

Consistency is Important in Decision Making Processes

By Byron A. Ellis - March 09, 2014



The recent Ukrainian upheaval is an interesting lesson in strategy. Often pundits and politicians do not analyze stimulus from a dynamic perspective, which leads to unintended outcomes.

When policymakers and the mainstream media analyze uprisings, wars, tight money, and so on, they often analyze outcomes from a static perspective. They do not take into consideration potential dynamic responses.

For instance, when they analyze demand, due to an increase in the minimum wage, often they visualize movements along a fixed demand curve and fail to account for the outward shift of the demand curve due to higher income and output, which leads to more and not fewer jobs.

The political stimulus also requires dynamic analysis. When governments use static analysis to support protesters around the globe that could help depose unfriendly democratically elected governments, it often leads to uncontrollable dynamic consequences.

In Syria, lack of dynamic analysis led to the influx of Islamists and a slow movement towards a fail state. In Ukraine, a lack of dynamic analysis failed to account for Russian interests and adverse responses.

In Iraq, an ill-advised invasion caused maiming, death, and untold continued suffering to US soldiers and Iraqi citizens. Similar outcomes await Afghanistan if peace between the local warring factions cannot be achieved.

Militarily strong nations often infringe on the territorial integrity of weaker nations. For instance, Israel grabs territories at will from Palestine without suffering any high cost or whisper of opposition from its Western allies, and Russia does likewise with Ukraine and other former Soviet states.

Unfriendly drones from militarily strong nations encroach and kill foreign citizens, whether they are innocent or not, and they do not claim that their actions are violations of the foreign country's territorial integrity or international laws. They consistently claim a right to self-defense.

The encroachment calculus for attacking militarily strong nations is quite different because they can respond in kind.

In principle, it is hard for the US to argue against Russia's encroachment on Ukrainian territory with any degree of credibility, because of its history of invasions: Panama, Grenada, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the continuing policies of drone strikes on sovereign territories.

Furthermore, the US sends mixed signals to the world. In 2011, it argued for a referendum to divide the oil-rich South Sudan from al Bashir's Sudan. Now it argues against Crimea's referendum because it wants a friendly Ukraine's control over the Crimean Peninsula.

The signal the US must send to the rest of the world is the concept of procedural justice. It is fairness within the decision-making process; and, it involves consistency, bias suppression, accuracy, representation, correctability, and ethicality.

When nations and political leaders fail to abide by rules of fairness and argue for a policy when it favors them and against it when it disfavors them, they lose worldwide credibility.

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