

8 | Judgments of Country Specialists about Foreign Policy Formation: The Operation of Internal Decision Processes

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INTRODUCTION

The cross-national study of foreign policy as well as the extensive literature on the foreign policy of the United States suggest that the governmental structures and processes by which foreign policy is formed and implemented can have an effect on the substance of that policy. Consider the following interpretations that have appeared in recent foreign policy analysis.

Bureaucratic politics suggests that the "pulling and hauling" between representatives of conflicting organizational interests often reduces policy to a "resultant" that fails to reflect the preferred position of any actors (Allison, 1971). In "groupthink" the motivation of policymakers to maintain the well being of the group leads them to reject the examination of conflicting information and ideas that challenge the prevailing interpretation--often with disastrous policy consequences (Janis, 1972). Although the expected dynamics differ from groupthink, multiple advocacy (George, 1972) provides a process for introducing into group decision making various perspectives and alternative courses of action. Unless some policymakers regularly take opposing positions and challenge any early tendency toward consensus, premature closure may result and reduce the likelihood of effective policy. According to Huntington (1961), the introduction of legislative type processes into the executive branch, with committees of individuals having essentially equal power and dealing with one another over a range of issues through time, has both process and policy outcome consequences. Compared to true executive processes, the legislative procedure is more likely to lead to log-rolling and compromises that generate policies

representing "the lowest common denominator" or "paper clip agreements" in which attempts to integrate conflicting features are ignored. Alternatively, a legislative type process can result in the postponement of issues over which conflict has arisen. Another way procedures affect policy outputs is through the belief system of a pivotal individual, such as a powerful Secretary of State. Holsti (1967) has suggested that certain belief systems can result in the interpretation of external events in a way that, regardless of what an adversary does, the behavior confirms the person's belief system and establishes the basis for a foreign policy response. The linkage of processes to policy suggested in the above interpretations finds further demonstration in dozens of case studies of specific policymaking episodes (e.g., Cohen, 1957; Newhouse, 1973).

Literature such as that cited above implies that there are important relationships to be uncovered between foreign policy structures and processes and types of foreign policy behavior. The present state of knowledge provides motivation for further inquiry not only for what it does offer but also because of problems it poses. Much of the literature concerns isolated case studies of American foreign policy. We know that there are good reasons for speculating that the processes operating in the United States Government are unlikely to be similar to those in many other states; yet, our knowledge of the processes in most other governments is exceedingly thin.

Furthermore, apparent contradictions in the effects of processes can be uncovered by examining the different theoretical contributions. For example, bureaucratic politics stresses the effect on policy of conflict between competing organizational actors. Groupthink, however, highlights the effects of excessive concern for the maintenance of consensus--not conflict--among policymakers. Systematic empirical research could help to identify the conditions under which one process rather than another is manifest. It could also help to sort out the processes prevalent in different regimes to distinguish those that are similar from those that are dissimilar. For very good reasons, little systematic cross-national research on the effects of decision structures and processes on foreign policy has been conducted. Most governments and ruling political parties do not routinely reveal the procedures by which policies are formed and implemented. On the contrary, these are often closely-held secrets and are divulged in a manner that reflects favorably on the prevailing

leadership or in an attempt by opponents to discredit a regime.

In short, systematic cross-national data on the processes of government are exceedingly difficult to acquire in a reliable and timely manner. Regardless of whether the researcher seeks to collect information for comparative case studies or more aggregated data comparisons, the research techniques for obtaining data are limited. All have serious liabilities. Information about governmental structures and processes sometimes can be inferred from the resulting public behavior and other observable scraps of information. For example, a very vague response or contradictory responses to a problem known to have been under consideration for a long time could suggest an important controversy in a political body in which no one had the authority to make a clear choice. The Iranian government's behavior in 1979-1980 with respect to the American hostages in Teheran might invite such an interpretation. The inference process in such cases, however, is usually treacherous. The behavior noted above might result from indifference, a crowded agenda, or shared uncertainty rather than a deep disagreement between units with divided authority.

Other available data acquisition methods pose similar problems. Occasionally, key participants can be interviewed. Sometimes after a sufficient lapse of time or a political revolution, public documents, memoirs, or private papers will be available for various forms of content analysis. For entire categories of governments, however, the likelihood of obtaining such information is extremely remote. Even for those governments where such material becomes available, the familiar problems of bias, selective memory, and post hoc reconstruction in the light of subsequent events must be faced.¹ To these must be added an additional hurdle for the analyst attempting to conduct cross-national research. The acquisition of the necessary language skills, cultural familiarity, and the development of knowledge about the possible sources and the means in which they might reasonably be interpreted can take a significant portion of a professional lifetime.

Individuals who have dedicated themselves to the careful scrutiny of one country during a period of history are themselves another source of data. In a sense, using expert judgments is a second-order procedure for it assumes that the knowledgeable individuals have used various methods such as those described above in reaching their own estimates about

various facets of the political system. Mueller (1969: 250-251) observes that while psychologists have been using expert judgments in rating scales for decades and while they are commonplace in other walks of life (e.g., gymnastics, diving, Nobel prizes, aspects of the U.S. census, etc.), still "the conscious use of panels of judges has been comparatively rare in political science." Nevertheless, there have been some notable applications in international relations and cross-national research. Examples include Blechman (1966), Fitzgibbon (1967), Jensen (1966), Klingberg (1941), Milburn and Milburn (1966), Milburn (1977), and Teune and Synnestvedt (1965). Some of these have employed sequential, autonomous panels of experts in the Delphi procedure developed by Helmer (see Dalkey and Helmer, 1963).

As with any of the methods that might be used to explore the internal procedures for foreign policy making on a cross-national basis, there are significant assets and liabilities associated with the use of systematic expert judgments. Some of the difficulties are readily discernible. As with all of us, experts on a political system have personal, professional, and cultural biases. In many instances, they may have inadequate information either because it seemingly does not exist or because they have not personally considered a particular topic or source. When asked to make estimates in areas of considerable uncertainty, individual differences in the willingness to speculate and variations in the degree of professional conservatism will emerge. Additionally, there is the problem of aggregating and weighting judgments when disagreements emerge. As has been noted (Sackman, 1974), even the Delphi procedure for handling differences may lead to results that are a product of group dynamics and consensus building rather than an improvement in the quality of judgments.

Despite these limitations, the use of expert judges offers advantages. The capacity to synthesize diverse sources of information examined by the experts already has been noted. The ability of experts to supply information directly on the variables or dimensions of interest compares favorably to the frequent necessity which is imposed by other sources of constructing inferences to connect indices for which data are available with the variables of real concern. Additionally, expert judges can provide feedback when the task does not seem appropriate or is not applicable. Perhaps one of the most compelling arguments in the present case for expert

judgments is the absence of comparable alternative sources of data applicable to a broad range of countries. Interviews could be used for some countries, objective indices for another set, documentary analysis for still another cluster, but there seems to be no way to apply the same data collection procedure uniformly to all of the countries of interest. Expert ratings permit the application of a common procedure. In responding to a common stimulus (the survey instrument), each expert draws from the sources appropriate for his or her area and translates them into a response that can be treated as comparable to the responses of other experts who may have found it necessary to rely on quite different materials in shaping their replies.

In brief, country and area specialists are a vital source for cross-national research who should be considered along with other valuable sources of information, such as governmental documents, biographies, and accounting statistics.² The research reported in this essay rests on the proposition that in comparing the foreign policy processes of a wide range of contemporary governments, the judgment of area experts offers the most promising source of information. It should be emphasized immediately that it is the author's firm belief that the data collected in this fashion must ultimately be supplemented wherever possible by other types of data gathered for the same variables. Indeed, it is to be hoped that if the first cut using judgmental data generates interesting or unexpected results, then the motivation for checking the findings with other means will be enhanced.

VARIABLES FOR WHICH DATA ARE SOUGHT

The basic research question for which data are sought can be stated: How do decision structures and processes affect foreign policy behavior? In other words, if structures and processes vary, are changes likely to occur in governmental foreign policy behaviors under some conditions? The foreign policy behaviors manifesting variations that we hope to understand are event data.

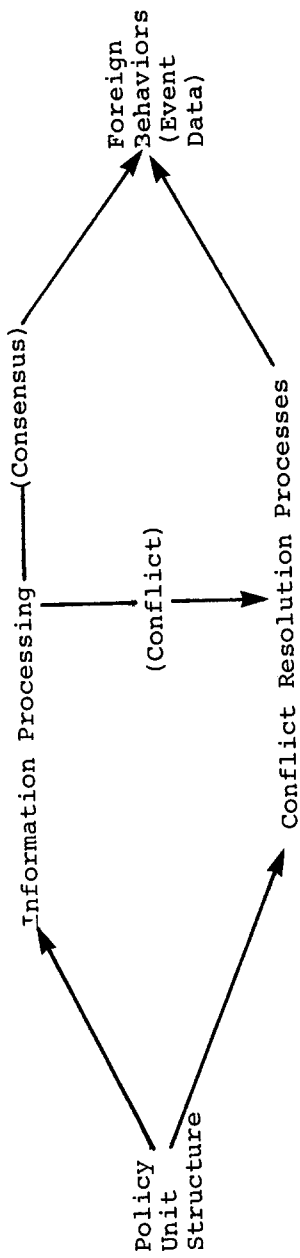
Although the task would probably be similar for any cross-national event data set, the one that will be used in the future analysis of this research has been collected as part of the Comparative Research on the Events of Nations (CREON) Project. Details on CREON are provided in Hermann, et al. (1973) and Callahan, et al. (forthcoming). This data set

contains information on a series of behavioral variables for 38 nations during the decade 1959-1968. The intention is to obtain data on decision structures and processes for the same sample of countries in the same decade. As indicated, the data gathered on foreign policy decision structures and processes will be used to investigate a model that specifies what effects these variables have on foreign policy behavior (see Hermann, 1979). They also will be used as part of a larger effort to construct more comprehensive explanatory models that incorporate variables from a variety of levels and theoretical perspectives to account more fully for foreign policy behaviors.

The proposed model that relates decision structures and processes has been set forth elsewhere (Hermann, 1978a; and especially Hermann, 1979) and will be described here only to the extent necessary to enable the reader to recognize the kinds of internal variables for which data are sought. The model proposes that foreign policy behaviors recommended by policy units that have an initial--almost immediate--consensus will be different from the behaviors generated by policy units that must first handle differences that arise within the unit during consideration of the issue. Furthermore, in those policy units in which substantive disputes do emerge, the procedures used to deal with the conflict influence the output. Various information processing variables are hypothesized to affect whether initial consensus or substantive conflict results when a unit confronts a problem. A summary diagram of the model appears as Figure 8.1. It reveals the need for several kinds of data. First, it requires data on certain defining structural characteristics of the foreign policy unit. Second, it requires data for two kinds of processes--those pertaining to information and to conflict management.

In addition to these kinds of data, the nature of the research design creates further demands for information needed from the country experts. Essentially, two basic designs are possible and their information requirements differ. In the more macro design, the researcher assumes that any government or regime can be characterized by one most common or prototypic structure and process. Kissinger (1966) appears to have selected this route when he classified domestic policy structures according to their leadership styles as bureaucratic-pragmatic, ideological, or charismatic-revolutionary. The difficulty with such macro classifications is that there is

FIGURE 8.1
Relationship Among Key Concepts in Connecting Unit Structure and Processes
to Foreign Policy Behavior



reason to believe that internal structures and processes used by the same government vary over time and with respect to the problem at hand.

The alternative micro design assumes that structures and processes can change from one occasion for decision to another. A practical difficulty with this approach is that with a large number of instances of behavior (CREON has over 12,000 events and other data sets have many more), it becomes impossible to ask experts about the procedure used in each and every case.

To resolve this difficulty with the micro design, we clustered events by issue areas and situational characteristics. Experts then had the more manageable task of determining what policy units tended to participate in certain kinds of situations (e.g., crisis vs. noncrisis) and in particular foreign policy issue areas. When the analysis is performed, the procedure will be to determine which events have been classified as representing specific issue areas and as possessing situational properties. Then, the foreign policy units that the country experts declare are associated with a given issue area and that deal with situations having specified properties will be assumed to have been involved with all events having similar classifications.

The more micro research design that uses the event rather than the nation as the unit of analysis also requires that we establish the set of possible foreign policy units that may have participated. Thus, when these requirements are combined with those mentioned previously, five broad categories of variables are sought from country and area experts:

- Alternative foreign policy units;
- Structural properties of each policy unit;
- Decision unit processes; and
- Foreign policy issue areas and situational attributes.

These categories of variables will be examined in more detail.

Alternative Foreign Policy Units

Country experts are asked to identify authoritative foreign policy making units using a stipulated definition. These units are defined as any entity (one or more individuals) whose members interact periodically over one or more kinds of foreign policy

issues and who either (1) exercise authority to determine policy and associated activity or (2) serve as a principal advisory unit to an individual or group that does exercise such authority. Virtually all members of a unit should be involved to some degree with each issue which that unit handles--thus, most ministries or departments do not qualify. An authoritative policymaking body can vary in size from one individual to multiple hundreds and need not deal exclusively with external affairs. This unit can be ad hoc, but it should be active for longer than the life of a single, short duration problem. It may be informal and without legal existence or any recognized name, but each member should be able to identify readily all those who participate in it.

In addition to these collective entities, the respondents are asked about the existence of a predominant leader. If such a person exists, he or she alone can be regarded as a decision unit. By predominant is meant that the person's preferences, once established, are tantamount to the regime's final position in most major policy questions regardless of issue area. Such a predominant individual can make his/her preferences prevail even in the face of concerted opposition from other influentials. In fact, the preferences of the predominant leader, once known, can be expected to mute the open expression of opposition either because the predominant leader could institute reprisals against opponents with relative impunity or because he/she is so revered and respected that no one wishes to offend the leader.

Policy Unit Characteristics

If there is a predominant leader for all or part of the decade, a critical issue becomes that leader's relative degree of interest or concern with foreign policy matters. The expert's rating of interest is augmented in most cases by social background data on the leader's amount of foreign policy experience. For collective decision units, information is sought on the relative size of the unit, the approximate distribution of influence among its members, and the extent to which its members represent entities external to the unit under examination.

Decision Unit Processes

Central to the theoretical model on policy unit structures and processes are the procedures for

information processing and internal conflict or disagreement management. Specific variables include the frequently used procedures for dealing with conflict, the proportion of foreign policy matters faced by a unit that is conflictful, the commonality of information sources used by members, and the likelihood that unit members share homogeneous or heterogeneous political beliefs. These variables provide several ways to assess the nature of key internal processes.

Issue Areas and Situational Attributes

Consultants are asked to identify the major foreign policy issue areas that the government faced during the decade 1959-1968. By major issue area is meant a broad domain of concerns about foreign policy that dominated the government's foreign policy activity for an extended period of time and that would be widely regarded as one of their major foreign policy concerns during the decade. As noted earlier, this information on issue areas will allow us to associate particular foreign policy units with classes of events that concern the same issue area. With respect to any issue area category, it may prove desirable to differentiate those foreign policy units that are involved with "most" of the specific events that are part of the issue area from units having more "limited" involvement with only a few events. Experts are asked to make that distinction.

The major situational attribute used to sort both policy units and events is the distinction between critical and routine events. In other words, such a variable would permit researchers to match events classified as critical with foreign policy units that tend to deal with situations of that type. A similar alignment will be sought between routine situations and units designed to process such matters. In sum, expert judgment is sought concerning the issue areas with which various policy units deal, the extent of their involvement in each category of issue areas, and whether they usually address routine problems or only critical ones.

Selecting and Contacting Experts

With the variables in mind for which expert judgments were sought, the task became one of locating such individuals and gaining their participation. With occasional exceptions, the experts contacted have been academic scholars currently situated in

North America. Names were obtained from directories such as the Biographical Directory of the American Political Science Association, the International Directory of Scholars and Specialists in African Studies, the Biographical Directory of the International Studies Association, and bibliographies such as the one by Kanet (1974) on Communist ruled countries. Recommendations of other potential respondents also were sought from individuals who were contacted through such sources. When possible individuals were selected who had demonstrated published scholarship on the country's foreign policy--preferably including the decade under examination. If this list was inadequate, those with more general knowledge of the country's contemporary public policy processes were contacted. If the pool of North American scholars was too small, then we consulted experts located in other countries (although this ruled out telephone interviews, which proved valuable in the first stage). Some effort was made to contact present and former American foreign service officers, but those with relevant experience for the period of interest proved difficult to locate. Diplomats presently covering such assignments professed to know extremely little about the 1959-1968 period.

All respondents were assured of individual anonymity. Most area experts were contacted initially by mail but some were first reached by telephone. The questionnaire was mailed only after the potential expert and one of the researchers had discussed the procedures by telephone. (Of course, the several individuals outside of North America were exceptions.)

Pretest

As reported in Hermann (1978b), the present author and his associates began in the winter of 1977-1978 to contact country experts, seeking their assistance with what must now be regarded as a pretest of the present design. That initial approach involved asking respondents to identify individual foreign policy "influentials" during the decade under examination. After such policymakers had been identified, the expert was asked a series of questions about each person's involvement in various decision units and issue areas, his/her relative power, the constituencies he/she represented, and so on. A great deal was learned about consulting with country and area specialists from the experience and some valuable data were acquired.

Based on our experience with experts on six countries, however, the researchers concluded that significant revisions in the instrument and the manner in which information was sought would be necessary in order for more potential respondents to be comfortable with the procedure. The abstract nature of some of the questionnaire items needed to be reduced. The bulk and initially overwhelming and complex nature of the questionnaire required revision. Finally, a more direct concentration on decision units rather than on separate individuals appeared to offer a more promising means of eliciting information on the key variables.

Objectives of the Revised First Stage

In the summer of 1978, the procedure for working with experts was revised. The current design entails two stages or waves of information collection. The multiple objectives of the first stage included the following:

- To establish contact with and the cooperation of three to five country experts for most of the countries in the CREON data set.
- To solicit their judgments on whether the country which they study had a predominant leader, given our definition of the term, for all or part of the decade.
- To ascertain their estimate of the relative degree of interest in foreign affairs of any predominant leader.
- To obtain their estimates as to which policymaking units may have participated in foreign policy episodes similar to a set of twelve given them.
- To elicit their reactions to and suggested revisions for a set of the country's major foreign policy issue areas during the decade.

Foreign Policy Episodes

The nature of most of the objectives should be apparent from the previous discussion. Some further comments, however, may be in order about the foreign policy episodes that together formed the largest and

most time consuming part of the first stage instrument. Rather than ask respondents to list all of the primary foreign policymaking units active in a given country for all or part of the decade, they were given a series of twelve foreign policy episodes. The experience with the pretest indicated that respondents might find it easier to construct a more comprehensive set of policy units by considering the entities involved in actual situations rather than to simply compile a list of them without any contextual reference.

For each episode the experts were asked which policymaking bodies were likely to have been involved in situations of that kind. By episode was meant a foreign policy problem that the regime confronted and that it apparently perceived as requiring some sort of decision or series of decisions. An episode is less encompassing than an issue area and differs from an event in that it entails not only the government action(s) but also the problem that appears to have occasioned the decision(s). The twelve episodes selected for each country were not intended to chronicle the major problems of the decade, but instead were designed to reflect different kinds of situations which the government had experienced. More specifically, the episodes chosen were expected to vary with respect to the four situational conditions: issue areas; relative importance; problem familiarity; and decision time. The researchers--not the respondents--classified each of the twelve episodes on those four dimensions. By compiling the list of foreign policy units mentioned for each episode, there developed a set of entities engaged in various kinds of foreign policy activities across the decade.

Other Features of the First Wave

The first wave questionnaire presented the expert with a specific definition of a predominant leader and sought his/her judgment about the presence of such an individual for all or part of the decade. The respondent also received a provisional list of foreign policy issue areas for the decade and was asked to amend it as he/she thought appropriate. Each expert was given the choice of mailing back the questionnaire or relaying the responses in a telephone interview. For every country an effort was made to have three experts complete the questionnaire. Although decision rules were developed to deal with differences between respondents on the

existence of a predominant leader, such a leader's interest in foreign policy, the revised set of policy units, and the list of foreign policy issue areas, eventually the second wave questionnaire was used to resolve any conflicts.

SECOND STAGE QUESTIONNAIRE

The second wave decision structure and process questionnaire is a necessary extension of the first. Both are needed to specify the desired variables. At the time of this writing, responses for twenty-one of the entire sample of countries have been completed for the second phase.³ The objectives of the second wave questionnaire are as follows:

- To resolve differences found in first-wave responses with respect to the presence of a predominant leader, the set of policy units, and the list of foreign policy issue areas.
- To identify which foreign policy units were likely to have been involved with the various foreign policy issue areas and to estimate the nature of their involvement.
- To select a subset of the identified foreign policy units for examination with respect to their structural characteristics and processes.
- To obtain for each selected policy unit estimates of a series of decision structures and process (information handling and conflict management) variables.

Procedures in the Second Round

Only one respondent per country has been asked to complete the second wave questionnaire. Whether these single responses can be augmented at a later time remains to be seen. The reason for limiting the use of country experts to one person was financial. Because the second round of judgments required considerably more time and effort than the first, the researchers felt that each respondent must receive a modest honorarium for his/her consultation on the project.⁴ To do otherwise would have exceeded the bounds of professional courtesy and undoubtedly would have reduced the willingness of some of the

individuals to devote the necessary time. Without a doubt, the requirement of honoraria imposed severe restrictions on the use of experts. Some implications of basing estimates on the replies of only one individual will be discussed subsequently.

Respondents for the second wave were chosen from those experts who had participated in the first round of the exercise. Selection criteria were the completeness of the individual's responses to the first round, indications of acquaintance with the topics of concern, and an expression after the first round that he/she would be willing to assist in further exploration of the subject.

In contrast to the first questionnaire, which could be answered either in writing or through a telephone interview, the second one required written responses. It was in two parts. The first part reproduced all of the issue areas and policy units identified for a given country by all of the experts participating in the first wave. The second round expert was invited to amend either list using the stipulated definitions. Upon completion of this task, the respondent worked with a large matrix in which the revised list of issue areas was related to the revised list of foreign policy units. The expert then estimated, for each combination of issue and unit, whether the unit was likely to have dealt with issues in that area and, if so, the nature of that involvement. If disagreements existed among first-round respondents as to whether a predominant leader existed, the second wave expert was asked to review the evidence and the definition in order to offer a final judgment.

The latter part of the second wave questionnaire asked a series of eight closed items about the relevant structure and process characteristics of each selected foreign policy unit. For some countries a manageability problem arose because the number of identified units substantially exceeded the arbitrary ceiling of ten that the researchers felt represented the approximate number of units which a single respondent might be asked to consider. Accordingly, procedures were introduced to determine if some identified policy units could be screened out before completing the second half of the questionnaire. This entailed the application of some previously established criteria, normally in a telephone conversation between the researcher and the respondent, upon completion of the first part of the instrument. The second column of Table 8.1 shows the number of foreign policy units for which structure and process

TABLE 8.1
Descriptive Data on Policy Units and Issue Areas

	Estimated Percent of Policy Units Identified	Number of Units in Part II	Number of Issue Areas	Average Unit Roles in Issue Area	Issue Areas Without Any Unit
Canada	75	8	9	3.3	None
Chile	Almost All	11	6	2.8	None
China (PRC)	Almost All	18	19	4.7	None
Cuba	75	12	10	4.5	None
Czechoslovakia	75	12	12	4.6	None
Egypt	Almost All	6	15	3.4	None
France	75	9	16	4.1	None
Ghana	Almost All	13	11	3.8	None
India	80	6	14	3.4	None
Kenya	Missing	12	9	3.0	None
Norway	Almost All	13	8	3.6	None
Philippines	50	10	13	4.0	None
Poland	Almost All	10	12	4.6	None
Spain	Almost All	9	5	3.4	None
Soviet Union	Almost All	14	15	4.5	None
Switzerland	75 to 90	11	8	4.4	None
Thailand	Almost All	6	7	2.1	None
Tunisia	Almost All	12	8	4.0	None
Turkey	75	11	5	3.8	None
Venezuela	Almost All	7	8	3.1	None
Zambia	Almost All	10	12	4.6	None

data were collected in the last section of the questionnaire. If the original number of units was ten or less, no reductions were sought. The table indicates that even after the criteria were applied, a substantial range--from six to eighteen units--still remained across the sample of countries.

Table 8.1 also reports each respondent's estimate of the proportion of all relevant policy units which was identified in the first part of the questionnaire. It is plausible to assume that the existence of some foreign policy units would not be known to observers or would be missed for other reasons. In deciding the known portion of units, the experts were asked to consider such factors as the overall size of the government, the degree of centralization, and the scope of foreign policy concerns. Of the twenty countries for which the respondent provided an estimate, virtually all of the foreign policy units were judged to have been detected in twelve countries and in another seven sampled nations 75 percent or more of all foreign policy units (as defined) were thought to be included in the amended list. It should also be noted that Table 8.1 shows a substantial range in the number of foreign policy issue areas addressed by the regimes in those countries between 1959-1968. Cross-national comparisons based upon that category may be difficult to make, however, because respondents were given considerable latitude in their definition of the scope of an issue area.

INITIAL IMPRESSIONS AND FUTURE PROBLEMS

Because a sizable portion of the second wave questionnaires has not been completed, systematic analysis of the respondents' estimates of the variables must be deferred. Nevertheless, the number of completed responses are sufficient to permit some initial impressions. Aside from methodological issues, the most urgent issue is whether the country experts are able to make discriminating judgments that permit the assignment of values to the variables needed for the investigation of the decision structure and process model. It is possible that experts would be unable to discern any appreciable variation on either structures or processes. This might occur because no variation actually exists in the real world. More likely, it could result simply because the country experts did not feel sufficiently knowledgeable about these matters to make the necessary distinctions. In either case, the questionnaire results could not be used to investigate the model.

Happily, the initial responses suggest otherwise. To support this claim, let us examine several indicators. First, as displayed in the final column of Table 8.1, the experts had no difficulty with the task of associating policy units with various issue areas in all examined countries. Beyond that simple requirement we might consider a more difficult issue: Are the country experts able to discern different policy units as variously involved in different issue areas? It is possible that the experts would find no basis for distinguishing among the roles of multiple policy units in a single issue area. The respondents could choose from five possible kinds of policy unit involvement within each designated foreign policy issue area.

Column 4 of Table 8.1 reports the average number of categories that the expert used to differentiate units for each of a nation's issue areas. If all units were seen as involved in the same way, the average number of categories used would be close to 1.0. If many different roles were identified, then the average should be closer to the maximum number of categories--five. Again, the table shows that experts were able to make the needed discriminations. The range in average number of categories used is from 2.1 to 4.7; all but two respondents used an average of three or more categories to distinguish policy unit involvement.

As a last indicator, one might inquire if the respondents differentiated among internal processes used by different policy units. Table 8.2 suggests an answer. Every expert was asked to judge the frequency with which each foreign policy unit in his or her assigned country used any of a set of procedures for resolving substantive conflict when it arose among that unit's members. For each of nine possible procedures, the respondent was asked to judge whether it was likely that a unit used the procedure "frequently," "sometimes," "rarely," or "never." Obviously, this item was one of the most speculative and difficult because it required the development of an inference process in order to estimate an answer. In the absence of much information, the natural tendency might have been to see all policy entities as using similar conflict management procedures.

Table 8.2 displays the percentage of units for a country that was judged to have used a given procedure "frequently" or "sometimes." Thus, for example, the respondent for Canada indicated that all of the policy units (100 percent) used the leader's

TABLE 8.2
Percentage of Units Using Various Conflict Management Processes

Country	Leader Preference	Unanimity	Working Majority	Formula Voting	Stalemate	Reconciliation	Outside Referral	Disruption	Other
Canada	100	100	33	--	33	--	--	33	--
Chile	100	33	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
China (PRC)	94	88	81	--	25	--	88	--	--
Cuba	100	--	100	12	--	88	75	--	10
Czechoslovakia	50	90	50	10	--	--	--	--	--
Egypt	100	33	17	--	--	--	83	--	--
France	100	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ghana	90	90	50	20	20	40	60	--	--
India	100	100	33	--	33	--	--	--	--
Kenya	91	73	36	18	9	18	9	--	--
Norway	77	15	85	69	15	8	77	--	80
Philippines	80	90	80	--	--	20	40	--	--
Poland	86	86	86	14	--	--	71	--	--
Spain	100	57	100	--	29	14	57	--	--
Soviet Union	93	79	43	29	21	21	64	--	21
Switzerland	50	92	50	8	58	8	42	--	25
Thailand	100	100	100	--	--	--	--	20	--
Tunisia	90	90	90	70	30	20	30	--	--
Turkey	100	--	100	33	67	33	--	--	--
Venezuela	100	--	83	17	--	67	50	--	--
Zambia	89	33	--	--	56	11	78	--	67

preference as the means of settling a dispute either frequently or sometimes. The overall pattern offered by Table 8.2 appears to suggest that the experts were again able to differentiate between conflict procedures used by different units. Of course, some or even all units will use some of the same procedures, but the table does not reveal an excessive pattern of very high percentages. In fact, the table reduces the actual distinctions (and increases the percentages) made by the experts because the two categories (frequently and sometimes) have been combined. Table 8.2 reveals other interesting patterns, but the point to emphasize here is that in one of the most difficult tasks in the questionnaire, the country experts felt that they could distinguish among internal decision processes.

CONCLUSION

It seems clear that the judgments of the respondents will generate measures with some variability, thus providing the data necessary to investigate the proposed model. The nagging questions about the reliability and validity of such expert-generated data remain. Virtually all of the structure and process estimates (in contrast to the identification of issue areas, policy units, and predominant leaders) are being gathered in the second wave questionnaire. Accordingly, when all is said and done, one must depend on the judgments of a single individual for estimates of extremely speculative data.

How can this procedure be defended and how can the pending detailed analysis be taken seriously? Some comments on this question will conclude this essay. Perhaps one must begin by asserting that no entirely satisfactory response can be offered. This is a high risk enterprise; if the results reveal anything noteworthy, the researchers hope that the findings will stimulate more work to challenge the conclusions rather than be ignored as unworthy of attention. This effort constitutes a beginning in an area where the alternatives to speculative and subjective data-generation procedures are to forego most comparative analysis.

More can be said, however, than the conclusion that there are no satisfactory alternatives. In fact, partial alternatives do exist for some countries and these will be pursued to check the proposed estimates. Public documents, autobiographies, and indepth studies of foreign policy decisions do exist for some governments included in the sample--such as

the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany, and Israel. These can be used to corroborate or challenge the expert judgments. Similarly, it probably will be possible to solicit the cooperation of a few experts to volunteer to replicate the second wave as a reliability exercise for selected countries. Perhaps a larger number of first-wave and other country and area experts could be encouraged to evaluate the judgments of second-wave respondents if the latter's estimates could be translated into a narrative description or perhaps a series of statements with which one could readily note agreement or disagreement.

None of these procedures can provide more than partial checks. Given the speculative nature of the needed estimates, it would not be surprising if qualified sources reached different conclusions. In the end, the approach taken here involves less the building of concurrence among independent estimators than encouraging the development of a single and reasonably consistent and coherent interpretation of a regime's internal processes. Several country experts might have divergent and equally plausible conceptualizations of the structures and processes of a government's foreign policy apparatus. Ideally, the objective should not be to force them into a single hybrid interpretation, but to permit the serial introduction of each alternative set of estimates into the model and observe what difference, if any, each makes.

Undoubtedly, most such developments must be deferred until some future point. The possibility of such an incremental strategy and the ability at a later time to test an alternative set of expert-generated data offer another reason for using expert judgments. Not only do such judgments provide a means for conducting cross-national empirical research on internal decision processes when no other method would permit such comprehensive coverage of various countries, they also permit the creation of a distinctive perspective regarding the resulting data. The data are the products of the country specialist's overall understanding of a country--his or her more or less implicit model. Each data point does not stand alone as an isolated observation or inference. Clearly, the possibility of recovering data from such a more integrated human system marks one of the strengths of country and area experts. It makes them highly attractive partners for the task of exploring what effects structures and processes in different governments have on their respective foreign policy behaviors.

NOTES

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1. For example, compare the account of American involvement in Cambodia as reported by Kissinger (1979) with that of Shawcross (1979).

2. While it is not the subject of this chapter, some thought should be given to the question of how we should relate to authorities in area studies, if they are to become a major source of expert-generated data. Lack of consideration and poorly planned inquiries have adversely affected the access of social scientists to other specialized audiences (e.g., members of Congress) in the past. Each researcher who asks for the help of another specialist bears some responsibility for maintaining the good will of such individuals for others who may seek their advice in the future.

3. As was noted earlier, the CREON event data set covers a sample of thirty-eight nations. It is not expected, however, that decision structure and process data will be acquired for all of those countries because the necessary experts have not been located. Difficulties have been experienced with Belgium, Costa Rica, Guinea, Iceland, the Ivory Coast, Lebanon, and Uruguay. As opportunities present themselves, these countries will be added, but their ultimate status is uncertain and they certainly will not be added as rapidly as the others still in progress. Those countries for which data can be expected in the relatively near future are East Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, West Germany, Uganda, U.S.A., and Yugoslavia.

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