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Strategic Denial and Deception

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A concern about the threat of high-level denial and deception has waxed and waned among Americans since the end of World War II. Sometimes they fear that denial and deception has shaped threat assessments: witness the 1976 "A Team/B Team experiment" in competitive intelligence analysis undertaken by the Gerald R. Ford White House.[1] At other times, the threat of denial and deception—here the euphoria accompanying the end of the Cold War comes to mind—seems to fade into insignificance. As the United States reigns as the only superpower and the world experiences a communication revolution, how much of a threat does denial and deception pose to American interests today? Do globalization, proliferating communication technologies, and the dissemination of vast amounts of information make effective foreign denial and deception more or less likely? Will more information and data sources make policymakers better informed or will the proliferation of information simply create confusion?[2]

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STRATEGIC DENIAL AND DECEPTION DEFINED

Denial and deception (D&D) is a term often used to describe a combination of information operations that a nation undertakes to achieve its objectives. *Denial* refers to the attempt to block information which could be used by an opponent to learn some truth. *Deception*, by contrast, refers to a nation's effort to cause an adversary to believe something that is not true.

Although they are distinct activities, denial and deception are intertwined in practice and are used as a single concept here. To deceive an opponent about the true intentions or goals of the deceiver, accurate information (e.g., about a military development program, a policy, a course of action, etc.) must be concealed or "denied" to the target. Deception, the effort to cause an adversary to believe something that is not true, can be undertaken together with denial operations. This involves using "leaks," planted information, or decoys to create the impression that the truth is other than it actually is, thereby creating an "alternative reality" for the target. When denial and deception works, the deceiver leads the target to believe a "cover story" rather than the truth. The target will then react in a way that serves the deceiver's interests.

The term "strategic," more difficult to define, is used here to denote a high level of importance. D&D is strategic if it directly affects the national fortune and interests. Strategic denial and deception is related to the "big picture." It concerns the major policies of a government, rather than the details of policy implementation. Strategic deception is thus aimed at the highest levels of a government or of the military chain of command (e.g., chiefs of state, cabinet members, or senior military commanders). The subject of the deception effort must be something that a high-level official would deal with personally. Similarly, strategic denial would be the effort to withhold information of the sort that is handled primarily by senior officials.

Foreign denial and deception occurs when state or non-state actors (e.g., terrorist groups, criminal organizations, or separatist movements) use denial and deception to achieve their objectives against U.S. targets, interests, or policies. D&D also can be used by foreign adversaries as a strategic instrument in the sense that it becomes a primary means for disadvantaging the United States—politically or militarily. For terrorist or criminal organizations, D&D is a strategic instrument, much in the same way as the navy or nuclear weapons are strategic instruments for the United States. Criminals and terrorists use D&D as a strategic instrument to shape the environment so that they can better achieve their objectives.

Various "channels" of communication are used by D&D practitioners. Sometimes intelligence sources and methods channel "corrupt" information to policymakers. Often, however, less clandestine methods of communication are used: media (television, radio, Internet) outlets, diplomatic interactions, academic exchanges, and international travel and tourism. D&D does not require "dedicated" communication channels to be effective. In fact, D&D is often facilitated when the transfer of information appears to be incidental to the ostensible purpose of an event or contact. Diplomats, academics, and business travelers offer convincing conduits for the information they discover by "accident" during the regular course of their professional activities.

SUCCESSFUL DENIAL AND DECEPTION

Based on historical experience and deductive logic, a successful denial and deception campaign[3] requires several components. First, the campaign benefits from strategic coherence. The deceiver nation must have an overall plan in mind for the achievement of its objectives; it must determine in advance how the target should behave and how deception will contribute to that outcome. The deceiver also must predict how the target will react in the wake of both successful and unsuccessful deception. This is no small task. Those contemplating deception may engage in wishful thinking when predicting the consequences of their deception campaign.[4] Additionally, the deceiver must integrate its actions with (a) efforts to deny an opponent accurate information and (b) deceptive cover stories. Again, this is no small task. D&D campaigns require coherent, if not coordinated, action from many departments, agencies, or ministries. Public statements, press articles, and Internet communications must be shaped to support the goals of the nation intent on deception. As this corrupt information is disseminated, steps must be taken to prevent accurate information from reaching the target.

Second, deception is enhanced when the strategic culture of the adversary is understood. To be successful, the deceiver must recognize the target's perceptual context[5] to know what (false) pictures of the world will appear plausible. History, culture, bureaucratic preferences, and the general economic and political milieu all influence the target's perceptions.[6] False information should conform to the idiosyncrasies of strategic and even popular culture. Mistakes are easily detected and often appear comical to the target audience.[7] Thus, deception requires creative planning: experience shows that successful deception planners manage to escape the routine and

culture of large bureaucracies. In sum, deception planners "need to know a great deal about the worldview of those they are trying to manipulate, and recognize the human proclivity for self-deception."[8]

Third, deception requires information channels to reach the adversary. Supplying the target with corrupt information in creative ways can also increase its credibility in the eyes of the target. Deception planners thus require the authority and imagination to exploit traditional channels and develop new ones on an ad hoc basis.

Fourth, a successful D&D campaign benefits from feedback mechanisms to collect data about the target's behavior. Discovering the way the target has interpreted the received data is especially important. A deception campaign is a dynamic enterprise: cover stories, communication channels, and specific initiatives require fine tuning to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities or problems. Knowing that a deception campaign is succeeding also can be crucial to the achievement of grand strategic objectives. To pursue a course of action that relied on deception if the target failed to "take the bait" would be foolhardy. Alternatively, if an initial deception plan failed, the feedback mechanism could activate backup D&D campaigns.[9]

PRACTITIONERS OF DENIAL AND DECEPTION

Deceivers can be divided into four categories: democracies; authoritarian regimes; regimes in transition (changing from authoritarian to democratic or vice versa); and non-state actors (criminal organizations, terrorist groups, separatist organizations). At one time or another, all types of actors launch (and suffer from) successful deception campaigns.

Democracies

Democracies employ D&D mostly in wartime. But democracies are quite capable of deceiving even in peacetime. From the Revolutionary War campaign at Yorktown, to the D-Day landings in World War II, to the "feint" of a Marine amphibious assault during the Gulf War, United States history is replete with instances in which deception was used to U.S. military advantage. Throughout the twentieth century, Great Britain and other democracies also occasionally showed themselves to be effective at D&D in war and peace. For example, Israel's and, more recently, India's programs to develop nuclear weapons benefited from sophisticated D&D campaigns. But Americans are often unaware of the successful D&D campaigns of other democracies, especially in peacetime.

Authoritarian Regimes

In contrast to democracies, authoritarian, and especially totalitarian, regimes use denial and deception as a regular instrument of governance.[10] This increases their reliance on similar tactics in foreign policy and defense matters. Especially disturbing is the tendency of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes to use D&D to support the initiation of hostilities. For example, Operation BARBAROSSA (the 1941 Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union) and Japan's attack on the United States and Great Britain in December 1941 were accompanied by sophisticated D&D campaigns. Authoritarian regimes also are adept at other uses of D&D: witness Iraq's continuing efforts to elude international inspection and destruction of its weapons of mass destruction.[11]

Non-State Actors

The way non-state actors employ D&D poses a rising threat to U.S. interests and those of other democracies. Transnational businesses, criminal syndicates, revolutionary organizations, terrorists, and religious groups pursuing illicit objectives must seek cover to operate effectively. For criminals, rebels, and terrorists denial becomes their raison d'etat. The shadowy world of the terrorist or the criminal is an alternative reality, not a temporary expedient to achieve limited objectives. The criminal flourishes in the hidden world created by denial, while the gunman uses denial and deception to enter the world of legitimate power. The clandestine underground is a way of life and a strategic instrument for highly illicit organizations.

For clandestine groups, denial creates a parallel world that exhilarates, offers a safe haven, and enhances the life of the committed. Evidence of this type of behavior can be observed both in the Sicilian Mafia, which seeks respect, power, and money, and in terrorist organizations that seek to change the direction of history through violent action. A cult may be perceived as benign by outsiders—witness how a group of Islamic extremists were generally ignored prior to their 1993 attack on New York City's World Trade Center, or how the Aum Shinrikiyo operated in Japan, Russia, and the United States with little interference from the authorities—until it uses violence to fulfill objectives hidden from even its own rank and file.

By contrast, sustained and coordinated deception campaigns often exceed the resources of non-state actors.[12] These clandestine groups rarely can afford the time and resources needed for an effective deception campaign.

But as the activities of Colombia's Cali Cartel, the Irish Republican Army, and the Sicilian and U.S. Cosa Nostra crime families demonstrate, they have on occasion deliberately deceived as well as denied.

When used by non-state actors, D&D poses an immediate threat. Scarce foreign aid and intelligence resources are often squandered against fake or insignificant issues. When criminals use D&D, police time is spent "chasing after shadows." Investigative efforts are diluted to the point where they no longer yield significant results. Criminals and political terrorists often use D&D to eliminate their competition or to misdirect law enforcement investigators. For example, U.S. analysts and policymakers are alarmed about the fate of "starving sentries" at Soviet-built weapons plants and storage facilities. But, once out of the spotlight, are senior Russian officials also conspiring to sell the inventories and infrastructures of those plants to the highest bidder?

Regimes in Transition

Some regimes are in transition from an authoritarian to a democratic form of government. Some seek to reverse the process, while others may seek to increase their foreign capabilities to alter the international status quo. When increasing their military capabilities, some powers are attracted to denial and deception as a means of protecting developing weapons and military infrastructures from outside interference or treaty commitments.

The history of how transitional powers have exploited D&D offers insights into such contemporary problems as the 1998 collapse of the monitoring efforts of the United Nations Special Commission for the Disarmament of Iraq (UNSCOM).

Decades earlier, during the interwar arms control and disarmament regime directed at the Weimar Republic, the Germans had obfuscated, if not actually hidden, their rearmament efforts from international inspectors. Sometimes individuals, most interested in their own pecuniary interests, hid existing stocks of weapons or manufacturing equipment on their own initiative. At other times, officials engaged in coordinated actions to hide activity forbidden by treaty. "Advertising Squadrons," whose ostensible purpose was to provide skywriting and advertising services, actually served in the late 1920s as the first operational units of the reborn German air force.

The Inter-Allied Control Commission (1920–1926), charged with verifying German compliance with the Treaty of Versailles, became aware of these German violations. But because its inspectors failed to uncover convincing evidence of systematic German violation of the treaty, the Allies accepted the mundane explanations provided when evidence of wrongdoing was

uncovered. As the Control Commission concluded its work in 1926, for example, Commander Fanshawe, a British naval inspector, told his German counterpart: "You should not feel that we believed what you told us. Not one word you uttered was true, but you delivered information in such a clever way that we were in a position to believe you. I want to thank you for this."[13]

Parallels exist between German rearmament and the recent UNSCOM experience in Iraq since the 1991 Gulf War. Over time, plausible, if unlikely, explanations offered by the Iraqis for apparent arms violations eroded international interest and commitment in pursuing evidence of weapons violations. No one seems to believe that Iraq is in compliance with United Nations mandates, but most governments are reluctant to act against murky evidence of arms violations.

Thus, transition regimes are advantaged because targeted nations "take the easy way out" by believing palatable lies and half truths rather than confront disturbing information.[14] This may also apply to other forms of denial and deception.

ANTICIPATING THREATS

The United States, for several reasons, is likely to be a target of denial and deception by a variety of state and nonstate actors. First, D&D can be viewed as a form of asymmetric warfare. Likely opponents lack the military capability needed to effectively challenge U.S. forces on the battlefield. For the most part, officers and policymakers in the United States are preoccupied by asymmetric threats in the form of new technology or weapons (e.g., using advanced sensors and microprocessors to upgrade the performance of primitive mines).

But asymmetric warfare does not have to be based on exotic technology or be intended to exploit technical weaknesses in U.S. weapons systems. Denial and deception, for example, allows adversaries to compensate for American superiority by delaying U.S. military action or by confronting policymakers with a fait accompli. In other words, opponents might hope to avoid confronting U.S. forces directly by increasing the costs of U.S. intervention. D&D also might prevent U.S. forces from creating the synergy in maneuver and firepower needed to overcome numerically superior opponents on the battlefield. Because U.S. forces increasingly depend on superior command, control, communication, and intelligence (C4I) to beat an adversary to the punch, opponents can expect to reap disproportionate benefits from a D&D attack on American C4I.

Second, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) is facilitated by D&D. Dual-use technologies or contraband materials and equipment are needed for the manufacturing of chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons. Most states and manufacturers are unlikely to supply well-known proliferators with sensitive equipment. But D&D can be used to avoid the international condemnation and sanctions that would follow clear evidence that a nation was seeking to develop an arsenal of unconventional weapons. As Israel's June 1981 preventive attack on Iraq's nuclear complex at Osirak demonstrates, a WMD infrastructure that is detected before weapons are readied faces the prospect of direct military action. D&D helps proliferators hide their activities and avoid international sanctions or military strikes intended to deny them their deadly arsenals.

Third, the United States is party to a record number of multilateral and bilateral arms control, human rights, and trade agreements. Because many of these treaties involve complex verification and compliance procedures, states seeking to violate these treaties will be tempted to use D&D. Multilateral treaties are especially vulnerable to this type of threat. The international community would be unlikely to abandon an international arms control regime (e.g., the chemical weapons convention) because suspicions are aroused that a state is failing to abide by its terms. The history of the interwar Inter-Allied Control Commission would suggest that political will is at a premium when it comes to sanctioning violators of multilateral regimes.

Fourth, the electronic media, especially all-news television networks and Internet coverage, provide new channels for D&D. Although these new media allow Americans to stay informed about global developments in real time, they provide adversaries with a way to communicate directly with U.S. citizens and elites. This access can provide adversaries with an advantage over efforts of the U.S. government to communicate its policy positions to a domestic or a global audience. The public, especially under authoritarian regimes, rarely has access to new communication technology. In many respects, American government officials and the public are now part of a national village that often shares the same "virtual" experience, especially when it comes to extraordinary events.

To the extent that these images can be manipulated by foreign agents, new forms of media provide new opportunities for D&D. If Vietnam was the first television war, and the Gulf conflict was the first war with real time global coverage, then the 1999 war in Kosovo was the first "interactive war." Although not very sophisticated, supporters of Serbia used the Internet to contact individual Americans directly, while Serbian officials

debated various talk show hosts on national television. These techniques are likely to become more sophisticated in the future.

Fifth, the dissemination of knowledge about U.S. intelligence technology and an increased technological sophistication among U.S. opponents, aided in part by the intimate and powerful experience of having done battle with U.S. armed forces, is increasing foreign awareness of U.S. intelligence sources and methods. In addition, the publication of heretofore classified information supplied by officials and unofficial "leaks" can be, and has been, used by diligent adversaries to understand U.S. intelligence capabilities and biases. Intelligence sources and methods have been further compromised by espionage incidents and diplomatic démarches. This information has made it possible for adversaries to target the U.S. intelligence community for denial and deception.

Sixth, globalization—the breakdown of the traditional barriers to national sovereignty—increases the information and economic channels that can be used to conduct D&D. Tourism, business travel, legal and illegal migration, legal and illegal international trade, and increasingly interactive global financial markets and instruments offer subtle and credible ways to communicate corrupt information. Simultaneously, global financial markets and commerce form a new and profitable venue for D&D operations. The successful manipulation of financial markets and commerce not only undermines confidence in economic institutions, but can adversely affect the quality of life of many Americans, including their investments and pension plans.

MINIMIZING THREATS

Although the threat of D&D cannot be eliminated, there are ways to minimize its adverse impact: (1) develop a program to increase awareness in U.S. government circles of the use and methods of D&D efforts; (2) increase public and media awareness of D&D; (3) increase awareness of the trade-offs entailed in revealing current U.S. collection and analytic methods; (4) train intelligence collectors, analysts, and managers; and (5) synthesize available knowledge and prepare for the future. These initiatives require only modest expenditures of resources and effort, but they may yield significant dividends.

Increased Government Awareness

Policymakers would be advantaged by recognizing that they may be either the target or channel for D&D. This simple recommendation is, however, difficult to put into practice. Elected and senior officials pride themselves on their

interpersonal skills. Like many people, they tend to rely on their own ability to accurately perceive their surroundings and to sense when they are being manipulated. Moreover, senior officials often tend to place more stock in their own personal observations, even if limited, than in a mountain of contradictory information. There may be more than a little truth to the proposition that the more "savvy" the politician, the less likely he/she will be concerned about being targeted by a denial and deception campaign.

Increasing awareness among elected officials and other policymakers of D&D use and methods may be facilitated by case studies. By providing examples of past and current D&D activities, they could serve as a powerful reminder of their potential damage to U.S. interests, especially when targeted against elected and appointed officials.

To further help prevent policymakers from falling victim to D&D, U.S. intelligence can provide policymakers with additional, up-to-date background information on their personal contacts and sources of information so as to place them in a more complete context.

Public and Media Awareness

The American public, and especially the mass media, can be made aware that they are being targeted by D&D efforts, whether to be used as a channel of communication to reach elected officials, or to shape broad political trends and opinion in the United States. Foreign officials planning deception will naturally have an interest in capturing public and media opinion in a democracy. But to exaggerate the threat posed by D&D would be counterproductive. Instead, accurate and consistent explanation that adversaries are interested in shaping public and media opinion to serve their own interests can sensitize individuals to the possibility that they are being manipulated. Awareness of how past, current, and possibly future D&D has targeted the media and other nongovernmental sectors will help minimize the effectiveness of strategic foreign deception efforts.

Awareness of Revealing Information on Intelligence Methods

Government officials are often placed in situations where there is an advantage in revealing information, either to the public or to other governments, containing insights into U.S. intelligence collection and analytic methods and capabilities. While decisions on whether or not to reveal certain information must be made on a case-by-case basis, officials need to be aware of the trade-offs involved. In particular, providing other governments, international bodies, or non-state actors with indications concerning intelligence methods may facilitate the conduct of D&D

against the United States. Those in a position to make such decisions, as well as other officials and the public, can and should be made aware of how their actions could affect U.S. intelligence sources and methods, and the ability of the United States to detect future D&D operations. In addition, adequate records concerning such releases of information must be maintained to help determine what foreign governments or non-state actors are likely to know about U.S. intelligence methods and capabilities that could help them plan their D&D operations.

Training Intelligence Collectors, Analysts, and Managers

Intelligence collectors, analysts, and managers must become more aware of the possibility of their being targets and channels for D&D. Education, briefings, and training programs could include case studies of successful D&D, especially those involving the extensive use of technical intelligence channels. Specific elements of a training program might involve

- enhancing an awareness of the extent to which technical intelligence sources and methods may be compromised (i.e., to what extent does the intelligence target and potential deceiver understand the operation of a given intelligence channel?);
- developing and implementing a rating system for technical intelligence collection comparable to that which exists for human source collection (e.g., whether collection is "expected" or "unexpected," degree of compromise of the channel, etc.);
- examining possible "feedback" channels a potential deceiver might use, including analysis of open source information (e.g., what information could a potential deceiver glean from official statements and actions?).

Increased Study of D&D History and Theory

The study of historical, theoretical, and foreign D&D should be fostered within the Intelligence Community. A great deal of intellectual capital was accumulated during the Cold War on how to assess and counter D&D. Many of these lessons can be used to anticipate current and future challenges. But the generation that developed counter-denial and counter-deception awareness and practices in the aftermath of World War II is passing from the scene.

The few specialists remaining active are available, and usually willing, to work with a new generation of counter–D&D practitioners and researchers, in and outside the intelligence community, to pass on their knowledge and foster new studies of effective practices and indicators of D&D activity. A network of these specialists could be maintained and

provided with an opportunity to help mentor scholars, research corporation analysts, and intelligence managers and trainers. In addition, the synthesizing and publishing of studies, and the holding of conferences on D&D in other countries are likely to provide insights, not only on past practices but on anticipated threats.

MINIMIZING THE THREAT

Foreign denial and deception affects the quality of life in the United States by causing policymakers to waste scarce public resources and to fail to anticipate strategic threats. Foreign D&D assists state and non-state actors abroad, and even facilitates illegal activity in the Western hemisphere and U.S. border regions. The Intelligence Community, the Department of Defense, and other government agencies, as well as elected officials, the media, and the public need to be aware of efforts to influence policy debates and priorities within the United States. D&D cannot be eliminated, but its impact can be minimized.

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[1] The fear that American intelligence professionals and policymakers had been deceived about the Soviet military buildup led, in part, to the competitive estimates in the Ford years and later to White House interest during the Reagan Administration.

[2] For more on how the proliferation of sources and data can impede intelligence analysis see Abram Shulsky and Gary Schmitt, "Intelligence Reform: Beyond the Ames Case," in Roy Godson, Ernest R. May, and Gary Schmitt (eds.), *U.S. Intelligence at the Crossroads: Agendas for Reform* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 1995), pp. 46–59. For evidence that increased data and transparency can impede accurate perception see Bernard I. Finel and Kristin M. Lord, "The Surprising Logic of Transparency," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 2, June 1999, pp. 315–339.

[3] Since perception is in the mind of the beholder, denial and deception is not necessary or sufficient to misperceive the intentions of another. Common cognitive biases, bureaucratic politics, or intelligence pathologies (e.g., excessive compartmentalization) can produce misperception and intelligence failure. See Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976); and James J. Wirtz, "The Intelligence Paradigm," *Intelligence and National Security*, Vol. 4, No. 3, October 1989, pp. 829–837.

[4] For example, Soviet leaders in the fall of 1962 failed to assess correctly the consequences of their denial and deception campaign to hide their deployment of missiles to Cuba from U.S. intelligence and defense officials. See James J. Wirtz, "Organizing for Crisis Intelligence: Lessons from the Cuban Missile Crisis," in James G. Blight and David Welch (eds.), *Intelligence and the Cuban Missile Crisis* (London: Frank Cass, 1998).

[5] Colin Gray interprets the notion of strategic culture in this manner. See Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[6] Strategic culture's role in shaping defense policies, doctrines, and priorities recently has generated much scholarly interest. See Alastair Ian Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995); Stephen Peter Rosen, *Societies and Military Power* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996); Peter Lavoy, Scott Sagan and James J. Wirtz (eds.), *Planning the Unthinkable: New Powers and their Doctrines for Using Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Weapons* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, forthcoming); and Elizabeth Kier, *Imaging War: French and British Military Doctrine Between the Wars* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1997).

[7] During the Gulf War, for instance, Iraqi propagandists warned U.S. forces that while they were fighting in the Gulf, their girlfriends were home with "Bart Simpson."

[8] Roy Godson, *Dirty Tricks or Trump Cards* (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 1995), p. 236.

[9] Barton Whaley maintains, however, that only two of 230 deception campaigns he surveyed contained a "plan within a plan." He suggests that an explanation for the apparent absence of a backup plan might be that the high success rate of deception campaigns (83%) precluded the need to devise deceptions within deceptions. Notes on Whaley's comments at "Colloquium on Foreign Strategic Denial and Deception," Georgetown University, 12–13 July 1999; and Barton Whaley, *Stratagem: Deception and Surprise in War* (Cambridge: MIT Center for International Studies, 1969).

[10] Roy Godson (ed.), *Comparing Foreign Intelligence* (Washington, D.C.: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1988).

[11] David Kay, "Denial and Deception: The Lessons of Iraq," in Godson, May and Schmitt, op. cit., pp. 109–127; and Scott Ritter, *Endgame* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999).

[12] But as Bowyer Bell notes, the World Trade Center bombers, the Irish Republican Army, and the Sicilian Mafia surmounted various hurdles in conducting successful denial and deception campaigns. See J. Bowyer Bell, "Conditions Making for Success and Failure of D&D: Nonstate and Illicit Actors," paper prepared for "Colloquium on Foreign Strategic Denial and Deception," Georgetown University, 12–13 July 1999.

[13] Fanshawe quoted in Barton Whaley, "Conditions Making for Success and Failure of D&D: Authoritarian and Totalitarian Regimes," paper prepared for "Colloquium on Foreign Strategic Denial and Deception," Georgetown University, 12–13 July 1999, p. 14.

[14] While Weimar Germany used denial and deception to hide its military buildup, Adolf Hitler used similar techniques to exaggerate the Nazis' military achievements in order to intimidate their opponents. Denial and deception is extraordinarily important for transition states. It helps them when they are most vulnerable—during power transitions when stronger states might move preemptively against them. In fact, denial and deception may explain the general absence of preventive war in power transition situations. See Richard Ned Lebow, "Windows of Vulnerability: Do States Jump Through Them?" *International Security*, Vol. 9, No. 1, Summer 1984, pp. 147–186.