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## MODELING THE 1973 SOVIET DECISION TO SUPPORT EGYPT

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**W**e present a contingency model of Soviet foreign policy making that focuses on decision making in the Politburo. The model is designed around three questions and shows how the answers to these questions determine the likely nature of the decision the Politburo will reach at any point in time. The questions are (1) Whose positions on the Politburo are critical to making a decision? (2) What are the positions or preferences of those who count on the issue under consideration? (3) How are disagreements among these individuals handled? The model is illustrated by examining the Soviet decision to increase significantly the numbers and types of weapons delivered to Egypt in early 1973. Of interest in this case is accounting for the shift in Soviet policy from refusing Egypt offensive weapons to providing them.

**C**onsiderable effort has been devoted to understanding, explaining, and even predicting Soviet foreign policy decisions and behavior. As in the story of the seven blind men and the elephant, however, students of Soviet foreign policy making have tended to focus on only one explanatory factor or a limited set of explanatory factors while believing that they have described the most essential parts of the entire animal. In a thorough review of the literature on Soviet foreign policy making, Horelick, Johnson, and Steinbruner (1975, 53) concluded that no present model provides "comprehensive and consistent explanations and reliable and accurate predictions." Looking to the future, Horelick and his associates proposed that our efforts at modeling Soviet foreign policy making might benefit from the development of frameworks incorporating "multiple perspectives." Writing a decade later, Alexander (1984) still found that models of Soviet decision making tended to empha-

size only one set of explanatory factors. As a first step toward more comprehensive models, he suggested a conceptual approach focusing on the relationships among three variable clusters: (1) leaders' perceptions of the external environment (the nation's resources, its technology, and reactions to previous decisions), (2) leaders' beliefs and attitudes, and (3) organizational factors.

We build on Alexander's proposal and develop a contingency model of Soviet foreign policy making that attempts to integrate the components of the decision-making process that students of Soviet politics have identified as important. The model focuses on decision making in the Politburo and takes into account (1) the distribution of power among members of this ruling group as well as (2) the attitudes, perceptions, personal styles, and organizational interests of individual members and (3) the processes by which collective decisions are made.

We will illustrate how the model works

by examining the Soviet decision to increase significantly the number and types of weapons delivered to Egypt in early 1973. This case is a particularly useful example for several reasons. First, the decision had far-reaching consequences. Not only did it lead to a war that fundamentally altered the position of the Soviet Union in the Middle East, but many believe it also seriously undermined the Soviet policy of *détente* with the United States. Second, more evidence is available on this decision than on most Soviet foreign policy decisions. Third, a variety of alternative interpretations have been put forth to explain what the Soviet leadership did. Finally, each of these interpretations offers, at best, only a partial explanation. The decision remains a puzzle. Why did the Soviets suddenly do an about-face, first refusing offensive weapons to Egypt and then providing them? Before turning to the model, we describe the problem facing the Soviet Union in the summer and fall of 1972—the months leading up to the decision.

### Decision To Supply Offensive Weapons to Egypt

In the late summer and early fall of 1972, the Soviet leadership faced a dilemma in the Middle East. By giving Egypt the strategic, offensive weapons it requested, the Soviets risked a new Arab-Israeli war and being dragged into a superpower confrontation. By not giving the weapons to Egypt, they faced the prospect of losing their position in Egypt permanently.

A prominent Soviet policy objective during this time period was *détente* with the United States. *Détente* was perceived as enabling the Soviet Union to obtain Western technology and trade credits, to help limit the arms race, to prevent a military confrontation with the United States,

and to counter the risks associated with the U.S.-Chinese rapprochement (see Golan 1984). But to at least some within the Soviet leadership, *détente* did not extend to superpower relations with Third-World countries. Increasingly in the early 1970s, Marshall Grechko, representing Soviet military interests, pushed for more Soviet involvement in the Middle East, particularly in Egypt (see Golan 1984; Kass 1978; Spechler 1986).

With the succession of Sadat to power in Egypt following Nasser's death in the fall of 1970, Soviet-Egyptian relations became more tenuous. Sadat's purges of pro-Soviet leaders and his approaches toward the West left the Soviet leaders in an uneasy position with an increased concern that "the U.S. and Egypt might work out a Middle East arrangement contrary to Soviet interests" (Freedman 1978, 102). To bolster their position, the Soviet leadership signed a Treaty of Friendship with Egypt and sent Sadat some sophisticated weapons but kept these weapons under Soviet operational control. The Soviet leaders continued to drag their feet on supplying Sadat with the strategic, offensive weapons he thought he needed to wage war with Israel (see Spechler 1986): "The gap between Soviet pledges and Soviet deliveries actually widened during this period" (Breslauer 1983, 91).

Frustrated with Soviet reluctance to make it possible for Egypt to regain its occupied territories and under increasing pressure at home to engage Israel militarily, Sadat ordered the Soviet military out of Egypt in July 1972 and turned toward the West for help. When he did not receive from Western Europe the aid he perceived was possible and found himself being held in abeyance by U.S. leaders, Sadat was forced to turn again to the Soviet Union for military weaponry (see George 1983). These overtures were initiated in the fall and early winter of 1972. This time, as Spechler (1986, 438) observes, "the Soviets promised—and short-

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ly thereafter began to deliver—the amounts of ammunition and parts and types of weapons and equipment that the Arabs considered necessary for going to war.” Moreover, they put the weapons under Egyptian control. The Soviet policy toward Egypt changed dramatically.

Scholars have provided a variety of explanations for why the Soviet reluctance and restraint in supplying strategic offensive weapons to Egypt in 1971–72 turned to a willingness to provide these weapons in the winter of 1973. Several of these explanations presume the Soviet leadership acted as a single unit making “rational” calculations about its role in the Middle East based on its relations with the United States. For example, Freedman (1978) explains Soviet behavior as reflecting a real preference for Third-World activism and an underlying lack of serious interest in détente. Breslauer (1983) argues that the Soviet decision to arm Egypt and make war possible resulted from disappointment in the lack of reciprocal restraint on the part of the United States with Israel and U.S. unwillingness to pressure Israel for a peace settlement. This decision was reinforced by low Soviet expectations from détente by late 1972.

A slightly different interpretation suggests the Soviets did not believe their Third-World actions would affect détente. Citing Soviet “misperceptions” of the consequences for U.S.-Soviet détente of the decision to arm Egypt, Glassman (1975, 118–19) sees a continuing strong Soviet commitment to détente throughout this period. Indeed, he indicates that an Egyptian willingness by late 1972 to limit its war aims was critical to the Soviet decision to provide strategic offensive weapons to Sadat (p. 98).

A few scholars (Dawisha 1979; Kass 1978; Spechler 1986) have emphasized the coalition shifts within the leadership in explaining the Soviet decision to support Egypt’s move toward a war footing. As Dawisha (1979, 150) notes, the “continu-

ous coalition-building and consensus formation” among competing institutional and leadership groups led to the seeming contradiction in positions toward arming Egypt evident from 1971 through 1973. Focusing on what characterized the competing leadership coalitions, Spechler (1986) stresses the importance of images of détente with the United States. She argues that Soviet decision making on the Middle East during the early 1970s was the product of a struggle among leaders holding “cooperative,” “competitive,” and “antagonistic” images of East-West relations.

The present model is in this latter tradition. It focuses on the Soviet leaders in the Politburo and seeks to offer a structured and explicit framework for understanding the bases on which coalitions form among members of this decision-making group, the reasons why coalitions change across time, and the process by which consensus is reached. A regime’s foreign policy actions—or the lack thereof—result from the interplay of multiple factors, each of which may vary independently of the others. Our purpose is to construct a model of Soviet foreign policy making that suggests how three different factors (*regime, individual qualities, and group dynamics*) relate to one another in accounting for policy in a manner that can accommodate change in any of the contributing factors.

Why should this kind of model be preferable to one designed around one component, for example, a rational actor approach or a focus on national interests? If a regime consists of multiple individuals with different values and, consequently, different preference orderings, the rational actor approach cannot help us reconcile the competing options—each of which may be “rational” from the perspective of one actor. Or if national interests are only one of the sources of explanation for foreign policy—and they do not change over time, but other factors do—how can we

calculate whether policy will vary?

In the proposed model each component performs a separate task. The state of each component depends on the nature of the other components. Thus the political regime — or the structure of power and the norms governing its use — determines which persons are going to be influential in a decision. One regime may be a dictatorship with one person's preferences dominating across major issues. In another regime there may be collective leadership. Once the regime component has determined the salient individuals, the model's individual component estimates preferences and the intensity with which each of these individuals holds views on a particular issue based on their personal characteristics, attitudinal data, and organizational affiliations. Individuals vary in the intensity of their preferences on an issue. This variation interrelates with their personal qualities and background to indicate the role they are likely to play in the decision process. Finally, with knowledge about regime norms and roles and preferences, the model estimates how any policy differences among the participants might be handled in terms of group dynamics. With differences resolved, deferred, or deadlocked, we can determine the probable nature of the resulting policy behavior.

In effect, the resulting policy is contingent on each of the components. If the regime changes, the relevant set of actors and the rules guiding their interaction change. Or if certain individuals are sensitive to changes in the relevant environment and dramatic changes occur in that environment, their preferences and roles may change — and so on. Each component can be viewed as providing the answer to a key question, and the resulting policy is contingent on the answers to all three questions. The questions central to each component are, Which leaders are so powerful that their positions must be taken into account in any decision

(*regime*)? What factors shape an individual's position and how (*individual*)? How are any differences among key members resolved to determine a Politburo decision (*group*)? In what follows we explicate each component in turn. Before moving to the next component, we describe the procedures we have used for operationalizing key variables in that component and present the data for examining the decision on supplying offensive weapons to Egypt.

### The Regime Component: Determining Whose Positions Count

#### Nature of the Political Regime

Political regimes, defined as a given structure of power and a set of more or less accepted decision norms, have far-reaching effects on the character of the decision process. Not only does a particular regime indicate who can participate in decision making and with what degree of authority, but the structure of a regime determines in important ways the extent to which leaders' personalities and attitudes will impact on the decision.

Thus a first requirement for a model of Soviet foreign policy decision making is to describe the characteristics of the political regime existing within the Soviet leadership at a given time. In our illustrative case, the particular Soviet political regime of interest is that existing in the period 1972 to the middle of 1973. Fortunately for our purposes, Roeder (1984) has proposed a conceptualization of power structures or regimes that builds on what most scholars (e.g., Conquest 1961; Fainsod 1963; Hammer 1974; Hough and Fainsod 1979; Medvedev 1986; Rigby 1970; Rush 1958; Tatu 1969) argue are the dominant features of Soviet politics. The system of top-level leadership in the Soviet Union is characterized by two

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**Table 1. Soviet Political Regime Types**

Structure of Political Authority	Level of Competition for Power		
	Low	Medium	High
Dispersed authority (many)	accommodative bureaucratic (1973-82)	competitive bureaucratic (1983-85)	combative bureaucratic
Clustered authority (some)	ruling coalition	oligarchic (1964-73)	pluralistic (1953-57)
Consolidated authority (one)	dictatorship (1957-59)	directive (1960-62)	first among equals (1962-64, 1985-?)

*Source:* Adapted from Roeder 1984.

somewhat contradictory traits: tendencies toward authoritarianism or concentration of decision-making authority in one or a few persons; and power struggles or competition for power and authority among the political elite, most notably among those at the Politburo level. These two variables—the structure of political authority and the level of competition for power—together can differentiate in meaningful ways the type of political regime existing in the Soviet Union at any given time.<sup>1</sup> As shown in Table 1, we devise nine regime types by establishing three points on each of these dimensions. Of the nine possible types of political regimes, we can identify seven distinct kinds of political regimes that have existed in the Soviet Union since 1953. Table 1 provides labels for all regime types and shows which have occurred in the Soviet Union.

We have developed a decision tree that asks a series of questions about the structure of political authority and the level of competition in a regime to determine which of these nine types of political regimes exists at any given time and in turn whose positions count in the making of foreign policy. (This decision tree can be found in Stewart, Hermann, and Hermann 1986).

### **The Soviet Political Regime, 1972 to mid-1973**

Using this typology of regimes to determine whose positions count, we need to decide which kind of regime existed in the Soviet Union in 1972-73 at the time of the decision concerning Egypt. A critical factor that distinguishes regimes involving collective authority among multiple leaders from those in which authority is abrogated to a single leader is whether or not a single leader is able to assume the power to make decisions across a range of issues despite varying degrees of opposition. Most studies characterize Stalin's rule between roughly 1934 and 1953 as a dictatorship (for the most influential work, see Fainsod 1963; Hough and Fainsod 1979) and some research sees Khrushchev as having behaved in this manner for much of the last seven years of his rule (e.g., see Hodnett 1981, esp. 88-92). The dominant view in the literature, however, is that Brezhnev never attained this level of authority. Gelman (1984), for instance, characterizes Brezhnev's principle strategy of rule as deliberately seeking to build and stay within the "Politburo consensus." Writing about the early 1970s, Hammer (1974, 319) describes Brezhnev as "the presiding officer of an oligarchy." And Simes (1984, 86) has observed that "during

Brezhnev's political predominance, a consensus style of leadership was clearly evident in the USSR." (See also Hodnett 1981; Rigby 1970.)

If Brezhnev was not able to make decisions on his own, then, was there during this period a relatively small group (i.e., roughly two to five individuals) in the leadership who, if they agreed, could make decisions across a range of issues? In other words, how dispersed was authority among Politburo members? Studies of both protocol evidence (Hammer 1974, 323-24) and political authority (Garthoff 1975; Gelman 1984) in the Brezhnev regime suggest that the inner leadership group in the Politburo toward the end of 1972 consisted of Leonid Brezhnev, general secretary of the party; Alexei Kosygin, prime minister; Nikolai Podgorny, the formal president; and Mikhail Suslov, the powerful, senior ideologue.<sup>2</sup> All were full Politburo members. None owed their position to any of the others. Each had—although in varying degrees—institutional and political bases of support not fully under the control of any other member of the group. Normally when this group found it possible to agree among themselves on policy issues, they could determine policy outcomes.

We do not want to suggest that there was no competition within this inner group, or that they always agreed on outcomes. In fact, Brezhnev's efforts to isolate, if not eliminate, Podgorny's and Kosygin's roles in foreign policy are well documented. (See, for example, Hough and Fainsod 1979, 477-78; Kissinger 1979, 1145). Our point here is simply that at the time of the decision under study it would not be possible to reach and sustain a policy line in the Politburo without the support of these four leaders. None of these core Soviet leaders was sufficiently strong to act alone or could easily or for long act in ways contrary to the interests of the clients whose support contributed to his power base (see Gelman 1984,

51-104). In effect, there was a clustering of authority in these four leaders (row 2 of Table 1).

Could this inner Politburo act when there was resistance to their positions among other members in the leadership? That is, what is the level of competition for power among the members? Which column in Table 1 is appropriate? If it could act despite resistance, the Brezhnev regime in 1972 should be considered a "ruling coalition." The evidence, however, suggests that at least Marshal Grechko, minister of defense; Peter Shelest, first secretary of the Ukraine; and Alexander Shelepin, head of the Soviet Trade Union organization, did on several occasions during this period actively resist policies supported by members of the inner group. Though Brezhnev had succeeded in significantly reducing the institutional power bases of both Shelest and Shelepin prior to the end of 1972 (Gelman 1984, 123-24), these leaders still retained their seats in the Politburo, from which they could make their views heard. Marshal Grechko was a special case. As Gelman (1984, 79-83) documents, Brezhnev decided as early as 1965 to base his own political coalition on an intimate alliance with the military leadership, expressed in part through the all-service military build-up initiated in 1965. Grechko was a vocal and vigorous advocate of both a strong defense and an assertive role for military power in the advancement of Soviet global interests. But even though Grechko was a close ally of Brezhnev at the end of 1972, we do not consider him a part of the inner leadership at that time because he would not become a full member of the Politburo until April 1973. Yet his special political relationship with Brezhnev and his powerful institutional base and role as almost sole spokesman for military interests provided Grechko with a substantial power base from which to challenge the inner leadership's preferences when he disagreed.

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If at least some members of the Politburo are able to challenge the inner leadership's decisions without direct penalty and do so regularly, we would label this a pluralistic regime. To the degree, however, that such challenges are met with retaliation, the inner leadership is able to limit effective participation and thus sustain an oligarchic regime. The cases of Shelepin and Shelest in foreign policy; of Gennady Voronov, the moderate agricultural reformer; and Dimitri Polyansky, a reputed Russian nationalist and hardliner on détente, are instructive here. All opposed the Politburo leadership during this period, and all were removed from the Politburo between 1971 and 1975. As Simes (1984, 80) notes, "It appears that those who were expelled from the Politburo had at least one thing in common—a positive program, a desire to advocate relatively strong views, to pressure for some form of change."

Our analysis, then, so far suggests that the Soviet political regime in late 1972 is probably best described as oligarchic (a regime characterized by clustered authority and a medium level of competition for power). In most cases, particularly in foreign policy, the key decision makers were Brezhnev, Kosygin, Podgorny, and Suslov. In certain substantive areas, however, other leaders may well have participated as influential decision makers. The extensive case study literature on Soviet decision making in the October 1973 Middle East war indicates that both Marshal Grechko and Boris Ponomarev, the candidate Politburo member with principal responsibility for Soviet Third-World policy, were active participants in the Soviet decisions relating to these events. (See, in particular, Golan 1984, 189; Kass 1978, 217–23; Shevchenko 1985; Spechler 1986, 453–54.) The most systematic evidence for this position is provided by the frequency of their participation in meetings with Egyptian leaders during the period

September 1970–February 1973, either in Moscow or in Cairo. The two most heavily involved actors, aside from the inner leadership, were Grechko and Ponomarev with seven and four meetings, respectively.

Although the analysis that follows develops a probable decision scenario limited to these six actors, we do not want to suggest that no other leaders' views may have been taken into account. Rather, our argument is that given the prevailing structure of oligarchic authority in the Politburo at this point in time, others' views probably influenced a specific policy choice only to the extent that they became an important source for the judgments of one of the six identified decision makers.

### The Individual Component: Assessing the Positions of Those Who Count

#### Factors Shaping Individual Positions

Once we know which Politburo members are important in determining Soviet policy vis-à-vis Egypt during the 1972 to mid-1973 period, we need to determine the nature of their positions or preferences on the critical issue of interest in the case, namely, whether or not to enable Sadat to go to war against Israel by supplying his country with strategic, offensive weapons. Do the members whose positions count favor or oppose arming Egypt and how strongly do they hold their opinions? Literature on Soviet leaders (e.g., Alexander 1984; Bialer and Afferica 1986; Breslauer 1982; Herrmann 1985; Roeder 1985; Stewart 1986; Valenta and Potter 1984), more general literature on foreign policy making (e.g., Brecher 1975; East, Salmore, and Hermann 1978; George 1980; Hermann, Kegley, and Rosenau 1987; Jervis 1976; Steinbruner 1974; Sylvan and Chan 1984; White 1970), and



research on social and political cognition (e.g., Ajzen and Fishbein 1980; Fazio 1986; Lau and Sears 1986; McGuire 1985; Petty and Cacioppo 1986) suggest four factors are among the most important potential influences on a member's position. These factors include perceptions of the international environment, personal attitudes on important issues, personality characteristics, and organizational background and affiliation. The studies cited above indicate that these factors combine the more transitory and stable influences on the individual choice-making process, that they can be measured, and that they affect not only how decisions are made but the nature of the decisions.

Before indicating how these four factors

might combine to shape a Politburo member's position on an issue, we will indicate what is meant by each of the factors, describe what aspects of each we must assess in determining a member's choice with regard to the issue of rearming Egypt, and discuss our assessments of these four factors in the present study.<sup>3</sup> Table 2 presents empirical data for the four factors for the six members of the Politburo who were involved in making the decision to supply offensive weapons to Egypt. These data are drawn from M. Hermann's (1980b) and Stewart's (Stewart, Warhola, and Blough 1984) content analyses of the speeches and writings of these Politburo members from January 1970 through December 1972.<sup>4</sup>

**Table 2. Factors Affecting the Positions of the Politburo Members Whose Positions Counted**

Politburo Member	Salience of Issue <sup>a</sup>	Commitment to Preference <sup>b</sup>	Sensitivity to Contextual Information <sup>c</sup>	Relation to Organizational Sector <sup>d</sup>
Brezhnev	.01 (h)	.16 (w)	65 (h)	generalist
Kosygin	.03 (h)	.22 (w)	68 (h)	generalist
Podgorny	.00 (l)	.16 (w)	97 (h)	generalist
Suslov	.00 (l)	.18 (w)	35 (l)	careerist (party ideologue)
Grechko	.01 (h)	.44 (s)	69 (h)	careerist (military)
Ponomarev	.00 (l)	.25 (w)	58 (h)	careerist (party ideologue)

<sup>a</sup>Numbers are percentages of total references to foreign policy issues that focused on the Middle East. The letters in parentheses indicate whether these percentages suggest high (h) or low (l) salience of this issue to the Politburo member based on the mean of all the members of the Politburo. The mean across all members was .01.

<sup>b</sup>Numbers are percentages of references to issues supportive of rearming of Egypt compared to references both supportive and resistive to rearmament. The letters in parentheses indicate whether these percentages suggest a weak (w) or strong (s) commitment to a preference. A member's score was considered to indicate strong commitment if it was one standard deviation or more above the overall Politburo mean of .24; one standard deviation was .14. Otherwise the score was considered indicative of weak commitment.

<sup>c</sup>The numbers are standard scores based on a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 indicating how responsive the Politburo member is to the political environment in speech material. The letters in parentheses indicate whether the standard score is one standard deviation above (h) or below (l) the mean.

<sup>d</sup>A generalist is a Politburo member who gained his position by moving across institutions and organizations whereas a careerist has generally come up through one organization or institution. Careerists have a strong affiliation, generalists a weak affiliation with the organizational sector.

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*Perceptions of the international environment.* Brecher (1975) has observed that how leaders perceive or interpret the international environment provides us with cues as to the choices they will want their governments to pursue. Examining the writings and statements of Politburo members, Stewart and his associates (Stewart, Blough, and Warhola 1984; Stewart, Warhola, and Blough 1984) have shown that the issues and areas of the world emphasized by a Politburo member reflect perceived priorities—how salient the issue or area is to the member. In other words, perceptions of the international environment suggest how the member structures the world and what problems are seen as important.

In looking at the Politburo decision to supply Egypt with strategic, offensive weapons, we are interested in how salient Middle East issues were perceived to be to each of the members, that is, how much they discussed the Middle East and its problems or opportunities relative to other topics and issues. Salience not only indicates what is important to the member but suggests whether the member will have a position on the issue. Members are less likely to have thought through or defined a position on an issue that is of little salience to them.

The first column of Table 2 presents data for perceived salience of Middle East issues for the six members of the Politburo whose positions were important to the decision process. Perceived salience was assessed by ascertaining the percentage of all references to foreign policy the Politburo member made from January 1970 through December 1972 that focused on Middle East politics. Such references took the form of comments about the Palestinians, U.S. actions in the Middle East, Soviet involvement in the region, Israeli actions, Middle East peace efforts, and the policies and behavior of the Arab countries. The Middle East was considered a salient issue for a member whose score

was at or above the mean for the whole Politburo on this issue.

*Attitudes.* Attitudes represent particular ways of viewing the world that are evaluative in nature. Herrmann (1985) and Stewart (Stewart, Warhola, and Blough 1982) have shown how the Politburo members' attitudes shape their orientations to foreign affairs. By knowing a member's more general international attitudes, we can infer a position on a particular issue in the absence of more specific information about the member's views. In considering Politburo members' attitudes toward providing Egypt with offensive weapons, we will examine members' reactions to a set of issues we regard as indicative of either support for or resistance to supplying such weapons to Egypt. The supportive issues focus on the importance of advancing Soviet interests in the Third World. The resistive issues indicate the usefulness of détente and constructive interaction with the West.

The particular issues we have chosen to examine build on the cooperative and antagonistic images of the United States that Spechler (1986) identified among Politburo members during the 1967–73 time period. Spechler observed that these two images had implications for the Arab-Israeli conflict. Those members holding the cooperative image "were impressed by the fragility of détente. . . . They did not want events in the Middle East (or in any other region) to cause or deepen mistrust and hostility between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R." (Spechler 1986, 448). According to those with the antagonistic view, "the U.S. must be actively countered and restrained, both militarily and politically. Highest priority must therefore be given to expansion of Soviet military power and political influence on a global scale. The U.S.S.R. must acquire friends and military facilities and maintain loyal allies wherever these would help to combat,

contain, or undermine American power" (Spechler 1986, 450).

The second column of Table 2 displays data on attitudes in the form of commitment to preference. The direction of a member's position toward arming Egypt (for or against) and the degree of commitment to this position were determined by finding the percentage of references a Politburo member made that were supportive of rearming Egypt compared to that member's total references both supportive and resistive to rearmament. Following Spechler's (1986) analysis, references were considered supportive of supplying Egypt with offensive, strategic weapons if they focused on the importance of Soviet support for national liberation movements and involvement of the Soviet Union in the Third World contained an emphasis on the dangers of détente and viewed the West as an irreconcilable enemy. References were classified as resistive if they saw Western behavior as moderate and the West as governed by "sober-minded forces" as well as showed an interest in arms limitation and disarmament, Middle East peace efforts, and fears of the increasing risks of nuclear war. The higher the member's score on commitment to a preference, the more supportive the member was considered to be of arming Egypt, and the lower the commitment score, the more resistive the member to making it possible for Sadat to attack Israel. A Politburo member was viewed as committed to a position if the score was one standard deviation above or below the commitment mean for the Politburo as a whole.

*Personal characteristics.* A Politburo member's personal characteristics also provide us with information about positions on policy questions. In particular, M. Hermann (1980a, 1980b, 1984, 1987) has shown that sensitivity to contextual information has an effect on how Polit-

buro members and other heads of state around the world process information and whether outside forces can influence their decisions.

Sensitivity to contextual information indicates how open a member is likely to be to information from the environment in determining the position to take on an issue facing the Politburo. The more sensitive to contextual information a member is, the more receptive he is to cues from the environment—information about the political context at the moment, information about other members' positions, organizational views—as guides to decision making. The less sensitive the member is, the more likely the member is to impose a previously established and strongly held set of views on the environment, selectively perceiving information that supports or bolsters the member's prior framework. Sensitivity to contextual information, in effect, separates leaders who are pragmatists from those who are crusaders (see Stoessinger 1979).

Data on sensitivity to contextual information is reported in column 3 of Table 2. To assess sensitivity to contextual information, a member's speeches and writings were content-analyzed for indicators of conceptual complexity. Conceptual complexity refers to the degree of differentiation that an individual shows in describing or discussing other people, places, policies, ideas, or things. The more conceptually complex individual can see varying reasons for a particular position, is willing to entertain the possibility that there is ambiguity in the environment, and is flexible in reacting to objects or ideas. The score for conceptual complexity is the percentage of words used that indicate high complexity. The coding categories and reliability data for this variable for these Politburo members are available in M. Hermann 1980b, 1983. The numbers for sensitivity to contextual information listed in Table 2 are standard scores based on a mean of 50 and a standard

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deviation of 10. The standard scores are derived from the mean score and standard deviation for conceptual complexity for all Politburo members during the 1970–72 time period. A member is considered highly sensitive to contextual information whose score is one standard deviation above the mean and rather insensitive whose score is one standard deviation below the mean. Because Ponomarev's score is quite close to one standard deviation above the mean, he was considered more rather than less sensitive to the context in the present study.

*Organizational background.* The adage "Where you stand depends on where you sit," used to describe U.S. bureaucratic politics also applies in the Soviet case and becomes the last factor important in identifying the position of Politburo members. Soviet leaders have backgrounds in a variety of institutions and in some cases represent these institutions on the Politburo. Those with longer tenures in a particular organization (e.g., the KGB, the foreign ministry, the International Department of the Party Secretariat) can be expected to be imbued with their organization's mission and to see the world through the mission requirements of that organization (see, e.g., Ashley 1980; Axelrod 1976a; C. Hermann 1978; Lowenhardt 1981; Valenta 1979).

Roeder (1986) has proposed two types of participants in the Soviet policy-making process: generalists and careerists. The generalists have gained their position of influence by moving across institutions and organizations—having experience and patrons in several different arenas. The careerists, on the other hand, have come up through one organization or institution—gaining expertise and a strong sense of identify with that organization. The careerists tend to view the world in ways that justify and strengthen the goals of the organizations with which they have been affiliated. In effect, the generalist's

political socialization produces a more heterogeneous perspective on priorities and operations in politics and world affairs, whereas the careerist's political socialization more likely has provided a singular perspective. Thus the mission of the organization with which a careerist is affiliated provides us with a means of knowing this member's position. It will be more difficult to ascertain the generalists' positions from their work experience.

Strength of organizational affiliation was based on a biographical search of each member's career patterns (Bishop 1986; M. Hermann 1980b). A member who had held positions for a 5–10 year period of time in more than one type of organization or institution or had lengthy service in a position with broad responsibilities across a number of issue areas was considered a generalist. A member was judged to be a careerist if most (roughly 75%) of his party or government experience was in one type of organization or institution, for example, the KGB, the foreign ministry, or the defense industrial establishment.

### How Factors Combine To Shape an Individual's Position

To help us understand how a Politburo member's perceptions, attitudes, personal characteristics, and organizational background interrelate in determining a position on a specific issue, we have derived a set of decision rules from the research literature on information processing (e.g., Axelrod 1976b; Fiske and Taylor 1984; Frey 1986; George 1980; Jonsson 1982; Lau and Sears 1986; Schank and Abelson 1977; Simon 1983; Steinbruner 1974; White 1984; Wicklund and Brehm 1976).<sup>5</sup> These decision rules indicate that Politburo members become *advocates*, *cue takers*, or *brokers* on a specific issue depending on how salient the issue is for them and the level of their commitment to a position. How they elect to play these

roles in the decision-making process is affected by their sensitivity to contextual information and the strength of their organizational affiliation. Figure 1 presents a decision tree that shows how the factors combine to shape a member's position. Using the data in Table 2 and Figure 1, we can estimate the role probably taken in the decision-making process by each of the members whose positions counted in the decision to rearm Egypt.

*Advocate.* The basic decision rule for becoming an advocate in the decision-making process can be stated as follows: If the issue is both salient to a Politburo member and he has expressed a strong opinion on it—either pro or con—the member is likely to look for information in the environment that supports the position and to reinterpret any organizational mission statement to encompass this view. In other words, the member will look for consonant, not dissonant, information that bolsters the position and provides a rationale for the option the member supports. Because the issue has personal salience, the member's expressed attitude will take precedence over perceptual or organizational factors. This set of relationships will be particularly potent for the individual who is relatively insensitive to contextual information anyway—who has a well-developed lens to view the world through. In this case, the member is likely to rationalize the information to support the position. However, the Politburo member who is fairly sensitive to contextual information will move more cautiously in advancing the position while holding firmly to it. Members who are advocates may act as coalition leaders if there are discrepant views being voiced on the Politburo.

Applying the data from Table 2 to Figure 1, we note that Marshal Grechko is the only one of the six key members in the Egypt decision who was an advocate of a position. The Middle East was a highly

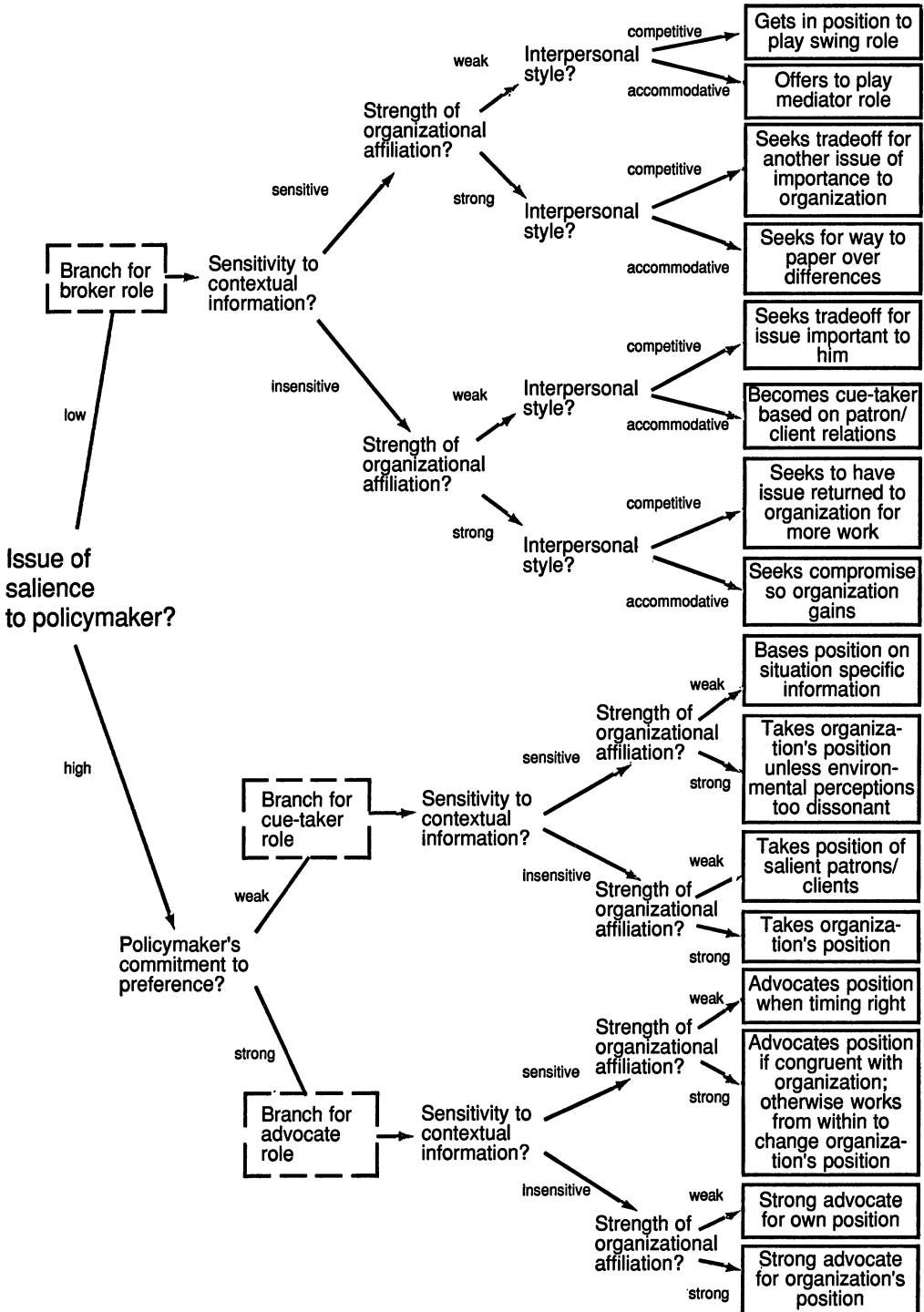
salient issue area for him and he was committed to supplying sophisticated weapons to Sadat. The data in Table 2 also indicate that Grechko is sensitive to contextual information and has a strong affiliation with the defense establishment in the Soviet Union. Moving through the decision tree in Figure 1 for members who are advocates, our information on Grechko places him in the outcome category that suggests he will advocate his position if it is congruent with that of the organization with which he is affiliated or, if not, he will work to change the organization's position from within. What was the Defense Ministry's position on Egypt in 1972?

An examination of leading Soviet publications during the 1970-72 time period shows the military press as a chief proponent of an increased Soviet military involvement in the Middle East (see, e.g., Golan 1984; Kass 1978; Spechler 1986). *Krasnaia zvezda*, the official press organ for the Ministry of Defense, argued that the "preservation of the Soviet-Arab alliance was a primary national interest of the USSR" (Kass 1978, 222). As Spechler tells us, "Influential military leaders . . . wanted to give priority to the Soviet-Arab alliance, not to détente, and . . . advocated both a more sympathetic attitude toward Arab use of force and deeper Soviet military involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict" (1986, 452). Thus, Grechko's position was isomorphic with that of his institutional base and he became an advocate for the position in the Politburo.

*Cue taker.* The information-processing literature suggests what happens when the issue is salient to a Politburo member who has not decided on a position or has only a weak commitment to a position. This individual will become a cue taker, making decisions on the basis of what others are doing or what is happening in the immediate situation. The issue is important

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**Figure 1. Conditions under Which Member Acts As an Advocate, Cue Taker, or Broker**



to these members. The question is how best to deal with it. They rely on the context to answer this question. Whence they take their cues depends on how sensitive they are to contextual information.

The less sensitive the member to nuances in the environment, the more the member will take recommendations or interpretations from significant others. The member who is strongly affiliated with a particular organizational sector is likely to adopt the position that predominates in that organization. The one who is only weakly affiliated with an organization will probably take cues from patrons or clients if they strongly advocate a position. In effect, the cue taker's power base supplies a position to the cue taker who is more insensitive.

For the Politburo cue taker who is more sensitive to contextual information, perceptions of what is happening currently become important to determining a position. The member who has a strong organizational affiliation is likely to compare the organization's position against personal perceptions of the international environment at that point in time. If these perceptions do not prove too discrepant, that is, if they tend to support the organization's option, the member will adopt the organization's position. But should the dissonant information from the environment lead to another position, the member is likely to adopt a position different from that of organizational comrades. The member with a weak organizational affiliation will depend on situation-specific cues and go with the majority opinion of the moment.

The data in Table 1 suggests that there were two cue takers among the key Politburo members on the issue of rearming Egypt: Brezhnev and Kosygin. For both men the Middle East issue was highly salient. Yet their commitment scores are not one standard deviation above or below the mean. Although Brezhnev and Kosygin leaned toward resisting sending

offensive arms to Egypt, their positions were not strong. Applying the data in Table 2 to Figure 1, we note that both these men were sensitive to contextual information and generalists with weak ties to any organization or institution. The decision tree indicates that such cue takers are likely to base their positions on situation-specific information. In effect, in forming their positions Brezhnev and Kosygin are likely to depend on what is happening in the Middle East and elsewhere at the time a decision needs making as well as on the majority opinion among other Politburo members.

*Broker.* Politburo members for whom the issue under consideration is *not* salient are likely to play a broker role in the decision-making process, helping to resolve the differences among other members while accruing credit for issues of importance to them. In effect, these members have less to lose and can gain as a result of what happens in the course of making a decision. So although they are indifferent on the substance of the issue under consideration, it is to their advantage to play a role in the process of working through conflict among other members of the Politburo.

The information-processing literature suggests that interpersonal style becomes a relevant factor here in addition to sensitivity to contextual information and strength of organizational affiliation because these members become involved in shaping the dynamics of the group as they try to resolve the differences among other members. How they choose to play this role—whether in an accommodative or competitive manner—is influenced by their interpersonal style. Specifically, are they cooperative and able to see situations and people in a win-win way or are they combative, tending to see politics as a zero-sum game?

Politburo members, whether insensitive or sensitive to information, who are



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strongly affiliated with an organization are likely to play the role of delegates or representatives of their organization when the situation is not personally salient. They want to get the best deal they can for their organization. The sensitive leaders will be able to use the nuances of the situation more than the insensitive leaders. But their aim is the same—to “get what we can for our organization.” The more accommodative members playing a broker role will work on compromises or papered-over solutions that let their organizations save face or help them form a coalition with another organization. The more competitive members will try to ensure that their organization gains as a result of the decision even if it is only a quid pro quo for the future.

Politburo members in a position to play a broker role with weak links to an organizational sector focus on increasing their *own* power and influence. Those who are more sensitive to the context are probably more effective in realizing their goal than those who are less sensitive. The less sensitive members are likely to be more obvious in their behavior and thus more easily dealt with or discounted. The more sensitive members, however, will give the appearance of being helpful while gaining influence for the future.

When the data in Table 2 are applied to Figure 1, it becomes apparent that three of the members whose positions counted in the decision to arm Egypt played a broker role: Podgorny, Suslov, and Ponomarev. For all three, salience on the issue was low relative to other Politburo members. These three members differed in how sensitive they were to contextual information and in strength of organizational affiliation. Podgorny was sensitive to contextual information and was not strongly affiliated with any organizational sector. Data on interpersonal style from M. Hermann (1980a, 1980b) indicate that Podgorny was likely to be accommodative.<sup>6</sup> As Gelman (1984, 73) observes,

“Some of his colleagues saw Podgorny as lacking steel in his makeup.” According to Figure 1, with these characteristics, Podgorny is likely to offer to play a mediator role in this decision process.

Although Ponomarev and Suslov were both strongly affiliated with specific institutional interests—Suslov as the Party ideologue and Ponomarev with the International Department (the department most responsible for Third-World policy), they differed in their sensitivity to contextual information and interpersonal style. Suslov was relatively insensitive to contextual information and accommodative, whereas Ponomarev was moderately sensitive but competitive (or combative) in style. Thus, according to Figure 1, Suslov was likely to seek a compromise consistent with his ideological principles, and Ponomarev was likely to look for a trade-off for another issue of importance to his organization. In the Egyptian case, the trade-off for Ponomarev might be Politburo support for actions to change the Third World nations’ image of the Soviet Union as an unreliable ally that arose with Sadat’s expulsion of the Soviet military (see Spechler 1986, 453).

### **Group Component: Resolving Differences among Those Who Count**

#### **Politburo Collective Decision Making**

In a political regime characterized as a dictatorship and in some circumstances in a directive, or first-among-equals, regime, the preferences of a single individual become the Politburo position on an issue. (For a definition of these types of regimes, see Table 1). In all other circumstances the positions of several powerful individuals must be considered and our model must have a component that takes into account the collective processes by



which disagreements among these people are handled.

The task for this final component of the model, then, is to establish an analytic system for moving from individual preferences to a collective decision (or indecision). To develop that system we draw on insights from research on Soviet politics and from studies of group dynamics (e.g., Brandstatter and Schuler 1978; Jones 1984; McGrath 1984; Triska and Finley 1968; Valenta 1979; Valenta and Potter 1984). Our typology of political regimes reveals which members of the Politburo we can expect to be essential for the resolution of a problem. Our assessment of the factors shaping perspectives on the issue indicates whether each individual member will be a broker, cue taker, or advocate (and, in the case of an advocate, the direction and intensity of the position). Using this knowledge, we create a set of decision rules for how those members whose positions count will handle disagreements among themselves. Rules must be developed for each of the nine types of political regimes in Table 1 and for any configuration of advocates, brokers, and cue takers.

Among the key assumptions on which the decision rules rest are the following:

1. *Regime effects on who must concur.* The number of Politburo members who must concur with a position in order for it to be a Politburo decision generally increases with both heightened competition among the members and more diffusion of authority and, conversely, decreases with reduction in competition and consolidation of authority. (We have identified these as the defining characteristics of a political regime.)

2. *Determining the core group.* The type of regime and the nature of the issue determine which Politburo members' support is necessary in

order to obtain a Politburo decision. (We call this subset of members the core group.)

3. *Core group consensus.* When the core group of the Politburo share the same position, even in the face of opposition from other members, that core position becomes the Politburo's collective decision.

4. *Decision by the most powerful.* When power and authority are unequally distributed within the core group, those with the most power and authority will seek to resolve any differences on the issue among themselves and exclude other members.

5. *Expansion of influence.* When the core group of the Politburo cannot resolve its differences, other members become more influential in determining the group's decision.

6. *Factors affecting weight of influence.* When the views of other members of the Politburo must be taken into account, those who have greater expertise on the issue, who represent interests directly affected by it, or who are special clients of leading members of the core group will exercise more influence than others.

7. *Changing positions.* Shifts in the position of any Politburo member as a result of developments in the external environment are more likely if the member (a) does not currently hold a position intensely and (b) has the personal characteristics to be receptive to new environmental inputs.

8. *Conditions for deadlock.* As the intensity of disagreement among members increases or as the number of key members who must concur with a position in order for it to become a Politburo decision increases, deadlock becomes more likely.

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9. *When brokers succeed.* Brokers within the Politburo are more likely to succeed in creating an acceptable compromise between conflicting positions, the lower the intensity with which members hold opposing views.
10. *Costs of exclusion.* As the competition for power becomes more acute and continuous, the exclusion of the preferred position of any competitors becomes more costly in terms of maintaining the existing regime.

These assumptions provide the foundation from which decision rules have been designed for each regime type. The purpose of the decision rules is to estimate decision outcomes for different configurations of individual stances among key Politburo members. The rules for each type of regime have been organized into a series of decision trees. As noted earlier, we determined that an oligarchic regime prevailed in 1972 when the Politburo struggled with the issue of rearming Egypt. Therefore we will apply the decision tree for oligarchic regimes to this case.<sup>7</sup>

### Nature of Collective Decision on Arming Egypt

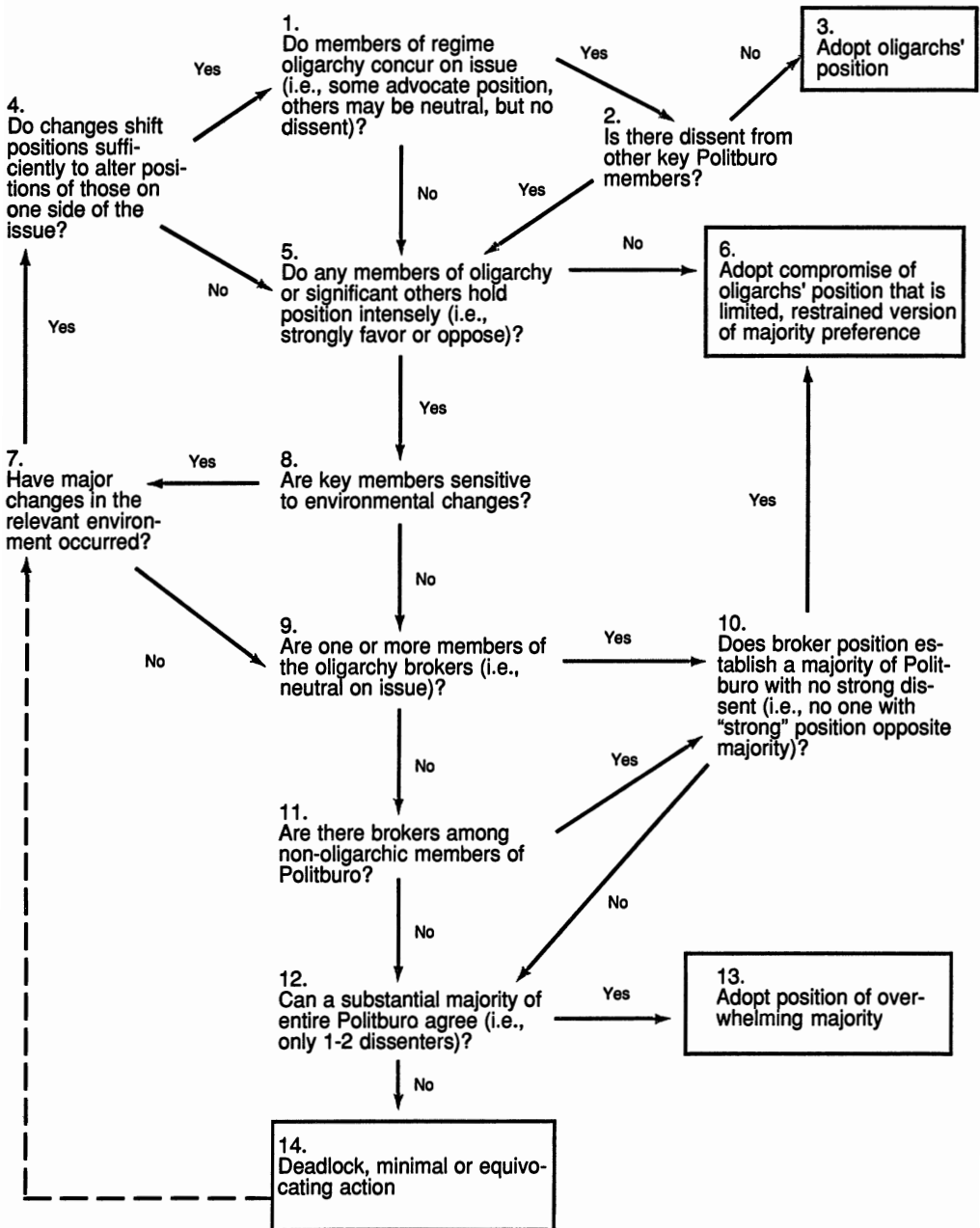
Let us begin by estimating the situation in the Politburo as it may have appeared in the late spring of 1972. As shown in the decision tree in Figure 2, we start by asking about the possible concurrence of positions among the four leading members of the oligarchy (item 1 in Figure 2). As indicated, our available data suggest Brezhnev and Kosygin were leaning against greater involvement, but they are classified as cue takers. Suslov and Podgorny had been relatively neutral on the issue and are categorized as potential brokers. Even though our data indicate their commitment was modest, there was

no disagreement among these four on the position of withholding arms from Egypt. Had these members constituted the core of a ruling coalition regime, the absence of dissent in the inner circle would have been sufficient for us to expect a firm policy decision. But in an oligarchical regime there is more competition for power, and the core group is mindful of the need to consider the views of key clients or others claiming special interest in the problem. Thus we must consider item 2 in Figure 2 and determine if other key members on this issue dissented from the core group's disposition to withhold offensive arms. We have contended that on this issue the positions of Grechko and Ponomarev must be added to the views of the oligarchs. Ponomarev, the data imply, was rather indifferent on the issue, but Grechko emerged as a strong advocate of providing Egypt with substantial armament. Because of his dissent, we have a division among those whose positions count. The model must propose how the issue would be dealt with under these circumstances.

Our assumption is that the core group has a strong desire to resolve issues among themselves—to limit the number of people who must be included in the decision. If no one feels intensely about the issue, then there is the possibility of the core group reaching a compromise among themselves (item 5 in Figure 2 leading to item 6). In this case, however, Grechko held his position quite strongly (more than one standard deviation from the mean). We judge that under these circumstances easy compromises are unlikely.

Some resolution of the problem, however, is still possible if any of the policy-makers whose positions count are sensitive to what happens in the environment and modify their positions as a result of major external events (item 8 in Figure 2). When the decision-making group includes such individuals—and we have estab-

Figure 2. Sequence of Decision Rules for Resolving Disagreements in an Oligarchic Regime



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lished that both Kosygin and Brezhnev manifested such responsiveness — we must monitor the environment for the possible occurrence of position-shaping events. None pertaining to the Egyptian question appear to have transpired in the spring of 1972. In fact, the events that did occur, such as the summit with Nixon and the Indo-Pakistani War, could be expected to reinforce Kosygin's and Brezhnev's sense of caution about providing weapons to Egypt. These events seem to undermine Grechko's position. Our analysis suggests that he, too, was sensitive to changes in the environment, although he was less likely to shift his position significantly, because of the reinforcing effect of the military interests that he probably felt compelled to represent.

Even though an easy compromise may not have been possible, a bargain among opposing members was likely if some of the core group were indifferent on the issue and were in a position to be brokers or mediators (item 9 in Figure 2). The available data suggest that on this issue Podgorny, Suslov, and Ponomarev all may have been able to play such a role. With half the members who comprise the core group somewhat opposed to sending more arms to Egypt, and Grechko's advocacy for supplying armaments somewhat tempered by external events, the opportunity arose for forging a compromise (item 10 in Figure 2 leading to outcome item 6). Item 6 in Figure 2 summarizes the outcome expected by the model under the circumstances suggested by the data. Specifically the model's forecast is for a restrained version of the majority position (no offensive weapons). Through the spring of 1972 and into the summer, Soviet behavior would appear consistent with this expected outcome. No substantial quantity of arms were transferred to Egypt — just enough to keep them on the string.

In the summer and autumn of 1972, however, Sadat and his regime initiated

actions that rightly could be regarded as restructuring events for the Soviet Politburo. In July 1972 Sadat boldly demanded the withdrawal of Soviet military advisors from Egypt. Our model suggests that such action would be perceived and affect the calculus of two pivotal members of the oligarchy — Brezhnev and Kosygin — whose personal profiles indicate that they are sensitive to environmental changes (see item 7 in Figure 2). Sadat's summer action demonstrated that he was prepared to disconnect himself militarily from the Soviet Union, which, in turn, could significantly reduce the USSR's position and influence in the Middle East. In the fall, Sadat took a second major step by indicating to the Soviets that he would limit his war aims — that he was prepared to engage Israel for limited objectives and thus reduce the risk of the war escalating to involve the Soviet Union directly. He also assured the Soviets of naval access to Egyptian ports.

We assume Sadat's two dramatic steps in the summer and autumn of 1972 were significant to at least Brezhnev and Kosygin, making possible a realignment of the positions of the core group of the Politburo. In terms of the decision tree in Figure 2, the answer to question 7 becomes *yes* sometime during the fall of 1972. Two key players who had been opposed to providing arms to Egypt were forced by external events (Sadat's demand for withdrawal) to realize the Soviets could lose their position in the Middle East. Sadat's subsequent actions combined this threat with a bid for Soviet support. The Soviet leadership was given another chance. A consensus is now possible in the core group of the Politburo around the Grechko position (item 3 in Figure 2). If the only members of the Politburo for whom the issue is salient agree on a course of action, that position becomes the decision and the outcome (item 3). Thus, the model now expects a decision to rearm Egypt.

**Table 3. Percentage of Statements by Inner Politburo Members Supportive of Factors Associated with Giving Offensive Arms to Egypt**

	1st Quarter 1972	2d Quarter 1972	3d Quarter 1972	4th Quarter 1972	1st Quarter 1973
Brezhnev	.20	.18	0 <sup>a</sup>	.10	.16
Kosygin	.37	.25	.59	.24	.51
Grechko	.59	.52	.43 <sup>a</sup>	.39	1.00 <sup>a</sup>
Suslov	.33 <sup>a</sup>	.08	.10	.34	.60 <sup>a</sup>
Podgorny	0 <sup>a</sup>	.08	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>
Ponomarev	.20	.10	0 <sup>a</sup>	0 <sup>a</sup>	.32
Politburo mean	.16	.10	.06	.11	.15
Standard deviation	.21	.14	.16	.16	.22

<sup>a</sup> Indicates less than 10 statements during the quarter that could be coded as evaluating factors relevant to supporting or opposing providing offensive arms to Egypt.

Do the available data support the model's expectation of a realignment of the positions of the key members of the Politburo most sensitive to major environmental developments? Table 3 displays the percentage of public statements favorable to arming Egypt made by each of the Politburo's inner circle during each quarter of 1972 and the first quarter of 1973. More specifically, entries in the table are references to the various factors that we judged would be supportive of enabling Egypt to go to war as a proportion of all references to factors both supportive and resistive of arming Egypt.

The data for the first two quarters of 1972 reflect the pattern described previously. Grechko appears as a strong advocate of supplying offensive weapons. The others are, to varying degrees, inclined in the other direction. During the third quarter of 1972, Sadat took his initiatives. The model suggests that these events ought to have the greatest impact on Brezhnev and Kosygin, the two cue takers. Kosygin's statements in the third quarter do reflect a rather dramatic change. For the first time, over 50% of his statements (more than two standard deviations above the Politburo mean) emphasize supportive factors. One might argue that Sadat had an effect on Brezhnev as well, but in a different

way. The Soviet leader who had been one of the most active public spokesmen simply stopped referring to the relevant factors entirely.<sup>8</sup> So did Podgorny and Ponomarev, although this is not a major change from their previous behavior. Grechko, too, makes very few public statements, but they remain favorable to support for Egypt.

The fourth quarter of 1972 seems more puzzling. Of the four members of the core group who speak out, three (Brezhnev, Kosygin, and even Grechko) place more emphasis on the factors indicative of resisting sending arms to Egypt than during any of the three previous quarters. The exception is Suslov, one of the members we had designated as a possible broker—the member least likely to change his views in response to external developments but likely to be responsive to opportunities within the group. On balance Suslov still stresses the supportive factors less than 50% of the time, though he is speaking publicly in a pattern that during the fourth quarter of 1972 comes closest to the now more cautious position of Grechko.

The data for the first quarter of 1973 should reflect a new Politburo decision on Egypt, and they seem to do so. Grechko and Suslov now say very little publicly,

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but their few statements strongly emphasize the factors supportive to arming Egypt. Kosygin, the more active spokesman during this period, also stresses the supportive factors. Podgorny continues his practice of saying nothing that provides indicators of his position. Ponomarev still gives limited emphasis to supportive factors, but more so than in any previous quarter. It is Brezhnev, the proponent of *détente* with the West, who appears to remain unconvinced. His references to the resistive and supportive factors are still tilted against enabling Egypt to engage Israel in war.

Taken together, the data in this case support an interpretation consistent with the model's expectations. Sadat's moves in the third quarter of 1972 affected Brezhnev and Kosygin—the two cue takers in the core group most likely to be responsive to major developments in the international environment. These two leaders reacted quite differently. Suslov, in a position to shape a compromise, probably recognized the new fluidity among his colleagues and advanced a solution that received the support of Kosygin and all the others except Brezhnev. Brezhnev, then, appears to have acquiesced to the other oligarchs in the new decision to provide Egypt with the military support it needed for a war with Israel.

### **Conclusion**

We address two puzzles. First, how do we account for the sudden shifts in the Soviet position on providing substantial military assistance to Egypt in 1972-73? The Soviet leadership in both word and deed had displayed great caution about giving Egypt offensive arms that would enable it to engage in another round of wars with Israel. Suddenly their position shifted. Why?

A second puzzle concerns Western scholarship on the Brezhnev era. It is

widely acknowledged that some form of collective leadership characterized the top levels of policymaking during much of the Brezhnev period, particularly in the early years. Nevertheless, when it comes to actual analysis of the decision, the implications of collective leadership—that sharp disagreements between the leaders must have arisen on some major policy questions—seems to be ignored. Instead, in analysis of the Brezhnev period scholars follow one of several escape routes. For example, they assume policy is made by a single, unitary actor, so that disagreements among leaders need not be considered. Alternatively, policy is explained by reference to the position of only one individual, ignoring the fact that others must have been involved and may have advocated competing views. Still another practice has been to ignore the decision process entirely and suggest that Soviet behavior is a response to actions or policies directed toward the Soviet Union or a reaction to Soviet actions. We believe it is necessary to offer explanations consistent with our descriptions of the Soviet policy-making process.

Beyond proposing a means to cope with the puzzles we have noted, our purpose has been to advance a model of Soviet decision making that possesses several essential features. First, the model advances an explanation that merges variables from three levels of analysis—individual, group, and regime. They are not viewed as competing sources of explanation but as complimentary. Each one adds useful interpretive information that can be integrated with that from other levels of analysis.

Second, we have introduced a contingency approach to characterize the relationship among the variables. The relationships change under different circumstances. Thus, when regimes change, the decision rules for dealing with disagreements among Politburo members change. The decision trees presented as figures

have served as one methodological vehicle for structuring contingencies.

Third, we have related decision structures and processes to outcomes or, more accurately, decisions. We have estimated positions for individual powerful leaders and have offered theory-based rules for suggesting which position will prevail and whether in its original or a modified form.

Finally, we have sought a general means of explanation rather than explanation constructed for one, and only one, occurrence in Soviet policy. We certainly have not tested the model here by interpreting a single case, but we hope to have demonstrated the plausibility of such a test. It has been our intention to fashion a model that employs variables for which we might reasonably acquire some empirical data — as we did in the Soviet decision to rearm Egypt — for a large class of actual decisions, thus facilitating investigation of the accuracy of the model systematically. A more refined version of the model, based on systematic research, should offer some short-term forecasting potential.

Perhaps a few words about data are important because we wish to keep the model in harmony with obtainable data. A recurrent criticism of decision-making approaches to the study of foreign policy has been the severe restrictions on acquiring meaningful data about the decision structures and processes of governments until years later when archives are opened, and even then the opportunities may seem limited. The alternative demonstrated in the data used for the Egyptian case has been to use public materials: content analysis of speeches and interviews to estimate attitudes and personal characteristics, biographical data to judge organizational experience, and thematic analysis of papers and journals associated with institutions to estimate organizational interests. We have also depended on expert judgments by academic and policy authorities. In using all these materials we have engaged in an inference process — often

moving from the more general subject about which we had some indications to the particular decision in which we were interested. The possibility for error is obvious. But our process is reproducible. Others can follow our inference path, challenge it, and see how their alternative inferences change both a data point and — when plugged into the model — the expected outcome. It is a process for examining less accessible political leaders and governments that should gradually enhance our understanding as we compare the impact of competing, but explicit, inferences on the adequacy of our modeled explanations.

## Notes

An earlier draft of this paper was presented at the annual convention of the International Studies Association, Washington, DC, 1987. The research reported in this paper was sponsored by the Mer-shon Center, Ohio State University. This paper —like the project from which it is drawn— represents a collaborative effort among the authors with Stewart preparing the materials on the regime, Margaret Hermann the materials on individual member choices, and Charles Hermann the materials on collective decision making. The authors would like to thank John Willieme for his help in collecting the case study materials and processing the attitude data reported in this paper.

1. We described these two variables in more detail in Stewart, Hermann, and Hermann 1986, for power to regime type. We are fully aware that our approach to regime does not address the question of how one regime changes into another. This issue is left to the further development of the model. However, we do believe that two of the most important variables whose interaction explains regime change are (1) perceived threats to such national values as system survival, or system stability and (2) perceived risks to organizational values. The sources of these risks may be inaction, proposed policy, or external events, to suggest only the most important. We are indebted to Randall Ripley for help in clarifying the concept of regime change.

2. Head (1982, 40) argues that the "presiding group" in Soviet foreign policy making throughout the period 1969-73 included "Brezhnev, Suslov and Ponomarev for the Party; Kosygin and Gromyko for the government; Andropov for the KGB; Grechko for the military." While Head's basic analysis is correct in terms of decision-making authority,



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he ignores the important fact that prior to April 1973 Gromyko, Grechko, and Andropov were only candidate members of the Politburo. Hodnett (1981, 97) includes in the "inner core of leadership" in the 1970s, Kirilenko, Kosygin, Suslov, and Podgorny, in addition to Brezhnev. (See, also, Gelman 1984, 65-67 and Garthoff 1975, 29.)

3. We describe these four factors in more detail in Stewart, Hermann, and Hermann 1986.

4. We readily acknowledge that these data are fragile and that slippage may exist between public utterances and expressed positions in Politburo meetings. But they do provide one set of indicators that allow us to apply the model to an actual case and to check the fit of the model's expectations with what actually happened.

5. There is a growing literature in both political science and psychology examining how individuals process information. The references listed here provide useful summaries of this literature for both disciplines.

6. The accommodative and competitive interpersonal styles represent aggregates of individual traits. These styles and what comprises each of them are described in detail by M. Hermann (1980a, 1983). The data for interpersonal style also come from content analyses of the speeches and writings of these Politburo members.

7. We present the decision trees for the other regime types in Stewart, Hermann, and Hermann 1986.

8. Brezhnev's behavior here may reflect the traditional Soviet pattern of becoming silent in a period of policy reevaluation. Although Brezhnev and Kosygin reacted differently to Sadat's initiatives, this outcome is not inconsistent with what the model would predict. The model says the cue takers will show a change but does not yet indicate the direction of that change.

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