Weak States in the International System

Michael Handel

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Weak States in the International System

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To My Mother
and
In Memory of My Father

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Preface to this Edition

Much has changed in the international system since this book first appeared in 1981 based on research done in the mid-1970s. Most of the examples used in this book were taken from modern European history, which was then the subject of the greater part of the literature in diplomatic history. Since the mid-1980s the international system has begun to change and these changes are likely to continue at an accelerated pace during the remainder of this century. Such developments inevitably affect the position of "weaker" states in the international system.

By far the most important new trend of the last decade is the general depreciation of military force as an instrument of policy not only for the great powers but for almost all states. This development has stemmed from the tremendous increase in the economic costs of modern war and a decrease in the possibility of achieving quick or decisive results on the battlefield. These trends have increased the political costs of waging war for the developed Western countries and to a lesser extent for all other states as well.

Trends in weapons development and the proliferation of sophisticated precision-guided munitions (PGMs) (as discussed in Appendix C of this book) have increased the relative strength of weak states against strong ones.[1] This trend, combined with the resort to guerrilla and terror tactics and strategy, has made any war with even much weaker states very costly and indecisive. This is illustrated by the American defeat in Vietnam and to a lesser extent by the results of its intervention in Lebanon (1983) and by the Soviet failure in Afghanistan. The recent proliferation of nuclear and chemical weapons will even further reduce the incentive of the great powers to use military force against smaller ones. Quick and decisive interventions such as that of the U.S. in

Grenada seem to be the exception – a relic of the age of gunboat diplomacy.

Diminishing returns from the use of military power have also been experienced by relatively weaker states such as Israel and Syria in Lebanon, and Iraq and Iran in the Gulf War. The impact of these trends on the behaviour of the superpowers and of weaker states alike is best reflected in the so called Weinberger Doctrine "On the use of Military Power" first articulated by the Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, on 28 October 1984. The Weinberger Doctrine made clear the reluctance of the United States to undertake any military operations anywhere – and the difficulties a democratic society faces in fighting any war, not merely a prolonged and indecisive one, in today's world – as already referred to on the pages of this book, including Appendix B.[2]

The extensive involvement of the United States and the USSR in world affairs, and the heavy military expenditure which has flowed from this involvement, have significantly affected their economic decline relative to the West European states and Japan. The resulting economic problems, which have reduced the self-confidence of the two superpowers, will lead them to allocate more of their resources to developing their own economies and less to policing the world. Much of the energy of the great powers will move from the international military to the international economic arena. The dangers of viewing the world in "zero sum" terms, which allowed some weaker states to "extract" more support from the great powers, have already been discussed in this book (see Chapter IV, pp. 187–95). This era is now clearly coming to an end.

On the whole the decline in the readiness of great powers to use military force will be welcomed by most weak and small states. Conversely, the same developments will weaken the position of those smaller states which depend on the direct military and/or economic support of great powers *vis-à-vis* other weak states.

A realistic assessment of the trends in the use of power in the international system seems to indicate that nations will become increasingly reluctant to resort to the direct use of military power. This overall depreciation in the utility of mili-

tary power, however, does not mean that violence between states will disappear. Wars between and within smaller states, particularly in the third world, will continue. Indeed, while the number of wars between the smaller states may decline, internal civil strife may actually increase.

For example, as the Soviet Union gradually turns to "democracy", internal strife between the different ethnic groups within that state is rising. Violence in the Israeli-occupied territories, in Lebanon, South Africa, India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, and even Mexico and China may be on the increase. Outside threats to most "weaker states" may diminish; internal threats to their stability may increase.

The political and economic change in the international system since the book was first published show how quickly the relative status and influence of states can alter. These changes will have the greatest influence on the arguments advanced in Chapter I of this book. While I can still adhere to most of the criteria that I used for measuring the relative power of states, two comments must be made. The first is the need to place more emphasis upon the importance of economic criteria relative to military criteria (although in terms of overall strength the two are closely related). The second is the need to emphasize even more than in my original arguments the upward or downward mobility of states in the international hierarchy of power.

Overall very few changes need to be made in Table 1 (pp. 15–18) which compares the military and economic strength of the *great powers* – except to up-date the data and to account for the fantastic increase in the relative economic strength and influence of Japan and the structural weaknesses in the Chinese and Soviet economies. The most interesting changes that must be made in Chapter I concern the relative position of the *middle powers*. Admittedly, the decision to include a state in the ranks of the middle powers, as my original discussion demonstrated, is much more subjective than in the case of the great and superpowers. Here wars and their resulting economic consequences have seriously affected the relative strength and our perceptions of strength and future promise, of states such as Argentina, whose economy is currently in shambles and which lost the Falkland

war against Great Britain; of Mexico and to a lesser extent Brazil with their huge external debts; or Iran whose disastrous war with Iraq and political isolation have reduced it from a perceived regional power to an economically and politically weakened state. The fluctuations in the price of oil have shown the vulnerability of states such as Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Venezuela which rely on one commodity (see also the discussion in Chapter V on the economic position of weak states in the international system). Given their economic progress, industrial countries such as Korea and Taiwan might be added to the list of middle powers, although their relative political isolation may work against such a decision.

Clearly, economic factors are more important than military ones in determining the relative ranking and status of the middle powers and weaker states, while the position of the great and superpowers still depends relatively more on their military strength. As a result changes in the relative positions of middle and superpowers will be much slower. However, toward the year 2000 the unification of Western Europe and the possible emergence of either a neutral unified Germany or a rearmed Japan may alter the structure of the international system and increase the number of superpowers.

Another subject which received considerable attention in the literature of the 1970s was the theme of small is beautiful, more efficient and more humane – in short, that smaller states were inherently more moral and less aggressive than great powers. Such radical chic themes can simply be dismissed as romantic nonsense.[3] There is no logical correlation between size and morality, aggressive policies, economic success or quality of life, as I pointed out in Chapter I (pp. 37–8). Big states can be aggressive or peaceful, small states can be economically successful or not. Weaker states have no monopoly on moral qualities as Libya, Cambodia, Syria and Iran have demonstrated. While South Korea has produced an economic miracle, North Korea, with a similar population, has developed into one of the economically least successful and politically most repressive states in the world. Rumania even after Ceauşescu is not far behind.

At the time this book was written, the theoretical literature

and studies of the policies of weaker states were relatively limited. Since then, the literature has grown immeasurably; indeed, it would be difficult to include a comprehensive up-to-date bibliography on even the foreign or defense policy of just one state such as Israel or Canada. Most of the theory developed in this book will continue to be useful, particularly for teaching the theory of international relations. The new reader must, however, continuously check my observations against developments in the international system and the latest military and economic trends. How has the position of weak states in the international system changed? Do the new norms of international diplomacy and new types of economic relationships mean that military strength and weakness is less relevant in today's world? Is the concept of weak or small states as useful in the 1990s as it was when the book was written?

M. I. H.

NOTES

1. For an interesting editorial on how modern precision-guided (PGMs) weapons can make the difference in helping a weak state defeat a superpower see the *Economist*'s editorial on the role of the US "stinger" shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missile in defeating the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. "Weapons, deadly weapons," *Economist*, 18 Feb. 1989, p. 18.
2. If US leaders strictly adhere to the so-called Weinberger Doctrine, the chances that the US will use its military power in any prolonged war are virtually non-existent. The six principles of the Weinberger Doctrine are:

   (1) The *vital interests* of the United States or its allies must be at stake.
   (2) *Sufficient force* should be applied to unequivocally reflect the intention of winning (i.e., no half measures or gradual measures).
   (3) Political and military objectives be *clearly defined.*
   (4) The US involvement must be *continuously reassessed* to keep cause and response in synchronization. [This principle seems to contradict principle no. 2 – M.H.]
   (5) Before troops are committed, there must be a reasonable assurance of *support from American public opinion.*
   (6) *A combat role should be taken only as a last resort.* [My emphasis]

   For a detailed discussion of the Weinberger Doctrine in this context see Michael I. Handel, *War, Strategy and Intelligence* (London: Cass, 1989), Ch. 10, pp. 493–7.

   The increased reluctance to use military force was indicated earlier by the *Nixon Doctrine* of 1969 recommending that the United States should support

other nations at war economically and politically but not by direct military involvement, and the *War Power Resolution* of November 1973.

3. Among the writers who argue thus are E.F. Schumacher (*Small Is Beautiful* (New York: Perennial Library, 1978)) and Leopold Kohn (*The Breakdown of Nations* (New York: E.P. Dalton, 1978) and *The Overdeveloped Nations: The Diseconomies of Scale* (New York: Schocken Books, 1978)).

. . . right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in powers, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.

Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War,* Book V, chap. 17.

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Introduction

The studies of modern diplomatic history and the theories of international relations have usually been based on the relations among the great powers: Britain, France, Prussia/Germany, Russia, and the United States. The available works are already exhaustive, but the output continues.[1] The study of the weak states, on the other hand, has been sorely neglected. This work is an attempt to look at the international system through the eyes and experiences of the weak states.

Methodologically, I have focused my attention at the level of analysis referred to by Kenneth Waltz as the "third image"[2] and by Graham Allison as the "rational actor" model (model 1).[3] The "third image" concentrates on the primacy of the international system for determining foreign policy. The "rational actor" model assumes that states are unitary, purposive, value-maximizing calculators.

While most of the existing theories of international relations can be readily applied to the behavior of weak states in the international system, the overall weakness of these states must be taken into account. Although the differences between the constraints which affect weak and powerful states can be overemphasized, several distinctions are important.

Domestic determinants of foreign policy are less salient in weak states. The international system leaves them less room for choice in the decision-making process. Their smaller margin of error and hence greater preoccupation with survival makes the essential interests of weak states less ambiguous. Kenneth Waltz's "third image" is therefore a most relevant level of analysis.

Moreover, because of the reduced scale of complexity of

bureaucratic and decision-making structures of weak states, there are *usually* fewer bureaucratic influences on foreign policy making, which makes Allison's "rational actor" model more appropriate.

Therefore it has been suggested that "the most obvious fact about small powers is that their foreign policy is governed by the policy of others. It follows that the student of small power policy, even more than the student of great power policy, must concentrate on the environment in which his subject exists".[4]

The available studies of weak states in international relations employ two basic methodological approaches. One is a "horizontal section," namely an attempt to develop general theories for the position and conduct of weak states in the international system. The other is a "vertical section," a study in depth of the foreign policy of one (or a few) weak state(s) in a given period of history. This work comes closer to the first category, attempting to find some general insights and observations on the behavior and position of the weak states in international relations.

Each method has its advantages and disadvantages. The more general the theory, the greater the number of countries that must be taken into account. But the more countries studied, the less the possibility of achieving a deep and meaningful analysis of each specific case. Whatever is gained on the theoretical level might result in the loss of richness in detail. Samuel Huntington referred to the same problem in *The Soldier and the State* as follows: ". . . understanding requires theory; theory requires abstraction; and abstraction requires the simplification and ordering of reality".[5] On the other hand, even if one were to exhaust the literature on any given country, one would surely reach the point of diminishing returns because so much of the information is repetitive and so little new knowledge can be gained.

In this work, I have attempted to analyze all the available theoretical literature on weak states in international relations, as well as to look into as many case studies as possible. Many of the theories in this growing body of literature can be accepted, but a sizeable number must be rejected, since they generalize too much from unique cases. Too many general-

izations are also made for a given historical period and then cavalierly applied to another.

The historical period and the structure of the international system in which the position of weak states is examined are of great importance. The position of the weak European countries for most of the nineteenth century (excluding the Napoleonic wars and Prussia's war with Denmark) was relatively secure, while the weak states *outside* the European system had to face the dangers of European imperialistic policies and very often could not maintain their independence. Although the weak European countries were not recognized as equal until the end of the First World War, and most of the important decisions in international politics were made by the Concert of Europe and later the great powers, the actual existence of the weak states was rarely at stake. During the decade or so that preceded the First World War, the competition among the great powers for the allegiance of the weak states considerably enhanced the bargaining power and maneuverability of the latter. After the First World War the position of the weak states further improved, as they achieved almost complete formal-legal equality in the League of Nations, while at the same time the great powers grew weaker.

The rise of the revisionist powers in the 1930s, however, marked the lowest point in the security of the weak states since the Napoleonic wars. Their security and very survival were directly threatened and many predicted their disappearance. This trend continued after the Second World War and at the beginning of the Cold War as the great powers —especially the USSR—tried to establish control over what they regarded as their spheres of influence. On the other hand, most of the African and Asian states have freed themselves from the grip of the powers and considerably improved their position *vis-à-vis* the great powers, a process which continues today.

It is therefore possible to distinguish between cycles of security or insecurity, influence or impotence of the weak states in the international system. The position and relative security of any weak state must be gauged in terms of the specific international system in which it is operating.[6]

A further impediment to arriving at more general

pronouncements on the position and behavior of weak states in the international system is that, even at the same period in history, weak states located in different areas have different neighbors and thus face different problems. This indicates the central importance of the geographical location of weak states. Therefore, studies of Finland, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Poland, Hungary and Israel stress problems of survival and vulnerability, while works on Portugal, New Zealand, Chile, and even Switzerland and Sweden emphasize their relative safety and capacity to hold their own against the powers.

In like manner, two basic approaches are evident in the theoretical discussions on weak states. One stresses their preoccupation with problems of survival and their limited freedom of maneuver. The other approach tends to inflate the influence of the weak states out of proportion to their real power. On the whole, I find myself taking a position somewhere in between the two. Weak states have not disappeared *en masse* as Treitschke and his followers and some social Darwinists predicted in the last quarter of the 19th century.[7] But neither can the weak states ever afford to relax their vigilance on matters of security, nor bask in the protection and good will of the powers. Even more than the powerful, the weak must be continuously on the alert. Any error in judgment can be fatal, "as those who are weak hang on a single turn of the scale."[8]

In fact, very few weak states have disappeared from the international scene during the last century. Weak states have demonstrated a remarkable capacity to survive despite all the dangers they faced due to their lack of power. The worst "enemy" of the weak states has been national unifications, such as in Germany and Italy. This process accounts for the "disappearance" of most of the weak states. When Karl Haushofer predicted the disappearance of the small countries, he recommended that they unify with the larger states: ". . . we may say that small states have a constantly decreasing chance of independent survival".[9] During the First and Second World Wars many weak states were temporarily occupied but they re-emerged after the war. Since the end of the First World War, but especially after the Second, the number of weak independent states has grown continuously. In the 20th

century, the only weak states which have disappeared are the Baltic States. Others, such as the East European States after the Second World War, and perhaps Finland, have lost much of their freedom of action in the international system, as well as much of their freedom to determine their own internal affairs. Having retained their national framework and cohesion as separate political entities, however, they can at least maintain the hope of regaining complete independence sometime in the future.

In this book, I have attempted to present a balanced account not only of the weaknesses and vulnerability of weak states, but also of the positive capabilities which they can develop to compensate for their deficiencies, i.e., those conditions under which their security is endangered and those under which it is enhanced. Many of the problems faced by the weak are also, to a lesser extent, shared by the more powerful. It must be remembered that if weakness and strength were *absolute* rather than *relative,* and fixed rather than dynamic qualities, the result of each conflict and collision of interests between weak and powerful states would always end in favor of might. For, as Professor Schelling has observed,

> "Bargaining power," "bargaining strength," "bargaining skill" suggest that the advantage goes to the powerful, the strong, or the skillful. It does, of course, if those qualities are defined to mean only that negotiations are won by those who win. But, if the terms imply that it is an advantage to be more intelligent or more skilled in debate, or to have more financial resources, more physical strength, more military potency, or more ability to withstand losses, then the term does a disservice. These qualities are by no means universal advantages in bargaining situations; they often have a contrary value.[10]

Given the broad scope of this book, there were certain subjects in the field which could justify a whole study on their own, such as guerrilla warfare as the weapon of the weak, the position of weak states in regional integration projects, the role of multinational corporations in weak states, etc. Rather than treat them superficially, I preferred to leave them to other times, or other hands.

NOTES

1. Italy, Japan and other states could be added to the list. It is tempting to suggest that the number of books, articles, monographs, and other publications devoted to a given state, at different periods in history, can serve as a quantitative indicator to its power, rank and position in the international hierarchy and to the impact of a state on the international system.

   For example, the literature on the Hapsburg Empire's foreign policy during the 19th century and up to the outbreak of the First World War is voluminous. The literature on Austrian foreign policy since the end of the First World War is quite limited. The works on Mussolini's foreign policy are quite extensive, whereas the literature on post-Second World War Italian foreign policy is minimal. The research on Germany's foreign policy on the eve of the First World War or on Hitler's foreign policy cannot be read by a single researcher; the literature on the Weimar Republic's foreign policy, a low point in German power, can easily be read by anyone.
2. Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp. 159–186.
3. Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1971), pp. 10–38.
4. Quoted in J. E. Spence, *Republic Under Pressure: A Study of South African Foreign Policy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p.6. See also Richard Kennaway, *New Zealand's Foreign Policy 1951–1971* (Wellington: Hicks Smith, 1972), pp. 153–155.
5. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), p. vii.
6. For an interesting analysis of historical international systems, see Richard N. Rosecrance, *Action and Reaction in International Politics* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1963) and Kyung-Won Kim, *Revolution and the International System* (New York: New York University Press, 1970). However, both concentrate mainly on the position and interrelationship of the great powers.
7. See, for example, Gertrude Himmelfarb, *Darwin and the Darwinian Revolution* (New York: Norton, 1968), pp. 412–431; also Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), pp. 170–200.
8. Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1950), p. 405.
9. Karl Haushofer, quoted in Andreas Dorpalen *The World of General Haushofer: Geopolitics in Action* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1966): "Small Countries have no Right to Exist" p.220.
10. Thomas C. Schelling, *The Strategy of Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 22.

CHAPTER I

Definitions and Characteristics of Weak States

If the notion of war were unknown in international relations, the definition of "small power" would have no significance; just as in the domestic life of a nation it has no significance whether one man is less tall or has a weaker physique than his fellow citizen.

Laszlo Reczei[1]

The term "smaller country" seems to be reserved for large countries with small populations, small countries with large populations, small countries with small populations, and sometimes countries of any size that mostly mind their own business in world affairs.

Herbert Goldhamer[2]

Humpty Dumpty: "When *I* use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

Lewis Carroll[3]

The behavior of states in the international system is largely determined by the power relations and differentials among them. Order within the system is continually threatened by the possibility that some states will resort to force or war in order to improve their relative positions. Because states frequently do coerce one another—or threaten to do so—it is important to analyze their respective capacities to protect, maintain, or further their national interests.

The traditional theories of international relations take the unequal distribution of strength among states into account by recognizing the existence of a pecking order of states based upon five gradations: super powers, great powers, middle powers, small powers (states), and mini-states.

The term "small power" appears frequently in the literature,[4] and it has a long tradition of usage. Yet it is a self-contradictory term, both semantically and logically. The main characteristic of weak states is, indeed, their *lack* of power or strength, and hence they are continuously preoccupied with the question of survival.

Raymond Aron refers to the semantic problem as follows:

> We avoid here the common expression "small powers", so as not to introduce a confusion in vocabulary. The use of the word *power* to designate the actors and not merely the capacity of the actors is self-explanatory. The rivalry of power being part and parcel of international life, we identify the actors and their capacity for action, and establish a hierarchy of actors as a function of their capacity.[5]

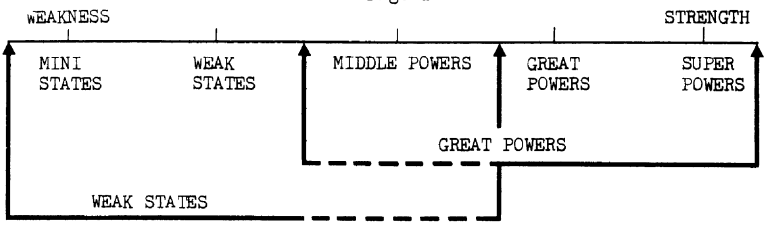
Aron, like the German scholars, employs the phrase "small state" (*Kleinstaat*) which, though more logical than "small power" (*"Kleinmacht"* would sound absurd!), is not entirely satisfactory. In the study of international relations, it is not the *size* of a state which matters, but rather its relative strength. Strictly speaking, a small state should be small in area. This term, however, has been applied to countries with enormous territories, such as Saudi Arabia, Chad, Mongolia, Libya, and Mauritania. To be exact, the expression "small state" should be used to describe only those states which both lack strength and are small in territory.

The term "weak states" has been adopted here because it

can be applied not only to small, weak states but to countries of considerable area which are, nevertheless, weak and therefore vulnerable. When the term "small states" appears within quoted material, it should be understood to mean "weak states."

The international power hierarchy—super powers, great powers, middle powers, weak states, and mini-states—might be illustrated by a pyramid in which the lowest layer, representing the weakest states, would include the greatest number of states. But it is more accurate to depict this hierarchy as a continuum:

Fig. 1



This study will focus on weak states, those on the left side of the continuum (or the bottom layers of an imaginary pyramid).

The Great Powers

The simplest definitions of weak states are negative. For example: "A small state is any state in the international system that does not belong to the category of the powers . . . ."[7] An explanation similar to that lexicon definition has been given by Paul Herre:

> . . . within the European historical development one should treat as Small States all those states which in the prevailing political system do not belong to the Great Powers.[8]

Other German scholars have simply referred to weak states as *Nichtgrossmachten* (non-great powers).[9]

Such definitions fail to characterize weak states positively; nor do they reveal enough about the great powers to make a derivative definition of weak states possible.[10] It is necessary, therefore, to define the term "great power." Historically,

there has been general agreement on what states are in the great-power category, and since this class is limited in number, common denominators are more readily apparent.

In modern times, the possession of nuclear weapons distinguishes the great powers from the rest of the states.[11] It is obvious, though, that prior to 1945 nuclear weapons could not have served as a criterion. Thus the standards used to define the great powers, as well as other states in the international system, are not static or permanent. Technological breakthroughs, changes in values, changes in perception by the states involved, and victories and defeats all lead to changes, often rapid and unexpected, in the power classification of states.[12]

The changing nature of such a definition becomes clear when one considers the growing number of states which may produce nuclear and conceivably even thermonuclear weapons, and thus join the hitherto exclusive atomic club of the great and super powers. The capability of additional countries to produce nuclear weapons also indicates the possibility of upward mobility in the international hierarchy.[13] Yet would the production of nuclear weapons by countries like Sweden, Israel, Switzerland, Brazil, and Egypt turn them instantly into great powers? The answer is obviously no. Under certain conditions, that achievement might add to their military power, bargaining leverage, and prestige; but under other conditions the development of nuclear weapons could lead to the imposition of pressures that might actually weaken rather than strengthen their position.[14]

The super powers at the extreme right of the continuum can be differentiated from the more numerous great powers by their nuclear development: the quantity of nuclear weapons available to them (abundance and overkill versus sufficiency);[15] technological advancement in terms of miniaturization of nuclear devices; the sophistication of their delivery system; differences in their second strike capability; and their ABM and MIRV capabilities. In the future, however, different technological criteria may be suggested to differentiate between the super powers and the great powers, such as their space programs, which are out of the reach of any great power.

It is clear that more than one set of criteria is needed to

define the position of a state in the international system. Nuclear weapons, the criterion used so far, will probably come to be only a necessary, not a sufficient, condition to determine whether a country can be classified as a militarily great or super power. The same thing is true of the other commonly used criteria.

Historically, the single most important yardstick for the measurement of military power has been the population size of a given state. This remained the basic standard for evaluating the military might of states well into the industrial-technological age. Indeed, until the outbreak of the First World War, despite all technological advances "the Balance of Power was directly affected by the population changes that took place during the period [among the major powers]."[16] The larger the population, the larger the army a state could put into the field, and God usually favored the largest number of battalions.

Of course, organizational qualities and the tactical skill of great captains of war could, to a certain extent, help compensate for small populations. This accounts for the temporary rise of less populous states to the ranks of the great powers of their times—states like the Netherlands, Sweden under Gustav Adolf, and Prussia under Frederick the Great.[17] Population size, then, is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for classifying a state as a great power.

Quite a few states whose populations are as great as or greater than those of Great Britain, France, West Germany, Japan—countries such as India, Indonesia, Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria, Italy—are not accepted as great powers. Indeed, a highly populated state cannot always utilize the manpower available to it. Although China's population is at least three times greater than Russia's, the Chinese army is smaller than that of the USSR and not so well equipped. It is much more difficult for a state that is less developed economically and socially to expand and equip a modern military force than it is for a modern industrialized society to do so.

In the 1970s, what counts is not the absolute size of a population but rather the so-called "effective population",[18] that is, the part of the population which can be armed and educated to operate modern sophisticated weapons. Additional

criteria must therefore be introduced to correlate a nation's population with its economic, industrial, and social capacity.[19] Two major indicators are the Gross National Product (GNP) and the GNP per capita.

The overall GNP enables one to compare the absolute size of the economic output of a country with that of any other state. This index, however, is not completely satisfactory for the measurement of a state's relative power. Canada with a population of 21.4 million produces a GNP of 78.1 million dollars, as compared with India, whose population reaches 553.8 million but which has a GNP of only 52.9 million dollars.[20] Similarly, Israel with a population of 3 million has the same GNP as Egypt with a population close to 34 million.[21] Therefore a country's GNP must be measured and corrected against the size of its population.

This correction can be made partly by measuring the GNP per capita,[22] which indicates a country's level of education, productivity, and industrialization, and hence furnishes a better idea of its capacity to provide its armed forces with modern equipment, to maintain its weapon systems, and to mobilize its manpower. To use the same countries mentioned above, the GNP per capita for Canada is $3,651, whereas that for India is less than $100. Israel's GNP per capita is $1,897, while Egypt's is only $220.[23]

The second problem with the GNP index is that the absolute size of a GNP may not reveal much about the structure of an economy. A relatively large GNP *can* be based primarily on agricultural products, whereas a small GNP can be based on modern sophisticated industry. Even when two industrial countries are being compared, the industry of one may be better geared to the production of military hardware than the industry of the other.[24]

Thus further information on the economic structure of a country is needed in order to evaluate its real strength. Here data can be acquired on such specific criteria as a country's steel production, energy consumption, energy reserves, and motor vehicle industry (see Table 1). For a state to qualify as a great power, it has to rank very high in all or most of these categories. Table 2 gives the ranges of the nations classified as super and great powers in the early 1970s.

TABLE 1

MILITARY AND ECONOMIC STRENGTH OF GREAT POWERS 1971

	STATES	Population (millions)	Area (thousand sq. km.)	GNP (billion $)	GNP (per capita ($)	Armed Forces (millions)	Military expenditures (billion $)	Nuclear weapons in 1973	Petroleum reserve (million metric tons)	Gas reserve (billion cubic meters)
SUPER POWERS	USA	205.3	9,363	976.8	4,758	3.066	77.80	10,000+	5,144	7,895
	USSR	242.8	22.402	497.0	2,047	3.535	65.00	10,000+	8,203	18,010
	CHINA	836	9,596	120.0	143	3,100	10.00	256	n.a.	n.a.
GREAT POWERS	JAPAN	103.4	370.07	197.2	1,907	0.250	1.50	—	3	16
	W. GERMANY	61.7	247.97	185.5	3,006	0.484	6.20	—	79	388
	U.K.	55.8	244.04	121.0	2,168	0.390	5.90	10,000+	396	1,126
	FRANCE	50.8	547.02	145.9	2,872	0.506	6.00	6,336	14	205