Preface

IT IS CUSTOMARY to say that a book “could not have been written” without the help and counsel of a particularly influential colleague or mentor. But this book literally could not, and would not, have been written without Michael Brecher, since it is part of an ambitious undertaking of which he is the progenitor in conception and the guiding spirit in execution. Were it not for his unexcelled powers of persuasion, I would never have been seduced into accepting an analytical challenge whose fascination is exceeded only by its complexity. In fact, Michael’s imprint upon this study is so strong that I am tempted *not* to extend to him the customary exoneration from its shortcomings. Why not make him share the blame?

But as attractive as that might seem, I have probably contrived to commit sins that are originally and uniquely mine, and for which I must take sole credit. So be it. I only hope that the end result does not fall *too* short of the high standard that Michael himself has set in the initial studies of the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) project.

The ICB project, and the place of this volume in it, are described in Chapter One. What remains here is to acknowledge and thank the others whose help has been instrumental. In the first place, I am grateful to the many participants in U.S. foreign policy decision-making who agreed to be interviewed and tried to give honest answers to questions that must have often appeared somewhat arcane. The cooperation of interviewees—and very few participants declined to be interviewed—was a pleasant surprise and source of encouragement which more than offset the almost total failure, despite extended efforts, to secure the release of meaningful government documents under the Freedom of Information Act.

Other scholars working on related studies have also been generous in exchanging ideas, suggesting sources, and sometimes making their own work available before publication. I would like to acknowledge, in particular, Shlomo Aronson, William Quandt, Bernard Reich, Nadav Safran, Steven Spiegel, and Raymond Tanter.

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The Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, through its general support of the ICB project, made this study and others possible. Such large-scale commitments to ambitious academic undertakings, expressed in generous financial backing, need to be noted in an age when they are increasingly rare.

I am also grateful to the Ford Foundation for financial assistance in conducting the interviews, and to the School of Advanced International Studies of Johns Hopkins University, and its Director, Robert Osgood, for the use of SAIS facilities during the summer of 1977, when the interviewing in Washington was carried out.

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Jihad Kassis, who served as my teaching and research assistant during most of the period of this book's gestation, was an extraordinarily strong source of support. He was, to begin with, a first-class researcher; and by the time the project was completed, he was more a colleague than an assistant. His own doctoral dissertation, which applies the ICB framework to a study of U.S. policy in the oil embargo of 1973-1974, nicely complements some of the work here on the 1973 crisis and is recommended to all students of the subject.

Finally, to the Window Co-op: *Baruch hashem, sof sof zeh nigr-mar.*

Alan Dowty
South Bend, June 1982