Rhetoric of a War Chief

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The methods of a discourse-centered approach to culture, while originally developed for small-scale societies, can be employed with profit in the study of the social functions of discourse in our own society. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the utility of these methods through an examination of a recent article by Secretary of State Caspar W. Weinberger, entitled "U.S. Defense Strategy," which appeared in Foreign Affairs in spring of 1986. The general hypothesis advanced here is that this text, as a linguistic sign vehicle, is not simply a device in which an image of reality is encoded. It is also an object whose semiotic characteristics can be understood as part of a mechanism for maintaining and enhancing the power and prestige of the author and the institution he represents within a field of social power.

The present article is not concerned with the substantive validity of the points made by Weinberger. To address these matters would be to engage in a political debate, which is the purpose of this article to avoid, insofar as is possible. Some residual appearance of criticism cannot be avoided for two reasons. First, any study of the rhetorical structure of this text will by implication call into question its status as a representation of reality. One could rightly ask: why not consider rhetorical power in another text, for example, an "anti-nuclear" one or one arguing for arms control? While such a study is actually underway, the general point remains: a text that is a study of the rhetorical functions of another text itself has rhetorical functions.

Second, if the specific hypothesis is that the form of the text is linked to the jockeying for power within a social field, then is it not safe to conclude that the representation of reality that is also contained in the text must be skewed? This latter question assumes that the analyst of rhetorical structures has a privileged access to reality and to how it is to be encoded. Such an assumption would undermine the semiotic project proposed here. The central proposition is rather that the nuclear reality is not directly apprehensible except through signs, and that the most that can be done by an analyst of rhetoric in such a charged area as the nuclear debate is to suggest plausible
hypotheses about how the form of a representation of reality may also be constrained by the non-representational functions it is designed to fulfill.

The Weinberger text is, of course, not unique in working within such a field of constraints. In fact, every textual representation of reality -- including the present one -- functions in the same way, in greater or lesser measure, within the general struggle for a voice in the definition of reality. The Weinberger article is special only in emanating from much higher rungs of power and prestige than most, and in dealing with a part of reality that is of potential immediate concern to all human beings.

The Foreign Affairs text is designed to reach a particular audience, and, it can be argued, to influence that audience in particular ways. In using the word "designed," however, I am not suggesting that conscious intention is involved. Whether Weinberger and those who helped to produce this text had certain purposes in mind is not an issue. The present argument admits of varying degrees of "unconscious" functioning, provided that the textual evidence can be found, and that a plausible hypothesis can be formulated regarding that textual evidence in light of its broader context of use.

Theoretically, the present article builds upon the work of the French sociologist-anthropologist P. Bourdieu, who uses the term "field" to describe a set of individuals interacting with one another in terms of a pre-existing set of relationships. Their actions can be understood as part of an attempt to influence their own position within that field. Of central concern here are relationships of power and prestige, and how Weinberger's "U.S. Defense Strategy" may function as a tool for influencing position within a field of power.

The present article, however, is concerned not with the field per se, but rather with the formal characteristics of the Weinberger text that are of relevance to a field. Its organization is in terms of the specific semiotic devices by means of which the Weinberger text is anchored to a reality outside language: (1) proper names and definite references, (2) personal pronouns, especially we, (3) explicit references to other texts, (4) the actual linear unfolding of the text, and (5) implicit relations with other texts based upon formal similarity. Despite this focus on textual characteristics, since the hypotheses make reference to the social field of the Weinberger text, some general remarks about the social field are in order.

Social and Textual Fields

Weinberger's article appeared in Foreign Affairs, a journal published by the Council on Foreign Relations in New York. This is perhaps the most broadly-based of the major foreign policy journals, with 75,000 subscriptions and 10,000 newsstand copies. The journal, as a sign vehicle, is the major determinant of the social field within which "U.S. Defense Strategy" operates.

The field is composed of two major parts: (1) the audience -- readers of the journal -- who make up the principal target of the rhetorical appeal, and (2) the authors who publish in this journal, and especially those who publish on matters of strategy and national security. These latter are the main competitors for power and prestige. There is a third field to which the text is relevant, viz., those who will not read the Weinberger article, and may not even have heard of Foreign Affairs. The text may nevertheless be relevant to this broader field through the struggle for power in American society, which is taking place in part through a dialogue over nuclear weapons and war more generally. It is conceivable that the text will have an indirect impact in this regard, through shaping the discourse of others who will in turn communicate with a broader public. In any case, the text participates in broader American cultural patterns of the semiotic representation of reality. I will return to the issue of this broader American field subsequently, in connection with the problem of "implicit intertextuality."

As regards the more narrowly defined field of Foreign Affairs, one striking characteristic is its comparatively small size. The community of regular readers, some 85,000, is actually comparable in size to some of the larger small-scale societies studied by anthropologists, and represents only a minute fraction of the American public (0.035%). The field of authors is much narrower yet. In a twelve year period, only 76 individuals contributed to discussion in Foreign Affairs of nuclear security as broadly defined. 11 of these individuals had two or more publications in this journal during this period.

A study of the institutional affiliations of the contributors shows that they tend to come principally from government, universities, research institutes, or some combination thereof, or to be journalists or businessmen. For the 76 individuals sampled, the breakdown is as follows:

government - 47%  
university - 29%  
institutes - 23%  
journalists - 9%  
businessmen - 6%  

(The figure exceeds 100% because of multiple affiliations). Among the recent government contributors are well-known present and former members of cabinet, including Robert McNamara, James Schlesinger, Harold Brown, and George Schultz, in addition to Weinberger.

It can be argued that a principal focus of struggle for Weinberger is Robert McNamara, who was Secretary of Defense from 1960-1967, and whose name is associated with a key strategic concept that has guided American policy since that time -- "assured destruction," later dubbed "mutual assured destruction" (or MAD). The concept has been under attack for some time, and is an explicit object of criticism for Weinberger (pp. 680-681) himself. The strategic defense initiative (SDI) proposed by the present administration, moreover, represents the first governmental program to counter the idea of deterrence through mutual vulnerability.

The immediate stimulus for the Weinberger article, within the Foreign Affairs forum, indeed, may have been the earlier (Winter 1984/85) article, entitled "The President's Choice: Star Wars or Arms Control," by McGeorge Bundy, George F. Kennan, Robert S. McNamara, and Gerard Smith. Weinberger nowhere explicitly
references this article. However, because the article represents a direct criticism of SDI, and because of the prominence of one of its authors as the principal architect of the previous alternative to strategic defense -- and a former Secretary of Defense whose shadow has been cast across the recent history of defense planning -- it may be reasonably hypothesized that Weinberger was responding to McNamara and to this text in particular.

In any case, this is not the first response to criticism that Weinberger has made. He has done so in other journals, for example, his debate with Theodore Draper in The New York Review of Books (Draper 1982, Draper and Weinberger 1983). He has even responded previously (1983: 1183-1184) in Foreign Affairs to an article that had been critical of his administration. It is thus reasonable to assume that words for him -- at least as much as for other authors -- are part of an attempt to win support for his ideas through direct battles with others. It is the rhetorical form of these words, with respect especially to this prestige function within a social field, that is the specific object of analysis in the following sections.

Space, Time, and Person

Any discourse is anchored to the world by means of various semiotic devices. Among the key devices for accomplishing this anchoring are "proper names," which have as their referential value definite persons, objects, events, or places. It is in part by means of these proper names that a text constructs an image of a specific world, rather than confining itself to reasoning about an abstract possible world.

In the Weinberger text, there are some 75 proper names, depending on precisely how these are counted. Three major types can be distinguished, as well as a number of minor types. The major types are: (1) names of geographical places, (2) dates, and (3) names of persons. Together these make up 81% of the total. The present analysis will focus on these three major types, which build up within the text an image of space, time, and person.

Since strategic discourse -- as opposed to other types of discourse -- tends to deal with a geopolitical segmentation of space, it is not surprising that the bulk of place name references (67%) are to nation-states, with 19% being to larger geopolitical groupings (Europe, Asia, Africa, Central America), and 14% to cities (Washington, Moscow, and Geneva), which in two cases also stand for nation-states. There is one more definite reference (the 38th parallel), which also has geopolitical significance. The particular choice of proper names thus creates an image of space as politically segmented.

More of interest to an understanding of the semiotic functions of this text is a consideration of (1) the frequency of occurrences of tokens of the place name types, and (2) the specific choice of tokens. In this regard, the salient feature is the overwhelming occurrence of Soviet Union, alongside the U.S. At least one instance of this proper name occurs in 24% of the sentences, with an instance of U.S. occurring in 21%. The text most frequent proper place name (Korea, with North and South Korea) occurs in just 2% of the sentences. This means that, as a rhetorical device, the text functions to encode a "bipolar model" of space, in which the U.S. is juxtaposed with the Soviet Union.

This interpretation is confirmed by inspection of the other nation-state mentioned. Korea was one area of major superpower conflict as was Vietnam, which after Korea, is the next most frequently occurring place names. Many of the other place names, additionally, are directly related to superpower confrontation or Soviet aggression (Angola, Afghanistan). Finally, there is only one mention of the Chinese, and no specific references to any of the individual European nation-states.

Rhetorically, however, the text does not simply encode a bipolar model. It also explicitly places the Soviet Union, in all but a few sentences, in a threatening or aggressive posture with respect to the U.S.: "the Soviet Union's attempt to achieve a position of global military superiority" (p. 676), "Soviet investment in strategic forces (as measured in dollars) has been two to three times the size of our own..." (p. 678), "...to meet any level of Soviet attack" (p. 680), "...not only are the Soviets ahead of us today..." (p. 682), "the Soviet Union has built more warheads capable of destroying our missile sites..." (p. 691). For an American audience, this is a rhetoric of fear.

Two points are worth making here. First, many writings of the so-called "anti-nuclear" sort, especially works from the Physicians for Social Responsibility, are also based on a rhetoric of fear. In the preliminary studies done thus far, however, the fear is generated with respect to the possibility of a nuclear war itself, which replaces the Soviet Union as the principal topic of discourse. PSR rhetoric of fear thus does not so explicitly encode a bipolar model. Second, it is possible at least in theory to encode a bipolar model without the rhetoric of fear. For example, the text could play upon feelings of superiority or could stress cooperation. Indeed, some aspects of superiority are present in the Weinberger text. In any case, the rhetoric of fear and the encoding of a bipolar model are in principle separable.

An hypothesis may be proposed to account for these rhetorical features -- in particular for (1) the bipolar spatial model, and (2) the rhetoric of fear: one function of the text as a semiotic device is to win support, through emotional means, for an expanding defense budget. This budgetary appeal is made in varying degrees of explicitness at different points in the text, e.g., "in light of U.S. congressional demands that deficit reduction be given highest priority, maintaining forces adequate for the missions essential to our vital interests remains our largest challenge" (679).

It should also be noted that the audience for a Foreign Affairs article -- members of Congress, persons in the foreign service, academics, corporate executives, and others with interests in international politics -- suggests that Weinberger's text, in addition to constituting a direct appeal for support, may also be functioning as a "didactic text" or a "meta-text," instructing people who read it in how to go about arguing on more local levels for the budgetary support that is needed. This is a proposition that requires further research into intertextuality, which will be touched upon below.

Just as the text encodes a particular model of space, so also does it encode a model of time. The time horizon of the text is that, roughly, of the human life cycle. Of the definite temporal references in the text, all but one, that is, 98%, fall in the range between 1932 and the 1990s, with 87% actually falling between the 1950s and 1990s, a time frame familiar to most readers of this text through individual life cycle experience. Of course, this is also the time frame within which strategy has come to mean nuclear
strategy, although Weinberger's text deals with conventional war as well. Nevertheless, it is significant that the focus is on relatively immediate life cycle time, and in this the text contrasts with some of the anti-nuclear writings studied thus far, where references are often to cosmic time.

The emphasis on local time is confirmed by a study of the time units of the text. The principal time unit of definite reference is the year, which accounts for 51% of the time references. 35% are to decades or parts of decades (e.g., "early 1960s"), and 12% to months. While there is one reference to a century, it is clear that the basic unit of time is the year.

With respect to frequency of occurrence, the single most prominent reference is to the "1950s," which accounts for 12% of the references. Together with the "early 1960s," with which it is usually juxtaposed, it actually accounts for 18% of all definite time references. Next most frequent is the year "1981," which accounts for 10% of all references. These frequency peaks can be understood with respect to the particular rhetorical functions of time within this text.

Put generally, the text is about changes or transformations, which are of two principal sorts. First, there is the broad shift in the balance of military power between the U.S. and Soviet Union which occurred between the 1950s, when the U.S. had clear nuclear superiority, and the late 1970s, by which time, or so the text argues, the Soviet Union had achieved nuclear parity if not actual superiority. "1981" thus stands for the endpoint of U.S. decline, as well as the starting point for a second transformation. This second shift has purportedly taken place between 1981, when Reagan took office, and 1986. During this period, the U.S. has moved to strengthen itself vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, and the U.S.S.R. has responded by tempering some of its own actions.

In terms of rhetorical function, the two transformations, brought out in the sign vehicle through frequency of time references, have complementary functions: the transformation of decline feeds into the rhetoric of fear which the text grafts onto the bipolar model; the strengthening transformation relates to a different communicative function, the endeavor to demonstrate that the present administration is "doing something" about the nuclear problem. There is a delicate balance between the two.

For Weinberger to win political support for himself and his administration, it is essential that he demonstrate that he is doing something new and significant. He cannot promote his political goals by simply generating fear of the Soviet Union. If he were to concentrate only on the rhetoric of fear, he would lose support for himself and the Reagan administration. To gain political support, he must demonstrate that his actions as Secretary of Defense are having a practical effect in making the world safer.

At the same time, the goal of demonstrating accomplishment depends upon the rhetoric of fear. The audience for this text must believe that the fear is real. If the text minimized the threat posed by the Soviet Union, then the accomplishment of the author and his staff would also be minimized. Threat must be played up in order for accomplishment to appear significant. Fear must be maximized, even as it is shown to be being brought under control.

If power and prestige are a product of how a political actor is perceived by others, and of what the affective orientation of those others is to him, then any sign vehicle emitted by an actor can affect power and prestige by shaping perceptions and affect. Publication of a text is thus a political act. The central claim here is that the ke function of the present text is to shape audience perceptions and affect in a particular way to show that Weinberger is doing something about dangers that are very real -- a threat, from the Soviet Union -- and thus is worthy of the power and prestige bestowed upon him.

Some light is shed on the question of perceptions and emotion by considering a final category of definite reference, through which a specific image of the world is built up. This is the category of person, studied here through the occurrence of proper name: the text.

15 proper names are actually used in the text, if one includes the various references to Ronald Reagan, e.g., the President, President Reagan, etc., as a single proper name. The breakdown is as follows: 80% are present or former government leaders, 13% are military figures; and 7% are scientists. The text thus situates itself and its author primarily within a world of high government figures. In terms of the text as a device for influencing perceptions and emotions within a social field, it is relevant that there is no "downward" reference. All of the government figures referred to are on the same plane, in terms of power and prestige, or higher than Weinberger himself.

Of the government figures, two are Soviet (Gorbachev and Stalin) and one British (Churchill). The remainder (75%) of this group, are present or former U.S. leaders. Of these, four are presidents (Ronald Reagan, Lyndon Johnson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Theodore Roosevelt) and five members of cabinet (Alexander Hamilton, Dean Acheson, Robert McNamara, Harold Brown, and Weinberger himself). The text thus creates a world in which U.S. government figures, and in particular members of cabinet, play a dominant role.

The strategy of self-promotion by means of mention of others of course involves both positive and negative reference. By approving of certain others, one invites comparison between them and oneself. Their features become part of the definition of oneself. Similarly, by negative reference, one draws a boundary, defining oneself in opposition to the other. Aside from the positive references to Reagan, the reference to Theodore Roosevelt, also a Republican, is positive as well. Roosevelt is summoned as an authority, whose words speak as well today as they did then. The reference to Lyndon Johnson, a Democrat, is negative. Weinberger invokes the nineteenth century strategist Clausewitz to suggest that Johnson had an outdated conception of strategy. The references to FDR, as one who sought to build American consensus for involvement in World War II, are also positive, despite the fact that FDR was a Democrat. FDR's presidency is viewed widely as a watershed in the history of American politics. This is the kind of image the present administration would like to have as well. Weinberger's references here are consistent with the general rhetoric of the Reagan Administration.

Regarding the cabinet-level references, particularly striking is the reference to Alexander Hamilton, perhaps the most famous member of cabinet never to have himself become president. Indeed, many Americans mistakenly believe that Hamilton was a president of the United States. By claiming consistency with Hamilton's writings,
Weinberger endeavors rhetorically to promote himself as a great history-making member of cabinet. Two of the remaining cabinet-level references are to Dean Acheson, Secretary of State under Truman, and Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense under Kennedy and Johnson. Both of the references here are negative. Indeed, there is a great deal of implicit negative reference to McNamara, as one of the figures most directly responsible for the doctrine of mutual assured destruction (MAD), throughout this text. These are the figures from whom Weinberger would like to distinguish himself.

The reference to Harold Brown, Secretary of Defense under Carter, and a Democrat, is interesting in this regard. Weinberger uses Brown's voice as a confirmation that the Soviets have been engaged in an unrestrained build-up of nuclear weapons. However, the reference is not actually positive. It serves as authoritative for Weinberger rather because it shows that even a Democrat such as Brown -- one indeed partially responsible for the situation with which Weinberger has had to cope -- agrees with Weinberger on the question of Soviet build-up.

These various personages thus serve as vehicles for self-definition by Weinberger. Part of the effort is aimed at distancing from those of whom he does not approve. Part is aimed at alignment with certain others with whom he would like to be compared. Rhetorically, it is of interest that Weinberger even manages to incorporate his own name, through a paraphrase of a statement by one of his critics: "One critic put it this way: even if Secretary Weinberger had a favorable public opinion poll for using force, who could guarantee that the public would not change its mind"? (p. 688). The name is placed textually alongside other names. Indeed, it is sandwiched between that of Alexander Hamilton, immediately above, and FDR and Churchill, immediately following. The very textual proximity, through a kind of extended metonymy, invites the positive comparisons that provide the text's author with prestige.

The Scope of the "We"

If definite references anchor a text to the real world and allow a specific image of that world to be fashioned, another kind of anchoring is accomplished by means of the deictic pronouns -- "I," "we," "you." Particularly significant for the present text is the first person plural deictic "we," which allows a sense of group to be built up, and which can be used creatively to include or exclude selected others. It is possible to view the strategic use of "we" as a key means of bringing about consensus. In the Weinberger text, we is used in several different ways. The following types, in order of increasing inclusiveness, have been isolated from the text:

1. The President and I, e.g., "The President and I believe that the answer lies in the Strategic Defense Initiative. We hope that strategic defense will eventually render nuclear missiles obsolete" (p. 681);

There is only one possible instance in Weinberger's text of a universal we, including all of humanity, and it may be that even this we should not be understood in universal terms "while secure retaliatory deterrence is necessary today, can we not move to a safer world in the future"? (p. 680).

In any case, it is possible to imagine progressively more inclusive circles of "we," beginning with the speaker/author plus one other, and extending out to include a "we" of humanity. Precisely where the boundaries are drawn, when one form of we is used and not another, and the frequency of usages determines the kind of community the speaker/author wishes to build up rhetorically.

In terms of the rhetorical structure of the Weinberger text, the key distinction seems to be between between an exclusive we, roughly equivalent to the Reagan Administration, and an inclusive we, the people of the United States, which, however, specifically excludes the Soviet Union. Indeed, this latter we is most frequently a shorthand for "U.S." or "United States" as opposed to Soviet Union. Statistically, this inclusive we dominates the text. Of the total occurrences of we, 68% are of the inclusive type. Since the "we" here is so consistently opposed to the Soviet Union, it can be stated that the sense of community it builds up is one that functions within the rhetoric of fear. It is this "we" of the United States that is continuously threatened and challenged by the Soviet Union and "its attempt to achieve a position of global military superiority" (p. 675). The universal we that includes the Soviet Union makes up little more than 1% of the total occurrences of this pronoun.

The remaining 31% of the we's are either exclusive or ambiguous, being interpretable possibly as inclusive, possibly as exclusive. The exclusive we's are to be understood in light of the function of this text as a means of bringing power and prestige to its author and to the author's affiliated institutions within the social field in which the text is put forth.
According to the present interpretation, one function of the Weinberger text is to show that the Reagan Administration, and within it the Weinberger Department of Defense, is doing something about the problem of nuclear war. In order to make this point rhetorically, Weinberger must differentiate himself and his colleagues from his critics and from the masses to show that he is doing something. Otherwise, credit would not necessarily fall to him and the present administration. The accomplishments could be the fruit of work done by, say, previous administrations. As a rule, it would not be possible for Weinberger to achieve the foregrounding of himself without some use of the exclusive "we."

Any adequate understanding of how power and prestige are achieved through the use of such texts must focus on the interplay between inclusive and exclusive we. For this is what makes the voice of the few appear to be the voice of the collectivity. A particular set of ideas, a particular plan for action comes in this way to be the accepted general plan. The speaker/author takes credit, and yet simultaneously converts the individual achievement into a collective product.

There are a number of critical passages in the Weinberger text in which this alchemy of "we" transformation takes place. In the following passages, the "i" subscript on the pronoun indicates "inclusive" and the "e" subscript "exclusive we:"

Our i principal difference with our e immediate predecessor arose from our i judgment that it was urgent to fund defense at levels adequate to restore our e neglected military so that we i could maintain deterrence and to do so as quickly as possible. We e, i have accomplished a great deal, but we i still confront major Soviet advantages in capital assets purchased since the 1970s and a continuing Soviet military buildup. In light of U.S. congressional demands that deficit reduction be given highest priority, maintaining forces adequate for the missions essential to our e vital interests remains our i largest challenge (p. 679).

The first sentence illustrates the movement between inclusive and exclusive, between individual and collective. The first three instances of our distinguish the present administration from its predecessor, but then the third our clearly refers to the United States as a collectivity, as does the we that follows. The exclusive we has come to the rescue of the inclusive "we." The next sentence begins with an ambiguous we that makes the clause simultaneously self-congratulatory, taking credit for this development, and yet also congratulatory of the whole collectivity. Those responsible in government, and in particular Weinberger, stand out, but simultaneously become identified with the collectivity. This movement recurs in the following sentence, where the first our clearly encompasses the nation, the second our being again ambiguous, with the Reagan-Weinberger administration simultaneously standing out, and yet being indistinguishable from the collectivity.

This pattern is repeated at a number of points in the text, where distinction is achieved through the exclusive we, but is welded to consensus through the inclusive we. To take one further example:

...
word "spiraling" being singled out. The verb phrase reporting the discourse ("talk about") also signals indefiniteness. Yet this instance of intertextuality is still explicit, since it represents the formal recognition of the words of others. Implicit intertextuality merely copies certain key words or an overall style, without acknowledgement. Nevertheless, the general and indefinite pole of this continuum may be thought of as closer to implicit intertextuality.

At the other extreme, in the Weinberger text, is the specific and definite reference. This involves mention of a particular speaker/author for the other text, together with contextual material on when and where the instance of speaking/writing took place, and the exact replication of the words from that text, set off by quotation marks. In the Weinberger text, this extreme is represented by quotes that have accompanying footnotes, directing the reader to the source text, for example, "As the Scowcroft Commission's report stated: 'Deterrence is the set of beliefs in the minds of the Soviet leaders. . . ." (p.677), with footnote 1 reading: Report of the President's Commission on Strategic Forces, April 1983, p.3.'

From a more general theoretical point of view, explicit intertextuality, or what is sometimes called "reported speech," is of interest because it represents an attempt by the speaker/author to manipulate relations between language and the world. The words that are reported themselves represent the world in a particular way. The reporting of the discourse of another allows the speaker/author to comment upon the representation of the world by language. Implicitly, these comments have a bearing on how his own text is to be interpreted with respect to the world.

For the most part, the explicit inter-textual references (both definite and indefinite) found in the Weinberger article are of two sorts: (1) authoritative and (2) critical. In the former, Weinberger endeavors to gain acceptance for his own linguistic representation of the world by showing that certain other authoritative figures have represented the world in the same way. In the latter, Weinberger tries to show that ways of representing the world linguistically that differ from his own are essentially incorrect. He adopts here a critical view of the language world relationship.

The Weinberger article consists of some 23 explicit inter-textual references, including both definite and indefinite types. Of these, two are neither authoritative nor critical. Both of these are highly indefinite and general. On p. 675 Weinberger writes, "the Soviets began for the first time to talk seriously about deep cuts in strategic offensive forces." The other reference (p. 694) is similar. It also deals with talk between the U.S. and Soviets.

Of the remaining instances, two are references to Weinberger's own previous discourse, about which more will be said subsequently. The remaining 19 are clearly either authoritative or critical. Of these, 53% are authoritative, drawing upon the words of others to support the reality encoded in the text, 47% are critical, representing an attempt by Weinberger to undermine the reality encoded in texts that are not in agreement with his own. Weinberger's own text thus represents discourse as a battleground over how the world should be represented in discourse, what the correct representation of the world is. By implication, Weinberger's own text is to be understood as part of a battle over representation.

The split between authoritative and critical is reflected as well in the subset inter-textual references that are definite and specific. There are 8 such in the text, and these 5 are authoritative (63%) and 3 (37%) are critical.

To take one example, that includes both an indefinite and general, and a definite and specific reference:

But given the past record of experts' declarations about what could not be done in the future, I am dismayed by the absolute assurance with which some distinguished American scientists and others declare the President's dream to be impossible. Recall that Albert Einstein predicted in 1932: "There is not the slightest indication that (nuclear) energy will ever be obtainable. It would mean that the atom would have to be shattered at will." (p.683)

In the first sentence, Weinberger challenges the fit between the world and the words of certain unspecified American scientists. The second sentence appears as support for the critical challenge by giving the words of one distinguished scientist. Their lack of fit with the world is left as an inference to be drawn by the reader, who then also by analogy can see reason for challenging the fit between the world and the words of contemporary scientists.

Weinberger concludes this article with a definite and specific reference: "Seven years ago, Theodore Roosevelt enjoined Americans to 'speak softly and carry a big stick" (p. 697). The emphasis here is clearly upon the stick. Weinberger clarifies his own message as an appeal for military build up, and that he is not the only important American political figure to have called for military buildup.

The function of reported discourse in Weinberger's text seems to be constant. The way in which references to other texts are made show the linguistic representation of reality as the battleground for a struggle over how to define the world. The two references to Weinberger's own previous words are to be understood in this light. They are not full authoritative, but part of an attempt to free the words from criticism and thereby to render them authoritative. Weinberger (p. 694) writes:

I have elsewhere outlined six major tests that should be applied by the United States in deciding to commit U.S. conventional military forces to combat... That speech spawned a continuing debate inside and outside the government. In light of the continuing commentary, let me now reiterate the key points I made.

The later statement (p. 696) moves further in the direction of an authoritative reference, asserting the wisdom of his previous statements, and therefore also, by implication, the wisdom of his current statements: "As I said in my first appearance before the Congress the road to recovery of a secure deterrent would be neither short nor easy."

The rhetorical strategy of explicit intertextuality may thus be construed as part of the attempt to make this particular text authoritative. Weinberger represents discourse as the arena in which a struggle for power is taking place. By implication, Weinberger's own text is a part of that struggle. Simultaneously, however, some texts are
authoritative because of the prestige of the their author, and these texts are to be respected. Among the respected figures, for Weinberger, in addition to Reagan, are: General Brent Scowcroft, Carl von Clausewitz, Alexander Hamilton, Winston Churchill, and Teddy Roosevelt. Weinberger would like his own discourse to assume the authority that the words of these figures have.

Linear Structure of the Text

The various rhetorical functions discussed thus far -- proper names, use of first person pronouns, and explicit inter-textual references -- have been analyzed as general characteristics of the text. However, in fact they are differentially realized across the text, giving the text a linear structure that is relevant to its overall semiotic functioning.

This linear structure can be comprehended, as a first approximation, through the semantics of the text, coupled with the explicit text segmentation supplied by Weinberger, who has divided the article into 8 parts, each except the first set off by a roman numeral. The first and last sections are really text boundary markers, functioning meta-textually to define the nature of the text that comes between in capsule version.

The remaining 6 parts form 5 rhetorical parts, which can be labelled A (=II), B (III + IV), C (=V), D (=VI), and E (=VII). These five parts are in turn organized into two major parts: B = A and C = B+C+D+E. From a rhetorical point of view, B sets up a problem: the transformation that has occurred in the world in terms of military power, and the corresponding need for a transformation in strategic thinking. C represents the solution, the new strategic concepts that are needed. Thus, B supplies the ground for C, the backdrop against which the need for new concepts appears necessary. This is the key to the rhetorical function of this text as a mechanism for the maintenance and enhancement of power by the author and the institutions he represents. It allows the text to show that the Weinberger Department of Defense is "doing something" about the problem it confronts, and is therefore worthy of the power vested in it, and deserving of future affirmation.

Each of the constituent parts of C involves the presentation of a new concept, the product of rethinking done within the Weinberger Department of Defense: A = the strategic defense initiative, B = guidelines for the use of conventional forces, C = guidelines for negotiation, and D = competitive strategies. The first of these consists in two subsections, which deal respectively with (1) arguments against the earlier concept of mutual assured destruction, and (2) arguments for the SDI buildup.

Data on how the rhetorical functions discussed earlier map onto this linear structure are summarized in Table 1. The general principle in terms of which these data can be analyzed is that the text is organized linearly so as to move from a position of relative "dissensus" to one of relative consensus regarding the view of the world as bipolar in nature. The specific arguments can be illustrated through graphs.

Fig. 1 plots the movement of inclusive versus exclusive we and the percentage of uses of Soviet. These are the critical variables. It should be recalled here that "inclusive we" means the United States as opposed to the Soviet Union, whereas

"exclusive we" means the Reagan Administration as opposed to others, such as critics, previous administrations, and so forth. At the outset, these two are balanced and the percentages are low. References to the

Table 1: Linear Structure of the Weinberger Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of sentences with Soviet</th>
<th>% of sentences with U.S.</th>
<th>No. of quotes:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of sentences</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of sentences</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Soviet Union, however, are high. In the statement of the problem, inclusive we remains low, but inclusive goes up, simultaneously as references to the Soviet Union go down. There is thus a preliminary move to build consensus, where the problematic element, the Soviet Union, is minimized.

It is in the next part (B) that the "dissensus" is unveiled. This is the section on the strategic defense initiative. For the only time in the entire text, exclusive we outstrips inclusive, and the gap of potential disagreement as regards the leadership, in particular Weinberger, and the audience opens up. At the same time, references to the Soviet Union are moderately high, higher than in the previous section, but far from the opening and final peaks. This is where Weinberger and the Reagan Administration are foregrounded, and stand potentially to accrue power and prestige, if consensus can be established around their initiative. The remainder of the text must seek to enlist the audience in this endeavor and to build consensus.

In the next section (C), dealing with the use of conventional forces, references to the Soviet Union and use of the exclusive we drop off. Simultaneously, inclusive we usage picks up. This is the first move toward consensus. "We," the United States, is not seen as directly confronting the Soviet Union. This is followed (in D) by a slight
movement again toward "disensus," with references to the Soviet Union going up sharply, but inclusive we dropping only slightly, and still dominating exclusive we. There is thus here no really sharp dissent, but the Reagan administration receives some foregrounding.

Fig. 1: Inclusive versus Exclusive "We" Usage

It is in the final major section (E) that the consensus is achieved. Here references to the Soviet Union go way up, but inclusive we shoots up even higher, while exclusive we disappears. Now the rhetoric is fully "us," with the audience enlisted in this vision through the pronominal perspective, versus the Soviet Union. The consensus around this opposition has been achieved. In the final section, inclusive we drops off, as does reference to the Soviet Union, and Weinberger can foreground himself and the present administration to take credit, thereby increasing his own prestige and power.

The other variables are interpretable in analogous fashion. Fig. 2 charts the relationship between inclusive we and references to the U.S. and Soviet Union. Basically, the movement involves the substitution of "we" for "U.S." in the opposition with "Soviet Union." At first we is little used, while references to the U.S. and Soviet Union abound. By the last major section (E), "we" has come to replace the "U.S.," and the identification of speaker and audience in opposition to the Soviet Union is accomplished. The intermediate sections show the oscillating pattern by means of which this union is accomplished, with references to "we" going up as references to the "U.S." and "Soviet Union" go down (A), this being the less controversial locus of consensus building, "we" going down when references to the "Soviet Union" go up, even references to the "U.S." remain stable (B), and so forth. Gradually, "we" is substituted for the "U.S."

A similar pattern emerges when authoritative intertextual references are plotted against critical ones (Fig. 3). The critical use of intertextual reference forms a peak earlier in the text and C) earlier than the authoritative references (D), with the intermediate section showing the overlap between the two.

The actual linear structure of the text thus suggests that, rhetorically, the text uses a device for: (1) bringing the audience to consensus with the author over a bipolar model and (2) bringing power and prestige to the author and his institution in the eyes of the audience through a delicate process of foregrounding and backgrounding.

Implicit Intertextuality

From the point of view of broader social issues and a long-term perspective on political developments, it is perhaps difficult to see the relevance of a micro-textual study. The contribution of one text, such as Weinberger's, may seem minimal. Even if one is confident in the specific hypothesis -- that the rhetorical form of a text is determined by the non-referential aspirations of its author within a field of social power and prestige -- there is still a question of anchoring the socio-textual analysis in a broader view of society and culture.
One specific concept that may be of use in this regard is "implicit intertextuality." By this is intended a relationship between texts based on the sharing of rhetorical features. Two general types of relationship may be distinguished. In one type (direct relationship), a text B occurs after another text A and is directly modelled on it. If Weinberger's "U.S. Defense Strategy" should turn out to supply a model for later speeches and writings by political supporters, for example, these later texts would stand in a relationship of direct implicit intertextuality with it. Where there are such direct A-B relationships, there is also likely to be a hierarchical relationship between the authors of A and B within the corresponding social field.

In the other type (indirect relationship), neither of the texts is directly modelled on the other, the two participating instead in a more widespread patterning. In the latter case, the commonality may be traceable to a third text, or may be for all practical purposes untraceable because of the complex web of intertextuality that is involved. Rhetorical uniformities in interview responses, for example, are probably of this sort. Two individual respondents may have no direct access to one another, and yet their responses may show rhetorical homology. In such cases, it may or may not be possible to trace the similarities to a third text, for example, a speech by the President. The relationship between the two is indirect, reflecting broader patterns of intertextuality.

Through consideration of implicit intertextuality, macro-textual studies, such as that of the present paper, can be linked to broader historical trends. However, to do so properly it is necessary to greatly expand the concept of "text." As it has been used thus far, "text" means principally a written document. The concept can be easily expanded to include spoken discourse, which is, in any case, typically studied through a written transcription. However, the integration of micro-textual analyses with broader historical trends requires an even more expanded conception of "text," which would include virtually any kind of culturally constituted sign vehicle. In particular, "text" would include such semiotic devices as film and music.

An example of intertextuality of this broad sort, in which the rhetoric of fear combined with the bipole model, is the movie "Red Dawn" which appeared in August of 1984 (see Zebouni 1985). The opening scenes in the film take place in a small town in Colorado, with the camera located inside a high school classroom. The camera eye, which gives the perspective and audience identification, is analogous to pronominal usage in language, although the communicative situation here is distinct, since the author is submerged. In any case, outside the window can be seen paratroopers, descending down out of the sky, opening fire in the town. We know, but actually learn only later, that these are Soviet-Cub troops, invading the United States.

While a shot-by-shot study of this film has not been done, it seems intuitive that its results would show a high frequency of those shots in which the Soviet Union is placed in the role of aggressor with respect to the American high school students. At the same time, the question of nuclear war and its effects is passed over readily. One would want to study the actual frequencies, and also questions of camera-placement, to determine if there is a more detailed correspondence between this film and the Weinberger text. Nevertheless, the rhetorical devices, while occurring in wholly different types of sign vehicles, appear in some measure congruent.

The relationship between these two sign vehicles is in all probability indirect. However, films may in some cases directly influence the rhetorical structure of texts produced by others. A newspaper article (Greene 1984) from September 1984 illustrates this fact with respect to "Red Dawn." The article, which begins by mentioning the film, reports an interview with a high school girl who had just enlisted in the Army National Guard. The reporter, inquiring about her motives, received a reply isomorphic with the film's script: "the Soviets could be attacking my neighborhood, my friends, my school, the places where we had our high school dances. Those are the people and places I care for, and they're worth defending." It is almost as if the camera point of view in "Red Dawn" had been directly translated into the "I" of her discourse. While the film causality in this case cannot be proved, the evidence is strongly suggestive of direct implicit intertextuality.

Evidence regarding the broader social field within which this intertextuality takes place can be gleaned from survey results regarding American attitudes to the problem of war. Particularly interesting in this regard is the summary article by Yankelovich & Dobie (1984) on "The Public Mood: Nuclear Weapons and the U.S.S.R." This shows that Americans are overwhelmingly afraid of the Soviet Union but also of nuclear war: For example, 83% asserted that "while in past wars we knew that no matter what happened some life would continue, we cannot be certain that life on earth will continue after a nuclear war" (1984: 54). 82% also claimed that "the Soviets are constantly testin..."
accessible to consciousness, the non-representational functions cannot be "read" in quite the same way. They can influence an audience and be felt without the audience being directly aware that these effects are linked to formal devices in the sign vehicle. Instead, it appears that the effects are part of the world that is represented. To disentangle these non-representational functions, it is necessary to analyze the formal devices a text employs and to hypothesize, on the basis of regularities that are discovered, the non-representational functions they fulfill.

The present analysis has endeavored to make accessible some of the formal devices operative in Weinberger's "U.S. Defense Strategy." These devices have various effects, all of which can be subsumed under the general function of maintaining and enhancing the power of Weinberger and the institutions he represents. Among the subfunctions that have been discussed are: (1) winning support for an expanded defense budget, (2) convincing the audience that the author has been doing something significant, (3) mapping the author's ideological alliances with other figures, (4) getting the audience to adopt the author's perspective, (5) making the text appear authoritative, and (6) serving as a "meta-text" to teach supporters how to argue the author's position.

It is difficult to imagine ways to assess the precise effect this particular text will have. It appeared in Foreign Affairs in the midst of a flurry of texts dealing with related issues, each having its own similar functions. The Weinberger article is part of a general textual battle. It represents a single salvo, the effects of which are only accessible through the outcome of the broader struggle -- for example, the actual funding levels for defense -- of which it is a part.

The impact of the Weinberger article in particular, however, is perhaps of less concern than the broader theoretical issue that is raised about the relationship between a chain of texts, linked by implicit intertextuality, and the non-textual world out of which the texts emerge and which they purport to represent. The significance of a particular text will depend on its position in and relationship to other texts in the chain, as well as upon the aesthetic effectiveness of its rhetorical design.

The broader issue, however, is the extent to which a textual chain obscures the comprehension of a reality by making relatively immediate concerns of power and prestige appear to inhere in that reality. The kind of analysis proposed here provides one particular perspective on the problem, but is itself inadequate to the larger task. It must be supplemented by (1) similar studies, which would permit greater clarity on the nature of the textual chain, (2) studies of the non-textual social space within which the texts are produced, and (3) scholarly studies of the real-world problems that the texts purport to represent. By such a procedure, it may prove possible to triangulate an insight into the text-world problem, as well as into the social and cultural roots of the problem of nuclear war itself.
Rhetoric of a War Chief

1. Nothing in the present analysis hinges upon Weinberger having himself actually written "U.S. Defense Strategy." The concern here is rather with the text as a formal sign vehicle, and with how it may be functioning given Weinberger as the represented author.


3. However, research into this problem is currently underway, along with preparation of another article on "The Social Space of Nuclear Discourse."  

4. By comparison, for instance, Foreign Policy has a total circulation of 25,000 and International Security a circulation of 5,800. The circulation of Time magazine, on the other hand, is listed as 4,237,962. These figures are from The Standard Periodical Directory, ninth edition, 1985-1986.

5. The category "audience" requires further study. Probably, for the Weinberger article, a distinction analogous to the hearer/overhearer one must be made. The "overhearer" group would include the Soviet government, with the article in this respect representing a sign of resolve. This problem has not been pursued further here.


7. The count here refers to the distinct "types," for example, Soviet Union, as opposed to "tokens," for example, the 115 distinct occurrences in this text of Soviet Union. The possible variations have to do with what is counted as a distinct "type." For example, in the present count, Soviet Union, Soviets, and the adjectival form Soviet are treated as of the same type. This is indicative of the general counting procedures. However, in the area of dates, the 1960's is distinguished from 1967 and 1983 is distinguished from November 1983. These decisions were made under the assumption that definite references to time allow for differing degrees of specificity. The principle is applied in the case of place names, e.g., Moscow is distinguished from Soviet Union. The overall conclusions will not be altered by minor variations on these counting procedures.

8. Of the remaining proper names, some refer to organizations or political groups (NATO, Department of Defense, Congress, Nazis), some to treaties or agreements (ABM Treaty, SALT, 1974 Protocol, 1971 Accidents Measures agreement), some to events (WWI and II, 1983 air war between Syria and Israel), one to a published work (The Federalist Papers), and one to a project (the Strategic Defense Initiative).

9. This particular kind of segmentation could be compared, for instance, to a travel guide (where definite references are to mountains, streets, historical sites, etc.) or even a strategic or tactical discourse that is regional in character, and which invades reference to rivers, mountains, areas of local populations, etc.

10. A third temporal reference is relevant to this goal as well, and this pertains to the tertiary prominence of "1967" and "1969s" within the text. This transform is not to do with the various categories in which the nuclear arsenal may be seen, but rather to the recent period, e.g., total number of weapons and megatonnage.

11. Former President Franklin Roosevelt and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev are referred to in variant ways.

12. Italicization of pronouns indicates reference to the sign vehicle type, i.e., the generic, while quotation marks indicate reference to the meaning of the pronoun.

13. It may be noted that in general reported discourse shades off into reported beliefs, which also plays a role in the Weinberger text, e.g., "Again, in Vietnam, failure to define a clear, achievable goal, and a belief that we could achieve what we wanted without a military victory, led to confusion, public frustration and even withdrawal." (p. 687).

14. The actual number depends on how a specific instance is counted. The procedure here treats as a single instance a number of separate sentences when two criteria are met: (1) the speaker/writer of the reported discourse is constant, and (2) the sentence in which the reported discourse occurs is contiguous. Thus, the sentences in the paragraph on p. 689, indefinite and general in nature ("Some critics will charge commitments both to strength and caution are inconsistent," etc.), count as a single instance.

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