

qualify as a deterrence encounter because the United States never committed itself to defend South Korea.⁵⁵ In a well-publicized speech, Secretary of State Dean Acheson defined that country as outside the American defence perimeter in Asia.⁵⁶ George and Smoke recognize this problem; they admit that, "strictly speaking," two of their deterrence cases, the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 and the Chinese invasion of the Tachen Islands in January 1955, cannot be considered deterrence failures "since the United States did not attempt to apply deterrence."⁵⁷ Four of their twelve case studies can be disqualified on this basis.⁵⁸

George and Smoke's definition of deterrence failure in terms of initiators' strategies leads them to reject the usual dichotomous coding of success and failure in favour of a coding scheme that allows for partial successes and failures. Some outcomes are mixed, they insist, because the initiator may have been deterred from certain options but not from others.⁵⁹ George and Smoke argue that some limited probes fall into this category and classify all of them as partial deterrence failures. We contend that the concept of a partial deterrence failure elides the distinction between general and immediate deterrence by equating challenges with deterrence failures. A limited probe constitutes a general deterrence failure but it only qualifies as an immediate deterrence failure when the challenger carries out the specific action the defender has proscribed. If a challenge falls short of that threshold, immediate deterrence does not

⁵⁵ George and Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, pp.141-142, note that Korea might be considered a case in which deterrence was not practised. They argue instead that it is an example of a situation in which deterrence was not employed effectively. Their discussion of the background of the case, pp.143-157, is enigmatic because it supports the conclusion that deterrence was not practised. Most of the analysis is devoted to explaining why Washington made no prior commitment to defend South Korea.

⁵⁶ Dean Acheson, "Crisis in Asia — An Examination of U.S. Policy," *Department of State Bulletin*, 22, 23 January 1950, p.116.

⁵⁷ *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, pp.539-540.

⁵⁸ These cases are the Berlin Blockade of 1948, the outbreak of the Korean War, the Taiwan Straits crisis of 1954-55, and the Hungarian Revolution.

⁵⁹ *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy*, p.5-7.