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The Sources of Military Doctrine

FRANCE, BRITAIN, AND GERMANY BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS

BARRY R. POSEN

Cornell University Press

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[2]

Explaining Military Doctrine

Theory and Explanation

In this chapter a number of hypotheses about what causes military doctrines to vary along the dimensions of offense-defense-deterrence, integration-disintegration, and innovation-stagnation will be introduced. These hypotheses are grouped into two families, representing two distinct perspectives on state behavior: that of "organization theory" and that of "balance of power theory." Both are summarized in this chapter. These two theoretical perspectives have achieved widespread currency in the study of national security policy. Both encompass a substantial literature. Thus, they seem a sensible place to start in an attempt to explain military doctrine. They have rarely been employed in this fashion.

The term "perspective" is perhaps more appropriate than the term "theory" as a description of the two families of hypotheses. Organization theory is a much larger and more diverse body of thought than that outlined below. I only summarize the fundamentals of the organization theory literature from which students of international politics have borrowed. Similarly, balance of power theory consists of a large and diverse literature, prescriptive and descriptive, which includes many disputes among its proponents. My summary of the theory borrows largely from Kenneth Waltz, but his work is perhaps the most abstract in the field, and his views are by no means universally shared.

Waltz and other balance of power theorists might quarrel with my use of the theory, since I have pulled it in the direction of "political realism" or "Realpolitik," with which it is closely identified, but not synonymous.[1] Waltz stresses the influence of general systemic constraints and incentives on the behavior of all states, and on the behav-

ior of the system as a whole. Students of "Realpolitik" focus on how these general constraints and incentives combine with the unique situations of individual states to lead them to specific foreign or military policies. Thus, the use of the terms "organization theory" and "balance of power theory" may be somewhat misleading. For the sake of brevity, however, and to indicate clearly the general origins of the hypotheses introduced, these shall be the labels for the two "perspectives" on the causes of military doctrine examined in this book.

I will introduce a few hypotheses regarding the influence of technology and geography on military doctrine that are consistent with one or the other of the two perspectives discussed above. One finds in the study of national security matters today a widespread belief that technology influences doctrine in decisive ways. In the past, as in the present, similar influence has sometimes been attributed to geography. I am unaware of any general theoretical statement that explains how and why either technology or geography affects military doctrine. Hence, these propositions will be integrated with the discussions of organization theory and balance of power theory.

Both organization theory and balance of power theory should be useful for explaining a good deal of state behavior during the last two or three hundred years. Balance of power theory should be able to explain the behavior of sovereign political units in any unregulated environment. Organization theory can be used to explain organizational behavior wherever we find large, functionally specialized bureaucracies. This latter condition has partially characterized European states since the end of the seventeenth century, and fully characterized them since the second half of the nineteenth century. Additionally, the two theories can be used to generate new hypotheses which can be tested against state behavior during this period. Because of the nature of the theories, valid comparisons can be made of different states across time and space. Lessons derived from such comparisons should be valid for many years to come, and should allow some rough predictions about the future.

Both of the theories under consideration are of the same type—structural theories. Such theories attempt to abstract from a particular political system the unique characteristics of its constituent parts and the interactions among those parts. As Kenneth Waltz puts it, the object is to discover the "arrangement" of a system's parts and the "principle of that arrangement."[2] To put it another way, such theories are inspired by the desire to discover what makes a system a system, what holds it together and causes it to behave in characteristic ways. Students of international politics have observed that

certain outcomes tend to recur, often contrary to the intentions of the actors. Organization theorists have noted the same phenomenon in their field of inquiry. In spite of real differences of substance, the behaviors of a great diversity of states in a wide range of historical circumstances seem to exhibit important underlying similarities. Thucydides' account of the rivalry between Athens and Sparta and his explanation for that rivalry are uncannily reminiscent of the Soviet-American Cold War. At the organizational level, students of large businesses, large bureaucracies, and large military organizations have found striking behavioral similarities.

Waltz argues that the concept of "structure" can be used to understand what holds an international system together and what produces certain characteristic outcomes. Implicitly, this view is shared by organization theorists, who frequently use the term "structure," albeit with little rigor. A common thread runs through Waltz's use of the term and that of many organization theorists.[3] The distribution of capabilities—of *power* within a system—is considered to be of critical long-term importance.

Why is the distribution of capabilities important? Because it is fair to assume that individual political actors are constrained by both the limits of their own power and the extent of others' power. Another fair assumption is that individual political actors are sufficiently rational to have some sense of what both they and their fellows can do. Beyond determining the mere distribution of power, it is important to know if that power is distributed according to any fixed principle. Does the distribution of power, intendedly or unintendedly, protect any particular value?

Within organizations (and states, for that matter) power is distributed to achieve functional specialization—an intense division of labor. The coordination of functionally specialized sub-units demands a hierarchical distribution of power. Power is distributed functionally and hierarchically to protect the purposes of the organization—be it a corporation, bureaucracy, or state.

The same is obviously not true of international politics. There, power is distributed more equally than in organizations. Moreover, it is distributed to protect no group purpose. There is no functional specialization among states. We can, however, conceptualize the value protected. States "read" the distribution of international political power rather easily to learn that it does not protect them and may endanger them. Sovereign units, mindful that no outside party will help them, help themselves. They nurture the power that they have, and they often seek to gain more. Power protects itself in interna-

tional politics. Such behavior tends to preserve individual sovereignty. Anarchy, the absence of an overarching sovereign, remains. The distribution of power in international politics thus *unintendedly* protects anarchy—the "value" in this case.

Both balance of power theory and organization theory assume that actors do what they can with their own power and what they must with reference to the power of others. This being the case, each theory predicts similar behavior of units in the context of similar structures. Anarchical environments should produce some similar behavior among the states that inhabit them. Purposeful, functionally specialized organizations should produce some similarity of behavior among sub-components.

The structural emphasis of both of these theories gives them their special utility in undertaking the task of comparing and explaining variations in military doctrine among different states, states all defended by professional military organizations but differently positioned in the international political system. A more thorough understanding of the origins of military doctrine can be achieved by employing the two theories in combination than by employing either separately or by proceeding empirically, with no theory at all. Both theories abstract the constraints that affect the behavior of national security decision-makers in the modern state. In some cases the external and internal constraints work at cross-purposes, in others they reinforce each other; in no case are they unimportant.

Theory Testing

A theory can be tested by logically deducing from it a series of "empirical statements." If it turns out that the empirical statements are true, the theory appears "more credible." The more times one can accomplish this, the more credible a given theory becomes. The hypotheses introduced in this chapter are empirical statements of this kind. To the extent that they are confirmed by the cases examined later in this book, the theories from which they are deduced gain more credibility.[4]

A second powerful type of test pits theories against each other. Arthur Stinchcombe makes use of the notion of the crucial experiment. "By eliminating the most likely alternative theory, we increase the credibility of our theory much more than we do by eliminating alternatives at random by checking consequences of our theory without thinking."[5] This test is difficult to perform in the present case. Inasmuch as there has been little attempt to develop theoretical expla-

nations of military doctrine, it is hard to say what are the most likely alternative theories. My goal is, perforce, more modest—to take two of the most widely employed theories of state behavior in international politics and compare their explanatory power. As far as explaining military doctrine is concerned, the theories introduced here are among the "most likely alternative" theories to each other. Stinchcombe suggests that we "look for those consequences of our theory whose negation is implied by the alternatives."[6] It will not escape the student of international politics that the balance of power family of hypotheses introduced in this chapter is closely akin to Graham Allison's "Model I" or rational actor model, Hans Morgenthau's "realist" theory of international politics, and Kenneth Waltz's "third image." The organization theory family of hypotheses is closely akin to Allison's "Models II and III," and falls within Waltz's "second image" of political theorizing.[7] In explaining international outcomes, balance of power theorists have stressed the influence of the *system;* organization theorists the state and its constituent parts. The reader will realize that some of the hypotheses advanced in this chapter conflict. Thus, the battle is joined. To the extent that hypotheses deduced from one or the other school seem to better explain the character of military doctrine, the theory from which those hypotheses are deduced achieves greater credibility.

Military doctrine, as discussed here, is a response to both national and international influences. It represents the state's response to the constraints and incentives of the external world, yet it encompasses means that are in the custody of military organizations. These are perhaps the most "organized" of organizations. It is from their basic structure that most subsequent organizations take their inspiration. Thus, military doctrine provides an excellent ground upon which the two theories can do battle.

One goal of theory testing should be the construction of particularly difficult tests—tests that one intuitively expects the theory to pass only with difficulty. Military doctrine offers a hard test for both balance of power theory and organization theory. In matters directly relating to the security of the state, it is reasonable to expect the maximum influence of environmental constraints and incentives and a high level of civilian political control over military organizations, outcomes consistent with balance of power theory. Organization theory gains in credibility if hypotheses derived from it provide the best explanation for the character of a particular military doctrine. Its defeat in such a competition for explanatory value must be judged a weakness in an area in which it claims to be strong.

Military doctrine also provides a difficult test for balance of power theory, since military organizations should, based on organization theory predictions, be among the hardest to control. They are parochial, closed, large, endowed with all sorts of resources, and masters of a particularly arcane technology. They should be out of control much of the time, as they were prior to World War I. If it turns out that balance of power theory has a lot to say about military doctrine, this should give us more confidence in the theory.

Neither the notion that technology exerts a decisive influence on military doctrine, nor that geography does so, is specifically addressed by any general theory. Nevertheless, it would be useful to test each notion for its validity. In our own time, technological developments such as multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles and guidance improvements are often blamed for the emergence of nuclear warfighting doctrines.[8] Britain's geographical separation from the European continent has long been cited as an explanation for her unique mode of participation in continental politics and wars.[9] After the fact, military historians are often willing to conclude that a particular technology had objective implications which either did find or should have found their way into military doctrine. Theorists such as Robert Jervis and George Quester use military technology and geography to explain international political events, frequently treating them as objective factors.[10]

States and military organizations are responsible for interpreting new military technologies and responding to geographic constraints and opportunities. Theories about states and military organizations can help us understand how new military technologies are assimilated and how geography is understood. To the extent that objective implications of technology or geography can be identified, balance of power theory would seem to predict some appreciation of these factors by the actors on the scene. Organization theory, on the other hand, predicts rather selective and idiosyncratic understanding of technology and geography.

While limited evidence and the quirks of history make most "tests" of international political theories less than decisive, I will argue that balance of power theory emerges from this exercise with a good deal more credit than it has enjoyed in recent years. Organization theory, on the other hand, emerges with somewhat less credit. The analysis does not show that organizational factors are unimportant, but rather that they are more often than not overridden by constraints and incentives that lie at the level of the international political system. Finally, crude notions of technological or geographical determinism find

little vindication, although these factors do influence military doctrine in important ways.

Predictions about the behavior of civilians and soldiers derived from the organization theory and civil-military relations literature broadly suggest a tendency toward offensive, stagnant military doctrine—doctrine poorly integrated with the political objectives of a state's grand strategy. The cases will illustrate that these tendencies do exist; organization theory does successfully predict a fair amount of military behavior and does explain much about civil-military relations. Yet, by 1940, outcomes different from those predicted by the theory emerged. Why?

Balance of power theory suggests that states respond to potentially dangerous increases in the power of their putative adversaries. Contrary to what is often supposed, balancing behavior was widely in evidence in the 1930s. For instance, by the time of the Battle of France, total British and French military assets probably exceeded those of Germany. Balancing behavior is both qualitative and quantitative. States not only seek allies and build up their military power, they audit their military doctrines. Such audits mitigate the tendency toward stagnation predicted by organization theory.

Balance of power theory predicts heterogeneity along the dimension of offense-defense-deterrence, depending on the political objectives of a state's grand strategy and on the geographical, technological, and political constraints and opportunities it faces. Balance of power theory can predict some details of military doctrine on the basis of the state's political "position" in the international system. It also predicts closer integration of a state's military doctrine with the political aspects of its grand strategy than does organization theory. Finally, as a function of the competition among states, it predicts a tendency toward innovation in military doctrine. These tendencies are not manifest all the time. In times of relative international calm, organizational dynamics are allowed to flourish. But in times of threat, the actions of both statesmen and, to a lesser extent, soldiers will tend to override these dynamics.

Thus, although my analysis affirms the utility of organization theory to the study of military doctrine, it also challenges the widespread popularity that the theory has enjoyed over the last decade in the study of national security matters; conversely, it enhances the credibility, and expands the explanatory power, of balance of power theory.

Choice of Cases

The preceding remarks directly raise the questions of the choice of cases and the method by which the cases have been researched. The prewar doctrines of Britain, France, and Germany were chosen as cases for five reasons. First, this period is one in which widespread conclusions were drawn about the implications of military technology based upon experiences with the technology. Second, this is a period that saw major innovations in doctrine—Blitzkrieg and Fighter Command (the first integrated air defense in history)—and one minor innovation—the Maginot Line. Third, the political relationship between Britain and France, and between them and their various smaller client states, contrasts sharply with the relative political isolation of Germany during most of the interwar period. This offers an opportunity to test hypotheses that I have derived from balance of power theory concerning the influence of political isolation on the doctrines of states. Fourth, the states in this period were defended by large, modern, professional military organizations. These three cases thus provide three major military organizations to examine. Indeed, since separate services will be examined in each case, more than three military organizations will be examined. Thus, an excellent opportunity to test organization theory hypotheses is provided. Finally, two of these states, Britain and France, were status quo powers initially confident of their security but gradually being confronted by more and more evidence to the contrary. Thus, "balancing" propositions can be tested.

In examining prewar doctrines, I have placed primary reliance on the large body of secondary literature concerning the period. Currently, the archives of Britain and France are releasing material from this period, and authors of recently published histories have had access to large quantities of primary source material. In some cases, I have supplemented secondary sources with primary source material when such material was useful to elaborate certain points or fill in gaps.

Military Organizations and Military Doctrine

The national security functions of the modern state are divided among specialists. These specialists, particularly professional sol-

diers, live out their lives and accomplish their tasks in highly structured, complex organizations. These two characteristics of the modern state, functional specialization and bureaucratization, exert an important influence on those aspects of military doctrine singled out for study in this work.

Military doctrines are in the day-to-day custody of military organizations. Such organizations have a large part of the responsibility both for the construction of military doctrine and for its execution in wartime. Intuitively, one would be surprised if such organizations did not exert a powerful and distinctive influence on military doctrine, and through it on grand strategy as a whole. Reliance on intuition alone is unnecessary, however. A rich, interrelated (if not entirely coherent) body of propositions about organizations, militaries, and states provides a useful starting point for generating new hypotheses about the influence of military organizations on military doctrine. These propositions are propounded in the literature of organization theory, civil-military relations, and state-building and state structure. Two fundamental points stand out. First, certain attributes of modern military organizations affect their attitudes to offense, defense, and deterrence; to political-military integration; and to innovation. Second, some aspects of the structure of modern states make it difficult, though not impossible, for civilians to exercise their authority along the dimensions of military doctrine selected for study.

Numerous propositions relevant to the study of military organizations are scattered through the organization theory literature. Regrettably, organization theory itself is a rather incoherent field. While propositions proliferate wildly, connections among them are vague. Although these propositions are by no means always clear about what causes what, and why, a number of propositions do bear on the central questions of this study. The literature on civil-military relations, though it has tended to focus on the question of military intervention into politics, also includes propositions relevant to the study of military doctrine. What follows is not a review of the literature from those two fields, but a discussion solely of those insights that may help yield answers to the central questions of this study.

Organization theory tries to explain organizational behavior and structure—what organizations do and how they look. In military affairs, the offensive proclivity of military organizations is an example of the kind of behavior we would wish to explain. Organization theorists explain things by reference to three important causal forces: *purpose*, *people*, and *environment*.

Purpose

Organizations come into existence for the pursuit of specific purposes. Purpose demands coordination, planning, and supervision. It requires the systematic introduction of rationality criteria, of cause and effect, cost and benefit. The pursuit of purpose encourages behavior and structure aimed at reducing uncertainty. All of this gives rise to that characteristic organizational form, bureaucracy. The specificity of functions in a bureaucracy mirrors the specificity of its purposes. Research and development requires a different bureaucratic structure than does the manufacture of steel.[11]

People

Organizations must pursue their purposes with people. People are a great source of uncertainty. While purpose demands rationality, people may not be able to provide it. People seldom approach the perfect rationality assumed in classical economics.[12] Capabilities are limited and unevenly distributed. Moreover, people are not tools; their inputs and outputs are not calculable in the same way as are inputs and outputs of raw materials or machinery. People seek more than simply wages from the organizations that they join. Power, authority, prestige, deference, good fellowship, and so on all condition the behavior of people in organizations. Thus, achieving the rationality required to pursue a purpose is problematical.

Environment

In the most basic sense, the environment spawns the organization; it produces the purpose that calls the organization into being. From the environment, contributions of people and materiel must be obtained. The organization's output is sold or traded to the environment in return for more contributions. The environment is, however, a source of great uncertainty. Will the organization's output satisfy those in the environment on whom the organization depends? Will essential contributions turn up at the time and place required for the organization to accomplish its purpose? The environment, like the organization's people, is often an obstacle to the coordination, control, and rationality that are required for the pursuit of purpose.[13]

Most of the propositions in organization theory stress one or more of these causal forces, and their relationship to one another. From these forces, a picture of organizational behavior and structure can be built. To pursue their purposes, organizations must coordinate and control the contributions of large numbers of variable human beings

in the context of an uncertain environment. Purpose demands rationality. Uncertainty is the enemy of rationality. Organizations attempt to reduce both internal and external sources of uncertainty.

Managing Uncertainty—Internal Mechanisms

Organizations develop routines for dealing with particular tasks, problems, and events standard in the everyday life of the organization. These are the now well-known "standard operating procedures" (SOPs) and programs combining such procedures popularized in the work of Graham Allison.[14] SOPs are the simplest rules of thumb for accomplishing basic tasks. In most Western armies it is SOP for tanks to fire from a "hull-down" or "hull-defilade" position. Positioning the tank on the reverse slope of a small hill and depressing the muzzle of the gun exposes very little of the tank's body to enemy fire, but allows it to fire. It is also SOP, on the offensive, to make the maximum possible use of irregularities in the terrain to mask the advancing tank.

SOPs are combined in standard ways to produce programs. It might take a large number of SOPs to produce a program.[15] The two SOPs above can be combined into an effective offensive program: some tanks in a unit may stand in a hull-down, overwatch position, covering the advance of other tanks that are exploiting the terrain. Organizations customarily have few programs, and making new ones is not easy. The package of programs held by an organization is called its repertoire, and is roughly analogous to a military doctrine.

Organizations develop preferred ways of doing things in order to control and coordinate the contributions of large numbers of subunits. Individuals and sub-organizations that specialize in one particular SOP or program develop a personal and professional stake in it. Organizations ensure that tasks are carried out by endowing sub-organizations with the capability and authority to do so.

Individuals in sub-organizations are trained, rewarded, and promoted according to a particular way of doing business. Those socialized and promoted by the organization to do things in a particular way will, in their turn, apply the same criteria to their subordinates. Thus, SOPs, programs, and the organizations that are responsible for them become institutionalized.[16] They may hang on long after they have outlived their usefulness. The remarkable longevity of the horse cavalry in Western armies is a good example. Allison has observed that primary responsibility for any set of problems gives rise to "parochial priorities and perceptions."[17] This phenomenon is particularly acute in military organizations.[18]

Environmental Uncertainty

The environment can be a source of much interference and uncertainty. Organizations do what they can to minimize environmental interference that might disrupt their normal routines.[19] Broadly, there are two sorts of strategies used by organizations to reduce their dependence on the environment—material and political. Material strategies aim to bring uncertainties under the direct control of the organization. Organizations stockpile or warehouse, make a fetish of scheduling, and industriously gather all the information they can on possible changes in the supply of what they need or the demand for what they do.[20] In some cases organizations engage in imperial policies that take some of these contingencies into their own domain. The determination of the United States Marine Corps to retain its own private air force is a good example. Bad experience with navy carrier-based aviation in World War II convinced the Corps that the Marine rifleman could only depend on a brother Marine for reliable close air support.

Organizations resort to political strategies when material ones are too expensive or are proscribed. For instance, military organizations might like to determine the size of their own budgets. One cannot, however, be at the same time a specialist in organized violence and a specialist in the collection of taxes. Hence, militaries are dependent on legitimate political authorities for critical contributions.

Those with formal authority over the organization are a cause of uncertainty. Organizations struggle for *independence* from legitimate authority, fearful that capricious, uninformed exercise of that authority will upset the delicate balance of internal structure and routine. To preserve their autonomy, organizations use political strategies such as the maintenance of alternative suppliers, the pursuit of prestige, or the pursuit of power over those on whom they are dependent. Militarism is one prestige strategy practiced by military organizations.[21] Military organizations have a certain inherent power within states that stems from the function that they serve, and they try to increase this power by mystifying their art, and concealing that art from civilian authorities. As Max Weber observed of all bureaucracies, militaries seem to know that knowledge is power, and take steps to keep their knowledge secret.[22]

Students of civil-military relations have noted the tendency of military organizations to seek autonomy. Samuel Finer argues that mili-

taries may intervene in politics precisely because of their professionalism. "As specialists in their field, the military leaders may feel that they alone are competent to judge on such matters as size, organization, recruitment, and equipment of the forces."[23]

Richard Betts, in his thorough investigation of postwar civil-military relations during crises, concludes that not much has changed. More often than not the Joint Chiefs of Staff have, since World War II, sought to maintain a distinction between "policy" decisions, in which they advise civilian leadership, and military decisions, over which they claim authority. In many cases, they have preferred organizational autonomy and poverty to political control and wealth.[24]

Other contingencies in the environment include attempts by rivals to take over an organization's primary task. This sometimes elicits violent reactions from threatened organizations. The Navy bitterly opposed Air Force attempts to establish preeminence in the immediate postwar period. These dangers can be alleviated by arranging a "negotiated environment." "The primary environment (relations with other organizations comprising the government) is stabilized by such arrangements as agreed budgetary splits, accepted areas of responsibility, and established practices."[25] In short, organizations seek alliances and make treaties.

Allison's comments on the international environment are of special utility. "Where the international environment cannot be negotiated, organizations deal with remaining uncertainty by establishing a set of *standard scenarios* that constitute the contingencies for which they prepare."[26] This has a special bearing on military organizations. Once military organizations have prepared such standard scenarios, they have an interest in finding ways to impose the scenarios on their adversaries through offensive action.

Uncertainty and Innovation

Very little of the preceding summary of organization theory suggests that organizational innovation is either probable or simple. As "rational," purposeful instruments, organizations place a premium on predictability, stability, and certainty. These values are inimical to innovation. Individuals within organizations develop personal stakes in particular elements of their organizations. They have little interest in change. For these reasons, students of organizational behavior have more frequently addressed incremental change than innovation.[27]

However, innovation—large change—is not unknown in organizations. What are it causes?

First, organizations innovate when they fail. This hypothesis recurs in the literature. Events understood to be serious failures challenge the organization's basic existence. It owes its existence to achievement of a certain purpose. The organization must innovate in a way that achieves the purpose, or it will suffer.[28]

Second, organizations innovate when they are pressured from without. Unsatisfied clients tell the organization what is wrong. If they have formal authority over the organization, they will change it to set things right. Pressure may be indirect. The organization may face diminishing contributions of resources because its customers or clients are doing business with someone else. The organization must innovate or face grievous losses.[29]

Third, organizations innovate because they wish to expand. Organizations often wish to expand in order to control environmental uncertainty and to seize new resources that can be used to reward their members. Of course, innovation is just one strategy for expansion, and not necessarily a preferred one.[30]

In the preceding pages, I have summarized the major hypotheses of organization theory useful to this inquiry. It is now possible, drawing on those major hypotheses, to infer more specific hypotheses concerning the three dimensions of military doctrine particularly focused on in this book: offense-defense-deterrence, integration-disintegration, and innovation-stagnation.

Hypotheses—Offense, Defense, and Deterrence

Most soldiers and many civilians are intuitively attracted to the offense as somehow the stronger form of war. Clausewitz, often misconstrued as the apostle of the offensive, was very mindful of the advantages of a defensive strategy. He called defense "the stronger form of war." However, every aspect of his work that *could be taken* as offensive advocacy has been so taken. What accounts for such systematic misinterpretation?

Uncertainty Reduction

Military organizations will generally prefer offensive doctrines because they *reduce uncertainty* in important ways.

1. The need for standard scenarios encourages military organizations to prefer offensive doctrines. In order to have a set of SOPs and programs, they must plan for a "standard scenario." Once SOPs and

programs have been tailored to such a scenario, the organization, in order to be "fought"—used in combat—must be used with those SOPs and programs. If the organization is to be "fought" successfully, it must respond to command in predictable ways. Commanders must have orders to give that generate predictable responses. Thus, it is strongly in the interests of a military organization to impose its "standard scenario" on the adversary through offensive action before the adversary does the same to it.

2. Warfare is an extremely competitive endeavor. Its most successful practitioners strive for even the smallest advantages. Thus, military organizations seem to prefer offensive doctrines not only because they appear to guarantee the side on the offense its standard scenario, but because they also *deny* the enemy his standard scenario. A military organization prefers to fight its own war and *prevent* its adversary from doing so. Taking the offensive, exercising the initiative, is a way of structuring the battle. The advantages seen to lie with surprise are more than psychological. An organization fighting the war that it planned is likely to do better than one that is not. For example, in the Arab attack on Israel in 1973, Egyptian and Syrian preparations were aimed at imposing an uncongenial style of warfare on Israel.

Defensive warfare might also seem to allow an organization to structure the battle. However, the defending organization is often in a reactive position, improvising new programs to cope with the adversary's initiative. If the defending organization is, for whatever reasons, a fast learner, it may rapidly improvise countermeasures that destroy the offender's programs. (The Israel Defense Forces achieved this with their Suez Canal crossing in 1973.) This leaves both organizations fighting a battle of improvisation which both would probably prefer to avoid. Victory goes to the most flexible command structure. Generally, however, professional soldiers appear to believe that striking the first blow is beneficial because, at least initially, it reduces the attacker's necessity to improvise and the defender's ability to improvise. This military judgment may reflect an implicit understanding that military organizations are not fast learners, precisely because they are the structured systems protrayed earlier. The perceived advantage of taking the offensive is thus magnified.

3. Because predicting whose national will can be broken first is a political task, not susceptible to the analytical skills of a military organization, military organizations dislike deterrent doctrines. Punishment warfare, conventional or nuclear, tends not to address an adversary's capabilities, but his will. Calculating in advance of a war whose

will is likely to break first is inherently somewhat more difficult for a military organization than devising plausible scenarios for destroying enemy capabilities. Calculations of enemy determination demand an entirely different set of skills than those commanded by a military organization. Calculations about military outcomes are at least somewhat susceptible to "engineering" criteria; calculations of relative will are not. However, this argument may be a weak one. There are more powerful reasons why military organizations do not favor deterrent doctrines.

4. Military organizations will prefer offensive doctrines because they help increase organizational size and wealth. Size and wealth help reduce internal uncertainty by increasing the rewards that the organization can distribute to its members. Size and wealth help reduce external uncertainty by providing a buffer against unforeseen events such as huge losses or partial defeats.

While the offensive allows the attacking force to be more certain of how its organization will perform, and to deny that certainty to an adversary, the offensive is likely to be technically more complex, quantitatively more demanding. There are many extra contingencies for which an offensive military instrument must be prepared. An attacking army encounters natural obstacles that must be crossed, creating a demand for engineers. Fortifications encountered may demand more and heavier artillery for their reduction. The offensive army may have to go anywhere, requiring special technical capabilities in its equipment. Nothing can be specialized for the environment of the home country. Aircraft need greater range and payload. All of these factors require an extensive logistics capability to uncoil behind the advancing military force. Troops will be required to guard and defend this line of communication. Operations at range will impose greater wear and tear on the equipment—demanding large numbers in reserve, and still more support capability. While various characteristics of geography, politics, and technology might place these same demands on a defensive force, as a general rule offensive doctrines impose them to a greater extent. Deterrent doctrines offer the most minimal material opportunities for military organizations. This is partly because they are more dependent on political will than on military capabilities. Partly it is a result of the clarity of the punishment mission, which allows rather extreme specialization.

5. Military organizations will prefer offensive doctrines because they enhance military autonomy. As noted earlier, civilian intervention in operational matters can be a key source of uncertainty for military organizations. Offensive doctrines tend to be more compli-

cated than defensive or deterrent doctrines, and thus increase the difficulties for civilians who wish to understand military matters. Defense and deterrence are relatively easy for civilians to master. Deterrent warfare with nuclear weapons has consistently proved to be the easiest form of warfare for civilian analysts to understand in the postwar period. Deterrent warfare by means of popular resistance—extended guerrilla action, for example—depends so heavily on the legitimacy of the government and its authority over its people that it may be the highest form of political-military warfare. Defense or denial does not present the complications of the offensive, and again includes such strong cooperation with civilian authorities as to restrict the operational autonomy of the army. The offensive, however, can be waged off national soil, and therefore immediately involves less civilian interference. Offensive operations are elaborate combinations of forces and stratagems—more art than science. Denial is more straightforward, and punishment is simplest of all. From specialists in victory, defense turns soldiers into specialists in attrition, and deterrence makes them specialists in slaughter.

There is little in organization theory or the civil-military relations literature to suggest that modern militaries will prefer anything but offensive doctrines, if such doctrines are in any way feasible.

Geography

6. Organization theory suggests a somewhat muted geographical influence on military doctrine. (The influence of technology will be discussed below.) Where geography can plausibly be argued to favor an offensive doctrine, it reinforces the organizational tendencies outlined above. For instance, it has become commonplace to explain the affinity of Prussia-Germany (in the past) and Israel (in the present) for offensive doctrines by their a) being surrounded and outnumbered by powerful enemies and b) enjoying the advantage of interior lines (with the ability to shift forces quickly from one front to another). Thus, the sequential defeat of the members of an enemy coalition with a series of rapid offensives, before they can pull their forces together and coordinate an attack, is deemed to be very attractive. Presumably, any state finding itself in a similar position would agree.

One less often finds the reverse argued—that some particular geographic configuration generally and sensibly leads to a defensive military doctrine. At the level of grand strategy, of course, both Britain and the United States have exploited the defensive advantage bestowed by ocean barriers. Yet, the navies of both powers have periodically argued for offensive military strategies to achieve "command

of the sea."[31] They usually have been constrained to operate in a more limited fashion, but the preference for the offensive, even in situations where it seems unreasonable, is striking.

Numerous examples of military organizations that undervalue the defensive utility of geography can be found. British colonial soldiers in India viewed Afghanistan as a potential Russian invasion route, and sought to control it. Yet, one British military expedition after another met with disaster brought on by wild Afghan raiders, treacherous terrain and weather, and long distances.[32] This stark evidence of the area's unsuitability as an invasion route was ignored, as subsequent expeditions were deemed necessary. In World War I the Russians underrated the defensive value of the Masurian Lakes to the Germans. The lakes ultimately split the large Russian force, allowing a smaller German army to defeat it piecemeal.[33] At the outset of World War I the British dispatched a small force to Persia, to guard the Abadan oil facilities. Its commanders opted for an attack on Baghdad, a distant objective for which the force was woefully inadequate.[36] Currently, the U.S. Navy advocates an offensive strategy against Soviet Naval forces based in the Barents Sea and Murmansk—a tough and distant target.[35] NATO has geographic choke points off the Norwegian North Cape, and in the Greenland-Iceland–United Kingdom Gap, that provide a powerful defensive advantage against any Soviet naval offensive, and all but obviate the need for an offensive against the north. In short, organization theory suggests that geographic factors that support offensive doctrines will more often be correctly assessed than those that support a defensive doctrine. History seems to confirm this observation.

Hypotheses—Integration

It was over a century and a half ago that Clausewitz made his now famous remarks on the relationship of war to policy. Most simply, "war is not a mere act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political activity by other means."[36] Political considerations reach into the military means, to influence *"the planning of war, of the campaign, and often even of the battle"* (my emphasis).[37] Clausewitz clearly believed that statesmen could and should ensure that policy infuse military operations. Those in charge of policy require "a certain grasp of military affairs."[38] They need not be soldiers, however. "What is needed in the post is distinguished intellect and character. He [the statesman] can always get the necessary military information somehow or other."[39] Clausewitz was over-optimistic on this

score. Few have challenged his judgment that policy must infuse acts of war, but the achievement of this goal has proven more difficult than he imagined. Social developments under way in his own time were to make political-military integration highly problematical.

Russell Weigley, the American military historian, has observed that political-military integration remains an "intractable problem," endemic to "the whole history of the modern state."[40] Moreover, the problem does not seem to be affected by whether the form of government is democratic or totalitarian. It arises in all types of political systems. In singling out the "modern state" Weigley is on the track of an explanation; for the distinctive structure of the modern state creates the problem.

The modern state emerged in its present form during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its most outstanding characteristic in terms of military doctrine is functional specialization. The separate responsibilities for diplomacy and war of organizations and individuals commanding different skills, information, and materiel generates a structural barrier to political-military integration. Ironically, such functional specialization was caused by the power struggle among the monarchies of Europe. Specialization and professionalization of foreign policy and national security functions spread because they improved the war-making capability of individual states.[41] "War made the state, and the state made war."[42]

The division of functions, and of expertise, is not an insurmountable obstacle to political-military integration. It is a real one, however. Even if soldiers could be relied upon to carry out the wishes of their civilian masters without resistance—even if they were the neutral tools that public administration theorists once assumed all bureaucracies to be—the problem of reconciling policy with administration, political objectives with military doctrine, still would exist. Ignorance of each other's problems, and barriers to coordination, would create difficulties. Grand strategies would tend toward disintegration.

The problem is rendered more serious, however, by those internal characteristics of the military as *combat organizations* discussed earlier. These affect not only the extent to which a doctrine will be offensive, but the degree of integration and the chances of innovation as well. Moreover, the division of functions within the modern state tends to magnify the impact of these internal characteristics on overall grand strategy.

Functional specialization between soldiers and statesmen, and the tendency of soldiers to seek as much independence from civilian interference as possible, combine to make political-military integration an uncertain prospect. These two fundamental aspects of state structure and organization lead to the following deductions:

1. As a rule, soldiers are not going to go out of their way to reconcile the means they employ with the ends of state policy. This is not necessarily to argue that they deliberately try to disconnect their means from political ends. Often, however, soldiers will elevate the narrow technical requirements of preferred operations above the needs of civilian policy. In the case of the European militaries prior to World War I, the single-minded pursuit of battlefield advantage closed off diplomatic options for statesmen.

2. This cause of disintegration is exacerbated because military organizations are unwilling to provide civilian authorities with information that relates to doctrinal questions, especially those having the most to do with the actual conduct of operations. Thus, civilians are simply unaware of the ways military doctrine may conflict with the ends of state policy. Policy-makers may simply not know enough about the operational practices of their military organizations to either alter their political strategy or force changes in military doctrine that would bring it in line with the existing political strategy. Nevertheless, in spite of the limits of information, organization theory would seem to suggest that if political-military integration is to be achieved, civilian intervention into doctrinal matters is essential. The question is, given the obstacles, what is sufficient to cause civilian intervention? This is a question better answered by balance of power theory.

3. The setting of priorities among military forces and missions is a key aspect of political-military integration. In multiservice military organizations, civilian intervention is critical to the setting of priorities. This is another way civilian intervention causes integration. In chapter 1 it was argued that one of the tasks of grand strategy is to set priorities among threats and opportunities in the environment, and to set priorities among forces to match these threats and opportunities. Interpreting the external environment is the specialty of civilians. Building and operating military forces is the task of services. Setting priorities among the services, and among forces or branches within services, is a central task of grand strategy. Yet, the tendency of individuals within organizations to preserve the task and power of their organization or sub-organization suggests that *among* or *within* services the goal of autonomy should be just as strong as it is for the military as a whole. Thus, it is very difficult for a group of services to accomplish the task of setting priorities. The inclination of a group of

services or sub-services to set priorities among themselves is going to be low.

In the absence of civilian intervention, and the exercise of the legitimate authority that only the civilians possess, militaries will arrange a "negotiated environment." This is likely to take the form of either preserving a customary budgetary split or dividing shares equally. Each service will prepare for its own war. Forces will not cooperate effectively. Neither will they be well balanced. A tendency will emerge for each service to set requirements as if it were fighting the war alone. This can easily result in misallocation of the scarce security resources of the state.

Left to themselves, a group of services cannot make a military doctrine that will be well integrated with the political aspects of the state's grand strategy. They can simply assemble a batch of service doctrines. This is less true within services, where higher authority can make allocation decisions. Even within services, priorities may not be set according to strategic criteria. A service doctrine may be as difficult to produce as an overall grand strategy.

Different branches within a service may have different goals and interests. For example, within the interwar German Army the artillerymen who dominated the upper ranks tended to oppose armor developments, perhaps fearing that direct-fire, armored tank guns might actually eclipse the former preeminence of the artillery and the artillerymen. Within services, and among services, priorities must be set according to grand strategic as well as strictly military criteria. There is no guarantee that the priorities set will reflect policy judgments and policy needs unless civilians intervene to assure this.

Hypotheses—Innovation in Military Doctrine

Obstacles

1. Because of the process of institutionalization, innovation in military doctrine should be rare. It will only occasionally be sponsored by the military organization itself. As already remarked, according to organization theory organizations try to control the behavior of their members in order to achieve purposes. One way of doing this is by distributing power through the organization so as to ensure that certain tasks will be accomplished. Individuals develop a vested interest in the distribution of power and in the purposes it protects. Generally, it is not in the interests of most of an organization's members to promote or succumb to radical change.

2. Innovations in military doctrine will be rare because they increase operational uncertainty. While innovation is in process, the organization's SOPs and programs will be in turmoil. The ability of commanders to "fight" the organization with confidence will decline. Should a war come during the transition, the organization will find itself between doctrines. Under combat conditions, even a bad doctrine may be better than no doctrine. It is possible to argue that the Prussians at Jena, the French in 1940, and the Russians in 1941 were taken in the midst of doctrinal transition.

3. Because of the obstacles to innovation discussed above, a technology that has not been tested in war can seldom function by itself as the catalyst for doctrinal innovation. Military organizations often graft new pieces of technology on to old doctrines. As Bernard Brodie has noted, "Conservatism of the military, about which we hear so much, seems always to have been confined to their adaptation to new weaponry rather than their acceptance of it."[43] Several subsidiary propositions are in order.

A new technology will normally be assimilated to an old doctrine rather than stimulate change to a new one. This proposition is entirely consistent with organization theory, but it is derived empirically by both Bernard Brodie and Edward L. Katzenbach.[44] In his tightly written study of the longevity of the horse cavalry, the latter observes that ". . . in the military it is quite impossible to prove that minor adjustments in a traditional pattern of organization and doctrine will not suffice to absorb technological innovation of genuine magnitude."[45] This problem stems from the difficulty of proving anything about a new military technology without using it in a major war. We see the problem replicated today, with the apparently endless debate on the implications of precision-guided munitions.

Military organizations have a hard time learning about the operational implications of new technology from the wars of other military organizations. This proposition is derived empirically, although it is entirely consistent with the parochialism expected from large organizations. The failure of most European armies prior to World War I to adapt to the emerging defensive power of new military technology demonstrated in the American Civil War, the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, and the Boer War of 1899–1902, supports the proposition.[46]

Causes of Innovation

In the military sphere, there are two exceptions to the preceding proposition that military organizations generally fail to innovate in response to new technology:

4. Military organizations do seem willing to learn from wars fought by their client states—with the weapons and perhaps the doctrine of the patron. Both the U.S. and Soviet militaries are willing to draw lessons from the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, although many of the "lessons" are not entirely clear.

5. Military organizations are even better able to learn about technology by using it in their own wars. Perhaps the best example of direct experience leading to correct appraisal of technology is found in the evolution of Prussian doctrine from 1850 to 1870. Prussia's attempted railroad mobilization against Austria in 1850 was a fiasco. Learning from the experience, the Prussians turned the railroad into an efficient war instrument by 1866.[47]

There are limits to the power of this proposition. In the American Civil War, frontline soldiers adjusted rapidly to the technological facts of modern firepower. They "dug in" whenever they had the chance. The generals understood the least, ordering frontal assaults against prepared positions throughout the war.[48] The same occurred in World War I, with generals ordering repeated costly offensives. Bernard Brodie notes that the generals "seemed incapable of learning from experience, largely because of the unprecedented separation of the high command from the front lines."[49] This seems a plausible explanation, and again is entirely consistent with organization theory.

Even in its own war, a military organization can misperceive the implications of a new technology unless the lessons are very stark. Katzenbach shows that both the Prussian Army in the Franco-Prussian War and the British Army in the Boer War managed to evade the lessons taught by those engagements about the effects of modern firepower on the cavalry charge.[50] The French Army at first correctly drew from the Franco-Prussian War the lesson that technology favored the defensive, but subsequently concluded that their defeat had resulted from an insufficiently offensive strategy. This ultimately allowed the Army to justify the offensive Plan XVII at the outset of World War I. Even the notion that direct experience with a new technology will lead to its correct integration into doctrine should be accepted cautiously.

The preceding examples also offer insights into the relationship between technology and the offensive, defensive, or deterrent character of military doctrine. Most simply, if a military organization has adopted an offensive doctrine, or is bent on adopting one, technological lessons on the advantage of defense are likely to be ignored, corrupted, or suppressed. This is consistent with the argument ad-

vanced earlier concerning the probable offensive preferences of most military organizations.

Organization theory predicts at least two causes of innovation that are much stronger and more reliable in their operation than experience with new technology: (6) military organizations innovate when they have failed—suffered a defeat—and (7) they innovate when civilians intervene from without. These hypotheses can be deduced from the basic survival motive of large organizations. Failure to achieve their organizational purpose, the successful defense of the state, can cause military organizations to reexamine their basic doctrinal preferences. Similarly, soldiers may respond to the civilian intervention that defeat often precipitates in order to defend the organization's autonomy, which is under attack.

Failure and civilian intervention often go hand in hand. Soldiers fail; civilians get angry and scared; pressure is put on the military. Sometimes the pressure is indirect. Civilian leaders become disenchanted with the performance of one service and shift resources to another. These resources may provide the "slack" for the newly favored service to attempt some innovations. The loser strives to win back his lost position. Interservice rivalry in postwar America may have produced some benefits—a menu of innovations for policymakers. Arguably, interservice rivalry has been a major factor in the growth of the "Triad," which has on the whole increased U.S. security. Similarly, aggrandizement at the expense of another service may be a motive for innovation.

Although civilian intervention into military doctrine would seem to be a key determinant of innovation, it involves special problems. The division of labor between civilians and soldiers is intense. Civilians are not likely to have the capability to dream up whole new doctrines. Thus, civil intervention is dependent on finding sources of military knowledge. Civil intervention should take the form of choosing from the thin innovation menu thrown up by the services. In multiservice defense establishments, civilians have the possibility, depending on the strategic position of the state, of choosing among competing services. Within services, hierarchy and the chain of command should tend to suppress the emergence of new doctrinal alternatives at levels where the civilians cannot find them.

None of this is to say that innovation in military doctrine is impossible. These are merely tendencies. Innovation is possible. Major innovations in doctrine occurred in two of the cases discussed in this book—Britain and Germany.

Summary: Organization Theory Hypotheses

Offense, Defense, and Deterrence

1. The need for standard scenarios to reduce operational uncertainty encourages military organizations to prefer offensive doctrines.
2. The incentive, arising from the highly competitive nature of warfare, to deny an adversary his "standard scenario" encourages offensive doctrines.
3. The inability of military organizations to calculate comparative national will causes them to dislike deterrent doctrines.
4. Offensive doctrines will be preferred by military organizations because they increase organizational size and wealth.
5. Offensive doctrines will be preferred by military organizations because they enhance organizational independence from civilian authority.
6. Because the organizational incentives to pursue offensive doctrines are strong, military organizations will generally fix on geographic and technological factors that favor the offensive, but underrate or overlook such factors that favor defense or deterrence.

Integration

1. Because military organizations seek independence from civilian authority in order to reduce the uncertainties of combat, military doctrines tend to be poorly integrated with the political aspects of grand strategy. Soldiers will avoid including political criteria in their military doctrine if such criteria interfere with strictly instrumental military logic.
2. Because of functional specialization, civilians and soldiers tend to know too little about each other's affairs. Soldiers, again in the quest for autonomy, will exacerbate this problem by withholding important military information from civilians. Inadequate civilian understanding of military matters creates obstacles to political-military integration.
3. Technical specialization within military organizations works against a strategically rational setting of priorities among different services, further contributing to disintegration.

In spite of the obstacles, civilian intervention into military doctrine is likely to be the primary cause of political-military integration of grand strategy, simply because civilians alone have the interest and the authority to reconcile political ends with military means and set priorities among military services according to some rational calculus.

Innovation

Most propositions about military innovation are negative.

1. Because of the process of institutionalization, which gives most members of an organization a stake in the way things are, doctrinal innovation will only rarely be sponsored by the organization itself.
2. Because doctrinal innovation increases operational uncertainty, it will rarely be sponsored by the organization itself.
3. New technology, when it has not been tried in combat, is seldom by itself a catalyst of doctrinal innovation.
4. A client state's combat experience with a new technology may spur innovation.
5. Direct combat experience with a new technology can cause innovation.
6. Failure on the battlefield can cause doctrinal innovation.
7. Civilian intervention can cause military innovation.

Balance of Power Theory and Military Doctrine

Organization theory suggests a tendency toward offensive, stagnant military doctrines, poorly integrated with the political elements of a state's grand strategy. Balance of power theory predicts greater heterogeneity in military doctrine, dependent on reasonable appraisals by each state of its political, technological, economic, and geographical problems and possibilities in the international political system. The three case studies will show that although organization theory does accurately predict certain tendencies in military doctrine, overall outcomes are more consistent with balance of power theory predictions.

From balance of power theory specific propositions about the variables offense-defense-deterrence, innovation-stagnation, and integration-disintegration can be deduced. Balance of power theory also describes the circumstances under which these propositions are most likely to hold true. In times of relative international calm, when statesmen and soldiers perceive the probability of war as remote, the organizational dynamics outlined above tend to operate. When threats appear greater, or war appears more probable, balancing behavior occurs. A key element of that behavior is greater civilian attention to matters military.

Such attention puts the more ossified, organizationally self-serving, and politically unacceptable aspects of military doctrine under a

harsher light. Fear of disaster or defeat prompts statesmen to question long-standing beliefs, to challenge service preferences, to alter budget shares, and to find new sources of military advice and leadership. Civilians intervene to change details, including posture and doctrine, not merely general principles. Organization theory would view civilian influence at such a level as unlikely. Moreover, soldiers, fearful that policies long preferred for their peacetime utility may be found wanting in war, are (according to balance of power theory) somewhat more amenable to outside criticism than in times of international calm. Soldiers themselves are more likely to examine their traditional premises. They will not abandon them, but they may hedge against their failure. These military tendencies are insufficiently strong in their own right to produce military doctrines consistent with balance of power theory predictions. It is the combination of civilian intervention and increased military open-mindedness that produces the results predicted.

In chapter 1, the concept of the "security dilemma" was employed to explain the pernicious effects of offensive doctrines on international politics. States are assumed to be sovereign units that wish to remain so. The environment in which they live is anarchic; each must look to its own security. Measures that one state takes to ensure its security can diminish the security of others. When this occurs, those threatened, mindful that they can rely only upon themselves should war come, tend to take countervailing measures. Whether by alliance building or arms racing, states engage in balancing behavior.

This description of states, their environment, and their behavior does not rely upon any peculiarities of particular states. It is more concerned with the environment of states than with their attributes.[51] As I conceive it, balance of power theory examines the nature of the international political system as a whole, and stresses the influence of the system on the behavior of individual actors. Thus, throughout this book I occasionally use *systemic* synonymously with *balance of power* (in its adjectival meaning).

The condition of anarchy, the absence of a sovereign, allows disputes to arise among states. These disputes frequently can be settled only by war. Due to the absence of a sovereign, violence is a constant and omnipresent possibility among states. In violent disputes two factors determine outcomes: capability and will. Wars are often won by those states that disarm their adversaries by dint of their superior coalitions, stronger economies, or more efficient military organizations. The allies won World War II this way. Wars are also won by superior willingness to pay the money or blood price of waging them.

The U.S. armed forces were not destroyed on the battlefields of South Vietnam. By virtue of the pain inflicted and the costs incurred on those battlefields, the will of the government and people of the United States was destroyed.

Although disputes among states are frequent, they do not always end in war. Capabilities for war and threats of war are often in the background, however. In the context of anarchy, capability and will are the final arbiters. War measures the relative capability and will of the parties to a dispute when one side or the other is either completely defeated or signals a willingness to quit. Thus, an understanding of relative capabilities and relative will in the context of a particular dispute reduces the tendency to resort to violence. There is no need for each side to measure the power and will of the other relative to its own through the medium of war, if such an understanding can be achieved in another way. States do not go to war for its own sake. Mindful of the costs and risks of war, they attempt through diplomacy to achieve a mutual understanding of one another's power and will—an agreement on who cares more and who has more.[52] This is a difficult process, in which each side does its best to convey an impression of great capability and concern, even as it must cast a cold analytical eye on its adversary's efforts to do the same. If this process fails to produce an agreement on relative power and will, then the task of achieving this "measurement" must fall to war.

The mustering of power—military capability and assets that contribute to military capability—is perhaps the most important task imposed on the state by the international political system. It is the means of survival in an anarchical environment. The mustering of power is a central concern of balance of power theorists and advocates of Realpolitik. In the context of anarchy, states take measures to ensure their security. They endeavor to increase their power. They do not necessarily do this single-mindedly or without limits. But even when a state tries to improve its power position out of defensive motives, frequently the things it does to ensure its own security reduce the security of others. If a given state is bent on expansion, its actions are still more likely to have this effect. Those threatened have a strong incentive to respond with attempts to increase their own power. This is called "balancing behavior."

States balance in two general ways: coalition formation and internal mobilization. Coalition formation has been the concern of most statesmen and academics who use the term "balance of power." Some of the discussions have been prescriptive, admonishing the wise statesman to preserve the balance of power. Others have been

predictive, suggesting that the anarchical condition of international politics strongly encourages balancing behavior among states. Whether or not states explicitly pursue a balance, a balance will be the likely result. The emphasis has been on alliance-building among great powers.

An alliance combines the military power of a number of states for the purpose of fighting wars. In advance of a war, a coalition (or the hint of one) can serve the purpose of enlarging perceived power as well. In the late 1970s, the United States manipulated the "China card" in this fashion. Lord Grenville, the British foreign secretary, originally conceived the Second Coalition against revolutionary France as a diplomatic instrument first, a military instrument second. He wanted to present the Directory with a plan for a comprehensive settlement, backed by the threat of war.[53] This method of mustering real and perceived power is of little utility in a bipolar system. Although the threat of alliance with a third party may carry some diplomatic weight, the relative weakness of the third party mitigates the effect. Thus, in bipolar systems we should see greater attention to "internal" mechanisms both for mustering real power and for enlarging perceived power. The same should be true of politically isolated states in multipolar systems.

Internal mobilization is the second way states increase their power. In response to increases in the offensive capabilities of a single adversary or to the development of an offensive coalition, states can look inside their own borders for additional capability. The arms race or "competition" between the two superpowers is internal balancing behavior. States may extract more resources from their economies for military purposes. They may restrict consumption and promote investment to achieve high rates of growth. Through enhanced training, qualitative improvements in a state's military organization can be sought. Salaries can be raised and professional cadres expanded.

Just as coalition formation and the hint of coalition formation can enhance perceived power in peacetime, so can the mustering of internal capabilities. Arms racing in large and visible weapons systems is hard for adversaries to avoid. Such weapons are often taken as indices of relative power. Thirty-five years into the Soviet-American arms competition, and fifteen years after the Soviets obtained an inescapable second-strike capability, many analysts and high officials still regularly become disturbed over minor inequalities in numerical indices of particular components of military capability. Such indices evidently influence political perceptions of relative strength.

Military forces can also be used more directly to display both power

and *will*. Forces can be moved, alerted, or mobilized. Small wars may be fought as indications of willingness to fight larger ones. This latter rationale arose frequently in defense of the U.S. presence in Vietnam, especially when no other rationale could be found. Such demonstrative uses of force have been a long-time adjunct of diplomacy. Frederick the Great once observed that "diplomacy without armaments is like music without instruments." The custom of armed demonstration arose in Frederick's time, with the emergence of the standing army.[54] A Brookings Institution study notes that the United States has alerted or deployed forces in this fashion over two hundred times in the Cold War.[55]

Several factors influence both the intensity of balancing behavior and the mix between coalition formation and internal mobilization. The degree of effort with which some states in a system attempt to improve their power position is the most important factor. Those states most often identified as history's would-be hegemons have elicited the most intense balancing behavior by their neighbors. Three other factors are also important: the distribution of power in the system; the geographical assets and liabilities of the various actors; and military technology.

The number of great powers in a given system is taken to be an important variable by many balance of power theorists because it affects both the mustering and measurement of capabilities.[56] The more great powers there are in a political system, the more complex these tasks become. A system of many powers provides opportunities for aggrandizing states because the responsibility for opposing expansion is unclear. Multipolar systems encourage "buck-passing." In bipolar systems the reverse is the case. The superpowers mainly have each other to fear, so they watch each other carefully. Neither can begin preparations for aggression without arousing the other's attention. The status quo superpower takes responsibility for opposing expansion because buck-passing is not an option—no other state is powerful enough to take over a passed buck. Each superpower is structurally constrained. The distribution of capabilities encourages wariness and discourages irresponsibility.

In multipolar systems, relative power is hard to calculate. Nobody can be quite sure who will side with whom. Even when two alliances face each other, the possibility of defection remains. This problem does not arise under bipolarity. The distribution of power is sufficiently unequal that, while each superpower can, on its own, do substantial harm to the other, no third party can do nearly as much harm to either. Bipolarity may encourage overreaction. It may cause a

widening and deepening of conflict. On the other hand, it makes relative power easier to assess and disabuses both superpowers from the belief that piecemeal aggression can be successful.

In multipolar systems aggressors can get a head start because defenders bicker about the nature of the threat and who shall pay the price of opposing it. As Mancur Olsen has pointed out, and as Kenneth Waltz has reiterated, such dissension is, at least in the short term, sensible behavior for each autonomous self-regarding unit. Checking an expanding hegemon is a collective good. Whether one state creates that good, or all create that good, all benefit. Because there is no way to prevent a given state from enjoying this benefit, that state has an incentive to "free ride." Each state may view the world in this fashion, attempting to pay as little, and get others to pay as much, as can be managed.

Dissension of this kind will retard the formation of defensive coalitions, and will hamper their effectiveness even after they are formed. Disputes about risks and costs are endemic to alliances. Moreover, the knowledge that today's friend may be tomorrow's enemy encourages disputes over spoils. The war must not end with any member of the coalition more powerful relative to the others than at the war's outset. No state wants to lose more than the others. No state wants others to gain more than itself. These calculations mean that a less than "optimal" amount of the collective good—defense—is likely to be provided.

The question of relative capabilities among great powers is less often addressed by balance of power theorists. Theory is facilitated by simplifying reality. It is possible to generate relatively clear and explicit hypotheses about behavior in systems of either several equal powers (multipolarity) or two equal powers (bipolarity). It would be quite difficult to generate such hypotheses about the myriad real-world variations that could occur in the relative capabilities of two or more major powers. Unfortunately, it is easy to reify a theoretically useful assumption.

For instance, theorists correctly view the current international environment as bipolar, although the fact that U.S. GNP is roughly twice that of the Soviet Union, and the latter only roughly equal to the Japanese, subtly alters the behavior of each superpower away from what it would be in a strictly bipolar system. The Soviets probably compete with greater intensity and the U.S. with less intensity than would be the case if the two states were more nearly equal in overall power. Similarly, the case studies that follow show that real-world variations in the capabilities of the major powers within a multipolar

system do seem to matter, although they matter in ways that are broadly consistent with the predictions of balance of power theory. Particularly, in multipolar systems, the weaker a status quo major power is relative to an expansionist state, the greater is the tendency for that power to devote energy to seeking allies—indeed, it may devote a good deal more energy to that endeavor than to enhancing its own military power. Status quo states in a more favorable position may pay more attention to their own military capabilities and less to coalition building, because they perceive themselves as better able to go it alone, at least for a time.

Geography and technology can affect the intensity and character of balancing behavior. Where geography and technology are believed to favor the defender, balancing behavior of all kinds should be slower and less intense than if the offensive is believed to have the advantage. Given the characteristic preferences of military organizations suggested earlier, civilian policy-makers will be more likely than soldiers to hold such views.

The study of the influence of geography on international politics may have been the first attempt systematically to examine the influence of the environment on the national security behavior of states. For instance, observers have long stressed the impact of geography on the military strategies, indeed the foreign policies, of Switzerland, Britain, and Germany, almost independent of the influence of total capabilities and military technology.

Mountain barriers have presented the Swiss with strong defensive advantages, which that nation has long adapted its military organization to exploit.

The English channel provided a defensive advantage that allowed Britain to forego a large land army in favor of a navy. In wartime, the naval superiority this permitted, combined with a position astride the sea routes out of western Europe, allowed Britain to blockade the merchant and war fleets of her continental adversaries, and thus to dominate much of the world's trade. These advantages produced a characteristic foreign policy and military doctrine. Safe and rich, Britain was usually slow to anger, and waged war with blockade, coalitions, subsidies, and small land expeditionary forces.

Germany was denied this luxury. Relatively barren of natural defenses and surrounded by strong powers, she had no obvious tactical advantages. If troops could be moved quickly enough, however, Germany might enjoy the advantage of "interior lines," the ability to shift forces quickly from one threatened border to another. To some extent, Frederick the Great managed to exploit this advantage. The

invention of the steam engine and construction of a dense rail net converted this geographical attribute into an even more important military factor—given an appropriate doctrine. German soldiers responded by placing a growing emphasis on mobility and the offensive. That combination would allow the German army to choose the place it wished to concentrate, deal quickly with one adversary, and then shift forces to deter or defeat attacks from other quarters.

These examples illustrate some of the ways geography is believed to have influenced military doctrine. Generally, it is not unreasonable to suggest that states with geographical defensive advantages will react more slowly and less intensively than other states to increases in adversary capability, and will more often stress defensive doctrines. The absence of such barriers should tend to produce the opposite effect. Where geographic factors seem to reward offensive military doctrines, states will be drawn to such doctrines whether or not they have status quo policies, and balancing behavior should tend to be quick and intense.

As illustrated by the case of Germany, more or less force will attach to these propositions depending on the interaction of geographic factors with the distribution of capabilities and the possibilities opened by military technology. Finally, although changes in military technology and the distribution of industrial power do affect the military influence of geographic factors in the long run, certain geographic factors tend to exert some influence on military practice for a very long time indeed. The defensive value of the Swiss mountains is an example already cited. The influence of the English Channel on British doctrine remained strong for almost three hundred years, through the end of World War II. The restricted access to the open oceans that limited Tzarist Russia's military options continues to plague the Soviet ballistic missile submarine force. Water transport, on the whole, remains so much more efficient than land transport that the United States can contemplate conventional war with the Soviet Union in southern Iran, even though the theater of operations in at least ten times as far from the United States as it is from the Soviet Union.

Complicating any theoretical inquiry into the influence of technology on military doctrine is the fact that technology appears sometimes as an independent or intervening variable and sometimes as a dependent variable. Statesmen often seem to treat technology as an immutable factor that intervenes between their raw power and that of their adversaries, influencing the effective military capability that each state can generate. For example, where military technology is perceived to favor the defender, an increase in an adversary's GNP

may appear less threatening than it would if military technology were perceived to favor the offense. A technological defensive advantage effectively dilutes the raw power of an expansionist state, while a technological offensive advantage supercharges that power.

On the other hand, some geographical or political factors can make an offensive doctrine (or defensive doctrine) so attractive that a state will go to great lengths to reconcile technology with that preferred doctrine. Inasmuch as raw military technology, like civilian technology, is often quite malleable, and several military technologies may be combined and recombined to produce offensive (or, as the case may be, defensive) advantages where defense (or offense) may have seemed the only feasible option, states may innovate to change apparently immutable technological realities. Whether a single military technology or a combination of military technologies fixes overall advantages in favor of offense or defense is, therefore, often as much a matter of perception as reality. If the advantage to offense or defense in a given instance is real, and if that reality is uncomfortable, actors on the scene may make great efforts to change it, depending on the other pressures that they face. Whether these efforts will prove successful is never clear. As will be shown, for geographical and political reasons German and British statesmen and soldiers in the 1930s successfully intervened to change perceived technological realities. Soviet and American statesmen and soldiers, unhappy with a condition apparently inherent in the nature of nuclear technology—invulnerable retaliatory forces are easy for relatively rich countries to get, and therefore nuclear war is unwinnable—have sustained constant, fairly well-funded efforts to reverse this condition for the last three decades. These efforts have met with failure, but they continue.

Hypotheses—Offense, Deterrence, and Defense

Discussion of individual hypotheses on the causes of offensive, defensive, and deterrent doctrines must be prefaced with a defense of the overarching hypothesis that balance of power theory implies heterogeneity rather than homogeneity on this dimension. I have argued that organization theory suggests that most militaries will prefer the offensive. If balance of power theory also suggested homogeneity on this dimension—the predominance among doctrines of *one* of the three categories—that could make the task of competitive theory testing either simpler or more difficult. The task would be simple if balance of power theory implied that states would prefer defensive doctrines, since we could easily examine a large number of military

doctrines and discover if they were usually offensive or usually defensive. On the other hand, if balance of power theory predicted offensive doctrines, then both theories would be predicting the same outcome, and one could hardly test them against each other. In cases where we found offensive doctrines, we would have an "overdetermination" problem—explanation of over 100 percent of the outcome. Of course, in cases where defensive or deterrent doctrines were found, both theories would be discredited. Balance of power theory does not predict homogeneous outcomes, however, although a misreading of the theory might suggest this.

Several students of state behavior whose analyses reflect the balance of power perspective have predicted state policies that would seem to demand offensive doctrines. Hans Morgenthau, John Herz, and to a lesser extent Robert Gilpin predict that states will generally try to expand their power.[57] States will seek not simply equality, but superiority. States are likely to behave this way because power is the key to survival in an anarchical system; since relative power is difficult to measure, the state never knows when it has enough, and it should therefore logically strive for a fairly wide margin of superiority. Basically, these theorists argue, as I have argued, that the security dilemma is always present. Effectively, they also argue, as I have *not*, that the security dilemma is usually quite intense. If this view of the system and its effects on actors were complete, then it would seem logical to deduce that all states will prefer offensive doctrines in order to be ready to expand their power. Because an offensive doctrine may allow the conquest of one's neighbors and the seizure of power assets that lie beyond one's borders, it might appear to be the military option that provides the most security.

This view, however, is not complete. It is *ahistorical* in the most fundamental sense, assuming that states are effectively newborn children, thrust into the jungle of international politics with nothing more than an orientation briefing on the "law of tooth and claw" to guide their actions. Under such conditions the security dilemma might indeed operate with extraordinary intensity. Robert Gilpin, however, admits that states make cost-benefit calculations when deliberating about whether or not to attempt expansion, and that perceptions of cost are affected by the state's historical experience.[58] Of particular importance are the consequences of its own or others' attempts at expansion, and the lessons learned from those episodes. While states, or those who act for them, frequently misread the lessons of history, balance of power theory itself suggests that expanding hegemons will be opposed and stopped. *We have ample his-*

torical evidence that this is the case. This is a lesson that is easy to learn. Indeed, such learning is consistent with Kenneth Waltz's prediction that states will become socialized to the norms of the system that they inhabit.[59] Not all states learn the lesson—not well enough to sustain perpetual peace—but enough learning takes place to make violent, unlimited, expansionist policies the exception rather than the rule. Status quo policies are the rule rather than the exception. France under Louis XIV and Napoleon, Germany under the Kaiser and Hitler, are already too many would-be European hegemons for those who have had to oppose them, but surprisingly few for a three-century game that has often involved as many as six major players.

A status quo policy, of course, need not lead to a defensive military doctrine, but it certainly need not lead to an offensive one either. Instead, status quo powers will assess their political, geographical, and technological positions and possibilities, and devise a military doctrine that preserves their interests at the lowest costs and risks. Thus, an inference from balance of power theory is that military doctrines will be heterogeneous along the dimension of offense-defense-deterrence.

Offense

1. States bent on conquest will prefer offensive military doctrines. This proposition is not deduced from balance of power theory, but rather is a matter of common sense. Louis XIV, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Adolph Hitler all had expansionist foreign policies, and required offensive instruments to pursue those policies.

2. States will try to pass on the costs of war to others. Offensive operations are one way to accomplish this. If war seems to involve high collateral damage, states will try to arrange that the war will be fought on the territory of the enemy, of neutrals, or even of allies. Nicholas Spykman once admonished, "Only in periods of weakness and decline have states fought at home. In periods of vitality and strength, they fight on other people's territory."[60] Of course, not all states have the option of fighting abroad, but those that do tend to avail themselves of it. Michael Handel offers another example: "It is an iron law of the Israeli strategic military doctrine that if a war breaks out, it must be transferred and fought on the opponent's territory as soon as possible."[61] Contrary as it may seem to what is popularly believed, this was a fundamental tenet of French doctrine in the interwar period. (This is discussed at greater length in chapter 4.)

3. States will support offensive doctrines when power appears to be shifting against them. Offensive doctrines are necessary to fight "pre-

ventive" wars. It also seems probable that in environments where power might rapidly shift, statesmen will want to keep an offensive capability "in the hole." A particularly intense arms race would seem to promote offensive doctrines. (We have already seen how the reverse can be true.) Preventive war is a peculiar sort of balancing behavior. "Because I cannot keep you from catching up I will cut you down now." Israel's cooperation in the Franco-British attack on Egypt in 1956 is explained in part by the fear that Egypt's new claim on the arsenals of the Eastern bloc would give her a permanent arms-race advantage. Hitler preferred an offensive doctrine partly because he believed that he had rearmed more quickly than his putative adversaries, but that they would soon catch up. An offensive doctrine would allow him to prevent this by permitting Germany to strike the Allies before they could remedy their military deficiencies (see chapter 6).

4. Similarly, states without allies, *facing multiple threats*, will be attracted to offensive doctrines. An offensive doctrine allows the state to choose the time and place of battle. If the joint capabilities of the adversaries are superior, offensive doctrines will be particularly attractive. In an offensive move, an isolated state can attack and defeat its adversaries sequentially, minimizing the effect of the imbalance of capabilities. This is a variety of preventive war. Instead of waging one dangerous war against a superior coalition, the offender elects to wage what amounts to a separate war against each of the members of the opposing coalition in turn. An offensive doctrine is thus a method of power balancing.

5. The force of the preceding hypothesis is increased if the geographic factor of encirclement is added. The military history of Prussia and later of Germany reveals a constant affinity for offensive doctrines. This is explained in part by the frequent threats of multifront wars. Israel's offensive doctrine allows her to defeat the Arab states sequentially. It may be that the offensiveness of the Soviet military doctrine—both in the rocket forces and in the ground forces—is partially a response to the existence of hostile states on every border.

6. Statesmen will prefer offensive military doctrines if they lack powerful allies, because such doctrines allow them to manipulate the threat of war with credibility. Offensive doctrines are best for making threats. States can use both the threat of alliance and the threat of military force to aid diplomacy in communicating power and will. In the absence of strong allies, the full burden of this task falls on the state's military capabilities. This was the major characteristic of Hitler's early diplomacy (see chapter 6). It provided the motivation for former Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger's merchandising of

substantial nuclear counterforce capability in the guise of "flexible strategic options." To some extent, this motivation appears to have been behind the offensive aspects of Strategic Air Command doctrine in the 1950s. Military demonstrations and an offensive doctrine are also important elements of Israeli grand strategy.

7. A state need not be politically isolated or geographically encircled to find defensive doctrines unattractive. States with far-flung security dependencies may find it advisable to defend such allies by concentrating offensive, disarming military power, or deterrent, punitive military power, against its adversary (or adversaries) rather than dispersing its scarce military capabilities in futile denial efforts in many places. Such dependencies, like NATO Europe in the 1950s, may be far from the guarantor, close to a major power adversary, and too weak to contribute much to their own defense. The security of such states is difficult to guarantee by defensive/denial means alone. If the United States had had to secure postwar Europe with conventional denial means, there would probably have been a great many more American troops in Europe than there were. The Soviet adversary had to be dissuaded from going to war against U.S. dependencies. The same was true if French allies in eastern Europe were going to be protected during the interwar period.

How is dissuasion to be accomplished if defensive/denial means are ruled out? Only deterrence and offense remain. While the United States has relied mainly on deterrence in the Cold War, offense has also played an important role. Many have argued against reliance on deterrence alone, since the adversary could punish the United States in return for any strike we might deliver. Extended deterrence is difficult because, whereas a state's readiness to inflict punishment on an adversary that aggresses directly against it might be unquestionable, its willingness to punish the same adversary for offenses against far-removed dependencies, and so to draw fresh fire and suffering on itself, is less likely to be credited. The credibility of the commitment is believed to go up with an ability to limit damage to ourselves by disarming the adversary. Herman Kahn, Colin Gray, and Glenn Snyder have suggested this with varying emphasis.[62] The offensive aspects of "massive retaliation" are explained in part by these considerations. To this day, a good deal of the offensiveness of U.S. nuclear doctrine may be explained by the unspoken requirement for a "not implausible," damage-limiting, first-strike capability.

Deterrence

8. Far-flung security dependencies and powerful adversaries can lead a great power to either deterrent or offensive doctrines. Offen-

sive doctrines will be preferred, but often the sheer scope of the problem and the capabilities of the adversary (or adversaries) make offensive capabilities hard to get. Technology and geography are frequently the key determinants of the scope of the problem. Before World War II Britain hoped to hold possessions half a globe away. She lacked the raw capability to project much power such a distance—particularly after ensuring the homeland against more immediate adversaries. Even if she could have mustered the capabilities and mastered the distances, Britain lacked a military technology that could disarm Japan and keep her disarmed. When states face such a situation, they will accept, although they may not embrace, deterrent doctrines.

The political organisms that most often find themselves in this situation seem to be the great empires of history. The British found it advantageous in the 1920s and '30s to police Arabian tribesmen not by pitched battle, but by bombing from the air. They could either obey the rules or be punished.[63] A close examination of British defense policy in the 1930s shows a pronounced inclination toward deterrence. The politicians of the period frequently used the term. Due to economic, industrial, and technological constraints, the actual operations envisioned were more of the denial than the punishment variety. However, dissuasion was the goal, and one finds a constant concern with the manipulation of military capability and potential military capability to discourage aggression. Only with the short-lived commitment to the population bombing doctrine of Bomber Command were any punitive operations planned in the 1930s.

C. W. C. Oman finds a clear example of a deterrent strategy in the Byzantine Empire of the ninth century:

> Much could also be done by delivering a vigorous raid into his (the Saracen's) country and wasting Cilicia and northern Syria the moment his armies were reported to have passed north into Cappadocia. This destructive practice was frequently adopted, and the sight of two armies each ravaging the other's territory without attempting to defend its own was only too familiar to the inhabitants of the borderlands of Christendom and Islam. Incursions by sea supplemented the forays by land.[64]

9. As noted previously, small states threatened by powerful adversaries often make recourse to deterrent doctrines. The peculiar coincidence of doctrines among the very strong and the very weak is easy to explain. In both cases, insufficient capabilities drive states to such doctrines. When a state's capabilities fall short of its aims or needs, it

may throw its political "will" into the balance. Will is as much a product of a state's political cohesion as it is a product of any material source. Thus, whenever states face security threats and are, by reason of the magnitude of the task or their own poverty, short of resources, we can expect to see deterrent doctrines.

Defense

I have argued that coalition formation is a common method both of enhancing perceived power for diplomacy and mustering real power for war. Yet, coalition management has its problems. Napoleon once declared that if he had to make war, he would prefer to make it against a coalition. Alfred Vagts observes, "Of all types of war, this is the one in which it is most likely that political aims will crowd out and repress strategic aims. And even if this is not intended, the other partner or partners will still suspect it, will try to spare their own forces and sacrifice those of the ally."[65]

10. Defensive doctrines, or doctrines with strong defensive elements, will be preferred by statesmen with status quo policies who are preparing to fight in coalitions. Such doctrines give the states in the coalition more time to settle the division of costs and benefits of the war. This phenomenon will be particularly pronounced if the costs of going on the offensive are seen to be high. One paradoxical example is found in Egyptian behavior during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war. Although the Egyptians had mounted a successful offensive to cross the Suez Canal, after crossing they chose a low-risk strategy of staying behind their air and anti-tank defenses. By so doing, they allowed Israel the luxury of concentrating the bulk of her military capability on the dangerous Syrian offensive. Egypt passed on the costs of the war to the Syrians. Egypt only left her defensive positions when frenzied Syrian protests suggested Israel's imminent victory. When Egypt finally attacked, its offensive was shattered. Britain and France were guilty of similar "buck-passing" in the 1930s. In both the Egyptian-Syrian case and the British-French case, the costs of going on the offensive were seen to be high. In the case of the 1914 powers, the cost of the offensive was seen to be low. This explains the less cautious behavior in the earlier period.

11. The preceding hypothesis may be attenuated by another constraint. Although states may seek military doctrines that allow them to pass some of their defense costs onto coalition partners, they must in some measure please these present or potential allies in order to attract them.[66] Thus, alliance suitors may adopt the doctrines of their intended allies. A given military doctrine may fail to achieve both the

goal of buck-passing and the goal of alliance-making, and when it does, a state can face difficult choices. In 1973, Egypt appears to have portrayed her military doctrine one way to achieve Syrian cooperation in the initial attack; operated another to spare her own forces early in the war; and finally shifted back to a strategy more accommodating to the Syrians in the abortive offensive against Israeli forces in the Sinai passes. France in the 1930s, on the other hand, could both attract British support and control her own contribution to any ultimate war effort with a defensive doctrine. Britain did not want any provocation of Germany, and that was fine with France.

12. Status quo states will generally prefer defensive doctrines if geography or technology makes such doctrines attractive. They are more likely to correctly interpret such factors than are non-status quo states, and since their goal is to conserve power, they are more likely to exploit them militarily.

13. Status quo states may prefer defensive doctrines simply because those states know that they are unlikely to strike the first blow. Since they expect to suffer the first blow, it is reasonable for them to expend their military effort learning how to parry it.

Hypotheses—The Causes of Civilian Intervention and Its Effects on Integration and Innovation

I have discussed some causes of the character of military doctrine. Organization theory identifies external intervention as a key source of integration and innovation, but also predicts that such intervention will be very difficult. Balance of power theory predicts that, difficult or not, such intervention will occur if it is necessary to secure the state. If balance of power theory successfully predicts not only intervention, but also the circumstances under which it occurs, then the theory gains in credibility relative to organization theory. Thus, it is important to address the causes of civilian intervention into military matters.

1. Political leaders with aggression in mind will often take a look at their military forces to see if they are ready to go. Hitler was most attentive to his military capabilities and, as we shall see, was a prime mover in the development of Blitzkrieg. This is not so much a proposition deduced from balance of power theory as a matter of common sense. The anarchy of international politics permits mischief. The military value of the object in view may or may not be a motive for mischief. If political leaders contemplate aggression for the purpose of expanding their resources for security, then their intervention can

be loosely explained in terms of structural constraints. Otherwise, we must fall back on avarice and "bloody-mindedness" as an explanation.

For whatever reasons civilian policy-makers choose a path of aggression, soldiers must either carry out the orders of their chiefs or resign. The prospect of war can have a catalytic effect on the behavior of soldiers whose lives or careers will inevitably be put into jeopardy. The final steps to the Blitzkrieg doctrine were taken by the commanders of the Germany Army only late in 1939 and early in 1940, when it became clear that Hitler was committed to an offensive against the Allies.

2. If planned aggression for political ends is one general cause of civilian intervention in military matters, the other is fear. This is consistent with balance of power theory. It is easy for statesmen to become frightened by events in the international environment. Many different kinds of events may threaten the state's security. Just as states "balance" materially by arms-racing or coalition formation, they "balance" qualitatively by taking a close look at the doctrine, competence, and readiness of their military organizations. They do not do so all the time, but when they do, fear is most often the driving force.

3. The same fear increases military organizations' receptivity to outside criticism and also sharpens their own self-critical faculties. The force of this proposition is attenuated in multipolar systems, however, if a given state perceives itself to have alliance possibilities. Under conditions of threat, civilians may divide their energies between chasing allies and reviewing their military posture. This may so reduce the pressure on a given military organization as to allow organizational dynamics to triumph. More specific propositions on this matter can be generated.

4. In the face of any sort of security problem, states without allies will tend to pay a good deal of attention to their military organizations. This is true of states that are politically isolated. Israel is a good current example: military leaders retire to become key political leaders, and politicians are generally well versed in military matters. This sort of attention is also characteristic of both poles in a bipolar system. Since the dawn of the Cold War American leaders have paid more attention to military matters than in any prior period of our history.

Examples of military innovation caused by civilian intervention and stimulated by political isolation are the development of the standing army in France under Louis XIV and the mass army during the French Revolution. Recall the important role played by Cardinal

Richelieu and the civilian war minister Michel Le Tellier in the development of France's first all-professional, standing army. What had driven France in this direction? Historian Michael Howard writes, "On the death of Gustavus, . . . Richelieu saw himself faced with the necessity of improvising an army and entering the field himself if Habsburg power, Spanish and Austrian, was not to become dominant in Europe."[67] Le Tellier's son, the Marquis de Louvois, completed his father's work, creating the army with which Louis XIV waged war on nearly all of Europe.[68]

The case of Revolutionary France is similar. The Directory had accumulated six major adversaries, and by August 23, 1793, the danger had become so great that the Committee on Public Safety ordered universal conscription for the first time in any modern European state. By the following summer, the French army fielded three-quarters of a million men, the largest armed force in Europe since the barbarian invasions.[69] The Committee did not simply invent the mass army. Lazare Carnot, a former military professional and a man with new ideas about military organizations and tactics, had joined the Revolution. It was his hand that guided French military innovation.

While political isolation provides an added spur to civilian intervention, even states with alliance possibilities show tendencies to civilian intervention in the face of new or growing threats. The best example of this is found in British behavior in 1934–1940. The rising military power of Germany brought not only a return to substantial defense spending, but greater civilian attention to the plans of the military. In spite of a military organization committed to an offensive doctrine, civilians intervened to promote a major defensive innovation—the development of the country's integrated air defense system, the first of its kind in history (see chapter 5). While the RAF did not wholeheartedly embrace air defense, and jealously guarded Bomber Command, that organization's support for air defense increased as the possibility of war loomed larger.

5. Disasters fresh in a state's memory are great promoters of civilian intervention, even if no immediate threat appears on the horizon. (This proposition and those that follow have their counterparts at the organizational level.) If a threat is apparent, the tendency will be more pronounced. The most recent example is the apparently very thorough review by Israel's Agranat Commission of all the events leading up to and including the 1973 war. While the Commission included two former chiefs of staff, the chairman and the other two members were civilians. Most of the report remains secret, but it is

known to have generated wide-ranging reform in Israel's armed forces.[70]

Another example is found in the case of Prussia. Between October 7 and November 7, 1806, Napoleon Bonaparte completely destroyed the armies of the heirs of Frederick the Great. The "army with a country" was swept aside by the superior numbers and methods of the French. Following this disaster, both civilian and military reformers came to the fore. Before the war, reforms of either bureaucracy or army were practically impossible. After the war, under the leadership of the soldiers Gerhard Scharnhorst and Count August Gneisenau, a commission was set up to reform the army. Opposition was not wanting, and in fact was suppressed only by the direct intervention of the king, who removed the opponents of reform from the commission.[71]

6. Some civilian intervention is produced not by disaster but by the high costs expected of a particular military exercise. A victorious but very costly war can substantially weaken a state. Even in the context of a superiority that provided some damage-limiting capability, U.S. civilian policy-makers in the 1950s watched their nuclear forces more closely than they had ever watched military forces before. Though the United States might have "prevailed" in a nuclear conflict, the game was not likely to be worth the candle. (Another example of this sort of behavior is seen in interwar France—see chapter 6.)

The experience or expectation of military disaster provides a key avenue by which technology can influence military doctrine. Civilians especially are moved to interpret new technology and integrate such interpretations into military doctrine when the technology presents some very clear and unambiguous threat to the state's survival. The threat may be of defeat or the probability of high collateral damage. Civilian intervention is unlikely unless demonstration of the technology, by test or combat-use, is sufficiently stark and frightening to shake civilians' faith in the ability of their own military organizations to handle it. The attitudes of French civilians to any chance of a replay of World War I, British civilians to the spectre of bombs falling on London, and American civilians to nuclear weapons are all good examples. Even here, though, the impact of technology is not determinative. In the French case technology was seen to be largely immutable, a force to be accepted and dealt with. In the British case, technology was seen as something to be changed.

Simple fear of defeat provides another motivation for civilian intervention. If an adversary appears particularly impressive, potentially capable of a decisive victory, civilians will pay considerable attention

to their military instrument. The intervention of British civilians into the doctrine of the RAF, for instance, was driven by fear of the German "knock-out-blow-from-the-air" (see chapter 5).

Summary: Balance of Power Theory Hypotheses

Offense, Defense, and Deterrence

In general, the theory predicts heterogeneity along the dimension offense-defense-deterrence.

1. Expansionist powers will prefer offensive doctrines.
2. States will prefer offensive doctrines when war appears to involve very high collateral damage, because offense allows the state to take the war somewhere else.
3. States with a favorable power position that is suffering erosion will prefer offensive doctrines. (Offensive doctrines are a vehicle for preventive war.)
4. States that face several adversaries may prefer offensive doctrines. (Again, offensive doctrines are the vehicle for preventive war.)
5. Similarly, geographically encircled states may prefer offensive doctrines.
6. States without allies will prefer offensive doctrines because they must exploit military power for diplomacy, a purpose best served by offensive capabilities.
7. States with widely distributed security dependencies will prefer offensive doctrines because they allow the concentration of scarce military assets.
8. States with far-flung security dependencies will accept deterrent doctrines when it is not feasible to sustain offensive or defensive doctrines. Deterrent doctrines are a vehicle for throwing political will into the military balance.
9. Similarly, small states may opt for deterrent doctrines because their capabilities are insufficient to support any other kind.
10. The possibility of coalition warfare can lead a state to a defensive doctrine because such doctrines permit a pace of warfare that allows allies to settle the division of the risks, costs, and benefits of war.
11. States preparing to fight in coalitions must also please their prospective coalition partners. This dilutes the power of proposition 10. If, for its own special reasons, a state adopts an offensive doctrine, its suitors may find it necessary to conform. By the same token, however, conformity to a defensive doctrine is likely if the state being wooed adopts a defensive doctrine.

12. Status quo states will generally prefer defensive doctrines if geography or technology makes such doctrines attractive.
13. Status quo states may prefer defensive doctrines simply because they know that they are unlikely to strike first.

Integration and Innovation

1. Statesmen contemplating aggression will tend to intervene in their military organizations.
2. Generally, anything that increases the perceived threat to state security is a cause of civilian intervention in military matters and hence a possible cause of integration and innovation.
3. Soldiers themselves tend to be more amenable to external prodding when the threat of war looms larger.
4. In states that are either politically isolated or geographically surrounded, civilians tend to intervene in military matters more frequently, and soldiers tend to approach war more seriously than in states with more favorable security conditions. Thus, both integration and innovation should be more frequent in such states.
5. Recent military disasters can be causes of integration and innovation.
6. Anticipated high costs of warfare can be a cause of civilian intervention. Because new technology (e.g., nuclear weapons) can greatly affect anticipated costs, this is one way technology can exert an influence on integration and innovation.

All of the preceding possible causes can be weakened in multipolar systems, where allies appear to be easy to come by. States and statesmen may spend too much time chasing allies, and not enough time auditing their war machines.

Summary

In this chapter I have offered brief surveys of organization theory and balance of power theory, and from these theories I have inferred hypotheses about what causes military doctrine to vary along the dimensions offense-defense-deterrence, innovation-stagnation, and integration-disintegration. I have integrated with these hypotheses a small group of propositions that concern the influence of technology and geography upon military doctrine. Most of these propositions are consistent with one or the other of the two theories introduced.

As argued in the opening pages of this chapter, these are structural theories. They are appropriate for the examination of the cases that

follow. These theories will be used in combination to explain the military doctrines of France, Britain, and Germany. Because in some of the cases contradictory hypotheses about doctrine are generated by the two theories, a comparison of these military doctrines allows us to examine and weigh the explanatory power of each theory.

In the broadest sense military doctrine should, according to *organization theory*, show a tendency to be offensive, disintegrated, and stagnant. This is suggested both by the character of military organizations and by their functional separation from the political decision-makers of the state. *Balance of power theory* predicts somewhat different outcomes, depending on the state's situation. In general, anything that makes the civilian leaders of a state more fearful should encourage political-military integration and operational innovation. Civilian preferences for offense, defense, or deterrence will be influenced by the international environment. Finally, if the two theories introduced here have any validity at all, we should find that *technology* and *geography* are rarely determinative in their own right, although they should often have an important effect on doctrine.

Under what conditions will organization theory enjoy its greatest explanatory power? Under what conditions will the international environment have the greatest influence? In times of relative international calm we should expect a high degree of organizational determinism. In times of threat we should see greater accommodation of doctrine to the international system—integration should be more pronounced, innovation more likely. Among states, doctrines should show more heterogeneity. However, even under such circumstances all will not necessarily be well. Multipolar structures, although they exert an important influence on doctrine, may so confuse decision-makers as to allow organizational determinants to come to the fore once again. The effects can be disastrous.

[3]

The Battles of 1940

Two great battles were fought in 1940. During May, in Belgium and northern France, Germany destroyed the cream of French and British land forces, so opening metropolitan France to complete conquest. The second battle, the Battle of Britain, was fought between the Luftwaffe and the Royal Air Force (RAF) from mid-July to late September 1940. While Hitler's objectives and strategy in this second battle seem to have fluctuated, Germany's fundamental goal was to destroy the RAF and seize control of the airspace over southern England and the English Channel. This was seen to be the necessary prerequisite for any successful invasion of Britain. Some historians doubt the strength of Hitler's commitment to such a course. However, the effort expended in the air battle itself, as well as the substantial ancillary efforts to prepare an invasion force, indicate that an invasion might have been attempted had Germany won the air battle.[1] The Luftwaffe was not successful, and Hitler turned his attention to the Soviet Union, a continental power more vulnerable to the Wehrmacht's specialty—coordinated air/ground operations.

These were important battles. Hitler's defeat of France brought Germany industrial, financial, and geographical advantages guaranteeing that whoever opposed past and future German expansion would have a rough time. World War II would be a long war. The Battle of Britain guaranteed that past and future German expansion would be opposed, and preserved the possibility of a future assault on the German homeland. Had Britain collapsed, one wonders if such an assault would ever have taken place. The resources freed might just have tipped the scales in Germany's favor in a future war with the Soviet Union.

Historians have offered many explanations for the outcomes of these two battles. Social, political, technological, and military expla-

ally or two might be found. In this sense, British grand strategy was perhaps the most successful of the 1930s.

The peculiarities of French, British, and German military doctrine are explained in part by their unique historical experiences. However, the remainder of this book is concerned with explanations of a different kind. In the next three chapters, the military doctrines of France, Britain, and Germany will be examined along the dimensions of offense-defense-deterrence, integration-disintegration, and innovation-stagnation in terms of organization theory and balance of power theory. In this way, the causes of the events of 1940 can perhaps be illuminated in a different and more systematic fashion than that found in conventional histories. At the same time, the two theories can be tested for their utility in explaining complex matters of national security.

[4]

France

French grand strategy during the interwar period aimed to preserve the political and territorial settlement of Versailles. The French recognized that the Versailles restrictions on German military power were the most fragile elements of the postwar settlement. They constructed their military doctrine to deal with an *expected* resurgence of German industrial and military power, which was identified as the main threat to French security. The army would play the key role in French strategy toward Germany, with the air force in support. (I am omitting discussion of the French Navy. Although it was a fairly powerful force, its role in the struggle against Germany was ancillary. The navy's mission was to help protect French access to her colonies, as well as to other possible extra-European sources of military support. The navy had a strong Mediterranean orientation, focusing more on the threat posed by the Italian fleet than on that posed by the German Navy.) French military doctrine was largely *defensive*; its purpose was to deny the German Army entry into France. Offensive or disarming operations were a distinctly secondary mission. The only major military move envisioned was the advance into Belgium, and even this had the initial purpose of holding assets rather than beating the Germans.

When it emerged in the mid-1920s, French grand strategy represented a relatively well-integrated approach to French security problems. Nevertheless, from its inception, the strategy gradually began to unravel. The defensive French military doctrine became less and less capable of supporting the French alliance system. Following the events of 1936 the doctrine may be considered as substantially, though not completely, disintegrated from the political elements of French grand strategy. The Belgian declaration of neutrality ended joint military planning between Belgium and France. This maximized

the possibility of a battle of movement in Belgium for which the French Army had not prepared. German fortification of the Rhineland ended even the pretense of a French offensive capability to support eastern European allies threatened by a resurgent Germany. French military doctrine, particularly its stress on defensive tactics and prepared positions, would have benefited from a serious review after 1936. While efforts were made to improve the French military position in a general way, there is little evidence to suggest that such a review was undertaken.

French military doctrine was not innovative during the interwar period, although political circumstances changed rather quickly during the 1930s. The Maginot Line, the first fortress system of its kind, can be looked upon as an innovation. However, when set against the static attrition battles of World War I, the Line seems more evolutionary than revolutionary. Similarly, although the French Army became more motorized and mechanized during the late 1930s, and the French Air Force acquired new aircraft, new equipment was not associated with any deeply held revolutionary view of modern warfare. The French Army and Air Force were organized for the first phase of a future war with Germany. This phase would stabilize the fronts preparatory to the mobilization of French and especially *allied* industrial assets for total war.

In this chapter the defensive, disintegrated, and stagnant character of French doctrine will be discussed in greater detail. I will evaluate and compare the contributions to French doctrine of systemic constraints and incentives, organizational pressures, and technology and geography. Of these, I will argue that systemic factors loomed largest; technological, geographical, and organizational factors played important though subsidiary roles. In many respects, it was *interactions* of all these forces that produced the complex and distinctive military doctrine of interwar France.

Defense

The Role of Technology

Much of the defensiveness of French doctrine can be explained by France's experience in World War I. French civilians and soldiers drew important and similar lessons from the war. Initially, civilians seem to have been more willing to translate these lessons into a markedly defensive military doctrine. Civilians and soldiers agreed that the war had demonstrated the decisiveness of modern fire-

power.[1] Some soldiers, such as Marshalls Ferdinand Foch and Joseph Joffre (prewar advocates of the offensive), were unwilling to translate this experience into an endorsement of defensive over offensive tactics and operations. Marshall Henri Pétain, on the other hand, with the apparent support of French political leaders, turned immediately to long-term planning for French security, based on defensive warfare in fortified positions.[2] During Pétain's tenure as peacetime chief of the French Army, his views, given the support of civilian leadership, prevailed both in written doctrine and in that doctrine's physical manifestation—the Maginot Line.

In chapter 2 the proposition was advanced that civilians will impose a judgment about technology on military doctrine when the implications of the technology are sufficiently stark. Soldiers may also draw conclusions under these circumstances. For France, World War I's firepower lessons were particularly stark. In that war France lost 1.4 million dead and missing, or 10.5 per cent of her "active male population."[3] Perhaps another 4.2 million soldiers were wounded.[4] This casualty rate produced the mutinies of May 1917, in which "collective indiscipline" occurred in 54 of the 110 French divisions on the Western Front.[5] The subsequent military decisions of French civilians show a determination to avoid the repetition of such casualties. Those decisions bound the French state and the French Army ever more tightly to a defensive strategy.

The second major lesson, stemming in part from the first was that the effectiveness of modern firepower could produce a *stalemate* very costly in terms not only of human but of industrial resources. When such a stalemate developed on the Western Front in World War I, it was discovered that modern weaponry could only be sustained by huge commitments of resources. Still greater resources were required for attempts to overwhelm enemy defenses in order to end the war,[6] attempts that were usually unsuccessful. Due to early reverses, France had been particularly disadvantaged in terms of industrial and natural resources. Before and after the war most of these resources were concentrated along her northern and northeastern frontiers.[7] Because the offensive Plan Seventeen, executed at the war's outset, included no provisions for defending these areas, they were lost, substantially weakening the subsequent French war effort and increasing French dependence on Britain. French interwar military planning would strive to secure these vulnerable areas from land attack.

Two major decisions, taken mainly by French civilians, determined the subsequent defensive character of French grand strategy and mili-

tary doctrine. Both decisions reflected the technological lessons of the war. The first was to drastically reduce the term of conscription; the second was to create the Maginot Line—an ambitious system of fortifications along the northeast frontier. These decisions were closely related.

French statesmen and soldiers were not alone in drawing lessons from the war. In the aftermath of World War I, there was throughout French society a turning away from things military. French leaders were faced with a widespread and overwhelming desire for a substantial reduction in the length of a conscript's period of service.[8] To succumb to these demands was to push the French Army to think largely in terms of defensive operations, because the offensive had previously been closely identified with a *three*-year term of service.

In 1913 the term of service in the French Army had been raised from two to three years. This was attributable in part to increasing international tension, and in part to the declining French birthrate. Less well known is that at the highest levels of the French Army the shift to a more offensive tactical doctrine was used to support demands for the third year. Offense was said to demand highly skilled and highly motivated troops. It was believed that this higher-quality army was impossible unless conscripts spent three years with the colors.

The term of service was reduced to eighteen months in 1924 and to twelve months in 1928, and there it remained until 1935.[9] The number of fully ready divisions dropped from twelve to six; fourteen divisions at partial strength were added; and twenty divisions were to be formed as before by mobilized reservists. This allowed but a thin *couverture* (covering force) against a German surprise attack. The French Army was now unsuited for offensive action and barely suited for defense. The one-year term was a major impetus for the construction of the Maginot Line.[10]

The small couverture would need defensive works to stop a sudden German attack. Compared to prewar French conscripts, the postwar conscript would have little time to develop his military skills. If thirty-six months had been necessary to produce an "offensive" soldier before the war, then twelve months certainly could not do so in the 1920s. Fortifications would be a valuable aid to the postwar conscript. As much was said during the debates on reducing the term of service to twelve months.[11] The new French Army would, at least during the initial stages of a future war, fight defensive engagements.[12]

The decisions by French statesmen to shorten the term of service and build the Maginot Line were quite deliberate steps away from an

offensive doctrine and toward a defensive one. These steps were taken, in part, as a reaction to the carnage of World War I. They also reflected a belief that France might not escape another war with Germany, and that such a war would demand human and industrial mobilization equal to that of the last. Therefore, France would have to maintain some sort of conscription to give minimal training to her young men. Hence, the twelve-month term. It was just as important to protect the critical industrial mobilization resources that had been lost to Germany early in the previous war. The Maginot Line would not only allow France to defend a dangerous invasion route with limited forces, it would help France defend her critical long-war resources in the northeastern part of the country.[13]

Reading the technological lessons of the war, French statesmen and soldiers came to reasonable conclusions. Modern firepower meant that offensives could be very costly. Manpower and industry had to be husbanded until the decisive moment when materiel superiority had been achieved. For French civilians and, as time passed, for French soldiers, this meant defensive operations and fortifications. At least one of France's greatest soldiers, Marshall Pétain, was a powerful advocate of this view.[14]

The Distribution of Power in Europe: Constraints and Incentives Affecting French Strategy

The French interpreted the technological lessons of the war in light of the overall balance of power between France and interwar Germany. Even after the Versailles Treaty Germany remained industrially and demographically superior to France, inherently more capable of waging an extended attrition war like World War I. This superiority may actually have increased during the interwar period.[15] In the 1930s Germany's population was a third again that of France. A comparison of relative industrial potential for modern war shows Germany with 2.5–3.5 times French mobilization capability by 1937–1938.[16] Such a massive disparity could prove decisive in an attrition war. From the first, French doctrine viewed the addition of Allied (especially British) industrial resources to her war effort as a prerequisite to any successful encounter with Germany.

Even a hypothesized defensive advantage might be overcome by German resource superiority. At the same time, an industrially inferior France would never overcome German defenses to end a war. If France had to face Germany unaided, she might ultimately be worn down and defeated. This had nearly been French experience in World

War I, even with British aid. Hence, the *imbalance of power* encouraged France to seek allies. Experience with modern technology sharpened the French perception of an imbalance of power and raised their fears of its implications for French security, but a real and serious imbalance did obtain.[17]

The imbalance of power might not have encouraged a defensive military doctrine. In some cases (as argued in Chapter 2) such imbalances encourage offensive doctrines. This was the case in Germany (see chapter 6). Two important systemic factors intervened to make defense attractive to France: the distribution of capabilities in the European political system, and the tendency of threatened states to defend their sovereignty. There were potential allies in Europe with enough strength to tip the balance against Germany if they formed a coalition with France. Given German expansionism, these states would soonor or later have to join France to ensure their own survival. With a defensive military doctrine France could avoid appearing bellicose herself, and thus enhance the legitimacy of her claim for assistance, remove the necessity for precipitate and potentially costly offensive military action before a new anti-German coalition pulled itself together; and, in the event of war, economically buy the time necessary to negotiate the substantial military contributions from her allies that would be needed for the ultimate decisive battles with Germany.

In the aftermath of World War I, there were many states with meaningful, if not substantial, military capability in Europe. For instance, by 1938 the mobilized Czech Army was a little over half the size of the mobilized German Army, and was nearly as well equipped.[18] Not only were capabilities widely distributed in interwar Europe, but states controlling those capabilities might ally themselves with France. Most European states had reason to fear a resurgence of German expansionism if only because so many of them had profited from Germany's downfall. France could exploit these fears. The central question would be how quickly and easily these states could be brought into an anti-German wartime coalition.

Although eastern European allies were cultivated by the French, for most of the interwar period Britain was perceived as the most important and powerful prospective ally. With two and a half times the industrial resources of France, Britain was an especially critical factor.[19] Yet, her geographical defensive advantage allowed her the luxury of waiting—both to determine the extent of a given aggressor's hegemonic ambitions and the extent to which other European states might oppose those ambitions. French experience with Britain imme-

diately after World War I did not bode well for a future alliance. Britain had refused to help enforce certain provisions of the Versailles Treaty, and had undermined French efforts to do so. She successfully opposed an effective security plank in the League Charter. She declined a direct alliance with France, and refused to guarantee the postwar status quo either on the Rhine or in eastern Europe. Indeed, Britain thwarted French anti-German actions at every turn. All the same, Britain's unique capabilities and attributes made her the focus of French strategic and diplomatic efforts in the 1930s.[20] British hesitancy would simply demand a more careful and cunning French diplomacy and military doctrine than had originally been envisioned.

In sum, France had potential allies, but bringing the most important ally into a future anti-German coalition was recognized as difficult. French decision-makers viewed British industrial and military resources as critical to their national security. No offensive against Germany would be contemplated until combined British and French resources were mobilized. Britain and other allies would have to pay a share of French defense costs. The French constructed a defensive military doctrine and posture in the belief that by doing so they would maximize the probability of this outcome. The same sort of decision—a decision predicted by balance of power theory (see chapter 2)—was made in Britain in the 1930s, as shall be argued in the next chapter. Both France and Britain constructed military doctrines that facilitated "buck-passing," because the Germans appeared so formidable and because prospective allies were there to receive the buck.

Students of French doctrine agree on the connection between its defensiveness and the desire to extract large contributions from French allies. The French Army's mission was to *prevent defeat* while French and allied resources were being mobilized. The military history curriculum of the École Supérieure de Guerre concentrated mainly on the lessons of World War I, stressing how the French Army had exploited the stabilized front without excessive losses and waited until enemy attrition and American aid resulted in decisive quantitative superiority. In a future war, an initially defensive strategy would similarly serve to elicit military contributions from France's allies at a minimum cost to France.[21]

After the war, Édouard Daladier, the French minister of defense in 1940, summed up his opposition to early offensives in Belgium by noting that they would have killed "one or two million of [France's] sons without the allies assuming their share of the common sacrifice."[22]

French doctrine depended upon Britain bearing part of the burden of any future war. A 1935 document from the War Ministry to the Haut Comité Militaire read, "From the practical point of view it is England which could assist us most effectively, not only in the long term, thanks to her great imperial potential and to her control of the seas, but even at the start of hostilities. Therefore, and above all, we must regain and marshal the immediate support of England."[23] In late 1938 the Army Staff echoed these sentiments, connecting a defensive strategy with burden-sharing in a memorandum to Daladier, then premier and war minister.

> In a word, the *only* chance the Anglo-French coalition has for victory, and for marshaling its hidden strength in the form of its great war potential, rests on two conditions: (i) that an early and very serious effort be made to *thwart* any attempt by future enemy to end a war quickly by means of a sudden and overwhelming blow; and (ii) that a continual and prolonged collaboration between the two Governments be anticipated and that preparations be made in advance for the *sharing* of their respective *resources*.[24] [my emphases]

Regular joint military staff conversations were the peacetime symbol of the wartime collaboration envisioned by the French. These the British constantly declined. Yet, every time there was some sort of crisis—in the Rhineland, in Spain, or with the Belgian declaration of neutrality—the French attempted to cement their military ties with the British.[25]

Much of French interwar diplomacy should be viewed as an attempt either to expand her alliance with Britain or to compensate for British coquettishness by alliances in the east or by flirtations with the Soviet Union and Italy. Historian Judith Hughes views the Locarno Pact of 1925 as a major example of such French machinations. Though it did not achieve the French goal of a first-class military alliance with Britain, it did attain more limited objectives.[26] Locarno safeguarded the international-legal basis of any future French reoccupation of the Rhineland in defense of Versailles, and obtained Britain's pledge that France would not be diplomatically isolated if she did so.[27]

The Maginot Line was the centerpiece of interwar French military doctrine, and played a critical role in French schemes to transfer war costs to her allies. The borders of France were all fortified to some degree, but the impressive Maginot fortifications, extending roughly one hundred miles from Lauterborg to the Belgium-Luxembourg border, were of a different order. These fortifications protected a

great natural invasion route and the substantial industrial assets that lay astride it.

The Line would protect French soldiers from the horrible effects of firepower. It would protect the soil of France and the critical industrial resources required for a long war. It would also allow the French to fight a low-cost defensive action while negotiating the contributions of her allies. Thus, the Maginot Line would seem to have represented an adequate response to the technological lessons of World War I, the interwar Franco-German imbalance of industrial and demographic power, and the alliance possibilities of the interwar European political system. This is not quite correct. As is well known, the Line was not extended along the Belgian border to the channel coast, even though important industrial resources were concentrated in this area. Indeed, this sector remained weakly fortified throughout the period.

Popularly, this is often seen as a mere blunder. It was not. Some historians have explained the inadequate fortifications by French fear of alienating Belgium—her ally until 1936.[28] Quite the reverse seems to have been the case: the Belgians demanded strong fortification of the border and viewed its absence as an invitation to the Germans and a grave threat to their own security. This was the Belgian position from 1932 onward.[29]

If the weak fortifications on the border were no mere oversight, nor a consequence of Belgian sensibilities, then how is the French decision to be explained? If France was interested in protecting her soldiers from modern firepower, preserving her border-concentrated industry, and buying the time to extract contributions from her allies, why did she not fortify the border? This question looms especially large when one considers that the contrast between the strength of the Maginot Line and the weakness of the Belgian border could be counted on to encourage a German end-run through Belgium. *This is exactly what the French wanted to have happen.* Paradoxically, an unfortified Belgian border would actually make it easier for France to achieve two out of three of the strategic objectives outlined above.

First, the industry in northern France was closer to the border than the industry in northeastern France. Fortifications along the Belgian border would only allow German invaders to shoot this industrial region to pieces from Belgian territory.[30] Thus, although fortification of the border might make France easier to defend in the short term, it would also occasion the loss of a good deal of her mobilization capability to enemy shellfire. Hence, in the event of a German attack *and a Belgian request for assistance,* the French planned to advance into

especially in the areas of fortifications, industrial mobilization capability, and armaments, the plan itself appears to have received little serious attention. Neither the military nor its civilian leaders seem to have considered the possibility that French military doctrine had become inadequate for one of the fundamental military missions identified by the state's grand strategy. It appears then that some of the narrow technological lessons of World War I took a backseat to systemic constraints and incentives. The overriding concerns seem to have been to export war damage and export war costs. Opportunities existed for doing both, and French military doctrine reflects a readiness to accept risks in order to seize those opportunities.

Organizational Influences

How was the French Army brought to accept this defensive doctrine? Among the hypotheses derived from organization theory (chapter 2) are that military organizations prefer offensive doctrines because they help reduce internal and external uncertainty, and because they contribute to organizational size, wealth, and autonomy. In chapter 1 I discussed the highly offensive character of pre–World War I French Army doctrine. The commitment to this doctrine was so strong that it survived long into a war that was daily demonstrating the defensive advantages bestowed by modern firepower.

The thinking behind France's pre–World War I offensive doctrine had included an important qualifying assumption: offensive warfare could be successful only with high-quality, well-trained troops. This had been a central argument in the successful prewar campaign to extend the term of service to three years, a move that gave the French Army a great deal of control over its personnel. They could be thoroughly prepared for the offensive battle. The offensive doctrine reduced external uncertainty by increasing the likelihood that the battle would be structured according to the French Army's battle plans. Finally, the offensive doctrine seems to have reduced the uncertainty that arises from fear of civil intervention. Anticipation of a short war was so pronounced that upon the outbreak of World War I the Chamber of Deputies adjourned with no plans to exercise any wartime functions whatsoever. The soldiers of France were in control.

With this history in mind, it seems strange that the defensive doctrine outlined in the preceding pages could so easily have been adopted by the French Army. Though the army had become highly respectful of modern firepower during World War I, its apparent embrace of a doctrine that was as much a defensive caricature as the

prewar doctrine was an offensive caricature requires some explanation. I will argue that the French Army's choice grew out of a confluence of forces that made a defensive doctrine a better device than an offensive doctrine for uncertainty reduction. The army came to prefer defense in part because of its World War I experience. Of equal importance were those civilian preferences and critical decisions favoring defense outlined in the preceding sections of this chapter.

After World War I French soldiers did not believe that offensives were impossible; they concluded, rather, that an offensive would require a quantitative superiority which France was unlikely to enjoy at a war's outset. Marshall Foch seems to have thought that the demilitarization of the Rhineland would allow offensives early in a war.[38] Even Pétain, the "high priest" of the defensive, recognized that the offensive spirit had to be preserved. However, offensives would require careful planning and overwhelming quantities of materiel.[39]

Moreover, some important French political leaders were willing to consider an early offensive as a device to avoid a repetition of World War I. In the debates of the 1920s on army reorganization and service reduction some suggested that the couverture had to be sufficiently strong to attack. Both André Maginot, the defense minister, and Édouard de Castelnau, the president of the Chamber Army Commission, made such arguments. A very strong couverture might be able to disrupt German preparations for an offensive against France and thus avoid a long attrition war.[40] If the technological lessons of the war did not inevitably imply a defensive doctrine for civilian decision-makers, then why should they have had such an effect on soldiers?

French civilians did not complete their drift to an overwhelmingly defensive doctrine until the end of the 1920s. By then the combination of the one-year term of service and the commitment of French regulars to the colonies had substantially reduced the size of the couverture. At the same time, the French withdrew from the Rhineland, lengthening the distance and difficulty of an offensive against Germany. The combination of a small couverture and greater distance encouraged the final flight from the idea of an early offensive action in a future war.[41] Indeed the reverse occurred. France began to fear the German General Hans von Seeckt's *attaque brusquée*.[42] These fears were a major impetus to the fortification of the northeastern frontier.[43]

Even granting a defensive predisposition among French civilians, the character of the Maginot fortifications themselves was not predetermined. Originally, the French Army hoped to use them as an *offensive* base. Within the army, there had been a debate between two

opposing factions. It was fought out over a five-year period in the Conseil Supérieur de la Guerre starting in May 1920. One faction advocated a 1918-style defensive system that stressed a series of well-prepared battlefields with continuous lines of barbed-wired light defensive works. Another faction advocated a series of heavily defended concrete fortifications at locations carefully chosen to facilitate maneuver, offensives, and counteroffensives. The Conseil favored the latter position. When Paul Painlevé became war minister in 1925 he advanced the "concrete" approach over the "barbed wire" approach. It is not clear, however, that Painlevé accepted the "offensive" uses of these forts favored by some of the generals.[44]

Historian Judith Hughes contends that the French Army began to abandon its offensive plans almost as soon as work had begun on the fortifications. Another historian, Donald Harvey, contends that the High Command continued to view the forts as counteroffensive and maneuver aids until well into the 1930s. The forts were believed to allow for economy of force on the defense and the creation of a "mass of maneuver" for the offense. Hughes admits that such elements were present in the army's declarations, but argues that the *plans* called for stabilization in the northeast, an advance to a defensive line in Belgium, and the slow mobilization of alliance resources for an ultimate counteroffensive.[45]

The different readings of French doctrine reflect its internal tensions. The French Army formally retained a classical interest in the offensive and wished to keep the offensive spirit alive. At the same time, all factions, within and without the military, could agree on one lesson from the previous war—"le feu tue" (fire kills). Offensives would thus require quantitative and qualitative superiority to overcome defensive firepower. Such superiority would take time to muster. As Germany rearmed and fortified her border, and as the French officer corps gained more experience with the one-year term of service, the ability to muster superior strength for offensives and counteroffensives early in a war seemed more and more problematical. In any case, as argued earlier, civilian interest in such offensives rapidly disappeared.

The French Army accepted a defensive doctrine because it reduced uncertainty in three ways. First, it helped the army protect what it perceived to be a vulnerable political position in the aftermath of World War I. Second, a defensive doctrine would allow the army to fight the kind of battle it had learned to fight in the earlier war. French officers would not have to "retool." Third, French officers distrusted the military skills and morale of one-year conscripts. Defensive operations would put the least stress on what were perceived to be poor human resources.

As noted earlier, the military legislation of 1928 provided for a one-year term of service for French conscripts. The general staff was not at all happy with this decision and demanded a number of important provisions to rectify the perceived dangers of the 1928 law. These provisions did not reconcile the High Command to the one-year term, or cause them to view it as any less of a threat to the professional army's existence and efficiency. Rather, the soldiers accepted the new legislation, tempered with their amendments, in order to "create a stable organization as a solid bulwark for and as a psychological encouragement to the military profession."[46] In short, the military was striving to reduce uncertainty for itself.

The army was serious about the amendments it had proposed. Later foot-dragging by the civilians on the implementation of these and other provisions of the legislation both reduced the confidence of French professional officers in the combat capability of the army and rekindled fears for the very survival of a professional officer corps in France.[47] From the professional officer's perspective, the various decisions and actions of the interwar governments of France threatened the survival, autonomy, and combat efficiency of the French Army. In order to defend the army, the High Command did what was necessary to build the defensive capability that the civilians seemed to want. A one-year term and the construction of fortifications were the two major commitments to national security that the civilians were willing to undertake. Within this context, a substantially defensive strategy was almost inevitable.[48]

Although the threat to the autonomy of the military institution provided a major stimulus to the army's acceptance of the defensive doctrine, that doctrine satisfied two additional requirements. Defense reduced battlefield uncertainty in two ways.

Defense allowed for the assumption of a slow-paced war, similar to the familiar methods of World War I, in which commanders would have time to command, and in which previously developed battle plans could be carefully employed. As remarked earlier (chapter 2), an hypothesis from organization theory is that military organizations generally try to reduce uncertainty by structuring the battle through the offensive (the German Army's inclination to adopt this solution is discussed in chapter 6). However, we have seen how the technological lessons of World War I and the political preferences of French governments militated against such a solution. Once the basic parameters were set, a rigidly defensive doctrine became perhaps the

only logical way for the French Army to reduce battlefield uncertainty. In the end, military thought became rigid and dogmatic.[49] The notion that an adversary might wreck one's defensive plans was somehow lost.

Finally, the defensive doctrine helped the French Army resolve the uncertainty about its own personnel. The professional officers did not regard the one-year conscript as a competent soldier.[50] Concrete forts would allow the small couverture to fight more efficiently and compensate for the one-year conscript's supposed lack of offensive spirit. Consistent with this view, as early as 1929, Maginot began to amend some of the ideas that had originally spawned the fortifications. He conceded the need for smaller forts in-between the large fortifications.[51] These spaces had first been thought of as areas for maneuver. They too would become fixed positions. By the mid-1930s the basic tactical doctrine of the French Army would reflect this static view.[52]

The French Army's acceptance of a defensive doctrine can thus be explained in large part by its desire to reduce internal and external uncertainty. Partly, too, the army's acquiescence was owing to a common mechanism of control over the military exercised by French civilians: finding a general who agreed with them and putting him in charge of overseeing major military decisions. As war minister in 1922, Maginot interposed Pétain as "Inspector General" between himself and the army High Command. The chief of staff had to submit all decisions on "military-technical" questions to Pétain, who in the French system would assume actual command of the military only in time of war.[53] Pétain's inclinations—especially his willingness to organize the reduction in conscripts' term of service—were very much in harmony with the desires of the civilians.

Maginot in effect co-opted one of France's greatest heroes in order to lend technical credibility to a fundamentally political/grand-strategic decision. Giving Pétain review power over all military decisions would allow more effective control over the military organization that would have to implement the strategy. Pétain could see to it that the critical "technical" decisions of the period favored defense, regardless of the preferences of other members of the French High Command.

This mechanism of civilian control over the instrumental tasks of a military organization is a common one. Political actors who find the preferences of their military organizations troublesome will often reach into the organization, select an individual who can fulfill their needs, and promote that individual to an important position. This mechanism was employed in interwar Britain and Germany. The

placement of Pétain in a key decision-making position during a period of military restructuring should have allowed him to set the terms by which the organization would subsequently function.

Pétain's position was doubly influential inasmuch as later French war ministers, like French governments, did not enjoy long tenure. They often came to power with little defense expertise and had scant time to develop more. The War Ministry was largely staffed by the military. The chief of the French General Staff became the key source of military information.[54] Thus, political instability may have increased the impact of functional specialization on French military doctrine. French civilian leadership of the 1930s was probably too unschooled in military matters even to consider major alteration of the defense decisions of the 1920s.

Stagnation and Disintegration

We have seen how French civilian and military decision-makers addressed in their military doctrine the technological lessons of World War I, relative French weakness, and the political alliance possibilites of the peace. They produced an integrated, defensive doctrine which was more evolutionary than innovative. The proposed advance into Belgium created one major problem for the doctrine: it might force French soldiers into military actions of the kind that modern weapons technology had made so costly in World War I. This possibility was mitigated but not eliminated by the formal defensive alliance with Belgium.

A second major problem for the doctrine stemmed from France's alliances in eastern Europe—with Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, and Yugoslavia. The defensive cast of French military doctrine would make it difficult to lend aid to any of these allies if they were attacked by Germany. France was, of course, more concerned with their aid to her if she were attacked. However, piecemeal German conquests in the east could, by virtue of the resources seized, increase Germany's short- and long-war capability against France.[55] Consciousness of this problem would have been wholly consistent with French doctrine. Yet, it does not seem to have played a great role in French thinking. The problem of guaranteeing the security of French allies may not have appeared serious while the Rhineland remained unfortified. Even a defensively oriented French Army might hope to attack under such advantageous circumstances. But how could German adherence to the Rhineland demilitarization provisions of Versailles and Locar-

no be enforced with a defensive doctrine? This question did not receive serious attention either. Thus, the seeds of French doctrinal disintegration were contained in the doctrine all along. Political events could and would turn small problems into big ones. The remilitarization of the Rhineland and the Belgian declaration of neutrality in 1936 were to put French military doctrine in the position of having to innovate or disintegrate.

In addition to problems with French ground doctrine in the 1930s, France had problems with the role of her air force. From World War I through the mid-thirties the French Air Force was a modest collection of qualitatively indifferent aircraft. It lacked a well-defined doctrine. Its command structure and relationship to the rest of France's armed forces fluctuated. Even with these problems, its aerial capability remained superior to that of Germany, since the latter was strictly limited by Versailles; but in 1935, when Germany revealed the creation of the Luftwaffe, and in subsequent years as that organization grew in strength and experience, little was done to alter the confusion that reigned in the French Air Force. Even without the benefit of hindsight, it would have made sense in terms of German progress to develop some sort of coherent conception of the air mission vis-à-vis Germany. This was not done. The absence of attention to the air problem is particularly striking in the context of French dependence on short-term mobilization of the army and long-term mobilization of industry. At minimum, one would expect a substantial commitment to air defense to protect the mobilization process.

Although the political and military circumstances surrounding French doctrine changed substantially during the mid- to late 1930s, surprisingly little change occurred in French military doctrine. There was little innovation. French military doctrine grew less and less capable of achieving French foreign policy goals. Moreover, this is no mere hindsight. At least some Frenchmen were cognizant of these problems at the time. What then explains the stagnation and disintegration of French military doctrine?

The Distribution of Power: An Enduring Factor

One reason French doctrine did not change in the late 1930s is that French politicians remained more interested in transferring the costs of their defense to others than they were in assuring France's ability to defend herself. This is explained in part by overall French weakness relative to Germany, and in particular by the perceived continued relevance of the World War I experiences with modern mili-

tary technology that had enhanced the impact of this imbalance. There was little if any striking evidence from actual combat in the interwar period to suggest that the World War I lessons needed revision. French doctrine, however, is as much explained by the opportunities for alliance building or buck-passing within the European political system. As noted earlier, there were plenty of countries in Europe with something to fear from a resurgent Germany. Even the reluctant British might be coaxed into a new anti-German coalition; they had always opposed the hegemonic ambitions of any European aggressor. French politicians concentrated their balancing efforts abroad, rather than at home, *both* because without powerful allies France could not expect to prevail in an attrition war with Germany, *and* because there were powerful allies out there to be had. The defense might have the advantage, but in a one-to-one slugfest Germany's large population and resource superiority might overwhelm French defenses. Thus, even when rearmament was undertaken, one of its chief purposes was to reestablish French credibility with allies. There was little if any effort to give France a unilateral military option against Germany.

France had three ways to pass the security buck. Great Britain was the first priority. She continued to be seen as the fundamental alliance requirement for any future war. France's cluster of eastern allies was of second priority—an insurance policy against British recalcitrance. Alliance with either the Soviet Union or Italy was of third priority; it was a speculative venture with a potentially high payoff. To say that Britain enjoyed number-one priority is still to understate her importance. It was believed that war against Germany without Britain was out of the question.

French leaders focused their energies on their political opportunities. For the most part, military organizations were *left with insufficient guidance*. The relative stagnation of their doctrine was not of great concern, because the doctrine remained consistent with the political priorities of French leadership. While some political conditions changed in the mid-thirties, the most important political influences on French doctrine did not change. Germany outnumbered and out-produced France. Allies must be sought to equalize the contest. Risks must not be taken that might draw France into an unequal contest without the assistance of allies. In this, the French may have been correct, but French military doctrine needed adjustment if it was to have a high probability of success in Belgium once that nation returned to neutrality. Similarly, preserving the security of French eastern allies in the context of a fortified Rhineland would demand a

more offensive doctrine. While some recognized the requirement for such changes, most notably and vociferously Charles de Gaulle, the political impetus for change was not forthcoming.

That the political will was not present reflected the French concern that her allies pay a "fair" share of future war costs. The French were concerned not to scare off the British, who were perpetually afraid that the French would draw them into a new war. French strategic defensiveness eased relations with the critical British ally. This is in line with an important balance of power theory prediction. In multipolar systems, states construct their strategies to attract allies. France had reason to doubt British willingness to support a vigorous anti-German policy. In the immediate postwar period, aggressive French behavior to enforce the provisions of Versailles had damaged relations with Britain. British policy-makers in the 1930s, with the fearful casualties of World War I fresh in their memory, were very reluctant to field the military forces needed to play a continental role. Britain enjoyed a natural geographical buffer against continental aggressors. British continental foreign policy was thus not only defensive, but sluggish. Anything in France that smacked of aggressiveness, such as an offensive military doctrine, might alienate Britain, and put off the day when she could be brought into an anti-German coalition.

At the same time, a more offensive French doctrine might have encouraged the eastern allies to engage in impetuous acts out of excessive confidence in France. The French feared being drawn into a war that they had no desire to fight—particularly without Britain. The eastern Europeans were meant to help France if she were attacked.

Thus, it is hard to see any overwhelming impetus for French civilians to tamper with the doctrine of their military organization. They would have had to carefully encourage offensive arms, doctrine, and training while at the same time obscuring these developments from everybody but the Germans—whom such measures would have been designed to dissuade. Moreover, French civilians would have had to keep careful watch on their soldiers to guard against any backsliding in the direction of pre–World War I offensive optimism. (Indeed, one may hypothesize that Gamelin's advance to Breda was an example of such offensive backsliding.)

The French case is suggestive of limits that may apply to active civil control of military doctrine in general. At least in pre–World War II France, civilians were much better at controlling the broad parameters of military doctrine than they were at controlling some of its more subtle aspects. Of course, the French may have had no satisfactory solution open to them. It may also be, as organization theory

would suggest, that there are simply limits on the time, energy, and expertise of civilians. (In subsequent chapters, however, we will see civilians transcending their apparent limits.) These should be especially pronounced when the energy of civilians is absorbed externally, in the forging and management of a large coalition. Hitler, who was less concerned with allies, paid more attention to his forces.

While the causal forces identified by balance of power theory and organization theory seem to have worked in tandem to produce an ineffective French doctrine, the French case still contains a lesson for those who might wish to do better than did the leaders of interwar France. For it is clear that the civilians' preoccupation with external events, and the military's preoccupation with preserving its autonomy and traditions, allowed little communication between civilians and soldiers. These factors were exacerbated by a political and social civil-military schism that dated from the dawn of the Third Republic. The state could not solve a doctrinal problem as delicate as that outlined above when its statesmen and soldiers communicated so poorly with each other. While direct policy relevance is only an implicit goal of this essay, the lesson that follows from the French case is that close civil-military relations are a prerequisite for an effective military doctrine. Civilians and soldiers must talk to each other *in detail* about the military operations that each imagines that the state will have to undertake. Such relations may never be amicable, but they must be close.

Alliance Diplomacy

In chapter 2 I argued that a central task of a state's diplomacy is the projection of an image of effective power in time of peace. States may accomplish this through the manipulation of external coalitions, military capabilities, or some combination of the two. In time of war, states must marshal capabilities through some combination of alliances and internal mobilization. In the 1930s the leaders of France concentrated on their external possibilities, both for peacetime diplomacy and in anticipation of a future war. Internal capabilities played an important but decidedly ancillary role.

The manipulation of internal capabilities for diplomacy might have demanded a more offensive military doctrine and posture. Such an offensive appearance would have contradicted the pattern of French strategic thinking outlined thus far. It would have raised the risk of a solitary France becoming involved in a war with Germany. Diplomatic alternatives offered lower risks and the possibility of greater gains. Hence, European political possibilities again encouraged

France to preserve her defensive military doctrine. Moreover, as noted above, the exploitation of these possibilities tended to absorb a great deal of political attention. French military doctrine was thus deprived of the sort of scrutiny that German doctrine received from Hitler. The same constraints and incentives that encouraged a defensive doctrine for war-fighting also discouraged an offensive doctrine for short-of-war coercive diplomacy. Hitler, with few alliance possibilities, structured his forces as much for bully and bluff as for war. Conditions promoting civil intervention and its concomitant pressure toward innovation in the German case were not present in the French case.

The French pattern was set in 1934 when France left the Disarmament Conference. In 1933, when Hitler accelerated German rearmament, the British and French put forth more strenuous disarmament proposals. Hitler responded by withdrawal from the Conference and the League of Nations.

Here was a clear signal that Germany was initiating military developments ultimately threatening to France. The decision of French leaders to leave the Conference indicates that they understood this well. Yet, no new measures were taken to increase France's military capabilities. Instead, defense expenditures were cut, and Jean Barthou, the foreign minister, went off to search for allies in the Soviet Union and in Italy.[56]

Rather than make any effort to increase French offensive capabilities to dissuade the Germans or improve the cohesion of her coalition, French leaders turned to Italy. In 1935, Pierre Laval was moved to describe Italy as "the bridge constructed between France and all those countries of central and eastern Europe which were allied with our country."[57] Such considerations gave rise to the short-lived Stresa Front (an anti-German coalition comprising France, Italy, and Britain). In their search for an eastern version of the Locarno Pact, their flirtations (admittedly restrained) with the Soviet Union, and their wooing of Italy, French governments sought to counter rising German military capability with a show of coalition-building. By 1936 these efforts had run their course, ending either in failure or, as in the case of Russia, in success so qualified as to be almost meaningless. Only the alliances of the 1920s with Belgium and the eastern allies remained intact, along with the Locarno Pact.

The events of 1936 put a still greater strain on French grand strategy and prompted a new burst of coalition-building. March saw the German remilitarization of the Rhineland, reducing the credibility of French security guarantees to her eastern European allies. August

1936 saw the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. The early involvement of Fascist Italy in that conflict alienated Leon Blum, Popular Front prime minister of France. The policy of using Italy as a "bridge" to the east was dropped. In October, Belgium returned to neutrality. This act soon rendered joint military planning for the long-sought defensive engagement in Belgium impossible. Each of these events prompted new French efforts to draw Britain into the joint military staff talks that would provide the essential preliminaries for the sort of war the French intended to fight.[58]

The British remained coy. Yet, from this point to the war's outbreak, cementing the tie with England remained the fundamental goal of French policy. Indeed, French willingness to sell out Czechoslovakia, the most capable of her eastern allies, is explained in part by the clear British disinterest in the Czech problem. Given a choice between joining forces with Czechoslovakia, but without Britain, or with Britain, and without Czechoslovakia, the French, consistent with their grand strategy, opted for Britain.[59]

From 1936 to 1940 France declined to take risks to ensure the security of her allies.[60] Indeed, throughout the period, French policy was to reassure her allies without increasing tangible commitments.[61] Even after France and Britain conceded parts of Czechoslovakia to Germany at Munich, General Gamelin was to advocate further alliance diplomacy to counter increasing German capability and bellicosity. In October 1938 he argued for strengthening French ties with Spain, Turkey, and the Balkans. How this was to be achieved after France had so recently sold out one of her most important allies is unclear.[62]

Repeatedly, from 1934 to the outbreak of the war, we see a well-defined emphasis in French responses to Germany. When Germany took any initiative that threatened France, the French scurried around trying to collect allies. While France managed to hold on to her treaty relationships of the 1920s, she was not able to expand them. Neither did she take military steps that would allow her to lend support to allies in eastern Europe. France was more interested in what her allies could do for her than in what she could do for them.

Of course, alliances are not charities; they are generally attempts by each party involved to transfer its defense costs to some other party or parties. In terms of French doctrine, however, it did not make sense to allow the Germans to take "long-war" resources piecemeal. This would put France at a disadvantage in terms of her own strategic calculations. Yet, this is what happened. Were French leaders completely unaware of this lapse?

Offensive Advocates

Even before France's final withdrawal from the Disarmament Conference on April 17, 1934, General Maxime Weygand, commander in chief of the French Army, and General Gamelin, chief of staff, were concerned about the German violations of the Versailles Treaty disarmament provisions. They overstated the extent of these violations to support arguments for a general increase in French defense spending, with special emphasis on the need for heavy tanks and artillery. These would permit the offensives necessary to aid French allies.[63] One should not leap to the conclusion that anything like Blitzkrieg was being proposed. The desired weaponry was destined for offensive uses, but in the slow and methodical manner developed at the end of World War I.

On April 17 the French cabinet approved a policy statement that advocated a much stronger line against Germany. The note foreshadowed Barthou's energetic alliance policy discussed above. The policy statement called for a more offensive cast to French military planning. The generals had argued for this previously. Yet, the only additional funding made available to the military in 1934 was dedicated to further work on the fortification system. The original plans for the Maginot Line were nearing fulfillment in 1934. Rather than shift expenditure to new programs, the government allocated more money to defensive works. French behavior was contradictory. While the policy statement of April 17 implied a requirement for greater offensive mobility, the army preferred greater mobility within an overall defensive context. One doubts that offensives were really in anyone's mind. Neither the subsequent behavior of the government in power in 1934 nor of later governments suggests any concern for offensive capability.[64] General Louis Maurin, the minister of war, summarized the position of the French government in a statement to the Chamber of Deputies on March 3, 1935.

> How could it be believed that we are still thinking of the offensive when we have spent billions to establish a fortified barrier? Should we be such fools as to go beyond that barrier, seeking some God knows what kind of military adventure? This I say to show you the thought of the government, that at least as far as my person is concerned, knows the war plans perfectly well.[65]

The Maginot Line signaled to friend and foe alike French unwillingness to undertake any kind of military action unless she were directly threatened.[66] This judgment is borne out by French behavior

in 1936 and remarked by observers on the scene. The structure of the French Army was one of the principal internal arguments against resisting German remilitarization of the Rhineland. In a note to the Conseil Supérieur de la Guerre, Gamelin stated flatly that no troops were immediately available for use in the Rhineland. France's military system did not give this capability, since the active units were simply the nucleus of a mobilized national army. Gamelin opposed even a symbolic action. Nothing should be done unless the entire couverture were put on a war footing, implying a call-up of a million men.[67] Due to internal political conflict at the time, the government deemed such action out of the question.

Lessons were drawn from this experience but were never applied in the forces. Later in 1936 Gamelin himself admitted that the form of the French Army was too defensive, and that to preserve her alliances the military forces had to be capable of some intervention beyond the frontiers.[68] In 1937 Lt. Col. Jean Fabry wrote in the *Revue Militaire Générale* that France's military organization did not allow any sort of bold diplomatic response to Hitler's occupation of the Rhineland.[69] Critics outside the center of government recognized the problem. De Gaulle argued for his armored and mechanized "armée de metier" on the grounds that it would prevent the piecemeal destruction of the French alliance system. Such a standing force would make possible limited military action to dissuade or defend, as opposed to total mobilization.[70] Paul Reynaud, later to become prime minister, shared de Gaulle's views and explained many of the failures of French foreign policy by the dearth of intervention capabilities.[71]

In 1936 the Popular Front government of Leon Blum recognized that an increased military effort was necessary to counter German actions and support French diplomacy.[72] Yet, none of the measures taken by France over the next two years, important and extensive though they were, directly served to increase France's capability to help her allies. The measures taken were completely consistent with the military doctrine evolved during the 1920s. First, a new program of light defensive works along the Belgian border was begun. This was meant to provide an insurance policy against the failure of the Belgian maneuver. The forts were not on the scale of the Maginot Line and were incomplete in the fall of 1939. Second, the system of economic mobilization for the long attrition war was improved. Third, an overall program of rearmament was begun. Although this program involved the purchase of substantial numbers of tanks and planes, no attempt was made to alter the army's predominantly de-

fensive plans for the use of these weapons.[73] No major preparations for offensive operations of any kind were made.

French war plans and preparations never improved "the speed and effectiveness of their aid to the east." General LeLong's remarks to the British on the subject of aid to Poland in 1939 show that the defensive French doctrine of the 1920s had undergone little change. LeLong noted that "the Maginot Line and the Siegfried Line faced each other, and France could not seriously attack Germany on land without long preparation."[74] The sacrifice of Poland would contribute to French security. One factor contributing to Gamelin's approval of the declaration of war in 1939 was his belief that mobilization could proceed without interference, while Germany was busy destroying Poland.[75]

Summary: Balance of Power Factors and the Stagnation and Disintegration of French Military Doctrine

The continuing obsession of French civilians and soldiers with passing the costs of French defense to potential allies militated against major innovations in military doctrine during the 1930s. French civilian leadership during the period concentrated its energies on preserving or expanding alliances. Of primary importance was the alliance with Britain. A more offensive military doctrine could only complicate the task of winning British support. Consistent with the priority assigned to British aid, France was willing to pay little in the coin of her own offensive capabilities to preserve her eastern alliances. France walked a tightrope between doing just enough to preserve her eastern alliances and at the same time maintaining a primarily defensive capability that would both satisfy the British and allow France, once war came, to pass the costs of war to all of her allies, great and small.

The unintended consequence of this policy was to produce a military organization insufficiently prepared for some of the important contingencies identified by French grand strategy, especially the French advance into Belgium. Civilians looked outward rather than inward for solutions to French security problems. Had the French political situation been more like that of Germany in the 1930s, or Israel today, one suspects that more sustained political attention would have been focused on military means. Unfortunately, the military was left to its own devices.

During the 1930s, both the French Army and Air Force failed to achieve innovations in military doctrine. In the wake of the political changes of 1936, this failure became a prime cause of the disintegration of French grand strategy.

The defensive doctrine that had evolved in the 1920s and early 1930s put French civilians and soldiers in an unfavorable position to absorb improvements in tank and aircraft design. Consistent with Brodie's generalization, the armed forces "accepted" the new weaponry without "adapting" to it.[76] The simplest lessons of World War I governed the army's behavior.[77] The French always stressed firepower over maneuver.[78] The requirement for a heavy firepower offensive with a massive preliminary bombardment fostered a slow and deliberate style of warfare. New techniques and machines were fitted to this model.[79] Ten years after World War I the École Supérieure de Guerre was teaching this view of war to its students, students who were to be commanding officers ten years later. Moreover, French officers were taught abstract principles of war in a "formalistic and routine" way. Instruction in the actual conduct of complex military operations seems to have been sparse.[80]

The evolution of French thinking on the tank provides a useful illustration. As early as 1920 the first subjugation of the tank to the rhythm of the infantry had occurred. By 1929 this was formalized in *instruction sur l'emploi des chars de combat* (instruction for the employment of tanks) issued by Paul Painlevé. This basic field manual declared that tanks were "only a means of supplementary action temporarily set at the disposal of the infantry. They considerably reenforce the action of the latter, but they do not replace it."[81]

By the late 1930s the tank course at the École Supérieure de Guerre attempted to teach the mass use of tanks and combined arms operations. Yet, in 1937 the École des Chars de Combat (the Armor School) still stressed the subjugation of the tank to the infantry, and the necessity for massive artillery support to suppress anti-tank guns.[82] (It is worth nothing that this last idea has come to have considerable validity.) The tank manual of 1937, signed by General Gamelin, deliberately forswore the discussion of mechanized divisions and the mechanized exploitation of breakthroughs.[83] Generally, there was a dogmatic subjugation of the tank to the infantry and an unwillingness to exploit any of its maneuver possibilities. Unlike German Panzer units, French tank units were usually not provided with mechanized organic support elements, such as infantry, artillery, and engineers,

which could help commanders exploit the full maneuver possibilities of the tank.[84]

As early as 1932 the French Army had experimented with an all-mechanized force. A tactical error by its commander was seized upon to end the experiment. Instead, old-style formations were gradually motorized and mechanized.[85] The horse cavalry division of 1932 gradually metamorphosed into the DLM (Light Mechanized Division) of 1940. Giving a new technology to the most traditional branch of a service is perhaps the worst way to assure its effective exploitation.

By 1936, the thought patterns and organizational structures were set. When Hitler began his depredations, few were willing to embark upon risky innovations. Weygand concluded that the speed of German rearmament did not allow anything revolutionary. Though many French writers continued to harp on the dangers of the attaque brusquée, few suggested that the French Army adopt its techniques.[86] While the *Instruction sur les grandes unités* of 1936, the official statement of French tactical doctrine for the late 1930s, extolled the speed and mobility of modern weaponry, it simultaneously stressed careful planning and the avoidance of encounter battles. The infantry manual of 1938 stressed firepower and "tactical security."[87]

In May 1939, in a speech at Chatham House (Britain's Royal Institute of International Affairs), Weygand reaffirmed his faith in the defensive and in firepower. "On this basis, he then outlined for his listeners a picture of stabilization on the western front in the coming war, with the decision to be reached elsewhere—in Eastern Europe or the Balkans."[88] In the end, French doctrine and forces were specialized for this hope.

How is the stagnation of French ground doctrine to be explained? As argued earlier, the French armed forces were brought to accept the defensive doctrine as a way to salvage their autonomy and identity. Throughout the 1930s, the civilian preference for a cautious defensive doctrine did not change; civilians did not intervene to promote innovation. They gave the soldiers little reason to believe that another doctrine would find official favor. Indeed, Philip Bankwitz offers this consideration (perhaps over-sympathetically) as the fundamental reason General Weygand would not consider major doctrinal reforms in the mid-thirties.[89]

Second, the doctrine's assumptions about the character of a future war continued to be based chiefly on French World War I experience. The veteran World War I French Army commanders were disinclined to seek changes that would render their own skills obsolescent.

Third, from 1928 through 1935 the French Army had its conscripts

for only a year. This was believed to be an inadequate training period. It was feared that when such conscripts were ultimately mobilized and recalled for active service, they would be unfit for all but well-planned defensive actions. Even after the two-year term was restored in 1936, the army perceived the standard of training as low for the majority of mobilizable reservists.

After 1936 an additional fear forestalled change. International politics was heating up. Suppose the army was caught during a major reorganization. If it were in transition between doctrines when war broke out, the question would be not whether it could fight well, but whether it could fight at all.

Thus, none of the factors hypothesized in chapter 2 as contributing to innovation were at work in the French military during the 1930s. There was little direct experience with new technology; new technologies were in the custody of very traditional services and service branches. There was little civilian pressure to innovate. The military hierarchy was inflexible and populated by elderly veterans of World War I. Conversely, in almost every way, an absence of doctrinal innovation reduced uncertainty for the organization.

The doctrine of the French Air Force (l'Armée de l'Air) in 1940 remains something of a mystery, but it too played a role in the French defeat. Historians agree that its contribution to the war was insufficient. It began the war with a miscellaneous collection of largely mediocre fighters. It deployed even fewer bombers. Some of these were obsolete; others were new but ineffective. Overall coordination of air operations was weak. Targets were frequently hit too late or with insufficient strength. The air force often failed to concentrate its fighters over critical points on the battlefield.

On the other hand, it does not seem that the air force was decisively defeated, but rather that it was improperly used, and in some ways scarcely used at all. While its goals and purposes were never clear, the French Air Force was, in the words of its commander, General Joseph Vuillemin, "at the time of the Armistice . . . ready to carry on, as it had a greater front line effective strength than on May 10."[90] On the one hand we have an air force that accomplished very little in the war. It lost over 500 planes in combat. Yet, it had sufficient reserves of personnel and machines to remain at full strength during sustained combat. Technically, then, the air force could fight. The problem was the failure to develop a coherent and appropriate doctrine.

Explaining the failure of the French Air Force is a complicated task, and one that historians have yet to complete. The following discus-

sion relies heavily on the work of Robert Young.[91] His explanations ring true in organization theory terms.

First, the French Air Force did not gain its independence from the army until 1933. Hence, it could not, as most organizations are known to do, promote any sort of independent task for itself. The army forced it into a mold that made it a mere appendage.

Second, even after the air force achieved nominal autonomy, it remained under the close control of the army. Independent developments had to be cloaked in the guise of the army's traditional preferences. Until 1936, the air force seems to have lacked an effective civilian minister either to fight for it or to push it along. When it finally got such a minister, Pierre Cot, his schemes were opposed by the army and went unsupported by the remainder of the government.

Like many of the French Air Force officers prior to his term, Cot had a modest preference for the counter–city strategic bombing advocated by Giulio Douhet, the famous Italian airpower theorist. Neither Cot nor his officers were fanatical about this; Cot paid attention to air defense, but he built bombers. This is understandable if it is seen as the search by a young organization for a mission that could preserve its newly won autonomy. Strategic bombing would get the air force out of the army's clutches. Because of the army's institutional clout, this doctrine was a key element in Cot's demise as civilian minister.

When Cot was driven from office in January 1938, his successor, Guy La Chambre, found it necessary to race hard to catch up with an increasingly threatening Germany. Like the British, he saw the shift of resources to the production of single-engine aircraft (the easiest to produce) as the simplest solution to his problem. Although the French resource shift to fighters was not as dramatic as the British, the decision gave France what little air power it had in 1940. La Chambre also abandoned any notion of strategic bombing in the early stages of a future war.[92] Why risk planes against and provoke retaliation by a superior adversary?

Generated in a haphazard way and without clear goals, l'Armée de l'Air was not much more than a pile of aircraft. When the war began, the fighters were parceled out to the commanders of large ground formations. Where the French Air Force fought, it gave the Luftwaffe as tough a time as could have been expected from an inexperienced and technically inferior force. But it was usually a case of too little and too late.

The tragedy of the French Air Force is partially explained by organization theory. As argued in chapter 2, it is difficult for a group of

services to construct among themselves a unified military doctrine consistent with a state's grand strategy. Services are more likely to bargain with each other in pursuit of their separate parochial interests. Each service will attempt to impose its own view of war on the others. Civilian intervention is required to coordinate the contributions of different services. French civilian leadership did not at first take an active hand in managing the air force because, as noted earlier, its energies were largely spent on coalition diplomacy. When Cot and La Chambre did take a hand, they drove the air force first one way and then another, each precipitating a destabilizing reorganization. La Chambre may well have been on the right track, but he had a late start compared to the Germans.

By 1940 the French Air Force was interested in almost every imaginable mission, from strategic bombing to air defense. However, with few priorities set by civilians, none of the missions were done well. In light of Britain's successful mastery of air strategy, the absence of strong civilian control in France is not adequately explained by the sheer technical difficulty involved. It may be explained, but only in part, by the outward-looking obsession of French statesmen. A definitive solution to the mystery has yet to emerge.

Conclusions

Determining the relative value of balance of power theory and organization theory in explaining French doctrine is a complicated task. Often the two theories seem to point to the same outcome. Balance of power theory does, however, emerge with a slight edge.

On first appraisal it appears that both balance of power theory and organization theory predict a defensive military doctrine for France. The country faced an imbalance of power; the imbalance was getting worse; allies were available to redress it. Yet, Britain, the most useful ally, was loath to risk a return to continental warfare. A defensive doctrine would thus serve two purposes. In peacetime it would conform to the political and military cautiousness of the ally being courted. The legitimacy of the French claim to assistance would be high. Once war came, a defensive doctrine would buy time to negotiate the distribution of the great risks and high costs associated with the offensive that would ultimately be required to defeat Germany.

Geography and technology influenced the doctrine in more subtle ways. Because the modern weapons technology employed in World War I increased the possibility of another attrition war, it magnified

the value of industrially powerful allies. It also magnified the importance of French industry, which was mainly located in the northeastern and northern parts of the country. The technological lessons of World War I increased the attractiveness of a tactically defensive military doctrine. Because the northeastern industries near Germany and Luxembourg were farther from the border than were the northern industries near Belgium, and because they possessed local terrain with greater natural defensive value, the French perceived them as more amenable to defense from fixed fortifications. Hence, the Maginot Line was built to cover these areas. On close examination, however, it appears that some of the industry of Lorraine remained vulnerable to artillery fire that a German invader could bring to bear from Luxembourg.

Maybe because the new technologies threw off various and in some cases contradictory implications for military doctrine, the conclusions drawn from them by the French were not wholly consistent. In the northeast, defense from prepared positions would help protect some essential mobilization resources, but some would remain vulnerable. In the north, it was argued that such resources could only be protected by moving forward into Belgium, with the associated risk of violent encounter battles. Arguably, some of the industrial resources of Lorraine could only be protected by a similar move into Luxembourg, but this does not seem to have been a high priority, judging from available accounts of French strategic thinking. Given French views, the requirement to avoid encounter battles and the requirement to protect industrial resources in the north contradicted each other. They could do one, or the other, but not both. It is also difficult to avoid the impression of at least some inconsistency between French views on the defense of the Belgian frontier and French willingness to install fixed defenses on the Luxembourg frontier.

The risks of an advance into Belgium were not excessive if the alliance with Belgium held together and the French could advance to reasonably well-prepared defensive positions. Once the alliance collapsed, French soldiers ran a higher risk of a battle of movement for which their doctrine was unprepared. What accounts for French acceptance of this risk?

Balance of power calculations tipped the scales in the north toward forward movement. Fortification of the northeastern border and an open Franco-Belgian border would induce Germany to move through Belgium. If Belgium cooperated, the Germans would be stopped far from the French border, saving the industries of the north. Furthermore, because Belgium had long been identified as an invasion

springboard against England, a German attack would help draw that country into continental battle, redressing the imbalance of power with Germany. This perhaps clears up some of the mystery about the Luxembourg frontier. Offensive action in Luxembourg might help protect some industry, but it would not yield any other significant dividends. This would suggest that it was precisely these other dividends that loomed largest in French plans for Belgium. In the end, France took some risks in terms of the narrow technological lessons of World War I for the sake of potential gain in gross capabilities.

Organization theory offers contradictory predictions for the attitudes of the French Army toward offense and defense. On the one hand, the slow-paced, largely defensive war of attrition had been the army's major World War I experience. Conservatism should have drawn it to a defensive doctrine. On the other hand, the French Army entered World War I with a strong offensive bias, and ended that war marching toward Germany. One could argue that this background, and the organizational incentives for offense discussed in chapter 2, should have been enough to keep the offensive spirit alive in the French Army. Close students of French interwar military doctrine have debated whether or not this was the case. The burden of the argument has been that offensive thinking received short shrift, and that the army really had no interest in the offensive.

A careful reading of the history, however, shows why the debate on French Army doctrine continues. In the early post–World War I period the French General Foch continued to believe that a rapid offensive might subdue German military resurgence. As the French lost support for aggressive enforcement of the Versailles Treaty and began to build the Maginot Line, French generals argued that the border forts should be constructed in such a way as to facilitate maneuver and counteroffensives. The original plans for the Line conformed to these wishes. The field manual of 1936 retained a good word for offensive action, so much so that some students of the manual have tried to make the case that French doctrine was not so different from the German. Finally, General Gamelin's Breda variant has the look of the 1914 French Army's daring offensive lunge. The offensive spirit did not simply vanish from the French Army.

It must be admitted, however, that these offensive strains were muted. The offensive tendency was weak partly as a function of organizational inertia and partly as a result of institutional doubts about the offensive élan of the one-year conscript. But the principal cause of the great defensiveness of French doctrine was the army's awareness that offense would find little favor with the civilian leaders

of France. This is not to argue that the French officer corps showed a particularly strong desire for a more offensive doctrine. Rather, the doctrinal parameters set by civilians, largely for balance of power reasons, reduced to zero the probability of independent military advocacy of any kind of offensive doctrine.

In the areas of integration and innovation, balance of power theory just narrowly provides a better explanation for French military doctrine than organization theory. Organization theory predicts that soldiers and statesmen will have difficulty reconciling policy and military doctrine. Before the Belgian declaration of neutrality in 1936 this was not the case. Afterwards it was. Why? Organization theory suggests that lack of mutual technical understanding between soldiers and civilians should produce disintegration. This tendency is exacerbated by the military's pursuit of organizational autonomy. These tendencies did not produce disintegration while the French military position remained relatively simple—before the problem of French entry into Belgium grew in tactical complexity and subtlety. Before the Belgian declaration of neutrality, the French Army could hope for an early and safe entry into Belgium, perhaps to occupy defensive positions already prepared for them. Defensive tactics developed for the northeastern frontier would not be taxed. After 1937, the move involved a higher risk of a war of movement, for which the military doctrine of France was unprepared. But how could the French Army get ready for a war of movement without appearing to return to the offensive and so to subvert the overall objectives of French grand strategy? Such a doctrine might have been possible with closer civil-military relations. Yet, as the threat increased, civilians remained preoccupied with the balance of power, which could only be rectified by strong allies. Civilians spent their time and energy trying to rebuild the old World War I coalition. There was little time left to address the details of military doctrine.

The preoccupation with forging and managing an external coalition also affected the chances for innovation. After nearly eighteen years of a defensive doctrine, the French officer corps would have been hard put to grasp independently for a more offensive, mobile-warfare, doctrinal innovation. As German strength and belligerence grew, it seemed that war could occur at any time. What if it came in the middle of a doctrinal change, leaving the army without any coherent guidance for combat? If innovation consonant with the changed political circumstances of 1936 were to occur, civilian pressure would have to be applied. Had civilians not seen so many alliance options to pursue, such pressure might have been forthcom-

ing. Had the imbalance of power not seemed so great, civilians might have paid more attention to their national military capabilities, and less to coalition diplomacy. But the imbalance did seem great, and civilians saw their greatest problem to be righting that imbalance. Moreover, a mobile-war doctrine might have appeared offensive, and jeopardized the possibility of timely British support. Civilians reacted to the balance of power, the constraints and incentives inherent in their environment, and created conditions in which organizational inertia could prevail.

Which of the two theories, balance of power theory or organization theory, better explains French interwar doctrine? Balance of power theory explains the broad defensive tendencies of French grand strategy. French soldiers were constrained to operate within these parameters. Once they had evolved a largely defensive doctrine, they had little incentive to change. Once the events of 1936 created the need for such a change, civilian intervention was required. Civilians kept their eyes on gross power disparities, however. The pursuit of allies occupied their time and energy. The details of the subtle changes that French doctrine required were probably beyond their understanding. The changes suggested by French military reformers such as de Gaulle had an excessively offensive appearance that would have undercut the broader purposes of French grand strategy. The constraints and incentives of the European political system thus created the conditions for organizational factors to produce stagnation and disintegration.

Perhaps the developments in actual French war planning in late 1939 and early 1940 can help clinch the argument that balance of power calculations were the determining factors in French grand strategy. By then, France had achieved its original overriding purpose of binding Britain to the French war effort. Would France concentrate on collecting her winnings or on acquiring more? Would she, in effect, return to those technological lessons of World War I that had influenced her doctrine in the direction of caution and conservatism? Or would she continue to respond to the constraints and incentives inherent in the European political system?

The Escaut Plan would have covered all the narrow military lessons of World War I. Its cautiousness might have compensated for the German lead in military experience, the absence of prewar Belgian cooperation, and the almost willful French ignorance of mobile warfare. It allowed the soldiers more time to prepare defenses; it took the battle away from the French border; it maintained an operational reserve against unforeseen contingencies; and it involved the British

in the initial fighting. There were, however, other chips to be won, chips useful in an attrition war. Why not try to gather in a million Belgian and Dutch soldiers? Why not try to save some Belgian industry for the Allied cause? Why not take the war even farther from the French border? Why not try to increase Britain's contribution? Would she not be more likely to make an ever-widening commitment to a long and costly ground war if that war were securing the Low Countries, with which she had a traditional obsession? The conclusion seems warranted that the same political constraints and incentives that had so driven French doctrine in the twenties and thirties permitted the remarkable war plan of May 1940. Those narrow technological lessons of World War I that played such an apparently important role in the early postwar period seem to have been discounted when the crunch came.

With British cooperation finally assured, French civilian leaders were less cautious and restrictive. Their long-sought diplomatic objective had been achieved. Under these conditions, French soldiers could allow their few surviving offensive inclinations freer rein. The overall balance of power had at last been partially equalized, but this only opened up new prizes for the French to seek. Ironically, these would require more offensive military action, which the French commanders, at least General Gamelin, were suddenly willing to contemplate. It was easier, however, to change the plans in a more offensive direction than it was to change the army's doctrine. For years balance of power considerations and organizational tendencies had meshed to produce a defensive, disintegrated, and stagnant military doctrine. By 1940, those same factors paradoxically allowed France to drift in the direction of a more offensive war plan, which would sorely tax forces trained and organized according to her defensive military doctrine.

To some readers this case might only suggest that the two theories capture causal forces of equal power, which worked in tandem to produce the distinctive doctrine of interwar France. I have argued, however, that balance of power theory better explains the broad parameters of the doctrine. A comparative perspective further illuminates the relative power of the two theories. In the two cases that follow, balance of power constraints and incentives differ from those faced by France, although the organizational ones are quite similar. Different doctrinal results emerge, results consistent with the different political and geographical circumstances faced by Britain and Germany. In comparative perspective, balance of power theory appears more decisive than it does in the admittedly complicated and murky case of French interwar doctrine.

[5]

Britain

Britain entered World War II with a defensive, innovative military doctrine, moderately well integrated with the political aspects of her grand strategy. The doctrine had only emerged in this form during the two years immediately preceding the outbreak of the war. Before that time, although the doctrine was defensive, and in some ways innovative, it poorly served British political ends.

Britain tried to preserve both her global empire and her European interests with economic and military resources that her elites understood to be insufficient. Because of this weakness, British leaders expected a new war to destroy the empire, even if England proper were to survive. To save the empire, they had to dissuade potential aggressors from attack. World-wide dissuasion was difficult to achieve with the military capabilities at Britain's disposal. Hence, the British ultimately chose to rely on the dissuasive effect of the threat to fight their traditional attrition war of industrial mobilization and naval blockade—in spite of the obvious fact that the entire British Empire could not match the combined resources of Germany, Italy, and Japan. Strong defensive naval and air forces would protect the industrial homeland and the sea lanes of empire from any sudden attack. Behind this shield imperial resources would mobilize. Finally, potential aggressors could not ignore the possibility that Britain would in the future, as she had in the past, seek and find powerful allies. Reliance upon continental allies to do most of the expected brutal ground fighting was an important component of British strategy.

By the 1930s, this dissuasive strategy was perhaps Britain's best bet, at least for the purpose of preserving the empire. Yet, the difficulty of defending the empire fed the emphasis on avoiding war, which in turn fed the policy of appeasement. Britain incrementally