Chapter 5: Jimmy Carter and American Fantasy

JIMMY CARTER AND AMERICAN FANTASY

It has been four and a half years since America has been at war. This is a long time for peace to last-at least if recent experience is any guide, and if near-wars like the Cuban Missile Crisis are counted. The first question, therefore, that one should ask of a new President is obviously:
"Will he take us into war?"

The results of this study give a simple, if frightening, answer to this question. Our conclusion is that Jimmy Carter – for reasons rooted both in his own personality and in the powerful emotional demands of Amer-ican fantasy-is very likely to lead us into a new war by 1979.

Which crisis might be chosen to act out our fantasy needs is not our concern here, since our focus is wholly American. Nor can we give an exact timetable or scenario for the next crisis. Even so, and with all due respect to the tentativeness of predictions made in our young science of psychohistory, we must conclude that it ap-pears that Jimmy Carter is very likely to be our next war leader not too far in the future.

That no one usually considers this blunt but crucial question-whether a leader might take us to war-is due more to our fear of hearing the answer than to any inherent difficulties in asking the question. After all, modern depth psychology is now able to determine emotional maturity of personality in at least some rough sense and

feel reasonably certain of its findings. Modern psychohistory is also, by now, able to determine the general emotional mood of a nation – again, with

some rough degree of accuracy-and show how our shifting national emotional needs interact with our leader's personality to produce moments of national crisis.(1)

But psychohistory to date has mainly been written about the distant past-the more distant, the better. Since we are part of the group-fantasies of today, how can we possibly analyze them? This is a first try at measuring the emotional maturity of a current President, Jimmy Carter, relating his personality to the emotional needs of the American people, and predicting what the immediate future is likely to bring as a result of the interaction between the two.

THE ORIGIN OF THIS STUDY

This study of Jimmy Carter and American fantasy is the fifth of some twenty-two projects currently being sponsored by The Institute for Psychohistory, its Journal of Psychohistory, and The Psychohistory Press.(2) The project began in the summer of 1976 at the regular Summer Workshop of the Institute, where several Research Associates began preliminary discussions of Paul Eloviti's initial report on Carter's childhood and personality – particularly in relation to the kinds of unconscious fantasies the media were at that time creating around him, from his teeth imagery to his various messianic "outsider" roles. Over the past year, our research and discussions have continued at Institute meetings and in private smaller gatherings, so that, as in all our Institute projects, it soon became hard to tell whose ideas were whose, so free-flowing and "non-academic" were our discussions and our sharing of individual research results.

My own research has been concentrated on repeated patterns of American group-fantasy over the past quarter century of American politics. Paul Elovitz's interest has sent him to Plains, Georgia, for psychoanalytically – informed – interviews with Lillian Carter and other emotionally crucial figures in Jimmy Carter's early life. David Beisel has tried to be more synthetic in approach than any of us, focusing on the complex interaction between personality traits and American historical fantasy needs. John Hartman has focused on utopian group-fantasies surrounding Carter s nominating Convention, and Henry Ebel has given us an inner glimpse of the way we all unconsciously perceive our leaders as super-potent adults and as super-babies at the same time. Yet all of the studies converge on one central theme: the intimate, dynamic relation-ship between the unconscious needs of the leader and the equally deep

unconscious needs of the group he purports to "lead."

Since psychohistory, as we conceive of it at the institute for Psycho-history, strives to be a science of patterns of historical motivation, our discussions and subsequent research have focused primarily on two areas crucial to

the analysis of Jimmy Carter's motivational dynamics. The first is his childhood – what did it feel like to be the son of Lillian and James Earl Carter, in the late 1920's, in Plains, Georgia? What strengths and what weaknesses did Carter acquire during his formative years from his relationship with his parents and other caretakers? What personality traits, what general patterns of behavior, have remained dominant throughout his life to determine the way he reacts to the enormous emotional tasks put on him as our leader?

The second main focus of study is that of historical "group-fantasy," a term which I use psychohistorically in a rather more specific way than it is used in the field of small-group dynamics, from which I borrowed it. An historical group-fantasy is a set of shared unconscious assumptions, quite unrelated to any "objective" reality, about the way it feels to be a member of a historical group at a particular time in history. Group-fantasies are what national opinion polls attempt to capture when they periodically try to determine the "mood" of America, and ask people whether they feel their leader is strong or weakening, whether they feel the country is safe or in a state of turmoil, whether the enemy is strong or threatening, what they feel the future may bring, and so on. These "gut" feeling change in patterns which, in fact, have nothing to do with the actual condition of the country. As we will shortly discover, they are almost wholly due to shifting fantasies constructed by people, and communicated by the media, which center on the leader's ability to provide imaginary nurturance to the "led." But these shifts in "mood" are nevertheless real, they can be measured, they move in roughly predictable ways, and they determine when we choose to participate in or abstain from international conflict.

One final word on the Carter project before I begin the presentation of my evidence. The demands of group-fantasy in America today are such that the majority of the press, including reviewers, will probably refer to these essays as an "attack" on Jimmy Carter. Nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed, quite the opposite. I even suspect that Carter would both enjoy and profit from reading these studies. In point of fact, we all voted for him, but even if we hadn't, our empathy-which is the first condition of our task as professional psychohistorians-has allowed us over the past year of research to so continuously identify with him, both as a growing child and as an adult, that by now he seems like one of us, a friend, hardly someone we could unfeelingly "attack." Besides, he is our leader-we are the passengers on the ship he is piloting through international waters, and we would ourselves be participating in the

common group-fantasy that no one really dies in wars if we wished him anything but well. Let it be said at the outset: Jimmy Carter is a decent, personally attractive, well-intentioned human being. But matters of war and peace involve the very deepest layers of the personality, and it is unfortunately likely that if the day should come when we are all evaporated by that bright orange glow on the horizon, it will be a decent, well-intentioned man who will have pushed the button.

STAGES OF AMERICAN GROUP-FANTASY

The political roles each of us plays within the shifting group-fantasies of our national life are, of course, roles both derived from and acting as defenses against childhood anxieties.(3) But even though one person may tend to take on liberal roles and another conservative ones, depending on the respective amounts of strictness and

support in childhood, there is a higher fantasy level which views these roles as merely two parts played in a drama that encompasses both, one whose "script" transcends the usual left-right political dichotomy of modern politics. Thus, America may split on temporary issues, but as a rule the vast majority of the country unites on major political assumptions: we unite in wanting our leader and nation "strong," we unite in feeling that the leader is often too strong and the government too big, we unite in agreeing to split over minor matters so as to make certain that no substantial changes can take place, we unite on who the "enemy" is and how dangerous he is, we unite on when it is time to go to war, and when it is time to end a war.

It is this higher level of group-fantasy which I have attempted in recent years to conceptualize and then measure. The tool for this measurement I have termed "Fantasy Analysis." The detailed technical criteria for the Fantasy Analysis of any historical document will be found in another of my essays(4) but suffice it to say here that it involves extracting from the historical document all the operative fantasy terms, including all the metaphors, similes, feeling states, body images, and other key emotional terms present. This produces a series of words describing deep body feelings, which then can be analyzed and placed in psychohistorical perspective.

As just one example out of hundreds I elsewhere detail, here is a passage from the minutes of a Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing in 1949 discussing our posture vis-a-vis the Russians in Germany:(5)

> *We understand that there are powerful pulls in the other direction and that there are things which the Russians would do which would be important in any such situation as that. We have no doubt that*

> *at some time or other the Russians are going to get ready to sell the Poles down the river on the eastern boundary.*

A Fantasy Analysis of this passage would pick up only two terms: "pulls . . . down the river." (Generally a Fantasy Analysis condenses documents to about 1% of their total verbiage.) The rest of the words are considered non-operative in motivational terms, essentially defensive in purpose, "rational" covers serving to distract one's attention from the emotionally powerful fantasy language buried within.

Now this may appear at first sight thoroughly arbitrary, and I admit that with any less than 50 pages of illustration and discussion it will be difficult for me to convey the accuracy and trustworthiness of this new psychohistorical tool. But even in the case of this 1949 hearing, it turns out that the words "pulls . . . down the river sound the emotional theme of the whole meeting, and condense very well its main historical group-fantasy: that the group's actions in taking a harder line against the Russians on Germany may result in its being pulled down a dangerous, "squeezing" passageway against its wishes, and that something terrifying might happen. Thus, al-

though the full text of the Hearing reads in a rather controlled and even dull tone, the Fantasy Analysis of the opening sections reads as follows:

hurting . . . face saver . . . riposte . . . large voice . . . horse's mouth . . lay down . . . undermine . . . pussyfoot . . . terrified . . . terror . . . terror . . pull . . . pulled . . . pulls . . . down the river . . forced . . . driven . . afraid . . . pull . . . run out . . . down the river. . . war. . . pull. . . fear. . . break. . . insane . . .squeezed . . . corridor . . corridor . . . corridor . . . corridor . . .

What I found from performing Fantasy Analyses of hundreds of historical documents-including newspaper and magazine articles, committee hearings, speeches, press conferences, political cartoons, even the Nixon Watergate tapes-is that hidden within every group communication is the skeleton of an emotionally powerful set of body feelings, and that a large part of the time this message has to do with body memories stemming from the primary trauma of all our lives: birth.

Although this discovery of birth as the key to group-fantasy appears at first to be a rather astonishing and even bizarre finding, it is the outcome of several years of analytic effort, and was in fact produced "by the material" rather than being imposed upon it for any theoretical reasons. (Indeed, I was so thoroughly disbelieving for some time of the nature of the results, that I retested the Fantasy Analysis technique with people unfamiliar with my earlier work to be certain I wasn't reading into the material something that wasn't there.) The selection above is one typical

version or stage of this body memory, one which regularly occurs as the result of Fantasy Analyses of historical material. It depicts a moment prior to the onset of actual birth, when the fetus is just beginning to feel the pull "down the river" and "into the corridor,' when the "squeeze" of the mother's contractions is just beginning to produce "terror" of what lies ahead-the seemingly endless hours of enormous persecutory pressure of the birth itself.

Since I am unable to go into as much detail here about the way birth stages affect group-fantasies as I have done in other studies,(6) I can only say in summary that the results of my Fantasy Analysis of hundreds of public documents from recent American history show a regular, lawful pattern of stages of group-fantasy, a pattern which repeats itself over and over again every three or four years, as follows:

ILLUSTRATION 1

STAGES OF GROUP-FANTASY

FETAL STAGE	LEADER FANTASY	NATION (WOMB) FANTASY	ENEMY FANTASY

FSl “Strong”	Strong	Intact womb, safe inside	Enemy strong, at bay
FS2 “Cracking”	Weakening	Cracking, crowded, unsafe	Weakening. dangerous
FS3 “Collapse”	Helpless	Collapsed, pressures building	Collapsed, poisonous
FS4 “Upheaval”	Tough	Trapped, fight way out of choking womb	Enemy powerful, engaged

The conditions within each stage were consistently correlated in historical documents subjected to Fantasy Analysis. In stage one, when the leader is strong-often but not always at the beginning of a presidential term-the nation seems safe and the “enemy” is kept at bay. Politics seems to be centered around the personality of a nurturant fantasy-leader, and to consist of discussions of how strong he is, whether he is too strong, whether government is doing enough, or is too big, and so on. In time, the ability of the leader to sustain a role of total magical nurturance to his people begins to deteriorate, and the “Cracking” stage two begins. News articles proliferate on how the internal strains in our

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“Oh, dear! I’m ‘fraid thouse Right-to-Life folks
are trying to cut abort my candidacy!”

Illustration 2 — This cartoon directly portrays Care as a fetus.

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country are threatening our national strength, on how a sudden collapse of values is to be feared, and on how the enemy too (projectively) seems to be “cracking at the seams,” with crises of leadership that may make them unstable and therefore dangerous. Stage three, “Collapse,” often begins with a specific event that can be viewed as a “collapse of values” which the fantasy-leader is helpless to prevent-whether a set of local events, such as riots, or an external event, such as a foreign policy reverse. During this stage, the central focus of anxiety is: Can the helpless leader protect us against possible upheavals and catastrophes? Articles are written on

how crowded the world (or the cities or the highways) is getting, how slender the food supply is, how polluted the environment has become, and how sheer chaos is just around the corner. Finally, with stage four, “Upheaval,” birth itself begins, and the nation looks for some crisis, usually involving war or the threat of war, to get into. The nation feels trapped, choking, claustrophobic, and must engage in a “struggle for freedom” in order to fight its way out of an intolerable situation. After a crisis situation is located, the enemy is engaged, and the nation feels strong again-and also greatly relieved, because at least it is now actively fighting something in the real world rather than passively suffering the fantasized intolerable pressures. (Political cartoons of the head hurting from painful pressures, and of the body being stretched and twisted, mark this stage.) But if the leader cannot “win” the war within a year or so, the nation fears it is not so tough after all and may actually die during its birth-crisis, and the leader is then instructed by the fantasy-language of all the media at once that somehow the birth pains must be ended. The leader then ends the war (at least in fantasy), the leader is once again strong, and the cycle repeats itself all over again.

The actual evidence for this group-fantasy cycle is detailed, document by document, in my study “Historical Group-Fantasies ,” with Fantasy Analyses of the media, speeches, conferences, congressional hearings, tapes, political cartoons and other material for the past 25 years of American history. The results of this analysis have been summarized in Chart A.

The past 25 years of American history have seen 6 complete group-fantasy cycles, each birth stage finally being acted out in a real crisis, generally, though not always, in a war or a near-war. The captions above the line show the crisis which was chosen to act out the birth fantasy at the peak of each cycle. The international crisis has usually been provided by whatever was handy at the time, and in every case the fantasy preceded the reality. That is, the fantasy language first went up to stage four, and the nation was crying for relief from intolerable pressures, and then whatever crisis was around was deemed important enough to produce action on our part. To emphasize this point, I have also put

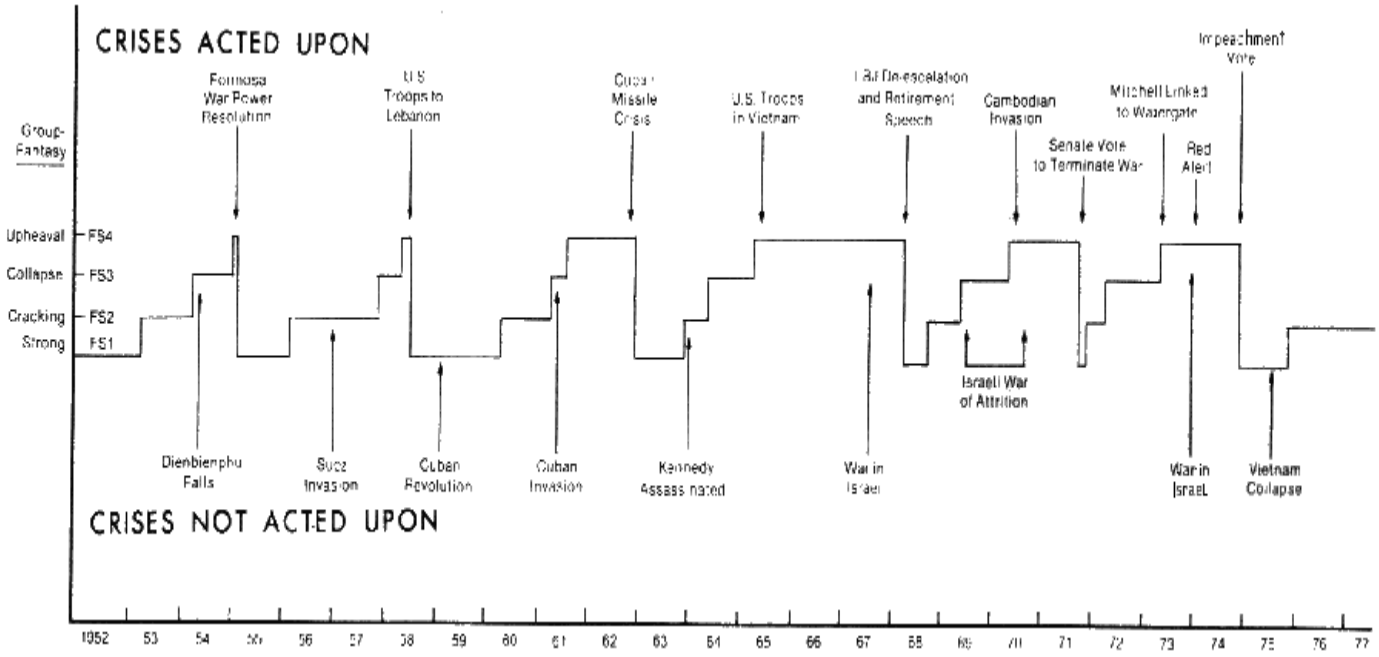

Chart A — LEVELS OF AMERICAN GROUP FANTASY

below the line some of the international crises which occurred during the first three stages, just a few of many that actually occurred, to show how many crises we did not choose to get into. Most of these, like the fall of the French forces in Indo-China, the Suez invasion, and various Arab-Israeli wars, were just as "important," often even more so, than the events we chose to jump into, but we were not under sufficient psychological pressure to respond with war-like action until we reached the fourth or "Upheaval" stage.

The first fantasy cycle begins with the slow buildup in the early Eisenhower years. It helps explain why Eisenhower could, during stage three, coolly withstand the powerful forces trying to get us to send planes and even troops into Dienbienphu, but then a little while later, at stage four, suddenly alert the nation and ask for formal war powers from Congress over a few insignificant islands off Formosa. Eisenhower's second cycle has a similar pattern, first careful restraint (during stage two) and refusal to commit our troops in the Suez-crisis, followed unexpectedly, and almost without rhyme or reason, by the dispatch of U.S. troops to peaceful Lebanon when we again reached stage four and couldn't find any other crisis to become involved in.

Kennedy's single cycle reached the fourth level early in 1961, and although for a time it looked as if we would be able to act it out in an armed confrontation with the Russians over Berlin, they seemed reluctant (for their own reasons) to get into a fight at that time, and built the Berlin Wall instead, thus ending the "crisis" — but leaving America "hanging" in mid-air at the "Upheaval" level. As we moved into 1962, we were therefore badly in need of something to fight about, but with no active war around to get into, the media began to comment on the "strange calm" the world seemed to be afflicted by-there was such cognitive dissonance between the upheaval and terror of the group-fantasy in our heads and the "quiet" of the world outside that we thought we might be insane. By the summer of 1962, we found the solution: Cuba. Long before we even suspected there might be missiles there, we began to use war-like language against Cuba, passing war resolutions, calling Cuba a "cancer"

on America, declaring a blockade of the island, terming Castro's existence and a "Red Cuba" intolerable to us, and then sending U-2 planes over to see what we could discover. The actual finding of the missiles after all this fantasy came as a great emotional relief, and when the Russians agreed to remove them in exchange for what we admitted were totally useless missiles in Turkey, which we had decided to remove anyway, we turned down the offer, gave the order to prepare to invade the island, and risked starting World War Ill-all 50 we could actually engage or at least thoroughly humiliate the poisonous "enemy" and experience the catharsis of fantasized birth.

Johnson's crisis was of course the Vietnam war, and although we may

have "inched" our way into it, the fact is that our first actual combat troops were sent to Vietnam only a week after the group-fantasy language reached stage four in every periodical in the country. Yet Vietnam, like both world wars before it was a very unsatisfactory catharsis-it didn't seem to want to follow its fantasy script and to end when we "felt" it should. So after months of articles and protests in 1968, demonstrating how many of "our boys" were dying there (at the fantasy level, no one seems to die early on in a war), Johnson "ended the war" by announcing its de-escalation and his own retirement. Immediately, two things happened to the group-fantasy. First, fantasy language went right back to stage one, and the war virtually disappeared from the media. It was as though, by common consent, we had agreed to pretend that it was over, though of course in fact it was still escalating, and the biggest battles and most destructive bombings lay in the future. Those who still protested, the same protesters that earlier captured fond media attention, were now vilified as nuts and crazies-why protest when the war had ended?

Nixon was elected, and went through the usual cycle of strong and then weakening leadership, and when at length in 1970 we got back up to stage four again, we began looking around for a new crisis in which to act out our birth fantasies. We looked at the world situation and discov-ered-lo and behold-Vietnam! Three weeks after the group-fantasy language again reached stage four, Nixon ordered the invasion of Cambodia, and the media quite rightly declared that "a new war" had begun.

By 1971, this "new war" again began to be painful enough to end, and the U.S. Senate did what it could easily have done years earlier; it voted to terminate the war. The fantasy language immediately dropped back to stage one again (although, as with Korea before it, the war actually dragged on for another year and a half after our fantasy declared it had ended). Nixon got the peace message from the nation and announced his purely symbolic trip to China-since he was now a "strong" leader again and could easily bargain with "the enemy."

But by the time the sixth cycle on our chart again reached stage four, Nixon found he had no crisis anywhere around to get into; indeed, he was just in the process of actually ending the Vietnam war. The Middle East was once again very tempting, but just managed to evade becoming a real crisis. Therefore, Nixon made the ultimate sacrifice-if the weak leader can't prevent the crisis, he will become the crisis, and by removing himself give a new leader a chance to go through the strong-weakening-helpless-tough cycle. Watergate, which previously had been buried in the back pages, now moved to the "front burner" of national attention, and Nixon, trained in

self-sacrifice from birth, threw himself into the flames “to relieve the intolerable pressures.” Here the Watergate tapes

are invaluable evidence of the movement of group-fantasy over the months, and a long analysis of the tapes and other documents from the Watergate “crisis” are part of my “Historical Group-Fantasies” article, along with a discussion of the special conditions under which a nation can substitute the replacement of a leader for the catharsis of war. But even during the Watergate period, the fourth stage crisis in 1973 did involve a plunge into a near-war action. After the last Arab-Israeli war had ended, Nixon ordered a full “Red Alert,” and two million American troops prepared for war, including the arming of nuclear weapons-all over a thoroughly insignificant Russian message about U.N. peace-keeping forces.(7) The Russians didn’t respond, of course, so the crisis was kept at a fantasy level until the impeachment vote finally removed the weak leader.

After Nixon’s removal, Ford became our stage one leader, and was everywhere shown as strong and nurturant, at least until he had been in office for some time and was shot at by two different women. He then appeared weak and ineffectual (stage two), a joke to many. When Jimmy Carter became President, because of the length of time since the last crisis, he started out at stage two in group-fantasy-which explains why he has barely had any “honeymoon” period in which he could get programs through Congress, as has been common with the beginning of other presidencies. Carter’s Gallup Poll after four months in office shows only 66% of those polled approving of the way he does his job, compared to 82% for Truman, 74% for Eisenhower, 76% for Kennedy and 73% for Johnson after a similar period.(8) This “lack of strength” image is wholly due to the stage of group-fantasy we are in at the time of this writing (May, 1977), which calls for a weakening (stage two) leader. In reality terms, Carter became President at the best of times – a sharply rising economy, no war, no civil strife – and no President has worked harder to strengthen his image with the people during his first months. But in group-fantasy terms, he remains a weakening leader, certain to weaken even further during the coming year. This is why his bills are already running into trouble, even though they have been rather modest in scope compared to the early proposals of other Presidents, and this is also why those polled continue to complain that in some indefinable way they still haven’t been able to “really know” what he is like.

THE PRESIDENT AS FANTASY LEADER

It should be understood at the outset that any actual accomplishments of a nation and its leadership are achieved despite the process of group-fantasy – fantasy works to defeat all real accomplishments, to handcuff all real leadership qualities, to waste all real assets and to keep people

wholly passive. Even wars turn out to be passive group acts-no decisions are required that are not purely tactical, no painful compro-mises of values, no maturity, only pure emotional release. America was never so passive and uncreative as in the Vietnam years (Vietnam indeed killed The Great Society, as Johnson said it did, only far more profoundly than just economically). In fact, I have elsewhere presented evidence that the President, his

advisors, the Congress and most of the people in the nation enter into what is an actual trance state while communicating and acting out these group-fantasies, a genuine trance similar to that of hypnotism or to that experienced under certain drugs. A group of presidential advisors sitting around a table in a War Room (as in the Cuban Missile Crisis) or a group of Congressmen attending hearings on war-powers legislation (as in the Gulf of Tonkin Crisis) are participating in what is technically more like a seance than a rational discussion. Their trance-like state can even be documented (with some effort-verbatim minutes are rarely kept of actual decision-making meetings, and memories of what really happened are notoriously skimpy). All the elements of a trance state can nevertheless be seen in these meetings:

heightened suggestibility, increased dependence on the leader, extremes of passivity by usually forceful people, demands for group unanimity, emotional rather than logical thinking, amnesia for inconvenient facts, inability to tolerate inaction, and even an increase in such body feelings as dizziness, fears of loss of control, dry mouth, pressures in the head, increased heart rate and feelings of claustrophobia, all of which are related to birth memories.(10)

The notion of the President as primarily a fantasy leader who is a delegate of national moods is quite at odds with the traditional model of political science, which regards leaders primarily as holders of something called "power" which they use to get action. In fact, most of politics works in an exactly opposite fashion: the nation first develops quite irrational group-fantasies, then pumps them through the media and lower government officials into the President and his advisors, expecting them to somehow act them out in order to relieve the anxieties generated by the fantasied conditions. This is true regardless of nation, period, or form of government. I have elsewhere documented the presence, for instance, of powerful birth emotions of being choked, trapped and strangled in the words of many nations going to war, from Kaiser Wilhelm's declaration before World War I that he felt "strangled" because a "net had suddenly been thrown over our head" to Hitler's going to war to solve Germany's problem of "Lebensraum." Similarly, America's wars from the Revolution to Vietnam have been permeated by language like "the child Independence struggling for birth," "a descent into the abyss," and the inability "to see the light at the end of the tunnel."(12) Although geopolitical or economic motives are usually

presumed to be the cause of wars, they are more accurately the occasions for war, the real causes being psychodynamic, wholly internal and shared psychological states. When the German General Staff wrote in 1914 that they "took to extreme measures in order to burn out with a glowing iron the cancer that has constantly threatened to poison the body of Europe," they used the same language and were responding to the same fantasy as Richard Nixon when, before the Cuban Missile Crisis, he said that "Cuba is a cancer . . . war is risked if Communism is not stopped and is allowed to spread now."(13)

The responsibility for solving this fantasy is finally dumped into the lap of the fantasy leader, who is an expert at receiving and interpreting the inchoate, powerful, shifting fantasy needs of large groups of people (this being the very definition of a politician). The "pressures" of the moment are translated into action-solutions and the fears of the people become the commands of the leader. The enormous relief provided by violent action is shown in Churchill's letter to his wife in 1914, as Europe went to war: "Everything tends toward catastrophic and

collapse. I am interested, geared up and happy." A similar group mood is revealed in what one American wrote from Washington, D.C. on the day Truman decided to send U.S. troops to Korea:

> *I have lived and worked in and out of this city for twenty years. Never before . . . have I felt such a sense of relief and unity pass through this city . . . When the President's statement was read in the House, the entire chamber rose to cheer.(14)*

Perhaps one of my most surprising findings has been that the frequency and seriousness of wars and war-like actions has little to do with the realities of military force, realities which supposedly govern so much of international relations. For instance, Truman's presidency was conducted in a continuous state of panic, culminating in his plunging America into the bloody, protracted Korean war-all during a period when America had overwhelming superiority of all forces, including sole delivery capacity for the atomic bomb. Indeed, the Truman Doctrine, the basis for a quarter-century of world-wide American intervention in local politics, was proclaimed in 1947 at a time when America enjoyed an atomic monopoly and when Russia lay utterly prostrate from World War II damage to her industry and population, a moment which Dean Acheson described as one of the greatest crises in history, when Russia was about to "carry infection to Africa through Asia Minor and Egypt, and to Europe through Italy and France."(15) In contrast, Eisenhower's years were far less interventionist, and were wholly without actual war, despite America's loss of military preponderance after Russian nuclear and missile development. It is, in fact, solely our fantasy needs which

prevent us from seeing that internal dynamics, not external threats, govern our foreign policy. Actual shooting wars, then, begin when two nations, in a slow, deadly dance, match group-fantasy cycles, wave for wave, crest for crest, and agree to grapple through a birth together-agreeing, as Kruschev wrote to Kennedy at the height of the Cuban Missile Crisis, to "come to a clash, like blind moles" battling to death in a tunnel.(17) While group-fantasy cycles in modern times are on the general order of four or five years long, actual shooting wars occur only every fourth or fifth crisis, when the psychological dynamics are right, the military preparations are adequate, and when an "enemy" has been located who is at his own peak of birth anxiety. Actually, statistical studies of wars confirm the lawful-ness of this group process rather well, at least for most of the industrially-developed world. In the past two centuries, for instance, wars have occurred on the average of every 18 years in the U.S., 18 years in England, 20 years in France, 24 years in Germany, and 18 years in Russia.(16) Our ritual death-dance has a rhythm of its own which captures every generation just as it reaches its peak of youth and then throws it into the hellish maw of Moloch.

THE PERSONALITY OF PRESIDENTS

At this point, the reader is justified in stepping back and asking a pertinent question: "If we grant that all the rather outrageous things you have said so far have some measure of truth, and that so early an event as birth seems to govern politics, then why bother with all the usual psycho-historical evidence about childhood and

parental influence and personal-ity development? It all appears quite hopeless the way you present it-with these eternal cycles of birth and rebirth. What possible differ-ence could it make what kind of personality the President has if politics depends so much on birth experiences everyone shares?"

The answer is of course that birth is only a part of the story. Regard-less of how traumatic an actual birth anyone has, even birth memories are profoundly modified by later childhood experience. The more a child is surrounded by love, freedom, and empathy, the more the child is able to repeatedly rework its earliest anxieties, the more it is able to modify them and even overcome them. A warm family provides a natural therapy even for birth anxieties, and if, as I claim in my "Evolution of Childhood" study,(18) childhood has a progressive trend throughout history, mankind should eventually be able to cure itself of war just as it has cured itself of slavery, vendetta, dueling, witchhunting and other group-psychotic practices. Yet most children even today have simply horrible childhoods, and wars are certain to continue for some time before

enough people become sufficiently emotionally mature not to need them. It is therefore one of our first tasks as psychohistorians to ask what kinds of personalities our leaders have and precisely how they interact with the emotional needs of the nation.

The psychohistorical study of presidential personality has unfortunately barely begun. There are only two Presidents who have been studied in sufficient depth, including their childhoods, to provide intelligent psychobiographies: Theodore Roosevelt and Richard Nixon.(19) Even so, enough information is available in primary sources to make a few generalizations about the kinds of people we have chosen to be our leaders in the twentieth century. First of all, none of them have had extremely traumatic child-hoods. On the six-stage scale of family types which I use to measure child-rearing modes (infanticidal, abandoning, ambivalent, intrusive, socializ-ing, helping), all Presidents in this century fall into the next-to-highest "socializing mode" with the exception of Nixon, whose dour Quaker mother and often brutal father put his childhood in the lower "intrusive" category. What this means is that in order to become a leader of America today, you cannot have a background which includes continuous batter-ing, repeated overt abandonment, or any other massively traumatic deprivations. (This, by the way, has not been the case for other countries and other periods-Hitler, for instance, was a classic "battered child", as were many of his generation of Austrians, the product of regular bloody beatings, hundreds of blows at a time.)(20) The overall level of American childhood, however, has been good enough in this century not to require such a psychopathic leader.

Within these limits, however, one trait stands out as common to the childhood of almost every President: an emotional distancing by the mother. This often occurs in the context of a series of nurses or other servants, to whom the mother delegates many of the child's caretaking functions, as was the case with T.R., F.D.R. and J.F.K. (21) It is as though the mothers of our Presidents must be "good enough" to give them the ego strength needed to survive the competition for leadership, but they must also be "distancing enough" to give them a deep hole of loneliness in the pit of their stomachs, a hole which they feel driven to fill with the needs and the adulation of large masses of people. No one who has not been the fantasy leader of an actual group can begin to image the demands put upon one who is expected to stay in touch with, and resolve, the deepest and most ambivalent

anxieties of the “led.” And generally only a deeply lonely person, who from childhood has expected to gain whatever approval and warmth he got by being the delegate of his mother’s needs and by performing in perfect tune to her wishes, however distorted, can be expected to become a professional politician. The sight of our fantasy leaders following our emotional commands is so common-place that we no longer even note it. David Frost tells Nixon on TV to

make statesman-like noises, and he becomes the all-powerful leader of the free world. Frost tells him to “apologize to the people,” and he cries and apologizes.

One childhood, however, stands out among those of all the Presidents for not having included a distancing mother: that of Dwight Eisenhower. Although no biographer has studied his childhood scattered through his writings are enough references to his early years to make the psychohistorian prick up his ears and suspect that something was differ-ent here. Although he grew up at the turn of the century, and his father’s occasional “application of leather” was similar to other families of the time, he had a most unusual mother, one whose closeness, warmth, consistency and real happiness with herself and her children was unique among the mothers of Presidents. Eisenhower’s stories about her, even his use of adjectives, are quite unlike any other autobiographical writing I have encountered in any world leader. He speaks of her as “warm,” “gentle,” “serene,” “tolerant,” with “an open smile”-and gives enough detailed incidents to assure one that this is not a reaction formation. When she was put upon by others, she was capable of being thoroughly outraged and doing something about it (once, having been cheated out of something, she began to study law at home), and in general seemed unusually successful in “making life happy and meaning-ful for a family of eight,” spending “many hours a day” with the children.(22) Her photographs are the only ones I have yet discovered in which the mother of a President is actually smiling (Eisenhower, too, is unique in smiling in his boyhood pictures, one happy face among his pained schoolboy comrades).

This unusual inner happiness made Eisenhower an oddball through-out his military career, from his early runins with the authoritarian MacArthur to his opposition to the rest of the military chiefs during World War Two with respect to the African landings (Eisenhower’s plan for immediate invasion of France, which could have cut the war short by two years, was firmly overruled by Churchill).23 But it was as President that Eisenhower was unique-so much so that it shows up plainly on our American group-fantasy graph (Chart A). Whereas other Presidents responded to the growing pressures of group-fantasy by finding a real war to act out, Eisenhower resisted all efforts to get him to be the usual fantasy leader. Although his political views were hardly unconventional, someplace deep inside him he found a core of maturity, and sense of personal worth, that enabled him to think rather than act when the majority of the country was saying: “We feel like we’re dying-you must do something to relieve our fears.” In fact, when he did act at the peak of two fantasy cycles, he did so in a way that at once relieved the anxieties by seeming to take war-like action but in no way actually led to war. The first was in 1955, when Congress-stung by his refusal to get

into Indo-China-gave him a formal war-power resolution over Formosa, hoping he would get into a fight with China. But although Eisenhower spoke tough, he actually used U.S. forces only to remove Nationalist troops from the islands that were under contention, thus ending the crisis. And when the birth peak came again in 1958, he moved troops in and out of sleepy Lebanon in such a way as to make it appear that we had somehow won a victory against Communism. He did not achieve this war-free record easily-McCarthy was the spokesman of our frustration with Eisenhower's maturity-but he did so effectively. The point to re-member is that it was one happy mother in Abilene, Kansas who, fifty years earlier, wrote the script for this most peaceful decade on the American historical stage.

THE PERSONALITY OF JIMMY CARTER

How, then, does Jimmy Carter's personality rate in comparison with other modern Presidents on the crucial parameters set out above? What kind of childhood did he have, what has his development beep like to date, and what can his interactions with the American group-fantasy to date tell us about the likelihood that he will act out our next birth crisis in war-like action?

The available evidence on Carter's childhood which is presented in the following essays places him squarely with the majority of recent Presidents as the product of a "distancing" mother. For his mother worked much of the time, believed children should not be with their mothers very much, and delegated many of her caretaking functions to others. He of course adapted well to this initial emotional deprivation, as did other Presidents, but deep down inside there is a well of loneliness which has been the mainspring of his political career and the source for his oft-repeated and nearly mystical "intimate relationship with the American People." His meteoric rise from being "Jimmy Who?" to being President was based not on traditional machine politics but on a messianic "outsider" image, which was cultivated from the start to fill whatever group-fantasies Americans projected into him. (Pat Caddell's famous memo to Carter-which told him that the fact that people do not know what Carter stands for is an asset because "large parts of the electorate can project their own desires on to Gov. Carter" – is as good a definition of the fantasy leader as I have seen.)(24) In particular, as David Beisel analyzes in detail in his study, Carter won the election through his intimate variations on themes taken from the Watergate loss of leader-ship, themes which drew on elements of his personal history, the myth of his "perfect" family, and the nation's feeling of having been "aban-doned" by their deposed leader. His personality has every trait seen in

Illustration 3- This cartoon portrays two group-fantasy themes. The first is Carter's Christ-like ability to walk on water. The second is the portrayal of the campaign as a tranquil sea, symbolic of the Good Womb.

Illustration 4- By March of 1977, the utopian group-fantasy is beginning to decay. In this magazine cover Carter is depicted as holy but the caption warns against expecting too much.

that of our past war leaders. His experience in childhood in interpreting his mother's distanced and often distorted messages made him extremely sensitive to the hidden group-fantasy needs of the nation; his need to live up to both his parents' seemingly unfulfillable expectations made him a classic workaholic; and both his populist image and his choice of an "active-positive" political role tend to make him action-prone when the time comes to carry out a birth episode. His positions on war to date have been consistent with that of a future

wartime leader. He was a Vietnam hawk up to the end of the war, and ever since then the topic of world peace has rarely been mentioned by him as an overriding goal of his Presidency.

There is nothing, I believe, which he has done since his inauguration to offset this summary of personality traits. He began by choosing his foreign policy staff out of the Rockefeller-supported Trilateral Commission, he has cooled down relations with Russia, scrapped years of effort in disarmament, discovered a "12-year decline" in NATO armament, urged a new push to build up NATO forces, scrapped his promise to reduce the American arms budget, and-lest the quiet, steady, insistent growth of atomic weaponry be completely forgotten-has added even more atomic warheads to the tens of thousands which presently exist, many of them in the new "more acceptable" form of battlefield atomic weaponry. That this new mood of belligerence has been virtually unnoted by the liberal press is to be expected-psychobistorians have learned to read U.S. News and World Report, not the New York Times, to find out what is really going on in American group-fantasy. The headlines of a recent issue of U.S. News in fact read: "THE PRESIDENT TALKS TOUGH . . . Harder Line With Russia," and quotes Carter as follows:

Africa:	"We see the possibility of war in the southern part of Africa as being ever-present."
Mideast:	"Americans would not respond well to any overt or implied threats" of an oil embargo.
Panama Canal:	"There is a potential threat to the Canal. .
Soviet Union:	"The differences between us and the Soviet Union are still wide and very significant."(25)

(The New York Times, the same week, took an astonishing report from its Mideast expert, Drew Middleton, headlined "Two Sides in Middle East Speak Casually of a War As Stress Shifts From Political to Military Solution," and buried it in the inner pages instead of giving it the first-page treatment it obviously merited.)(26)

Carter's language, as revealed by extensive Fantasy Analysis of his speeches, is quietly permeated with the imagery of fear and war. When it

occurs in the context of a domestic issue, so that an energy program becomes "the moral equivalent of war," the press picks up and repeats the imagery, with headlines about a world-wide oil crisis that requires "wartime urgency"(27) and cartoons showing Carter dressed as Jesus walking with a sign saying "The End Is Near." When his speech is about foreign matters, it bristles with the same kind of aggressive and fearful imagery, carefully hidden between noble phrases, that I have found time and again in Fantasy Analyses of Presidential speeches before other war-like actions. Here, for instance, is a Fantasy Analysis of his Notre Dame University address on May 22, 1977:

dark faith . . . strands that connect . . . confidence . . . separated strength . . . arms . . . fear . . . fear . . . fought fire with fire fire is better fought with water . . . confidence . . . contained weakened its foundation . . . war . . . crisis . . . sapping . . . strains . . . weakened . . . crisis . . . danger . . . violence . . . com-bat . . . fear. . . awakening. . . pow-

erful . . . strong . . . war . . . reduce the chase . . . war . . . hatred . . . damage, hunger and disease . . . blood . . . despair . . . reinforce the bonds . . . con-fidence . . . dangerous . . . freeze . . . weapons . . attack . . . death . . . explosives . . military intervention . . . military force . . . danger . . . arms . . . explosives . . . explosives . . . arms . arms. . . war(28)

That there is a positive side to many of Carter's words and actions which lead to increasing tensions is of course not to be denied. But that he has a deeply-felt commitment to human rights, for instance, does not negate the fact that the form and particularly the timing of his repeated attacks on Russia with respect to human rights are part of the "get tough" fantasy, and incidentally do nothing for the Russian dissidents he is defending. The same case could be made for the form and timing of his statements on Palestine, Africa, and so on.

What is more, the American public is, I think, fully aware of the hidden imagery of Jimmy Carter as a future war-leader. His leading symbol-his teeth-is the identical image regularly used in portraying another leader chosen for his belligerence, Theodore Roosevelt, especially in his "Big Stick," aggressive, "biting" role.(29) Even Carter's ambiguity as to whether he is a liberal or a conservative acts to increase tensions. For Carter is an ideal President to obstruct. Conservatives can oppose him as a Democrat, Liberals as a Conservative, and it seems a good bet that stalemate will be the main theme of the period in 1978 while stage three builds up-as it often is in other stage three periods-and that the peak of tensions for stage four will, if the past two decades is any guide, occur some time in 1979.

Given the current condition of the Middle East as the world's tinderbox, and given the current American view that any future oil embargo is a crucial "strangulating" birth precipitant, one is even tempted to fore-cast the scene of the next conflict. Henry Kissinger has declared that America will go to war in the Middle East only "where there is some actual strangulation." Gerald Ford has said: "In the case of economic strangulation we must be prepared to take the necessary action for our self-preservation. When you are being strangled it is a case of either dying or living." (Ford's definition of "strangulation" is even more fetal: "Strangulation if you translate it into the terms of a human being, means that you are just about on your back.")(30) I need hardly say that when I begin to hear the word "strangulation" bandied about regularly some time in 1979, 1 intend to put my family and dog in the car and head for Canada, out of the way of the prevailing winds and atomic fallout.

Even if the hairline trigger of the Mideast is not the actual release mechanism for the next crisis, it is doubtful that anything short of war-like action will be the stage upon which the drama is played. While the conditions that determine whether a birth-crisis takes the form of war, revolution, or other leadership crisis are yet to be presented, Carter's personality seems to be quite closed to precipitation of a leadership crisis like Nixon's. Nor does he have the kind of self-destructive drive and accident-proneness which made Kennedy go into Dallas while full-page ads were using the language of violence, and then ride slowly through the center of town in an open car. So the only thing that can deter Carter from responding to our next call for war, when "pressures" once again grow intolerable, is his maturity.

Might Carter's well-known "independence" include an independence even from us? Might a man who can show physical warmth to his wife in public-and mean it-be able to tap some deep source of human warmth in his heart when the chips are down and decline to plunge us into another hellish birth? Might a man who spends whole days with his daughter, in which she plans every minute of his time, be able to remember that children really die in wars?

One hopes so. For on such a slender thread of hope hangs the existence of mankind.

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