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The Intensity of Fear in International Crises

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Abstract

Emotions are a central aspect of international relations. Fear is associated with crisis scenarios and has led to varying responses ranging from diplomacy to military aggression. What explains such variation? Existing models treat fear as a binary without considering its intensity. This paper addresses this gap by developing an operation model grounded in appraisal theory. Drawing on cognitive psychology, I seek to explain how states interpret threatening events through three stages: relevance, implication level, and coping potential. Through these appraisals, fear and its associated intensity are formed and influence the range of policy behavior.

To test this model, I conduct a plausibility probe using two United States (U.S.) foreign policy crisis case studies: the Cuban Missile Crisis and the North Korean Missile Crisis of 1994. For the first case, moderate fear—driven by perceptions of high implications and high coping potential—lead to a defensive option of the blockade or "quarantine." In contrast, heightened feelings of fear during the latter case—stemming from both perceived high implications and low coping potential—pushed the U.S. to seriously consider initiating a military operation. If we take my operational model seriously, scholars investigating emotion must incorporate an emotion's intensity level with discussing state behavior.

Introduction

Emotions perform a significant role in international politics. Fear has long been associated with international crises (Crawford 2000), as it is linked with the motivational goal of security (Steimer 2002). Despite fear's dominance, historical crisis scenarios have ranged from peaceful resolutions to potential war. The Cuban Missile Crisis saw a moderate, defensive approach with

a naval quarantine while the North Korean Missile Crisis saw the U.S. seriously considering steps to war. In both cases, fear towards a nuclear crisis saw different approaches despite similar contexts. Instead of viewing fear as a binary factor, one must examine the intensity of emotion as a potential answer. Just as individuals feel fear in life-threatening dilemmas, a state when faced with a security crisis experiences the same emotion. Understanding how its intensity is shaped requires closer examination.

Imagine a scenario of a rampaging bear. When facing this threat, an individual experiences the emotion of fear. They must decide between engagement or to take flight. For a state, the rampaging bear is replaced by a crisis scenario caused by another state. A crisis scenario falls onto three elements: one's security, a sense of urgency, and levels of uncertainty (Dyson and Hart 2013). Does such a situation generate feelings of fear? If so, how does fear translate into state behavior? A state can fight itself out of a scenario, but it cannot necessarily 'flee.' A state may capitulate but to do so would contradict a security-seeking assumption. With this leaving the state only with a 'fight' option, crisis scenarios should lead to more aggressive outcomes rather than diplomatic solutions. Why then do resolutions to crisis scenarios vary from offensive, defensive or peaceful postures? What role does fear play, if not viewed as a binary variable?

To address these questions, I propose an operational model of states to theorize how the emotion of fear is generated, and that intensification of fear leads to generalizable outcomes in behavior. This builds upon the work of the emotional literature in international relations, as it addresses how the intensification of fear arises within the collective identity of the state. States, when seen as a social identity (Wendt 1995; Sasley 2011; Mercer 2014), are proposed to feel emotions on the group-level. Through socialization of similar cultures (Wendt 1995; Mercer

2014) and the application of group-appraisal towards an event (Sasley 2011), states can *feel* emotions via their collective identity. To further build the emotional research, I will address how a level of an emotion relates to state behavior.

In the next section, I motivate the use of emotions and fear when investigating decision-making behavior. I then demonstrate how emotions govern global politics from the established literature, and how an operational model sheds clarity onto questions raised within the research. Following this discussion, I examine the literature exploring existing models of emotion and the positionality of my model. This model will act as an adaptation of Cognitive Appraisal Theories which seek to explain emotion and the intensification of emotion through an appraisal of events.

Literature Review

Why Emotions?

Emotions play an essential role in the decision-making capacity of individuals, as without them individuals cannot perform their cognitive functions (Frijda 1986). Emotions also drive behavior and affect the decision-making process. Individuals often seek to amplify positive feelings while seeking to avert negative feelings (Mellers and Schwartz 1999). Emotions of sadness, fear, or shame can influence perceptions to be overly pessimistic, while pride, joy, or anger encourage optimistic perceptions (Wendy 2013). For example, if one loses a bet, they may seek to risk further losses due to anger increasing risk acceptance and commitment (Tsai and Maia 2009). Emotional experiences can be tricky to measure, however, as emotions often are shaped by beliefs and subjective comparisons (Mellers and Ritov 1999).

Fear is a difficult emotion to investigate. While some research suggests fear increases risk aversion and decreases commitment (Tsai and Maia 2009), others have found that fear has the

opposite effect (Kugler, Connolly, and Ordonez 2012; Zhang and Gu 2018), especially in the presence of a 'tangible reward' (Wake, Wormwood, Satpute 2020). These implications have inspired scholars to apply such findings to the international realm, in hopes of understanding how emotions interplay with state behavior. This project adds to this discussion by investigating how emotional amplification, or intensity, shapes state behavior. In the next section, I will review the emotions-based literature and position my argument within the research.

Emotions in World Politics

What is an *emotion*? Theories of emotions have been long debated between biological based theories and cognitive based theories (Crawford 2000). Naturalistic theories focus on how the physical structures of one's brain or associated neurochemicals lead to sensations that can be categorized as an emotion (Crawford 2000). For example, fear results from the heightened sensations one feels after encountering a traumatic event. For cognitive-based approaches, emotions result from one's own beliefs, perceptions, and thoughts towards a stimulus (Crawford 2000). The way we *appraise* an event determines whether we view an event as significant resulting in the creation of an associated emotion. For this paper, I take a cognitive-based approach as the power of *perceptions* plays a large role in how a leader decides to act in any given situation (Jervis 1976). Cognitive social psychology as a field has demonstrated the capacity to address 'error-and-bias' portraits of decision makers (Goldgeier and Tetlock; 2001). The power of perceptions can overcome the material, and this was historically shown with the misperceived offensive advantage prior to World War I (Jervis 1978).

Scholars have examined how emotions influence the decision-making process of leaders. Emotional beliefs, or beliefs strengthened by a specific emotion, dictate aspects of behavior

(Mercer 2010). For example, a leader facing an international crisis initiated by a weaker adversary may respond strongly if they feel threatened regardless of its true severity. For Ross, emotions are required for human agency—to lack emotions is to lack motivation and a sense of urgency (Ross 2014). Emotions move beyond just fear and incorporate other feelings such as anger, hatred or jealousy and may mix (Ross 2014). Fear can push populations to stereotype whole groups of individuals while jealously can open the door to violence such as genocide (Ross 2014). Within my research, I examine fear as an isolated concept to isolate its effects in my operational model. As stated previously, fear is often associated in a crisis bargaining situation (Crawford 2000), as it generates a high-stakes scenario where leaders face real, dire consequences. How fear is generated and influences state action remains an aspect of the current research. Before delving into how existing works attempt to examine emotions through frameworks, I believe it is important to address whether emotions can be ontologically explored beyond the individual.

Emotions of States or of People?

Can a state *feel* emotion? Such a question is pertinent when discussing an operational model. Referenced research thus far has analyzed the behavior of leaders but whether this evidence can be viewed ontologically as the state remains to be answered. Scholars have argued that the 'state' represents the social identity of its constituent members (Wendt 1999). Individuals shape the social identity of the state through shared interactions and ideas (Wendt 1999). States, in turn, are shaped through the interactions it has with other states (Wendt 1999). In other words, states are social entities made, shaped, and maintained through social behavior. By assuming and maintaining a role, it becomes part of your identity and shapes the way you pursue your interests

(Wendt 1999). Emotions are argued to be necessary for the relationship between identity and behavior, as emotions create norms of behavior and can strengthen them (Mercer 2006). Such social identities are also argued to have the capacity to experience group-level emotions.

Group emotions refer to shared feelings from a collection of individuals when perceiving an event (Mercer 2014). Group-level emotions result from salient social identities, as people tend to evaluate or appraise stimuli through from the perspective of the group (Smith and Susan 1996; Gordijn, Wigboldus and Yzerbyt 2001; Smith and Mackie 2016). A state, as a collected identity, socializes the members within the group to feel emotions in shared ways (Sasley 2011; Mercer 2014). This explains why traumatic events, such as a terrorist attack or devastating crisis, elicits similar feelings within a society. Individuals are socialized to respond to stimuli in similar wars with respect to the collective identity formed for the state. This definition does not mean every member within society has to abide by this strict parameter, but rather the group majority does 'feel' in this way (i.e., emotional convergence).

Elites themselves have been argued to embody the collective identity of a state as well (Wendt 1999). Once an emotion is determined by leadership, it is transmitted down to the rest of the state as elites play a significant role in shaping the 'collective understanding' of emotional underpinnings of a society (Crawford 2000; Hutchinson 2016). However, if traumatic events generate feelings of fear within a state—whether from socialization or elite-dictated emotional responses—how a state responds and its associated behavior to the degree of the emotion felt requires further exploration. Although this paper does not take a firm stance on whether emotions can apply only to states or individuals, my model focuses on generalizing fear and its associated intensity to state behavior. For the next section, I will explore how existing models of

emotion in international politics aim to address this point, and how my model further develops the research.

Existing Models of Emotions

Scholars of international politics have attempted to address the question of how emotions arise and impact state behavior. One area of research has focused on the European Union (EU). Emotions have been argued to construct a community of values or 'emotional community' where they either enable or restrict the creation of policies or actions by the EU (Salgado 2021; Gürkan 2024). For example, following the launch of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, high feelings of anger correlate with the EU adopting sanctions towards the Russian state (Gürkan 2024). Fear, on the other hand, accompanied EU policies towards enhancing its security prowess in the wake of the invasion (Gürkan 2024). While such research has demonstrated a correlation between emotions and policy behavior, it has not demonstrated how emotion is created nor how its intensity impacts state behavior.

To address this concern, Gürkan and Terzi proposed a model that applies an institutional appraisal process to the EU. This model considers four categories: EU interests, the collective memory of the EU, EU competence, and the socio-cultural context (Gürkan and Terzi 2024). Taken together, if these four conditions are met and lead to *coherent*, or shared emotions collectively within the EU, the generated emotion influences EU behavior (Gürkan and Terzi 2024). The issue that arises within this model, however, is again a lack of explanation for the intensification of emotion. Simply treating whether an emotion exists collectively does not alone explain a variation in behavior. In other words, does fear with the EU always lead to security

enhancement measures following the Ukraine War? Or could fear lead to aggressive maneuvers such as joining the war effort for the EU's security?

Scholars have also proposed that emotions play a significant role in the diplomatic behavior between states. For example, emotions play a significant role in coercive diplomacy (Markwica 2018). Those affected by coercive diplomacy are shaped by their appraisal tendencies and action tendencies. Appraisal tendencies refer to how shared cognitive beliefs cause people to appraise their environment in similar ways, while action tendencies refer to how psychological changes determine the behavior taken (Markwica 2018). Other scholars have analyzed the role of anger, fear, and flattery in negotiations (Young 2020; Olekalns and Druckman 2014). For example, from 1968 to 1994, the idea of North Korea gaining nuclear weapons generated fears of an unstable region for the United States; such fears shaped individual perceptions and actions as the U.S. leadership employed emotional analysis to make sense of the changing landscape (Young 2020). Flattery has been employed to increase personal relationships, as it generates feelings of both authenticity and allows for freer flows of information (Olekalns and Druckman 2014). Another work explores how official emotions, or emotions done by members on behalf of an institution, shape diplomatic behavior (Hall 2015). Hodd believes emotions expressed by the state are from appraisal processes from actors within the state (Hall 2015). For example, framing an issue to elicit guilt during the diplomatic process has the aim of attributing responsibility for any wrongs done (Hall 2015). Such works, however, continue to fail to explain how the intensity of an emotion shapes an associated behavior. Flattery may aim to elicit authenticity during the diplomatic process, but if the feeling is only subtly felt how does this impact negotiations? In other words, appraisal models must not only consider the generation of an emotion but its associated intensity as well.

Furthering Appraisal Theory and Emotional Intensity

In this paper, I create a model based on appraisal theory that addresses emotional intensity. Scholars have emphasized the need for appraisal-based arguments (Jervis 2017; Hutchinson and Bleiker 2014; Sasley 2011), as appraisal theories provide explanations for both the creation of emotions and the intensification of such emotions (Lazarus 1991; Scherer 2001; Hall 2015; Markwica 2018; Lian 2018; Jin 2019; Mohammed 2024; Gürkan and Terzi 2024). Emotional intensity can be defined as "variations in the magnitude of emotional responses" (Goto and Schaefer 2017), and such responses refer to the action an individual takes in response to the emotion felt (Sonnemans and Frijda 1995). Intensification is a key component of this literature as intensity is associated with human behavior; the more intense the emotion, the more forceful the action (Sonnemans & Frijda, 1995). While fear lacks a clear answer as to whether it increases or decreases risky behavior, one cannot deny that emotional intensification leads to forceful responses. More simply, I hold the argument that higher levels of fear lead to more forceful behavior.

To build my theory, I adapt arguments made in Appraisal Theory from cognitive psychology (Lazarus 1991; Scherer 2001; Moors 2017), and the work of Scherer's model known as the 'Sequential Check Theory of Emotion Differentiation' (Scherer 2001). I chose this model as it views emotions not as static states but as experiences that shift during the appraisal process (Scherer 2001). While Lazarus's model addresses reappraisal and emotional change, its broader appraisal categories offer less precision in explaining the intensity of emotion (Lazarus 1991). Scherer's model also incorporates a sequence that provides causal claims for the creation of emotion (Moors 2013; Scherer 2001). Though appraisal theorists continue to debate about the

superiority of other models, this model provides a simple, step-by-step process for a state-centered approach open for modification (Scherer 2001).

The Sequential Check Theory of Emotion Differentiation contains a four-step process. The first step determines the type of emotion felt while the latter three steps influence its associated intensity. The first SEC can be referred to as the Relevancy of the Event. Relevancy is divided into essentially three 'check boxes' or guiding questions: novelty, intrinsic pleasantness, and goal relevance/congruence (Scherer 2001). Novelty refers to whether the stimulus has a degree of familiarity. Intrinsic pleasantness refers to whether the event causes positive or negative feelings. Goal relevance determines if the event impacts the goals and needs of the individual. These three check boxes, if satisfied, determine whether the event is relevant to the individual.

The second SEC is the Implications of the Event (Scherer 2001). This step determines the level of consequences of the stimulus once it has been perceived. Scherer divides this step into five checks that occur during this cognitive process: causal attribution check, outcome probability check, discrepancy check, goal conduciveness check, and urgency check. The causal attribution check determines which agent is responsible for the stimulus and attributes intentions. The outcome probability check describes what situations can unfold from the stimulus occurring. The discrepancy check refers to whether the event is consistent with one's expectation at that point in time. The goal congruence check determines whether the consequences of the event would be obstructive to one's goal. The last check is the urgency check, which determines whether a high-priority action is needed in response to the event. The third SEC of Scherer's model is Coping potential. This falls on three checks: control check, power check, and adjustment check. Control check refers to how much the event could be influenced by natural

elements, such as the environment. power check refers to the power of the individual over the event. Adjustment check is the flexibility the individual feels if both the control and power check determine little influence can be made on the event.

The fourth and final SEC of Appraisal Theory is Normative Significance. In other words, what is the significance of the social-norms and values of the self? Scherer divides this step into two checks: internal standards check, and external standards check. Internal standards check refers to whether the event exceeds the internal standards of self-ideal, moral code or culture/group norms. The external standards check determines whether the action taken to address the event matches with social norms. Following this discussion of Scherer's model, I will now develop my own State-Centered Appraisal Theory on how fear and the intensity of fear is formulated in international relations.

Theoretical Argument

Core Assumption

For this paper, I hold one central assumption: although emotions are shaped by social, cultural, and normative contexts, they have shared understandings in the international system (Hall 2015). Specifically, I assume fear carries a shared meaning in the international system, making it possible to identify and measure fear's presence and intensity across states. This assumption builds on constructivist and emotions literature which views states as collective actors capable of expressing emotion through both symbolic behavior and elite discourse (Wendt 1999; Crawford 2000; Sasley 2011; Mercer 2014; Hutchinson 2016; Gustafsson and Hall 2021). I lean onto the ontological view that states are social identities that can feel and express emotion through the members within, although it is important to note this model can apply to a leader-

focused study as well. While I acknowledge that emotional expression varies within a cultural context (Scherer 2001; Crawford 2000), this framework assumes fear—defined as a response formed via appraisals on perceived threats—can be analyzed within the elite discussions of state policy. Fear can arise outside of threats to a state's security, as one could argue economic perceptions or socially perceived threats can invoke fear as well. For this paper, however, I limit my scope of fear to the obstruction of a state's interests and security, as this holds true with times of crisis as individuals are faced with a threat to their vital interests (Crawford 2000; Dyson and Hart 2013).

State-Centered Operational Model

Relevancy of the Event:

When a state determines the relevance of the event, it will follow through these three checks. First, the state will ask if the new military development is novel? The leadership will then ask if the military development generates feelings of positive or negative emotions. In this model, this negative emotion will be fear. The last question is whether the military event is relevant to the goal of the state: its own security. If the military development is seen as irrelevant, then any feelings of fear subside. If the military event satisfies all three conditions, it will generate the emotion of fear. The next three steps determine the intensity of the fear, as associated appraisals determine whether the state feels high or low levels of fear during the international crisis.

Implications of the Event:

For my state model, security is once again the starting point. I eliminate the outcome probability check from my model because I assume the military development has occurred or is occurring.

For example, an announcement of a new missile system, in my model, assumes that the state is actively acting towards the development of the system. This appraisal factor is guided by four checks instead.

The first check determines if the military development occurs from another state and attributes intentions. For an event to generate a level of fear, another actor is necessary within this specific model I have put forth. The second check determines if the military development is out of character of expected behavior of the other state (e.g., does the Soviet Union sending nuclear missiles fall out of normal expected behavior during Cold War tensions?). The third check determines if the military development is obtrusive to the state's goal of maintaining its own security (e.g., would nuclear weapons in Cuba threaten the security of the United States?). In the fourth step, the state determines if the event requires an urgent response depending on the temporality of the event occurring. This step is slightly modified from the original definition, as I assume uniform urgency in relation to the state's goal of security.

The intensity of fear increases if implications are seen as high. If an event is temporally urgent, unexpected, goal obtrusive and can be attributed to more maligned intentions, then the feeling of fear will increase. If not, lower implications decrease the intensity of fear felt.

Coping Potential:

When overlaying this SEC to my state model, a state will determine how geographical factors, such as distance, influence the development of the military event. While this is not applicable to all weapon systems, I expect proximity to be referenced if it is seen as a key factor. The threatening range of missile systems can vary significantly depending on the placement of such systems. The state will also perceive whether its own capabilities give it influence over military

development. Whether such perceptions reflect the material reality is irrelevant to my argument, as this theory is a cognitive-based argument. The last check determines if the state, in the event of both lacking control and power, can effectively adapt itself to the situation. If the U.S. could not adapt to the reality of a nuclear armed Cuba—assuming a lack of power capabilities—the nation would grow more fearful. High levels of coping potential decrease the intensity of fear while low levels have the opposite effect.

Normative Significance:

Normative context is a significant factor with respect to the appraisal process (Scherer 2001). With respect to this model, its role is somewhat assumed as this model application is to crisis scenarios. In international relations, the securitization literature has shown that crisis scenarios often are associated with the need for drastic action (Nyman 2013), and thus the options taken are not prone to strict normative constraints seen with other situations. More simply, my operational model takes place in the normative dimension associated with extreme crises as shared through the international system. When security is prioritized, normative constraints shift with threatening crisis situations.

Empirical Notes and Limitation

It is important to note that while evidence and measurements for the various SEC at times are closely related, in practice I treat them as analytically distinct. The first concerns the perceptions of an event, the second concerns the consequences of the event, and the last addresses one's own capacity to influence the event. As will be shown in the methodology section, I will use linguistic tools to measure and separate these stages as much as possible, although I acknowledge

empirically the evidence can overlap in expressions of fear and its intensity. In other words, evidence that may appear to support one SEC can also be seen to support another.

This is in line with Appraisal Theory, however, as the stages are simultaneously occurring and shaping following the Relevancy SEC (Scherer 2001).

Determining the intensity of fear

With fear as the scope condition of this model, below is the interaction between the two SECs of the Implications of the event and the Coping Potential of the event. Together, this interaction determines the intensity level of fear.

Figure 1.

	Low Implications	High Implications
Low Coping Potential	Moderate Fear	High Fear
High Coping Potential	Low Fear	Moderate Fear

Expected behaviors:

As stated earlier, the forcefulness of behavior is associated with the intensity of fear felt (Sonnemans and Frijda 1995). In other words, in times of intense fear we expect riskier behavior. I hold the position that 'fleeing' is not a realistic expectation of behavior by states, as fleeing would translate into capitulation. To surrender would defeat the assumption of a state seeking to maintain its being and identity. While this could be countered with suggestions of appeasement, acceptance, or band-wagoning with a more powerful ally, my model either accounts for or disagrees with such proposals. Appeasement has long been argued to be a failed, immoral policy for states to partake in (Dimuccio 1988). This is not to say the policy could never work, as in some circumstances it could prove to (Dimuccio 1988), but rather states have had an overt negative view since the 1930s. Acceptance or band-wagoning, on the other hand, are both options one could fit within my framework. As will be shown below, accepting the military development of another state is possible if it does not invoke a serious feeling of fear, while band-wagoning I argue is a more defensive reaction as a state seeks to form a stronger posture with an ally. To further develop my expected behaviors, I list them below.

For High Feelings of Fear, I expect states to participate in aggressive, risky behavior as perceived low coping potential and high implications of the event present the most precarious position for a state's security. Such expected behaviors are as follows: preemptive strikes, offensive operations, and increasement of arms.

For Moderate Feelings of Fear Intensity, I expect states to participate in more defensive posture-related behavior as the perception of either high coping potential or low implications generates space for pursuing less risky behavior. Such expected behaviors include strong diplomatic actions such as alliance formation or coalition-based behavior.

For Low Intensity of Fear, I expect states to participate in behavior without immediate, expected change from the opposing actor. Given the combination of high coping potential and low implications, the military event is perceived to have little impact on the security of the state. Why then pursue risky or defensive behavior? Mild forms of behavior include weaker diplomatic efforts such as economic sanctions or international pressure campaigns. In other words, efforts that do not necessitate involvement of immediate offensive or defensive postures.

Methodology

Plausibility probe

To explore my theoretical argument, I will be conducting a comparison case study analysis. The comparison will be done through a plausibility probe. A plausibility probe is a research method designed to determine if a theoretical argument holds merit for further testing (Levy 2008). Given that my theoretical approach is a modification of cognitive appraisal theory, this allows room for further theoretical development if the cases of my selection prove promising. This also allows me to test pre-defined indicators of my theory without the constraints of arguing for causality.

The cases that I will be analyzing are the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and the North Korea Nuclear Missile Crisis of 1994. Both cases have an important similarity: they start from a crisis resulting from nuclear weapon developments. They also both come from the perspective of the United States, although I concede this is a limitation of generalizability that would need to be addressed in a future paper. They both have somewhat stark differences in resolution as well. For the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Kennedy administration opted for a blockade rather than an invasion of the island. For the North Korea Missile Crisis, the Clinton administration was

minutes away from deciding on a military course of action before news of a Carter-led peace framework. Why both cases, despite important similarities, lead to different outcomes will be explored through my fear-intensity model.

Sources of evidence

For both cases I center my evidence from elite discussions of foreign policy makers. As noted in my previous discussions, the state represents an emotional entity, and the policy leader discussions represent the core space where such processes are made. Elites embody the collective identity of a state (Wendt 1999) and therefore embody the collective emotion of a state. This level of fear felt by the leadership shapes the level of fear felt within the state (Crawford 2000; Hutchinson 2016).

For the Cuban Missile Crisis case, my empirical data is from the transcripts of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council meetings and meeting notes. Such resources are in the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library as primary source documents. Supplemental secondary documents are used for context. For the North Korea Missile Crisis case, my empirical data is from a mixture of national security archives, memoirs, and interviews from public officials due to associated limitations of availability.

Measuring and Conceptualizing Fear

Fear is a difficult emotion to analyze and investigate. Not only does it lack predictive influences of behavior, but analyzing its authenticity outside of purposive displays of performance can be tricky to explore. Despite these methodological difficulties, fear still plays a large role in international politics and crisis-threatening scenarios (Crawford 2000).

While a definition of fear is subject to debate, with scholars questioning whether it is a cognitively constructed phenomena or an inherit feature of our biology (Mobbs et al. 2020), I side with the definition of fear as "an averse emotion" resulting from an urgent, physical or psychological threat (Lazarus 1991). This definition falls in line with cognitive-based arguments, as it associates fear with appraisal factors of low control and low certainty (Christopher 2010). Such arguments address the weaknesses of behavior arguments, as it allows for a more predictive model to be constituted on the internal mental processes of an individual. Instead of analyzing behavior as evidence of an emotion, an operational model of cognitive functions provides a stronger explanation as to how the emotion arose in the first place. Continuing with a cognitive approach, fear is viewed as an emotion that arises from threat identification and intensifies as it is appraised.

The question remains on how to measure an emotion. Scholars have addressed this question by offering methodological tools, although no tool is perfect. One tool establishes emotional meaning through direct reference (Van Dijk 1998; Koschut et al. 2017). This includes lexical indicators such as nouns, adjectives, or verbs that directly refer to an associated emotion, such as "fear," "fearful," or "fearing." Another tool looks for words that contain a context-invariant judgement to refer to the emotional attitude of the speaker (Koschut et al. 2017). For example, the word "terrorist" conveys strong meaning. Metaphors also portray emotions through symbolic speech through exaggeration or intensification (Charteris-Black 2011; Koschut et al. 2017). While treating discourse does require an interpretive approach to an extent, and thus is subject to potential error, discourse often provides a rich resource of "observable correlates" for empirical research (Koschut et al. 2017).

When measuring fear in diplomatic discourse, scholars have employed these tools as evidence of emotional impact. When analyzing the sentiment of anger of the People's Republic of China (PRC) during the Taiwan Strait Crisis of 1996, Hall looked for emotionally loaded language and the effect of grammar and punctuation, such as the usage of exclamation points from official PRC messages (Hall 2015). While translation could have impacted the overall purity of the empirical resource, he still looked for specific words used within China that refer to specific meanings, such as *fenkai* for distress (Hall 2015). Markwica, when analyzing the affective experience of Khrushchev during the Cuban Missile Crisis, relied on isolating descriptive emotions and figurative emotions (Markwica 2018). In other words, investigating the usage of lexical indicators, narrative structures and metaphors or loaded phrases to prescribe emotion and emotional intensity.

Lexical indicators also hold ideological meaning (Van Dijk 1998). This will allow me to pinpoint words such as 'threat' or 'danger' as a way that demonstrates a level of fear. Narrative structures are seen as ways where emotions are diffused, either consciously or subconsciously, within groups (Ross 2014; Hutchinson and Bleiker 2014). Fear should arise from narratives suggesting quick action or escalatory rhetoric. Emotive intensifiers and metaphors, such as exaggeration, often can be seen to convey strong emotions as well (Charteris-Black 2011). Fear, as a negative emotion, should be expressed with dire consequences with great emphasis. Using lexical indicators, narrative structures, emotive intensifiers and metaphors, I will conceptualize fear from my empirical data in line with previous research done. Such tools will be used in all stages of my operational model, as both the Implications of the Event and the Coping Potential play a vital role in shaping the intensity of fear.

SEC Discussion Expectations:

To identify evidence for *Relevancy of the Event,* I expect language within the documents demonstrating a sense of novelty, negative feelings, and whether the security of the state is implicated. For the *Implications of the Event,* the documents should demonstrate officials discussing intentions of another state, whether such behavior is out of character for that state, how obstructive the military event is towards a state's security, and whether an urgent response is needed or being considered. For the last SEC, *Coping Potential*, evidence should highlight whether the state highlights the role of proximity or geography, the level of military capability the state has at its disposal, and whether the military development, if successful, could be 'lived with.' As noted earlier, fear should be present and measured in each SEC, as appraisal theory is a simultaneous process involving not only the creation of emotion but its associated intensity as well.

The structure of the case analyses

For each case, I provide a step-by-step framework through my appraisal theory. Each case is motivated by the current state of emotional literature where it needs further refinement. The Cuban Missile Crisis—while a heavily researched case study in international relations—lacks a formalized model of fear intensity to explain state behavior. The North Korean Case—due to empirical constraints—lacks an appraisal model to explain state behavior. To address these needs, this paper explores the plausibility of each case with respect to this model.

Applying Appraisal Theory to the Cuban Missile Crisis

Introduction

The first case being I will analyze is the Cuban Missile Crisis from the perspective of the U.S. This event would last for thirteen tense days, where the Kennedy Administration deliberated on a response to the Soviet nuclear missiles being deployed in Cuba. Rather than launching an air strike or simply accepting a new reality of missiles located within the island, the U.S. adopted a naval blockade, or "quarantine," which ultimately pushed for a diplomatic resolution between the U.S. and the Soviet Union (Allison 1969). This decision presents a puzzle. Although fear, as it will be shown, was present throughout the crisis, the U.S. chose a more moderate, defensive strategy rather than aggression or complete restraint. Scholars of emotion literature have offered varying explanations (Steinberg 1991; Ethier 2013; Alexieva 2016).

One explanation involves embarrassment and humiliation, as Kennedy was still emotionally sensitive following the failure of the Bay of Pigs (Alexieva 2016; Steinberg 1991). Such sensitivity pushed Kennedy to reassert U.S. prestige by placing the Soviet Union in a more vulnerable position (Steinberg 1991). Another explanation involves fear and anger in crisis behavior (Carlson and Dacey 2014). Fear is argued to make a leader risk-averse, assuming it is effectively instilled, while anger produces more confrontational behavior (Carlson and Dacey 2014). Kennedy's initial rejections of diplomacy, for example, can be attributed to his anger towards Khrushchev (Carlson and Dacey 2014).

Such accounts, however, leave many questions unanswered. If fear was the dominant emotion, we should have expected paralysis from the leadership, and if anger was the driving force, air strikes should have been pursued. Instead, the U.S. pursued a restrained yet assertive path of a blockade. The existing literature performs well in explaining what emotions were present but fails to take into account how the intensity of a said emotion shapes policy behavior.

To address this area in want, I will apply appraisal theory with a focus on the intensity of fear in this case. When not treating fear as a binary variable, I argue that a moderate intensity of fear explains why the U.S. chose a middle option between aggression and inaction. Though the crisis itself lasted thirteen days, I will only be analyzing foreign policy discussions up to the decision to initiate the quarantine of the island. I limit the scope of this discussion as to analyze the full crisis would require further appraisals such as Khrushchev's letters in response to Kennedy's action or the appraisal of the U-2 aircraft being shot down.

Following my methodology discussion, I use lexical indicators, narrative structures, and emotive intensifiers as evidence of the emotion of fear. The evidence should highlight repeated uses of language or structures that emphasize an emotion felt within internal discussions. For example, discussions repeatedly using the word 'danger' would signify the presence of fear. With this measurement, I turn to exploring the theoretical framework with this first case.

Perceiving the Event

Relevancy SEC

As noted in Figure 1, relevance is necessary to determine if the event can generate fear. Given the guided questions discussed, I will be searching for evidence on a few key points. First, the evidence should show that the actions taken by the Soviet Union were perceived as novel. Second, reactions from the U.S. foreign policy discussions should have negative reactions towards the discovery of the missiles. Lastly, the discussions should also demonstrate a link between national security of the U.S. and the presence of potential nuclear weapons on the island. To begin, let us first look for evidence from the initial discussions of the Executive Committee of the National Security Council (ExComm) meetings.

On October 16th, 1962, President John F. Kennedy received news from his national security advisor, McGeorge Bundy, that a Soviet Union missile base was being developed in Cuba (JFK Library 1962, October 16). Kennedy then held a series of meetings to discuss this serious development and brainstorm U.S. policy action. Secretary of State David Dean Rusk started the first meeting with a discussion acknowledging the existence of the event. Rusk was surprised that there was a missile system being constructed extremely close to the southeastern coast of the US.

Rusk began "this is a serious…development", adding, "It's one that we, all of us, had not really believed the Soviets could, uh, carry this far" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). McNamara would shortly state, "...because we are fearful of these MIG 21s…We don't know what they're capable of" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). Such actions are perceived as 'serious' and 'fearful' suggest feelings of shock at the news of the Soviet missile systems being deployed. This provides support for two of the three guiding questions about novelty and positive or negative feelings. Because the discovery was a 'shock' in terms of the boldness of the Soviet Union, the U.S. leadership was in disbelief at the news. It was also fearful of the development as well. The Soviet Union was going 'this far' in their military actions immediately meant that this was new territory for the US.

Rusk further commented about the relevancy of the event in combination with the negative feelings rising. Evidence of this is seen with his comments about the need for immediate military actions, in terms of mobilization, to further certain security aspects of the U.S. (JFK Library 1962, October 16). He stated, "...I do think we have to set in motion a chain of events that will eliminate this base," and followed with, "...we have to think very hard about two major, uh, courses of action as alternatives. One is a quick strike…the other would be…a

combination of things." Rusk further stated that "...I think there are certain military, uh, actions that we could, we might well want to take straight away." He would end by suggesting, "We reinforce our forces in the southeastern part of the United States…to deliver an overwhelming strike at any of these installations…" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). These quotes suggest that the discovery of Soviet missiles in Cuba was extremely relevant to the security of the U.S. Rather than interpreting these quotes as a choice being decided upon, Secretary Rusk's comments suggest immediate negative reactions of Soviet missile deployment. Suggestions for minor military preparations and movements demonstrate this, as the event is being perceived as relevant to the U.S.'s security. To have little discussion militarily would suggest the event does not concern a state's security otherwise.

Ultimately, these initial discussion points of Secretary Rusk and Secretary McNamara provide support for the first step of my state-centered appraisal theory. The military developments on the island of Cuba were being perceived as relevant to the state's goal of security and the emotion of fear was generated. Lexical indicators, such as 'serious' or 'fearful,' words associated with negative meaning, highlight the emotion of fear. There are also narrative structures that present demanding quick, decisive action involving the military which also suggest individuals were feeling certain levels of fear as well. This demonstrates that when discovering the event, fear as an emotion was at play due to the novelty and negative feelings suggested by these early discussions. In the next section, it will be shown how fear is elevated due to the high levels of consequences associated with the event. Risks alone through the rationalist model will be challenged.

Defining Consequences

Implications of the Event SEC

Following my discussion in Figure 1, the step of *Implications* determines the level of consequences from the military event. For this section, discussions within the U.S. should attempt to address the question of Soviet intentionality with the missile place. The empirics should also highlight whether the event is out-of-character of the USSR, and if the presence of nuclear weapons is obstructive to U.S. security. I also will be searching for evidence that may demonstrate a sense of urgency. If the U.S. felt time was not on their side, the evidence should demonstrate this fact. To continue testing this theory, let us further investigate discussions between President Kennedy and his advisors.

Following Secretary Rusk's comments, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, General Maxwell D. Taylor and President Kennedy further discussed the details of the developments in Cuba. In terms of state security, McNamara emphasized certain unknowns about the ability to determine when the delivery systems in Cuba would be operational. He stated, "If they become operational before the air strike, I do not believe we can…knock them out before they can be launched…" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). Rusk commented and added, "...if they shoot those missiles, we are in a general nuclear war" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). Further comments were made later in the meeting with McNamara stating, "We have a serious air defense problem…I think we must assume that the Cuban air force is definitely capable of penetrating, in small numbers, our coastal air…" (JFK Library 1962, October 16).

General Taylor added to the general unknowns about when such systems would be ready, "...our knowledge of the timing of the readiness is going to be so…difficult that we'll never have…the exact…perfect timing" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). Even with refined predictions upon further surveillance from U-2 aircraft, many advisors still cautioned about a level of

uncertainty. In fact, an unnamed advisor voiced such concerns suggesting “this wouldn’t rule out the possibility that one of them might be operational very much sooner”, to which General Carter replied, “...one of them could be operational much sooner. Our people feel that this has been, being put in since probably early September.” (JFK Library 1962, October 16).

It is important to stress here that the policy discussion quotes provided evidence to two of the guiding questions under this step. To start, McNamara and Rusk were heavily emphasizing the level of obtrusiveness to the state’ security. While Rusk made a remark about the potential of nuclear war, McNamara addressed more so the gaps within the U.S. air defense established within Florida in the event of Cuban aircraft being mobilized to support any action of the Soviet Union. In other words, the implications of the missile sites and potential Cuban violation of U.S. air space were high with respect to state security. Second, the question of urgency, and specifically temporal urgency, was discussed heavily here. General Talyor’s concerns over the inability to know for certain the time needed for the systems to become operational highlighted this question directly. General Carter’s admission to uncertainty with respect to the anonymous advisor’s concerns over whether the estimates could be incorrect furthered this point. Thus, what we had was an event with high temporal urgency and a high level of threat to security. The last two guiding questions are about intentions of the initiator and whether such behavior is out of character.

To these questions, I direct our attention to discussions specifically with General Taylor, Secretary Rusk, and President Kennedy. President Kennedy directly asked, “What is the…major reason for the Russians to, uh, set this up…” to which General Taylor replies “what it’d give’em is primary, it makes the launching base, uh, for short range missiles against the United States…” (JFK Library 1962, October 16). Secretary Rusk further ponders about the intentions of the

Soviet Union by stating “one thing Mr. Khrushchev may have in mind is that…he knows that we don’t live under fear of his nuclear weapons to the extent…he has to live under fear of ours…”. “...they may be thinking that they can either bargain Berlin and Cuba against each other, or that they could provoke us into a kind of action in Cuba…for them to take action with respect to Berlin.” He continued that he doesn’t “...really see the rationality of, uh, the Soviets pushing it this far…” (JFK Library 1962, October 16). President Kennedy later voiced aloud “I don’t know enough about the Soviet Union, but if anybody can tell me any other time since the Berlin blockade where the Russians have given us so clear provocation, I don’t know when it’s been…” (JFK Library 1962, October 16).

I believe these quotes add evidence to the two questions about intentions and expected norms of behavior of the Soviet Union. The discussion about the intentions of the Soviet Union remained unclear. While none of the speakers necessarily addressed malign intentions towards the Soviet Union, none of them declined the possibility either. In other words, there was a great degree of uncertainty with respect to the intentions of the rival state. As mentioned before, fear is often associated with a large degree of uncertainty to one’s own interests during times of international crises (Crawford 2000). Second, President Kennedy’s claim about the action being taken being at odds with Soviet Union behavior since the Berlin Blockade with Stalin addressed the question about expected norms of behavior. It is clear, and as discussed earlier in the previous section, the U.S. was blindsided by this action, which was seen essentially as rash, irrational, and out of character for the Soviet Union.

Overall, I argue the discussions here provide ample support for the *Implications* step of my state-centered appraisal theory. Given that this development holds high implications for the U.S.’s security and the lack of certainty regarding the intentions and temporal urgency, I classify

this step as an intensifier for the state's feeling of fear. Fear is again seen with lexical indicators discussing "unknowns" and "serious" problems with respect to the U.S. defense systems. The discussion also emphasized the consequence of a "general nuclear war" showing the level of fear in terms of potential consequences. There are also conversations of narrative structures that emphasize an aspect of uncertainty for the Soviet missile systems and associated intentions. The unknown speaker, specifically, worries about the possibility that the operational capability of the missile sites will happen much sooner, and General Taylor stating that there will be an inability to know with 100% certainty about such operations. McNamara also raised concerns over the inability of U.S. air defense systems to be fully effective. We also see some emotional intensification regarding the Soviet Union intentionality point, as President Kennedy voiced loudly about how out of character these actions taken by the Soviet Union were. This paints a picture of a higher degree of fear with respect to the perceptions of the implications of this specific military event. In other words, this case falls into the high implications category.

Deciding on an Outcome

Coping Potential of the Event SEC

The step of determining coping potential derives from the state's ability to influence the military event. Following Figure 1, the empirical data should address three questions. First, did the geographical proximity of Cuba play a role in the U.S.'s decision-making process? Second, did discussions show concerns over the range of tools available for the U.S. to address the missiles in Cuba. Third, the evidence should also demonstrate if the U.S. felt a nuclear-armed Cuba was acceptable, or at minimum tolerable, to co-exist with. To answer these questions, we turn to the discussions of top foreign policy members once more.

Following discussions about the consequences of the crisis, General Carter, Assistant Secretary Martin, General Taylor, Secretary McNamara, and President Kennedy shifted the conversation to addressing the event. To start, McNamara told Kennedy, "to take out only the missiles…or to take out the missiles and the MIG aircraft and associated nuclear storage facilities…could be done in twenty-four hours' warning" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). General Taylor adds to this about the importance of gathering better intelligence from the U-2 aircraft and then "If it really threatens the United States, then take it right out with a hard crack…five days perhaps-to do the complete job" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). McNamara also added that "It seems to me almost certain that any one of these forms of direct military action will lead to a Soviet military response…it may well be worth the price" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). In a later meeting about a quarantine plan, McNamara would place more weight on a blockade operation to force a negotiation for the removal of strategic missiles from Cuba (JFK Library 1962, October 20).

What these quotes demonstrate is that the U.S. government knew it had various material capabilities at its disposal to handle the situation if necessary. This fits neatly with the guiding question about one's own capabilities to influence the event. By discussing military operations ranging from airstrikes to invasions of Cuba to waiting for further intelligence, it is clear the policy makers were fully aware of U.S. capabilities. Additionally, despite earlier weaknesses in defense systems positioned within Florida, the policymakers further remarked about the overall expected damage to Florida being minimal. General Taylor states "...it would be entirely possible for MIGs to come through with conventional weapons and do some amount, some damage" to which Kennedy replies "Yeah. Not, uh, talking overall, not a great deal of damage" (JFK Library

1962, October 16). This demonstrates that even in the event of conventional bombing, despite any weaknesses, the U.S. expected little damage.

There is also support for guiding questions about the geographical dimension and the overall flexibility of the state if it could not prevent the event from occurring. In a discussion with the generals about 'balance of power politics' and the overall threat levels of operational missiles in Cuba, McNamara stated that the Chiefs did think the missiles would overall shift things but from his own personal stance, "...not at all." (JFK Library 1962, October 16). General Taylor would cautiously agree by stating "...these are just a few more missiles… they can become…a rather important adjunct and reinforcement to the…strike capability of the Soviet Union…But more than that, these are…to our nation it means, it means a great deal more…" emphasizes a political factor here (JFK Library 1962, October 16). President Kennedy said, "You may say it doesn't make any difference if you get blown up by an ICBM flying from the Soviet Union or one that was ninety miles away. Geography doesn't mean that much" (JFK Library 1962, October 16). In other words, the proximity of Cuba did not decrease the coping potential the U.S. felt it had in this crisis. Even if missiles were positioned on the island, the foreign policy makers did not believe any large balance-of-power shift would occur. If all else failed, the U.S., from this evidence, did not feel a nuclear-armed Cuba would be disastrous to its security.

It is clear the U.S. viewed it had a high amount of coping potential with respect to the Cuban missile development. From arguments over the options to take against the missile sites to the overall 'balance of power' logic not shifting greatly, the President and his advisors felt there was some space to influence the current situation. Lexical indicators, such as the word "damage", "nuclear" and "missiles" still demonstrate there is a level of fear persistent following

the previous SEC steps of this theory, but the narrative structures portray a sense of confidence. Secretary McNamara and General Taylor discussed how the U.S. would have the material capability to take out missile storage facilities if needed. There was also a sense of unconcern of potential damage caused by conventional weapons, such as Cuban bombers without atomics, between Kennedy and General Taylor. The diminishment of the geographical element also demonstrates that the proximity did not correlate to an increased feeling of fear either. We also saw emotional intensifiers emphasizing the capability of the United States. In relation to striking missile facilities General Taylor stated the ability to "take it right out with a hard crack" and McNamara stating the timeframe of twenty-four hours. Thus, while fear is present, we see it weakened with feelings of confidence in reference to the policy options on the table. The U.S. perceived they had many capabilities on the table before it with costs being somewhat minimized as well.

Ultimately, the blockade option would be chosen out of a moderate feeling of fear. Even if the case had high implications, the U.S. had a high amount of coping potential. There was no need for rash military action as the situation was not perceived with a high level of fear. According to my theory, a more moderate level of fear is associated with more defensive rather than aggressive behavior. Choosing the blockade as the final option fits well within the appraisal framework. This is not to understate the risk of escalation or nuclear wear, as McNamara did warn about air strikes leading to potential nuclear war. Rather this shows that the U.S. did not 'feel its back was against the wall', as a state with low levels of coping potential would feel.

Applying Appraisal Theory to the North Korean Missile Crisis of 1994

Introduction

The second case of this paper is analyzing the role of fear influencing the U.S. during the North Korean Missile Crisis of 1994. North Korea had signed onto the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1985, but following the end of the Cold War tensions rose between the state and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (Ponneman & Gallucci 2004). On March 12 of 1993, North Korea announced its intent to withdraw from the NPT following confrontations with the inspection teams of the IAEA (Ponneman & Gallucci 2004). This resulted in the U.S. and the IAEA attempting to negotiate with the North Korean government, only for the crisis to fully emerge when North Korea was attempting to generate plutonium to build a nuclear bomb (Ponneman & Gallucci 2004). While war ultimately did not occur due to former President Carter's diplomatic intervention in Pyongyang, one cannot deny that the Clinton administration was *minutes* away from a decision on a military operation (Frontline 2003).

The emotions-based literature has remained largely silent on applying or exploring how fear shaped the decision-making process of the U.S. at this time. While it is noted that fear has long marked the U.S. towards a nuclear program of North Korea, Iran, and even Iraq (Sasley 2011), explanations of the influence of fear remain underdeveloped. To address this area of concern, I will apply my operationalized model of fear intensity to explore an emotions-based explanation of the United States' response to North Korea. A challenge of this case is with respect to its temporality; the North Korean Crisis lasted officially from March of 1993 to October of 1994 with the signing of the Agreed Framework (Ponneman & Gallucci 2004). Another challenge is with respect to the available data. Much of the internal discussions of the Clinton administration remain classified, leaving me only with public statements, interviews, and memoirs. This is because public statements are often intended for specific audiences, and speakers often may distort or shy away from revealing potentially costly beliefs to the public

(Renshon 2009). This is especially prevalent as the U.S. media continues to portray North Korea as an isolated, childish country led by a narcissistic dictator (Kim 2014). However, some research has shown that beliefs remain largely consistent in both public and private settings with President Kennedy (Renshon 2009). Even if leaders may express their language in more formal deliveries, the beliefs behind the statements can be consistent. This is not to suggest that such results generalize to most contexts, but it does support some empirical validity despite the obvious limitations. Given the limited availability for this case, such resources provide the next best data for a plausible test of my model.

Following the previous case, I will examine the intensity and presence of fear with respect to each SEC and how this determined state behavior. Lexical indicators, narrative structures, and emotive intensifiers should also be present within the language as discussed previously. Conceptualizing emotion via text is a tricky task to accomplish, but such rhetorical devices allow for inference into the emotive state of the discussions. While the literature is not as neat as the previous case, empirical data will be established for each SEC to demonstrate the plausibility of the U.S. reacting to the North Korean Missile Crisis through an appraisal-model of fear.

Perceiving the Event

Relevancy SEC

Like the first case study, I will seek for evidence that demonstrates the novelty of the actions taken by North Korea, negative reactions from U.S. policy makers, and discussions involving national security. To examine the relevancy SEC discussions, interviews, and writings of former President Bill Clinton and former Secretary of Defense William J. Perry will be analyzed.

On February 26, 2003, Secretary Perry sat for an interview on Frontline with PBS. When asked about what sparked the crisis, Perry stated "The North Koreans had a nuclear reactor at a place called Yongbyon, a research reactor. They announced they were going to reprocess the field from that reactor." (Frontline 2003). While tensions were already high between the U.S. and North Korea, this move was a dramatic step of escalation. In terms of novelty, this move meant that North Korea was fully prepared to take the necessary steps in developing nuclear weapons despite ongoing negotiations with the U.S. and the IAEA. Perry follows, "The crucial action was not just the potential reprocessing, but the expelling of the inspectors, which was a very clear signal to use that they planned to go ahead and reprocess this fuel, get the plutonium and then make the nuclear bombs." (Frontline 2003). In other words, North Korea was initiating a crisis with this dramatic step.

Such a development immediately generated very negative reactions. The Clinton administration always viewed a nuclear-armed North Korea as a "red line" (Perry 2006), and such actions immediately were seen as provocative. President Clinton wrote in his memoir, "In order to make absolutely certain that the North Koreans knew we were serious, Perry continued the tough talk over the next three days, even saying we would not rule out a preemptive military strike" (Clinton 2004), in response to the actions taken by North Korea. President Clinton, in a press conference with reporters in March, had stated that "...the situation in Korea is serious, and we have responded in a serious way…" (Clinton 1994), when inspections were not following IAEA obligations. Such sentiment remained and sharpened following the development of potential reprocessing for plutonium. This points to evidence showing a strong, adverse reaction of the U.S. towards this development.

Lastly, such a development was seen as extremely relevant to the security of the United States. President Clinton, on April 13th in a meeting with the American Society of Newspaper editors, stated, "...we hope to preserve an environment in which America can grow, and Americans can flourish…in addressing North Korea's nuclear program, which protects not only our troops on the Peninsula but ultimately the interests of all Americans…" (Clinton 1994). In May with an interview with CNN, President Clinton would add, "In the face of so much promise and trouble, we have a chance, a chance to create conditions of greater peace and prosperity and hopefully more lasting peace and prosperity" (Clinton 1994). "Trouble" was in reference to North Korea's nuclear program and its efforts at the time. What these quotes demonstrate is a link between the United States' national security with the fate of North Korea's nuclear program.

As seen from above, the evidence shows that the North Korean Missile Crisis was perceived as a relevant military event. Not only were the initial steps of attempts to reprocess fuel into plutonium seen as novel, but it was also seen as unacceptable. Immediate negative reactions emphasize this point, with President Clinton emphasizing the undesirable consequences of a North Korean nuclear program on the U.S. national security. Lexical indicators in such quotes show a presence of fear. Words and phrases such as "hostile" or "serious" emphasize the negative emotion within the U.S. Narrative structures characterize the move as unacceptable in need of action and further show fear was felt, as seen with Secretary Carter's remarks and the Clinton administration discussions of a "red line". Fear was an emotion present in the U.S. as it perceived North Korea's move as escalatory and dangerous in need of a response. The two SECs below will delve into how the U.S. would begin to shape its response.

Defining Consequences

Implications of the Event SEC

When determining the *Implications* of the event, the evidence must demonstrate the US attributing intentions to the North Koreans, whether actions taken by North Korea were seen as of character, and if the developments by the North Koreans were seen as highly obstructive to U.S. security. Such evidence can be found from President Clinton. Assistant Secretary Carter, and Secretary Perry.

When it came to the intentions of North Korea, the U.S. appeared to have a level of uncertainty with respect to why North Korea was pursuing such weaponry. Secretary Perry, when asked about North Korea's intentions, stated, "We can't really know for sure. My judgement then and my judgement today was that they determined that they needed nuclear weapons for their own security, and that it just seemed like a way to get them…", suggesting a security motive (Frontline 2003). However, he was quick to add, "But I have to be very clear. We're only guessing what their intentions were. They never told us why they were doing it." (Frontline 2003). President Clinton, in a telephone call with President Kim Young Sam of South Korea in August, noted "We are not relying on North Korean good faith. IAEA inspectors must verify their commitments, and this will provide transparency" when President Sam expressed concerns over North Korea's reliability and intentionality (Clinton Digital Library 1994). While this discussion is after the peak of the crisis in June, it still highlights a deep uncertainty towards North Korea.

The discovery of the event was also seen as an escalatory step, as stated in the earlier Relevancy SEC section of this paper. While North Korea had disagreements with the IAEA in 1992 and 1993 by restricting and preventing inspections (Chung 1994), it is clear preparing to produce plutonium was an aggressive move. New negotiations were being held with the U.S. and

the IAEA prior to the North Korean announcement of reprocessing the field from the Yongbyon reactor in June of 1994, but such negotiations were unfruitful (Ponneman & Gallucci 2004). While North Korea had defueled earlier in 1989 (Sokolski 1996), this time the action was in combination with stalled talks and against the IAEA. This announcement was also compounded with a sense of urgency. “Had they done that, it would have given them enough plutonium to make about five or six nuclear bombs”, as noted by Secretary Perry. He would further state in response to North Korea’s nuclear program efforts in 2003 that the “world was running out of time” (Frontline 2003), emphasizing that time was a crucial factor and continues to remain one.

The announcement and potential production of weapons was also obstructive to America’s national security. Secretary Perry would state, “We considered that to be a very great danger…most immediately and most obviously because we felt it would weaken deterrence on the Korean Peninsula and therefore make war more likely” (Frontline 2003). President Clinton in his memoir notes, “I was determined to prevent North Korea from developing a nuclear arsenal, even at the risk of war” (Clinton 2004). In other words, a nuclear armed Korea was immediately seen as a danger to the U.S. and its alliances abroad. To reiterate, President Clinton made it clear that preventing “rogue states” from receiving nuclear weapons was a key component (Silverstone 2008) of American national security. Similarly to the relevance section, this shows there was a high degree of obstructiveness towards America’s security.

As seen with the empirical support, the four guiding questions suggest the U.S. perceived high implications during the peak of the North Korean Missile Crisis of 1994. Due to uncertain intentions, a sense of urgency, the provocative nature of the move, and the high degree of influence on American national security, the implications of this event intensified the feelings of fear. The lexical indicators such as “risk”, “war” with narrative structures suggesting the inability

to know the trust intentions of North Korea show fear remained a present factor that only intensified. The usage of emphasis with the world "running out of time" further demonstrates an intensification of fear felt with the U.S. with the North Korean nuclear program. Following the perceived high implications of this event, the next step analyzes the perceived coping potential of the U.S. towards the North Korean Nuclear program.

Deciding on an Outcome

Coping Potential of the Event SEC

The final step is determining the level of coping potential a state has in face of a crisis. For this, I will be searching for evidence on three marks. The discussions of U.S. policy makers should address whether geography was an influential role in its decision-making process. Second, evidence should demonstrate if the U.S. felt it had a range of tools available to stop North Korea in an efficient, effective manner. Lastly, I will be searching for evidence highlighting whether the U.S could co-exist with a nuclear-armed Korea.

With respect to geography, the interview with Secretary Perry highlights some points. First, Perry stated, "…the only problem…was that we believed it's quite likely that this would trigger off a conventional war…possibly even an invasion of South Korea…" in reference to a military response. He goes on to say, "...North Korea made their quite inflammatory statements saying that they would turn Seoul into a sea of flame…This is strong language. It got our attention…" (Frontline 2003). Perry, focused on the impacts with "South Korea" and overall deterrence within the region (Frontline 2003). In other words, the geographic dimension focused on the alliance of the United States, not specifically the mainland of the U.S. itself. However, as discussed before, President Clinton linked national security with the state of the international

community. In his memoirs Clinton would go on to say, “Both Jiang and Hosokawa shared my concern about the looming crisis with North Korea, which seemed determined to become a nuclear power, something I was determined to avoid…” in reference to concerns of Japan and China as well.

Such discussions shift to the question about whether the U.S. had a wide-range toolkit to alter North Korea’s nuclear program. When it came to diplomatic advancements, it became clear within the U.S. that such efforts were failing in providing results. By the time North Korea decided to start reprocessing its fuel for plutonium, it had prevented inspectors from the IAEA during diplomatic discussions with the U.S. (Sokolski 1996). In other words, diplomacy was failing. Assistant Secretary Carter stated, “We were not, by any means, confident that we could talk them out of taking that step, and therefore we looked into the possibility of compelling them by force…” (Frontline 2003). Secretary Perry, claiming diplomacy was still at the forefront, called it “coercive diplomacy” or “...diplomacy that was backed with a very credible threat of military force” (Frontline 2003). The U.S. felt it lacked purely diplomatic solutions and looked to military options as the only tool that *seemed* to be left. While the U.S. felt confident in its military capabilities, associated costs with a potential war or invasion of South Korea left the U.S. lacking effective tools. Unlike the Cuban Missile Crisis where the U.S. felt the costs were manageable and had various military operations, this crisis was perceived in a more extreme manner.

The last question regarding coping potential is whether the U.S. could live with a nuclear-armed North Korea in the event the situation could not be averted. Assistant Secretary Carter stated, “We felt that…would bring a potentially hostile nation…across the nuclear finish line and that…wasn’t acceptable to us” (Frontline 2003). Secretary Perry would state, “We were willing

to risk war…We had gone over the war contingency plans very carefully and had concluded that…we would undoubtedly be successful…" (Frontline 2003), although it is important to note Clinton described receiving "sobering estimates" in terms of potential costs. Despite this, however, Assistant Secretary Carter said, "It is such a disaster…to allow North Korea to go nuclear that we needed to run…substantial risks to avoid the greater danger of a nuclear North Korea (Frontline 2003). What this evidence suggests is that the U.S. could not accept a reality with a nuclear armed North Korea. The U.S., even with noted, associated costs, viewed war as a possible or even necessary endeavor to prevent a nuclear armed North Korea.

Ultimately it is clear the U.S. perceived it had a low coping potential with respect to North Korea developing nuclear weapons. Not only was it a danger to its allies of South Korea and Japan, but the U.S. viewed it as a grave national security threat to itself. Diplomatic actions and negotiations had failed in providing results, leaving the U.S. with "coercive diplomacy" and the potential use of force or war. Words and phrases, such as "disaster", "wasn't acceptable", and "willing to risk war" show that there was a high level of fear present in the administration. Narrative structures emphasizing a "greater danger" of a nuclear-armed Korea over costs associated with armed-conflict further show the intensity of fear felt. Thus, fear is further intensified in the *Coping Potential* step leading my model to suggest the U.S. felt a high level of fear.

While the historical outcome of the "Agreed Framework" may appear to challenge my model, I believe this case provides strong evidence for my theory. When viewed as a case to initiate conflict, the empirical record shows the U.S. was moments away from choosing an aggressive option. Had it not been for former President Carter's surprise interception with a negotiated framework, more likely than not the U.S. may have entered a military conflict with

North Korea. In fact, Secretary Perry in his interview stated, “We were literally in the process of giving the briefing to him [President Clinton] ...when the call came in from President Carter…” (Frontline). President Carter’s intervention appears to be a fortunate surprise that halted the considerations for military options. In his memoir, President Clinton notes how he “thanked President Carter for his efforts…” (Clinton 2004) with North Korea as negotiations followed in Geneva. In other words, the Clinton administration was essentially *minutes* away from an aggressive military option before a call from President Carter. This ranged from deploying troops to preventive force. Although it is impossible to know if war or a military crisis would have emerged with North Korea against the U.S. and South Korea, it cannot be denied that the U.S. was leaning heavily towards a military operation to prevent a nuclear-armed North Korea. Even in face of associated risks, the administration was fully prepared to disable the North Korean nuclear program.

Ending Discussion

I have proposed an operational model to examine the formation and intensity of fear in international politics. Emotions play a significant role in shaping state behavior, with fear playing a decisive role in crisis scenarios. Rather than treating fear as a binary presence, this model demonstrates how cognitive appraisals shape the level of fear felt and what options a state takes in times of crisis.

My model provides an adapted framework of cognitive appraisal theory when investigating emotions in international relations. By operationalizing intensity, the emotion of fear can be further investigated and explained with state behavior. The main components test the relevancy of the event, the implications of the event, and the coping

potential the state has in an international crisis. As a state perceives a crisis, the listed appraisals above determine the amount of fear the state feels. I argue that if a state feels high levels of fear, it is more likely to pursue aggressive military operations during a crisis. If a state, on the other hand, experiences low feelings of fear, little to no serious action is taken. Moderate feelings of fear lead to defensive postures, allowing space for a state to take risk-averse action.

To test my model, I re-evaluate two cases in U.S. history: the Cuban Missile Crisis and the North Korean Missile Crisis. Through a plausibility testing of both cases, I demonstrated that moderate fear led the U.S. to pursue measured action in response to Soviet missiles in Cuba, while high levels of fear pushed the U.S. towards serious consideration of military action against North Korea. What is key within both cases is not the presence of fear but how the U.S. appraised its ability to cope with the threat and its associated implications. While both cases had similar sources of tension leading to the crises, both had varying levels of outcomes associated with the intensity of fear generated.

Some limitations of this model require addressment. First, its reliance on leadership perceptions and historical archives makes causal inference difficult to confirm and requires more rigorous testing. Second, this model assumes higher feelings of fear lead to more aggressive responses. Although such an assumption is based within psychological research, fear is a difficult emotion to use for predictable outcomes. Further analyzing how fear can lead to feelings of paralysis or capitulation can be insightful outside of crisis scenarios.

Future research should extend or adapt this model to include other emotions, such as anger, shame, or humiliation, as this paper's scope was only on fear during times of

international crises. Outside of crisis scenarios, investigating how emotions influence states in times of war, periods of cooperation, and times of increasing tension will further our understanding of the emotions dimension of international politics. Applying this theory to more leader-focused studies also provides a fruitful direction, as I address only a state-centered model. Doing so will deepen our knowledge of how emotional intensity shapes state behavior in international relations.

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