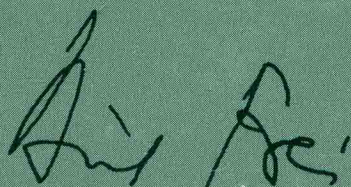


Edited by



Daniel Frei

MANAGING INTERNATIONAL CRISES

Volume 2

POLITICAL SCIENCE: An International Series

AD



Edited by
Daniel Frei

MANAGING INTERNATIONAL CRISES

*Published in cooperation with the
International Political Science Association*



SAGE PUBLICATIONS
Beverly Hills / London / New Delhi

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For information address:

SAGE Publications, Inc.
275 South Beverly Drive
Beverly Hills, California 90212

SAGE Publications India Pvt. Ltd.
C-236 Defence Colony
New Delhi 110 024, India



SAGE Publications Ltd
28 Banner Street
London EC1Y 8QE, England

Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Main entry under title:

Managing international crises.

(Advances in political science ; 2)

Essays based on papers presented at a Round Table on International Crises and Crisis Management, University of Zürich, in 1981.

"Published in cooperation with the International Political Science Association."

Resumés in French.

Bibliography: p.

Contents: Crisis decision-making, the information approach / Karl W. Deutsch—Managing international conflicts: evidence from field and laboratory experiments / Jean A. Laponce—Patterns of crisis thinking : an analysis of the governing circles in Germany, 1866-1914 / Vadim B. Lukov, Victor M. Sergeev—[etc.]

I. International relations—Congresses. I. Frei, Daniel. II. Round Table on International Crises and Crisis Management (1981: University of Zürich)

III. International Political Science Association.

JX1395.M276 1982

327.1'6

82-5880

ISBN 0-8039-1849-6

FIRST PRINTING

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ADVANCES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

An International Series

*Published in cooperation with the International
Political Science Association*

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MANAGING INTERNATIONAL CRISES

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D 815

F 862



SAGE PUBLICATIONS
Beverly Hills / London / New Delhi

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The contributions published in this volume are based on papers submitted to a Round Table on "International Crises and Crisis Management" held at the University of Zurich, Switzerland, in 1981, under the auspices of the International Political Science Association (IPSA). The editor is most grateful to all participants to this Round Table for their manifold stimulating comments.

The Swiss Association of Humanities and Social Sciences, the University of Zurich, and the German Association for Peace and Conflict Research gave generous financial support for the Round Table.

When preparing this volume, the editor was kindly assisted by Mrs. Aurelia Boermans, Mr. Bruno Rosli, and Dr. Pierre Allan. He also wishes to thank Professor Richard L. Merritt, editor of *Advances in Political Science*, for having agreed to publish this volume in his series, and Sage Publications for their interest in making this book available to a larger audience of social scientists and diplomatic practitioners.

—Daniel Frei

FROM THE SERIES EDITOR

Advances in Political Science: An International Series reflects the aims and intellectual traditions of the International Political Science Association: the generation and dissemination of rigorous political inquiry free of any subdisciplinary or other orthodoxy. Along with its quarterly companion publication, the *International Political Science Review*, this series seeks to present the best work being done today (1) on the central and critical controversial themes of politics and/or (2) in new areas of inquiry where political scientists, alone or in conjunction with other scholars, are shaping innovative concepts and methodologies of political analysis.

Political science as an intellectual discipline has burgeoned in recent decades. With the enormous growth in the number of publications and papers, and their increasing sophistication, however, has also come a tendency toward parochialism along national, subdisciplinary, and other lines. It was to counteract these tendencies that political scientists from a handful of countries created the IPSA in 1949. Through roundtables organized by its research committees and study groups, at its triennial world congresses (the latest of which takes place in August 1982 in Rio de Janeiro), and through its organizational work, IPSA has sought to encourage the creation of both an international-minded science of politics and a body of scholars from many nations (now from more than 40 regional associations) who approach their research and interactions with other scholars from an international perspective.

Managing International Crises, edited by Daniel Frei, is the second volume in *Advances in Political Science: An International Series*. Like its predecessor, it represents well the intent of IPSA in creating the series: it comprises original papers of quality that focus in an integrated manner on a single important topic; and its authors, from various countries and social systems, take differing approaches to the

central theme. Like most other volumes to be included in the series, it taps the vast intellectual resource of political scientists linked to the International Political Science Association.

—Richard L. Merritt

PREFACE

The past two decades of international relations research have experienced an unprecedented interest in the study of international crises. In this period, hundreds of books and articles have been published,¹ and in scholarly discussions it has become quite customary to identify several specific schools of thought around which the many-faceted efforts tend to cluster.² The problems of international crisis became a paramount focus of interest following the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, although the direct confrontation between the two major powers armed with nuclear overkill capabilities may fortunately constitute an exception rather than a typical pattern in contemporary international politics. Irrespective of the definition of a crisis (there are several elaborate and well-defined concepts), it seems obvious that the majority of crises which broke out in the past two decades are confrontations between secondary powers, in many cases serving, however, as proxies to major powers. At any rate, crises constitute a highly salient class of international events and continue to constitute, perhaps increasingly so, a cause for concern for both scholars and practitioners.

It is therefore not surprising to see that the eighties seem to indicate a renewed and more active interest in this subject due to the growing awareness that crisislike international confrontations may escalate into an uncontrolled war. The 1914 analogy has become a topical argument. The question is being asked whether there will be a second Sarajewo and whether the risks today do not increasingly resemble the years and months prior to the triggering of World War I (Kahler, 1979; Der Spiegel, 1980).

After twenty years of smooth crisis management, doubts are being raised as to the allegedly infinite capacity of modern diplomacy to cope with the increasing crises. It is argued that the successful record of two decades of crisis management may breed overconfidence and leave unnoticed the rapidly changing quality and quantity of crisis episodes.

Such reservations seem even more pertinent if one takes into account the trends underlying the average annual incidence of serious international disputes. The frequency of crises has risen more than fourfold between 1960 and 1976 (Cusack and Eberwein, 1980: 4). Projections of the probability of international disputes for the period 1982-2000 also lead to the conclusion that such disputes will continue to occur in the foreseeable future (Eberwein, 1981: 160-176).

On the other hand, scholars and practitioners all agree that for the time being there is virtually no alternative to crisis politics. As former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara once stated: "There is no longer any such thing as strategy, only crisis management" (quoted in Segal, 1979: 35-51). Crisis management has become a way of life irrespective of its inherent risk of failure. It constitutes a major "style" of interaction in a world characterized by ideological rivalry, confrontation of major powers armed with nuclear weapons, and increasing regional and local unrest causing increasing instability.

Yet, apart from its present significance, crisis management reflects some deeply rooted properties of the contemporary international system. One main feature is the changing place of force as a political instrument. Facing the risks of escalation, governments in the nuclear age no longer use force or the threat of force in the same way as in the prenuclear age. This does not mean, as some optimists prematurely seemed to assume at the beginning of the nuclear era, that the force option in the conduct of external relations has simply been ruled out as a consequence of the risks of a nuclear holocaust. Nor does it mean that the use of force or the threat to use force has become less frequent in the nuclear age. On the contrary, the major powers are undertaking efforts to develop operative intervention capabilities and to give navies a new role in world politics. Hence, the use of force is obviously becoming increasingly "thinkable" again as it becomes more and more subtle and skillful. It is also more practicable than before. The Clausewitz paradigm of war as a continuation of politics by other means has become fashionable again, although plain "war" has now been replaced by the various techniques of exerting influence and pressure by a refined use of force which is typical for crisis politics in the foreseeable future.

Precisely this fact constitutes a source of uneasiness. The problem is that the states using force are still far from having adopted "rules of the game" or standardized patterns for signalling intentions and capabilities. Therefore, crisis politics implying the use of force necessarily contains an enormous amount of uncertainty. This in turn makes the system of