atomic bomb (Thorpe, Shapin 2000, 545). As a Harvard graduate, brilliant scientist, and skilled linguist, Oppenheimer was the optimal choice to be the leader in one of the most important projects in American history (Thorpe, Shapin 2000, 545). Oppenheimer was perfect to run the project because he was, in addition to being a brilliant scientist, very effective at handling a great deal of people efficiently (Thorpe, Shapin 2000, 545). Under incredible pressure, Oppenheimer was successful in managing over three thousand people directly, while simultaneously dealing with both mechanical and theoretical difficulties that arose throughout the development of the atomic weapon (Thorpe, Shapin 2000, 546)

On July 16th, 1945, it was finally time to test the first atomic weapon. Nicknamed “The Gadget”, the first atomic weapon was detonated at 5:29 AM in a mountain range in Northern New Mexico (Walker 2005). The subsequent blast was so enormous that the characteristic mushroom cloud materialized as high as over 30,000 feet, and the flash was so bright that it is reported that a blind girl “saw” the flash from over 120 miles away (Walker 2005). Stricken in awe from what he had seen, Robert Oppenheimer, quoting Bhagavad Gita, said “I am become Death, destroyer of worlds.” (Walker 2005). The nuclear age had begun.

Japan

When the Japanese attacked the American military base on Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941, the spark was lit to a long, brutal war between the United States and the Empire of Japan. The American strategy became a system of moving from Japanese island to Japanese

island in a strategy known as “island-hopping” (Tzeng 2000, 96). This strategy was an effective one, but cost a great deal of casualties for both sides (Tzeng 2000, 96).

As the war in Europe began to draw to a close, the Allied forces began to focus their attention on a ground invasion of mainland Japan. After the surrender of Nazi Germany, the United States demanded the surrender of the Japanese through the Potsdam Declaration on July 26th, 1945 (Agreement 1945). The declaration threatened “prompt and utter destruction” should Japan ignore the demand to surrender, which it did (Agreement 1945). The early estimated consequences of the invasion (known as “Operation Downfall”) were horrific. Military experts predicted almost half a million American casualties alone, while the Japanese were expected to suffer upwards of ten million total casualties (Newhouse 1988, 42). This incredibly high estimate for the Japanese is attributed to the extreme, zealous spirit in which the people of Japan were programmed to foster. The popular war song “100 million Souls for the Emperor” was a typical rallying call for the women and children of Japan (Fussel 1988, 17). This radical extremism that permeated the Japanese populace was reflected in the Japanese military strategy of “Ketsu-Go”, a military philosophy dedicated to causing the invading enemy so much pain and punishment in the defense of the homelands that eventually the United States would sue for peace rather than finish the war (Miscamble 2011). The estimates for Operation Downfall were created by examining previous battles between Japan and the United States during World War II, evaluating their casualties, and adjusting them accordingly for the geographical size and population size of the Japanese home islands (Miscamble 2011). One such battle was the battle of Okinawa.

Known as the “typhoon of steel”, the battle to take the island of Okinawa was so vicious that it was the single greatest battle in the Pacific Theater during WWII and led American

military experts to consider alternative tactics to seize the Japanese home islands other than ground invasion, which ultimately leading to the decision to use atomic weapons (Tzeng 2000, 45). In the battle that lasted over 3 months, over 12,000 Americans were killed and an additional 40,000 were injured (Tzeng 2000, 46). Over 110,000 Japanese soldiers were killed, while only 7,000 remained alive to be taken captive. In addition, over 100,000 Japanese civilians were killed in the battle (Tzeng 2000, 46)). When considering how devastating the battle of Okinawa was, it became apparent that any invasion of the home islands would be hellish battle of earth-shattering scale. Estimations for how terrible the battle for the home islands of Japan can be gauged when comparing them to aspects of past battles like Okinawa, such as population sizes. The population of Okinawa before the battle was close to 250,000 (Tzeng 2000, 45). The population of the Japanese home islands in 1940? Over 74,000,000 (Tzeng 2000, 100).

When President Franklin Roosevelt passed away on April 12th, 1945, the responsibility of ending the war in the Pacific was thrust upon the succeeding president, Vice President Harry Truman. Amazingly, President Roosevelt kept the Manhattan Project such a close secret, that Truman wasn't even aware of the project on April 24th, 1945, two weeks after the death of Roosevelt (Bernstein 1998, 549). Burdened with this sudden responsibility and knowledge, it was left up to Truman to make a decision as to use the weapons or not (Bernstein 1998, 549). Finally, Truman made the decision that nuclear weapon were the best course of option, a decision he made based on two primary factors; 1) the high estimated costs of a ground invasion, and 2) the desire to end the war quickly (Bernstein 1998, 550).

The first atomic bomb, nicknamed "Little Boy" was dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima on August 6th, 1945. The death toll from the bombing ranges between 90,000-166,000 people, half of whom died in the initial explosion (Newhouse 1989, 50). "Fat Man", the

second atomic bomb, was dropped on the Japanese city of Nagasaki three days later on August 9th, 1945, with a casualty toll ranging between 60,000-80,000 (Newhouse 1989, 51).

The utilization of these atomic bombs had both positive and negative consequences. In comparison to the earlier estimates on casualties of Operation Downfall, the death toll resulting from the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was significantly less (Newhouse 1989, 42). The weapons were relatively cheap when compared to a complete land invasion, and much quicker a resolution. The weapon was even less damaging than past tactics used in the war, such as the constant fire bombings on Tokyo, or the attack on Dresden in February of 1944, the single most destructive military action in history that killed almost 140,000 people in single day (Newhouse 1989, 42). Negatively, the bombs did specifically target two very large civilian populaces, and completely annihilated two entire cities. However, the zealousness and loyalty of the Japanese population makes it difficult to distinguish a civilian populace from a military threat. This belief was emphatically stated by the intelligence officer of the United States Fifth Air Force when he stated on July 21st, 1945 that “There are no civilians in Japan” (Fussel 1988,27). The radiation from the nuclear weapons was also extremely painful and resulted in many deaths for those who survived the initial explosions (Fussel 1988, 32). The use of the weapons also raises several moral dilemmas. Was it ethically responsible for the United States to unleash such a powerful and destructive weapon?

Many claim that the use of atomic weapons was not necessary in order to force Japan to submit. Admiral William Leahy, President Truman’s Chief of Staff, believed that by 1945, it appeared clear that the Allies had won the war, and it seemed to only be a matter of time until Japan would surrender (Krieger 2012). However, the ferocity and determination of both the Japanese military and populace cannot be overstated. This determination is possibly best

highlighted by the Kyūjō Incident, an attempted coup by several high ranking Japanese military leaders on the night of August 14th, 1945 (Toland 1970, 814). The coup was devised in an attempt to stop the surrender of Japan to the Allies after the destruction of the cities Nagasaki and Hiroshima by replacing the Emperor with military commanders. (Toland 1970, 814). The coup failed and the surrender went as planned (Toland 1970, 815). It is hard to imagine that the use of nuclear weapons were not a necessity to force Japan to surrender, considering that many Japanese still did not want to surrender, even after the deployment of the weapons and the consequent destruction of two entire cities.

Deterrence Theory

There are several theories that analyze the ways in which nuclear weapons effect the world around them, one of the most important being deterrence theory. Effective deterrence is any action by a party that can dissuade another part from pursuing a course of action. When applied to nuclear weapons, this refers to how a state's nuclear weapons deter potential opponents from attacking in order to prevent escalation of conflict and nuclear war (Brodie 1958, 2). Deterrence theory argues nuclear weapons deter war because states are dissuaded from using their weapons and initiating conflict because to do so could result in a catastrophic, nuclear conflict (Brodie 1958, 1). Deterrence only occurs when the state hoping to utilize deterrence has the capability to back up its threat of retaliation, and the will to do so. The theory has close ties to the concept of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), the military doctrine that states if two opponents were to utilize nuclear weapons, it would lead to the total destruction of both sides. In order for a state to legitimately wield deterrence to their benefit, the state needs both the capacity

to respond devastatingly should they be attacked, and the will to do so (Brodie 1958, 3).

Deterrence policy can fit into two wide categories. The first is when a state is preventing an armed attack against its own territory, otherwise known as direct deterrence. The second category is when a state is preventing an armed attack against another state, which is referred to as extended deterrence (Huth 1999, 26).

A more specific variant theory of deterrence is known as rational deterrence theory. With rational deterrence, the importance of state and individual levels of decision making is further emphasized, and rational choice is paramount (Huth 1999, 27). It is also crucial that any threat of deterrence is considered credible by the potential aggressor state. Without credibility, deterrence is impossible to support or reinforce, and has no real power to dissuade (Huth 1999, 27). Furthermore, there are four additional factors to consider when deciding whether deterrence is applicable to a particular scenario; military balance, bargaining power, reputations for resolve, and the particular interests and concerns at stake (Huth 1999, 28).

Military balance is an extremely important factor in deterrence. In order for deterrence to be viable, the defending state has to have the capacity to respond militarily effectively in response to any strike (Huth 1999, 25). Deterrence can fail when either the attacking state or defending state misjudges the military capacities of their opponents. States must also have efficient bargaining and diplomatic power that can discourage the threat of conflict (Huth 1999, 30). Without it, anything a state says may be perceived as simply a bluff. Opposing states' recollection of their opponent's past reputations in conflict can also play a large role in the possibility of viable deterrence (Huth 1999, 30). If the state being threatened has proved in the past that they are capable and willing to retaliate should they be provoked, this reputation can deter conflict on its own. The stakes that are at risk for both states is an important factor in

deterrence as well (Huth 1999, 31). For example, if the defending state has more at stake than the attacking state, it is likely that the defending state will risk more in order to make sure it succeeds in the conflict, and vice versa (Huth 1999, 31).

One of the main developers of deterrence theory was renowned military strategist Bernard Brodie. In 1958, Brodie wrote that a credible nuclear deterrent must always be at the ready, but never used (Brodie 1958, 2). Another supporter of deterrence theory is American economist and professor of foreign policy Thomas Schelling. Schelling argues that military strategy has changed, and that coercion through intimidation is an essential aspect of modern war (Schelling 1966). It is in this way that nuclear deterrence becomes necessary. Many nations have the capability to wreak havoc with their weapons, which validates their claims to defense and motivates as a deterrent to conflict (Schelling 1966).

However, many political historians and military experts oppose the strategy of deterrence. The entire basis of deterrence theory lies in the rationality of those who control the weapons, something that is not concrete and difficult to anchor a philosophy on (Zagare 2004). Individuals who are unstable or delusional (or both) lack rationality, thereby destabilizing the delicate balance of deterrence (Zagare 2004). A very pressing example of this issue that is quite relevant in the current international sphere is radical, extremist terrorism. There is nothing rational about a suicide bomber.

Another criticism of nuclear weapons is that, with nuclear weapons, it is impossible to rule out the chance of accidental launch, equipment malfunction, or a simple misunderstanding that could lead to nuclear war (Steinberg 1994, 76). It is important to remember that nuclear weapons are managed by human beings, whose judgment is certainly not infallible. Mistakes can and have been made in the past (Steinberg 1994, 76). False alarms in particular have caused

some very close calls. One such occasion occurred on October 31th, 1962 when the North American Air Defense (NORAD) Command Center had a report of two unidentified aircraft crossing the mid-Canada line, and responded with a full state military alert, with nuclear readiness, only to find out that the report was false (Steinberg 1994, 77). Another dangerous incident occurred on a New Jersey nuclear site when crew members accidentally inserted a tape that was a simulation of a missile attack (Steinberg 1994, 77). When radar “confirmed” the attack (a satellite was passing over the radar at the time and thought to have been a missile), the crew informed the military that Cuba had launched missiles that were less than two minutes away (Steinberg 1994, 77). The reports were quickly dashed as false, but it was an extremely close call (Steinberg 1994, 77). Incidents like this could have had catastrophic consequences, and make the stability necessary for deterrence to work efficiently difficult to attain.

A reformation of thought from positive to negative on deterrence theory and the proliferation of nuclear weapons to small states came in the form of a series of articles published by the *Wall Street Journal* and written by William Perry, Sam Nunn, George Schultz, and Henry Kissinger (Kissinger et al 2007). The articles condemned nuclear weapons and deterrence theory in a post-Cold War world, and called for a world free of nuclear threat. Kissinger, who was once a supporter of nuclear weapons during the Cold War, now states that the concept of deterrence is outdated and not relevant in the modern world (Kissinger et al 2007). While Kissinger thought that nuclear weapons were important to preserving peace in the Cold War, bipolar distribution of power era, he believed that in a multipolar nuclear system, nuclear weapons only caused instability and danger (Kissinger et al 2007). In an article, the authors state:

“Deterrence continues to be a relevant consideration for many states with regard to threats from other states. But reliance on nuclear weapons for this purpose is becoming increasingly hazardous and decreasingly effective.” (Kissinger 2007)

The Cold War

From the mid-1940s through the early 1990s, the two super powers in the world, the United States and the Soviet Union, were in a bitter standoff. While great powers had been deadlocked before in the past, never before did any of the great powers had nuclear weapons in their arsenals. These stashes of nuclear weapons created a new level of potential worldwide devastation that the world had never been threatened with before. The competition between the two superpowers became known as the Cold War.

There were several instances during the Cold War that became quite heated. More than once it tense situations between the United States and the Soviet Union brought the world to what seemed to be the brink of nuclear war and worldwide cataclysm. Arguably the two most dangerous were the Berlin Blockade that began on June 4th 1948, and the Cuban Missile Crisis in October of 1968. These two crises were both crucial points of the Cold War in respective ways.

When World War II finally ended in 1945, the city of Berlin was divided into four sections, each controlled by one of the four victor nations, France, Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union (Herbert 1949, 172). This situation evolved when Berlin quickly

became divided simply between two sides, “East” and “West”, with the nations of France, Great Britain, and the United States uniting their sections. Divided Berlin, located deep in East Germany, Soviet controlled land, soon became an annoyance to the Soviet Union (Herbert 1949, 166). In June of 1948, the Soviet Union blocked all Western supply routes by road to West Berlin, hoping that Western Berlin would eventually rely on the Soviet Union for supplies, giving them control over the entire city (Newhouse 1989,66). Tensions were dangerously high. If the United States or any other Western nation had violated the blockade, war appeared inevitable. In response, the Western nations headed a massive air lift of supplies into West Berlin that lasted for almost an entire year (Newhouse 1988, 66). The amount of supplies was colossal, supplying over two million people with their daily needs for the span of the entire airlift, such as food, water, fuel, and other necessities (Newhouse 1988, 66). After around 320 days of constant supply drops, the Soviet Union finally reopened the roads to Berlin without incident (Newhouse 1988, 67). This amazing effort succeeded in both avoiding war and humiliating the Soviet Union.

Arguably an even more volatile situation was the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1963. The situation began when American surveillance planes conducting missions over Cuba captured photos of offensive nuclear weapon sites being established in Cuba that had the potential to strike the United States (Newhouse 1988, 166). When news of these weapons reached the White House, many, including the Joint Chiefs of the United States, demanded swift and decisive strikes on Cuba, followed by a ground invasion that would have almost surely led to war between the Soviet Union and the United States (Newhouse 1988, 168). However, cooler heads prevailed, and the United States instead placed a total embargo on the island of Cuba, cutting off further Soviet supply ships to the island nation (Newhouse 1988, 175). Though a risky move,

the embargo did eventually succeed, though the United States had to agree to remove offensive weapons stationed in Turkey (weapons that were considered to be obsolete and scheduled to be decommissioned) to help the Soviets appear as if they weren't backing down (Newhouse 1988, 173).

While both the Berlin Blockade and the Cuban Missile Crisis were incredibly tense situations, both were resolved peacefully, and without the use of a nuclear weapon. Consequently, some political science experts laude these situations as reflections of successful nuclear deterrence (Kelleher et al 1986, 28). One such expert is McGeorge Bundy. Bundy argues that one of the keys to deterrence, rationality, was of paramount importance in both of these crisis situations and prevailed (Kelleher et al 1986, 28). This rationality by the leaders in both the Soviet Union and the United States led to the understanding of the consequences of nuclear weapons, and made them proceed with utmost caution (Kelleher et al 1986, 28). It was this caution of the possible devastation wrought by nuclear weapons that helped avoid war, a caution that may not have existed in a situation sans nuclear weapons.

When the Cold War finally ended in 1991, it wasn't with a nuclear boom, as many had feared, but with a whimper. The Soviet Union dissolved, and nuclear weapons were never used offensively by either side. However, while no nuclear bomb was deployed, it is important to note that war was still rampant throughout the Cold War era, just not directly between the United States and the Soviet Union, and on a smaller scale than many had feared. These wars and conflicts arose in situations such as Korea, Vietnam, areas of South America, Afghanistan, and Angola (Loveman 2002). These conflicts that often led to indirect conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union and their opposing ideologies came to be known as proxy wars (Loveman 2002). In these proxy wars, either the Soviet Union or the United States would

be a fighting a third party force, with the third party receiving aid from the opposing superpower (Loveman 2002). For example, during the Soviet Union's occupation in Afghanistan and their conflict with the Mujahedeen, the United States secretly supplied the Mujahedeen with both supplies and weapons to help them combat the invading Soviet armies (Loveman 2002).

These proxy wars that became common throughout the Cold War may be a direct result of the presence of nuclear weapons. While the United States and the Soviet Union knew that open war between the two of them would almost surely lead to cataclysmic nuclear war, these proxy wars provided a mask and a cloud in which the two sides could exchange indirect conflict (Krepon 2003, 1). For example, if the Soviet Union attacked the mainland United States, this action would obviously warrant a large scale, nuclear response. However, no action the Soviets could have made in Afghanistan would have been seen as important enough to warrant a nuclear retaliation; it simply wasn't worth it (Krepon 2003, 2). No American nuclear weapon would ever be deployed because of something the Soviet Union did in Kabul. The reverse is true with the United States in Vietnam. This strategy began to create an interesting situation with nuclear weapons. While nuclear weapons were arguably preventing large scale conflict between the two sides, they were also encouraging small scale conflict (Krepon 2003, 2).

The idea of this situation of discouraged large scale conflict but encouraged small scale conflict has been christened the "stability-instability paradox" (Krepon 2003). The paradox was first identified by B.H. Liddell Hart in 1954, who stated:

"...to the extent that the H[hydrogen] bomb reduces the likelihood of full-scale war, it increases the possibility of limited war pursued by widespread local aggression." (Krepon 2003)

The “stability” in the term refers to the general stability caused by a decrease of large scale conflict, while the “instability” reflects the constant instability caused by a great deal of smaller and minor conflicts (Krepon 2003, 3). The primary factor in creating this paradox is nuclear weapons, making the impact of nuclear weapons in the Cold War an exceptionally difficult role to decipher. While they arguably prevented a massive world war, they also contributed to smaller conflicts to riddle the globe.

India/Pakistan Conflict

The conflict between India and Pakistan reflects one the most antagonistic situations between two states in modern international politics. This mutual feeling of distrust and hostility is rooted in historical, ideological, cultural, and religious differences. To make the situation even more complex, both India and Pakistan now have nuclear arsenals at their disposal.

The animosity between both Pakistan and India is the result of a convoluted and complicated history. Both Pakistan and India actually became independent from Great Britain simultaneously in 1947 as the result of a long negotiation process (Bates 2011). Those areas of the British colonies that were more than 75% Muslim were to become known as Pakistan, while the rest of the land was to be India (Bates 2011). The region of Kashmir, however, was known as a “Princely State”, and was left free to decide which country to join. When Pakistan sent emissaries trying to convince Kashmir to join Pakistan, India saw this as an invasion, and war erupted (Bates 2011). This first war for Kashmir was not the last, resulting in two other major wars and several other skirmishes (Bates 2011).

The First Kashmir War in 1947 (also known as the Indo-Pakistan War of 1947) was the first major war between India and Pakistan after they were both granted independence from Great Britain (Lyon 2008). Both the provinces of Kashmir and Jammu were given the choice to decide whether they wanted to join India or Pakistan. Pakistan feared that the leader of the provinces, the Maharajah, would choose to join India, and tribal Pakistani groups preemptively invaded Kashmir and Jammu (Lyon 2008). This occupation led both provinces to sign the Agreement to Accession, officially joining India. After over a year of fighting, India asked the UN to help mediate an agreement, leading to the creation of the Line of Control, which divided the Kashmir province into territories controlled by Pakistan and India respectively (Lyon 2008).

A second war between India and Pakistan in 1965 began when Pakistan attempted to create an insurgency in Kashmir and Jammu by sneaking soldiers across the border disguised as plain clothed, ordinary civilians. India, once it discovered the plot, responded in force, with a full scale military assault on West Pakistan (Lyon 2008). Though the war lasted less than 20 days, thousands were killed before a joint Soviet-American mediated ceasefire was reached. The war featured one of the largest tank battles in history. Another war erupted in 1971 when India moved to aid Bangali rebel forces in East Pakistan, prompting West Pakistan to marshal a large scale attack against India (Lyon 2008). The war, though only lasting 13 days, resulted in the highest death toll of all the conflicts between the two states, and an untold amount of horrific atrocities against innocent civilians (Lyon 2008). India and the Bangali rebels were the victors, and the country of Bangladesh was created out of what was East Pakistan (Lyon 2008).

India detonated its first nuclear weapon in May of 1974, describing the test as a “peaceful nuclear explosion” (Newhouse 1988, 268). Called Operation “Smiling Buddha”, the nuclear detonation was very close to the Pakistani border and sent a clear message to the Pakistani

government from India. Pakistan immediately bought a nuclear facility from the French and began its own nuclear program soon after, finally detonating their own nuclear weapon on May 28th, 1998. Both India and Pakistan now had nuclear weapons.

Now that both India and Pakistan held nuclear arsenals, tensions between them were palpable. In 1999, Pakistani troops crossed the Line of Control and occupied the Indian territory of the Kargil district (Lyon 2008). India retaliated with a large military offensive to root out the Pakistani invaders. This quickly escalated into a much larger conflict, becoming the first and only war in history between two states that had nuclear weapons, formally known as the Kargil War (Rajagopalan 2006, 2). Luckily, a great deal of international pressure led to both sides deescalating the conflict and the conflict quickly ending after a few months without becoming a full scale war (Rajagopalan 2006, 2). However, that has not been to the end to disputes between the two sides (Lyon 2008). Minor skirmishes and border clashes have riddled the India/Pakistan relationship, with the worst coming in the form of a terrible terrorist attacks in 2001 and 2008.

On December 18th, 2001, 5 militants believed to have been supported by and trained in Pakistan attacked the Indian Parliament (Slater et al 2002). 12 people were killed, including all 5 militants, and another 18 were injured (Slater et al 2002). In 2008, another horrific terrorist attack by Pakistani terrorists on the city of Mumbai resulted in the deaths of over 150 innocent people and injuring 600 others (Economist 2008). The terrorists' targets included several religious sites, a women and children's hospital, and a hotel (Economist 2008). This attack could have easily been the spark for a war between the two sides. However, war was avoided. If a terrorist attack couldn't serve as a catalyst for a nuclear strike, it is interesting to consider if anything really could.

Since both India and Pakistan have acquired nuclear weapons, each has developed a different, yet compatible approach and mentality towards nuclear weapons and their use. Pakistan has developed a nuclear military doctrine of a “strike first policy”, indicating that Pakistan planned to use a nuclear weapon as the first response to any military attack, or as a pre-emptive strike against an attack they perceived as inevitable (Lyon 2008). Pakistan has stated clearly that conditions for a Pakistani first strike are: 1) India attacks Pakistan and takes over a large section of territory, 2) India destroys a large part of Pakistani air or ground forces, 3) India attempts to place strong economic restrictions on Pakistan, or 4) India attempts to internally subvert Pakistan or motivate political instability (Krepon 2003, 19). India, however, has adapted a fairly different strategy of “no first use” (Lyon 2008). In this doctrine, India would only deploy a nuclear weapon in response to a nuclear attack. In a way, these doctrines of India and Pakistan combine quite nicely (Lyon 2008). Pakistan knows that India will not attack them with a nuclear weapon unless they use one first, but their doctrine allows first strike but only when the threat of a nuclear attack is likely; essentially the two doctrines coincide well, and could possibly prevent large scale war.

However, while the respective nuclear policies in India and Pakistan may prevent large conflicts such as war, small skirmishes and clashes are still common on between both sides (Krepon 2003, 2). The largest war between the two sides was the 1971 war in East Pakistan, three years before India detonated its first nuclear weapon (Krepon 2003, 4). Since then, no conflicts of that scale have occurred between India and Pakistan. The only conflict that was close was the conflict in Kargil, which was not quite a full blown war (Rajagopalan 2006, 3). Nevertheless, there is still conflict between the states, just to a lesser extent than all out warfare.

This decrease in large scale conflict combined with the continued persistence of small scale conflict adds further evidence to the case of the “stability-instability paradox”. Both Pakistan and India have shown the restraint not to initiate a war that would cross the “nuclear threshold”, the degree of conflict that would result in nuclear war, establishing “stability” (Krepon 2003, 5). However, border clashes and skirmishes between the two states are still exist, creating “instability” (Rajagopalan 2006, 5). In this situation, it appears that nuclear weapons haven’t prevented conflict as a whole, but have limited conflict in its size and duration (Rajagopalan 2006, 1). Some political science experts have seen this phenomenon as a positive thing, while others aren’t so optimistic.

There are those who see the possession of the nuclear weapons, deterrence theory, and the subsequent “stability-instability paradox” as a positive thing in the India-Pakistan situation. Jaswant Singh, the former Indian Minister of External Affairs, stated:

“If deterrence works in the West—as it so obviously appears to, since Western nations insist on continuing to possess nuclear weapons—by what reasoning will it not work in India.” (Krepon 2003, 3)

Singh isn’t the only high ranking Indian official to support the presence of nuclear weapons as a beneficial asset for the relationship between India and Pakistan. Former Army Chief K. Sundarji stated emphatically that not only were nuclear weapons a positive factor for the situation between India and Pakistan, they may be the only possible solution for peace (Krepon 2003, 4).

Pakistani officials also agree that nuclear deterrence has helped the India-Pakistan conflict. Former Pakistani Foreign Minister Abdul Sattar stated that acquiring nuclear capability has only encouraged stability, in spite of the crises that have occasionally occurred, and that self-

interest would contain both India and Pakistan from nuclear conflict and encourage caution (Krepon 2003, 5). Political science expert Dr. Devin Hagerty supported the Indian and Pakistani possession of nuclear weapons for peace in saying:

“There is no more ironclad law in international relations than this: nuclear weapon states do not fight wars with one another.” (Krepon 2003, 5)

There are those who are vocally opposed to the nuclear weapon situation in the Pakistan and Indian situation as well. Opponents of the “stability-instability paradox” believe that it encourages small conflict greater than it deters large scale conflict, and was a direct cause of the terrorism in the Kashmir province, and for the conflict that erupted in Kargil (Rajagopalan 2006, 7). Critics also emphasize that situations that result from the “stability-instability paradox” are dangerously associated with the concept of “brinkmanship” (Rajagopalan 2006, 11). Brinkmanship, the concept of pushing a hazardous situation until it teeters on the point of becoming an extremely dangerous one (Rajagopalan 2006, 11). The “Stability-Instability Paradox” can result in “brinkmanship” because states, such as Pakistan and India, may push the boundaries of the “nuclear threshold”, and may accidentally cross the line, which could be devastating (Rajagopalan 2006, 8).

The Middle East

For decades, the Middle East has been a hotbed of international conflict. Rife with erratic dictators, countless ethnic and religious disputes, and dangerous terrorist organizations, the region appears to be the worst possible location for nuclear weapons. However, even considering these terrible conditions, no nuclear weapon has been utilized by a state in a conflict or fallen into the control of an organization outside of a state.

A great deal of the tension derives from the animosity between the state of Israel and the surrounding Muslim majority states, such as Egypt and Syria (Marmor 1963). The dangerous situation stems from varied cultural, religious, and social issues that divide the individual states (Marmor 1963). The presence of nuclear weapons has further complicated these preexisting issues (Fitzpatrick 2011). Though not a confirmed fact, many believe that Israel itself controls and maintains nuclear weapons, while its neighbors do not. Typically many experts would consider this imbalance between two competitive sides as a dangerous lack of deterrent (Fitzpatrick 2011). However, despite countless minor conflicts, nuclear weapons have not been utilized.

One of the major conflicts between Israel and several of its Islamic neighbors, such as Egypt, Jordan, and Iraq, was the Six-Day War of 1967 (Roberts 2012, 16). After a period of high tensions, war erupted after a series of surprise Israeli air-raids on Egyptian air-fields (Roberts 2012, 16). Though outnumbered and surrounded, Israel won a decisive ground war that led to Israel claiming a great deal of territory, including the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula in the span of six days (Roberts 2012, 17).

Not all conflict in the Middle East is exchanged between Israel and its predominantly Muslim neighbors. The Middle East has a much higher rate of military intervention in politics than most Third World countries (Picard et al 1993, 552). The region is a hotbed of internal political instability that has resulted in several military coups and revolutions, such as Bakr Sudki coup in 1936, the revolt of Rashid Ali-Kaylani, the Iraqi revolution against the Hashemite monarchy in 1958, and the Iranian revolution of 1979 (Picard et al 551). War between regional warlords is common as well, and differences between adverse sects of Islam, mainly the Sunnis and Shiites, have created a great deal of conflict as well (Picard et al 552). One of the largest conflicts erupted between Iran and Iraq in 1980.

In 1980, a horrific war erupted between Iraq and Iran, which lasted until 1988 (Wright 1985, 839). One of the primary, driving forces behind the war was the fear in Iraq that the Shia majority that had long been suppressed in Iraq would be inspired by the revolution in Iran to in turn rebel against the Sunni rulers (Wright 1985, 840). After terrible devastation for both countries, the war ended in a virtual stalemate with very little ground changed hands (Wright 1985, 848). Since the conflict, both sides have attempted to acquire nuclear weapons (Wright 1985, 849).

One prevalent fear in the Middle East concerning nuclear weapons doesn't involve a state at all; rather, many worry that an Islamic terrorist organization such as Al Qaeda may succeed in seizing control of a nuclear weapon and deploying it. However, this appears to be far easier said than done. The security that surrounds weapons is very severe, and deploying a device requires an exceptional level of technological skill and weapons understanding ((Bunn, Wier 2006). The threat of a terrorist organization creating its own nuclear weapon from scratch is an even more daunting task. The sheer amount of technology and rare materials necessary would be nearly

unattainable for a terrorist organization (Bunn, Wier 2006). The possibility of a state aiding a terrorist group in creating a nuclear device is also unlikely. The aid could be easily traced back to the host state, causing the same backlash as if the state had simply launched the device itself (Bunn, Wier 2006).

Conclusion

Nuclear weapons have had a distinct impact in international affairs and international conflict since their first utilization on Japan. Identifying that exact impact, however is difficult. Beginning this thesis, I believed that the influence of nuclear weapons was a positive one. I was a firm supporter in the validity and effectiveness of deterrence theory, and its ability to prevent warfare. However, throughout the course of conducting these thesis, I have realized that the real impact is not that clear.

After researching and analyzing different perspectives on nuclear weapons, my perception of nuclear weapons has now shifted to the “Stability-Instability Paradox” viewpoint. When juxtaposing my case studies, it became apparent that while there were no colossal conflicts with the states involved in my cases (other than World War II and Japan), small conflicts were still very common. It became apparent that while nuclear weapons were possibly shielding against large scale warfare, smaller skirmishes were using the nuclear threat as a mask or a shield to engage in violent actions that wouldn’t have been deemed “important enough” to warrant a nuclear retaliation. This new perspective fits very accurately with the “Stability-Instability

Paradox”, which I believe, after conducting this thesis, is the most accurate description of how nuclear weapons have impacted international conflict.

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