

Western powers to Berlin, the case cannot be considered an immediate deterrence failure.⁶³ If presently unavailable documents should one day reveal that Khrushchev had intended to carry out any of these proscribed actions but subsequently decided to refrain because of Kennedy's efforts to buttress the American commitment to defend Berlin, the confrontation would have to be judged a deterrence success. But on the basis of the available evidence, the case is probably best described as unsuccessful compellence by the Soviet Union; Khrushchev tried and failed to use the threat of a possible war over Berlin to force Western political concessions. By this reasoning, the outcomes of all four cases George and Smoke classify as limited probes and partial deterrence failures should be recoded.⁶⁴

Despite these difficulties, the definitions by George and Smoke of deterrence success and failure more closely approximate the kind of actions specified by deterrence theories as challenges than do those of other analysts. The definition of failure is also rigorously applied by George and Smoke and used effectively to illuminate different kinds of deterrence challenges. Difficulties in its application arise because the definition is not derived from the postulates of deterrence theory. An operational definition of success and failure must be based on whether or not a challenger carries out the specific behaviour proscribed by the defender.

Beyond definitional differences, a second generic reason for variation in the coding of outcomes is differences in the interpretation of the historical evidence in individual cases. These controversies invariably concern the intentions of challengers. Judgments about whether a case qualifies as a deterrence encounter and about its outcome, require information about a putative challenger's intentions. As this is not always available, controversy thrives.

⁶³ George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, p.542, agree that "the Western powers had given various intimations that their commitment to West Berlin did not include opposition to the erection of a barrier between East and West Berlin. . . ."

⁶⁴ George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, p.541. These cases are the Berlin blockade (phase 1), the two Taiwan Straits crises (phase 1), and the Berlin Wall.