

Notes 4: April 9

- I. Information Signaling and Misperception:
 - A. In anarchy, high value information is costly to send and costly to receive because of
 - 1. Bluffing (strategic misrepresentation of preferences for outcomes; like world peace)
 - 2. Translation (of preferences)
 - 3. Lack of enforceability (of threats and bribes)
 - 4. Thus, talk is cheap and behavior is real/ high value
 - a. Example: positioning of fleets (US near N. Korea, Iran, and Russia)
 - B. Credible commitment
 - 1. Believable
 - 2. Because costly
 - 3. Signal
 - 4. Costly to make because of risk (exposure to retaliation); increase of conflict potential.
 - a. US ground force in Korea, Europe
 - b. Positioning of troops creates a hostage and a tripwire
 - C. Deterrence- credible threats and bribes aimed at changing adversaries' behavior (compelling) or maintaining status quo
 - 1. Balance of power is automatic (passive) deterrence
 - 2. Active deterrence – deterrence that cannot occur without costly action
 - a. Mobilization of military forces
 - b. High alert (ex: Nuclear War Alert)
 - c. Arms expenditure increases (e: contemporary Middle East – more than 100% increases by Iran, Saudi Arabia and allies; Israel since 2008)
- II. Misrepresentation and the war choice
 - A. War by error
 - 1. Irrational beliefs (rare)
 - 2. Misperception – false beliefs concerning cause and effect
 - 3. Incomplete information (preferences for war and peace of adversaries)
- III. Misperception – the short war illusion (problematic)
 - A. War planners falsely believe that war could be short and decisive (1914)
 - B. Thus, governments falsely chose war when this would inevitably lead to a long war of attrition. Had this been accurate knowledge, war might not have occurred
 - C. The problem – war planners from 1890-1914 knew that industrial weapons would cause mass casualties and could lead to attrition warfare if mass militaries of major powers (2 million +/-) could not achieve quick decisive results. Thus, they rationally chose war plans accordingly
 - 1. First preference strategy decisive offensive
 - 2. Second preference strategy rational attrition
 - D. They chose these plans for the following reasons
 - 1. Offensive necessity, extreme defensive advantage
 - 2. Maximum mobilization, but minimum mobility
 - E. The offensive was necessary for domestic political, economic, and military morale reasons and the need to seize the initiative.

- F. The Russo-Japanese War, the Boer War, as well as the US Civil War had demonstrated the tactical killing power of rapid fire rifles and artillery and machine guns
- G. Mobilization- railroads and mass conscription guaranteed mass militaries limited only by demography and domestic politics
- H. Minimum mobility- but, constrained to foot and horse powers; armies must attack or lose initiative for good.