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DRAFT: January 21, 1993
COMMENTS WELCOME

The Evolution of an American Establishment:
Congress, the President, and the Contemporary
Foreign Policy Community

by Nelson W. Polsby
University of California, Berkeley¹

Since the beginning of the American republic foreign policy has had an important influence on the shaping of the nation. One might argue that the very need to unite the thirteen colonies emerged because they had to fight a war and the Articles of Confederation were too weak to coordinate the required effort. The expansion of the country entailed plenty in the way of foreign relations, including as it did the Louisiana purchase, the Mexican war and its consequent annexations, the purchase of Alaska, and the Spanish-American war. The Monroe Doctrine announced a capacious hemisphere of influence for the United States, which the building and operation of the Panama Canal later symbolized in a notable and concrete way. Its alleged lack of entangling alliances failed to keep the United States out of either of the world wars of this century.

Throughout most of this history, both Congress and the President have in varied ways been deeply involved in foreign affairs, in decisions of war and peace, in decisions to expand and to project American influence outward from the borders of the nation, in decisions about

¹ I should like to acknowledge the valuable assistance of my research assistants Russell Paulsen and Jonathan Bernstein in pulling together background data on which much of this paper is based. I draw freely, in addition, from an earlier article of mine, "Thoughts on Congress, National Security, and the Rise of the Presidential Branch" The Atlantic Community Quarterly 26 (Spring, 1988) pp.97-104. Two writers whose reflections have been especially useful to me in thinking about topics covered in this paper are Godfrey Hodgson and Leslie H. Gelb.

immigration and decisions about foreign commerce, notably tariffs. Contemporary discussions about the conduct of American foreign affairs thus have to acknowledge deep and complicated historical roots. They also must acknowledge great asymmetries in the ways in which the two political branches of the American government have engaged questions of foreign affairs, and that these have varied sharply over time. Contrast, for example, the dominance in foreign policy exercised by the War Hawks of the House of Representatives in the early part of the 19th century with the resignation, at the very end of the 19th century, of one of the most internally powerful Speakers ever to lead the House, because he could not countenance his party's, or his President's, war-mongering.

All these dealings in foreign affairs were accomplished without much in the way of a policy-making structure. Before World War II the United States had a diplomatic corps, an army and a navy, but no Department of Defense, no Air Force, no Central Intelligence Agency, no National Security Council, no Joint Chiefs of Staff with direct access to Congress and the President. Of Franklin Roosevelt's White House in the 1930's, the President's cousin, Joseph Alsop, recalled:

There literally was no White House staff of the modern type, with policy-making functions. Two extremely pleasant, unassuming, and efficient men, Steve Early and Marvin McIntyre, handled the President's day-to-day schedule and routine, the donkey-work of his press relations, and such like. There was a secretarial camarilla of highly competent and dedicated ladies who were led by "Missy" LeHand. . . There were also lesser figures to handle travel arrangements, the

enormous flow of correspondence, and the like. But that was that; and national policy was strictly a problem for the President, his advisors of the moment (who had constant access to the President's office but no office of their own in the White House), and his chosen chiefs of departments and agencies.²

The goal of this essay is to call attention by way of sharp contrast with this historic situation to key features of the policy-making structure that exist in the field of foreign affairs today. As the institutions of American government have undergone transformations incidental to addressing the challenges of modern life, how have the basic constitutional responsibilities and relationships of Congress and the President been affected? There is, I believe, a surprising answer to this question.

I. The Foreign Policy Establishment

Ever since Richard Rovere published his devastating send-up of C. Wright Mills' The Power Elite, it has been difficult to discuss the idea of an American policy-making establishment with an altogether straight face.³ There is, nevertheless, an intelligible core idea that seems worth pursuing. A finite, describable population exists consisting of specialists who in any

² Joseph Alsop, FDR: 1881 - 1945. A Centenary Remembrance (New York: Washington Square Press, 1982), pp.92-93.

³ Actually, there were two Rovere critiques of Mills, the first serious, the second farcical. Both are reprinted in Rovere's The American Establishment and other Reports, Opinions, and Speculations (N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1962) pp. 3-21, 254-268. The work that provoked Rovere's criticisms is C. Wright Mills The Power Elite (N.Y.: Oxford, 1956).

generation make careers out of performing various official tasks relating to the foreign policy of the United States. This population almost certainly is not a general all-purpose group of decision-makers who dominate all domains of policy. What they actually do as individuals may vary quite a lot, and the extent of their influence as individuals will undoubtedly ebb and flow with, among other things, the influence of elected officials with whom they are allied. At any rate it does seem to make sense to speak of a foreign policy establishment in the same way that scholars have referred to "whirlpools or centers of activity focussing on particular problems"⁴ or to "policy subsystems"⁵ or "subgovernments"⁶ or "issue networks."⁷ What is being described are policy establishments. It is important to emphasize the plurality of the phenomena in question. Rather than an all-purpose power elite, each policy establishment that operates at the national level specializes in a given subject matter. Recent, painstaking empirical work strongly suggests that lobbyists and others who look after the interests of interest groups in Washington specialize according to the specific concerns of their employers.⁸ Washington law

⁴ Ernest S. Griffith, Congress: Its Contemporary Role (New York: New York University Press, 1951), pp. 37-38.

⁵ J. Leiper Freeman, The Political Process: Executive Bureau-Legislative Committee Relations (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955).

⁶ Douglass Cater, Power in Washington (N.Y. : Random House, 1964) esp. pp. 26-48.

⁷ Hugh Heclo "Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment" in Anthony King, (ed.), The New American Political System (Washington, D.C. : American Enterprise Institute, 1978) pp. 87-124.

⁸ John P. Heinz, Edward O. Laumann, Robert H. Salisbury, Robert L. Nelson, "Inner Circles or Hollow Cores? Elite Networks in National Policy Systems" Journal of Politics 52 (May, 1990), pp. 356-390.

firms specialize. Congress specializes when it breaks into committees and subcommittees and thereby is organized into a highly explicit division of labor.

It seems only natural that specialization should prevail under modern circumstances in which technical information and advanced skills in obtaining and manipulating it are more or less basic requirements for participating in policy making. Can one person know enough simultaneously about arms control and the world-wide flow of investment? Possibly, but not probably. And these, after all, are only two domains out of the very large number that generate facts and figures and theories explaining how they fit together that are in some sense required so that participants can meet minimal qualifications for thoughtful policy-making. So the notion of a specialized foreign policy establishment makes intuitive sense. It takes time and intellectual commitment to produce a population of participants capable of competent participation. At any given time different members of a policy establishment occupy different points in the life cycle and are enjoying different political fortunes. This means that, at a minimum, a policy establishment is internally differentiated according to who is politically in and who is out; with respect to the life cycle there will be novices, prime-time players, veterans and emeriti.⁹ This characterization would in principle apply equally to policy establishments concerned with housing, constitutional law, or fiscal and monetary policy, as well as to foreign policy.

So, to begin with, let us ask: if there were a more or less professionalized foreign policy establishment, what would it look like? Presumably we would find its members clustered around

⁹ Other bases for differentiation in the Washington community include state of origin, and time of arrival in Washington. See Nelson W. Polsby, "The Washington Community 1960-1980" in Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein (eds.) The New Congress (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1981) pp. 7-31.

the main institutions that in the United States make foreign policy. These institutions are for the most part highly visible: the Presidency, for example, the State Department and the Defense Department, and Congress. Not everyone in these institutions, to be sure, is concerned with foreign policy. A glance at a U.S. Government Organization Manual gives some helpful guidelines. Within the Executive Office of the President slightly fewer than 50 public officials hold the rank of Special Assistant to the President or above and deal with foreign affairs. These include 14 senior staff members of the National Security Council, the NSC's Executive Director and two statutory advisors to the NSC (CIA Director and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff); three Deputy Assistants and above of the Office of Management and Budget under headings titled National Security and International Affairs; and twenty-three Assistant U.S. Trade Representatives and above in the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. In the State and Defense Departments a like number of senior officials are involved. Just 42 officials in the State Department hold the rank of Assistant Secretary or above. In the Defense Department there is an Undersecretary for Foreign Policy and sections titled International Security Affairs (twelve officials at Deputy Assistant Secretary and above), International Security Policy (6), Special Operations (10), Security Policy (8), Trade Security, Net Assessment, Defense Policy Board (executive officer) (4).

Most of these high officials have professional staff assistance, and so from top to bottom the official foreign policy establishment might at any time number in the hundreds or possibly the low thousands. For some purposes this might be a useful population to analyze. In this paper I mean to concentrate attention on the 125 top officials (43 presidential, 42 state, 40 defense) I have mentioned and on all those still living who once held one or more of these

positions. I do not know exactly how large a group this might be, although I think it is a number worth knowing. I suppose most of these are members of the Council on Foreign Relations (2,670 members as of June 1990) but not all members of the Council were once public officials in the above categories; as of the 1990 Annual Report of the Council, just 13 percent of the members were currently public officials in all categories.¹⁰

If we were to stipulate that this, more or less, identifies the population that is at the center of our interest, what might usefully be said about them?¹¹

II. The Presidential Branch

In the first place, virtually all of them are presidential appointees, serving at the pleasure of the President. As is true of cabinet members, presidential appointees can come from any of five possible places: client groups of the agency, substantive specialists, Washington generalists,

¹⁰ Council on Foreign Relations Annual Report July 1, 1989 - June 30, 1990 (N.Y.: Council on Foreign Relations, 1990), p.110.

¹¹ A methodological aside: This definition of the foreign policy establishment excludes from the foreign policy establishment people who have never served in the indicated positions. Thus, excluded would be Henry Luce and James Reston, two significant participants in American foreign policy from the 1930's to the 50's, or Walter Lippmann, who was influential over an even longer period, or Abe Fortas, who advised Lyndon Johnson on the Vietnam war. Nearly any attempt to speak intelligibly about a community as vaguely bounded as the foreign policy community would encounter similar anomalies. As a general rule, to understand any set of outcomes, the most sensible method is to specify what the outcomes are and to ask how they were caused and by whom, moving backward in the causal chain until satisfaction or fatigue set in. Thus in an inquiry about US-China policy in the 1950's, one would encounter Henry Luce in short order. Our task here is a little different; it is to gather and understand some basic facts about the inhabitants of institutions that can be found involved in most contemporary foreign policy-making activities.

personal friends of the President, or representatives of symbolic constituencies.¹² Members of these different groups tend to relate quite differently to the organizations they lead, to clientele and to the President. In general, presidential appointments in foreign affairs have predominantly gone to substantive specialists, though the Bush administration Secretaries of State and Defense, long-time Presidential friends, and both former White House Chiefs of Staff without specific experience in foreign affairs, pretty clearly fall into the Washington generalist category.

The experience in office of both of these leaders illustrates some of the consequences of the emergence of a new phenomenon in American government. Secretary Baker reportedly interacted with senior members of his department hardly at all.¹³ Secretary Cheney had to resort to extraordinary disciplinary measures on two highly publicized occasions in order to

¹² For more on these options see Nelson W. Polsby, Consequences of Party Reform (N.Y.: Oxford, 1983) pp. 95-102.

¹³ John Newhouse writes: "Although Baker had little direct experience with foreign policy when he arrived ... he did intend to isolate his department's principal business from ... career professionals. He arrived with four aides, each of whom had worked for him in other places. The four became an inner circle; they alone had direct access to Baker and were familiar with most of what went on." "Profiles: The Tactician " New Yorker, May 7, 1990, P.74. See also Thomas L. Friedman, "In Quest of a Post-Cold War Plan" New York Times, November 17, 1989. A privately circulated spoof dated April 1, 1989 carrying the logo State: The Newsletter of the U.S. Department of State makes the same point. Features include an article titled "Photograph allegedly shows Baker swimming across the Potomac". A caption says, "Skeptics say this may be a clearly doctored fake to show that Secretary Baker is alive and in Washington". Another story says "Margaret Tutweiler, of the Alabama Tutweilers, explained to newsmen today that 'Mr. Baker's style is to start with a base of trusted, reliable aids, and to slowly expand outward.'" An adjacent headline: "Baker expresses trust in 2nd FSO". Part of the story reads: "Observers are gratified at the quickening pace of such calls around the department. There have been two in the past week. Observers point out that if the calls continue at this pace, Secretary Baker will have expressed confidence in as many as thirty career department officials by 1991."

bring a semblance of coordination to important policies of the Defense Department.¹⁴ These approaches to management are the consequence of a structural problem influencing the way in which senior officials must do business if they are to maximize their own most significant governmental asset, namely access to the President -- which both Baker and Cheney have. That there should be such a notable tension between participation at the Presidential level and management of an executive department -- a tension that the quote above from Joseph Alsop suggests was not much of a factor fifty years ago, is an indicator of the importance of the rise of a separate and distinct Presidential branch, the single most important trend in the last half century of American national government.

There are still a few observers who remember that in 1937 the President's Committee on Administrative Management -- the Brownlow Committee -- could announce, with good reason, that "the President needs help." Into the White House described by Joseph Alsop it was proposed to introduce a half dozen or so special assistants. This small corps, with its "passion for anonymity," would form an Executive Office to help the President do the nation's business. It has quite rightly been pointed out that the emergence of the presidential branch since then is in no sense a fulfillment of the Brownlow Committee's recommendations but rather a development on a far more vast and ambitious scale than the Committee anticipated, or desired.¹⁵ Moreover, the initial cause of the emergence of this larger development was not the adoption,

¹⁴ Andrew Rosenthal "Cheney Rebukes Air Force Chief for Arms Talk with Legislators" New York Times, March 25, 1989; Eric Schmitt, "Air Force Chief is Dismissed for Remarks on Gulf Plan" New York Times, September 18, 1990; Michael R. Gordon, "Cheney Has Staked Out Authority in Pentagon", New York Times, September 18, 1990.

¹⁵ James W. Fesler, "The Brownlow Committee Fifty Years Later," Public Administration Review, 47 (July - August, 1987), pp.291-296.

in 1939, of a version of the Brownlow's Committee's recommendations, but rather the burgeoning of special agencies responsible to the President as a result of the demands placed on the national government by World War II.

Something similar to the establishment of the welfare state in the U.K. (although less thoroughgoing) took place in Washington immediately after World War II. Responsibilities for the national economy were never allowed to slip back completely into the private sector after the war was over, and the Employment Act of 1946 made it clear that Congress wanted things that way.¹⁶ Perhaps the most significant pre-war innovation was the transfer in 1939 of the Bureau of the Budget to the Executive Office, but it was not until the Johnson Administration that the energetic politicization of that agency began to take shape. Earlier, to be sure, starting with Eisenhower, figures other than career civil servants were appointed to the directorship of the Bureau, but that was as far as the political incursions went until more recent times.¹⁷

Immediately in the post-war era in the realm of foreign and defense matters alone the following organizational events occurred at the top of the government:

1. The establishment of the National Security Council as a permanent presidential organization;

¹⁶ See Stephen K. Bailey, Congress Makes a Law (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950).

¹⁷ See Allen Schick, "The Budget Bureau That Was: Thoughts on the Rise, Decline and Future of a Presidential Agency," Law and Contemporary Problems 35 (Summer, 1970), pp.519-539; Larry Berman, The OMB and the Presidency, 1921-1979 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979); and Percival F. Brundage, The Bureau of The Budget (New York: Praeger, 1979).

2. The establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency, an agency growing out of the wartime Office of Strategic Services and responsible directly to the President on the governmental organization chart.
3. The addition of a separate Air Force to the organization chart, the creation of a Joint Chiefs of Staff and the imposition of a new layer of Presidential appointees above the service secretaries through the creation of a Department of Defense.

These three organizational innovations -- each significantly changing the way in which national security policy was to be conducted and each shifting responsibilities massively upward and toward the President personally were the result of a single law, the National Security Act of 1947.¹⁸

In addition there were:

4. Successive purges and consolidations of the foreign service through the loyalty -- security programs, the reorganization known after its author as Wristonization, and further reorganizations later on.¹⁹

¹⁸ See, e.g. Paul Y., Hammond, Organizing for Defense (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961) for the story up until the Kennedy Administration; and Keith C. Clark and Laurence J. Legere (eds.) The President and the Management of National Security (New York: Praeger, 1969).

¹⁹ For some of the detail, see I.M. Destler, Presidents, Bureaucrats and Foreign Policy: The Politics of Organizational Reform (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), and Eleanor Bontecou, The Federal Loyalty-Security Programs (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1953).

Students of public administration are perfectly well aware of each of these developments in the decade following the surrender of Japan. It is valuable to contemplate them from the distance that thirty more years brings, however, so that we can appreciate not only the micro-consequences in terms of changed public policies (such as U.S. policies toward mainland China, or toward military procurement) that contemporaneous commentators followed with great acuity, but also the ways in which these changes in administrative structure and functioning contributed to a grand redesign of the American government.

The emergent presidential branch, as it has developed over the last half-century, is a more or less self-contained and self-sufficient organism that competes -- usually quite successfully -- with Congress to influence the main activities of the executive branch, that is, the bureaucratic agencies of the permanent government. The presidential branch consists, in the first place, of the Executive Office of the President, including nine agencies (White House Office, Office of Management and Budget, National Security Council, and so on), a budget of over \$100 million, and a full time staff of perhaps 1,400. It consists also of those presidential appointees to the top of the executive branch who choose -- like Secretaries Baker and Cheney -- in the conduct of their responsibilities to respond primarily to White House leadership rather than to the interest groups served by their agencies or the bureaucratic needs of the agencies themselves. This gives a rather porous definition, but a helpful one in calling attention to the ragged boundary between presidency and executive branch.²⁰

²⁰ The best recent work on this subject is by John Hart. See his The Presidential Branch (Elmsford, NY: Pergamon, 1987) and "The President and his Staff", in Malcolm Shaw (ed.), The Modern Presidency (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), pp. 159-205.

The presidential branch is not wholly dependent on the executive branch for expert advice on program formation owing to the peculiarly American way in which our policy communities are configured, partially in, partially out of government. The presidential branch commonly holds the executive at arm's length during annual budget negotiations, during episodes of program reduction and cut-back, and even during periods of programmatic innovation, especially in foreign affairs, such as President Nixon's opening to China.²¹

This is one historical sequence that had an impact on the foreign policy establishment. We might refer to it as the presidentialization of post-war administrative structures in the field of foreign and national security affairs, a main contributor to the growth of the presidential branch. Another historical sequence might be described as follows²² : The development of the discipline of operations research in World War II made explicit the relationships between military strategy and military procurement. It also broke the monopoly of expertise of the professional military on both -- a monopoly only weakly maintained in the U.S. in any event because of the small size of the pre-World War II military establishment. The influence of World War II with its need to militarize a major portion of the economy and society to fight a total war significantly professionalized operations research but located the relevant profession both inside and outside the career military. In the post-war era, notably during the McNamara administration of the Defense Department, a mutated version of operations research -- PPBS -- became a means by which civilians in the Defense Department sought to influence strategies and

²¹ A recent illustration, from the field of health and welfare: Robert Pear, "Health Secretary Rejects Demands on Spending Cuts" New York Times, December 18, 1990. See also Richard E. Neustadt and Ernest R. May, Thinking in Time (N.Y.: The Free Press, 1986) pp.227-229.

²² Some of this is guesswork, since my command of the relevant facts is sketchy.

procurement decisions made up until then in peacetime mostly through log rolls among the armed services. The newer, more sophisticated demands for program justification at the level of the Secretary of Defense set off a ripple effect downward into the career services which searched for officers who could supply appropriate sorts of analysis. Different skills and talents slowly came to be rewarded in the career services, and different sorts of careers began to appear among top military leaders, careers featuring more formal study, more staff experience, more liaison experience with administrative units cognate to the armed services (e.g. service in the NSC), and less line command duty. (See, for example, the careers of Generals Alexander Haig and Brent Scowcroft (Ph.D), or Admiral William Crowe (Ph.D).) In this historical sequence too the rise of centralized capabilities interacts with professionalization lower down to produce a somewhat differently manned and qualified policy-making establishment than existed before World War II.

III. Professionalization of the Establishment

Although it is true that, like statistics, anecdotes can tell lies, a few good anecdotes are sometimes helpful in sharpening the wits so that when we are ready to test hypotheses, the hypotheses we are testing can be defended as interesting. The domain within which the next few anecdotes fall is that of career-watching, a method of tracing the contours of an organizational structure as it is experienced by its inhabitants.

I remember with pride and pleasure when, as a young professor at Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, I participated in hiring two brilliant young men just out of graduate

school. Leslie Gelb came to us in 1964 from Harvard where he had been a doctoral student of Henry Kissinger's. He grew up in a middle class Jewish family in suburban New York, went to Tufts (BA 1959, with honors in Government and Philosophy) and on to Harvard graduate school (Ph.D. 1964). Reginald Bartholomew grew up in Portland, Maine in a working class Methodist family of Italian extraction. He graduated from Dartmouth (1958) and went on to the University of Chicago (1959-1964). He came to us before he finished his Ph.D. dissertation, and, so far, to the best of my knowledge, he still hasn't finished his Ph.D.

These two became friends as well as colleagues. Gelb didn't like Wesleyan and didn't much like teaching. He left us after just over a year and went to work on the staff of a U.S. Senator from New York, Jacob Javits, a Republican (1966-67). At that time he was the first foreign affairs specialist on the personal staff of a U.S. Senator. From there, unusually, he crossed over the party barrier and got a job as a staff member in the Democratic administration. He became deputy director of the policy planning staff of the Defense Department in 1967, in effect deputy to Morton Halperin, an acquaintance he had made in graduate school, and then in 1968 he became Halperin's successor as Director. This is the part of the Pentagon that deals with policy matters similar to matters dealt with by the State Department: there is, in effect, a little State Department in the Pentagon, (International Security Affairs) just as there is a little Pentagon (the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs) in the State Department. One of his assignments in the Pentagon was to serve as the editor and compiler of what later became famous as the Pentagon Papers, and he was also (1968-69) acting deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Policy Planning. From 1969-73 he was a senior staff member of the Brookings

Institution, where he wrote a prize-winning book The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked.²³ He worked in Washington as a New York Times correspondent from 1973-77, then went back into the government, this time to the State Department Bureau of Political-Military Affairs as director (1977-79). Still in Washington, he moved from 1979-81 to the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace and then back to the New York Times as their Washington-based national security correspondent (1981-86). In 1986, the Times finally lured him out of Washington and to New York where he became deputy editor of the editorial page and editor of the op-ed page. On January 1, 1991 he became the foreign affairs columnist of the New York Times, based in New York.

A couple of years after Les Gelb started his Washington career, while he was in the Pentagon, his friend Reggie Bartholomew joined him. Bartholomew is a gifted linguist with a French-American wife and he moved in due course to the State Department's Policy Planning staff (1974) and then to the National Security Council Staff (1977-79). Although he was not a career Foreign Service Officer he joined the Foreign Service Reserve and was heavily relied upon by Secretary of State Haig to negotiate agreements for U.S. bases in Greece and Cyprus (1981-83). He went to Lebanon as U.S. Ambassador at a particularly tough time, (1981-83) and was rewarded by a couple of years as Ambassador to Spain (1987-89). In the Bush Administration he became Undersecretary of State for International Security Affairs, and later Ambassador to NATO.

Both these men have spent nearly 30 years each in and around the making of U.S. foreign and defense policy. Others, whose careers I have followed for a shorter period of time,

²³ With Richard Betts, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1979).

and who are somewhat younger, have similar career profiles. Karl D. Jackson, for example, (B.A., Princeton, 1965; Ph.D., MIT, 1971) is a specialist in South-east Asian politics whose faculty service at Berkeley since 1972 was twice interrupted (before he resigned in 1989) for lengthy tours of duty first at the Pentagon (deputy director, policy planning, 1983-84, deputy assistant secretary of defense, East Asia and the Pacific, 1986-88), at the NSC, and later, as foreign policy advisor to the Vice President (1989-92). He lists himself in Who's Who as a government official. Dennis Ross (B.A., Ph.D., UCLA) spent most of the Bush administration as Director of Policy Planning in the State Department. He previously served in the Pentagon and in the N.S.C. and worked in Berkeley as director of the joint Berkeley-Stanford program on Soviet studies. Richard Haass, my colleague in 1986-87 at Harvard, an Oberlin BA and, as a Rhodes Scholar, an Oxford Ph.D., worked in the State Department 1981-85, in the Pentagon 1979-80 and as a legislative assistant in the U.S. Senate (1975). In the Bush administration he was on the senior staff of the National Security Council.

It seems important to note that these people were all explicitly trained to be specialists in foreign affairs, all were self-selected to their occupations, and all have touched many of the bases in their occupational community. They have spent time out of government, and their time in government has been spent not in any one, but more commonly in two or three different foreign policy bureaucracies. So have many of their friends and colleagues who while Republicans held the presidency were New York investment bankers, (like Clark Clifford's literary collaborator Richard Holbrooke) or international lawyers, mostly in Washington (like Walter Slocombe or James Woolsey, Bill Clinton's nominee as director of the CIA) or professors (like Clinton's NSC Director Anthony Lake), or public officials spread all over

Washington including on Capitol Hill.²⁴ The variety of their professional experiences, which some regular foreign service officers and senior career military people who rise to the top of their respective career services have also shared, give elements of institutional memory and professionalism to the foreign policy establishment even though the careers of these people are for the most part not conducted within a single bureaucracy.

How do the careers of these people move? By fits and starts. Younger participants are spotted and promoted by older ones. Teammates in one setting seek to recruit friends and congenial contemporaries whose work they respect to the next. Because elections and other aspects of political life are constantly changing the terrain within which these professionals operate -- bringing in new Presidents, or new Secretaries of State, or new congressional subcommittee chairmen -- the career opportunities of professional participants evolve. Godfrey Hodgson describes this process in the career of an earlier member of the foreign policy establishment, Henry Stimson: "Buried inside every successful career, like the chicken wire inside a plaster sculpture, lie networks of contacts. When, as was so often the case in Stimson's life, the opportune connection is with the bearer of a famous name or the alumnus of an elite school, the envious are apt to put success down to privilege, forgetting that not even the most august -- indeed, least of all the most august -- are likely to offer help unless they respect the beneficiary."²⁵

²⁴ For a Capitol Hill variant, see Christopher Madison "Hamilton's Foreign Policy Alter Ego" National Journal December 22, 1990, p. 3097, on the career of Michael H. Van Dusen, (B.A., Princeton; Ph.D., Johns Hopkins). Although academically qualified in the new style, Van Dusen has spent most of his career on the Hill working for one boss.

²⁵ Godfrey Hodgson, The Colonel (N.Y.: Knopf, 1990) p.47.

This is a little different from the European bureaucratic model in which, for the most part, key actors in foreign and defense policy tend to move in an orderly fashion through a career service. Because our key players move in and out of government, and are competed for by all three of the major official foreign policy bureaucracies (NSC, State, Defense) it is probably not fully appreciated that the American system of government actually provides an equivalent set of professionalizing occupational experiences for key players on the way up. To be sure the players may occupy different roles depending upon whether the administration is Democratic or Republican. But the permutations are many, rather than endless.

These career patterns reflect the fact that there is no single entity that has sole control over foreign and national security policy-making in the United States. In a simplified picture of American foreign policy-making at least four or five administrative entities have to be taken into account: the Office of the Trade Representative, the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Department, the State Department, and the National Security Council. Although each of these entities interacts with the others, each has a substantial sphere of autonomy, and they do not report to one another in a bureaucratic sense. Of course they all report to the President, and many of them report to Congress as well -- to four or five different committees of each house, as a matter of fact.

It is necessary to remember that the foreign and defense establishment in Washington is divided into these eight or ten or twelve entities, congressional committees and executive agencies -- but it is also useful to think of this establishment as a community in the sense that this establishment differs from, and only slightly overlaps, the similar set of entities that makes

agriculture policy or housing policy in the United States.²⁶ Like these other establishments, the foreign policy establishment over time gives observers the impression that they are watching a floating crap game with regular professional participants who spend their lives holding down jobs first in one, then in another of these entities. For a while they may move out of these jobs to positions in law firms, universities, newspapers, investment banks or foundations closely attuned to foreign policy-making -- and then they move back into power again. This is the lesson of the career paths we have been tracing.

The lesson is not that because professionals move during their careers from agency to agency, there is the administrative equivalent of overlapping interests and consequently no interagency conflict. Professionalism entails skill at adopting job-specific attitudes. As one of these professionals, then in the State Department, once remarked, he would rather negotiate with the Russians than with the Defense Department -- successors to his former colleagues -- on an arms control issue. Conflict is reflected also in the institutionalized relations between the NSC and the State Department, mitigated in the Bush administration by the fact that an unusually well-socialized and governmentally experienced President chose to promote peace between the two agencies and gave the heads of both extremely good access to his own thoughts.

The NSC was too young and too small in Truman's and Eisenhower's time to pose the institutional problem for the State Department it later became. But Kennedy, Nixon, and Carter used the NSC explicitly to penalize the State Department for sluggishness and suspected lack of

²⁶ One should be mindful of the argument, made e.g. by Holbert N. Carroll, that foreign affairs in the modern era increasingly touches myriad matters, including finance, commerce, agriculture, and so forth. The House of Representatives and Foreign Affairs, (Boston: Little Brown, 1966).

enthusiasm for Presidential priorities. Ford in his short period in office simply gave the NSC away to Henry Kissinger in the State Department. Reagan's treatment of both agencies was extraordinarily neglectful. He permitted the CIA to penetrate the NSC to conduct business the CIA had been forbidden by Congress to do. This caused a month-long nationally televised joint hearing by two committees of Congress and the resignation of the National Security Advisor and the White House Chief of Staff.²⁷ Even so, the Council, under new management, successfully fended off an attempt by the Secretary of State to curb the scope of its activities.

"Conflict between the State Department and the White House," said an elaborate analysis in the New York Times at the time, "has been a perennial feature of policy-making in every recent Administration."

In the Carter Administration, for example, Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance and the National Security Advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski, repeatedly clashed over American policy on the Soviet Union and other issues. Alexander M. Haig, Jr., President Reagan's first choice as Secretary of State, was locked in a bureaucratic war with White House officials.²⁸

²⁷ For a detailed and early account, see Robert Pear, "The Story Thus Far, Assembling Some of the Pieces of the Puzzle," *The New York Times*, December 14, 1986, or Philip Shenon with Stephen Engelberg, "Eight Important Days in November: Unraveling the Iran-Contra Affair," *The New York Times*, July 5, 1987.

²⁸ Michael R. Gordon, "At Foreign Policy Helm: Shultz vs. White House," New York Times, August 26, 1987. See also I.M. Destler, "A Job That Doesn't Work," Foreign Policy 38 (Spring, 1980) pp. 80-88; and Peter Szanton, "Two Jobs, Not One," Foreign Policy 38 (Spring, 1980) pp.89-91.

Professionalization therefore does not necessarily produce less internal disagreement than there used to be in the foreign policy community. Indeed on the whole, the rise of professionalism among key members coincided with the bitter Vietnam period where the broad internationalist consensus among politically active Americans broke down.

Historically, the American foreign policy establishment achieved something like an institutional take-off roughly at the turn of the 20th century, when so many other American institutions (corporations, the professions, universities) were established in their modern form. So, too, something like an American foreign policy community emerged from the Spanish-American war and was personified in particular by Theodore Roosevelt. New York investment bankers and Wall Street lawyers comprised the first major American anti-isolationist interest group. They founded the Council on Foreign Relations in the early 1920's and led the battle in the 1950's not only to support a bipartisan foreign policy but -- in some ways more important -- they waged an internal war in the Republican party to prevent the isolationist backsliding that, in the contemporary view, doomed the League of Nations and crippled international efforts to ward off World War II.

This overriding mission -- the defeat of domestic isolationism -- bound the foreign policy establishment together and gave a cumulative moral weight to its activities until the Vietnam war. Two trends -- professionalization of the foreign policy community and the exhaustion of its historic mission -- helped the Vietnam war to change the foreign policy community and gives the community its present-day shape.

What do we mean by professionalization? John Foster Dulles and Dean Acheson came to their concerns about foreign affairs through their families: Acheson's father, born a

Canadian, was a Bishop in the American branch of the Church of England. Dulles began as secretary to his uncle, Robert Lansing, who was Secretary of State in the Wilson Administration. These were among the last of an old guard. Today specialists in foreign affairs have Ph.D.'s or at least extensive explicit training; even Henry Kissinger, born in Germany, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, born the son of a Polish diplomat, had to do graduate work and write dissertations on their way to participation in foreign policy-making.

The careers of both were nurtured, in the first instance, at universities. Both pursued their careers through activity in foreign policy talking shops; the Council on Foreign Relations and the Trilateral Commission, respectively. The pattern of their careers is today more and more common in the foreign policy community. Foreign policy specialists are being recruited to the entourages of presidential candidates based on brains; the loyalty comes later. That's professionalization.

Professionalization also means the acquisition of advanced training as a prerequisite for competent participation. Clearly this is happening to the foreign policy community, as a simple test discloses. Approximately one-tenth of the members of the Council on Foreign Relations in 1950 was compared with approximately one-tenth of the members in 1990. Those whose names could be found in Who's Who in America were checked for the possession of a Ph.D degree. Here are the results:

TABLE I
Ph.D. Holding Among CFR Members

	<u>1950</u>	<u>1990</u>
Found in Who's Who:	64.2% (N=108)	49.4% (N=190)
Not Found:	35.7% (N=60)	50.6% (N=195)
Of those found:		
Hold Ph.D:	18.5	25.8
No Ph.D.	81.4	74.2

Source: Annual Reports, Council on Foreign Relations, 1950, 1990, Who's Who in America 1950, 1990.

Members of the Council on Foreign Relations today are a lot less famous than they once were (judging from the sharp decline in their appearance in Who's Who) and considerably more educated, if these figures can be believed. Thus the character of the foreign policy community evolves over time.

This evolution should draw our attention to international relations Ph.D programs in universities, to international law sections of major metropolitan law firms, to membership groups like the Council on Foreign Relations and the World Affairs Councils in the large cities, and to policy research organizations, erroneously called "think tanks," that have lately proliferated, especially in Washington.²⁹

These institutions harbor American professionals in foreign policy when they are out of office. They provide auspices for the elaboration of ideas that, with the turn of an electoral wheel, might swiftly become public policy. One famous example of this was the Brookings

²⁹ See Nelson W. Polsby, "Tanks But No Tanks", Public Opinion, 6 (April-May, 1983) pp. 14-16, 58-59.

Institution blueprint for a middle-east policy that William Quandt and others developed on the outside and brought, more or less whole, to the Carter Administration's National Security Council.³⁰ Hodgson observes that left to its own devices the foreign policy establishment is centrist in its political views. This is not wholly consistent with the notion of a professionalized establishment consisting of hired guns associated with a broad range of policy alternatives being sponsored by various elected politicians. Three points need to be made in mitigation of the seeming differences involved. First, Hodgson's establishment is a slightly different population from the one I am discussing. He concentrates on an older, pre-Vietnam population, on the generation of the wise men who fought World War II with Henry Stimson and built the post-war international world with Dean Acheson.³¹ My establishment consists of their successors, who tend to be from the top of the class in an academic rather than a social sense, who got their basic

³⁰ The content of the Brookings report, *Toward Peace in the Middle East*, (Brookings Institution, December, 1975) is outlined by William Quandt in *Decade of Decisions* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977, pp. 290-91) and by Walter Laqueur and Barry Rubin (eds.) in *The Israel-Arab Reader*, 4th edition (Pelican Books, 1984, pp. 589-590). Steven Spiegel writes that many identify the Brookings report as the "intellectual basis of Carter's policy." (*The Other Arab-Israeli Conflict*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985, p. 323). Spiegel also notes that three of the participants in the Brookings study group--Brzezinski, Quandt, and Bowie--received high posts at the beginning of the Carter administration.

³¹ Hodgson describes the group that surrounded Stimson in the War Department in World War II: "Stimson, Bundy, Lovett, Harrison were all members of Skull and Bones [a Yale secret society]. Only McCloy and Patterson of the inner circle were not. Stimson, Bundy, Harrison, McCloy and Patterson were all graduates of the Harvard Law School; only Lovett was not. Stimson, Harrison, Lovett, McCloy and Patterson were all prominent on Wall Street; only Bundy was not, and he practiced law on State Street, the nearest thing to Wall Street in Boston ... The plain fact is that, during a war for democracy conducted by a Democratic president ... the War Department was directed by a tiny clique of wealthy Republicans." *The Colonel*, p. 247. See also Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, *The Wise Men* (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1986), Dean G. Acheson, *Present at the Creation* (N.Y.: Norton, 1969), and Hodgson, "The Establishment," *Foreign Policy* 10 (Spring, 1973), pp. 3-40.

cognitive grounding in how nations behave from reading Quincy Wright and Hans Morganthau in graduate school rather than from listening to the exhortations of Endicott Peabody (long time headmaster at Groton) and reading the book of Common Prayer at boarding school.

The second point is that this later establishment is in its way also centrist in that it tends to constrain the options politicians sponsor to alternatives broadly considered feasible on technical grounds. The fate of the Star Wars option in the Bush administration suggests what happens when an establishment takes custody over the medium run of a politician's favored set of impractical alternatives.

The third point has to do with the constraint of centrism itself, the restriction of the range of policies an establishment is willing to consider to those options that are generated politically and placed on the table by virtue of having reputable political sponsorship. It is not completely the case that the foreign policy establishment is entirely so constrained, as, for example an examination of the rejected options that were floated about what to do with the first deliverable atomic bombs suggests.³² It does seem to be true that ultimately establishments tend to settle on politically centrist solutions. It is perhaps even more correct to say that professional policy establishments rarely succeed in persuading political leaders responsible for important decisions to reach for non-centrist solutions. This is at least in part because public policy in the American political system is frequently formed interactively among diverse participants (rather than hierarchically by experts feeding unitary decision-makers) and requires agreement from many actors. Over the long run the horizons of these actors can be changed, and it certainly should

³² E.g. A demonstration drop on uninhabited terrain. See Richard Rhodes, The Making of the Atomic Bomb (N.Y.: Simon and Schuster, 1988).

be counted as a major accomplishment of the American foreign policy establishment that anti-isolationist doctrines should in the post-war years have spread so widely among American politicians. But this is a long-run accomplishment, more akin to education than to policy analysis or advocacy. Professional establishments pay for the power to do this by being forever respectable over the short run. This means accepting the constraints of interactive policy-making and working over the short run within the range of the politically feasible.

I thus think it is plausible to argue that while American methods for developing a foreign and defense policy elite are by European standards messy and haphazard, they are also quite effective, and respond well to the size and decentralization of power in the American political system and to its requirements for interactive policy information. And these methods result in a professionalized population of public servants who can manufacture, and sustain beliefs in, a suitable range of conventional wisdoms.

IV. The Congressional Role

It is the size and decentralization of our nation, the separation of powers, multiple centers of intellectual leadership and the rise of the presidential branch of government alongside units of the executive branch that are relatively independent from one another and responsible both to the President and Congress, that foster the appearance, and sometimes the reality, of a nation that speaks with more than one voice, that now and again delivers differently from its promises, and that animates lips that are hard to believe even when they are read. Not incompetence, not inadvertence, but a complicated structure and its consequent requirement of interactive

policy-making make the United States hard to live with in the contemporary world, hard to do business with. Does it contribute also in some positive way?

Perhaps we can approach this question by asking: What role for Congress remains in foreign, defense and national security affairs in a constitutional structure dominated by a juggernaut as formidable as the modern, highly professionalized, presidential branch of government? In addressing this matter I propose to take inspiration from that extraordinary British journalist, Walter Bagehot, who, in his famous treatise mistitled The English Constitution, distinguishes between efficient and dignified instruments of government. He assigns efficiency to parliament and dignity to the monarch, who, he says, had three rights: to be consulted, to encourage, and to warn.³³

This mode of analysis has proven attractive to a number of contemporary observers of policy-making in present-day America. They assign efficiency to the presidency and dignity to Congress and complain that Congress is not dignified enough. The problem, they say, is that especially in foreign affairs Congress intrudes too much on the president's constitutional turf to the detriment of coherence in policy-making, steadiness and reliability in our alliances, and predictability in dealing with adversaries. Moreover, it is urged, Congress fails to give enough running room to those selfless and uniquely valuable national treasures who formerly were supposed to embody Brownlow's "passion for anonymity," but have not lately done so, the President's assistants.³⁴

³³ Walter Bagehot, The English Constitution (first published, 1867) (London: Collins, Fontana 1963), p. 111.

³⁴ A careful and responsible summary of these arguments is contained in James L. Sundquist, Constitutional Reform (Washington, DC: Brookings, 1986). See also Lloyd N. Cutler, "To

Needless to say, a major source of these complaints is former assistants to the President. Some of these citizens are so exercised that they wish to do away with the separation of powers altogether, get rid of Congress and the presidency both, and adopt a system where the legislature -- if we really must have one -- knuckles under to the chief executive -- let us call this figure the prime minister -- especially in foreign affairs.

For a while this point of view puzzled me. Where, I wondered, was the presidential assistant going to emerge after all this constitutional tinkering? Perhaps what they were advocating, I ventured to think, was a House of Commons mainly so as to establish for themselves a House of Lords. I thought I detected as well some more basic analytical flaws in the argument.

A slightly more careful reading of Bagehot puts a different gloss on what it means to be a dignified branch of government. This is the branch, says Bagehot, that mobilizes, focuses, and instructs public opinion. And more than merely the passing opinions of the public: their deeper sentiments of loyalty to the political system, their sense of the legitimacy of the regime -- embodying what we in the United States might call the consent of the governed.

Obviously, Congress does not entirely carry that full burden in our system. It is a system, after all, of shared powers and Congress shares with the President the fact that both have immediate access to electorates. They are different electorates, to be sure, but each is every bit as national in its scope as the electorate of the other. By virtue of the President's origins in an election, the presidency is a dignified as well as an efficient office, just as

Form a Government", Foreign Affairs 59 (Fall, 1980). One would have thought these arguments, which are perennial, would have been laid to rest by Kenneth N. Waltz's devastating Foreign Policy and Democratic Politics (Boston: Little, Brown, 1967). But no.

Congress, through the exercise of its constitutional responsibilities to legislate, to appropriate, and to advise and consent, is efficient as well as dignified. Thus in speaking of three major congressional activities that help to define the role of Congress in foreign affairs we further illustrate the mixture of dignity -- that is, public-regarding activity -- and efficiency -- that is, activity directed to policy-making and therefore to congressional-presidential relations -- that characterizes the modern Congress.

Congress has the right to publicize. Publicity is a fascinating phenomenon and not merely to practitioners of politics. Max Weber somewhere once said that the essence of political craftsmanship was knowing when to make an issue of something, knowing when to fight. Congress and especially the Senate has the right to set a part of the national agenda through the publicity accorded its investigations, its debates, and the speeches of its members. The dynamics of agenda setting turn out to be quite complicated. Frequently the power to publicize is not merely a device for communicating between community leaders and followers but actually a device through which one set of national leaders communicates with other sets of leaders also located in Washington by means of statements directed to general publics.

No doubt it is in part a product of the sheer size of the policy-making machinery that exists in the American national government that messages among political leaders are in Washington frequently sent through publication in newspapers of general circulation. It is a method of communication that continuously tests the public acceptability not only of policy alternatives that governments have chosen to pursue and defend, but also of alternatives that may

only be proposed, or are being tentatively considered or are internally being contested among agencies of the executive, or the presidential branch, or between them.³⁵

I suppose that this phenomenon is frequently deeply confusing, and possibly disturbing, to foreign observers of our American government who are used to far more compact and secretive and less extensive policy-making machinery. Their discomfort is understandable in light of the fact that the power to publicize, like any power, can be misused. And it has been. We might remember, for example, what Senator Joseph McCarthy did in the early 1950's to the career services of the State Department and the U.S. Information Agency by his misuse of the power to publicize -- and we might remember also Dwight Eisenhower's decision to let McCarthy do it.³⁶

On the other hand, there is the example of Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman J. William Fulbright's decision to hold hearings in early 1968 on the rationale and the conduct of the war in Vietnam. These hearings played a large part in focusing national attention on the conduct of the war. Secretary of State Dean Rusk was invited to come up to Capitol Hill and testify. He was treated courteously but questioned sharply during his eleven hours of testimony on March 11 and 12, and others, with different views, also had their say. The new Secretary of Defense, Clark Clifford, and his deputy, Paul Nitze, declined to testify, Clifford on the

³⁵ See David Broder, Behind the Front Page (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), pp. 209-210, and Nelson W. Polsby, "American Democracy in World Perspective and What to Do About It" in D.K. Adams (ed.) Studies in U.S. Politics (Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1989) pp. 215-228.

³⁶ See Martin Merson, Private Diary of a Public Servant (New York: Macmillan, 1955), and Norman Dorsen and John G. Simon, "A Fight on the Wrong Front," Columbia University Forum (Fall, 1964) pp. 21-28.

ground that he was still learning his job, Nitze because he had concluded that he could not defend current policy in public. Historian Herbert Y. Schandler comments:

There is reason to believe that this was the point where Clifford's growing but unresolved doubts crystallized into a firm conviction that our strategy had to turn to that of seeking a peaceful solution. . . . Certainly the idea of having to defend this dubious and unsuccessful policy before informed and hostile congressional critics focused his doubts. "When Clark Clifford had to face up to the possibility that he might have to defend the administration's policy before the Fulbright committee, his views changed," recalled Nitze.³⁷

One possible inference from this episode is that in a nation like the United States, with its enormous distances and its varied population, where the consent of the governed is so frequently solicited in elections, the management of a decent arena for the criticism and testing of public policy can be of immense value.

There are, secondly, the twin capacities that Congress retains to hasten and to delay. Matters can move swiftly through the stages of congressional approval or they can stall. One thinks of Speaker O'Neill giving President Jimmy Carter the present of a specially created committee that expedited the Carter energy program through the House of Representatives in

³⁷ Herbert Y. Schandler, The Unmaking of a President: Lyndon Johnson and Vietnam (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 215, U.S. Congress, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings, Foreign Assistance Act of 1968, Part I - Vietnam.

very short order, and then the thirteen-month delay that followed in the Senate.³⁸ One thinks of the postponement by so many years of American recognition of the communist government of China -- a delay largely to be accounted for by the distribution of opinions in the U.S. Senate.³⁹ And likewise, one might think of the dispatch that Arthur Vandenberg urged on President Truman, once Truman and Dean Acheson and George Marshall convinced him and the rest of the Senate leadership that something like a Truman doctrine was needed to protect the post-war development of Greece and Turkey and conceivably also Italy and France from a Communist take-over.⁴⁰

Finally, there is the power to incubate. Incubation is a term that I have used to cover a process that may go on over many years.⁴¹ Essentially, it occurs because members of Congress, being people who are deeply engaged in public affairs, now and again get ideas about the content or substance of public policy. As we all know, obtaining agreement on any particular course of action is a sizeable task in coordination in most democratic political systems. Certainly this is true in a separation of powers system. Many items already exist on the public agenda. Many different actors have their varied priorities. And so to place any particular innovation on the agenda for action takes time, energy and effort.

³⁸ See Congressional Quarterly, Energy Policy (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, Inc., 1979).

³⁹ See, e.g., The Reporter, issues on the China Lobby, April 15 and April 22, 1952.

⁴⁰ See Nelson W. Polsby, Political Innovation in America: The Politics of Policy Initiation (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), pp.75-91.

⁴¹ Ibid. pp. 152 ff

More and more U.S. Senators find it useful for the progress of their careers to cultivate interest groups that organize nationally and not merely in their own states. Publicity, plus the official instruments of Congress -- the introduction of bills, the holding of hearings, the making of speeches -- all provide opportunities for senators and to a lesser extent, members of the House, to educate their colleagues, over the long haul, on the merits of proposals. Not every bill that gets introduced is designed for immediate enactment. Sometimes the purpose is to begin to make a record, to put a new policy on the long-term agenda.

This was, more or less, the way the nuclear test ban treaty stayed alive during the seventeen years between its proposal and its enactment. The idea was kept alive by a senator, Hubert Humphrey, who

seized jurisdiction over an emerging issue by means of the establishment of a special subcommittee and then worked hard at keeping the possibility of a solution afloat in the world of policymakers.⁴²

The Peace Corps is another example of a foreign policy innovation incubated in Congress.⁴³

In general, as I have mentioned, the fashion is to deplore the involvement of Congress in foreign policy-making and to see such congressional initiatives of recent years as the War Powers Resolution and the Angola Resolution, the difficult struggles over the MX and the

⁴² Ibid p.67.

⁴³ Ibid pp. 61-94.

Panama Canal Treaty and SALT II as inappropriate exercises of congressional power. But perhaps some of the other examples I have mentioned may prompt a different conclusion. In a vast and heterogeneous society which is dedicated to self-government it may well be needed, and therefore it is fortunate if there exists a public forum like Congress in which the varied strands of opinion that arise in a complex nation are woven into public policy in such a way that the outcomes command reasonably broad assent. The results may not be particularly coherent, but they can become something far more important and more difficult to achieve than that, namely, legitimate.

Finally, we should note that Congress has, to a degree, professionalized as well in the realm of foreign affairs. The chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services for most of the 1980s, who was elected to the position over the heads of several members senior to him, holds a Ph.D. from M.I.T. and formerly worked as a policy analyst in the Pentagon. Bill Clinton appointed him Secretary of Defense. The committee's senior staff of 21 which of course also deals with a range of issues outside the realm of foreign policy (e.g. procurement, military construction, personnel issues) has only two Ph.D.'s. Twelve out of 15 senior members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee have advanced degrees, on the other hand, including five Ph.D.'s.

This contrasts with the situation in the early 1960's and before, when Congressional staff were far less likely to be substantively qualified, and more likely to exist mainly to provide companionship, political services, or patronage for individual members. Biographical data on committee staff are harder to come by for the earlier era, but such data as are available, mainly

through early editions of the Congressional Staff Directory (1959 and thereafter) show considerably smaller committee staffs, and an overwhelming preponderance of lawyers.⁴⁴

V. Conclusions

This paper has attempted to describe some important structural changes in the community that makes American foreign policy over the last half-century, including the following main points:

1. There is a professionalized foreign policy establishment, one of many establishments that exist in the various domains in American policy-making. This establishment is a structural feature of the American political system.

2. The foreign policy establishment is institutionalized within the government in multiple executive agencies, the most important of which are the NSC, the State Department and the Defense Department. These vary in their political influence from time to time. The foreign policy establishment significantly overlaps the national security establishment.

3. The foreign policy establishment is also institutionalized outside the executive branch, in Congress and in the private sector (law firms, think tanks, foundations, publications, universities).

⁴⁴ Charles B. Brownson, ed. Congressional Staff Directory 1961. (Washington D.C.: Congressional Staff Directory, 1961) shows three professional staff members for the House Foreign Affairs Committee (one MBA-Ph.D.) and three for House Armed Services (all lawyers). On the Senate side J. William Fulbright's Foreign Relations Committee had nine professional staff members (one Ph.D.) and Armed Services had three, all lawyers. This is probably an incomplete count, but the central tendency is unmistakable.

4. The foreign policy establishment was transformed by World War II, which laid the foundation for the post-war emergence of a Presidential branch of government, a branch that makes special use of in-and-outers and experts with personal professional credentials.

5. The emergence of the Presidential branch stimulated the transformation of Congress and led to the acquisition by Congress of professionalized Congressional staff. Contemporary foreign policy professionals tend to be hired guns, thus are available to politicians on both sides of most issues. Their moral weight as a group thus differs from the generation of their predecessors, the preppies from Yale College, who clustered around such figures as Henry Stimson and, while claiming not to read other peoples' mail, founded the CIA.⁴⁵ This explains why contemporary professionalism does not necessarily mitigate policy disagreement or conflict.

6. The institutional transformation of Congress has had as its main impetus the preservation of the traditional Congressional role. Contemporary Congressional activities in foreign affairs emphasize the central place of Congress in representative government by virtue of the Congressional capacity to give legitimacy to and withhold legitimacy from U.S. initiatives in foreign affairs. Thus the frequently criticized assertiveness of Congress in foreign affairs can be read from another perspective as the restoration of a Congressional capacity to participate in foreign policy decisions, as the Congressional response to the growth since World War II of a greatly expanded Presidential branch.

⁴⁵ See Robin W. Winks, *Cloak and Gown: Scholars in the Secret War, 1939-1961* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1987).

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