DUTY, HONOR… PARTY?
IDEOLOGY, INSTITUTIONS, AND THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE

A DISSERTATION
Submitted to the Department of Political Science
and the Committee on Graduate Studies
of Stanford University
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for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

In this dissertation, I argue that political ideology and domestic political institutions structure civil-military debates about how and when to use military force. Although previous studies of military influence typically have portrayed civil-military relations as a stand-off between conservative military officers and liberal civilians, this characterization ignores the significance of partisan differences in American politics and neglects the importance of American political institutions.

I develop an informational theory of military influence that accounts for these domestic factors and explains when and how senior military officers will influence presidential decisions about whether to use military force. I argue that divisions over political ideology, and not civil-military differences, routinely shape the most salient dimension of interaction between political leaders and senior members of the U.S. military. I also argue that domestic political institutions – political parties, national elections, congressional approval of military appointments, and bureaucratic hierarchy – lead to predictable patterns of convergence and divergence in the preferences of the president and his senior military advisors. My informational theory suggests that the resulting variation in preference alignment will have profound effects on whether presidents decide to use force to accomplish their foreign policy goals.

Using a multi-method research design, I find broad support for the primary claims of my informational theory. I show that there are large and significant differences in the foreign policy attitudes of Republicans and Democrats that hold both for military officers and for elite civilians. Moreover, when I condition on political ideology and partisan identification, differences between the attitudes of elite civilian leaders and senior military officers disappear; in other words, I find no evidence of a general civil-military gap. Nevertheless, the disproportionate number of conservative officers in the senior officer corps does lead to an asymmetry in the ability of presidents appoint senior officers who share their preferences. Using a new dataset that includes information in the political campaign contributions of 382 retired four-star generals
and admiral from 1977-2002, I show that Democratic presidents are likely to appoint liberal officers only when their co-partisans control the Senate. In contrast, Republican presidents almost always appoint conservative officers, though my qualitative analysis suggests that closer preference alignment occurs in cases when Republicans control the Senate.

I then demonstrate that the resulting patterns of civil-military preference alignment and divergence profoundly affect presidential decisions to use military force. Presidents from both parties are more likely to use military force when advised by military officers whom they appoint when their co-partisans control the Senate, though the effects are larger for Democratic administrations than for Republican administrations. I also introduce evidence from five historical case studies to provide external validity for my quantitative analysis and to explore private signaling and public dissent as mechanisms of military influence. Throughout each chapter of this dissertation, I also find clear evidence of a distinct partisan asymmetry; Democratic presidents face unique challenges when identifying, appointing, and dealing with senior military leaders.
To Kristen.
Preface and Acknowledgements

Just over four years ago, I received an email in Iraq from Colonel Ike Wilson in the Department of Social Sciences at the United States Military Academy. He already had selected me to attend graduate school and teach American Politics at West Point. Now, he was offering me the opportunity to have a third year to pursue a PhD instead of Masters Degree. At the time, an extra year with my wife and family – with a guarantee of no deployments – sounded like an excellent idea. And although the time with my family indeed has been sweet, if I had known what I was about to get myself into, I might be back in Iraq or Afghanistan today instead of in Palo Alto!

Of course, I jest. I am deeply thankful for the sacrifices of the men and women who are apart from their families and in harms way on their fourth and fifth deployments. Many of them are my soldiers, peers, and commanders. I am humbled to have such an amazing opportunity, and I hope that my experiences here at Stanford will equip me to better serve with them again in the future. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Colonel Wilson and to Colonel Mike Meese for providing me with this tremendous opportunity, and for supporting me throughout the process.

There are far too many people to thank individually for they help they have given me both before and during this process. My soldiers, teachers, mentors, friends, and family all have helped to prepare me to successfully complete a doctorate. The credit for this work belongs with them; any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies are no one’s fault but my own.

As a cadet, my professors in Sosh inspired me to want to follow their example and return to the Academy to develop future leaders for our Army. My love for the study of American politics began on my first day of class with Colonel Rob Gordon, and it has continued to this day. John Nagl, Paul Yingling, Bill Ostlund, Russ Howard, and Jennie Koch also took an active role in my development as a soldier-scholar, and supported me even when I did not deserve it. Don Snider sparked my interest in civil-
military relations. His love, support, and guidance have been instrumental in my development as an officer, as a scholar, and as a husband and father; I hope to emulate his example.

I also am indebted to a number of terrific mentors and officers who encouraged me to pursue a doctorate. General (ret.) Barry McCaffrey and Brigadier General H.R. McMaster both were instrumental in my decision to attend graduate school, and Stanford in particular. Colonels Patricia Frost and Eric Angeli helped me overcome the bureaucratic hurdles necessary to complete a successful command before returning to graduate school. Major Paulie Krattiger and Lieutenant Colonel John Henderson continue to mentor me, advising me on matters big and small.

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# Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 1
The ‘Civil-Military Gap’ and the Use of Force ....................................................................................... 5
The Argument ........................................................................................................................................ 8
Accounting for Political Parties in Civil-Military Relations ............................................................... 9
How Political Institutions Shape the Civil-Military Dialogue ............................................................ 11
Military Influence and the Use of Force ............................................................................................... 13
Plan of the Dissertation ....................................................................................................................... 16

Chapter 2. An Informational Theory of Military Influence ................................................................. 19
Theories of American Civil-Military Relations .................................................................................. 21
An Informational Theory of Military Influence .................................................................................. 26
Accounting for Political Parties in Civil-Military Relations ............................................................... 27
Elections, Appointments and Hierarchy: How Political Institutions Shape the
Civil-Military Dialogue ..................................................................................................................... 30
Military Influence on Presidential Decisions to Use Force ............................................................... 36
Summarizing the Theory ..................................................................................................................... 49

Chapter 3. The Democrat-Military Gap ................................................................................................. 51
The Gap in the Previous Studies of the Civil-Military Gap ................................................................. 53
Partisan Bias and the Civil-Military Gap ............................................................................................. 56
Hypothesis Development ..................................................................................................................... 58
Methods and Data ................................................................................................................................ 59
Dependent Variable ................................................................................................................................ 62
Key Independent Variables .................................................................................................................. 66
Control Variables .................................................................................................................................. 68
Empirical Findings: The Democrat-Military Gap ................................................................................. 69
Foreign Policy Attitudes and Priorities ............................................................................................... 69
Restrictions on the Use of Military Force ............................................................................................ 79
Economic and Social Values Issues ..................................................................................................... 83
Perceptions of Civilian Society and Military Culture ........................................................................ 86
What are the Causes of the Democrat-Military Gap? ....................................................................... 91
Opting In and Opting Out .................................................................................................................... 93
Is the Democrat-Military Gap Growing? ............................................................................................. 97
Conclusion ............................................................................................................................................. 100

Chapter 4. Duty, Honor, Party? The Politics of Military Appointments ............................................. 103
Synthetic Literature Review ................................................................................................................ 106
The Limited Pool: The Democrat-Military Gap ............................................................................... 111
A Model of the Military Appointment Process ................................................................................. 113
The Outcomes of the Nomination Process ......................................................................................... 116
Empirical Tests ..................................................................................................................................... 124
Qualitative Evidence and Illustrative Cases ....................................................................................... 134
Conclusion ........................................................................................................................................... 139

Chapter 5. Picking Fights: Appointments and the Use of Force ...................................................... 141
The Quantitative Use of Force Literature ........................................................................................... 143
Theory Review .............................................................................................................. 147
Hypothesis Development .......................................................................................... 149
Empirical Tests ......................................................................................................... 153
   The Frequency of Troop Deployments ................................................................. 153
   The Probability of Troop Deployments ................................................................. 167
Conclusion ............................................................................................................... 190

Chapter 6. Studies in Military Influence and the Use of Force ....................... 191
Laos, 1961 ................................................................................................................. 193
Laos, 1962 ................................................................................................................. 201
Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962 ..................................................................................... 207
EC-121 Crisis, 1969 .................................................................................................. 217
Gulf of Sidra, 1981 .................................................................................................... 226
Bosnia, 1992 ............................................................................................................. 238
Bosnia, 1993 ............................................................................................................. 247
Bosnia, 1994-1995 ................................................................................................... 250
Conclusion ............................................................................................................... 257

Chapter 7. Conclusion ............................................................................................ 259
Summary .................................................................................................................. 259
Limitations of My Approach and Findings ............................................................. 261
Normative Issues and Implications ........................................................................ 266
Areas for Future Research ...................................................................................... 272
A Final Note ............................................................................................................. 273

References .............................................................................................................. 275
List of Tables

Table 3.2: Ideological Identification of Senior Officers .......................................................... 56
Table 3.3: Party Identification in the 1998-99 TISS Survey .................................................. 60
Table 3.4: Ideological Self-Identification in the 1998-99 TISS Survey ................................. 61
Table 3.5: Civilian and Military Attitudes on the Militant Internationalism Scale............... 73
Table 3.6: Civilian and Military Attitudes on the Cooperative Intl. Scale ......................... 76
Table 3.7: Civilian and Military Attitudes on Realpolitik and Humanitarian Scales........... 77
Table 3.8: Civilian Officials Rather than Military Officers Should Have the Final Say on What Type of Military Force to Use (By Civ-Mil Category and Party ID) ........ 81
Table 3.9: In Wartime, Civilian Leaders Should Let the Military Take Over Running the War (Responses by Civil-Military Category and Party ID) ........................... 81
Table 3.10: Civilian and Military Attitudes on the Powell Doctrine and Use of Force Restrictions ........................................................................................................ 82
Table 3.11: Civilian and Military Attitudes on Economic and Social Issues ...................... 85
Table 3.12: The Decline of Traditional Values is Contributing the Breakdown of Our Society: Responses by Civil-Military Category and Party ID................................. 87
Table 3.13: The Military Gets More Respect Than it Deserves: Responses by Civil-Military Category and Party ID .......................................................... 88
Table 3.14: Summary of Findings on the Democrat-Military Gap .................................... 89
Table 3.15: Ideological Sorting, by Category .................................................................... 90
Table 3.16: Party ID of Army Officers ............................................................................. 93
Table 3.17: Political Ideology of Army Officers ............................................................... 94
Table 3.18: Party ID Projection for Senior Officers ............................................................ 96
Table 3.19: Political Ideology Projection for Senior Officers ............................................ 97
Table 4.1: Party ID: Military and Civilian Leaders in the FPLP Surveys, 1976-96........... 112
Table 4.2: Ideological Identification of Senior Officers .................................................... 112
Table 4.3: Contributions of US Four-Star Officers, 1977-2002 ...................................... 127
Table 4.4: Contributions of US Four-Star Officers, 1977 – 2002 .................................. 130
Table 4.5: Contributions of U.S. Four-Star Officers, 1993-2000 ................................... 132
Table 4.6: Contributions of U.S. Four-Star Officers, 1995-2000 (Clinton Under Divided Government) ................................................................. 134
Table 5.1: Frequency of Uses of Military Force, Including Background Controls .......... 159
Table 5.2: Frequency of Uses of Military Force, Including Pres. Fixed Effects .............. 165
Table 5.3: Distribution of Opportunities to Use Force by President ............................... 169
Table 5.4: Probability of a Military Response, Including Background Controls .......... 175
Table 5.6: Probability of a Military Response, Including Controls (Excl. Reagan) ....... 184
Table 5.7: Probability of a Military Response, Including Pres. FE (Excl. Reagan) ....... 185
List of Figures

Figure 3.1: Mean Score on the Militant Internationalism Scale by Civil-Military Category ................................................................. 70
Figure 3.2: Mean Score on the MI Scale by Civil-Military Category and Party ....... 71
Figure 3.3: Mean Score on the Cooperative Internationalism Scale by Civil-Military Category ................................................................. 74
Figure 3.4: Mean Score on the CI Scale by Civil-Military Category and Party ...... 75
Figure 3.5: Mean Score on Realpolitik Scale by Civ-Mil Category and Party ...... 78
Figure 3.6: Mean Score on Interventionist Scale by Civ-Mil Category and Party ...... 78
Figure 3.7: Mean Score on Powell Doctrine Scale by Civ-Mil Category and Party .... 80
Figure 3.8: Mean Score on Social Welfare Question by Civ-Mil Category and Party 84
Figure 3.9: Mean Score on Social Issues Scale by Civ-Mil Category and Party ...... 84
Figure 4.1: Appointment Regimes for Analysis ........................................ 115
Figure 4.2: Case 1 (Unified Democrat) ..................................................... 117
Figure 4.3: Case 2 (Divided Democrat) .................................................... 118
Figure 4.4: Case 3 (Unified Republican) ................................................... 118
Figure 4.5: Case 4 (Divided Republican) .................................................. 119
Figure 4.6: Summary of Hypotheses regarding the Preferences of Senior Officers .. 121
Figure 5.1: Relative Preference Alignment of the President and his Senior Military Advisors ........................................................................ 148
Figure 5.2: Examples of Uses of Force ...................................................... 152
Figure 5.3: JCS Appointments and the Use of Force .................................... 160
Figure 5.4: CJCS Category and the Use of Force ......................................... 162
Figure 5.5: JCS Appointments and the Use of Force (by President) ................. 166
Figure 5.6: Annual Opportunities to Use Force, 1949-2000 ......................... 170
Figure 5.7: Military Responses per Opportunity vs. PercentAppointment (by Party) ...... 173
Figure 5.8: Military Responses per Opportunity by CJCS Appointment Category ... 173
Figure 5.9: JCS Appointments and the Use of Force ....................................... 178
Figure 5.10: JCS Appointments and the Use of Force ..................................... 179
Figure 5.11: Military Responses per Opportunity vs. PercentAppointment (Reagan excluded) ................................................................. 182
Figure 5.12: Military Responses per Opportunity vs. CJCS Appointment Category (Reagan excluded) ......................................................... 183
Figure 5.13: Military Responses per Opportunity vs. PercentAppointment (by Pres.) ..... 187
Figure 5.14: Military Responses per Opportunity vs. CJCS Appointment Category (by Pres.) .... 187
Chapter 1

Introduction

“If there is one basic element in our Constitution, it is civilian control of the military.”
– President Harry Truman

“Let’s see who we’ve got here tonight. General Moseley, Air Force Chief of Staff. General Peter Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They still support Rumsfeld. Right, you guys aren’t retired yet? Right?”
– Comedian Stephen Colbert

Introduction

In the summer of 2006, seven retired U.S. military officers publicly spoke out against the Bush Administration and its war policies in what has become known as the “Revolt of the Generals.” Although their initial critique focused primarily on Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s leadership style, these officers quickly expanded their agenda to include substantive disagreements over the Administration’s Iraq policy (Margolick 2007). Within weeks, several of these officers openly questioned President Bush’s decision-making and leadership on the war in Iraq. Lieutenant General Gregory Newbold, for example, went so far as to publish an opinion piece in which he outlined the reasons “Why Iraq was a mistake” and argued that President Bush was culpable for the deteriorating situation in that country (Newbold 2006).

Many commentators and pundits quickly framed this dissent as an extension of a broader ‘civil-military’ conflict that they claimed had emerged even before the war began (Cloud and Schmitt 2006; Thompson and Duffy 2006; Duffy 2006). According to this narrative, the most prominent critics of the proposed military operation in Iraq shared one thing in common – military service (Ricks 2002; Graham 2002; Salinero

1 This description was used several times in the popular press in the spring and summer of 2006, but it became widespread after the former Army Chief of Military History published an article with the same name. Brigadier General John S. Brown (2006), “The Revolt of the Generals,” Army 56: p. 110-112.
In contrast, the characteristic that distinguished the supporters of the Iraq mission within the Administration was their lack of military experience. Consequently, these non-veteran civilian hawks faced off against the reluctant warriors occupying the senior ranks of the military in a high-stakes policy debate about the use of military force. In this view, the ‘Revolt of the Generals’ simply was an extension of these earlier policy disagreements, once again highlighting the stark civil-military divide.

Although the claim that these Iraq policy debates broke along civil-military lines was simple and appealing to members of the media looking for a storyline, it is not clear that it was accurate. It is true, of course, that several prominent critics of President Bush’s decision to invade Iraq were veterans or retired military officers; however, many other veterans and military officers did express support for the operation (McGregor 2002). The only active duty officer who publicly raised any objections to President Bush’s Iraq policy was Army Chief of Staff General Eric Shinseki, a holdover from the Clinton administration whom President Obama later appointed as his Secretary for Veterans’ Affairs. Bush’s own appointees to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) all supported the plan publicly, and there is little evidence that any of them raised serious doubts in private (Woodward 2004; Franks 2004; Ricks 2006; Myers, Kohn, Owens, Korb, and Desch 2007). Surveys at the time also found that more than two-thirds of military officers approved of the decision to invade Iraq, with even higher levels of support among senior officers (Thompson and Duffy 2006; Military Times 2003, 2004). Additionally, many non-veteran political leaders voiced concerns about the wisdom of initiating the conflict while most veteran legislators – such as Senator John McCain – vocally supported the decision to use force (McGregor 2002). In fact, several studies have confirmed that veterans in Congress were no more likely

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2 Both Woodward and Ricks, however, do highlight concerns raised by Secretary of State Colin Powell and cite higher initial troop estimates given by CENTCOM commander General Tommy Franks. Both Powell and Franks later publicly supported the operation and Franks subsequently lowered the troop requirements. Moreover, Franks reportedly became explosively angry at “those Title X mother-fuckers” (referring to the members of the JCS) when Shinseki raised his concerns about troop levels.
to vote to authorize force in Iraq than were non-veterans (Price 2008). Instead, the authorization votes in the House and Senate broke primarily along partisan lines.³

Political ideology also seemed to play a role in the ‘Revolt of the Generals’ in 2006 though it was somewhat less conspicuous. Although several commentators implied that the views of the vocal generals were representative of those still serving on active duty, the officers who spoke out were, in fact, only a small fraction of the thousands of retired admirals and generals. As even comedian Stephen Colbert noted during his White House Corrеспondents’ Dinner Speech, many officers on active duty still backed the Administration. For example, Commander of the Army’s 18th Airborne Corps, Lieutenant General John Vines stated, “I support my Secretary of Defense.” Additionally, other retired generals – some of whom had served at the highest levels of the Bush Administration during the initial phases of Iraq like Tommy Franks and Jack Keane – publicly defended President Bush and his policies, though these statements rarely warranted headlines (Cloud and Schmitt 2006).

One of the ‘Revolt’ generals – Anthony Zinni – was a Clinton appointee who already had left the military before President Bush even took office. The other officers who spoke out, with the exception of Major General John Batiste, either were passed over for promotion or forced to retire, or they left because they anticipated that they would face a similar fate (Jaffe 2006; Duffy 2006). Although they initially limited their criticism to the question of Rumsfeld’s competence, these officers quickly became involved in partisan politics. CBS News fired Batiste from his position as a military consultant because of his participation in ads targeting President Bush. Zinni and four

³ The following numbers are reported from Price (2008). Among Republicans in the House of Representatives, 92 percent of non-veterans (151/164) and 92 percent of veterans (80/87) voted to authorize the use of force in Iraq by supporting Joint Resolution 114. Among Democrats, 34 percent of non-veterans (46/137) voted to authorize the use of force compared to 45 percent of veterans (19/41). In the Senate, 96 percent of Republican non-veterans (27/28) voted for J.R. 114 compared to 95 percent (21/22) of Republican veterans. Among Senate Democrats, 56 percent of non-veterans (19/34) voted to authorize the use of force compared to 63 percent of veterans (10/16).
of the other officers either endorsed Democratic candidates for Senate, made
campaign contributions to Democratic causes, or both.  

Even after President Bush replaced Rumsfeld as the Secretary of Defense in late 2006,
many of these officers continued to be politically active by endorsing and advising
potential Democratic presidential nominees.  

At the same time, however, a large group
of retired military officers also lined up to support Republican nominee John McCain.
Consequently, members of both political parties were able to point to military leaders
who supported their policy positions. Thus, despite popular references to the civil-
military divide regarding U.S. foreign policy and the issue of Iraq in particular, senior
and retired military officers remained divided amongst themselves along largely
partisan lines.

In this dissertation, I explore how ideology and political institutions structure
American civil-military relations. I argue that the Iraq debate is not exceptional.
Contrary to the conventional wisdom that there is a distinct civil-military gap about
the use of force, I instead demonstrate that divisions over political ideology, and not
civil-military differences, routinely shape the most salient dimension of interaction
between political leaders and senior members of the U.S. military. Nevertheless, the
vast majority of senior officers in the U.S. military identify themselves as both
conservative and Republican. The officer corps is not governed by majority rule,
however; instead, individual officers advise presidents from one of the two major
political parties. Consequently, the domestic political institutions that determine which
military officers advise which civilians are of particular importance.

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4 CBS Press Release, “CBS News Asks Batiste to Step Down as a Consultant,” accessed online at
supported a number of different Democratic candidates and causes during the 2006 and 2008 campaign
season. For one example, see http://www.dailykos.com/story/2006/05/03/207184/-Webb-Endorsed-by-
Murtha.-Zinni.-Petersen.-Newbold.
5 Officers from this group advised John Edwards, Hillary Clinton, and Barack Obama at different points
in the campaign. Major General Paul Eaton was especially active, endorsing and serving as a regular
advisor to Hillary Clinton. For a while, many believed that President Obama was seriously considering
asking Anthony Zinni to be his Vice President.
I argue that the structure of these specific American political institutions – political parties, national elections, Senate approval of senior military appointments, and bureaucratic hierarchy – lead to predictable patterns of convergence and divergence in the preferences of the Commander-in-Chief and his senior military advisors. As was the case during the Iraq war, neither the officers selected to serve as members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) nor the officers forced into early retirement are selected by chance. Political leaders actively try to identify military officers who share their beliefs about how to use military force in support of foreign policy goals, and they attempt to appoint such officers to positions of influence within the U.S. military. Since senior military appointments occur at regular intervals and require Senate confirmation, the president does not always have military advisors that share his preferences about the use of military force.

The resulting variation in the ideological alignment of presidents and their senior military advisors has profound effects on whether presidents decide to use force to accomplish their foreign policy goals. In general, presidents are more likely to appoint officers who share their preferences when their co-partisans control the Senate, although Republican presidents still fare reasonably well even when they face a Democratic-controlled Senate. Consequently, I also find that presidents are more likely to use force when advised by members of the JCS who share their preferences; once again, however, this effect is stronger for Democratic presidents than for Republican presidents.

The ‘Civil-Military Gap’ and the Use of Force

From a scholarly perspective, this dissertation fits into a large body of research on the influence of domestic political institutions on international outcomes. There long has been a debate about the relative importance of international and domestic factors in foreign policy, but recent work increasingly has begun to focus on when, how, and why domestic institutions matter (Schultz, forthcoming). Most of the work in this literature has been comparative in nature, focusing primarily on regime type (Russett 1994). Examinations of the military in this literature usually treat it as an interest
group that benefits from conflict (Snyder 1991). Most of the literature emphasizes that the military has influence through leaders’ dependence on it to stay in power (Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 2005), through its ability to act independently of civilian control (Sechser 2004), or through direct rule in military dictatorships (Lai and Reiter 2000). Although early work in the bureaucratic politics literature (Allison 1971) mentioned the importance of policy advice, subsequent scholars have never systematized its effects. This dissertation contributes to this literature by exploring the impact of military advice on decisions to use military force.

Of course, I also am not the first scholar to examine whether or how senior military officers can influence decisions regarding the use of force. A number of other scholars have looked closely at this issue. Beginning with Huntington’s claim that there is a ‘conservative military mind,’ however, previous scholars of American civil-military relations have assumed that there are important differences between civilian and military preferences regarding the use of military force (Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960; Betts 1977; Petraeus 1987; Feaver 2003; Feaver and Gelpi 2004). According to the traditional narrative, ‘liberal’ civilian leaders often are more willing to use military force to accomplish political goals than are pragmatic military leaders. Because military leaders most directly bear the costs of war, they only want to use force as a last resort. Moreover, even when military force is deemed necessary, these reluctant warriors want to employ their resources in an overwhelming fashion to achieve a decisive victory as quickly as possible. In the words of Peter Feaver and Christopher Gelpi, there is a “basic civil-military divide on how force should be integrated into American foreign policy.”

The scholarly literature on military influence and the use of force also seems to confirm this general view of civil-military conflict. Betts (1977) and Petraeus (1987), for example, both found that unified military opposition was likely to persuade the president not to initiate a potential military operation during the Cold War, though neither scholar explained what factors created this military consensus. Similarly,

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6 Feaver and Gelpi (2004), p. 3.
Feaver showed that military preferences prevailed over civilian preferences on use of force decisions in more than 20 percent of the cases he examined between 1945 and 1989, noting that the military always acted to restrain military action. He did not identify any cases in which senior military officers were able to force the president to deploy troops when he did not already want to do so. Additionally, a number of scholars have suggested that these trends have continued, or even increased, since the end of the Cold War, citing examples such as Bosnia, Rwanda, and the 2003 Iraq war (Kohn 1994; Weigley 2001; Feaver 2003; Desch 2007).

In addition to this support in the scholarly literature, the notion of a fundamental civil-military divide also has gained traction in the popular media. Reports persist that post-Cold War civil-military relations have been characterized by repeated disputes between civilian leaders who want to use force and military advisors who are reluctant to do so (Mandelbaum 1996; Dowd 2002; Graham 2002; Milbank 2002; Ricks 2002; Mackey 2010). In recent years, discussions of an underlying civil-military gap among foreign policy elites have become commonplace.

Although this broad characterization of American foreign policy debates as a struggle between a group of liberal civilians and a homogenous military officer corps is simple and appealing, it fails to account for other important domestic political factors. Rarely is there a unified ‘civilian’ position on foreign policy issues. For example, even if we were to concede that there is, in fact, a conservative military mind, previous scholarship has shown that there often are significant foreign policy differences across parties (Nie with Anderson 1974; Wittkopf 1990; Gaines et al 2007; Berinsky 2007; Howell and Kriner 2007). In the American political system, political parties help to structure foreign policy debates primarily along ideological lines. Since the ‘military’ does not give advice to an undifferentiated mass of ‘civilians,’ one might expect civil-military relations to vary depending on which party controls the White House, the Congress, or both.

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7 Feaver (2003) identifies an incomplete list of 29 separate decisions to use force during the Cold War and argues that military preferences prevailed in 6 of these cases (21 percent of the time).
Traditional accounts of civil-military relations also assume, however, that there is a single military position on all foreign policy issues. This generalization also may be misleading. Although the vast majority of senior officers identify themselves as conservative Republicans, there is at least some ideological variation within the military. A small number of senior officers do, in fact, identify themselves as moderate independents or moderate Democrats. Consequently, attempts to compare civilian and military attitudes without accounting for variation within these groups may obscure important issues and confound our analysis of civil-military relations.

Since individual officers advise the president on decisions regarding the use of force, political leaders have an incentive to try to identify and appoint senior military officers whose political preferences are closest to their own. Because of the large number of conservatives in the senior ranks of the military, however, this is easier for Republicans than for Democrats. In either case, the quality of information and the subsequent decision-making process is different for presidents depending on whether or not they are advised by officers who share their preferences. Nevertheless, previous accounts of civil-military relations and military influence on use of force decisions largely ignore the potential importance of these domestic political factors. In this dissertation, I attempt to fill the gap in this literature by examining the influence that senior military officers have on use of force decisions while also accounting for the effects of political ideology and domestic political institutions.

The Argument

I begin with the observation that the ‘military’ does not give advice to an undifferentiated mass of ‘civilians.’ Instead, particular political leaders are selected through a process of national elections and particular military advisors are chosen through a formal appointment process. Subsequently, the president and individual legislators rely on senior military advisors to provide them with important information that they use to formulate national security goals. Since these officers possess certain informational advantages over the president, I argue that it matters a great deal which
particular officers advise him. My central argument is that political institutions determine how closely the preferences of military advisors will align with the presidents they serve. This preference alignment then influences policy decisions. Presidents are more likely to use force when military officers who share their preferences advise them.

There are three components to my argument. First, I present a micro-level explanation of how political parties structure the foreign policy attitudes of individual civilian and military leaders. Next, I describe how U.S. political institutions determine which particular leaders will be placed in positions that enable them to influence use of force decisions and I suggest particular patterns that will result. I conclude by explaining how these ideological and institutional factors have real and significant policy consequences.

**Accounting for Political Parties in Civil-Military Relations**

The politics of American foreign policy is partisan politics. In other words, foreign policy preferences vary across parties, not across civil-military categories. In contrast with the civil-military gap hypothesis, I argue that partisan identification explains the foreign policy attitudes of senior military officers as well as those of civilian elites. Although there are exceptions, of course, I argue that Democrats and Republicans – regardless of whether they have served in the military – generally have very different beliefs about how and when military force should be used to support U.S. foreign policy.

Republicans are likely to embrace a worldview that previous scholars have identified as Militant Internationalism (Wittkopf 1990; Holsti 1998, 2001). In other words, they typically believe that the international system is violent, dangerous and conflictual. Consequently, they think that, when diplomatic efforts fail, the U.S. must be prepared to use overwhelming military force to fundamentally change the status of underlying political problems. In contrast, Democrats are far more likely to be Cooperative Internationalists. According to this worldview, international cooperation and stability
are possible with the help of international institutions and robust diplomatic efforts. Instead of using military force as part of an attempt to unilaterally impose their preferred political solutions, Cooperative Internationalists believe in using military force to supplement diplomatic efforts as a way to achieve negotiated settlements.

By not paying significant attention to these broader partisan differences when studying civilian and military attitudes, previous scholars have mischaracterized the nature and causes of the existing opinion gap. In Chapter 3, I present survey evidence to show that the civil-military gap described in the extant literature represents a classic case of omitted variable bias. Consistent with previous behavioral research, I present evidence of significant variation in the foreign policy attitudes of elite civilians that breaks primarily along partisan lines. Moreover, I find no evidence to suggest that military service shapes military officers’ foreign policy attitudes.

I do, however, find evidence of a distinct partisan asymmetry. Among Republican elites, there are no significant differences between the foreign policy beliefs of elite civilians and senior military officers; however, among Democrats, there are considerable differences. The attitudes of Democratic military officers are more moderate than Democratic civilian elites, though they are still quite different than the attitudes of officers who identify themselves as Republicans. This attitudinal gap is primarily the result of ideological differences driven by selection processes into, and out of, the officer corps; virtually all the Democrats in the senior ranks of the military describe themselves as moderate Democrats while Democratic civilian elites consist of both liberals and moderates. Liberal Democrats join the military at very low rates, however, and the few that do join leave at relatively high rates.

As a result, the vast majority of the officers in the senior ranks of the U.S. military identify themselves as conservative Republicans. The officer corps clearly is not a democracy, however. Senior military officers do not gather together to confer before presenting the most popular military point of view to an assembled group of civilian leaders. Instead, individual officers sit in a room and offer advice to a particular
president from one of the two major political parties. As a result, the domestic political institutions that determine which military officers and which civilian leaders will be in the position to influence use of force decisions are of particular importance.

**How Political Institutions Shape the Civil-Military Dialogue**

Domestic political institutions determine how closely the foreign policy preferences of the president and his senior military advisors will be aligned. American voters select legislators and the president from each of the two political parties through national elections. The president then appoints his senior military advisors, with the advice and consent of the Senate, from a limited pool of qualified military officers in accordance with U.S. statutes at fixed intervals of time. I argue that this set of domestic institutions leads to predictable patterns of convergence and divergence in the preferences of the president and the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

In the U.S., the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the six regional combatant commanders are the primary military advisors to the president. As a result, the Chairman and – to a lesser extent – the other eleven officers directly provide the president with critical information that he uses when he decides whether or not to deploy military forces overseas. The president appoints each of these officers with the “advice and consent” of the Senate. Unlike other senior bureaucratic nominees, however, four-star military appointees must come from a limited pool of qualified military officers who meet specific qualifications that are articulated in U.S. statutes.

I argue that these two factors – the requirement for Senate approval and the limited pool of available officers – impose constraints on the president’s ability to appoint military advisors who share his preferences. The main argument on this point is developed through a formal model in Chapter 4. As I explain in greater detail in that chapter, presidents are most likely to appoint officers who share their foreign policy preferences when they appoint these officers during periods when the president’s co-partisans control the Senate. Under such circumstances, a president from either party can nominate the available officer whose preferences are closest to his own. However,
because of the small number of liberal candidates available in the pool of qualified officers, Democratic presidents still may fail to find an officer whose preferences are aligned completely with his own.

When the president faces a Senate controlled by the opposition party, however, he will be more constrained. A long and contentious nomination process or a failed confirmation can be time-consuming, humiliating, and politically costly to the president. Consequently, he has an incentive to anticipate potential Senate opposition when selecting his proposed candidates. As a result, the president is likely to nominate the military’s establishment pick in an attempt to avoid these costs. Since the vast majority of available officers are conservative, it is, nevertheless, more likely that the preferences of the establishment pick will be more closely aligned with those of a Republican president than with those of a Democratic president.

In Chapter 4, I provide quantitative evidence that presidents are, in fact, more likely to ‘ politicize’ military appointment during periods of unified government. I test these predictions using a new dataset that includes information on the political campaign contributions of 382 retired four-star general officers and admirals from 1977-2002. Consistent with my expectations, I find that Republican presidents are very successful in appointing conservative officers under both unified and divided government. However, Democratic presidents are much more likely to appoint liberal officers when Democrats control the Senate, especially for the most important appointments.

Although a president can use the appointment process to shape the preferences of his senior military advisors, he faces institutional constraints on when he can do so. All four-stars officers are appointed for fixed terms that do not align with electoral transitions. The staggered nature of these appointments thus guarantees that senior officers will serve under multiple presidential terms, if not multiple administrations. Presidents from both parties will receive advice from senior officers whom they did not appoint for significant portions of their administrations, sometimes for as long as two years. Consequently, a president cannot always count on having senior military
advisors who share his preferences about how and when to use military force. Nevertheless, this set of political institutions leads to predictable patterns of preference alignment and divergence. In general, presidents are most likely to appoint officers who share their preferences when their co-partisans control the Senate; moreover, presidents are least likely to be advised by officers who share their preferences when they inherit these officers from a previous administration of the opposite party.

**Military Influence and the Use of Force**

Senior military leaders can use their private information about the potential costs and consequences of military operations strategically to influence presidential decisions about whether or not to use military force. As a result, I argue that these predictable patterns of preference alignment have real policy consequences. A president who is advised by officers who do not share his preferences is less likely to use force than a president who is advised by officers who do share his preferences. I argue that senior military advisors can use two mechanisms – private signaling and public dissent – to attempt to dissuade the president from using military force.

**Private Signaling**

When addressing an international crisis, the president makes his decision about whether or not to use military force in the face of uncertainty about the consequences of his policy choice. Since he does not know the precise effects of the military policies he is considering, the president – and other policymakers – must infer whether military force can accomplish his desired goals at acceptable cost based on the advice of military officers who possess private information about the situation. Thus, although military expertise can provide benefits through governmental specialization, it also can provide senior military advisors with opportunities to strategically influence policy decisions.

I argue that the more similar military and presidential preferences are, the more informative the military’s signals will be to the president (Crawford and Sobel 1982). When military and presidential preferences are closely aligned, military advisors will
reveal their private information completely and accurately. In these cases, the
president will follow the advice of his senior officers, using military force only when
they signal that using force will be better than the status quo. When the president’s
senior military advisors do not share his goals, however, they instead are likely to
withhold or misrepresent their private information about the consequences of military
action. Except in cases where the president holds a high prior belief that military will
succeed, he will be less likely to intervene, ceteris paribus. Embarking on potentially
costly military ventures with unreliable information carries great risk for the
Commander-in-Chief.

Public Dissent
In addition to sending private signals, military officers also can utilize external
strategies to try to dissuade the president from using force (Feaver 2003; Wong and
Lovelace 2007; Brooks 2009). When senior military advisors believe that the president
is inclined to deploy troops even in the face of their private opposition, they also may
go outside the Administration, using public dissent in order to increase the president’s
domestic political costs of going to war.

Because of their informational advantages, these officers may be able to use their
private information to help structure the policy debate in the public sphere. Either by
sharing information with members of Congress or retired officers who share their
policy preferences, leaking information to the press, or, less frequently, by making
direct public appeals, senior military officers can potentially widen the scope of debate
surrounding a given operation, breaking down political consensus and raising the
political costs of using force. As a result, the possibility of public dissent by senior
military officers serves to reinforce the status quo, making it less likely that a president
will use military force when officers who don’t share his preferences advise him.
When the military officers advising a president share his preferences, however, public
dissent will be less likely. Instead, the president will be likely to follow the advice and
signals offered to him in private.
The Partisan Asymmetry

Efforts by senior military leaders to block military action are likely to be more effective against Democratic presidents than Republican presidents for two reasons, however. First, the large number of conservative military officers available in the senior officer corps makes it easier for Republican presidents to identify at least some senior officers who share their preferences, even during transitions between administrations. It can be extremely difficult for Democratic presidents to find enough like-minded officers to fill all senior military posts. In contrast, a Republican president does not have to scour the military to find conservative officers who share his preferences. Consequently, a Democratic president who assumes office is likely to find that none of the members of the JCS or his other senior military commanders share his preferences.

Second, public dissent also may be more effective when used against a Democratic President. Since the American electorate historically has viewed the Democratic Party as weak on national security issues (Petrocik 1996; Petrocik, Benoit, and Hansen 2003-2004), public conflicts between the president and the military may only serve to exacerbate this Democratic electoral weakness. In contrast, public military dissent should be less effective when a Republican is in office. Moreover, Democratic legislators may be less likely to target a Republican President on military or defense issues than would Republican legislators. Without clear evidence of incompetence, Democratic attacks on a Republican President who is considering the use of military force could later backfire and reinforce perceptions of Democrats as weak or indecisive on national security issues. Consequently, at least some forms of military dissent are likely to be less effective in blocking a Republican president from taking action.

For both Democratic and Republican presidents, however, my theory suggests that a president who is advised by officers who do not share his preferences is less likely to use force than a president who is advised by officers who do share his preferences.
Nevertheless, the size of the effect should be larger for Democratic presidents than for Republican presidents.

In Chapter 5, I present evidence consistent with these claims using two data sets covering U.S. military responses from 1949 to 2004 that include information on roughly 2300 international crises. I do, in fact, find an asymmetric effect. I estimate that, holding everything else constant, a Democratic president who has appointed all five members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is approximately twice as likely to use military force to respond to an international opportunity than he would if he had not appointed any of these officers. A Republican president, on the other hand, is only 20 percent more likely to do so, though the effects are slightly larger when I exclude data from the Reagan Administration. Moreover, there is evidence from historical cases that private signaling and public dissent induced caution in presidents who were considering the use of force. In Chapter 6, I examine five such cases: the Laotian Crisis (1961-1962), the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), the EC-121 spy plane shoot-down near North Korea (1969), the first Gulf of Sidra incident (1981), and the Bosnian crisis (1992-1995). These cases all highlighted the fact that divisions over political ideology, and not civil-military differences, shaped the most salient dimension of interaction between political leaders and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. There also is considerable evidence that presidents often must invest significant effort to identify and appoint military officers who share their beliefs about international politics.

Plan of the Dissertation
This dissertation proceeds as follows. In Chapter 2, I develop an informational theory of military influence. I begin with a brief review the existing literature on American civil-military relations and foreign policy decision-making that is focused on identifying gaps in the existing literature. I then develop a theory that fills these gaps

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8 In the aggregate, my theory does not explain use of force trends during the Reagan Administration well.
and explains when, how, and why senior military officers will affect presidential decisions regarding the use of force.

In Chapter 3, I draw on the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) opinion data to examine the individual-level survey responses of civilian and military elites. I explore answers respondents gave to a battery of policy questions about how and when to use military force as well as about other social, economic, and cultural issues. My analysis suggests that the primary divisions among elites with respect to their attitudes about American foreign policy are not civil-military divisions; instead, a clear split exists along ideological lines. I then provide evidence that differences between civilian and military Democrats result from selection processes into, and out of, the military, and not from socialization processes.

The individual level analysis in Chapter 3 sets the stage for Chapter 4. In this chapter, I explore how the ideological composition of the officer corps and domestic political institutions determine which officers political leaders will select as four-star officers in the U.S. military. First, I develop a formal model of the general officer appointment process. It suggests that presidents will be more likely to ‘politicize’ the military appointment process during periods of unified government. I then test these predictions using a new dataset that includes information on the political campaign contributions of 382 retired four-star general officers and admirals from 1977-2002. The data show that Democratic presidents are likely to appoint liberal officers only when their co-partisans control the Senate. In contrast, Republican presidents almost always appoint conservative officers, though my qualitative analysis suggests that closer preference alignment occurs in cases when Republicans control the Senate.

In Chapter 5, I turn to the central task of assessing whether the appointment of general officers actually matters in shaping foreign policy. I draw on two different datasets to examine whether preference alignment between a president and his generals affects his propensity to authorize the use of military force. Because a president is more likely to appoint officers who share his preferences during periods of unified government, I use
the percentage of the Joint Chiefs appointed under unified government as a proxy for preference alignment. I also utilize a series of variables that identify whether the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) was appointed under unified government, appointed under divided government, or inherited from a previous administration. Using these measures, I assess the impact of variation in preference alignment on the president’s propensity to use military force from 1949-2004 using two updated datasets. I first test whether these variables are correlated with quarterly uses of force in the aggregate. Then, I examine the relationship between my independent variables and the probability that a president will respond militarily when facing an international crisis. As noted there, the data show that presidents from both parties are more likely to use military force when advised by military officers whom they appoint when their co-partisans control the Senate, though the effects are larger for Democratic administrations than for Republican administrations.

In Chapter 6, I supplement my quantitative tests with a more nuanced series of qualitative analyses. I examine in detail a handful of important presidential decisions about the deployment of military capabilities during the Joint Chiefs era. I analyze five significant American foreign policy crises from the last fifty years and examine the role that senior military officers played during the debate leading up to the president’s final decision. These cases illustrate what it looks like for military officers to use their information strategically during a real world foreign policy crisis, highlighting the messy and sometimes complicated tactics that my quantitative tests are not designed to capture.

I conclude the dissertation with a summary of my findings and a discussion of the limitations of this study, its normative and policy implications, and avenues for future research. I suggest that my findings raise interesting questions that constitute a vibrant inter-disciplinary research agenda for the future study of the domestic politics of American foreign policy and civil-military relations.
Chapter 2

An Informational Theory of Military Influence

“The first advice I am going to give my successor is to watch the generals and to avoid
the feeling that just because they were military men their opinions on matters were
worth a damn.”
– President John F. Kennedy

“It is the merit of a general to impart good news, and to conceal the truth.”
– Sophocles

Introduction
Senior military officers routinely advise political leaders on important decisions
related to national security. In doing so, these officers provide civilian leaders with
critical information that they use to formulate policy goals. The development of
military expertise undoubtedly pays a dividend and helps increase national security;
nevertheless, it also can provide military leaders with opportunities to use their private
information strategically to influence the decisions of civilian policymakers. This
chapter develops an informational theory of when, how and why they are likely to do
so.

Previous studies of civil-military relations have pitted the preferences of a
homogeneous military against those of its civilian masters. This characterization,
however, ignores the significance of partisan differences in American politics and
neglects the importance of American political institutions. In contrast, my theory is
institutional in nature. I argue instead that, if we hope to better understand the effects
of military advice, we must account for the role that parties, elections and military
appointments play in shaping the civil-military dialogue.
Specifically, I argue that these institutions play a significant role in determining how closely the preferences of military leaders will be aligned with those of the civilian policymakers whom they advise. Citizens choose their legislators and the president from one of the two major political parties through a system of national elections. The president, with the advice and consent of the Senate, then selects his senior military advisors from a restricted pool of potential military officers in accordance with a set of laws that establish the timing and criteria for officer appointments. My theory predicts that this set of institutions will lead to predictable patterns of convergence and divergence in the preferences of the Commander-in-Chief and his senior military advisors. In general, a president is more likely to get military advisors who share his preferences when he appoints them during periods of unified government.

I further show how military advice will influence presidential decisions about whether to use military force depending on these patterns of preference alignment and divergence. My central argument is that variation in the preference alignment of the president and his senior military advisors affects whether the president considers the information he receives from the military to be reliable. Consistent with the broader signaling literature (Spence 1973, Crawford and Sobel 1982, Cho and Kreps 1987, Krehbiel 1992), I argue that the more similar military and presidential preferences are, the more informative the military’s signals will be to the president. When the president believes the military’s signal to be informative, he is more likely to follow military advice regarding foreign policy. However, if the president believes the military’s signal is uninformative, he will be less likely to use force, ceteris paribus. Embarking on potentially costly military ventures with unreliable information carries great risk for the chief executive.

I also extend the previous work of other scholars (Feaver 2003, Brooks 2009) who have specified additional ‘external’ strategies – mobilizing members of Congress and making public appeals – that military advisors may employ to influence presidential decisions. In particular, I argue that military officers who are not appointed by the president will be more likely to employ these inherently political strategies. I then
show how these strategies reinforce the effects of unreliable information, making presidents less likely to use military force when officers who do not share their foreign policy preferences advise them.

In many other countries, especially non-democracies, the military may have other tools to influence policy, including the direct use of violence or the threat of a coup. Consistent with other explanations of U.S. civil-military relations, my theory rests on the assumption that senior military officers view these tools as unavailable, either because of the existing incentive structure or because of strong professional norms (Huntington 1957, Feaver 2003, Golby 2011). My theory shows how, even under more restrictive conditions, senior military officers still can influence the policy choices of elected civilian leaders.

This chapter proceeds as follows. I briefly review the extant literature on American civil-military relations and military influence in foreign policy decision-making. In doing so, I identify several gaps in the existing literature. Next, I develop an informational theory of military influence that fills these gaps. I do so in three steps. First, I establish the role that political parties play in structuring civilian and military attitudes regarding the use of force. Next, I outline how presidential elections, senior military appointments, and the bureaucratic hierarchy lead to patterns of convergence and divergence in presidential and military preferences. Finally, I identify two potential mechanisms of military influence—internal signaling and public dissent—and I explain how both of these mechanisms influence presidential decisions about whether to use military force. I conclude with a summary of my informational theory.

**Theories of American Civil-Military Relations**

The most enduring work on democratic civil-military relations is Huntington’s *The Soldier and the State* (1957). According to Huntington, effective models of civil-military relations rely on a form of ‘objective control’ that separates the political and military spheres. Under this model, political leaders achieve civilian control by maximizing military professionalism. Although civilian leaders still reign supreme
over political affairs, Huntington argues that civilians should defer to professional military leaders on purely military matters. Thus, civilians control the decision to use force, but they should not interfere with the military on questions involving strategy, tactics or logistics. Although many of Huntington’s arguments are closely tied to normative claims about what civil-military relations should be like, they rest on the positivist claim that these prescriptions, if followed, will lead to effective national security policies.

Over the last fifty years, Huntington’s model has become so pervasive that it is often referred to as the ‘normal theory of civil-military relations.’ Nevertheless, his claims about the centrality of ‘objective control’ have not gone unchallenged. Janowitz (1960) and Cohen (2002), for example, both argue that the political and military spheres are not nearly so distinct and separable as Huntington claims them to be. Political and military issues often overlap significantly, and policy goals often must conform to what is militarily practicable. A president’s decision about whether to go to war often depends on the projected costs of the conflict or on the perceived likelihood that a proposed military operation will, in fact, succeed. In most cases, however, the president’s primary cost estimates and operational assessments come directly from his senior military advisors.

Huntington’s analysis also focused entirely on differences between civilians and the military, ignoring the possibility of preference divergence within these groups. He claimed that there is a conservative, ‘military mind,’ and almost all scholars since have analyzed American civil-military relations primarily as a struggle between a homogeneous group of civilian leaders and a unified military bureaucracy. This

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9 Huntington contrasts his preferred model of ‘objective’ control with what he refers to as ‘subjective’ control. According to Huntington, subjective control is the maximizing of the power of civilian groups in relation to the military. By interfering with and weakening the military, civilians can assert their control over the military. Whereas methods of subjective control rely on military involvement in “institutional, class, and constitutional politics,” objective control depends on military autonomy.

10 As a result, Cohen argues that effective civilian leaders in wartime must intimately involve themselves in war plans by questioning and prodding their military officers. Cohen also recognizes the importance of selecting officers who share the president’s preferences. See, for example, his discussion of Lincoln’s military appointments and the consequences of his choice to appoint General Ulysses S. Grant.
approach has one critical flaw, however. Although organizational factors surely play at least some role in shaping and constraining the advice of military officers, rarely is there only one “military” position on an issue; perhaps more importantly, there almost never is a unitary “civilian” position. Therefore, attempts to compare civilian and military attitudes without accounting for variation within these groups may obscure important issues and confound our analysis of civil-military relations.

In contrast with Huntington, Feaver (2003) conceptualizes civil-military relations as a principal-agent relationship. Drawing on the broader economic and bureaucratic literature (Niskanen 1971; Ross 1973; Bendor 1988; Ferejohn and Sh ipan 1990; McNollgast 1987, 1989, 1990), he explores how civilian efforts to monitor and punish the military might affect its ability to do what civilian policymakers want them to do.\(^\text{11}\)

Although Feaver’s model provides a useful framework with which to examine the policy implementation component of civil-military relations, it does not fully explain how civil-military relations might influence policy choice in the first place. His formal model assumes that the desired policy has been established exogenously, prior to the strategic interaction between the civilian principal and the military agent. Thus, similar to Huntington’s normal theory, Feaver implicitly assumes that military leaders have little ability to influence civilian policy decisions, largely ignoring the military’s advisory role (Gibson and Snider 2001).

Similar to Huntington, Feaver also concentrates primarily on differences between civilians and the military, neglecting partisan differences within the military. Although his model can account for variation in military and civilian preferences during policy implementation, he minimizes the importance of this component of the model. Feaver claims that “there is some irreducible difference between military and civilian, and this

\(^{11}\) Feaver (2003) develops both a formal and informal theory of Civil-Military relations. While his formal model does offer useful insights and predictions about civilian control of military operations, it cannot address adequately military influence on decisions to use force. Nevertheless, his discussion of how key political control mechanisms from the bureaucratic politics literature apply within the civil-military context is extremely useful. See, for example, his discussion of incentives, screening and selection mechanisms, fire alarms and police patrols in the civil-military context, p. 75-86.
will naturally extend into different perspectives.”12 By assuming preference divergence from the outset, Feaver thus downplays a significant body of research that demonstrates that employers and politicians frequently use hiring procedures and bureaucratic appointment processes in order to mitigate or solve their principal-agent problems (Brehm and Gates 1997; Weingast 1984; Moe 1987, 1990; Snider and Weingast 2000). In other words, principals often make appointments in order to align the preferences of the agent with those of the principal, thus enhancing bureaucratic control.

Apart from Huntington and Feaver, other scholars have proposed structural explanations for variation in military influence, especially in the wake of the Cold War.13 Michael Desch (1999; 2001), for example, develops a threat-based theory of civil-military relations in which the success of civilian efforts to control the military is determined by the level of external threats to the state.14 According to Desch, civil-military conflict will be mitigated by the presence of an external threat. Since the external threat to the U.S. decreased with the collapse of the Soviet Union, civil-military relations after this event were more conflictual.15 He finds that civilian preferences prevailed over military preferences more frequently during the Cold War than they did in the post-Cold War environment.

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13 Similarly, others have argued that the passage of the Goldwater Nichols Act in 1986 increased the power of the Chairman relative to the other service chiefs (Weiner 1997), but this change does not necessarily explain why military influence as a whole would increase. One possible reason why we might expect more military influence after the passage of the GWNA is that it might have served to reduce the collective actions problems associated with inter-service rivalry. Nevertheless, in the majority of cases prior to its passage, the CJCS personally provided the president with advice and recommendations from the JCS (sometimes more faithfully than others; see, for example, McMaster 1997) without the other chiefs in the room.
14 Desch also argues that the presence of an internal threat is the greatest challenge to civilian control, though he says that there is no variation in the U.S. case. When there is an internal struggle for control of a society, the military will turn some of its focus inward where it believes itself to be a competitor for domestic control of the state.
15 According to Desch, the model is actually indeterminate in the post-Cold War case; it either could predict good civilian control or it could predict good civilian control intermixed with some instances in which military preferences prevail over civilian preferences. Which outcome occurs depends on non-structural factors, such as organizational culture, that are not explicitly part of the model (Desch 1999, p. 16-17).
Although a pervasive external threat may provide an incentive for military cooperation, Desch’s theory does not account for the empirical variation in military influence on presidential decisions to use force identified by Betts (1977), Petraeus (1987), and Feaver (2003) during the Cold War period.\textsuperscript{16} Feaver, for example, showed that military preferences prevailed over civilian preferences on decisions to use military force in more than 20 percent of the cases he examined between 1945 and 1989.\textsuperscript{17} Similarly, Betts (1977) and Petraeus (1987) both found that unified military opposition sometimes persuaded the president not to initiate a potential military operation during the Cold War, though they did not explain what factors created this military consensus. Even apart from the seeming inconsistency that military preferences prevailed over civilian preferences in one out of five decisions during a period of ‘good’ civil-military relations, however, Desch’s structural theory simply was not designed to explain this type of variation.

In summary, then, there are several existing gaps in the extant theoretical literature. The first is that scholars of civil-military relations have assumed that attitudinal differences on the civil-military dimension trump other differences. As I will show in Chapter 3, however, civil-military differences vanish once we account for partisan differences. The second is that previous scholars have ignored the importance of military advice. Nevertheless, a president’s decision about whether to use force often depends on the projected costs of the conflict and the perceived likelihood that an operation will succeed. Finally, existing theories provide no satisfactory explanation for how or why military ‘opposition’ could influence presidential decisions about

\textsuperscript{16} Desch, however, does not look exclusively at presidential decisions to use force; instead, he identifies 74 cases of civil-military conflict from 1938-1997. During the period from 1938-1989, Desch identifies only 2 cases in which military preferences prevailed over civilian preferences though none involved presidential decisions to use force. From 1990-1997, Desch identifies 8 cases in which military preferences prevailed, only one of which involved a decision to use military force. Nevertheless, Desch’s coding criteria for what constitutes a civil-military conflict is not clear and his list appears far from exhaustive, especially on the use of force.

\textsuperscript{17} Feaver identifies an incomplete list of 29 separate decisions to use force during the Cold War and argues that military preferences prevailed in 6 of these cases (21 percent of the time); nevertheless, Feaver’s analysis does provide some weak support for Desch’s theory in that he identifies 2 out of 7 cases (roughly 28 percent) in the 1990s in which military preferences prevailed over civilian preferences. Feaver (2003, p. 218-224) also provides a thorough critique of Desch’s structural theory.
when to use military force in response to a crisis. In other words, previous theories have not adequately identified the potential mechanisms of military influence.

In the next section, I develop a theory of military influence that extends, but is consistent with, Feaver’s informal agency framework of civil-military relations. In doing so, I account for variation in civilian and military preferences, incorporate the military’s advisory role, and identify the mechanisms by which senior military officers can influence presidential decisions.

**An Informational Theory of Military Influence**

I begin with the observation that the ‘military’ does not give advice to an undifferentiated mass of ‘civilians.’ Instead, individual officers advise elected civilian politicians from each of the two major political parties. In most cases, military advice regarding the use of force is given first, and sometimes exclusively, to the President of the United States. Since these senior officers possess certain informational advantages over the president, it may matter a great deal who these officers are and whether the president considers their information to be reliable.

Most analyses of American civil-military relations typically have assumed that there is a ‘Civil-Military Gap’ and that civilian and military preferences are fundamentally opposed (Desch 1999; Feaver 2003; Feaver and Gelpi 2004). Although aggregate comparisons of civilian and military attitudes do show some differences between groups, this characterization misses important variation within both groups that may influence civil-military relations significantly. On the civilian side, in particular, we know that partisan differences explain much of the variation in individual foreign policy attitudes (Berinsky 2007); moreover, as I show in chapter 3, partisan ID also is

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18 Since the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the primary military advisor to the President of the United States. Prior to 1986, the Joint Chiefs collectively served as the primary military advisors to the President. In practice, however, the Chairman met privately with the president and his senior civilian advisors to advocate the views of the Chiefs. For a more detailed discussion of the pre-GWNA period, see, for example, Petraeus (1987, p. 182-196) or Perry (1989). The statutory requirements dictating the advisory role of senior general officers can be found in Title 10, U.S. Code.
the most reliable predictor of foreign policy attitudes even among senior military officers.

**Accounting for Political Parties in Civil-Military Relations**

Traditional characterizations of partisanship focus on the predictive power of party identification in American elections (Campbell et. al. 1960). The centrality of partisan identity in American politics reaches far beyond voting behavior, however; partisanship is a dominant factor in explaining not just how people vote, but also how they interpret politics in general. In the classic formulation, Americans identify with a political party early in their lives, most commonly as a loyalty acquired from their parents. Partisan preferences tend to form during adolescence before becoming more stable over one’s lifetime (Jennings and Markus 1984; Sears and Funk 1999). Party loyalty thus contributes to an individual’s identity and provides a set of foundational principles that the individual usually maintains throughout her life (Berelson, et. al. 1954; Campbell et. al. 1960; Converse 1964; Green and Palmquist 1990, 1994; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002).

In the *American Voter*, Campbell et. al (1960) argued that party identification serves as a “perceptual screen through which the individual tends to see what is favorable to his partisan orientation.” A substantial body of research has confirmed that partisan bias shapes the way individuals interpret and integrate facts into their political attitudes and opinions (Bartels 2002, Taber and Lodge 2006, Gaines et. al. 2007; but see Gerber and Green 1999). Taber and Lodge (2006), for example, utilized survey experiments to examine the relationship between partisan bias and opinion updating. They found that strong partisans make every effort to maintain their existing opinions by seeking out confirming evidence, arguing against information that does not fit their preconceived notions, and attributing more strength to arguments that were consistent with their beliefs. Similarly, Gaines et. al (2007) found that partisan bias played a significant role in shaping the interpretations – and subsequently the opinions – that citizens held about the handling of the Iraq War. Moreover, they found that those who

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19 Campbell et. al (1960, p. 133).
were “better informed more effectively used interpretations to buttress their existing partisan views.”

Although many Americans believe that politics should stop at the waters’ edge, the politics of foreign policy often is, nevertheless, partisan politics. A wide body of public opinion research demonstrates that, on average, Republicans and Democrats do generally perceive foreign policy issues in vastly different ways (Nie with Anderson 1974; Wittkopf 1990; Gaines et al 2007; Berinsky 2007; Howell and Kriner 2007). Even during the so-called period of ‘foreign policy consensus’ prior to the Vietnam War, Republicans and Democrats frequently disagreed about how to accomplish foreign policy goals (and sometimes even about goals themselves). Only a few years after Eisenhower had implemented his program of ‘massive retaliation’ for example, Kennedy replaced it with a doctrine of ‘flexible response.’ Although both presidents agreed on the dangers of the underlying Soviet threat, they fundamentally disagreed about how U.S. diplomatic and military power should be implemented in order to contain global Communism. Likewise, Barry Goldwater and other conservative Republicans were prominent critics of Lyndon Johnson’s Vietnam policy even before Johnson committed significant numbers of U.S. troops.

These examples of policy disagreements are consistent with fundamentally different worldviews about how America should approach international politics. Republicans are far more likely to embrace a form of Militant Internationalism (MI), seeing international relations as inherently dangerous and conflictual. As a result, they believe that the U.S. must meet international threats with strength and military force when diplomatic efforts fail. Democrats, on the other hand, are likely to be Cooperative Internationalists (CI); in other words, they generally believe that widespread international cooperation ultimately is possible with the help of

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20 Gaines et al 2007, p. 957.
21 Of course, there also were changes in the Soviet threat during this time period, especially the development of a Soviet second strike capability last in Kennedy’s term; nevertheless, Kennedy expressed his different strategic views as early as the 1960 presidential campaign.
22 For a more complete discussion of the original articulations of these distinctions, see Wittkopf (1990), Holsti and Rosenau (1993), and Holsti (2001).
international institutions. Although they sometimes believe that coercion is necessary, Democrats typically view military force as a supplement to, rather than a replacement for, diplomatic efforts.

The literature on Congress’ role in foreign policy also emphasizes the importance of these partisan differences. Howell and Pevehouse (2007) show that presidents were more likely to use military force when their co-partisans controlled the legislature, even prior to 1973. Johnson (2006) also demonstrates that during the Cold War, when disagreements about foreign policy issues emerged, these debates and votes broke largely along party lines. Price (2008) reaches a similar conclusion when analyzing use of force votes after the end of the Cold War, showing that a legislator’s partisan affiliation is the best predictor of his vote choice for individual humanitarian and realpolitik missions. Clearly, the impact of the Vietnam War, the effects of southern realignment and political polarization, and the collapse of the Soviet Union all exacerbated foreign policy differences between the parties; nevertheless, many of these differences already had existed for decades.

This evidence of partisan influence in foreign policy poses a particular challenge to traditional accounts of civil-military relations. Even if the views of military officers are somewhat homogeneous, there clearly is evidence that civilian attitudes vary largely along party lines. Thus, if Republicans and Democrats hold different opinions regarding foreign policy, we at least should expect predictable changes in civil-military relations when a new party takes control of the White House or the Congress. Nevertheless, previous accounts of civil-military relations do not adequately account for partisan variation among civilian political leaders.

In chapter 3, I examine the so-called civil-military gap within the context of the literature on party identification (PID). Consistent with previous behavioral research, I present evidence of significant variation in the foreign policy attitudes of elite civilians that breaks primarily along partisan lines. Counter to the civil-military gap hypothesis, however, I also present evidence that partisan identification explains the foreign policy
attitudes of senior military officers. I find very little evidence that military service shapes military officers’ foreign policy attitudes. Nevertheless, I find evidence of a distinct partisan asymmetry. On the Republican side, there are no significant differences between elite civilians and senior military officers; however, among Democrats, there is considerably more heterogeneity. Democratic military officers are far more likely to identify themselves as moderates and to hold more moderate foreign policy attitudes than their civilian elite counterparts.

The composition of the senior officer corps is, nevertheless, striking. While less than 12 percent of senior officers identify themselves as Democrats, 67 percent call themselves Republicans. At first glance, the partisan distribution of the officer corps might lead one to expect uniformly better civil-military relations during Republican Administrations and inherently conflictual relations during Democratic Administrations. Reality, however, is slightly more complex, especially when we focus primarily on the military’s advisory role. In the U.S., the military organization clearly is not itself a democracy. As a result, the ‘military’ does not give advice to an undifferentiated mass of civilians; instead, individual officers sit in a room and offer advice to particular presidents. Consequently, I argue that it matters a great deal who these officers are and how they get into that room.

Elections, Appointments and Hierarchy: How Political Institutions Shape the Civil-Military Dialogue

In the U.S., the officers who advise the president usually are the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the six regional combatant commanders.23 These twelve senior officers – the Chairman in particular – provide the primary sources of military advice for the Secretary of Defense and the President on military planning and decisions regarding the use of force. Critically, these senior officers are appointed by the President with the “advice and consent” of the Senate. Nevertheless, there has been

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23 In this context, I discuss only the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), the Vice Chairman of the JCS, the service chiefs (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines), and the regional Combatant Commanders: ATLANTCOM, CENTCOM, EUCOM, NORTHCOM, PACOM, and SOUTHCOM (AFRICOM is not included in the time period I examine). The other Unified Combatant Commanders and unit commanders typically serve three-year terms as well.
very little theoretical development and virtually no empirical work on the general officer appointment process and how it may affect use of force decisions.

Although few researchers have examined the military appointment process directly, many scholars have looked at how the relationship between the Executive and the Senate shapes appointments in other areas of government. In particular, scholars have developed a number of models for judicial, regulatory, and bureaucratic appointments. One prominent view is that the president dominates the appointment process (Moe 1985, 1987; Mackenzie 1981). According to this “presidential dominance” view, the president cares a great deal about ‘his’ appointments and is able to assert his will against a Senate plagued by collective action problems. As a result, the president’s preferences are the primary determinant of an appointee’s preferences. In contrast, the “Congressional dominance” approach argues that the Senate’s preferences alone should determine an appointee’s preferences (Weingast 1984). According to this view, the President essentially will give in to the Senate because the political costs he would face from a failed appointment are exorbitant.

Recent work has advanced a more nuanced view of the domestic appointment process in which the Senate can constrain the president, but only up to a point. In these cases, the president’s power as the first-mover is determined primarily by a ‘reversion policy’ or by the players’ beliefs about what policy would be in the event of gridlock. In particular, a voluminous literature on appointments to the bureaucracy (Calvert, McCubbins, and Weingast 1989; Wood and Waterman 1991; Hammond and Hill 1993; Chang 2001), the courts (Moraski and Shiplan 1991; Rohde and Shepsle 2005), and federal regulation boards (Waller 1992; Snyder and Weingast 2000) demonstrates that the President sometimes strategically chooses not to nominate his preferred candidate when facing a hostile Senate. Nevertheless, the president’s position as the first-mover also enables him to anticipate the Senate’s actions and put forward an appointment that will maintain the status quo. Why should we expect the appointment of general officers to be any different?
One reason we might expect the process to be different for military appointments is that Senators often have more to lose by opposing the president on military issues than they can gain by opposing the president publicly. Since involvement in foreign affairs rarely does much to enhance legislators’ re-election prospects, the argument goes, they have little incentive to spend time or effort on such issues. Doing so would distract them from their primary task of focusing on constituent issues. Moreover, in military affairs, responsibility for operations typically falls largely on the president. If operations go well, the president will receive the credit; if they go poorly, he will receive the blame. Legislators, on the other hand, rarely are in a position to receive much credit for a successful operation. However, if they involve themselves in the decision-making process and operations go poorly, they open themselves up to charges of interfering with the president’s responsibilities as Commander in Chief. Thus, particularly during international foreign policy crises, legislators have strong incentives to stay silent in order to avoid the blame that might arise if operations go badly (Weaver 1986).

Nevertheless, it is not clear that opposition to a president’s nominee for a military appointment later would translate into blame for a failure in military policy. Senators have developed a number of parliamentary tools that make it possible for them to block appointments, such as allowing them to expire in committee without ever taking a costly public vote. Moreover, by tradition, military confirmations almost always utilize voice votes on the floor. Thus, it is relatively easy for any individual Senator to distance himself from the process. And even if a Senator did participate in a roll call vote on a military appointment, it is not clear that such a vote could be used against him during a campaign. Reports discussing failed military appointments almost always focus solely on the President with only vague references to the Senate and comments from unnamed legislative staff. Thus, there are reasons to believe that Senators will be able to block the president’s nominee without fearing the possibility of future blame. Senators may stand to gain less than the president, but they also have very little to lose by opposing him.
In some cases, however, Senators may stand to lose by opposing the military’s proposed nominee. Senators do not have the same institutional capacity as the president to gather information regarding military issues. Thus, they often are largely dependent on personal relationships with senior military officers. As such, during the appointment process, Senators on the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) may have to consider the costs of lost access to information or special favors from senior officers. Senators’ re-election prospects also may be closely tied to their ability to deliver large contracts or retain bases in their home states. The support of senior officers during this process also may be important, at least at the margins. Finally, members of the SASC or other legislators may rely on military officers for help with investigations or other constituent services from time to time. As a result, members of the SASC often may have strong incentives to support a particular nominee or to support the nominee resulting from the negotiations conducted within and between the four branches of the military.

There is at least one way in which the military appointments process clearly differs from the process used for bureaucratic and regulatory appointments, however. All four-star officers are selected from within the officer corps, according to a set of unique statutory requirements. For example, a nominee for appointment to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is selected from a pool of only fifteen officers. Similarly, each of those fifteen officers – the Vice Chairman, the Service Chiefs, and the Combatant Commanders – also is chosen from among a limited, though somewhat larger, number of senior officers. Thus, strategic politicians must choose their preferred candidates only from the set of available officers.

The sitting members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, especially the Chairman, also play a role in this process. By law, the CJCS is required to present the Secretary of Defense with his recommendation for each position as well as with a refined list of approximately five potential candidates. Although the Secretary of Defense (and the

24 The statutory requirements for the appointment of senior general officers are described in detail in Title 10, U.S. Code.
President) is not legally bound to use this list when selecting his final nominee, most politicians view it as an apolitical, or at least non-partisan, process. In general, these recommendations are determined largely on the basis of competence and necessary experience as well as on intra-service norms regarding fairness (Betts 1977). If presidents choose to ignore the military’s recommendation in order to nominate their most-preferred candidate, political opponents may be able to accuse the president of ‘ politicizing’ the national security process.

In chapter 4, I develop and test a formal model of the senior military appointments process that incorporates the factors discussed above. I begin with the premise that strategic politicians believe that officers with closer preferences either will be easier to control or that they will provide better advice and information. As a result, the President and members of the Senate will have an incentive to try to appoint officers who share their respective preferences.

In my model, however, the unique composition of the senior officer corps plays a critical role in determining the outcomes of the game. I assume that the military nominee is selected according to service norms or military performance, not on the basis of political ideology. I model this process by treating the establishment nominee as a random draw from the pool of all available officers. As a result, my model implies that this process provides bargaining power to the Senate under cases of divided government; nevertheless, this nominee will, in the vast majority of cases, be a conservative nominee.

In order to avoid paying the political costs of a failed appointment amidst charges that

25 Each of the military services has developed norms about the necessary requirements and career progression for appointment to certain senior military positions. Additionally, they have coordinated over time to develop informal norms about inter-service nominees from the military. For example, many argue that the services have worked out a ‘rotation’ to guarantee that each service will have its turn to fill the position of Chairman. Additionally, the services generally seem to have coordinated on which service should receive particular regional commands (the Navy in the Pacific, the Army in Europe, etc.). Nevertheless, all of these norms are non-binding. While they typically do play a significant role in dictating the military’s proposed nominee for a position, political leaders often ignore them when making the final appointments.
he is attempting to ‘politicize’ a national security appointment, the President has an ex ante incentive to appoint the military’s nominee. Since the resulting military advisor will, on average, be conservative, a Republican President will get an officer whose preferences are closer to his than will a Democratic President. Under cases of unified government, however, the President can appoint the best available nominee without fear of rejection since the Senate shares his preferences. Even in this case, however, my model expects a Republican President to get an officer whose preferences are closer (in fact, identical) to his relative to a Democratic President. Since it is likely that there are no military officers whose preferences align perfectly with his, he instead must take the most liberal officer available.

In general, then, the composition of the military’s senior officer corps should cause the preferences of officers appointed during this process to be closer to Republican Presidents than to those Democratic Presidents. Nevertheless, Democratic Presidents sometimes can improve their position significantly, especially during periods of unified government. In chapter 4, I develop this logic in greater detail.

Even though a president can use the appointment process to shape the preferences of his senior military advisors, he is significantly constrained with respect to when he can do so. These officers are appointed in such a way that they virtually are guaranteed to serve under multiple presidential terms, if not multiple administrations. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the JCS each are appointed for two-year terms, but can be re-appointed for a second term.26 The respective service chiefs are each appointed to serve four-year terms that are staggered to provide continuity between administrations.27 Finally, the regional combatant commanders all are appointed for three-year terms, typically staggered by a matter of months. Thus, presidents of both parties will have to work with general officers whom they did not appoint for significant portions of their administrations, sometimes for longer than two years. As a

26 According to U.S. law, there are several other exceptions. For example, during time of war, the president can nominate the CJCS to a third term. This exception only has been implemented on one occasion, when President Johnson appointed Army General Earle Wheeler to a third term during the Vietnam War.
27 Prior to 1978, service chiefs were appointed every two years with a maximum of two, two-year terms.
result, a president cannot always count on having senior military advisors who share his preferences about how and when to use military force.

**Military Influence on Presidential Decisions to Use Force**

Previous theories of civil-military relations implicitly have assumed that the president knows when he wants to use force and when he does not; his only challenge is how to get the military to cooperate with his plans. But, in reality, the president does not always know what he wants. When an international crisis arises, he must make a decision about whether to use military force in the face of uncertainty about the consequences of his policy choice. Although he often would prefer to use force in a given situation if he expects a military operation to be relatively short, low cost, and successful, the president instead might be reluctant to use force in the same situation if he expects a long, unsuccessful campaign with high casualties.

Consistent with previous informational models, I assume that political leaders and military officers are self-interested and outcome-oriented. In other words, they derive costs and benefits not from the decision to use force itself, but rather from the consequences of that decision. Consequently, the effects of a policy choice will coincide with policy-makers’ expectations only to the extent that they have precise information about how a policy maps into a final outcome. Since they often do not know the precise effects of the military policies they are considering, the president and other political leaders must infer whether or not the president should order the use force based on the advice of expert military officers who possess private information about the situation.

**Information Asymmetries in American Civil-Military Relations**

Information asymmetries are inherent in principal-agent relations. In the context of American civil-military relations, in particular, military agents possess a number of informational advantages over their civilian principals. Senior military officers spend

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28 In particular, the president often has incomplete information about how a policy choice – the decision to use military force – will translate into outcomes. The key distinction here is between the decision to use force and the effects of that policy choice once it has been implemented.
long careers developing expert knowledge regarding military technology, tactics and logistics; they also have direct access to information about the military capabilities of potential threats that is not readily available to the president or other political leaders.

Senior officers’ previous experiences and knowledge of military doctrine also put them in a unique position to develop casualty estimates, to predict the number of troops necessary to accomplish certain political goals, and to identify technical issues or complications with a plan. The sheer size and complexity of the military bureaucracy can make it difficult for inexperienced civilian policymakers to understand, even under the best circumstances. As Feaver has argued, it is “plausible that the basic information asymmetry problem inherent in any principal-agent relationship is particularly acute in the civil-military relationship.”

Of course, civilian policymakers may develop national security expertise, but they generally leave combat itself to the military. Although some civilians devote a significant amount of time developing knowledge about military strategy and tactics, they rarely, if ever, have the chance to put their knowledge into practice during combat or military training. According to General Andrew Goodpaster and Samuel Huntington,

> It is not that all wisdom resides in the military; far from it. Civilian students of strategy, operations, procedures, intelligence practices, procurement practices, educational methods, and training techniques have offered much in the past and continue to do so… But it is the test of combat, or the perceived probable results of the test of combat – the unique domain of the military professional – that ultimately and fundamentally establishes the validity of military posture and action.

While it is true that some civilian veterans may have combat experience, the more recent experiences of military leaders typically will be more accurate due to rapid changes in technology, doctrine or military capabilities. Moreover, even if civilian veterans possess some expertise, they nevertheless must rely on senior military leaders.

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29 Feaver (2003), p. 70
30 Goodpaster and Huntington (1977), p. 32.
for intelligence estimates and assessments of enemy and friendly capabilities. National security secrecy laws also may make it relatively more difficult for civilian policymakers to monitor the military due to fewer external fire alarm mechanisms (Feaver 2003). As a result, senior military officers typically are in the best position to assess the costs of a military endeavor and to determine the likelihood that a particular military operation will succeed. Moreover, they often are in a position to exert control over assessments of the strength and capabilities of enemy forces, the potential costs of military operations, and the necessary size of potential military options.

While the development of military expertise undoubtedly pays a dividend and helps increase national security, it also provides senior military leaders an opportunity to use their private information strategically in order to influence policy decisions. When the preferences of military leaders align with those of the president, these officers should have an incentive to represent their private information accurately. But when preferences are not aligned, senior military officers may use their private information to influence policy decisions in two ways. First, they can choose to misrepresent or conceal their private information while giving advice to the president or other Administration officials during private deliberations. Second, they can choose to express public dissent outside of the Administration in order to increase the president’s domestic political costs for using force. As I will show below, both of these strategies – especially when employed together – are likely to make a president less inclined to use force.

**Signals, Inferences and Beliefs**

I assume that, other things being equal, the president would rather select a policy whose consequences are known in advance than a policy whose consequences are

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31 Of course, military officers do not possess a crystal ball; they certainly can be, and sometimes are, wrong. Nevertheless, it is not implausible to believe that the expert knowledge of senior military officers serves to reduce the uncertainty over outcomes. For my theory to hold, I simply must assume that military officers are in a better position to assess the consequences of military action than are civilian leaders. Moreover, civilian leaders believe that military officers have better information or expertise.
uncertain. In other words, the president is risk averse; he would rather maintain the status quo than risk getting involved in a military conflict if he feels uncertain about its outcome. It also is likely that a president might expect a failed military venture to be extremely damaging politically while a successful operation instead might only bring short-term, limited benefits. The Bay of Pigs fiasco, the Vietnam War, and the 2003 Iraq War are all examples of failed military operations that consumed a president’s term and damaged the president’s domestic credibility for prolonged periods of time. In contrast, the benefits of a relatively clear-cut victory in the 1991 Gulf War were not sufficient to guarantee the re-election of President George H.W. Bush less than 18 months later.

Presidents often have incentives to use military force to accomplish their policy goals; however, they don’t want to use force if the operation will fail. When the president’s senior military advisors (who are asymmetrically informed) share their assessment of the number of troops required to accomplish a political goal, the operation’s likely costs in terms of civilian and U.S. casualties, and the possible duration of the conflict, the president tries to ascertain what his advisors know about the consequences of the policy that he does not know. The president uses the information from the military in order to make an inference about the military’s private information about the situation. The product of the president’s inference is a new or updated set of beliefs about the relationship between the decision to use military force and the actual consequences of that action. The president’s updated beliefs then serve as the basis for his final policy choice that attempts to maximize his preferred policy outcome.

Previous signaling models have demonstrated that the more similar two agents’ preferences are, the more informative and reliable their signals will be (Crawford and Sobel 1982; Cho and Kreps 1987; Krehbiel 1992). Since agents with similar

32 Assuming that players are risk averse in other signaling models is not uncommon. See, for example Krehbiel (1992). He assumes that legislators are risk averse because they want to position themselves to claim credit for their legislative accomplishments.

33 Formally, this is the same as assuming that players’ utility functions are quadratic in the outcome space. The substantive implication of this assumption is that players are risk averse. Each player always prefers an outcome with certainty to a lottery whose expected outcome is that which he could have with certainty.
preferences both desire the same policy outcomes, the agent possessing private information has an incentive to disclose that information truthfully in order to induce the ‘correct’ policy choice; when the agents’ preferences diverge, however, the same incentive does not exist. As a result, the president’s ability to make reliable inference about the military’s private information depends largely on how closely the military advisor’s preferences are aligned with his own.

*A Simple Example of Military Signaling*\(^{34}\)

Consider the following stylized example of a signaling game with two players, a Military Advisor and a President. Assume that the Military Advisor has perfect and private information about the costs, c, of a proposed use of military force, where c > 0. The President receives some benefit, B, if he chooses to use military force, less the costs; if instead he chooses to maintain the status quo policy, both players receive a payout of 0. In the event that the President does use force, the Military Advisor also receives the payoff \((1-a)B\), where a represents the ideological distance between the two players in some foreign policy continuum. The President prefers the military operation as long as the costs are less than the benefits (c < B), but would rather maintain the status quo otherwise. In contrast, the Military Advisor prefers to use force only when \((1-a)B > c\).

The following sequence of strategic actions takes place. A crisis arises and the military advisor receives private information about the costs of the military operation. The military advisor then sends one of two signals to the president, either ‘Go’ or ‘Don’t Go.’ The president decides whether to use force or accept the status quo.\(^{35}\) The game ends and payoffs are awarded to the two players based on the closeness of the realized outcome to their preferred outcome.

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\(^{34}\) Obviously, this simple illustration is not a complete model. Instead, it serves only as a heuristic to illustrate the basic logic of my argument.

\(^{35}\) In order to gain tractability on a complex theoretical problem and to focus on the role of military advice, I generally treat all non-military alternatives as the status quo. The president, of course, also may consider a number of other economic, political, or diplomatic options. Bendor and Moe (2001, p. 188), suggest one potential way that future agent-based modelers simultaneously may be able to examine the effects of both military and non-military policy advice.
An equilibrium exists in which the Military Advisor says ‘Go’ if and only if he wants the operation to go forward, when \( c < (1-a)B \). If the Military Advisor signals ‘Go,’ then the President will use force because \( c < (1-a)B \) implies \( c < B \). However, the Military Advisor instead will signal ‘Don’t Go’ whenever \( c > (1-a)B \) and, as a result, the President will not use force. Under this case, the expected cost is \( E[c | c > (1-a)B] \). Even though the range of possible costs includes some values for which the President would want to use force, this expectation also includes all values where \( c > B \), for which he does not want to use force. Thus, the probability that the President will choose to use military force is strictly increasing in \( a \), as long as \( E(c) > B \). In other words, the closer the preferences of the President and the Military Advisor are aligned, the higher the probability that the President will choose to use military force.

Of course, reality is much more complex than games like this one imply. Senior military officers do not simply give the president a one-time assessment of a military operation’s costs. Instead, their advice and assessments are messy and complex, consisting of a number of different messages involving casualty estimates, cost projections, troop requests and risk assessments, often over a period of days or weeks. Moreover, military officers themselves may be uncertain of their projections and estimates or about the president’s decision criteria for an operation. If the president’s expectation of the costs is related to his decision about how many troops to send, military officers may, in all cases, have incentives to pad their estimates in order to get sufficient troops to accomplish their mission. Since senior military officers are not subject to re-election, they may be less sensitive to domestic political costs than the president or other elected officials. As a result, even the preferences of officers appointed by the president may diverge somewhat from his own.

Nevertheless, the simple illustration above serves to highlight the central idea that senior officers can use their private information strategically. When officers who do

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36 For the purposes of this illustration, I assume that \( E(c) > B \). If \( E(c) < B \), then the probability that the President will use force is slightly more complicated. In the extreme case, where \( E(c) < B \) and \( a = 1 \), then the Military Advisor’s signal would contain no information and the President will choose to use force regardless of whether he receives a ‘Go’ or ‘Don’t Go’ signal.
not share the president’s preferences advise him, they have an incentive to withhold information or misrepresent their expert knowledge to influence his policy decisions. When officers do share the preferences of the president, however, they are more likely to transmit reliable information about the costs of a military operation.

Conventional wisdom also suggests that military officers in the U.S. always are reluctant warriors. Nevertheless, several recent examples serve to demonstrate that military officers do, in fact, send messy, but relatively informative ‘Go’ signals when they prefer the use of force more than they prefer to maintain the status quo. For example, even though he stated that he would have preferred to have ground troops available for the Kosovo War, General Wesley Clark was one of the most vocal supporters of President Clinton’s decision to wage war using air power alone. Several years earlier, General John Shalikashvili also clearly signaled that he believed Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti would be relatively low-cost after voicing initial reservations several weeks earlier. In fact, after hearing Shalikasvili brief his assessment of the potential costs of military intervention to President Clinton, George Stephanalous remarked on the general’s supreme confidence, “Isn’t this what they always think before the fighting starts?”37

Military Information and Outside Options: Public Military Dissent

Of course, there are some cases in which the president’s prior beliefs about the expected costs of a military operation would lead him to use force even in the absence of reliable information about the operation’s costs. In these cases, senior military officers will not sit idly by on their hands. Instead, they will attempt to increase the president’s domestic political costs by using their private information to influence members of Congress or to sway public opinion. In fact, a sizeable body of work has focused on the normative implications of military dissent since the end of the Cold War (Weigley 1993; Kohn 1994; Bacevich and Kohn 1997, 2005; Ricks 1997; Myers and Kohn 2006; Owens 2006; Korb 2006; Desch 2006; Snider 2008; Brooks 2009; Snider and Nielsen 2009). Nevertheless, because of its normative focus, this work has

been less clear in describing how military dissent could, in fact, influence a president’s decisions about whether to use force.

A general theme of these debates is that senior military officers might be able to use the prestige of their uniform to influence public opinion or to embolden members of Congress to thwart the plans of the Commander-in-Chief. Nevertheless, the extant literature on presidential war powers seems to stand in contrast to such claims. It suggests that modern presidents dominate American foreign policy, especially on decisions about the use of force (Corwin 1994, Meernik 1994, Peterson 1994, Gowa 1999, Fisher 2000). According to this view, because the president doesn’t face the same collective action and information problems that member of Congress face, he can act more decisively, secretly, and expediently than they can.

In many cases, these findings clearly correspond with political reality; the president often does, in fact, have significant institutional advantages over the Congress. Especially when his senior military advisors share his preferences, the Administration can, and will, present a united front. However, the Executive branch is not a unitary actor and, as I have argued above, the president does not always control the information about a proposed military venture. If his senior military advisors do not share his preferences about a proposed military venture, they may have an incentive to share information with sympathetic members of Congress or to voice public concerns about the proposed military action. Although the internal signaling argument above suggests that the president already may be somewhat unlikely to use force if he is uncertain about its consequences, public dissent – or the threat of public dissent – can make the decision to use force even more costly for the president.\footnote{A number of scholars recently have focused on the ways in which Congress (Howell and Pevehouse 2007) and public opinion may constrain presidential decision-making on the use of force, at least at the margins (Sobel 1993; Sobel 2001; Klarevas 2002; Baum 2004; Larson and Savych 2005). The unifying theme of these arguments is that if the president anticipates higher domestic political costs ex post, he will be less likely to use force ex ante.}

Risa Brooks (2009) has created a useful typology of the political strategies that senior military officers may engage in within a democracy – public appeals, grandstanding,
alliance building, and shoulder tapping.\footnote{Public appeals involve public commentary, such as writing an opinion piece in a newspaper or giving speech; in general, they target the mass public. Grandstanding occurs when an officer threatens to resign, or resigns, over a policy disagreement. It can target the public or Congress. Alliance building and shoulder tapping both target the Congress. Officers engage in alliance building to strengthen their political ties with members of Congress or interest groups. They use shoulder tapping when they conduct an ‘end run’ around the administration, bringing information about a policy issue to members of Congress and lobbying for a particular outcome (Brooks 2009, p. 218-224). She also identifies ‘politicking’ as another form of political activity in which retired officers can participate. Politicking involves the use of endorsements or public statements during a political campaign; it is targeted at the mass public.} Although future research can and should examine the relative effects of each of these strategies, for my purposes, it is sufficient to assume that the military simply can use public dissent to ‘go outside’ the Administration. By sending signals to others who share their preferences either in Congress or the public, military officers can, in turn, strengthen domestic opposition and make the use of force marginally less attractive to the president in a given situation (Sobel 1993; Sobel 2001; Klarevas 2002; Baum 2004; Larson and Savych 2005).

Military Dissent, Media Indexing, and Public Opinion

But why would we expect public dissent from the military to influence public opinion at all? Average citizens have little information with which to understand and interpret complex foreign policy issues (Almond 1950; Lippmann 1992).\footnote{A significant body of research also demonstrates that, on average, citizens know much less about foreign policy issues than they do about domestic policy. For example, see Graber 1984; Sobel 1989; and Baum 2004). For the most part, everything they know about a planned military initiative comes from the media. Unfortunately, media outlets often find themselves in much the same position as average citizens. Journalists often lack the knowledge and tools to assess the potential costs and benefits of an operation, and they frequently rely on official sources for information about potential uses of military force.}

The ‘indexing hypothesis’ suggests that the media depends on government officials when developing their foreign policy coverage (Bennett 1990). According to Lance Bennett, “mass media news professionals, from the boardroom to the beat, tend to ‘index’ the range of voices and viewpoints in both news and editorials according to the
range of views expressed in mainstream government about a given topic.” A number of scholars have confirmed the basic thrust of the indexing hypothesis: the parameters of mainstream media debate generally reflect the levels of conflict and consensus in Washington (Bennett 1990, Mermin 1999, Arnold 2004). Moreover, recent work also has helped to confirm that the media follow the positions taken by political elites, rather than vice versa (Zaller 1994). According to John Zaller, “Elites lead, masses follow, and the press does the bidding of the government.”

Senior military officers thus may be able to use their private information to help structure the policy debate in the public sphere. Either by sharing information with members of Congress or retired officers who share their policy preferences, leaking information to the press, or, less frequently, by making direct public appeals, senior military officers can potentially widen the scope of debate surrounding a given operation.

Of course, the indexing literature is not the only body of research to argue that elite debate influences media coverage and public opinion regarding the president’s approval. A significant body of research in American politics focuses centrally on studying the ways that political elites frame public discourse and a number of studies have examined the presidential use of force. Adam Berinsky, for example, argues that the reaction of elites directly affects support for presidential decisions regarding the use of force:

When political elites disagree as to the wisdom of intervention, the public divides as well. But when – for whatever reason – elites come to a common interpretation of a political reality, the public gives them great latitude to wage war. Thus it is not the direct influence of events that matter. Instead, it is the conflict among political elites concerning the salience and meaning of those events that determines if the public will rally to war.

In other words, Americans do not rally round the flag for patriotic reasons whenever

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41 Bennett (1990), p. 105.
the president sends troops abroad; rather, the public responds to the public reactions of political leaders. Absent public criticism of the president’s policy choice, citizens may have few reasons to oppose presidential action. But when political opponents launch attacks on the administration’s policies, citizens react to familiar partisan or ideological cues. Public dissent leads to confrontational media coverage, and, in turn, polarized public opinion. It is only when political elites support the president that we observe rally effects.

Since military leaders possess the best information about a proposed military venture, their decision about whether to support the president or to voice their dissent to members of Congress or the public may be consequential in shaping public opinion. When senior military officers move in lock-step with the president, they dominate the information environment and are a formidable force in foreign policy-making. But when senior military officers take their dissent outside of the Administration, they widen the scope of the political debate and help break the political consensus that otherwise might have resulted due the lack of information available to members of Congress and the public. In some cases, senior military officers may introduce themselves directly into the debate, as was the case with Colin Powell’s election season op-ed opposing military intervention in the Balkans (Powell 1992). In others, however, the mere threat of public military dissent – and broad disagreement among elites and the public – may be enough to dissuade a president from using force.

This theoretical perspective also helps us make sense of a previously unexplained finding in the civil-military relations literature. A number of scholars have concluded that military officers have been more effective in blocking military deployments than in inducing them. Since my theory suggests that public dissent by military officers works to weaken ‘rally effects,’ it generally serves to make it relatively more difficult for a president to use force. In contrast, a public signal by the military calling for war would be marginally less effective because it would have to generate sufficient political costs to force the president into war. Since the president could counter this move by appealing to his co-partisans in Congress and in the public, the military’s
ability to influence public opinion necessarily would have to be much higher to force the president’s hand. As a result, it is at least somewhat less likely that military officers would be effective in coercing presidents to use force when they would prefer not to do so. Of course, my theory also implies that when the preferences of the president and his senior military officers are aligned, checks on presidential decisions to use force are virtually non-existent.

Members of the Joint Chiefs may, however, face costs that make some expressions of public dissent prohibitive. There is a long normative and political tradition in the U.S. that helps define the bright lines that senior military leaders cannot cross. And Feaver (2003) is right to argue that civilian punishment mechanisms help civilian leaders control the behavior of senior military officers. When the probability of punishment is high, as is usually the case during periods of unified government, senior officers often will have to tread more carefully. But when the probability of punishment is relatively lower, they have more freedom to inject themselves directly or indirectly into public debates about foreign policy (Avant 1996-1997; Feaver 2003).

Even in the face of potential civilian punishment mechanisms, however, there are a variety of ways that senior military officers can express their dissent. Senior officers can provide information privately to key Congressional leaders or committee-members through ‘end-runs’, virtually unimpeded. In fact, it quite literally is part of their job description to do so. Service chiefs and combatant commanders also can provide their ‘professional’ military judgments during public testimony before Congress and the American people or during speaking engagements during routine question and answer sessions with the press. Additionally, they can grant interviews at odds with the Administration position, make public speeches or statements questioning the wisdom of potential courses of action, or provide information off-the-record. Sometimes, they even may go so far as to leak or authorize the leak of classified information or internal Administration deliberations in order to voice their opposition. Or they may share their

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44 This list of ways to dissent does not, of course, represent normative approval for such actions. Instead, it outlines the potential ways that senior officers can, and do, attempt to voice their public dissent.
concerns in the form of talking points to any one of the sympathetic retired officers who express their views on cable news each night. In many of these cases, moreover, officers can do so with little or no fear of punishment as long as they are transparent with Administration officials and stay within legal disclosure limits and secrecy laws. General Colin Powell’s much-maligned interview and op-ed in the New York Times, for example, both were conducted with full knowledge of, and clearance from, the National Security Advisor as well as the Secretary of Defense (Powell 1992; Feaver 2003). In other cases, these officers simply must ensure that they are not caught. Nevertheless, the sheer amount of criticism directed at ‘out of control’ senior officers since the end of the Cold War, and the relative dearth of examples of punishment, suggests that military officers have ample opportunities to voice their public dissent.

In general, then, the possibility of public dissent by senior military officers serves to reinforce the status quo, making it less likely that a president will use military force when officers who don’t share his preferences advise him. When the military officers advising a president share his preferences, however, we rarely should expect to see public dissent. Instead, the president will be likely to follow the advice and signals offered to him in private.

There is reason to believe that military dissent might not be as effective when used against a Republican President as it would when used against a Democratic President, however. The Republican Party effectively has ‘owned’ the issue of defense and military policy since the early 1950s (Petrocik 1996; Petrocik, Benoit, and Hansen 2003-2004). Accordingly, military dissent simply may be more effective when a Democratic President is in office, especially when the military is attempting to block

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45 Of course, one also could interpret this behavior as a ‘pre-emptive strike’ on Clinton as a presidential candidate, explaining why members of the Bush Administration might be willing to tolerate such behavior in the first place.

46 Petrocik also argues that ownership of the broader issue of ‘foreign relations’ is performance-based. Nevertheless, he provides compelling evidence that the American electorate views members of the Republican Party as more competent than members of the Democratic Party on issues related directly to defense policy and the use of military force.
the use of force.\textsuperscript{47} Since the American electorate historically has viewed the Democratic Party as weak on national security issues, public conflicts between the president and the military only serve to exacerbate this Democratic electoral weakness.

In contrast, public military dissent may be less effective when a Republican is in office. Moreover, Democrats in Congress may be less likely to seize on military dissent to target a Republican President on military or defense issues than would Republicans in Congress, ceteris paribus. Without clear evidence of incompetence, it could be potentially costly for Democratic legislators to attack a Republican President who is contemplating military action since many have painted the Democratic Party as weak or indecisive on national security issues. Even if members of Congress were able to prevent the president from using force, they might open themselves up to potential campaign attacks as being weak or dovish on national security. As a result, at least some forms of military dissent are likely to be less effective in blocking a Republican president from taking action.

\textbf{Summarizing the Theory}
Presidents rely on information and advice from expert military officers when determining whether or not to use military force. Although the development of military expertise can help the president gain the benefits of governmental specialization, it also can provide military leaders with opportunities to use their private information strategically to influence policy decisions.

The more similar military and presidential preferences are, the more credible the military’s signals will be to the president. When military and presidential preferences are closely aligned, military advisors are likely to reveal their private information to the president. In these cases, we should expect the president to be more likely to

\textsuperscript{47} Of course, it may be possible that military dissent may have a marginally greater effect on ‘pushing’ a Democratic president to use force; however, as I argued earlier in this chapter, military dissent already is relatively weak in such instances because they have to move public opinion rather than maintain elite consensus.
follow the advice of his senior officers, using military force when he expects doing so will accomplish his foreign policy goals while incurring relatively low costs. In contrast, when the president’s senior military advisors do not share his goals, military leaders instead are likely to withhold or misrepresent their private information about the consequences of a military operation. Additionally, they are likely to go outside the Administration, using public dissent in order to increase the president’s domestic political costs of going to war. However, this external strategy is more likely to be effective against a Democratic president than a Republican one because of Republican issue ownership on defense issues. In general, though, a president who is advised by officers who do not share his foreign policy preferences will be less likely to use military force than a president advised by officers who share his preferences. In contrast, when the preferences of the president and the military are aligned, the president is more likely to use military force, ceteris paribus, especially if he is a Democrat.

I argue that American political institutions – specifically parties, election, and military appointments – determine how closely the preferences of military leaders will be aligned with those of the president whom they advise. My theory predicts that partisan elections and the military appointment process will lead to predictable patterns of convergence and divergence in the preferences of the Commander-in-Chief and his senior military advisors. A president is more likely to get military advisors who share his preferences when he appoints them during periods of unified government. Under divided government, however, the senior military appointments process is more likely to yield officers whose preferences are aligned with those of elite civilian Republicans.
Chapter 3

The Democrat-Military Gap

Why the Conventional Wisdom about the Civil-Military Gap is Wrong and Misleading

“I was referred to yesterday as the President’s witness. I thought I was the committee’s witness. I would like to point out that I am neither a Democrat nor a Republican. I think it would be improper if I were, in my position. I have never voted.”
– General of the Army Omar Bradley

“I’m not a Republican. I’m not a Democrat… But here I stand tonight, endorsing George W. Bush to be the next President of the Unites States.”
– General Tommy Franks

Introduction.

In the fall of 2002, retired General – and opponent of the Iraq War – Anthony Zinni criticized several hawks within the Bush Administration, focusing on their lack of military experience. After naming a number of prominent military men who had expressed concerns about the proposed operation, Zinni remarked, “It’s pretty interesting that all the generals see it the same way and all the others who have never fired a shot and are hot to go to war see it another way.”48 Although Zinni’s decision to utter this statement publicly was somewhat controversial because he was serving as the Bush Administration’s special envoy to the Middle East at the time, the content of his remarks simply reflected the conventional wisdom: military experience fundamentally shapes one’s views about how and when to use military force.

This chapter challenges that conventional wisdom. It argues that previous studies about the presence of an ideological gap between soldiers and civilians – the ‘Civil-Military Gap’ – have paid insufficient attention to the findings of the behavioral

research tradition within the field of American politics, particularly with respect to the importance of partisan identification, attitude formation and political ideology. The behavioral literature consistently has demonstrated that an individual’s party identification forms early in life, that it is remarkably stable over time, and that it shapes how one sees virtually all aspects of political life (Berleson, et. al 1954; Campbell et. al 1960; Converse 1964; Green and Palmquist 1990, 1994; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2004). This chapter argues that the failure to adequately situate the study of the ‘Civil-Military Gap’ within this behavioral tradition has led previous scholars of civil-military relations to mischaracterize both the nature and the causes of the existing opinion gap.

By focusing centrally on the importance of partisan identification, I will argue that the actual gap is far better described as a ‘Democrat-Military Gap.’ I will demonstrate that the ‘Civil-Military Gap’ described in the extant literature represents a classic case of omitted variable bias; when comparing the attitudes of civilian elites and senior military officers while conditioning on party identification, a different picture of the gap emerges. Although there are an exceptionally large number of Republican officers (and a very small number of Democratic officers) within the senior ranks of the U.S. military, there are few systematic differences between Republican military officers and civilian elite Republicans. The attitudes of Democratic officers within the military, however, differ sharply from the attitudes of Democratic civilian elites across a number of issue areas. My analysis suggests that these differences result primarily because the overwhelming majority of Democratic officers in the military are moderate Democrats, with very few liberal Democrats in the senior ranks.

I also will suggest that officer selection and attrition can explain the high levels of conservatism and Republicanism within the senior ranks of the officer corps. Although I lack the panel data necessary to make definitive conclusions regarding the effects of military socialization, I demonstrate that Democrats enter the officer corps at much lower rates than do Republicans; additionally, I show that the most liberal junior officers typically leave the military before reaching the senior ranks of the military.
My estimates suggest that this attrition process accounts for almost all of the variation between the aggregate partisan identification and political ideology statistics of junior and senior officers. Nevertheless, I cannot identify definitively why Democrats enter the military at such low rates and leave at such high rates. Finally, I offer evidence indicating that claims of a rapidly growing gap since the advent of the All Volunteer Force (AVF) have been greatly exaggerated, even with respect to the ‘Republicanization’ of the officer corps.

This chapter proceeds in four stages. First, it briefly reviews the scholarly literature on the ‘Civil-Military Gap’ as well as the behavioral literature on partisan identification; in doing so, it identifies several ways in which the literature on civil-military relations does not align with our current understanding of partisan identification and the formation of political attitudes. Second, it re-examines the evidence for the ‘Civil-Military Gap’ in light of the literature on party identification. Third, it considers the possible theoretical alternatives that could explain the high-level of conservatism and Republicanism within the senior officer corps before examining the existing evidence on this issue. It concludes with a discussion of policy implications and areas of for future research.

The Gap in the Previous Studies of the Civil-Military Gap

In many ways, the idea of a civil-military divide seems obvious. According to Feaver and Gelpi, members of the military immerse themselves in a “set of beliefs, traditions, and experiences that those outside the military do not share.” The intense environment that surrounds military service, the prolonged exposure to a unique culture, and the carefully designed professional military education system must shape the worldview of soldiers, especially those soldiers and officers who serve for extended periods of time. Even scholars who do not view a potential gap as normatively problematic generally concede that the nature of military institutions and the particular demands of military service should lead to differences between military

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49 Ibid., p. 4.
leaders and civilians elites. How could military experience not influence one’s views regarding the use of force?

Following the Cold War, members of the media began to focus on what they called the ‘Civil-Military Gap.’ In reality, the idea of a gap was nothing new. The civil-military relations literature long had argued that there were clear and important differences in the attitudes of civilian and military leaders (Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960; Betts 1977). Members of the media also had frequently reinforced the idea that there was a fundamental civil-military divide. Nevertheless, at the end of the Cold War, a number of commentators began to focus on the increase in the number of clashes between civilian policymakers and senior military leaders over defense and foreign policy issues as evidence that the gap between soldiers and civilians had widened.  

In 1997, for example, Thomas Ricks chronicled a group of young marines that he claimed had become extremely alienated from civilian society during boot camp, framing the anecdote as evidence of a troubling cultural divide that had emerged between the military and society. Moreover, he argued that the military had become ideologically out of step with the mainstream of American society and that the officer corps, in particular, had become isolated from American culture (Ricks 1997a, 1997b). Ricks’ popular work and the broader concern about civil-military conflicts during the Clinton years inspired a renewed scholarly focus on the idea of a gap between civilians and the military.

Previous Studies of Officer Attitudes, Ideology, and Partisan Identification

Since Ricks published his book, political scientists and sociologists have attempted to identify the nature of the civil-military gap and the factors that might shape it. A number of studies have confirmed that senior military officers identify themselves in exceptionally high numbers as both conservative and Republican (Holsti 1998; Feaver and Kohn 2001, Dempsey 2010, Urben 2010) and that partisan identification among

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50 See, for example, Mandelbaum 1996; Weigley 2001; Ricks 2002a, 2002b; Dowd 2002; Hastings 2010; and Mackey 2010.
officers has increased since 1976 (See Tables 3.1 and 3.2). The largest and most-comprehensive study, the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS) “Project on the Gap Between and the Military and Civilian Society,” concluded that, in general, the views of senior military officers were more conservative than those of the civilian elite, but not more conservative than society at large (Feaver and Kohn 2001).


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Although many scholars have identified the large numbers of Republicans within the senior ranks of the military, they rarely have focused on partisan identification or attitude formation as major issues of inquiry. Instead, political scientists often have highlighted the aggregate differences in the attitudes of elite civilians and senior military officers on questions about how and when the United States should use military force (Holsti 1998, 2001; Feaver and Gelpi 2004). This analysis essentially has resulted in a restatement of the conventional wisdom. According to Feaver and Gelpi, “something deeper than personalities or partisanship is at issue – a basic civil-military divide on how force should be integrated into American foreign policy.”

Nevertheless, there has not yet been a systematic attempt to analyze the ‘Civil-Military

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51 Several studies stand out as exceptions; see Desch (2001) who focuses on possible causes of ‘Republicanization,’ Dempsey (2010) who identifies that the partisan composition of the Army as a whole is more diverse than many had previously believed, and Urben (2010) who examines the stability of party affiliation within the officer corps.

52 Ibid.
Gap’ in light of the behavioral literature regarding party affiliation and attitude formation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
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<td>2004****</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>242</td>
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* Survey of Pentagon Staff (conducted by Janowitz); ** FLPL Surveys (1976-1996); *** TISS Surveys; **** Citizenship and Service Survey; 
Note: Surveys utilize different methodologies and should be used only for a rough comparison.

**Partisan Bias and the Civil-Military Gap**

Traditional characterizations of partisanship focus on the predictive power of party identification in American elections (Campbell et. al 1960). However, the centrality of partisan identity in American politics reaches far beyond voting behavior; partisanship is a dominant factor in explaining not just how people vote, but also how they interpret politics in general. In the classic formulation, Americans identify with a political party early in their lives, most commonly as a loyalty acquired from their parents. Partisan preferences tend to form during adolescence before becoming more stable over one’s lifetime (Jennings and Markus 1984; Sears and Funk 1999). Party loyalty thus contributes to an individual’s identity and provides a set of foundational principles that the individual usually maintains throughout her life (Berleson, et. al 1954; Campbell et. al 1960; Converse 1964; Green and Palmquist 1990, 1994; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002). In doing so, party identification thus furnishes answers to a wide range of questions: “Who am I? … What should I believe? What is the nature of reality? What should be done, what should not be done?” Thus, partisanship provides a framework for the perception and evaluation of the political world (Campbell et. al 1960; Bartels 2002).

In the *American Voter*, Campbell et al (1960) argued that party identification serves as a “perceptual screen through which the individual tends to see what is favorable to his partisan orientation.”\(^{54}\) A substantial body of research has confirmed that partisan bias shapes the way individuals interpret and integrate facts into their political attitudes and opinions (Bartels 2002, Taber and Lodge 2006, Gaines et. al 2007; but see Gerber and Green 1999). Taber and Lodge (2006), for example, utilized survey experiments to examine the relationship between partisan bias and opinion updating. They found that strong partisans make every effort to maintain their existing opinions by seeking out confirming evidence, arguing against information that does not fit their preconceived notions, and attributing more strength to arguments that were consistent with their beliefs. Similarly, Gaines et. al (2007) found that partisan bias played a significant role in shaping the interpretations – and subsequently the opinions – of citizens about the handling of the Iraq War. Moreover, they found that those who were “better informed more effectively used interpretations to buttress their existing partisan views.”\(^{55}\)

In contrast with the literature on political partisanship, civil-military relations theorists instead have tended to see partisanship among military officers not as an organizing framework to understand political life, but rather as an obstacle to the development of a professional military willing to subordinate itself to the interests of civilian leaders (Huntington 1957, Janowitz 1960, Kohn 1997, Feaver 2003). As a result, there have been essentially no attempts to seriously consider how partisanship might shape officers’ interpretations of their experiences within the military.\(^{56}\) Although a number of studies about the ‘Civil Military Gap’ have controlled for partisanship, none have considered the possibility that an officer’s partisan bias might directly influence the way he interprets his experiences within the military. In other words, Democrats and Republicans might face many of the same things during their time as military officers,

\(^{54}\) Campbell et al. (1960), p. 133.  
\(^{55}\) Gaines et al 2007, p. 957.  
\(^{56}\) Recently, Urben (2010) conducted an important study on partisan stability within the Army officer corps. She found that officers’ partisan affiliations and political ideologies were stable; service in the Army and deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan had no significant effect on either variable.
but they might interpret these experiences in vastly different ways. Thus, it is possible that an officer’s experiences within the military will only serve to reinforce his existing partisan affiliation and political preferences.

Perhaps even more importantly, previous analyses of the ‘Civil Military Gap’ have failed to differentiate between the attitudes of civilian elites who are Democrats and the attitudes of those who are Republicans. In the context of American political institutions, this oversight is extremely problematic for a simple reason: partisan politics shapes the structure of American civil-military relations. An undifferentiated mass of the ‘military’ does not give advice to an undifferentiated mass of ‘civilians.’ Instead, individual officers interact with civilian politicians from each of the two major political parties. Thus, any attempt to understand the nature of a ‘Civil-Military Gap’ must account for the central role of party affiliation in shaping the attitudes of both senior military officers and civilian elites. It also must play close attention to the attitudinal differences between Republicans and Democrats. This chapter attempts to fill this gap in the empirical literature by testing the Civil Military Gap hypothesis while conditioning on party affiliation.

**Hypothesis Development**

Previous analyses of the Civil-Military Gap have tested the gap hypothesis by comparing the mean attitudes of civilian non-veterans with the mean attitudes of civilian veterans and senior military leaders. However, each of these groups consists of a very different mix of partisans (see Tables 3.3 and 3.4). Thus, aggregating these attitudes might lead to differences in attitudes simply because of the different distribution of partisans within each group (Simpson 1951; Blyth 1972). Although mean comparisons of civilian leaders and military officers may at first glance make one think that there are civil-military differences, this relationship may be spurious. In order to adequately test the gap hypothesis, we need to refine our hypotheses and tailor our empirical strategy to account for these known partisan differences.
If the Civil-Military Gap hypothesis is correct, we would expect there to be substantive and systematic differences between different the various civil-military categories (non-veterans, veterans, and military officers) within the same party. For example, we should expect Republican non-veterans to hold different opinions regarding the use of force than do Republican veterans or Republican military officers. In contrast, similarities between the attitudes of respondents from the various civil-military categories within the same party would be evidence against the gap hypothesis. Thus, my analysis in the next two sections will focus on testing the following restatements of the Civil-Military Gap hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 1.** Senior military leaders and civilian veterans will have substantively different opinions regarding foreign policy goals than do civilian non-veterans who identify with the same political party.

**Hypothesis 2.** Senior military leaders and civilian veterans will have substantively different opinions regarding restrictions on the use of force than do civilian non-veterans who identify with the same political party.

**Hypothesis 3.** Senior military leaders and civilian veterans will have substantively different opinions regarding economic policies and social values issues than do civilian non-veterans who identify with the same political party.

**Hypothesis 4.** Senior military leaders and civilian veterans will have substantively different opinions regarding their perceptions of civilian society and military culture than do civilian non-veterans who identify with the same political party.

**Methods and Data**

In this section, I will test the expectations of the gap hypothesis using survey data collected by the Triangle Institute for Security Studies (TISS). The TISS study targeted three distinct populations: 1) civilian elites, 2) senior military officers, and 3) the mass public. My analysis will focus only on civilian and military elites because
they are far more likely to have a direct influence on the foreign policy decision-making process and because many of my variables of interest are not available in the mass civilian sample.\textsuperscript{57}

The civilian elite sample was selected primarily from \textit{Who’s Who in American Politics}, but was supplemented with several targeted subsamples. The military elite sample focused on senior military officers at the Pentagon and the military’s senior service colleges. Researchers conducted the survey primarily via mail, but they also distributed surveys to military officers at the designated institutions. Drawing on Feaver and Gelpi (2004), I distinguish between three types of respondents: 1) civilian elite non-veterans, 2) civilian elite veterans, and 3) senior military officers.\textsuperscript{58}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.3: Party Identification in the 1998-99 TISS Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percent selecting each option</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Military Leaders Civilian Veterans Civilian Non-veterans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(416)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other and None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(642)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Differences between groups significant at the 0.001 level; percentages calculated within columns.

Tables 3.3 and 3.4 display the breakdown of Party Identification and Ideological self-identification within each of the three categories. More senior military officers identify themselves as Republicans and conservatives than are civilians in either of the other

\textsuperscript{57} For analysis of the enlisted ranks of the Army, see Dempsey (2010). Dempsey’s central finding is that the Army as a whole is far less politically homogenous than previously thought even though the senior ranks of the officer corps are disproportionately conservative and Republican.

\textsuperscript{58} Feaver and Gelpi (2004) identify five categories. I excluded two categories from my analysis: 1) elite civilians currently enrolled in a professional military education program, and 2) officers in the Reserves or National Guard attending professional military education programs. Both groups are extremely small, and it is less likely that they would have a direct effect on the foreign policy process. I also ran all of my analyses while including respondents from both categories, but their inclusion did not substantively or significantly affect my results.
two categories. Civilian veterans also are more likely to identify themselves as Republicans and conservatives than are civilian veterans; nevertheless, combining the two civilian groups yields a much more balanced distribution of partisans, with 37 percent of civilians identifying as Democrats and 34 percent identifying themselves as Republicans.

Table 3.4: Ideological Self-Identification in the 1998-99 TISS Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent selecting each option</th>
<th>Senior Military Leaders</th>
<th>Civilian Veterans</th>
<th>Civilian Non-veterans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Liberal</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Liberal</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(23)</td>
<td>(51)</td>
<td>(150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(176)</td>
<td>(86)</td>
<td>(179)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Conservative</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(345)</td>
<td>(118)</td>
<td>(139)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Conservative</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(86)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>(47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(632)</td>
<td>(294)</td>
<td>(594)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Differences between groups significant at the 0.001 level; percentages calculated within columns.

Following previous studies of the Civil-Military Gap, I will begin my analysis by comparing across groups utilizing a variety of methods including bar charts, distributional graphs, and cross-tabulations; in almost all cases, my initial analysis replicates the methods used in previous studies. After comparing across the civil-military categories, however, I then condition on party as well as civil-military category. Additionally, I utilize multivariate regression analysis to examine whether observed differences persist even when controlling for a variety of demographic characteristics or other confounding variables. Although this analysis would not erase differences between groups, it would allow us to make more informed inference about the potential causes of observed differences between groups. The design of previous surveys makes it difficult for us to assess whether selection or socialization cause

59 I chose primarily to present bar charts and cross-tabulations because of their clarity and their prevalent use in the literature. Although distributional graphs are not included in this chapter due to space constraints, this analysis yielded substantively similar results; they are available upon request.
attitudinal differences; nevertheless, later in the chapter, I will return to this question and highlight evidence that suggests that selection into, and out of, the officer corps may be the primary factor in causing the differences observed in the next section.

**Missing Data**
Since many of my independent variables rely on the construction of scales from multiple questions, ‘no opinion’ responses and missing data can create a number of gaps in the data and eliminate respondents who have answered even six of seven relevant questions. To fill in the gaps in the dataset, I used the Amelia II software package for multiple imputation (King, Honeker, Joseph and Scheve 2001). No values for party affiliation, political ideology, or other demographic characteristics were imputed. Overall, I imputed 6.4% of the data. I also ran regression models on the non-imputed data, and they produced statistically and substantively similar results.

**Dependent Variable**
The primary variable I am trying to explain is the aggregate attitudinal differences between senior military leaders and civilian leaders who have never served in the military. Following Holsti (1998, 2001) and Feaver and Gelpi (2004), I utilize a number of issue scales in order to better capture underlying political attitudes regarding the use of force, economic and social issues, and perceptions of civilian society and military culture. In almost all cases, I utilize issue scales and coding rules that previously had been used in the literature on the Civil-Military Gap. My subsequent analysis will focus primarily on four issue areas: 1) Foreign Policy Priorities and Goals, 2) Restrictions on the Use of Military Force, 3) Economic and Social Values Issues, and 4) Perceptions of Civilian Society and Military Culture. ⁶⁰

⁶⁰ For all questions with three responses (not including ‘no opinion’), the respondents’ answers were coded as follows: very important = 1, somewhat important = 0.33, and not important = -1. For all questions with four responses (not including ‘no opinion’), I coded the answers as follows: strongly agree = 1, agree somewhat = 0.33, disagree somewhat = -0.33, and disagree strongly = -1. All missing data and ‘no opinion’ responses were coded through multiple imputation using the Amelia II software package as discussed above. Holsti treated no opinion responses as ‘0’ on a scale running from -1 to 1 and Feaver and Gelpi coded ‘no opinion’ responses as ‘3’ on a 5-point scale. I also conducted the analysis using Holsti’s (1998, 2001) and Feaver and Gelpi’s (2004) coding rules and obtained substantively similar results for all dependent variables.
Foreign Policy Attitudes and Goals

In order to analyze individuals’ attitudes on foreign policy priorities and goals, I utilize two sets of scales that have been prominent in the civil-military relations literature. First, I use the multidimensional Militant Internationalism (MI) and Cooperative Internationalism (CI) scales introduced by Wittkopf (1990) and applied to the study of the civil-military gap by Holsti (1998, 2001). The MI scale represents a perspective on international affairs that emphasizes “a conflictual world in which expansionist powers represent a major threat to the United States.” The MI scale is constructed as the mean of respondents’ support for seven questions about the following topics: 1) the importance of containing communism, 2) the importance of maintaining superior military power, 3) the validity of the domino theory, 4) Russian foreign policy goals, 5) the role of the CIA, 6) using military force to prevent aggression, and 7) Chinese foreign policy gains.

In contrast to MI scale, the Cooperative Internationalism scale emphasizes a foreign policy dimension that focuses on the importance of multilateral cooperation and international institutions. The CI scale is based on questions related to the following seven issues: 1) helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries,

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61 Wittkopf and Holsti typically have extended their analysis to include a two-by-two table, consisting of four categories: hard-liners, internationalists, isolationists and accommodationists. For a more detailed description of this process, see Wittkopf (1990) or Holsti and Rosenau (1993) or Holsti (1997). I also conducted this analysis and found it to be consistent with the Democrat-Military Gap thesis offered in this chapter.


63 These survey items scaled together well (alpha = 0.72). Specific question wordings from the TISS survey were as follows: Question 1. “Here is a list of foreign policy goals that the United States might have. Please indicate how much importance you think should be attached to each goal: 1) very important, 2) somewhat important, 3) not important, or 4) no opinion.” Q01F: “Containing communism.” Q01J: “Maintaining superior military power worldwide.” Question 2. “This question asks you to indicate what your position is on certain propositions that are sometimes described as lessons that the United States should have learned from past experiences abroad: 1) strongly agree, 2) somewhat agree, 3) somewhat disagree, 4) strongly disagree, or 5) no opinion.” Q02A: “There is considerable validity to the ‘domino theory’ that when one nation falls to aggressor nations, others nearby will soon follow a similar path.” Q02C: “Russia is generally expansionist rather than defensive in its foreign policy goals.” Q02D: “There is nothing wrong with using the CIA to try to undermine hostile governments.” Q02E: “The U.S. should take all steps including the use of force to prevent aggression by any expansionist power.” Q02G: “Any Chinese victory is a defeat for America’s national interest.”
2) combating world hunger, 3) strengthening the UN, 4) fostering international cooperation, 5) promoting human rights, 6) gaining UN cooperation in international disputes, and 7) and giving economic aid to poorer countries.

Feaver and Gelpi (2004) developed two similar scales to identify support for foreign policy goals including 1) Realpolitik missions and 2) Interventions to promote human rights. To construct their Realpolitik scale, Feaver and Gelpi used the MI scale, but added an additional question regarding the emergence of China as a military threat. I employ the same approach. For the Interventionist scale, Feaver and Gelpi used only questions on the following topics: 1) helping to improve the standard of living in less developed countries, 2) combating world hunger, 3) fostering international cooperation, and 4) promoting human rights. In this case, I again will utilize the same questions to construct my scale.

64 These items scaled together with an alpha = 0.74. Specific question wordings from the TISS survey were as follows: Question 1. “Here is a list of foreign policy goals that the United States might have. Please indicate how much importance you think should be attached to each goal: 1) very important, 2) somewhat important, 3) not important, or 4) no opinion.” Q01A: “Helping to improve the standard of living in less-developed countries.” Q01C: “Combating world hunger.” Q01D: “Strengthening the United Nations.” Q01E: “Fostering international cooperation to solve common problems such as food, inflation and energy.” Q01H: “Promoting and defending human rights in other countries.” Question 2. “This question asks you to indicate what your position is on certain propositions that are sometimes described as lessons that the United States should have learned from past experiences abroad: 1) strongly agree, 2) somewhat agree, 3) somewhat disagree, 4) strongly disagree, or 5) no opinion.” Q02B: “It is vital to enlist the cooperation of the U.N. in settling international disputes.” Q02F: “The U.S. should give economic aid to poorer countries even if it means higher prices at home.”

65 These survey items scaled together well (alpha = 0.72). Specific question wordings from the TISS survey were as follows: Question 1: “Here is a list of foreign policy goals that the United States might have. Please indicate how much importance you think should be attached to each goal: 1) very important, 2) somewhat important, 3) not important, or 4) no opinion.” Q01F: “Containing communism.” Q01J: “Maintaining superior military power worldwide.” Question 2: “This question asks you to indicate what your position on is certain propositions that are sometimes described as lessons that the United States should have learned from past experiences abroad: 1) strongly agree, 2) somewhat agree, 3) somewhat disagree, 4) strongly disagree, or 5) no opinion.” Q02A: “There is considerable validity to the ‘domino theory’ that when one nation falls to aggressor nations, others nearby will soon follow a similar path.” Q02C: “Russia is generally expansionist rather than defensive in its foreign policy goals.” Q02D: “There is nothing wrong with using the CIA to try to undermine hostile governments.” Q02E: “The U.S. should take all steps including the use of force to prevent aggression by any expansionist power.” Q02G: “Any Chinese victory is a defeat for America’s national interest.” Question 3: “This question asks you to evaluate the seriousness of the following as threats to American national security. The emergence of China as a great military power: 1) very serious, 2) moderately serious, 3) slightly serious, 4) not at all serious, or 5) no opinion.”

66 These items scaled together with a Cronbach’s alpha = 0.71. Question wordings from the TISS survey were as follows: Question 1. “Here is a list of foreign policy goals that the United States might have. Please indicate how much importance you think should be attached to each goal: 1) very
Restrictions on the Use of Force

My second issue area examines attitudes on how to use military force with an emphasis on whether or not political restrictions should be placed on the use of force. Following Feaver and Gelpi, I focus on several questions related to the ‘Powell Doctrine’; however, I also analyze several questions regarding the appropriate role for civilian policymakers and senior military officials during the use of force decision process. To construct the Powell scale, I combine two questions related to two key tenets of the Powell Doctrine: 1) military force should be used only in pursuit of total victory, and 2) military force should be used quickly and massively rather than gradually. Additionally, I examine the responses to three questions regarding the use of military force separately: 1) civilian officials should have the final say on the decision to use force, 2) civilian officials should have the final say on what type of military force to use, and 3) during wartime, civilian leaders should let the military take over running the war.

Economic and Social Values Issues

In addition to examining foreign policy questions, I also consider economic policy and social values. In this case, I rely primarily on a question about support for income redistribution and a social policy scale developed by Holsti (2001). In order to code the economic policy variable, I assumed that economic liberals would favor taxation for the purposes of income redistribution while economic conservatives would oppose it. For the Social Values scale, I included questions on the following topics: 1) school important, 2) somewhat important, 3) not important, or 4) no opinion.” Q01A: “Helping to improve the standard of living in less-developed countries.” Q01C: “Combating world hunger.” Q01E: “Fostering international cooperation to solve common problems such as food, inflation and energy.” Q01H: “Promoting and defending human rights in other countries.”

The correlation between these two items is 0.45. The question wordings from the TISS survey are: Q02I: “Military force should be used only in pursuit of the goal of total victory.” Q02J: “Use of force in foreign interventions should be applied quickly and massively rather than by gradual escalation.” The question wordings from the TISS survey are: Question 48B. “This question asks for your opinion on a number of statements concerning relations between the military and senior civilian leaders: 1) strongly agree, 2) somewhat agree, 3) somewhat disagree, 4) strongly disagree, or 5) no opinion.” Q48B. “In general, high ranking civilian officials rather than high ranking military officers should have the final say on what type of military force to use.” Q48D. “In wartime, civilian government leaders should let the military take over running the war.”

Question 5. “This question asks you to indicate your position on certain domestic issues: 1) strongly agree, 2) somewhat agree, 3) somewhat disagree, 4) strongly disagree, or 5) no opinion.” Q05K. “Redistributing income from the wealthy to the poor through taxation and subsidies.”
busing, 2) abortion, 3) women’s societal role, 4) school prayer, 5) gay teachers, and 6) the death penalty.\textsuperscript{70} I assumed that liberals would support an active government role to redress past discrimination, a ban on the death penalty, and government action to protect abortion rights and gay rights.

*Perceptions of Civilian Society and Military Culture*

My final dependent variable relates to attitudes regarding civilian society and military culture. I analyze two questions separately. The first question asks respondents whether the decline of traditional values is contributing to the breakdown of society; the second question asks whether the military receives more respect than it deserves.\textsuperscript{71} Since there are a number of other ways to analyze this issue with the existing TISS data, I also briefly will mention several possible extensions or other areas for analysis during my discussion.

*Key Independent Variables*

*Military Status of Respondent*

The military status of respondents has been the primary explanatory variable in the empirical literature on the Civil-Military Gap. For my analysis, I created three dummy variables to represent respondents from each of the following categories: 1) *Military Leader*, 2) *Civilian Elite Veteran*, and 3) *Civilian Elite Non-veteran*. For the variable, *Military Leader*, I coded respondents who reported that they currently were serving on active duty in the military as ‘1’, and coded this variable as ‘0’ otherwise. Similarly, for *Civilian Elite Veteran*, I coded all respondents who reported that they currently were serving on active duty in the military as ‘1’, and coded this variable as ‘0’ otherwise. Similarly, for *Civilian Elite Non-veteran*, I coded all respondents drawn from the civilian elite sample.

\textsuperscript{70} These six items scale together relatively well (alpha: 0.69). Question 5. “This question asks you to indicate your position on certain domestic issues: 1) strongly agree, 2) somewhat agree, 3) somewhat disagree, 4) strongly disagree, or 5) no opinion.” Q05A. “Busing children in order to achieve school integration.” Q05E. “Leaving abortion decisions to women and their doctors.” Q05F. “Encouraging mothers to stay at home with their children rather than working outside the home.” Q05G. “Permitting prayer in public schools.” Q05I. “Barring homosexuals from teaching in public schools.” Q05L. “Banning the death penalty.”

\textsuperscript{71} Specific question wordings from the TISS survey are as follows: Question 8A. “This question asks you to indicate your position on certain domestic issues. The decline of traditional values is contributing to the breakdown of our society: 1) strongly agree, 2) somewhat agree, 3) somewhat disagree, 4) strongly disagree, or 5) no opinion.” Question 31. “Thinking about the way most Americans view the military, would you say the military gets more respect than it deserves, less respect than it deserves, or about as much respect as it deserves?”
who reported prior military service as a ‘1,’ and coded it ‘0’ otherwise. Finally, the
Civilian Elite Non-veteran variable is omitted from all regression analysis so that these
respondents can serve as the baseline comparison category.\footnote{As noted previously, I removed all respondents from Feaver and Gelpi’s (2004) categories, ‘Civilian PME’ and ‘Military Reserves’ from my data set because they were not central to my analysis. However, I also conducted all my empirical tests while including both categories and obtained statistically and substantively similar effects.}

\textit{Partisan Identification of Respondent}

Several previous studies of the gap hypothesis have included Party ID as a control
category. My analysis includes dummy variables for several partisan categories. I
created several dummy variables, Democrat, Independent, and No Party. I also created
a Republican dummy, but this variable is omitted from all regression analysis as the
baseline comparison category.

\textit{Interaction between Military Status and Partisan Identification}

Finally, I introduce several interaction terms intended to determine whether the
evidence for the Civil-Military Gap hypothesis holds up when comparing respondents
across each military group within their respective partisan categories. For Military
Leaders, I created the following interaction terms: Military Leader x Democrat,
Military Leader x Independent, Military Leader x No Party. Similarly, I created
Veteran x Democrat, Veteran x Independent, Veteran x No Party for Civilian Elite
Veterans.

If the Civil-Military Gap hypothesis holds generally, interpreting these coefficients
should be fairly straightforward. We would expect the coefficient on the variable,
Military Leader, to be statistically significant; additionally, none of the coefficients on
the interaction terms would be statistically significant. The interpretation would be
that a gap exists between Republican Military Leaders and Republican Civilian Non-
veterans; moreover, we could infer that a similar gap exists between the Military
Leaders and Civilian Non-veterans within the other partisan categories. If the
coefficients on Military Leader and all of the interaction terms are not statistically
significant, then we can infer that there is no general Civil-Military Gap within a given issue area. The same logic applies when comparing Civilian Elite Veterans with Civilian Non-Veterans.

However, if any of the coefficients on the interaction terms are statistically significant, we must sum the coefficients of the relevant Military Status Variable, the relevant Party ID Variable, and the appropriate interaction term. Take a Democrat Military Leader, for example. In order to identify the total effect of being a Democrat Military Leader (compared to being a Civilian Elite Republican), we would sum the coefficients on the following variables: Military Leader, Democrat, and Democrat x Military Leader. If we wanted to compare a Democrat Military Leader to a Civilian Elite Democrat, we would compare that total to the coefficient on Democrat. The same logic holds for Civilian Veterans and for each of the Party ID categories.

**Control Variables**

Although my primary interest relates to the effects of Military Status and Party ID, demographic factors are, in many cases, correlated with these variables. As a result, it will be useful to examine whether any observed differences simply are a result of demographic characteristics or whether a respondent’s Military Status or Party ID have an independent effect. Thus, I included the following control variables: Age, Gender (coded 1 for females and 0 for males), Education, Minority (coded 1 for blacks and Hispanics; 0 otherwise), and South (coded 1 for respondents who identified they originally were from the South, and 0 otherwise). Consistent with previous research, I expect that an increase in Age and being from the South will be positively correlated with more ‘conservative’ attitudes. In contrast, I expect that women, minorities, and more educated individuals will hold more ‘liberal’ attitudes in general; as a result, I expect their coefficients to be negative in all regression models.

I also include an additional variable, Military Social Contact, to represent the amount of contact a respondent has with members of the military. Feaver and Gelpi (2004) found that including such a variable “accounts” for what they found to be an otherwise
statistically significant Civil-Military Gap in attitudes regarding the use of force. Feaver and Gelpi admit that respondents might report regular contact with military officers because they already have attitudes similar to those serving in the military. Nevertheless, they suggest that – since this variable’s inclusion eliminates the Civil-Military Gap in their regression analyses – regular “socializing with the military may serve to bring the attitudes of civilian elite nonveterans in line with those of active duty military elites.”

Thus, I follow Feaver and Gelpi and include a Military Social Contact scale by combining questions 28-30 on the TISS survey. These questions seek to measure how much contact civilians have with members of the military in their social lives or at work. Finding that this variable is statistically significant does not necessarily lead to a finding that there is, in fact, a Civil-Military Gap. However, if including Military Social Contact does eliminate an otherwise statistically significant finding, it may imply that social contact with the military is a mechanism that leads to attitudinal differences. These differences may result either because people with a certain set of beliefs choose to associate with the military or because contact with the military changes people’s attitudes through a process of socialization.

**Empirical Findings: The Democrat-Military Gap**

*Foreign Policy Attitudes and Priorities*

I begin my analysis by examining differences in foreign policy attitudes and priorities through the use of both the MI and CI scales as well as the Realpolitik and Interventionist scales. Consistent with many previous analyses of the Civil-Military Gap, I present a series of figures that represent the respondents’ mean answers on each of the scales (which all range from a minimum possible response of -1.0 to a maximum possible response 1.0). Larger differences between the mean responses for each group can be interpreted to represent a larger attitudinal ‘gap.’

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74 In all cases, I have created my scales so that they range from more ‘liberal’ responses (values of -1.0) to more ‘conservative’ responses (values of 1.0).
Figure 3.1 presents the results of the mean responses on the Militant Internationalism scale broken down by the military status categories. As we can see, there is an apparent ‘gap’ between Civilian and Military Respondents; additionally, a difference of means test indicates that the ‘gaps’ between Civilian Elite Non-veterans and Civilian Elite Veterans and Military Leaders, respectively, both are statistically significant at the 0.001 level. Virtually all previous empirical evidence of the Civil-Military Gap is based on a methodological approach similar to the one used to create Figure 3.1.

Next, Figure 3.2 presents the same responses, now conditioned on respondents’ reported Party ID. As we see in Figure 3.2, a much different picture emerges. Among the Civilian Elite Non-veterans, there is a statistically significant and substantively much larger gap between the means of both parties (0.42) than the gap we observed between Civilian Non-veterans and Military Leaders (0.17) in Figure 3.1. Moreover, the difference in means test between Civilian Non-veterans and Military Leaders is
neither substantively large nor statistically significant. However, among Democrats, differences between Military Leaders and Civilian Non-veterans are substantively large (0.23) and a difference of means test is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Additionally, Military Independents are no different than Military Democrats, though they are different from elite Civilian Non-veterans (0.12) with a p-value of less than 0.01.

Figure 3.2
Mean Score on the MI Scale by Civil-Military Category and Party

A similar pattern emerges in Table 3.5, which presents a series of regression models that control for the demographic factors discussed above. Models 1 and 2 present tests of the Civil-Military Gap that control for Party ID, but that do not examine differences within parties. As expected, we do observe a Civil-Military Gap in Model 1 with the coefficient on Military Leader both positive and statistically significant; however, this apparent gap disappears when we include the Military Social Contact variable in Model 2. Similar to the analysis in Figure 3.2, Models 3 and 4 examine differences between civil-military categories within the same party. Model 3 identifies no
statistically significant gap between Republican Military Leaders and Republican Non-veterans; however, the interaction terms Military Leader x Democrat, Military Leader x Independent, Veteran x Democrat, and Veteran x Independent are all positive and statistically significant. Thus, when we combine these coefficients with the large and statistically significant coefficients on Democrat and Independent, respectively, we do identify substantively large and statistically significant differences between Military Leaders and Civilian Non-veterans among Democrats and Independents. We also identify differences between Civilian Veterans and Civilian Non-veterans among both Democrat and Independent identifiers.

As hypothesized by Feaver and Gelpi, however, it could be that this attitudinal gap is related to the level of contact that Civilian Non-veterans have with the military. Nevertheless, even when controlling for Military Social Contact, which is positive and statistically significant in Model 4, these results remain. Thus, while it does appear that contact with the military is correlated with more ‘militant’ values regarding the use of force, it is difficult to determine whether this effect is the result of socialization or selection. It could be that this effect is the result of a process of socialization due to continued contact with service members. It also might be that individuals who are supportive of a more aggressive foreign policy choose to work in the defense industry where they would have more contact with military officers; unsurprisingly, this variable is highly correlated with both military service and with self-identification as a DOD employee. In either case, the coefficient (0.05) on the Military Social Contact variable is much smaller than the coefficient on Democrat x Military Leader (0.21). As a result, even if this result is driven by socialization, we would expect that increased civilian and military contact would only have a marginal in mitigating the size of the gap.
### Table 3.5: Civilian and Military Attitudes on the Militant Internationalism (MI) Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader</td>
<td>0.06***</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Elite Veteran</td>
<td>0.09***</td>
<td>0.08***</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military Social Contact</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>(0.01)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.21***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military Leader x No Party</td>
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<td>(0.07)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x Democrat</td>
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<td>0.10*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.14**</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x No Party</td>
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<td>0.07</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0.31***</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
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<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** = p < 0.01, one-tailed test; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.10.
Assessing whether or not these findings are substantively large requires some subjectivity. However, one can begin by comparing the relative sizes of my findings with those of previous studies. The partisan gaps identified in Model 4 are much larger than the civil-military gaps identified in Model 1. Among Democrats, the change from a Military Leader to a Civilian Non-veteran leads to a predicted mean shift of 11.5 percent on the MI scale. Additionally, the predicted mean shift when changing from a nonveteran Republican to a non-veteran Democrat is nearly 19 percent on the MI scale. Both of these predicted mean shifts are much larger than the 4.5 percent mean shift resulting from the apparent Civil-Military Gap in Model 1. In all cases, these gaps are substantively much larger than the previously identified Civil-Military Gap.

**Figure 3.3**
**Mean Score on the Cooperative Internationalism Scale by Civil-Military Category**

Figures 3.3 and 3.4 display similar results for the Cooperative Internationalism scale. Once we account for the partisan distributions within each civil-military category, most of the differences between Republican Military Leaders and Republican Non-veterans vanish. The difference of means tests between Republican Non-veterans and
Republican Veterans and Military Leaders, however, were both statistically significant with p-values of 0.08 and 0.03, respectively. Although this result does offer weak evidence of a Civil-Military Gap on the CI scale, the Republican gap is not substantively large, especially when compared to the partisan differences. Moreover, when controlling for other demographic factors using multivariate regression in Table 3.6, the p-value for Military Leader is no longer statistically significant. Once again, partisan differences largely dominate variation in the civil-military status of respondents on the CI scale; among Republicans and Independents, Military Leaders, Civilian Elite Veterans and Non-veterans hold attitudes similar to one another once we control for other demographic factors. The only exception again is within the Democratic Party. Although the attitudes of Democrat Civilian Veterans and Non-veterans are not statistically different, there is an attitudinal gap between Military Leaders and both groups of Civilian leaders.

Figure 3.4
Mean Score on the CI Scale by Civil-Military Category and Party
<table>
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<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th>Model 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Elite Veteran</td>
<td>-0.06**</td>
<td>-0.06**</td>
<td>-0.08**</td>
<td>-0.08**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>-0.02***</td>
<td>-0.02***</td>
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<td>0.08***</td>
<td>0.08***</td>
<td>0.08***</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.02</td>
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<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>0.26***</td>
<td>0.23***</td>
<td>0.28***</td>
<td>0.25***</td>
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<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>0.09***</td>
<td>0.07***</td>
<td>0.10***</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
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<td>0.07**</td>
<td>0.10*</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
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<td>(0.03)</td>
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<td>(0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Social Contact</td>
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<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
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<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military Leader x Democrat</td>
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<td>-0.13**</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Military Leader x Independent</td>
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<tr>
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<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x No Party</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x Democrat</td>
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<td>0.08</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-0.07</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.26***</td>
<td>0.40***</td>
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<td>(0.07)</td>
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<td>0.16</td>
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*** = p < 0.01, one-tailed test; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.10.
Table 3.7: Civilian and Military Attitudes on the Realpolitik and Humanitarian Intervention Scale

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<th></th>
<th>Realpolitik Missions</th>
<th>Interventionist Missions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Military Leader</td>
<td>0.07*** (0.02)</td>
<td>-0.03 (0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Elite Veteran</td>
<td>0.09*** (0.03)</td>
<td>0.01 (0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.01 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.01 (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.06** (0.02)</td>
<td>0.06*** (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-0.05*** (0.01)</td>
<td>-0.05*** (0.01)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>0.10*** (0.04)</td>
<td>0.09*** (0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>0.07*** (0.02)</td>
<td>0.07*** (0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>-0.32*** (0.02)</td>
<td>-0.36*** (0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>-0.19*** (0.02)</td>
<td>-0.26*** (0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Party</td>
<td>-0.10*** (0.03)</td>
<td>-0.13*** (0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Social Contact</td>
<td>0.06*** (0.01)</td>
<td>-0.06 (0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x Democrat</td>
<td>0.21*** (0.06)</td>
<td>-0.13* (0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x Independent</td>
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<td>-0.07 (0.06)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x No Party</td>
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<td>-0.04 (0.08)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x Democrat</td>
<td>0.10* (0.06)</td>
<td>0.04 (0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x Independent</td>
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<td>-0.04 (0.07)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veteran x No Party</td>
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<td>-0.09 (0.12)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.30*** (0.06)</td>
<td>0.20** (0.07)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R²                      | 0.19                  | 0.21                     | 0.14                    | 0.15                    |

(N)                     | 1542                  | 1542                     | 1542                    | 1542                    |

*** = p < 0.01, one-tailed test; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.10.
Figure 3.5
Mean Score on Realpolitik Missions Scale by Civ-Mil Category and Party

Figure 3.6
Mean Score on Interventionist Missions Scale by Civ-Mil Category and Party
As displayed in Figure 3.5 and the first two columns of Table 3.7, the results for the Realpolitik scale are virtually identical to those of the MI scale. This result is unsurprising given that the scales are virtually identical with only the inclusion of a question about whether China’s military represents an emerging threat. Similarly, my findings regarding the Humanitarian Intervention scale (see Figure 3.6 and columns 3-4 of Table 3.7) largely parallel my findings for the CI scale.

The pattern we observe in Figures 3.1-3.6 and Tables 3.5-3.7 will re-emerge repeatedly throughout the following analysis. Differences between Military Leaders and Civilian Non-veterans within the Democratic Party persist while differences between the same groups on the Republican side disappear. Previous failures to account for the underlying partisan distributions within each Civil-Military category have led scholars to make flawed inferences about the nature and causes of attitudinal differences between civilian and military leaders because they did not account for partisan differences within each civil-military category. When we do account for partisan differences, however, a more nuanced and accurate picture emerges. There is no Civil-Military Gap regarding the use of force; there is, instead, a Democrat-Military Gap.

**Restrictions on the Use of Military Force**

The differences between partisans and the size of the Democrat-Military Gap become even more substantial when we examine restrictions on the use of military force. Figure 3.7 again displays a wide gap between Elite Civilian Republicans and Democrats on questions that attempt to gauge support for the Powell Doctrine. Moreover, we observe no substantive or statistically significant differences between

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75 To conserve space, I will not reproduce figures similar to those in Figure 3.1 and 3.3. In all cases (with the exception of the Economic policy scale), I was able to identify the apparent ‘Civil-Military Gap’ when not accounting for Party ID.

76 This measure may not, in fact, actually be capturing a respondents’ level of support for the Powell doctrine since it does not include any questions regarding exit strategies, public support, or clear goals; instead, it may simply be measuring preferences over the amount of military force to use in a given situation. Nevertheless, I am comfortable assuming that responses to the types of questions mentioned above would be highly correlated with the questions I included and chose to utilize Feaver and Gelpi’s (2004) terminology.
Republicans groups, but we do observe statistically significant variation between Non-veteran Democrats and Senior Military Democrats (p-value < 0.001).

**Figure 3.7**

*Mean Score on Powell Doctrine Scale by Civ-Mil Category and Party*

A similar pattern emerges when we examine individual questions regarding restrictions on the use of force (see Tables 3.8 and 3.9). Although 54.4 percent of Democrat Non-veterans agree that civilians should “have the final say on what type of military force to use,” only 28.3 percent of Senior Military Democrats report agreement (p-value < 0.01). However, the percentages of respondents agreeing with this statement among Republican Non-veterans and Military Leaders are not statistically different at 31.7 and 27.2 percent, respectively. On the question of whether civilian leaders should let military leaders “take over the running of the war,” Republican Non-veterans are the most willing to agree, with 65.6 percent of respondents reporting that they ‘agree strongly’ or ‘agree somewhat’ while only 12.7 percent ‘disagree strongly.’ The idea that civilian non-veterans would be more willing than senior officers to let military leaders take over running a war seems counter-intuitive. One possible explanation for this result has to do with the timing of the TISS
survey. Since the TISS survey was conducted in 1998-1999, shortly after Operation Allied Force in Kosovo, Republican leaders may have been particularly sensitive to President Clinton’s decision against the use of ground troops.

Table 3.8: Civilian Officials Rather than Military Officers Should Have the Final Say on What Type of Military Force to Use (Responses by Civ-Mil Category and Party ID)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Senior Military Democrat</th>
<th>Veteran Civilian Democrat</th>
<th>Non-veteran Civilian Democrat</th>
<th>Senior Military Republican</th>
<th>Veteran Civilian Republican</th>
<th>Non-veteran Civilian Republican</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree Strongly</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree Somewhat</strong></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagree Somewhat</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>378</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41.3%</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagree Strongly</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>332</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>186</td>
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</table>

Note: Percentages calculated within each column.

Table 3.9: In Wartime, Civilian Leaders Should Let the Military Take Over Running the War (Responses by Civil-Military Category and Party ID)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Senior Military Democrat</th>
<th>Veteran Civilian Democrat</th>
<th>Non-veteran Civilian Democrat</th>
<th>Senior Military Republican</th>
<th>Veteran Civilian Republican</th>
<th>Non-veteran Civilian Republican</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree Strongly</strong></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree Somewhat</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>33.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagree Somewhat</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagree Strongly</strong></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>1126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages calculated within each column.
Table 3.10: Civilian and Military Attitudes on the Powell Doctrine and Use of Force Restrictions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Powell Doctrine</th>
<th>Military Runs Wars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader</td>
<td>0.04***</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Elite Veteran</td>
<td>0.08***</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-0.09***</td>
<td>-0.08***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>0.06*</td>
<td>0.06*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>-0.43***</td>
<td>-0.44***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>-0.14***</td>
<td>-0.19***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Party</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Social Contact</td>
<td>0.09***</td>
<td>0.06***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x Democrat</td>
<td>0.19**</td>
<td>0.32***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x Independent</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.37***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x No Party</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x Democrat</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x Independent</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x No Party</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.65***</td>
<td>0.44***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>1542</td>
<td>1542</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** = p < 0.01, one-tailed test; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.10.
Table 3.10 reports the results of the multivariate regression models I ran on the Powell Doctrine scale as well as on the “Military Runs Wars” question.\textsuperscript{77} In both cases, the effect of being a Democrat compared to being a Republican is large and statistically significant. Republicans are, on average, less likely to support restrictions on the use of military force than are Democrats. Once again, there is no general ‘Civil-Military Gap,’ but there is a difference between Civilian Non-veteran Democrats and Military Leaders who identify as Democrats. Thus, there appear to be significant differences between partisans both on when to use military force and how to use military force. Similarly, an attitudinal gap exists between Senior Military Democrats and Civilian Democrats in terms of foreign policy priorities and restrictions on the use of force.

\textit{Economic and Social Values Issues}

On questions regarding the use of force, the attitudes of Democratic Military Leaders are, on average, the most similar to Civilian Independents, not Civilian Democrats. This trend continues for both economic and social issues. Figure 3.8 and Model 2 in Table 3.11 display the results. Once again, when controlling for other demographic factors, the attitudes of Civilian Republicans and Military Republicans are statistically different on the social and economic welfare question (see Table 3.11). The same also is true for Independents and those who do not identify with a party. In contrast, there does appear to be a gap between Democratic Civilian and Military leaders on questions related economic policy. Among Democrats, the change from a Military Leader to a Civilian Non-veteran leads to a predicted mean shift of 17 percent on the social welfare and taxation question.

On questions related to ‘Social Values’ issues, such as abortion, gay rights, and the death penalty, the familiar pattern re-emerges. Figure 3.9 and Table 3.11 (columns 3 and 4) display these results. Democratic Military Leaders are much more conservative on social issues than are Democratic Non-veterans; in fact, in this case, the attitudes of Democratic Military Leaders are closer to those of Republican Non-veterans than

\textsuperscript{77} Although not reported, I obtained similar results when I conducted a regression analysis for Q48B regarding who should have the final say on what type of military force to use.
those of Democratic Non-veterans. We also observe a gap when comparing the attitudes of Independent Military Leaders (and those with no party affiliation) to similar Civilian Non-veterans. Once again, however, there is no gap among military status groups within the Republican Party.

Figure 3.8
Mean Score on Social Welfare Question by Civ-Mil Category and Party

Figure 3.9
Mean Score on Social Issues Scale by Civ-Mil Category and Party
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Issue (Social Welfare)</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader</td>
<td>-0.16***</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.16***</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian Elite Veteran</td>
<td>-0.10**</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.04*</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td>(0.07)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>0.02*</td>
<td>0.02*</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
<td>(0.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.05***</td>
<td>-0.05***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority</td>
<td>0.11*</td>
<td>0.13**</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.07)</td>
<td>(0.07)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>-0.11***</td>
<td>-0.10**</td>
<td>0.05***</td>
<td>0.05***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>0.60***</td>
<td>0.66***</td>
<td>-0.41***</td>
<td>-0.46***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>0.20***</td>
<td>0.23***</td>
<td>-0.21***</td>
<td>-0.31***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
<td>(0.07)</td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td>(0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Party</td>
<td>0.31***</td>
<td>0.42***</td>
<td>-0.14***</td>
<td>-0.21***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td>(0.03)</td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Social Contact</td>
<td>-0.04**</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.08***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.02)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.01)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x Democrat</td>
<td>-0.35***</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.25***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x Independent</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.22***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.10)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Leader x No Party</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.11*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.12)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x Democrat</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.11)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.05)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x Independent</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.13**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.12)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veteran x No Party</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.18)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(0.09)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-0.62***</td>
<td>-0.55***</td>
<td>0.33***</td>
<td>0.19***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.12)</td>
<td>(0.14)</td>
<td>(0.06)</td>
<td>(0.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>1542</td>
<td>1542</td>
<td>1542</td>
<td>1542</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** = p < 0.01, one-tailed test; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.10.
In this case, however, using the Social Values scale may mask some differences between Civilian and Military Republicans, especially on two questions. When responding to a question about whether homosexuals should be barred from teaching in schools, 55 percent of Military Republicans stated that they “Agree [d] Strongly” or “Agree[d] Somewhat” compared to only 40 and 41 percent who responded similarly among both Civilian Veterans and Civilian Non-veterans, respectively. Similarly, there also was a statistically significant difference between Republican Military Leaders and Civilian Republicans on the issue of whether to ban the death penalty with Civilian Republicans more likely to favor such a ban than Republican Military Leaders (16 percent compared with 8 percent). In all other cases, mean responses were not statistically different between Civilian and Military Republicans.

On the Democratic side, however, the mean responses of Civilian Non-veterans and Military Leaders were statistically different (p-values < 0.01 in all cases) on every question. For example, 18 percent of Military Leaders agreed with the “barring homosexuals from schools” statement compared with 13 percent and 10 percent of Civilian Veterans and Civilian Non-Veterans, respectively. As on the use of force issues, one’s Party ID is the best predictor of a respondent’s attitudes regarding ‘Social Values’ issues; however, Democratic Party ID appears to matter even less for Military officers with respect to their attitudes on issues such as abortion, women’s role in society, homosexuality, and the death penalty.

**Perceptions of Civilian Society and Military Culture**

In addition to examining differences in attitudes regarding the use of force, much of the previous work on the ‘Civil-Military Gap’ has focused on perceptions of civilian and military culture. As Tables 3.12 and 3.13 suggest, however, the variation between civilian and military leaders that previously has been identified in the literature also primarily appears to be a result of differences in the partisan distributions of the comparison groups.\(^78\) When presented with the statement that a “decline in traditional values is contributing to the breakdown of our Society,” approximately 93 percent of

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\(^78\) Although not reported, the results of my multivariate regression confirm this analysis.
all Republican respondents in each of the three Military Status categories selected “Agree Strongly” or “Agree Somewhat.” Among Democrats, however, more than 80 percent of Military Leaders agreed with the statement compared to only 48 percent of non-veterans (p-value < 0.001). Nevertheless, Democratic Military Leaders do appear to be relatively less supportive than Republicans; the modal response for Democratic Military Leaders is “Agree Somewhat” while the modal response for all Republican categories is “Agree Strongly.”

On the question regarding “respect for the military,” there appears to be a general consensus that the military does not receive more respect than it deserves. In fact, no more than 13 percent in any group stated that the military received more respect than it deserved. Nevertheless, Republicans and Democrats do disagree on whether the military receives less credit than it deserves. For all Republican groups, the modal response is to select “less respect;” for all Democrats, the modal response is “about as much respect.” Within each party, there is no statistical difference between the responses of each of the military status groups.

Table 3.12: The Decline of Traditional Values is Contributing the Breakdown of Our Society: Responses by Civil-Military Category and Party ID

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Senior Military Democrat</th>
<th>Veteran Military Democrat</th>
<th>Non-veteran Civilian Democrat</th>
<th>Senior Military Republican</th>
<th>Veteran Military Republican</th>
<th>Non-veteran Civilian Republican</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree Strongly</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agree Somewhat</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54.4%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>28.9%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagree Somewhat</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disagree Strongly</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>46</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>1126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages calculated within each column.
The TISS survey also offers a number of other potential questions with which to compare the attitudes across partisan and military groups. In all of the cases that I examined, respondents’ Party ID dominated. Although there were a few questions on which individuals’ military status appeared to have more of an effect than others, the total effect of one’s military service was much smaller than the effect of one’s Party ID.  

Previous findings regarding the ‘Civil-Military Gap’ hypothesis do not hold up when we account for political parties. When comparing the attitudes of civilian elites and senior military officers while conditioning on party identification, a different picture emerges. Although there are an exceptionally large number of Republican officers (and a very small number of Democratic officers) within the senior ranks of the U.S. military, there are few systematic differences between Republican military officers and civilian elite Republicans. The attitudes of Democratic officers within the military,  

Table 3.13: The Military Gets More Respect Than it Deserves: Responses by Civil-Military Category and Party ID

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Senior Military Democrat</th>
<th>Veteran Civilian Democrat</th>
<th>Non-veteran Civilian Democrat</th>
<th>Senior Military Republican</th>
<th>Veteran Civilian Republican</th>
<th>Non-veteran Civilian Republican</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More Respect</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>About as Much</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58.7%</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
<td>43.0%</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Respect</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>65.9%</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>1126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages calculated within each column.

The military groups appeared to have no significant effect on respondents’ assessments of civilian political and military leaders. However, on questions regarding the value of certain aspects of “military culture and benefits,” civilian respondents of both parties underestimated the value relative to military officers. In particular, military officers valued early retirement, post housing, and other military benefits more than civilians (though partisan differences remained with the responses of Republican civilians much closer to those of military officers than those of Democratic civilians). A similar pattern emerged over a question regarding whether society would be better off if it “adopted more of the military’s values and customs.”  

79 Military groups appeared to have no significant effect on respondents’ assessments of civilian political and military leaders. However, on questions regarding the value of certain aspects of “military culture and benefits,” civilian respondents of both parties underestimated the value relative to military officers. In particular, military officers valued early retirement, post housing, and other military benefits more than civilians (though partisan differences remained with the responses of Republican civilians much closer to those of military officers than those of Democratic civilians). A similar pattern emerged over a question regarding whether society would be better off if it “adopted more of the military’s values and customs.”
however, differ sharply from the attitudes of Democratic civilian elites across all issue areas that I examined (see Table 3.14).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.14: Summary of Findings on the Democrat-Military Gap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Realpolitik Foreign Policy Goals</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Civilian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat Civilian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat Veteran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Democrat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Civilian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Veteran</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Republican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+16.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Economic Issues</strong></th>
<th><strong>Social Values Issues</strong></th>
<th><strong>Views of American Society</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republican Civilian</td>
<td>Democrat Civilian</td>
<td>Republican Civilian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat Civilian</td>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-33.0%</td>
<td>-22.7%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat Veteran</td>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>No Gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-31.0%</td>
<td>-21.0%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Democrat</td>
<td>Gap</td>
<td>Gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-16.5%</td>
<td>+16.5%</td>
<td>+9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Civilian</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+33.0%</td>
<td>+22.7%</td>
<td>-18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican Veteran</td>
<td>No Gap</td>
<td>Gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+31.0%</td>
<td>+22.6%</td>
<td>-9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military Republican</td>
<td>No Gap</td>
<td>Gap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+33.0%</td>
<td>+23.8%</td>
<td>-20.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages listed are the estimated distances moved on each of the policy scales (as a total percentage of the largest possible shift of two points, from -1 to 1) when moving from the top category (Republican Civilian or Democrat Civilian) to the category on the side. Partisan gaps are shaded.
The findings above also are consistent with the hypothesis that ideological sorting has occurred at different rates within the two parties (Levendusky 2007; Sniderman, Tomz, and VanHouweling 2008). Table 3.15 displays the ideological self-identification of respondents by civil military category and party. Among Republicans, ‘correct’ ideological sorting (conservatives who identify as Republicans) is high across all categories with respondents sorted properly more than 75 percent of the time. Moreover, the differences between civil-military categories are not statistically significant. Among Democrats, however, there is a clear break between civil-military categories. Democratic Military Officers are much less likely to identify themselves as liberals than are Democratic civilian elites. Although there are some Democrats among the senior ranks of the officer corps, most of them are moderate Democrats. Moreover, this evidence suggests that a cleavage exists among Democratic elites over foreign policy issues, but not among Republican elites.\footnote{One possible criticism of the above analysis is that the limited number of Military Leaders in the sample who identified themselves as Democrats (46) also presents an obstacle to reliable inference. This criticism may be valid; we therefore should be somewhat skeptical of my findings with respect to the differences between Democrat Military Leaders and Democrat Non-veterans. Nevertheless, it is unclear how a larger number of Military Leaders would affect the findings. \footnote{I also conducted all my regression analyses displayed above while including a control for ideology along with the standard party dummies. Even without including my interaction terms, the inclusion of variables for both party and ideology is sufficient to eliminate the civil-military gap findings.}}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.15: Ideological Sorting, by Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Military Democrat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Percentages calculated within each column.
sample of Democrats would affect the much more relevant point that even with an adequate sample of Military Republicans, there are no substantive differences between the mean attitudes of Republican Military Leaders and Republican Non-veterans (and Veterans). Moreover, the attitudinal gap between Elite Civilian Democrats and Military Republicans is even larger than we previously believed. Thus, because of the disproportionate number of Republicans within the senior officer corps, it still is fair to focus on the more accurate and relevant description of a Democrat-Military Gap.

**What are the Causes of the Democrat-Military Gap?**

Why, then, are there so many more Republicans than Democrats in the senior ranks of the officer corps? And why are the attitudes of the few military Democrats more moderate than those of their elite civilian counterparts? There are at least two possible theoretical explanations: socialization and selection.

Based on the survey evidence presented above, socialization may seem like an improbable explanation. Nevertheless, it is possible that military training and experience could have different effects on individuals, depending on their initial political preferences. For example, military socialization processes might cause a liberal or moderate officer to become more conservative but they also might cause an extreme conservative to become more moderate, leading officers to converge toward moderately conservative attitudes and affiliation with the Republican Party. In contrast, it also is possible that the high levels of conservatism and Republicanism within the senior ranks of the military are due to self-selection, either because of individual preferences or because of institutional pressure or bias. Officers with conservative political preferences may enter at higher rates, and/or leave at lower rates, than officers with liberal preferences. It also is possible that socialization and selection processes both operate simultaneously.

To date there have been few attempts to examine the relative effects of socialization and selection on members of the officer corps, primarily because of the difficulty of conducting a long-term panel study with military officers over the course of their
career. However, scholars have conducted several short-term panel studies with cadets at the United States Military Academy (USMA) and the United States Naval Academy (USNA), examining their value formation. This literature consistently has found that self-selection plays a significant role in determining the values of cadets entering the academies (Hammill, Segal and Segal 1995; Bachman, Blair, and Segal 1997; Stevens, Rosa, and Gardner 1994; Franke 1999; Snider, Priest, and Lewis 2001) and that, “even in their first year, cadets are more similar in their values to career-oriented military personnel than to citizen soldiers or their civilian peers.”

Several of these studies also identified some shifts in values and changes in personality over time though they concluded “military academy socialization…may not ‘create’ a new value set for the individual…as much as it clarifies and solidifies those values that the new cadet brings to the academy” (Priest, Fullerton, and Bridges 1982; Stevens, Rosa, and Gardner 1994; Franke 1999). Nevertheless, these surveys were unable to determine whether these effects were, in fact, due to the cadets’ military experience because similar changes sometimes were identified in university settings (Stevens, Rosa, and Gardner 1994). Additionally, none of these surveys asked questions regarding partisan affiliation or political preferences.

Recent cross-sectional surveys, however, have asked military officers some questions that may allow us to make somewhat reliable inference regarding the relative effects of selection and socialization. Urben (2010), for example, conducted a large-scale, random sample survey of more than 4,000 active duty Army officers. She finds little evidence to suggest that officers possess different determinants of political attitudes than do members of the general public. Consistent with the findings of the broader American politics literature, Urben also finds that Army officers have stable partisan affiliations and political ideologies, which are unaffected by combat deployments and service in the Army. The next section will extend Urben’s analysis to suggest that self-

selection into, and out of, the officer corps alone can adequately explain the partisan composition of the senior officer corps.

**Opting In and Opting Out**

Conservatives and Republicans enter the officer corps at significantly higher rates than do liberals and Democrats (see Tables 3.16 and 3.17). Although we cannot definitively rule out the possibility that an intense socialization process dramatically influences partisanship during pre-commissioning training, the ideological and partisan distribution of active duty lieutenants generally is consistent with previous surveys of USMA cadets and ROTC students at Duke University (Cummings, Dempsey, and Shapiro 2005; Snider, Priest and Lewis 2001; Feaver and Kohn 2001). Nevertheless, there still are fewer conservatives and Republicans among the junior ranks of the Army officer corps than there are among its senior ranks. What accounts for these differences?

---

**Table 3.16: Party ID of Army Officers (Civil-Military Relations in a Time of War Survey, 2009)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Democrat</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Republican</th>
<th>No Party/Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenants</td>
<td>23.68%</td>
<td>14.86%</td>
<td>52.94%</td>
<td>8.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(153)</td>
<td>(96)</td>
<td>(342)</td>
<td>(55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captains</td>
<td>21.44%</td>
<td>14.52%</td>
<td>55.89%</td>
<td>8.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(226)</td>
<td>(153)</td>
<td>(589)</td>
<td>(86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majors</td>
<td>15.94%</td>
<td>13.52%</td>
<td>63.38%</td>
<td>7.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(158)</td>
<td>(134)</td>
<td>(628)</td>
<td>(71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lieutenant Colonels</td>
<td>14.21%</td>
<td>15.46%</td>
<td>65.58%</td>
<td>4.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(114)</td>
<td>(124)</td>
<td>(526)</td>
<td>(38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonels</td>
<td>11.05%</td>
<td>17.79%</td>
<td>65.77%</td>
<td>5.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(41)</td>
<td>(66)</td>
<td>(244)</td>
<td>(20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17.84%</td>
<td>14.85%</td>
<td>60.33%</td>
<td>6.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N = 3,864)</td>
<td>(692)</td>
<td>(573)</td>
<td>(2329)</td>
<td>(270)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several recent surveys have demonstrated that junior officers who identify themselves as Democrats are both less likely to state that they want to pursue a full military career (Dempsey 2010) and more likely to leave the military after their initial military commitment (Urben 2010). Since Urben’s survey includes a question that asks officers whether they are “in the process of separating from the Army or planning to separate from the Army in the next six months,” we can use these responses to estimate attrition rates and project the composition of the senior officer corps if it were determined only by attrition. Then, we can compare this “projected senior officer cohort” to the existing sample of senior officers. In order to do so, we only need to know the size of an incoming cohort of lieutenants and the approximate size of a cohort of senior officers after regular attrition.

I based my projections on the manpower estimates provided by the Congressional Research Services in 2006. This data enabled me to identify the approximate size of

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83 These findings also are consistent with the TISS finding that Democrats are somewhat less likely to characterize their experience in the military as positive than are Moderates and Republicans (Feaver and Kohn 2001) and that they feel less comfortable talking about politics at work (Urben 2010).

84 I based my estimates on U.S. Army officer projections from FY2008 available at http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/natsec/RL33518.pdf. I assumed that an initial entry cohort of lieutenants consisted of approximately 4250 officers and I assumed that a senior office cohort consisted of a group of 1750 lieutenant colonels with approximately 18 years of service in the Army. The years of service
an incoming junior officer cohort (4250 second lieutenants), the approximate size of that same cohort after 18 years of military service (1750 lieutenant colonels and colonels), and the approximate number of officers who would leave military service before 18 years (2500). I used the partisan breakdown from Urben’s analysis to estimate the total number of partisan identifiers in the “Initial Officer Cohort” and the “Senior Officer Cohort.” Next, I estimated the partisan breakdown of the officers who would leave the Army before they reached 18 years of service. Since Urben asked individual officers whether they were leaving the service in the next 6 months, I was able to estimate the number of partisans leaving as a percentage of the total junior officer attrition in the category, “Attrition Rate.” For example, among the junior officers who reported that they were leaving the Army in the next 6 months, 35 percent of them identified themselves as Democrats. Finally, I subtracted the “Attrition Rate” estimates from the “Initial Officer Cohort” to produce the “Projected Senior Officer Cohort” and compared it with the “Senior Officer Cohort” based on Urben’s data. I used a similar procedure to produce estimates for officers’ self-reported ideology.

By way of fair warning, however, there are several reasons why such an analysis might be problematic. First, it does not account for generational or cohort effects that could occur if different kinds of officers enter the military in response to historical events. Second, the attrition rates could be biased since the survey was conducted in 2009, in the midst of on-going wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. If Democrats were leaving the military at higher rates simply because of their opposition to these wars, the results would be biased in my favor. Since the survey was conducted after the drawdown in Iraq had begun during the presidency of Barack Obama, I expect that this bias will be minimal. Additionally, the data only include responses from active duty Army officers. Since it is possible that socialization and selection processes

---

85 The attrition percentages listed are based on the number of junior officers (lieutenants and captains) with less than 10 years of service who report that they are separating or planning to separate in the next six months. I also conducted the same analysis for officers serving fewer than 8 and 12 years, and obtained similar results.
operate differently in the various services, these results may not be generalizable to the entire officer corps. Nevertheless, these simple projections may be able to provide a baseline to understand the magnitude of selection effects, at least in the Army.

Table 3.18: Party ID Projection for Senior Officers Based on Entry Rates and Loss Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial Officer Cohort</th>
<th>Attrition Rate</th>
<th>Projected Senior Officer Cohort</th>
<th>Senior Officer Cohort</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrats</td>
<td>24.0% (1020)</td>
<td>35.0% (875)</td>
<td>8.25% (145)</td>
<td>13.0% (228)</td>
<td>-4.75% (-83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
<td>15.0% (637)</td>
<td>12.0% (300)</td>
<td>19.25% (337)</td>
<td>16.0% (280)</td>
<td>3.25% (57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republicans</td>
<td>53.0% (2253)</td>
<td>44.0% (1100)</td>
<td>66.0% (1153)</td>
<td>66.0% (1155)</td>
<td>0% (-2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Party</td>
<td>8.0% (340)</td>
<td>9.0% (225)</td>
<td>6.5% (115)</td>
<td>5.0% (88)</td>
<td>1.5% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (4250)</td>
<td>100% (2500)</td>
<td>100% (1750)</td>
<td>100% (1750)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tables 3.18 and 3.19 present the results of these projections for partisanship and ideology, respectively. Attrition rates alone do an excellent job of projecting the composition of the officer corps, especially for partisanship. The percentage of Republicans in my “projected senior officer cohort” is identical to the percentage of Republicans in the survey sample at 66 percent. However, I slightly over-estimate the percentage of Independents and slightly under-estimate the percentage of Democrats. For political ideology, this simple selection model also performs well, though not quite as well as the model for party. In this case, I over-estimate the percentage of Moderates by 5.5 percent and under-estimate the percentage of Conservatives by 5.0 percent. This small difference plausibly could be explained by known differences in political ideology associated with increasing age. Since we know that, on average, members of the general population become more conservative as they get older, we would expect a similar effect among military officers; military socialization is, of course, another possible theoretical explanation. Nevertheless, even without accounting for the effects of age or military socialization, entry rates and attrition rates together do a good job explaining both the partisan and ideological composition of the senior officer corps.
These projections offer insight into, and a plausible explanation for, both dimensions of the Democrat-Military Gap. First, they demonstrate how self-selection into, and out of, the military can account for the large percentages of conservatives and Republicans in the senior officer corps. Second, they explain why we might expect to see differences between senior military officers who are Democrats and elite civilian Democrats. If the most liberal officers leave the military before they reach its senior ranks, only moderate Democrats will remain. As a result, we would expect senior military officers to have more moderate beliefs than would their more liberal counterparts. Finally, these simple projections also suggest that military experience may not play a significant role in shaping one’s political attitudes; instead, they suggest that certain types of individuals simply are more likely to enter, and stay in, the officer corps.

Is the Democrat-Military Gap Growing?

Holsti (1998) argued that the Civil-Military Gap grew rapidly between 1976 and 1996. But given that we actually face a Democrat-Military Gap, has it grown? And, if so,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Officer Cohort</th>
<th>Attrition Rate</th>
<th>Projected Senior Officer Cohort</th>
<th>Senior Officer Cohort</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Liberal</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Lib.</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat Con.</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Conservative</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
how much and how quickly has it grown? Obviously, a full treatment of this subject would require a project of its own. Nevertheless, while conducting my analysis, I did notice several things worth highlighting. Together, they suggest that the Democrat-Military Gap may have grown much less over the last few decades than one might assume.

First, much has been made of Holsti’s finding that Republican Party identification rose from 33 percent to 67 percent among senior officers between 1976 and 1996 (while Democrats declined from 12 percent to 7 percent; see Table 3.1). During the same time, however, officers’ responses regarding their political ideology remained overwhelmingly conservative at levels greater than 60 percent (see Table 3.2). Additionally, Desch (2001) has demonstrated that Civil-Military differences on individual survey items did not increase, even as the partisan composition of the officer corps changed. Thus, it is not clear that the preferences of senior officers were shifting significantly even as they were becoming more likely to identify themselves as Republicans.

Second, in both 1976 and 1980, but not subsequently, the FPLP survey included two questions regarding one’s party identification. The first question asked Party Identification while the second asked whether a respondent leaned toward either party. Holsti’s analysis dropped all party leaners. However, if we include party leaners for 1976 and 1980, the partisan composition of the senior officer corps looks very similar to the composition today. In 1976, 67 percent of respondents identified with (or leaned toward) the Republican Party compared to 15 percent who identified with (or leaned toward) the Democratic Party. In 1980, 72 percent of respondents leaned toward the Republican Party while 20 percent leaned toward the Democratic Party. Moreover, the responses of Republican Party identifiers and Republican Party leaners are neither substantively nor statistically different when compared on the MI and CI scales.

86 Since the 1976 FPLP survey targeted a different population than later surveys, I only included officers over the age of 30 in my estimates for that year. The 1976 FPLP survey was conducted at the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey and generally surveyed younger officers who were lower in rank than those at the War Colleges used from 1980 until 1996.
described earlier in the paper.\textsuperscript{87} Once again, this evidence suggests that officers’ preferences have not changed significantly despite many claims that the advent of the AVF has significantly altered the composition of the officer corps. Instead, it indicates that the major change is that ‘Independent’ officers who previously ‘leaned toward the Republican Party’ increasingly have identified themselves with the Republican Party.

But if officers’ political preferences did not change significantly between 1976 and 1996, why did they increasingly begin to identify with the Republican Party? One possibility is that senior officers simply began to sort themselves into the appropriate parties as political leaders became increasingly polarized over time, mirroring trends among the greater public (Levendusky 2009; Fiorina and Levendusky 2006; Fiorina and Abrams 2008). It does appear that conservative senior officers increasingly sorted themselves into the Republican Party between 1976 and 1996, at least in terms of open partisan identification; nevertheless, the sorting explanation does not, by itself, provide a compelling theoretical explanation for why there were so few partisans in the senior officer corps in the first place.

Another possibility is that the norm of non-partisanship began to break down over time as new laws following the Vietnam War encouraged military officers to vote. In 1973, the passage of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act removed the major impediment that prevented members of the military from voting by requiring states to accept absentee ballots from service members. The Act ensured that soldiers and military officers would be provided both an opportunity to register and to vote.

The passage of this law also coincided with the beginning of the perceived break in the military professional ethic of non-partisanship. Prior to its passage, there was a strong tradition of senior military officers who vocally encouraged a non-partisan ethic, including General George Marshall, who believed that professional military officers should not even vote; however, with the passage of the UOCAVA, Congress and the

\textsuperscript{87} Due to space constraints, I excluded these graphs from my analysis.
DoD actually began to encourage voting among members of the military. The Act was updated in 1986 and embraced fully by the Department of Defense when the Pentagon set a target for the military to produce 1.2 million voters by election day (Gellman 1992). It seems unsurprising that military officers who held conservative beliefs would increasing identify themselves with the Republican Party when given more opportunities to do so. Although we cannot show that the UOCAVA caused military officers to abandon the norm of non-partisanship, it is one plausible explanation.

Recent research also indicates that military officers are not especially politically active, though they do report voting at higher rates than do members of the general population (Dempsey 2010; Urben 2010). Nevertheless, the finding that politicization is not increasing as rapidly among the officer corps as some had thought does not imply that there are not still potential normative concerns; in fact, it may suggest that these concerns are even more significant than we previously believed. A number of scholars have documented how military advice and bureaucratic maneuvering may have hindered civilian control of the military at various points since World War II, especially during Democratic Administrations (Brodie 1973; Sagan 2003; Herspring 2005). In other words, the Democrat-Military Gap may not be an entirely new phenomenon. Chapters 4 and 5 will examine how the advice of senior military officers influences presidential decisions to use force under both Republican and Democratic administrations.

Conclusion
This chapter has demonstrated that there is only a Civil-Military Gap in a limited sense. Although there are differences, on average, between civilian elite leaders and senior military officers, these differences disappear among Republicans when we condition on an individual’s partisan identification. There are an exceptionally large number of Republican officers (and a much smaller number of Democratic officers) within the senior ranks of the U.S. military, but there are few systematic differences between Republican military officers and civilian elite Republicans. The attitudes of Democratic officers within the military, however, differ sharply from the attitudes of
Democratic civilian elites. In other words, there is no ‘Civil-Military Gap;’ there is only a ‘Democrat-Military Gap.’

In this chapter, I also have suggested that both aspects of the Democrat-Military Gap – the large number of Republicans and the attitudinal differences between military and civilian Democrats – can be explained by officers’ decisions to select into, and out of, the military. Democrats enter the officer corps at much lower rates than do Republicans; they also tend to leave the military before reaching the senior ranks of the military. Moreover, I offered evidence indicating that claims of a rapidly growing gap since the advent of the All Volunteer Force (AVF) have been greatly exaggerated, even with respect to the ‘Republicanization’ of the officer corps. The ‘Democrat-Military Gap’ has existed for decades in American politics.

Nevertheless, the root causes of this gap are still unclear. Why do liberal officers choose to enter the officer corps at low rates and choose to leave at such high rates? While it is possible that these high levels of attrition are the result of social pressure or discrimination, it also is possible that liberal officers simply don’t have a taste for the tasks or requirements of military service. These officers may prefer to pursue a more autonomous lifestyle, free from the constraints of the strict, military hierarchy.

Future research is needed to help us better understand the determinants of officers’ decisions to leave the officer corps.

Although this chapter has shown that there are a large number of conservative Republicans in the senior officer corps, it also has demonstrated that there are systematic attitudinal differences between elite civilian Democrats and Republicans as well as between military Democrats and Republicans. Thus, it follows that the shape of civil-military relations may depend, at least in part, on which military officers are appointed to serve at the military’s highest levels. The “military” doesn’t give advice;

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88 See, for example, Kane (2011) who argues that the pervasive risk-averse, bureaucratic personnel structure of the military causes innovative and entrepreneurial officers to leave the military and join the private sector. If these personnel systems disproportionately affect liberals or Democrats, even inadvertently, they could be contributing to the Democrat-Military Gap.
individual military officers sit in a room and give advice to individual presidents. Consequently, it matters a great deal who these officers are and how they get into that room. In the next chapter, I turn directly to that question.
Chapter 4

Duty, Honor, Party?
The Politics of General Officer Appointments in the United States

“The U.S. military must remain apolitical at all times. It is and always must be a neutral instrument of the state, no matter which party holds sway.”
– Admiral Michael Mullen

“The fact is there isn’t a general in Washington who isn’t political, not if he’s going to be successful, because that’s the nature of our system.”
– General Colin Powell

Introduction
What explains why certain military officers rise to the most senior positions while others do not? Can either the Senate or the military bureaucracy constrain the president’s ability to appoint his preferred general officers and admirals, or can the president select whomever he wants? Research about the appointment of general officers and admirals to senior advisory positions in the U.S. military is scant. The few existing studies that tangentially address the issue implicitly assume that the either the President (Fordham 2002, Feaver 2003) or the military (Janowitz 1960, Betts 1977) dominates the appointment process. Similarly, the literature on civil-military relations focuses almost entirely on the relationship between the President and the military, paying very little attention to the role of the Congress in military affairs. Nevertheless, like other administrative and bureaucratic appointments, senior military appointments require the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate. As a result, members of the Senate do have an institutional mechanism through which they can influence the outcomes of the military appointment process. The question is: do they?

At first glance, there appears to be little Senate involvement or influence in the appointment process for general officers and admirals. Since 1949, the Senate rarely
has denied a President’s nominee for appointment to four-star rank on a floor vote. However, President Bush’s 2007 decision not to re-nominate General Peter Pace for a ‘customary’ second term as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs illustrates another potential way that the Senate might constrain the President. Anticipating a protracted and costly appointment process on Capitol Hill, President Bush instead chose to nominate a more moderate candidate that the Senate was willing to accept. In this instance, Congressional influence was significant even though it was not observable on a roll call vote. In other cases, however, the Senate has taken more direct action, blocking a number of senior military appointments using various parliamentary tools or by letting the appointments expire in committee.  

A voluminous literature on appointments to the bureaucracy (Calvert, McCubbins, and Weingast 1989; Wood and Waterman 1991; Hammond and Hill 1993; Chang 2001), the courts (Moraski and Shipe 1991; Rohde and Shepsle 2005), and federal regulatory boards (Waller 1992; Snyder and Weingast 2000) similarly demonstrates that the President often strategically chooses not to nominate his preferred candidate when facing a hostile Congress. For many bureaucratic and regulatory appointments, the president anticipates the Senate’s actions and puts up an acceptable candidate in order to avoid a costly – and potentially unsuccessful – nomination process. Why should we expect the appointment of four-star officers to be any different?

I argue that the political process for general officer appointments is, in fact, similar to the process used for other bureaucratic appointments; the Senate can and does constrain the President’s ability to get the military advisors he wants. Nevertheless, I claim that a unique feature of the military appointment process – the uneven distribution of political attitudes among senior officers – causes a similar process to yield distinct results. Specifically, I argue that the limited number of liberal officers available makes it difficult for Democratic politicians to appoint the military advisors they desire; the high base-rate of conservative officers reduces the bargaining power of Democratic politicians during the appointment process.

89 Similar tactics have been used to block at least sixteen four-star appointments since 1980.
As I showed in the last chapter, the senior ranks of the officer corps overwhelmingly are populated with conservative officers. As a result, the vast majority of available senior officers hold views about the use of military force that clearly are in line with those of elite civilian Republicans. Nevertheless, I also demonstrated that there is at least some ideological variation within the officer corps; there are a small number of officers who do, in fact, identify themselves as liberals or Democrats. More importantly, their attitudes regarding the use of force seem to be generally in line with – though somewhat more moderate than – those of elite civilian Democrats. Thus, Democratic politicians sometimes will have an opportunity to select officers who share their values.

In this chapter, I develop a formal model of the general officer appointment process. It suggests that presidents will be more likely to ‘politicize’ the military appointment process during periods of unified government. Moreover, my model implies an asymmetry in the ability of presidents from each of the two major political parties to appoint senior officers who share their preferences. In particular, the model predicts that Republican presidents almost always will be able to appoint conservative officers; Democratic presidents, on the other hand, only will be able to appoint liberal general officers and admirals when Democrats control the Senate. I test these predictions using a new dataset that includes information on the political campaign contributions of 382 retired four-star general officers and admirals from 1977-2002. Consistent with my model, I find that Republican presidents are very successful in appointing conservative officers under both unified and divided government. However, Democratic presidents are much more likely to appoint liberal officers when Democrats control the Senate, especially for the most important appointments. Specifically, they are more successful when appointing the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Combatant Commanders90, but not when appointing other four-star officers.

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90 Although the term Combatant Commander only was officially adopted in 2002, I will refer to all officers who served as regional and functional Commanders-in-Chief prior to the change as Combatant Commanders throughout the paper.
Synthetic Literature Review

Two Views of Presidential Power

The literatures on U.S. foreign policy-making and civil-military relations present two vastly different views of Presidential power regarding military policy. The presidential war powers literature suggests that the modern presidency dominates the nation’s military actions, especially its decisions to use force; in contrast, the extant civil-military relations literature portrays the president as struggling to control a powerful military bureaucracy that enjoys that possesses significant informational advantages over the president.

To some observers, the system of checks and balances has eroded and the presidency is out of control in the area of foreign policy (Schlesinger 1973; Fisher 2000). The president can deploy forces whenever he desires, and members of Congress have neither the power nor the will to stop him (Corwin 1948, Gowa 1999, Peterson 1994, Fisher 2000). Although recent research has demonstrated that claims of Congressional impotence may be overstated (Howell and Pevehouse 2007), this literature nevertheless suggests that the president is extremely powerful in the area of foreign policy.

In contrast to the largely unconstrained president presented in the war powers literature, however, the literature on civil-military relations paints a picture of a president attempting to control a powerful military bureaucracy that has huge informational advantages over him. In this literature, the senior military officers are the ones who are out of control (Kohn 1994). While some scholars have argued that military officers use their power to block potential military operations (Betts 1977; Weigley 1993; Kohn 1994), others claim that military leaders generally push the nation toward more aggressive policies (Brodie 1973; Desch 1999; Sagan 2003).\(^91\)

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\(^91\) One of the central debates in this literature has been about the content and influence of military advice. Responding to an old stereotype that officers are reckless and war-prone, Huntington claims that military officers are cautious and pessimistic, advocating for the use of force “only as a last resort in crises, and only when victory is almost certain” (Huntington 1957, 69). Several analyses of crisis decision-making during the Cold War have echoed Huntington’s claim. Betts (1977) and Petraeus (1987) both have argued that the advice of senior military officers has been no more aggressive – and
Although military leaders do not always oppose the president’s policies, when they do, they can present a formidable challenge to presidential power.

How can the president appear so powerful from one perspective and so weak from another? The theoretical framework I developed in chapter 2 offers one possible explanation to this puzzle: the president’s dominance in foreign policy is contingent on his informational advantages, and his informational advantages are contingent on whether or not he has senior military advisors who share his preferences. As I showed in chapter 3, there is considerable variation in the attitudes of both civilian and military leaders that breaks primarily along partisan or ideological lines. When it comes to use of force decisions, the “military” doesn’t give advice; individual officers sit in a room and give advice to individual presidents. As a result, rarely is there only one “military” position on an issue. Similarly, there is not a unitary “civilian” position. Consequently, it matters a great deal who these officers are and how they get into that room.

In the U.S. case, these individuals usually are the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the six regional combatant commanders. These twelve senior officers – the Chairman in particular – provide the primary source of military advice for the Secretary of Defense and the president on military planning and decisions regarding the use of force. Critically, these senior officers are appointed by the President with the “advice and consent” of the Senate. Nevertheless, there has been very little theoretical development and virtually no empirical work on the politics of the general officer appointment process.

frequently less aggressive – than the advice of civilians whom presidents have consulted when deciding whether or not to deploy forces; however, these scholars also argue that once the president decided to use force, military officers almost always advocated for overwhelming force and opposed gradual escalation. In response, proponents of militarist theory argue that it is extremely difficult to separate the decision about whether to use force from decisions about how much and what type of force to use (Brodie 1973, Desch 1999, Sagan 2003). Militarist theorists maintain that military officers are, on the whole, prone to favor policies that are more aggressive than civilians. Incentives to seek glory, socialized values, and familiarity with the instruments of war lead self-interested military officers to be more hawkish than other civilian advisors (Brodie 1973). When senior military leaders voice concerns over low-level uses of force and appear less aggressive than their civilian counterparts, they actually may be strategically positioning themselves to advocate for greater levels of force once the decision to use force has been made.
Previous Work on Military Appointments

Richard Betts offers the best, and only, theorizing about senior military appointments. In his book, *Soldiers, Statesmen, and Cold War Crises*, Betts creates a typology of general officer appointments as “routine-professional”, “professional-political”, or “exceptional-political” (Betts 1977). He argues that the president has some freedom of choice among the candidates, but “usually only in a prophylactic sense by ensuring that the chief is not an enemy of administration policy or strategy” (Betts 1977, p. 56). Although Betts states that the President may consider the response from the Senate, he fails to develop clear hypotheses about the circumstances under which we should expect to see each type of officer appointed. Instead, he identifies individual officers as belonging to each of his various groups, and concludes that, most of the time, the senior officers appointed are routine-professionals who are selected through a process largely driven by the military. Moreover, Betts argues that politically motivated appointments are somewhat exceptional, but that they may happen if a President wants to make a dramatic policy shift. He also argues that when president’s do ‘politicize’ the process, they do so “at the top” (Betts 1977, p. 67) because of the scarcity of available candidates. Although Betts fails to specify the precise conditions under which we should expect to see ‘ politicization,’ his examination remains the best work in the literature to date and it has contributed significantly to our understanding of military appointments during the Cold War.

Aside from Betts’ work, there has been no other direct examination of the military appointment process. Other civil-military scholars have addressed the topic somewhat tangentially, however. Feaver’s principal-agent theory of civil-military relations (2003) draws heavily on the bureaucratic politics literature and lends itself well to discussions of officer appointments. Although he provides an extensive discussion of the screening and selection process for military officers in the U.S., his analysis focuses primarily on recruiting and accession policy at lower levels of the military. Feaver does mention that the Senate votes on all officer appointments and that it screens senior nominees more carefully; nevertheless, he ultimately concludes that “the president and his civilian staff often personally select the officers for the most
senior and sensitive posts, and in this way shape the collective preferences of the officer corps” (Feaver 2003, p. 79). Similarly, Fordham has examined whether or not Presidents from each party prefer to appoint the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs from a particular branch of the military (Fordham 1996). While it is not entirely clear that either of these authors intended to make predictions about military appointments, Feaver and Fordham both implicitly assume that Presidents generally can, and do, get the officers they prefer.

Although few researchers have examined the general officer appointment process directly, many scholars have looked at how the relationship between the Executive and the Senate shapes appointments in other areas of government. In particular, scholars have developed a number of models for judicial, regulatory, and bureaucratic appointments. One prominent view consistent with the ideas expressed by Feaver and Fordham is that the president dominates the appointment process (Moe 1985, 1987; Mackenzie 1981). According to this “presidential dominance” view, the president cares a great deal about ‘his’ appointments and is able to assert his will against a Senate plagued by collective action problems. As a result, the president’s preferences are the primary determinant of an appointee’s preferences. In contrast, the “congressional dominance” approach argues that the Senate’s preferences alone should determine an appointee’s preferences (Weingast 1984). According to this view, the President essentially will give in to the Senate because the political costs he would face from a failed appointment are exorbitant.

Recent work has advanced a more moderate view of this process in which the Senate can constrain the president, but only up to a point. In these cases, the president’s power as the first-mover is determined primarily by a ‘reversion policy’ or by the players’ beliefs about what policy would be in the event of gridlock. In particular, a voluminous literature on appointments to the bureaucracy (Calvert, McCubbins, and Weingast 1989; Wood and Waterman 1991; Hammond and Hill 1993; Chang 2001), the courts (Moraski and Shipan 1991; Rohde and Shepsle 2005), and federal regulation boards (Waller 1992; Snyder and Weingast 2000) demonstrates that the
President sometimes strategically chooses not to nominate his preferred candidate when facing a hostile Senate. Nevertheless, the president’s position as the first-mover also enables him to anticipate the Senate’s actions and put forward an appointment that will maintain the status quo. Why should we expect the appointment of general officers to be any different?

One reason we might expect the process to be different is that Senators often have more to lose by opposing the president on military issues than they can gain by opposing the president publicly. Since involvement in foreign affairs rarely does much to enhance legislators’ re-election prospects, the argument goes, they have little incentive to spend time or effort on such issues. Doing so would distract them from their primary task of focusing on constituent issues. Moreover, in military affairs, responsibility for operations typically falls largely on the president. If operations go well, the president will receive the credit; if they go poorly, he will receive the blame. Legislators, on the other hand, rarely are in a position to receive much credit for a successful operation. However, if they involve themselves in the decision-making process and operations go poorly, they open themselves up to charges of interfering with the president’s responsibilities as Commander in Chief. Thus, particularly during international foreign policy crises, legislators have strong incentives to stay silent in order to avoid the blame that might arise if operations go badly (Weaver 1986).

Nevertheless, it is not clear that opposition to a president’s nominee for a military appointment later would translate into blame for a failure in military policy. Senators have developed a number of parliamentary tools that make it possible for them to block appointments such as allowing them to expire in committee without ever taking a costly public vote. Moreover, by tradition, military confirmations almost always utilize voice votes on the floor. Thus, it is relatively easy for any individual Senator to distance himself from the process. And even if a Senator did participate in a roll call vote on a military appointment, it is not clear that such a vote could be used against him during a campaign. Reports discussing failed military appointments almost always focus solely on the President with only vague references to the Senate and comments.
from unnamed legislative staff. Thus, there are reasons to believe that Senators will be able to block the president’s nominee without fearing the possibility of future blame. Senators may stand to gain less than the president, but they also have very little to lose by opposing him.

In some cases, however, Senators may stand to lose by opposing the military’s proposed nominee. Senators do not have the same institutional capacity as the president to gather information regarding military issues. Thus, they often are largely dependent on personal relationships with senior military officers. As such, during the appointment process, Senators on the Senate Armed Services Committee (SASC) may have to consider the costs of lost access to information or special favors from senior officers. Senators’ re-election prospects also may be closely tied to their ability to deliver large contracts or retain bases in their home states. The support of senior officers during this process also may be important, at least at the margins. Finally, members of the SASC or other legislators may rely on military officers for help with investigations or other constituent services from time to time. As a result, members of the SASC often may have strong incentives to support a particular nominee or to support the nominee resulting from the negotiations conducted within and between the four branches of the military.

The Limited Pool: The Democrat-Military Gap
Another reason we might expect the military appointment process to be somewhat different from that of other bureaucratic appointments is that all senior military officers are selected from within the officer corps, according to a set of unique statutory requirements. For example, a nominee for appointment to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is selected from a pool of only fifteen officers. Similarly, those fifteen officers – the Vice Chairman, the Service Chiefs, and the Combatant Commanders – also are chosen from among a limited number of senior officers.92

92 The statutory requirements for the appointment of senior general officers are described in detail in Title 10, U.S. Code.
As I showed in the last chapter, the vast majority of senior military officers identify themselves as conservative and only a small minority identify themselves as liberal (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2). Most of the senior officers in the pool of available nominees hold conservative views; as a result, their attitudes are more likely to be in line with those of elite civilian Republicans.

As I showed in the last chapter, the vast majority of senior military officers identify themselves as conservative and only a small minority identify themselves as liberal (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2). Most of the senior officers in the pool of available nominees hold conservative views; as a result, their attitudes are more likely to be in line with those of elite civilian Republicans.

Nevertheless, there is some ideological variation within the officer corps; a small number of officers do, in fact, identify themselves as liberals or Democrats. More importantly, their attitudes regarding the use of force generally seem to be in line with
– though somewhat more moderate than – those of elite civilian Democrats. As a result, Democratic politicians will have the opportunity to appoint officers who share their values under the right circumstances. Nevertheless, they will have a more difficult time finding officers who share their policy views, if they can find any at all.

A Model of the Military Appointment Process
The model in this section focuses on the central features of the military appointment process in order to draw conclusions about how senior officers are appointed. The real world is significantly more complicated than, and in some respects quite different from, this simple model; nevertheless, this model attempts to capture the key aspects of the military appointment process. In particular, it focuses on the ways in which institutional features of the nomination process constrain the president’s ability to appoint officers who share his policy preferences.

The general structure of the basic model is as follows. I assume that two elected officials (an Executive and a Senate) together appoint a military advisor. The Executive puts forward a nominee and the Senate accepts or rejects. If the Senate rejects the nominee, the process repeats until the Senate accepts. The Senate and Executive both receive utility based on the information that they receive from the military advisor. Drawing on the primary result from Crawford and Sobel (1982) and the broader findings of the signaling literature, I assume that the closer the military advisor’s preferences and values are to the Executive or the Senate, the more credible – and valuable – their signals about military policy will be. In other words, the President and the Senate both want to appoint a military advisor whose ideal point is as close to its own as possible.

I also make the following assumptions about the game. First, I assume that both players have complete information regarding all aspects of the nomination and policy

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93 One could argue that appointments of the service chiefs (apart from the CJCS and combatant commanders) would better be modeled by assuming that the nomination process is primarily about policy. Following the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in 1986, the service chiefs’ role in providing information on operational planning greatly decreased; in either case, the same basic logic and the structure of the model would hold.
process; thus, the Senate and the Executive both know what they are getting when they make an appointment. Second, I model the appointment process as occurring along a single liberal-conservative policy dimension. Third, to simplify matters and focus on the basic process, I treat all actors as unitary decision makers. Fourth, I assume that all players have single-peaked Euclidean preferences. Finally, I assume that if the Senate does not approve the nominee, the military advisor will be selected by lottery from the available officers in the pool. In the next section, I set up and solve the basic model.

**The Senior Officer Appointments Model**

The relevant players in the appointment process are the Executive and the Senate. Let $X_S$ be the ideal point of the Senate and $X_E$ be the ideal point of the Executive in a set of military policy alternatives represented as an interval on the real line. The Executive draws his nominee from a limited pool of potential military advisors who have ideal points such that $X_M \in [m, 1]$. In order to represent a pool of military advisors whose ideal points are more conservative than those of a Democratic politician I assume that $m > 0$. I simplify further by assuming that the actors’ utility functions on this single-dimensional policy space take the following form:

$$U_\theta (X) = -|X_\theta - X_M|$$

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94 This single-dimension assumption is common in the appointments literature (see, for example, Snyder and Weingast 2000; Moraski and Shipan 1999; and Segal, Cameron, and Cover 1990, 1992). Although a number of foreign policy scholars have focused on multiple dimensions that structure foreign policy attitudes, focusing on a single dimension should nevertheless provide a useful approximation of the complex multi-dimensional reality of the appointment process. Additionally, a single-dimensional analysis is far more theoretically and empirically tractable without losing predictive power (Krehbiel 1996).

95 In the case of the Senate, this assumption is plausible as I simply focus on the median voter. For the Executive, however, a number of players including the Secretary of Defense, the sitting CJCS, and the President all potentially can influence the process; nevertheless, I assume that the President’s preferences will dominate to focus on the implications of inter-branch bargaining between the Executive and the Senate.

96 In order to develop a powerful and parsimonious model, I ignore the legal framework that provides the service chiefs with the opportunity to recommend potential nominees to the Secretary of Defense and President. Although this internal process involves many actors with competing interests, the Executive is not bound by its recommendations. For the time being, I will assume away the internal workings of this process; later in the paper, however, I will discuss how transaction costs involved with the Executive’s decision to ignore these recommendations may influence the nomination process.
Additionally, the Executive and the Senate both can use their institutional powers to seek their own political purposes; however, they each face potential costs associated with their nomination and confirmation powers. The President, for example, must consider the costs of extended hearings, negative publicity, and investments in time, preparation, and political capital; he also must consider the possibility that his nominee will be delayed or rejected. Concerns about these potential costs provide incentives for the Executive to take the Senate’s preferences into account (Hammond and Hill 1993). The Senate also must consider potential costs that come in the form of lost opportunities to focus on relevant policy issues that may influence their re-election prospects. Nevertheless, since the Senate effectively can block the Executive’s nominee without an up-or-down vote, I will assume that the Senate’s costs of rejection are trivial (under most circumstances), especially when compared to the Executive’s.  

When faced with a military appointment opportunity, the Executive and Senate bargain over which nominee to appoint. I model this process as follows. The president proposes a nominee that the Senate accepts or rejects. If the Senate accepts, the nomination process is over and the proposed nominee becomes the military advisor. If the Senate rejects, I assume that the military advisor will be selected by a lottery over the interval \([m,1]\). As a result, both players will have to consider their payoffs with a nominee \(X^*_M = (m+1)/2\).  

The location of \(X^*_M\) is crucial to predicting the outcome of this process. One way to think about this outcome is that, in the event of gridlock, military norms regarding the particular experiences, qualifications, or competence necessary to hold a given position and/or the rotation of different positions between

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97 In every case in which the Senate ‘actively’ has blocked the Executive’s nominees, it has done so through parliamentary mechanisms that enable legislators to simply let the nomination expire without ever conducting an up-and-down vote in the Senate Armed Services Committee. Media coverage of these non-events has been extremely limited with very little attention focused on ‘obstruction’ by the median voter or SASC chair; instead, stories generally have focused on the inability of the President to get his nominee.

98 For simplicity, my model assumes that potential nominees are distributed uniformly over the interval \([m,1]\). We know, however, that the distribution of the actual senior officer corps is right-skewed. As a result, this model only makes general predictions about relative spatial positions rather than identifying precise spatial locations. In either case, as long as \(m > 0\), the lottery would yield a ‘conservative’ nominee.
the services will determine the ideal point of the nominee.\textsuperscript{99} As suggested above, there are a number of reasons to think that opposition party members on the SASC have strong incentives to support the ‘military’s nominee’ when it differs from that of the president.

This game loosely reflects the official proceedings of the appointment process for four-star generals and admirals. In reality, the process is not so one-sided as there is considerable communication between individuals in the Executive branch – the President, the Secretary of Defense, the CJCS, and the National Security Advisor – and members of the SASC and their staffs. Below, I will focus my analysis on four potential regimes to represent the possible combinations of unified and divided government under the two-party system in the United States (see Figure 4.1). For simplicity, I will assume that the Executive and the Senate are placed at one of the endpoints (0 or 1); nevertheless, all results hold as long as both the Republican ideal point and ‘m’ are greater than the ideal point of any Democratic player. The next section will analyze the model and identify equilibrium outcomes in each regime.

**The Outcomes of the Nomination Process**

In each case, I will solve the model by backwards induction. Assuming the president is rational and forward-looking, he will consider the Senate’s actions in the confirmation stage of the game when he selects a nominee. Knowing that a rejection by the Senate would be costly, the Executive will attempt to nominate an officer that the Senate will accept, but whose preferences are as close to the Executive’s ideal point as possible. In the perfect information environment of my model, the “threat point” for this process is the expected outcome of the lottery over the interval \([m,1]\) where \(X^*_M = (m+1)/2\).

Next, I will examine the actions of the Senate and the Executive under all potential regimes in turn (see Figure 4.1).

\textsuperscript{99} This approach would only require an assumption that the selection criteria were not correlated with political ideology and thus could be treated as a generally ‘random’ process.
Regime 1: Unified Democrat \((XE = 0, XS = 0; XE = XS < m)\)

In this regime, the Senate and the Executive share identical preferences. As a result, the Senate will not place a constraint on the Executive’s choice. Nevertheless, the ‘gap’ between the Democratic Executive and the pool of available officers does limit the Executive’s ability to appoint an officer who shares his preferences. Although the Executive would prefer to nominate an officer such that \(X_M = 0\), he only is able to appoint an officer such that \(X_M = m\). Thus, the Executive successfully can appoint his preferred nominee; nevertheless, he receives less utility than he would if there were an unlimited pool of officers available (see Figure 4.2).

Regime 2: Divided Democrat \((XE = 0, XS = 1; XE < m)\)

When a Democratic Executive faces a Republican Senate, however, he is even worse off. In this regime, the Executive and the Senate disagree completely about which nominee should be appointed. As a result, the players’ expectation about what will happen if they fail to agree on a nominee, \(X^*_M = (m+1)/2\), is crucial to predicting the outcome of the game. Since the Executive knows that the Senate will reject any nominee to the left of \((m+1)/2\), he knows he can do no better than appointing a
nominee where \((m+1)/2\); however, he can do worse. If the Executive attempts to nominate a military officer whose ideal point is to the left of \((m+1)/2\), the Senate will reject the nominee and the Executive will have to pay the costs of lost reputation and political capital. Thus, it is rational for the Executive to anticipate the Senate’s action and appoint a nominee such that \(X^*_M = (m+1)/2\) regardless of whether the distance between \(X_E\) and \((m+1)/2\) is small or large (see Figure 4.3).

**Figure 4.3**
*Case 2 (Divided Democrat)*

\[
X^*_M = (m + 1)/2
\]

\(X_E\) \hspace{1cm} m \hspace{1cm} X_M = (m + 1)/2

**Regime 3: Unified Republican \((X_E = 1, X_S = 1; 0 < m)\)**

Similar to the Unified Democrat regime, in this regime the Republican Executive and the Senate again share identical preferences. Accordingly, the Senate will place no constraint on the Executive’s choice. However, in the regime, the limited pool of available officers does not hinder the Executive’s choice. Since there is no ‘gap’ between the pool of officers and the Republican Executive, not only can he appoint his preferred nominee, but he also can appoint an officer who exactly shares his preferences (see Figure 4.4).

**Figure 4.4**
*Case 3 (Unified Republican)*

\[
X^*_M = (m + 1)/2 \hspace{1cm} X_M = 1
\]

\(m\) \hspace{1cm} \(X_E\) \hspace{1cm} \(X_S\)
Case 4: Divided Republican (XE = 1, XS = 0; XS < m)

Finally, in the last regime in which a Republican Executive faces divided control of the Senate, the Republican Executive will anticipate the actions of the Democratic Senate in order to avoid paying the costs associated with a rejection. The Executive will appoint a nominee such that $X_M^* = (m+1)/2$ and the Senate will accept in the first round. Nevertheless, it is important to note the impact of the ‘gap’ in this case as compared to the Divided Democrat regime. Since m > 0, the Republican Executive always will fare relatively better than the Democratic Executive under divided government because both will get an officer whose preferences are closer to Republican preferences. Similarly, a Republican Senate under divided government also will fare relatively better than a Democratic Senate would under divided government (see Figure 4.5).

![Figure 4.5
Case 4 (Divided Republican)](image)

The only comparative static involves the location of the parameter, ‘m.’ In general, as ‘m’ increases, so does (m+1)/2. Thus, the larger the gap between Democrats and the military, the worse Democrats should expect to do during the general officer appointment process both under unified and divided government. In contrast, an increasing gap will have no effect on Republicans under unified government, but will lead to better outcomes for Republicans under divided government.

In summary, the model implies that the limited pool of military officers provides Republican politicians with distinct advantages during the general officer appointment process. The basic intuition is that Presidents only can ‘politicize’ the appointment
process under periods of unified government. Under divided government, the Senate can constrain the Executive, but only by supporting the ‘professional’ military candidate. The overwhelmingly conservative pool of available officers makes it very likely that the ‘professional’ officer’s preferences will be closer to those of Republican politicians. As a result, I expect that Republicans will fare better than Democrats under periods of divided government.

Factors Omitted From the Model
The primary task of a theory is to organize and explain a range of empirical phenomena by identifying the underlying relationships that account for them. Parsimony can make a theory powerful when it successfully uncovers an underlying logic that drives political behavior. Nevertheless, choices about which factors to include or ignore are inherently subjective. As a result, it is important to think critically about the resultant gap between the model I have built and the reality I am attempting to explain. The general officer appointments model reduces a complex process into a sequential, finite game where all players have one opportunity to affect where a nominee falls along a one-dimensional continuum. The politics of general officer appointments is certainly far more complicated, and far less certain, than this suggests. In the next section, therefore, I consider several important factors the model omits and estimate what impact they ought to have on the president’s ability to appoint the general officers and admirals he prefers.

Uncertainty and Information Problems
The above model assumes perfect information. All players exactly know the ideal points of each player and have a shared understanding of the gap between the military and Democrats, the parameter m, as well as the location of the ‘average’ officer, \( X^*_M = (m+1)/2 \). Clearly, this assumption does not hold in reality. Presidents and members of the Senate may, in fact, be mistaken about the spatial location of each of the nominees in the pool. In some cases, the players may even be uncertain about the cardinal positions of the nominees. General officers typically do not have established public policy records for political matters on which they have to take public positions.
in the same way that nominees for judicial or regulatory appointments might. Moreover, there are strong professional norms within the military against officers disclosing their political beliefs.

In the real world, however, there are not an infinite number of candidates who meet the statutory requirements for four-star appointment; in fact, there only are a few, typically between five and nine. In this context, it does not seem unreasonable that the players would both know the identity of the most extreme candidates as well as those who are believed to be ‘moderate’ or ‘typical.’ Thus, while it is possible to generate a model under conditions of less than perfect information (by introducing a random parameter around ‘m’), it is not clear what the marginal benefit would be. In either case, all players would act on their expected beliefs with the observed outcome changing only after a nominee revealed his true preferences. Although introducing uncertainty would in some sense better approximate reality, the additional complexity would not add any intuition about the basic appointment process.

Transaction Costs
Because my model assumes perfect information and does not include the ‘military’ or the sitting members of the Joint Chiefs as strategic players, it cannot account for transaction costs. A significant amount of time and effort may be necessary for the Secretary of Defense or the president to gain information about potential nominees and to gauge how the Senate will respond to a president’s choice. In the real world, the Secretary of Defense receives recommendations on potential nominees from sitting members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Secretary of Defense and the President have to determine the reliability of this information and potentially seek out and interview additional candidates if their preferences diverge with those of the chiefs. Not only does this process take time and effort, but it also may lead to strained relationships between senior officers who view the Administration as meddling in what they consider to be an internal Pentagon matter. As a result, the Secretary of Defense or the President may have to choose whether this effort is, in fact, worth it. In cases in which the President’s costs outweigh the marginal benefits of getting his preferred nominee,
he may determine that such attempts simply are not worth the effort. As a result, we may expect that the President only would invest the time and effort necessary to identify and nominate his most preferred nominees for the most important senior officer positions.

*Issue Linkage and Re-election Incentives*

The general officer appointments model assumes that the players only consider preferences over policy when considering nominees. However, an extensive literature suggests that legislators are frequently, if not always, motivated by re-election concerns (Mayhew 1973). Nevertheless, I chose to ignore these other issues that may be linked to the politics of general officer appointments for several reasons. First, the members of the Senate Armed Services Committee are largely self-selected onto that committee because of their policy expertise or interest. As a result, they typically have real interest in the outcome of the appointment process as it relates to their ability to influence policy. Senators do not have the same institutional capacity and resources for gathering information on developing military and foreign policy issues that the president does; as a result, they may rely heavily on their ability to gain access to credible information from senior military officers, both formally in hearings and in personal conversations. Second, while the re-distributional aspects of the defense budgeting process may have a substantial impact on Senators’ re-elections concerns, it is not clear that routine appointments would translate into votes on a regular basis. Moreover, as elaborated above, it is not clear that opposition to a president’s nominees would translate into blame for failed policies. Although there may be several cases in which non-policy factors play a central role in this process, I believe they are exceptions rather than the rule.

*Hypothesis Development*

My formal model allows me to develop several testable hypotheses about the outcomes of the general officer appointment process. In this section, I will lay out my primary hypotheses as well as those of the primary competing theoretical
explanations: 1) Presidential Dominance, 2) Congressional Dominance, and 3) Professional Dominance (See Figure 4.6).

My model predicts that the generals appointed by a Democratic President under unified government will be the most liberal officers available and that the officers appointed by a Republican President under unified government will be the most conservative officers available (or, more generally, the officers whose preferences are closest to those of the Republican president). Under conditions of divided government, I expect the process to yield conservative officers whose preferences are closer to those of Republicans than to the preferences of Democrats.

The hypotheses of the alternative approaches can be summarized as follows. The Presidential Dominance model predicts that the president’s preferences alone should determine the preferences of the nominee. Thus, Democratic presidents should always get the most liberal nominee under both unified and divided government; Republican Presidents should always get the most conservative nominees. The Congressional
Dominance model instead argues that the preferences of the Senate alone will determine the preferences of the nominee. In this case, a Democratic Senate should be able to get the most liberal officers regardless of the party of the president and a Republican Senate should be able to get the most conservative officers. Finally, the professional appointments model assumes that there should be no relationship between the preferences of the President or the Senate and appointed officers. For a comparative summary of these hypotheses, see Figure 4.6.

Empirical Tests

**Campaign Contributions of U.S. Four-Star Officers, 1977 - 2002**

To analyze whether or not the Senate can affect the preferences of the general officers the President appoints, I collected data on the political campaign contributions of all four-star general officers and admirals appointed to serve in the United States military from 1977 – 2002. All of my data came from the U.S. Federal Election Commission website. In every case that I report, I confirmed contributions using the officers’ home addresses and full name. In many of the cases, I also was able to match the officers simply by using their official title (General, Admiral, etc.). To be coded as a partisan, I required that an officer make a contribution to a political party or candidate for national office totaling $250. My unit of observation is appointments, rather than officers, because some officers were appointed to four-star rank on multiple occasions.

Of the 382 appointments examined, I was able to obtain contribution information for 246 appointments, with 53 making contributions primarily to Democratic candidates, 240 making contributions primarily to Republican candidates, and 6 making significant contributions to both parties. Since I required that an officer give at least 66 percent of his contributions to one party, I removed these 6 officers from my data set for a total of 240 appointments out of 382 appointments, or 62 percent. In virtually all these cases, the officers did not begin to make their contributions until after they

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100 Although the statutory requirement that the Senate must confirm all four-star officers individually did not go into effect until 1978, I chose to include the data from 1977 because it during a period of unified government and because it make my results slightly weaker.
retired. Moreover, they generally donated overwhelmingly to one party or the other. In sixteen cases, an officer donated to both political parties.

Limitations of this Approach

It should be noted at the outset that this initial test is far from perfect in its ability to validate my theory. Any evidence I find is merely suggestive at this point for several reasons discussed below. First, the data cover a relatively limited time period with the unified Democrat regime coming only under President Clinton. More importantly, my theory would better be tested with a more precise measure of ideal points. I initially attempted to replicate procedures in the courts and regulatory boards literature, but general officers do not produce the same types of easily quantifiable policy outputs. I also tried to use editorials to estimate the ideology and competence of these officers; however, after an exhaustive search, I found less than a hundred editorials written about the 382 general officer appointment proceedings over the last 25 years.

Instead, I turn to the campaign contributions of retired officers. I use these officers’ campaign contributions as an imperfect measure of their partisan identification and assume that partisan contributions will be highly correlated with their ideological preferences. There are at least two reasons that this measure may be problematic. First, it is possible that senior military officers’ political activity upon retirement is largely dependent on their experiences while working for a particular presidential Administration. However, this bias should systematically work against my predictions in favor of the Presidential Dominance model, however. Second, it is possible that officers’ contributions are strategic; they give to position themselves for later appointments or government access. I find no evidence that retired officers’ specifically target the party in power, however, though it is possible that an officers’ service within an Administration could constrain his giving behavior. In either case, it seems extremely unlikely – in light of the broader literature on partisan identification – that conservative officers would attempt to align themselves with liberal candidates, or vice versa. Instead, any resulting bias is likely to be minor, with moderate officers strategically positioning themselves with one of the two parties after retirement.
Nevertheless, my measure is the first attempt to quantify the ideological preferences of retired officers, and future scholars may be able to improve upon it.

A better test of my model also would provide a more precise measure of the ideal points of the President and the Senate while controlling for the pool of potential candidates available. Nevertheless, the imprecise nature of my measure and the gaps in the data make this strategy untenable. Additionally, my test looks primarily at the aggregate numbers of officers appointed rather than at the outcomes of individual appointments described in my model. Although I do provide some suggestive illustrations regarding particular cases, official records involving the appointment process are not readily available. Moreover, I have not yet been able to conduct detailed interviews with the Presidents, Secretaries of Defense, Senators, or military officers necessary to adequately conduct thorough qualitative tests of relevant cases. Future research should attempt to improve upon these crude measures.

Despite all the shortcomings listed above, however, the evidence presented in this section represents the best empirical attempt to examine the influence that the Senate has on general officer appointments. It suggests that the Senate does play an important role in the process, and that the composition of the Senate is correlated with the percentage of ‘partisan’ officers appointed by individual presidents. It also reveals a stark asymmetry in the ability of Democratic and Republican presidents to get the officers they prefer, especially on the most important appointments. Additionally, the data reveal little difference between the ideologies of the officers appointed under divided government, regardless of the president. As such, this evidence is generally supportive of my hypothesized predictions over those of the Presidential, Congressional, and Professional Dominance models.

**Empirical Results for all Officers**

The overall results for all four-star officers are displayed in Table 4.3 (for breakdowns by president, see Appendix 4.1). The evidence in the table is largely consistent with the hypotheses derived from my formal model. Under unified government,
Democratic Presidents appointed significantly more officers who contributed to the Democratic party than did Democratic Presidents under divided government. Over 30 percent of the time, unified Democrats appointed “Democratic” generals compared to a rate of approximately 14.6 percent for Democrats under divided government. Nevertheless, divided Democrats still were more than twice as successful in getting Democratic officers than were unified or divided Republican presidents. In contrast, there was virtually no difference between unified and divided Republican presidents with more than 50 percent of the officers appointed contributing to Republicans in both cases. In short, the evidence in Table 4.3 suggests that the composition of the Senate matters a great deal for Democratic Presidents when they are appointing four-star officers, but that it has very little impact on Republican Presidents. The data offer no evidence for the pure Congressional Dominance model. The Presidential Dominance and Professional Dominance models, however, arguably do a good job explaining appointments under Republican Presidents, but cannot explain the clear correlation between unified Democrats and the appointment of officers who contribute to Democratic candidates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appointment Type</th>
<th>Republican Contributors</th>
<th>Democratic Contributors</th>
<th>No Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unified Democrat</td>
<td>24 (30.0%)</td>
<td>25 (31.3%)</td>
<td>31 (38.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divided Democrat</td>
<td>44 (49.4%)</td>
<td>13 (14.6%)</td>
<td>32 (36.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Republican</td>
<td>49 (53.8%)</td>
<td>6 (6.6%)</td>
<td>36 (39.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divided Republican</td>
<td>70 (58.3%)</td>
<td>9 (7.5%)</td>
<td>41 (34.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>187 (49.2%)</td>
<td>53 (13.9%)</td>
<td>140 (36.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Democratic Regimes: Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 9.12 (p = 0.003)
Republican Regimes: Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 0.008 (p = 0.930)
My model, however, predicts that the spatial location of candidates under varying regimes should differ. Under the Democratic regimes, the use of partisan contributions yields clearer – though still somewhat problematic results since we cannot account for the available pool – because we can assume that retired officers who contribute to Democratic candidates are spatially to the left of officers who contribute to Republicans. However, under the regimes with a Republican president, we have no way to compare officers who contribute to Republican candidates to one another.

Although I do not have a reliable way to place candidates neatly on an ideological spectrum, it may be plausible to consider how much officers contributed to a party as a proxy for ideological intensity. The age, education, and salaries of these officers typically are very similar so it seems reasonable that more committed ideologues would give more to political causes. Ideally, I would like to compare all the officers considered for a particular position against one another; however, limited information about which officers were considered, or even qualified, hinders my ability to do this. Thus, I compared the mean contributions of appointed officers under unified Republicans to those of officers appointed under divided Republican regimes. Officers appointed under unified Republican regimes did, in fact, contribute to Republicans and candidates and causes at slightly higher rates ($5208) than did officers appointed under divided Republican regimes ($4577). Nevertheless, my two-sample t-test failed to reject the null hypothesis that these mean contributions are not statistically different with a p-value of 0.3714. While this test does not offer clear evidence in favor of my model, it also does not contradict my central findings.

Categories of Appointments
Next, I broke the data into two categories of appointments: 1) Members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Combatant Commanders\(^\text{101}\), and 2) All other four-star

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\(^{101}\) Members of the JCS include the Chairman, the Vice Chairman, the Army Chief of Staff, the Air Force Chief of Staff, the Chief of Naval Operations, and the Commandant of the Marine Corps; Combatant Commanders include both the regional and functional commanders.
officers. The list of all other four-star officers includes a variety of different positions that typically are subordinate to one of the service chiefs or combatant commanders. The officers in Category 1 typically have much broader responsibilities and greater contact with the President and Secretary of Defense. Accordingly, I will consider them to be more ‘important’ to the President.

Table 4.4 displays the empirical results when divided into the two categories. Again, the data largely are consistent with the predictions of my general officer appointments model, but not with the expectations of the alternative approaches. However, a striking difference between outcomes involving the most important officers and all other officers emerges in this analysis. Presidents under unified government appear to fare extremely well when appointing the most important officers, but fare less well when appointing other officers. More than 44 percent of the general officers appointed under unified Democrats contributed to Democratic candidates. Although I have not controlled for the effects of the limited pool of officers, this result is striking when one considers that most surveys of general officers estimate the number of Democrats in the senior officer corps at approximately 10-12 percent. Additionally, the percentage of non-contributors also is unusually high, at 41.4 percent, for Unified Democrats when compared to the other categories. While we should be careful not to infer too much from the data, it may be possible that Democratic presidents nominate moderate or non-ideological candidates when no other more liberal officers are available. For other four-star officers, however, Democratic presidents fare less well. Although 23.5 percent of these officers contributed to Democratic candidates, this result is not

102 The officers included in this ‘other’ category are the following: the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps; the Vice Chief of Naval Operations; the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army; the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force; Commander, Air Component Command; Commander, Allied Land Forces, Southeast Europe; Commander, Atlantic Fleet; Commander, Naval Forces Europe; Commander, Pacific Air Forces; Commander, Pacific Fleet; Commander, U.S. Air Force, Europe; Commander, U.S. Army, Europe; Commander, Army Material Command; Chief of Naval Material; Commander, Air Education and Training Command; Commander, Air Force Logistics Command; Commander, Air Force Material Command; Commander, Air Force Systems Command; Commander, Air Force Space Command; Commander, Air Training Commander; Commander, Tactical Air Command; Commander, Army Readiness Command; Commander, U.S. Forces Command; Commander, Military Airlift Command; Commander, Army Training and Doctrine Command; Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Power Europe; Deputy, Commander-in-Chief, Europe; U.S. Military Representative to NATO; and Commander, United Nations Command (Korea).
Republican Presidents also do slightly better for important appointments when their co-partisans control the Senate, appointing Republican contributors 76.7 percent of the time compared to 66.7 percent when Democrats control the Senate. For category two appointments, however, the results are reversed with Unified Republicans appointing Republican contributors only 42.6 percent of the time compared to 52.8 percent for Divided Republicans. Nevertheless, the Republican differences are not statistically different in either category.

There are two possible causes for the difference between appointments in category 1 and category 2 among Democratic presidents. First, as briefly mentioned before, Democratic presidents may consider it too costly to invest the time and effort necessary to identify and appoint the best officers for these lesser positions. Because these officers have less responsibility over policy and must nest their policies within

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appointment Type</th>
<th>JCS Members and Combatant Commanders</th>
<th>All Other Four-Star Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Republican Contributors</td>
<td>Democratic Contributors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Democrat</td>
<td>4 (13.8%)</td>
<td>13 (44.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divided Democrat</td>
<td>20 (57.1%)</td>
<td>6 (17.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unified Republican</td>
<td>23 (76.7%)</td>
<td>2 (6.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divided Republican</td>
<td>32 (66.7%)</td>
<td>6 (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>79 (55.6%)</td>
<td>27 (19.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Democratic Regimes (JCS): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 11.88 (p = 0.001)
Republican Regimes (JCS): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 0.8253 (p = 0.364)
Democratic Regimes (Other): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 1.664 (p = 0.197)
Republican Regimes (Other): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 0.7056 (p = 0.401)
Difference between Divided Dem and Divided Rep (JCS): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 0.538 (p = 0.463)
Difference between Divided Dem and Divided Rep (Other): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 3.44 (p = 0.06)
the policies of senior commanders, they are less critical. Moreover, these officers also interact less frequently with the President and the Secretary of Defense. Nevertheless, forward-looking presidents still may have an incentive to influence these appointments since they potentially could have an impact on the pool of officers available for more senior appointments. Another possibility is that there simply may not be enough liberal officers available; as a result, presidents might have to strategically choose the appointments on which to focus their attention. Instead of ‘wasting’ liberal officers on less important appointments, presidents may save them for the most important jobs. Nevertheless, the lack of data on the pool of available officers makes inference about this difference difficult.

Controls for Military Appointments under President Clinton

One potential concern is that the observed relationship between regime type and campaign contributions among officer appointments may be spurious. The only divided Democrat regime we have observed is that of President Bill Clinton from 1995-2000, and there are several reasons to believe that other factors during this time period may have influenced Clinton’s ability to appoint military officers who shared his preferences. First, during the last four years of the Clinton Administration, a moderate Republican – William Cohen – served as Secretary of Defense. It may be the case that the lower number of Democratic officers appointed during this time period resulted from Secretary Cohen’s influence on the process rather than from the effect of a hostile Republican Senate. Fortunately, we also observed two years with a Democratic Secretary of Defense – Secretary William Perry – under divided government. Thus, we can compare how Clinton fared with a Republican Senate under Secretaries of Defense from both parties.

Table 4.5 displays the results under Clinton by Secretary of Defense and regime with non-contributors removed for ease of comparison. The data suggest that William Cohen’s influence does not explain the decrease in the number of appointed officers
contributing to Democratic candidates. The pattern again is clearest for members of the JCS and the combatant commanders. Although the percentage of democratic officers appointed under Cohen is slightly lower (22 percent) than the percentage appointed under Secretary Perry (25 percent) during the period of divided government, this difference is neither large nor statistically significant. However, the change in liberal officers appointed under Perry – from 71.4 percent 25 percent – is both large and statistically significant. The same pattern also is evident for all other four-star appointments though the overall effect is much smaller and not statistically significant. Again, the data generally is consistent with the model’s predictions, especially for the

Table 4.5: Contributions of U.S. Four-Star Officers, 1993-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Secretary of Defense</th>
<th>JCS Members and Combatant Commanders</th>
<th>All Other Four-Star Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Republican Officers</td>
<td>Democrat Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspin (Unified)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>1 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry (Unified)</td>
<td>2 (28.6%)</td>
<td>5 (71.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry (Divided)</td>
<td>6 (75.0%)</td>
<td>2 (25.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohen (Divided)</td>
<td>14 (77.8%)</td>
<td>4 (22.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>22 (62.9%)</td>
<td>13 (37.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perry (JCS): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 4.00 (p = 0.04)
Perry (Other): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 1.95 (p = 0.163)
Difference between Perry Divided and Cohen Divided (JCS): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 0.024 (p = 0.877)
Difference between Perry Divided and Cohen Divided (Other): Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 1.34 (p = 0.248)

Nevertheless, I cannot reliably infer from the data that the Secretary of Defense does not have the ability significantly influence the appointments process in other cases. Although it appears that both Perry and Cohen represented President Clinton’s interests in a similar manner under divided government, it does not necessarily follow that this pattern would hold under the current circumstances in which a Republican SecDef – Robert Gates – is serving a unified Democratic regime.
most important appointments. Moreover, although Secretary Perry never made specific public statements regarding difficulties with the Senate on military appointments, these findings are consistent with his broader remarks about partisanship in the Senate. Upon announcing his decision to step down as Secretary of Defense in late 1996, Perry spoke of his growing frustration with the partisan political climate in Congress and what he believed were its harmful effects on the military establishment.  

Another possible confounding factor is Clinton’s potential loss of focus or limited political capital during and after the Monica Lewinsky scandal. In order to examine whether or not the Lewinsky scandal influenced President Clinton’s ability to get his preferred nominees, I consider Clinton’s divided government appointments both before the scandal broke on 17 January 1998, and after. These results are displayed in Table 4.6. In this case, there does appear to be some evidence that the Lewinsky scandal is correlated with the appointment of fewer Democratic officers, at least for more important appointments. Before the Lewinsky scandal made the headlines, 36 percent of Clinton’s divided government appointments resulted in Democratic officers; after the scandal, the number of Democratic officers dropped to only 13 percent. Although this difference is not statistically significant, the Lewinsky scandal appears to have moderately hindered President Clinton’s ability to get his preferred officers. Nevertheless, even the 36 percent of Democratic officers appointed prior to the scandal is far lower than the 78 percent appointed under unified government. This difference also is statistically significant with a p-value of 0.064. Thus, this data still is largely consistent with the predictions of my model.

Although I have controlled for the two of the most-likely factors that may have confounded my results, data limitations prevent me from ruling out several other possibilities. First, there may have been something idiosyncratic about President Clinton himself that led him to react to a Republican Senate in a cautious manner.

Additionally, these findings may have been driven by the highly polarized political climate during which Clinton served as President. Nevertheless, Clinton’s last six years in office are, in fact, the only period of divided Democratic government during the era of the Joint Chiefs. During this period, the existing quantitative evidence is largely supportive of the parsimonious explanation offered in my general officer appointments model.

### Table 4.6: Contributions of U.S. Four-Star Officers, 1995-2000 (Clinton Under Divided Government)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>JCS Members and Combatant Commanders</th>
<th>All Other Four-Star Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Republican Contributors</td>
<td>Democratic Contributors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Lewinsky</td>
<td>7 (63.6%)</td>
<td>4 (36.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Lewinsky</td>
<td>13 (86.7%)</td>
<td>2 (13.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>20 (76.9%)</td>
<td>6 (23.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

JCS: Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 1.90 (p = 0.169)
Other: Chi-squared (1 d.f.) = 0.524 (p = 0.469)

### Qualitative Evidence and Illustrative Cases

Available qualitative evidence – including information about a number of individual cases before, during, and after the period covered by the data – also illustrates the plausibility of my model. One problem with this type of analysis is that the absence of objective measures for an officer’s political ideology prior to 1977 necessarily makes parts of the following analysis less precise and more subjective. In many cases, however, scholarly consensus has emerged about whether or not officers’ preferences were in line with, or opposed to, the Administrations they served.

### Betts’ Typology

First, I turned to the typology and classifications presented by Betts about the members of the JCS serving from 1949-1976. I briefly examined whether there were
any systematic relationships between Betts’ classification of officers based on their modes of military appointment and the political regime (unified or divided government) under which they were appointed. Several clear patterns emerge that generally are consistent with my model. Seven of the nine officers Betts identified as ‘professional-political’ or ‘exceptional-political’ appointments occurred under periods of unified government. A Republican, President Richard Nixon, appointed the two exceptions. In contrast, 27 of the 41 ‘routine-professional’ appointments were made under divided government while only 14 were made when the president’s co-partisans controlled the Senate. In general, then, this evidence suggests that my model may help explain the circumstances under which certain officers were appointed, even before the period covered by my quantitative analysis.

Periods of Unified Government

There also are a number of specific cases in which presidents of both parties were able to hand-pick their preferred officers and steer them through the appointment process during periods of unified government. Both Dwight Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy were criticized for ‘politicizing’ the process when they replaced the ‘holdover’ chiefs from previous administrations with officers who shared their preferences about the role of military force (McMaster 1997). 105 In particular, Kennedy recalled Maxwell Taylor from retirement, breaking the norm of service rotation, instead of appointing the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral George Anderson, who believed he was next in line. Then, when Chief of Staff of the Army George Decker voiced opposition to the Administration’s approach in Southeast Asia, Kennedy chose not to re-nominate him for a customary second term. Kennedy also chose not to appoint any of the sitting four-star officers in command positions; instead, he chose a relatively junior officer for the position. Earle Wheeler was a three-star officer with little command experience who jumped ahead of many senior officers because Secretary of Defense Robert

105 Although many have argued that Truman, Eisenhower, and Kennedy shared many of the same foreign policy goals, they differed drastically with respect to the way in which they believed that military power could help them achieve their goals. Eisenhower’s doctrine of ‘massive retaliation’ was a significant break with Truman’s policies. In a similar manner, Kennedy’s doctrine of ‘flexible response’ shifted the balance back again. Military historians generally agree that both Eisenhower and Kennedy used the military appointment process to help align their military doctrine with their broader foreign policy goals.
McNamara told Kennedy that Wheeler “thinks like us.” Lyndon Johnson later selected Wheeler to replace Taylor as the CJCS, again breaking the norm of ‘service rotation.’ Johnson re-appointed Wheeler two more times, making him the longest serving CJCS in history.

There are several other examples of attempted ‘ politicization’ under periods of unified government. When President Ronald Reagan stopped in Hawaii en route to China in the spring of 1984, he was so impressed with Admiral William Crowe’s briefing on the military situation in the Far East that he reportedly told Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger that if another Chairman was needed, he had found him. When sitting General John Vessey retired, Reagan nominated Crowe even though he was not Vessey’s initial nominee. In fact, Crowe was not even among the top candidates on the Navy’s list of potential nominees. Nevertheless, Weinberger and Reagan appointed, and got, the officer they preferred. Crowe’s case highlights the problem of uncertainty, however. In retrospect, it is not clear that Crowe was, in fact, the officer whose preferences aligned most closely with Reagan’s. Although there was relatively little direct confrontation between Reagan and his CJCS, Crowe publicly supported President Bill Clinton for president against President George H.W. Bush. Still, it appears that Reagan believed at the time that Admiral Crowe shared his preferences and he was able to get the officer he wanted against the objections of the Navy with no opposition in the Senate.

President Clinton’s nomination of General John Shalikashvili for CJCS and Admiral William Owens for VCJCS also are indicative of this pattern. Clinton ignored the recommendation of outgoing Chairman, Colin Powell, and instead chose to meet with every candidate meeting the statutory requirements before selecting Shalikashvili. After a long process, Clinton chose the Army officer, again breaking the norm of service rotation. During his confirmation hearing, General Shalikashvili also was the

Crowe is one of the six officers who made contributions but was excluded from the data; Crowe made relatively even contributions to members of both parties, donating $2250 to Republican causes and $3000 to Democratic candidates. Moreover, it is unclear whether Crowe’s preferences regarding the use of force actually were out of line with Reagan’s since their working relationship was relatively harmonious.
first senior military officer to support a potential military operation in Bosnia.\textsuperscript{107} President George W. Bush also broke several precedents in selecting his senior officers during periods of unified government. In 2003, Bush backed Secretary Donald Rumsfeld’s decision to bring retired General Peter Schoomaker out of retirement to get an officer who shared his vision for the Army.\textsuperscript{108}

\textit{Periods of Divided Government}

All the cases listed above largely support both my model and the Presidential dominance model. However, a different pattern emerges when we examine periods of divided government. First, despite six examples of presidents ignoring the principle of service rotation for the CJCS under unified government, the rotation has been observed during periods of divided government on all but one occasion. Second, consistent with my model, it is extremely difficult to find any cases of overtly ‘political’ appointments under periods of divided government. In most cases under divided government, it appears that presidents deferred to the selection process within the Department of Defense instead of investing the time and effort necessary to identify and nominate a candidate whose preferences were closer to the President’s. In other cases, the Senate’s involvement was more overt.

One clear case of Senate influence occurred early in the Ford Administration. The Army Chief of Staff position opened in September 1974 upon the unexpected death of General Creighton Abrams. Initially, President Ford stated that he wanted to appoint General Alexander Haig to the post. In the midst of the Watergate scandal a year earlier, Haig had been tapped as the temporary White House Chief of Staff and worked closely with Ford during the transition. However, the possibility of Haig’s appointment as Army Chief of Staff led to opposition within the Pentagon and, subsequently, to opposition within the Senate. Fearing a potential confirmation fight, Ford instead chose to nominate the Pentagon’s recommended candidate, General

Frederick Weyand, for the Army Chief of Staff position. President Ford did, nevertheless, appoint Haig to serve as the Supreme Allied Commander Europe, a position that did not require Senate confirmation until several years later (Betts 1977). Although President Ford was able to place General Haig in a position of responsibility, the Senate successfully did deter Ford from appointing Haig as Army Chief of Staff as the president initially hoped to do.

An even more overt example of Senate influence involved the Bush Administration’s decision not to re-nominate General Peter Pace for a ‘customary’ second term as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Pace initially was appointed as the CJCS in 2005 under a unified Republican regime; however, when control of the Senate changed hands in 2007, his re-appointment was far from certain. Although the Administration wanted to keep Pace in the military’s top job, they instead chose to nominate Admiral Michael Mullen because they expected a tough battle in Congress for the nomination. Announcing the decision not to re-nominate Pace, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated, “It had been my intention, from early in my tenure, to recommend to the president that General Pace be re-nominated for another two-year term as chairman. However, after consultations over the course of several weeks with both Republican and Democratic senators, I concluded that there was the very real prospect the process would be quite contentious.” Additionally, there is some evidence that Gates drew heavily on the advice of the opposition Senate before announcing Mullen as the Administration’s nominee. The Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Senator Carl Levin (D, MI), stated that he received a formal request from Secretary Gates to solicit the views of other Senators regarding potential nominees and that he believed Mullen was “well-qualified” for the job. Obviously, this case took place during the midst of a difficult and intense war; it is not intended to be a test of my model on its own. Nevertheless, it does clearly illustrate that the Executive sometimes

110 Ibid.
does account for the Senate’s preferences when determining which military officers tonominate.

**Conclusion**

Presidents are most likely to ‘politicize’ their senior military appointments during periods of unified government. When they face an opposition Senate, however, presidents are more constrained and must anticipate the actions of the Senate. The distribution of preferences within the senior officer corps also appears to have significant implications for the outcomes of the appointment process for generals and admirals. The large number of conservative officers in the senior officer corps leads to an asymmetry in the ability of presidents from the two political parties to appoint senior officers who share their preferences, especially when the opposition party controls the Senate.

In this chapter, I have demonstrated that, from 1977-2002, Republican presidents were very likely to appoint conservative officers under both unified and divided government; in contrast, Democratic presidents were more likely to appoint liberal officers only for the most important positions – the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Combatant Commanders – when Democrats controlled the Senate. Additionally, the limited qualitative evidence I presented suggests that my general officer appointment model may help us understand the military appointment process throughout the entire JCS era.

This evidence alone does not provide a significant explanation to a much more significant question, however: do the patterns of preference alignment and divergence identified in this chapter actually have an influence on foreign policy decisions? According to my informational theory of military influence, they should. Nevertheless, identifying ‘politicization’ in senior military appointments process is one thing; showing that it matters is another. In the next two chapters, I turn to the more important task of testing the central predictions of my informational theory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appointment Type</th>
<th>JCS Members and Combatant Commanders</th>
<th>All Other Four-Star Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Republican Officers</td>
<td>Democrat Officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter (Unified)</td>
<td>2 (12.5%)</td>
<td>6 (37.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reagan (Unified)</td>
<td>23 (76.7%)</td>
<td>2 (6.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reagan (Divided)</td>
<td>6 (54.5%)</td>
<td>2 (18.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.W. Bush (Divided)</td>
<td>18 (69.2%)</td>
<td>3 (11.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton (Unified)</td>
<td>2 (15.4%)</td>
<td>7 (53.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton (Divided)</td>
<td>20 (57.1%)</td>
<td>6 (17.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W. Bush (Divided)</td>
<td>8 (72.7%)</td>
<td>1 (9.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>79 (55.6%)</td>
<td>27 (19.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5

Picking Fights

Joint Chiefs Appointments and the Use of Military Force

“But what we accomplished was through operating behind the scenes. It was playing one party off against the other. It was taking advantage of a Democratic president and a Republican-controlled Congress, and weaving in and out to get what you needed.”
– General Hugh Shelton, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

“What’s the point of having this superb military you’re always talking about if we can’t use it?”
– Madeleine Albright

Introduction

In the early years of the Clinton Administration, a number of contentious debates emerged between civilian leaders and senior military officers. According to many observers, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other senior officers were undermining civilian control of the military at every turn, marking a ‘crisis’ in civil-military relations (Weigley 1993; Kohn 1994; Ricks 1997). Historian Richard Kohn, for example, was especially critical of General Colin Powell for “his intrusion into foreign policy” and for “reversing the relationship between national goals and military means” during use of force decisions regarding Bosnia and other potential humanitarian operations. Although Kohn and others often stopped short of directly saying so, their analysis suggested that Powell’s actions had influenced the president’s policy decisions. By the end of 1993, Clinton had appointed a new Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General John Shalikashvili, and several other key military advisors. Over the next few years, the Clinton Administration deployed troops around the world at a

such a “furious pace” that Republican critics, including Condoleezza Rice, argued that the president had pushed the armed forces “close to a breaking point.”

In the next two chapters, I examine the extent to which such increases in deployment rates are related to changes in the preference alignment of the president and his senior military advisors. In Chapter 4, I demonstrated that the president is more likely to appoint general officers who share his preferences during periods of unified government. More generally, I also identified the conditions under which the preferences of senior military advisors would converge and diverge with those of the Commander-in-Chief. While both of these findings are interesting in their own right, they may, nevertheless, be of little consequence if members of the JCS cannot influence policy decisions. In this chapter, I turn to the central task of assessing whether the appointment of general officers actually matters in shaping foreign policy.

Specifically, I examine whether preference alignment between a president and his generals affects his propensity to authorize the use of military force. Because a president is more likely to appoint officers who share his preferences during periods of unified government, I use the percentage of the Joint Chiefs appointed under unified government as a proxy for preference alignment. I also utilize a series of variables that identify whether the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) was appointed under unified government, appointed under divided government, or inherited from a previous administration. Using these measures, I then assess the impact of variation in preference alignment on the president’s propensity to use military force from 1949-2004.

The results of my quantitative tests provide general support for the informational theory of military influence that I developed in Chapter 2, but with some minor qualifications. The percentage of general officers appointed to the JCS during unified government is highly correlated with the use of military force; additionally, this effect

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is larger for Democrats than for Republicans. These results are robust, and they hold both under all specifications when I examine the relationship between my independent variables and the aggregate numbers of quarterly uses of force. However, when I instead examine the probability that a president will respond militarily when facing an international crisis, the results are more complicated. In this case, the effect is asymmetric; there is strong evidence that Democratic presidents are more likely to use force when they have more officers who share their preferences advising them, but there is little evidence of a similar effect among Republican presidents. In particular, my theory does not explain use of force decisions during the Reagan Administration well; nevertheless, there is some evidence that it may be consistent with use of force decisions during other Republican administrations.

I will proceed as follows. First, I briefly will synthesize the quantitative use of force literature. Then, I will review my theoretical argument from Chapter 2 and develop the specific hypotheses that I will test. Third, I discuss my research design and the measures I use to test my hypotheses. Then, I test a central prediction of my theory, namely whether there is a relationship between the variation in preference alignment between presidents and their military advisors and their propensity to use military force during the Joint Chiefs era. I conclude with a discussion of the implications of my results.

**The Quantitative Use of Force Literature**

Presidential decisions to use military force often have significant international and domestic implications. As a result, a large number of scholars have attempted to identify which international and domestic factors are most important in explaining when and why presidents are prone to use force and which combination of circumstances is mostly likely to lead to strategic success. Beginning with Blechman and Kaplan (1978), these scholars have developed a number of datasets that track troop deployments and other uses of force over time; additionally, they have tested the implications of a number of international and domestic theories about the sources of military conflict.
Realists and neo-realists, in particular, have paid particular attention to how international factors influence use of force decisions. According to classic formulations of the neo-realist tradition, states focus primarily on their own power and security as related to their standing in anarchic international community (Waltz 1979). The structure of the international system, foreign threats to security, and the national interest thus dictate a nation’s foreign policy; consequently, Waltz argued, “It is not possible to understand world politics simply by looking inside of states.”

Consistent with this view, James Meernik and other scholars have provided evidence that international factors often influence use of force decisions. Meernik (1994; 2000), in particular, pays attention to how the United States’ overseas interests might shape such decisions. He finds that the president is more likely to use military force when the nation faces greater threats to its overseas defense commitments and less likely to use force when the possibility for a confrontation with the Soviet Union is high (Meernik 1994). Similarly, Gowa (1998) and Moore and Lanoue (2003) both offer evidence that the distribution of power among states in the international system helps explain instances of force; they also reject the view that domestic factors – such as the partisan composition of Congress, the electoral cycle, or the state of the economy – play any significant role in use of force decisions.

Some scholars in this field, however, have argued that both international and domestic factors play a role in shaping a president’s decisions about whether to use force. Conceding that international factors certainly are important, they focus instead on the role that domestic politics and psychological factors might play. In a seminal work, Ostrom and Job (1986) argued that presidents “monitor salient dimensions in the domestic, international, and political arenas” when making use of force decisions. Their empirical results suggested that domestic factors – such as economic conditions, the proximity of national elections, and presidential approval ratings – often were as

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113 Waltz (1979).
significant as international factors (Ostrom and Job 1986). Although James and Oneal (1991) found that international factors remained more important than Ostrom and Job initially concluded, they nevertheless agreed that domestic factors were the most important determinant in foreign policy.

Building on this work, recent empirical studies have contributed additional evidence and provided nuance to some of these initial findings. Fordham (1998), for example, argues that public opinion and economic conditions influence how the president interprets the international environment. When economic conditions are good and public approval is high, the president has relatively fewer reasons to accept the risk inherent in a military venture; when these conditions are unfavorable, however, he may be more likely to see potential opportunities for political gain (Fordham 1998). Similarly, Stoll (1984) provides evidence that suggests that presidential decisions to use force are contingent on the election cycle and whether or not the nation already is at war. Most recently, Howell and Pevehouse (2005, 2007) demonstrated that the president is less likely to use force when he faces a Congress controlled by the rival party. Although debates about the relative importance of domestic and international factors continue to persist, the consensus in the field is that both factors play at least some role.

For the most part, scholars in this field have paid very little attention to whether aspects of civil-military relations could influence presidential decisions.115 Almost all previous studies into the effects of military influence on foreign policy have been qualitative in nature (see, for example, Betts 1977; Petraeus 1987; and Feaver 2003).116 Although these qualitative studies have provided a rich source of data about

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115 Sechser (2004) does look comparatively at how different forms of civilian control affect states’ propensity to use military force in general. He does not focus on American foreign policy or on variation within civilian control regimes, however.

116 These scholars primarily examined Cold War decisions to use military force. In general, they found that senior military officers were no more aggressive – and sometimes less aggressive – than civilians in the Executive branch. Additionally, they suggested that senior military officers were most influential when they opposed the use of military force, especially when they were unified in their opposition. Qualitative analyses can, of course, serve to test social scientific theory; in Chapter 6, I use it for just such a purpose. The above examples, however, did not do so. Instead, they induced general insights from a selection of notable use of force decisions. As a result, these studies have provided a rich source
military influence on particular presidential decisions, they have not offered any theoretical explanations for variation across cases. These studies have, however, suggested that senior military officers sometimes can prevent the president from using force, especially if they are unified in their opposition.

Only recently have scholars begun to use quantitative methods to gauge the scope of military influence. Feaver and Gelpi (2004) conducted one of the first, large-scale tests of how civil-military relations might influence foreign policy. They examined the relationship between the percentage of veterans in the U.S. Congress and the initiation of militarized interstate disputes (MIDs) between 1816 and 1992, finding that “as the percentage of veterans serving in the executive branch and the legislature increases, the probability that the United States will initiate militarized disputes declines.” Other scholars have argued that these veteran effects may have been spurious, however. When controlling for the partisan composition of Congress, for example, Howell and Pevehouse (2007) found no relationship between the percentage of veterans in the House of Representatives and U.S. deployments abroad. Similarly, Price (2008), provided evidence that military veterans in Congress did not vote any differently than their co-partisans on decisions to authorize the use of force in Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, or Kosovo. Both of these latter findings are entirely consistent with the evidence I presented in Chapter 3, suggesting that partisan affiliation – and not one’s military status – determines an individual’s foreign policy preferences.

Even including the studies above, however, no one directly has attempted to use quantitative methods to examine the influence of the members of the JCS themselves. My project represents the first attempt to do so. In the next section, I briefly will review my theory and I will outline the specific hypotheses that I will test.

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of data about military influence on particular presidential decisions and they have helped us understand how senior military officers might have affected presidential decisions to use force in specific cases; nevertheless, they offer no real theoretical explanation for variation across cases. For example, they do not explain why military advisors oppose the use of force in some cases, but not in others.

117 As I noted in Chapter 2, Feaver (2001) does introduce an Agency theory of Civil-Military relations. As I argued previously, however, I believe that his model cannot explain use of force decisions on its own.

Theory Review

Previous theories of civil-military relations implicitly have assumed that the president knows when he wants to use force and when he doesn’t; his only challenge is how to get the military to cooperate with his plans (Huntington 1957; Janowitz 1960; Desch 2001; Feaver 2003). But, in reality, the president doesn’t always know what he wants. When an international crisis arises, he must make a decision about whether to use military force in the face of uncertainty about the consequences of his policy choice. 119 Although the president often would prefer to use force in a given situation if he expects a military operation to be relatively short, low cost, and successful, he might be reluctant to use force in the same situation if he instead expects a long, costly campaign with high casualties.

As I showed in Chapter 3, foreign policy attitudes break primarily along partisan or ideological lines, not along civil-military lines. In general, Republicans and Democrats differ both about how to use force and about when and why to use force. Moreover, as I discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, they also tend to develop different policy goals. Thus, although many Americans believe that politics should stop at the waters’ edge, the politics of foreign policy often is, nevertheless, partisan politics. 120 Even during the so-called period of ‘foreign policy consensus’ prior to the Vietnam War, Republicans and Democrats frequently disagreed about how to accomplish foreign policy goals (and sometimes even about goals themselves). 121 As a result, Democrats and Republicans often have very different preferences about how and when to use military force.

Consistent with previous informational models (Spence 1973; Crawford and Sobel

119 In particular, the president often has incomplete information about how a policy choice – the decision to use military force – will translate into outcomes. The key distinction here is between the decision to use force and the effects of that policy choice once it has been implemented.
120 A wide body of public opinion research demonstrates that, on average, Republicans and Democrats do generally perceive foreign policy issues in vastly different ways (Nie with Anderson 1974; Wittkopf 1990; Gaines et al 2007; Berinsky 2007; Howell and Kriner 2007).
121 As I noted in chapter 2, Eisenhower and Kennedy agreed on the dangers of the Soviet threat, but they fundamentally disagreed about how U.S. diplomatic and military power should be implemented in order to contain global Communism. Similarly, Barry Goldwater and other conservative Republicans were prominent critics of Lyndon Johnson’s Vietnam policy even before Johnson committed significant numbers of U.S. troops.
1982; Cho and Kreps 1987; Krehbiel 1992), I assume that political leaders and military officers are self-interested and outcome-oriented. In other words, they derive costs and benefits not from the decision to use force itself, but rather from the consequences of that decision. Consequently, the effects of a policy choice will coincide with policy-makers’ expectations only to the extent that they have precise information about how a policy maps into a final outcome. Since they often do not know the precise effects of the military policies they are considering, the president and other political leaders must infer whether or not the president should order the use of force based on the advice of expert military officers who possess private information about the situation. Although the development of military expertise can help the president gain the benefits of governmental specialization, it also can provide military leaders with opportunities to use their private information strategically to influence policy decisions.

The more similar military and presidential preferences are, the more informative the military’s signals will be to the president (Crawford and Sobel 1982). When military and presidential preferences are closely aligned, military advisors are likely to reveal their private information to the president. In these cases, we should expect the president to follow the advice of his senior officers, using military force when he expects that doing so will accomplish his foreign policy goals while incurring relatively low costs. In contrast, when the president’s senior military advisors do not share his goals, military leaders instead are likely to withhold or misrepresent their private information about the consequences of military action. Unless the president holds a relatively high prior belief that military action is extremely likely to be successful, he will be less likely to intervene, ceteris paribus.¹²² Embarking on potentially costly military ventures with unreliable information carries great risk for the Commander-in-Chief.

Of course, there are some cases in which the president’s prior beliefs about the

¹²² In some specifications of these of types games, other equilibria may be possible. Cho and Kreps (1987) offer a compelling argument that the assumptions necessary for these other equilibria to hold are unlikely to be met.
efficacy of force would lead him to use force even in the absence of reliable information that an operation would succeed. In these cases, senior military officers will not sit idly by on their hands. Instead, they will attempt to increase the president’s domestic political costs by using their private information to pursue ‘external’ strategies, such as mobilizing members of Congress and making public appeals in order to influence members of Congress or to sway public opinion (Feaver 2003, Brooks 2009). A sizeable body of work has focused precisely on the normative implications of the prevalence of this type military dissent since the end of the Cold War (Weigley 1993; Kohn 1994; Bacevich and Kohn 1997, 2005; Ricks 1997; Myers and Kohn 2006; Owens 2006; Korb 2006; Desch 2006; Snider 2008; Brooks 2009; Snider and Nielsen 2009).

When the military believes that the president is inclined to use force even against military advice, senior military officers also may go outside the Administration, using public dissent in order to increase the president’s domestic political costs of going to war. These officers may be able to use their private information to help structure the policy debate in the public sphere. Either by sharing information with members of Congress or retired officers who share their policy preferences, leaking information to the press, or, less frequently, by making direct public appeals, senior military officers can potentially widen the scope of debate surrounding a given operation, breaking down political consensus and raising the political costs of using force. In general, then, I expect that a president who is advised by officers who do not share his foreign policy preferences will be less likely to use military force than a president advised by officers who do share his preferences.

Hypothesis Development

Senior military officers are appointed in such a way that they are guaranteed to serve under multiple presidential terms, if not multiple administrations.123 The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the JCS each are appointed for two-year terms, but can be re-

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123 In this context, I discuss only the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), the Vice Chairman of the JCS, and the service chiefs (Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps).
appointed for a second term (or third during time of war). The respective service
chiefs are each appointed to serve four-year terms that are staggered to provide
continuity between administrations. As a result, presidents of both parties will have to
work with general officers that they did not appoint for significant portions of their
administrations.

In Figure 5.1, I lay out four different categories of general officer appointments based
on my formal model from Chapter 4. The category “Aligned” refers to an officer
appointed during a period of unified government. In contrast, I refer to an officer
appointed under divided government as “Constrained.” If a President inherits a
member of the JCS from a President of the opposite party who appointed him under
divided government, I will refer to him as “Moderately-opposed.” Finally, if a
President inherits a military advisor from a President of the opposite party who
appointed him under divided government, I will refer to him as “Opposed.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 5.1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relative Preference Alignment of the President and his Senior Military Advisors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aligned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately-opposed</td>
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<td>Opposed</td>
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In Chapter 4, I demonstrated that both Republican and Democratic presidents are most
likely to appoint general officers who will share their respective preferences during
periods of unified government. I also found that the military advisors appointed by a
president from either party under divided government essentially would have
preferences that are closer to Republican presidents. Thus, consistent with my formal

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124 During my empirical tests, I will treat a Democratic president who inherits his generals from another
Democratic president as the same category. The opposite is true for Republicans.
model and the empirical analysis in the previous chapter, I make the following assumptions about the preference alignment of the president and his senior military advisors.

Democratic “Aligned” officers are most likely to share the preferences of Democratic presidents and, thus, they should be expected to provide them with the most reliable information.¹²⁵ The preferences of “Constrained” and “Moderately-opposed” officers, however, will diverge from those of a Democratic president while the preferences of an “Opposed” officer should significantly diverge from the preferences of a Democratic president; as a result, all three categories of these officers are unlikely to provide reliable information to Democrats. Similarly, officers in the “Aligned” Republican category will share the preferences of a Republican president.¹²⁶ However, the preferences of “Constrained” and “Moderately-opposed” officers should still be somewhat aligned with those of a Republican president and, thus, they should provide relatively reliable information to Republican presidents. In this case, only the preferences of “Opposed” officers will diverge from those of Republican presidents. For a brief summary of these categories and assumptions, see Figure 5.1.

Although an informative signal from one officer who shares the preferences of the president should enable him to make reliable inference, all of the president’s military advisors will not necessarily speak directly to him when he contemplates a given use of force decision. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs is the principal military advisor to the President and is likely to have the most direct access to the president, especially in recent years. Although the Chairman legally is bound to provide the views of any dissenting Service Chief, the other Chiefs often are no longer formally consulted on operational military decisions. Prior to the implementation of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act in 1986, the situation was less clear and the Service

¹²⁵ Of course, there still may be some ‘gap’ between the preferences of Democratic presidents and “Aligned” officers, but these officers should, nevertheless, provide the most reliable information to Democratic presidents. Later in the chapter, I will discuss this idea in greater detail.

¹²⁶ In fact, the preferences of Republican “Aligned” officers should be relatively closer to those of a Republican president than those of Democratic “Aligned” officers should be a Democratic president because of the Democrat-Military Gap outlined in Chapter 3.
Chiefs had greater access to the President. Legally, the Chiefs advised the president as a collaborative body, and they attempted to provide consensus recommendations. Nevertheless, in many cases prior to the GWNA, the Chairman alone met with the President and his civilian advisors after meeting with the other Chiefs.\textsuperscript{127} Since the recommendation of the members of the JCS typically came to the president through the voice of the Chairman, he often may have received a filtered view. As a result, I also will assume that the president was more likely to get more informative signals about the costs of military operations either when a) he appointed more officers who shared his preferences, or b) when he appointed the Chairman who shared his preferences.

Additionally, public dissent should be relatively more costly when it involves the Chairman himself (because he is the senior ranking officer) or when it involves more than one senior officer. Moreover, since other members of the JCS potentially could challenge dissent by only one chief, dissent also becomes less likely as the president appoints more officers who share his preferences. In general, then, I expect that a president who is advised by officers who do not share his foreign policy preferences will be less likely to use military force than a president advised by officers who do share his preferences. In the next section, I test the following specifications of my hypotheses:

\textit{Hypothesis 1a. All else equal, a president should use force more often as the number of officers he has appointed to the Joints Chiefs of Staff under unified government increases, and less often as the number of officers he has appointed to the JCS decreases.}

\textit{Hypothesis 1b. All else equal, the relative increase in a president’s propensity to use force – as the number of officers he has appointed to the Joints Chiefs of Staff under unified government increases – should be larger for a Democratic president than for Republican president.}

\textsuperscript{127} For a more detailed discussion of this phenomenon, see Petraeus (1987), p. 253-256.
Hypothesis 2a. All else equal, a Democratic president should use force most often when he has appointed the CJCS under unified government.¹²⁸

Hypothesis 2b. All else equal, a Republican president should use force most often when he has appointed the CJCS under unified government and least often when he has inherited a CJCS appointed by a Democratic president.

Empirical Tests
In this section, I will conduct two separate empirical tests. First, I will test my hypotheses with respect to the aggregate frequency of U.S. troop deployments using a quarterly event count model. Almost all previous studies about the presidential use of force have used this type of statistical model.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, these types of models have one critical weakness. Since they rely solely on quarterly aggregations of deployments, event count models cannot control for particular features of precipitating events themselves. Nevertheless, to remain consistent with the existing literature, I first will use an event count model. Then, however, I will test my hypotheses using more comprehensive data that attempt to account for ‘opportunities’ to use force (Howell and Pevehouse 2007). These relatively new data allow me to model the probability of a troop deployment while controlling for more contextual factors.

The Frequency of Troop Deployments
Event Count Data
My event count data draws from Howell and Pevehouse (2007), and builds on their update of the original Blechman and Kaplan time series that ended in 1976.¹³⁰ Although I did not change their data in any way, I did extend it out to 2004 from the

¹²⁸ Since no Democratic president immediately has followed a Republican president whose party controlled the Senate, I cannot test the effects of a Democratic president with “Opposed” senior officers. Additionally, I expect no difference in a Democratic president’s propensity to use force whether he is advised by a “Constrained” officer or a “Moderately-Opposed” officer.
¹²⁹ Meernik (1994, 2000) and Howell and Pevehouse (2007) are notable exceptions.
¹³⁰ Over time, a number of scholars have continued to refine and update this data. Fordham and Sarver (2001) expanded this data set immensely, providing the basis from which Howell and Pevehouse (2005; 2007) and I could proceed.
previous end date of 2000 in order to be able include the Republican Moderately-Opposed category for the CJCS.\textsuperscript{131} To identify uses of force post-2000, I replicated the procedures described in Fordham (1998). My primary dependent variable is a count of the number of times per quarter that the president initiates military force overseas.\textsuperscript{132}

\begin{center}
\textbf{Figure 5.2}
\end{center}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of Uses of Force</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East/West Germany, 1959. Mobilization of troops in Western Europe in response to Berlin Deadline Crisis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Korea, 1968. Deployment of three aircraft carrier groups in response to the seizure of the USS Pueblo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan, 1970. Three aircraft carriers sent to eastern Mediterranean to warn Syria against intervention in Jordanian civil conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South/North Korea, 1975. Mobilization and deployment of U.S. troops in response to increases in North-South border clashes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt/Saudi Arabia, 1980. Forward deployment of rapid reaction forces, including naval and air force personnel. Stationing of SR-71, AWACs, and F-4Es to Egypt and Saudi Arabia in aftermath of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba, 1984. Major increases in scale and length of war games conducted off coast of Cuba, all originating at Guantanamo Bay. Nuclear-capable forces are “show-cased.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama, 1989. Invasion of Panama.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia, 1992. 30,000 U.S. troops, carrier group deployed to facilitate famine relief.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{131} All of my results hold even without the extension of the data. However, stopping in 2000 would have allowed me only to test six of my eight categories instead of seven.

\textsuperscript{132} Originally, Blechman and Kaplan ranked demonstrations of force on a five-point severity scale. Subsequent work frequently has divided this scale into major uses of force (1-3) and minor uses of force (4-5). This distinction between minor and major uses of force is standard in the use-of-force literature (DeRouen 1995 and 2000; Fordham 1998; Howell and Pevehouse 2007). Consistent with the extant literature, I only will consider ‘major’ uses of force. This title, however, can be somewhat misleading. Major uses of force include instances that involved the deployment of nuclear capabilities or the mobilization of multiple aircraft carrier task groups, battalions, or combat wings. The severity of the use of force is determined by information available at the outset of the crisis regarding the size and nuclear capability of the troop deployment, which separates major from minor incidents.
To constitute a use of force, a president must either deploy nuclear capabilities or mobilize multiple aircraft carrier task groups, troop battalions, or combat air wings.\textsuperscript{133} Figure 5.2 provides several examples.\textsuperscript{134} In almost cases, the uses of force captured in these data represent a significant military commitment to deal with an overseas crisis. Between 1949 and 2004, U.S. presidents used force a total of 150 times, exactly. Over 128 quarters, Republican Presidents used force 98 times total (0.76 uses per quarter) while Democratic presidents used force 52 times (0.55 uses per quarter) over 94 quarters.

*Key explanatory variables*

I construct several variables in order to examine the relationship between general officer appointments and the frequency of troop deployments. *PercentAppoint* is a continuous variable measures the percentage of officers that a President has appointed to the JCS under periods of unified government.\textsuperscript{135} *Dem*\textsuperscript{*}PercentAppoint is an interaction term of *PercentAppoint* and a dummy variable that is coded 1 if the President is a Democrat and 0 if he is a Republican. Since *PercentAppoint* captures the effects of increasing the percentage of officers for a Republican president, I expect the coefficient to be positively signed. Consistent with Hypothesis 1b, however, I also expect the coefficient on *Dem*\textsuperscript{*}PercentAppoint to be positive and statistically significant, resulting in a larger net effect for a Democrat than for a Republican.

I also construct five dummy variables, and seven categories, to measure the effects of appointment the CJCS. *Aligned* is coded 1 if the President (or a previous president from the current president’s party) appointed the CJCS under unified government and 0 otherwise. *Dem*\textsuperscript{*}Aligned is an interaction term of *Aligned* and a dummy variable that

\textsuperscript{133} For a more detailed explanation of coding procedures and deployment types, see Fordham (1998) or Fordham and Sarver (2001). The level of the use of force is determined by information available at the outset of the crisis. Although the president does not know the long-term severity or duration of the conflict, he does have information about the size and scope of the initial deployment decision that he chose to make. This information distinguishes major from minor incidents.

\textsuperscript{134} This figure is replicated from Howell and Pevehouse (2007), p. 60.

\textsuperscript{135} I chose to use percentages instead of the total number because, prior to 1978, the Commandant of the Marine Corps (CMC) was not a sitting member of the JCS. Prior to 1978, the CMC was considered subordinate to the Chief of Naval Operations and did not have full rights as a member of the JCS.
is coded 1 if the President is a Democrat and 0 if he is a Republican. \textit{Mod-opposed} is coded 1 if a President inherited the CJCS from a president of the other party who appointed him during a period of divided government; it is coded 0 otherwise. \textit{Dem*Mod-opposed} is another interaction term. Finally, \textit{Opposed(Rep)} is coded 1 if a Republican president inherited the CJCS from a Democratic president who appointed him under unified government.\textsuperscript{136} The baseline category that I leave out of my model is \textit{Constrained}. This variable is coded 1 if the president appoints the CJCS under divided government, and 0 otherwise.

Since \textit{Aligned} will measure the effects of an Aligned Republican, I expect the coefficient to be large and positively signed. Similarly, the coefficient on \textit{Dem*Aligned} should be positive, resulting in a larger total effect for a Democrat than for a Republican. In contrast, I expect a large, negative effect for \textit{Opposed Rep}. For \textit{Mod-opposed} and \textit{Dem*Mod-opposed}, I expect no statistical relationship. I also expect a negative coefficient on \textit{Dem} which captures the total effect for a constrained Democrat. Moreover, since \textit{Dem} picks up the intercept for a constrained Democrat, all of my observed indicators for Democratic interactions will be the total of the interaction term minus the coefficient for \textit{Dem}.

\textit{Background controls}

Scholars have examined various domestic and international factors that shape the president’s ability to use force abroad. I include controls for many of the potential factors that may influence a president’s decision to use force in an attempt to ensure that my results are not a result of omitted variable bias. Nevertheless, all of my results hold remarkably well absent all controls, whether I estimate a fixed effects model or not.

Consistent with Howell and Pevehouse (2007), I include a variable, \textit{Unified}, that is coded 1 during periods of unified government, and 0 otherwise. When the president’s

\textsuperscript{136} I do not include an additional interaction term for an Opposed Democrat because this category does not appear in my data. No Democratic president has replaced a Republican who just had served during a period of under unified government.
partisan supporters control Congress, his ability to use force should increase; similarly, when the opposing party controls Congress, he should be more constrained. The expectations laid out by Howell and Pevehouse (2005, 2007) suggest that the coefficient on Unified should be positive.\footnote{Though not reported, I also estimated models that include Howell and Pevehouse’s (2007) other measure of congressional influence, which captures the number of the president’s co-partisans in the Senate. Substituting this variable for Unified did not affect my results. However, under models including fixed effects for presidential administration, this alternate variable was positive and statistically significant, consistent with their previous analysis.} In other words, presidents should be more likely to use force when their party controls Congress.

I also include the quarterly unemployment rate, Unemployment, and the consumer price index, CPI, consistent with the literature on economic performance and the use of force. I updated Howell and Pevehouse’s data, and filled in gaps for both measures using information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Fordham (1998) demonstrates that poor economic performance creates incentives for the president to act aggressively in foreign affairs. If his hypotheses are correct, both variables should be positively signed.

To account for theories of diversionary war, I control for the president’s public approval rating, Approval. Originally, Ostrom and Job (1986) found that presidential approval ratings were a significant determinant of military deployments; however, recent research has produced mixed results. I measure Approval with the president’s first Gallup approval rating in each quarter. Similarly, I include controls for the effects of elections on the use of force with a dummy variable, Election. Some scholars argue that the “rally around the flag” effect establishes an incentive for presidents to use force just prior to an election. I code Election as 1 during the first three quarters of a presidential election year, and 0 otherwise. I also include a variable, Qtrsoffice, which measures the total number of quarters that the president has served in office. This variable should account for any presidential learning that might occur as a president becomes more comfortable dealing with foreign policy while in office.

In order to control for the impact that members of Congress with military experience
may have on the president’s ability use force, I include Feaver and Gelpi’s (2005) variable, *Percent Vet*\(^{138}\), which measures the number of veterans in the House and cabinet. Feaver and Gelpi argue that presidents exercise force with lower frequency when there are more veterans in the House and cabinet. If they are correct, the coefficient on *Percent Vet* should negative.

I also include several variables to help account for systemic international factors that may affect a president’s foreign policy decisions. Ongoing military commitments may make presidents less likely to employ force on other fronts. Thus, I use a dummy variable, *OngoingWar*, coded 1 during US wars (Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf War, and the Global War on Terror) otherwise. Similarly, I include a *ColdWar* dummy variable coded 1 during the period from 1945–89. To account for systemic international factors that may influence the onset interstate conflict, I include a measure of US hegemony. This measure, *Hegpower*, is the percentage of international military capabilities held by the United States from the Correlates of War Capabilities data set. Hegemonic power may increase America’s responsibility to intervene in conflicts throughout the world. As a result, *Hegpower* may be positively correlated with the frequency of troop deployments overseas.

*Event Count Results*

I assume that the use of force is a function of the way in which a majority of the members of the JCS were appointed and relevant background controls. I report estimates from negative binomial regressions with robust standard errors, accounting for clustering on each president. I selected the use of negative binomial models because Poisson models assume independence between events within an observation period (King 1998). It is probable that decisions about military deployments are influenced by previous military action initiated in the past. Negative binomial models are not constrained by this assumption.

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\(^{138}\) Feaver and Gelpi consider only the House and the Cabinet in their estimates, ignoring the Senate. Additionally, their measure for the House only includes male veterans, though they do include female veterans serving in the Cabinet. The measure I report includes the percentage of all veterans in the House, the Senate, and the Cabinet. Bianco (2005) and Price (2008) also find no significant effects between the percentage of veterans in Congress and foreign policy outcomes.
Table 5.1 presents the estimated regression results for my measures of general officer appointments on major uses of force. The results displayed for both Model 1 and Model 2 are generally consistent with my theory. In Model 1, the main coefficients of interest, PercentAppoint and Dem*PercentAppoint, are highly statistically significant and correctly signed. Moreover, the net effect of increasing the percentage of officers for a Democratic president – the sum of the coefficients PercentAppoint and Dem*PercentAppoint – is much larger than the effect for a Republican president (PercentAppoint) alone. Both Democratic and Republican presidents are more likely to use force when they have appointed the members of the JCS, but the effect is much larger for Democrats than for Republicans.

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Table 5.1: Frequency of Uses of Military Force, Including Background Controls

Negative binomial regressions estimated. Quarterly number of uses of force analyzed from 1949 to 2004. *** = p < 0.01, one-tailed test; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.10. Huber/White/sandwich standard errors clustered on presidential administrations reported in parentheses.
Since interpreting the total effects of interaction terms can be challenging, I present the predicted changes in the use of force that I calculated for Democrats and Republicans in Figure 5.3.\textsuperscript{139} A Democratic president who has appointed the majority of the officers on the JCS is more than twice as likely to use force than a Democratic president who has appointed none of the officers on the JCS. In contrast, a Republican president in the same situation is only 16 percent more likely to use force. As Figure 5.3 shows, a Democratic president with no appointees on the JCS is much less likely to use force than a Republican president; nevertheless, there is no statistical difference between Democratic and Republican presidents when both have appointed all the members of the JCS.

\textbf{Figure 5.3}

\textit{JCS Appointments and the Use of Force}

\textsuperscript{139} In order to estimate predicted values and probabilities reported in this Chapter, I used the Clarify software package for STATA (King, Tomz, and Wittenberg 2000; Tomz, Wittenberg, and King 2001). Not including the explanatory variables of interest, all dichotomous variables are set at 0 – except for \textit{ColdWar} which is set at 1 – and all continuous variables are set at their mean values.
For Model 2, the results are somewhat mixed. Consistent with my expectations, Democratic presidents have used force much more frequently when they were advised by a CJCS whom they appointed under unified government than they would have otherwise. However, there is not a similar effect for Republican presidents. Additionally, there is no statistical difference between a Republican president who appointed his CJCS under divided government and a Republican president who has inherited his CJCS from a Democratic Administration. Although my theory implies that the effects for Democratic presidents should be larger than those for Republican presidents, the finding that there is no net effect for Republicans is surprising. Some of this non-finding appears to be driven by the relatively high number of uses of force in the Reagan Administration prior to the bombing of the Marines barracks in Lebanon. One plausible explanation for this inconsistency might be that Reagan had a uniquely high belief in the efficacy of military force prior to the incident in Lebanon, leading him to use force at relatively high rates even in the face of military advice against doing so.\textsuperscript{140} In contrast, Eisenhower and Nixon both chose to use force at extremely low rates when they were advised by a CJCS who they had inherited from a previous Democratic Administration, which is consistent with the predictions of my theory.\textsuperscript{141}

Figure 5.4 displays the total effects for Republican and Democratic presidents under each category. Again, a Democratic president who has appointed the CJCS during a period of unified government is significantly more likely to use force in a given quarter than a Democratic president who has inherited the CJCS from a different

\textsuperscript{140} Some pundits argued at the time that conflict between President Reagan and the CJCS, General David Jones, had grown so severe that Reagan considered firing Jones. For a more detailed examination of the political conflict between President Reagan and members of the JCS early in his Administration, see Richard L. Strout, "Will the general lose his job?" \textit{The Christian Science Monitor}, January 23, 1981, p 23 and Riker-Coleman (2001).

\textsuperscript{141} There is some evidence that Reagan was particularly inclined to believe in the efficacy of military force, especially early in his Administration. After the bombing of the Marine Barracks in Lebanon, however, it is likely that he revised these beliefs. I also estimated regression models that included a dummy variable for the period of the Reagan Administration prior to the attack in Lebanon. The coefficient for this variable was large, positive, and highly statistically significant. It also caused the sign of \textit{OpposedRep} to become large and negative, though it still fell just outside of statistical significance with a p-value of 0.113. Including presidential fixed effects also leads to a similar result, which is at least somewhat consistent with the idea that Reagan came into office with a high prior belief about the efficacy of military force.
Administration or one who has appointed the CJCS under divided government. There is no similar effect for Republican presidents. In both of my models, however, the general results hold even with the inclusion of the variable, \textit{qtrsoffice}. Controlling for a lack of administrative experience in dealing with foreign policy thus does not seem to mitigate the effects of JCS appointments on the use of force.\footnote{I also estimated other models that included different measures of presidential experience in foreign policy. I used dummy variables for the first six, twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four months of presidential Administrations as well as for a president’s second term and lame duck period. I also included interaction terms for party in case there were significant differences between parties. None of these specifications changed my substantive results.}

The evidence for the domestic control variables is mixed. In general, poor economic conditions and high public opinion seem to correspond with higher levels of military activity. Consistent with Ostrom and Job’s findings, the effect of higher levels of unemployment is positive and statistically significant in both models. The coefficient on \textit{CPI} is small and negative, but it is not statistically significant in either model.
Contrary to Ostrom and Job’s argument that the incentives for presidents to use force increase as their approval ratings fall, I find some evidence that higher approval ratings actually lead to an increase in the frequency of troop deployments. The coefficient on Approval is positive and statistically significant in Model 1, but falls just outside the accepted range for statistical significance in Model 2. In either case, this evidence stands at odds with Ostrom and Job’s original finding that unpopular presidents are more likely to use force.

Other domestic factors seem less critical in explaining higher frequencies of the use of force, however. Consistent with Meernik (1994) and Gowa (1998), I find no statistical relationship between election cycles and the use of force. I also find no evidence in either of these models that partisan support in Congress influences the president’s relative freedom to use force (Howell and Pevehouse 2007). Finally, my results counter Feaver and Gelpi’s finding that the percentage of veterans in the cabinet and U.S. House of representatives significantly predicts uses of military force. The estimates of Percent Vet are small and insignificant in both models. This finding is unsurprising given the evidence I presented about partisan affiliation in Chapter 3. On the whole, however, the other estimates in the model generally are consistent with previous research.

With the exception of my control for ongoing wars, variables attempting to estimate the effects of the international environment fare less well. When the U.S. is at war, however, U.S. presidents appear less likely to commit troops to other crises. The variable War is negative and statistically significant in both models. The coefficient on the variable, Cold War, is not statistically significant in either case though, indicating that the end of the bi-polar international system has not had an effect on the propensity of U.S. presidents to deploy troops overseas. There also appears to be no statistically significant relationship between the level of U.S. hegemony and the frequency of U.S. military deployments.
Robustness checks

I also conducted several robustness checks to confirm that my results would hold under other specifications. The first issue I addressed was whether or not the effects for general officer appointments hold throughout the entire history of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Some scholars argue that a foreign policy consensus existed prior to the Vietnam War, but that America’s first major defeat created a schism between the two parties, driving their views farther and farther apart on foreign policy. If this view is true, general officer appointments may have negligible impacts during the period prior to the Vietnam War. In order to test this hypothesis, I examined the effects of the general officer appointment process before and after the War Powers Resolution in 1973. I also conducted a similar test for the periods before and after the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act in 1986. In all periods, I found evidence consistent with that presented above.

Next, I estimated several fixed effects models. First, I controlled for decade fixed effects in case something about the international threat environment varied over time. Once again, my results were consistent. Finally, I controlled for fixed effects by presidential administration in case there is something about a president’s individual temperament that I do not capture using party ID alone. The results of these tests are reported in Table 5.2 and Figure 5.5. In Model 3, the coefficient on \( \text{Dem} \times \text{PercentAppoint} \), again is highly statistically significant and correctly signed; however, in this case, there appears to be no similar relationship for Republican presidents. This partisan asymmetry shows in Model 4 as well. Even when controlling for presidential administration, Democratic presidents used force much more frequently when they were advised by a CJCS appointed under unified government.

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143 This technique presented several challenges when testing the CJCS variables, however. Prior to 1973, we observe only 5 of the 8 appointment categories in my model, compared to 7 of the 8 after 1973. I adjusted the specifications of my model as necessary to address this issue. Nevertheless, all the estimates in this model are consistent with my predictions. Aligned Democrats used force more frequently than Moderately-Opposed Democrats, but there was no statistically significant difference between all three Republican cases. After 1973, all estimates again were consistent with my theory.

144 An F-test also revealed that the inclusion of decade fixed effects was not jointly significant.
For Republicans, however, neither *Aligned* nor *Opposed* are statistically significant.\(^{145}\) Although not all of the differences between presidents are statistically significant, Figure 5.5 shows that much of the variation picked up by the fixed effects model appears to be intra-party variation since intercept estimations break clearly along party lines. None of the coefficients for Republican presidents in the estimated model are lower than the coefficients for Democratic presidents. In general, then, my main empirical findings for my event count model still hold up well even with presidential fixed effects.

\(^{145}\) The coefficient on *Opposed*, however, is large and correctly signed. This may be weak evidence in support of the argument about Reagan’s prior beliefs about the efficacy of military force presented above.
As I have shown above, the main empirical results of my event count model remain strong even when subjected to a number of more critical tests. Nevertheless, since I am concerned with examining presidential decisions to use force, the event count approach has a number of drawbacks. First, it does not account for many of the contextual factors that may influence a president’s decision about whether to use force in a particular situation. Second, this approach does not account for the instances in which presidents considering using military force, but decide against doing so. As a result, James Meernik argues that when using an event count model, “it is not possible to evaluate adequately the significance of decision-making inputs since there is no set of cases where force may plausibly have been employed, but was not, to use as a basis for comparison.” Although Meernik (1994) was the first scholar to attempt to address these issues, Howell and Pevehouse’s (2007) ‘opportunities’ database represents the most comprehensive data available to address presidential decision-

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making and the use of military force. In the next section, I use these data to model individual decisions to use force.

**The Probability of Troop Deployments**

*The ‘Opportunities’ Database*

To identify potential opportunities that might provoke a U.S. military response, Howell and Pevehouse (2007) searched the front-page of the *New York Times* for reports of “violent acts perpetrated against the United States government, threats to the stability of foreign regimes, gross violations of international law, and nuclear proliferation.”\(^{147}\) In order to count as an opportunity to initiate a new use of force, U.S military operations in that location must have ended. Additionally, the unit of observation is an individual state’s involvement in a crisis so one news story can generate opportunities for more than one foreign nation.\(^{148}\) Although their data also do capture opportunities related to a variety of intra-state conflicts, they do not use non-state actors themselves as units of observation. After identifying opportunities, the authors then identify which opportunities the U.S. government responded to within 30 days.

One problem with this ‘story-day’ measure of opportunities is that individual news stories (and the corresponding military responses) are not independent of one another. Since the *NYT* often covers the same conflict for a number of days, each opportunity is not unique. In the two months prior to U.S. intervention in Bosnia in 1995, there were 38 ‘opportunities’ to use force according to the original data set, most of which were coded as leading to a military response. If the *NYT* is more likely to cover stories if it expects the president to respond militarily, then this coding would bias the results in my favor. In order to deal with this problem, I removed all opportunities in which the *NYT* had written a story about the same crisis in that country during the previous month. As a result, I was able to identify and include only one unique opportunity per crisis per country. However, I still may slightly overestimate the number of

\(^{147}\) Howell and Pevehouse (2007), p 78. For a full description of coding rules, see also p. 78-79 and 245-255.

\(^{148}\) The data also do not account for which state initiated a conflict.
opportunities; if the NYT did not report on a crisis for thirty consecutive days, and then later resumed coverage of the conflict again, my coding technique would count these as two separate opportunities. Nevertheless, this approach reduces concerns about non-independence and decreases the total number of opportunities from 13,290 NYT stories to 2,341 unique opportunities.\footnote{I initially conducted all of my empirical tests using the original data. When using the full data, my results are substantively similar and even more statistically significant than in the tests reported in this chapter.} It also minimizes problems that might arise if the NYT covered stories more frequently in cases where presidential intervention seemed likely.\footnote{My approach does not, of course, solve the problem that would arise if the NYT simply did not include a story at all because they believed that the president would not intervene.}

I also made several other minor changes to the opportunities data to facilitate my specific empirical tests. First, I only included responses that counted as major uses of force, drawing on Fordham and Sarver (2001) to eliminate all ‘minor’ responses that were captured in their data.\footnote{Specifically, I identified all minor responses – coded as a level 4 or 5 response according to the Blechman and Kaplan coding rules – and recoded them as a non-force response to a given opportunity.} For example, during the Falklands War, Secretary of Defense offered the British the use of an American aircraft carrier, though the aircraft carrier was never sent into service. In the original database, this instance and others like it were coded as a military response. I also verified that all major uses of force were included as responses to available opportunities.\footnote{I indentified three uses of major force that inadvertently had been eliminated from the data. I also found several military responses that were not included in the data because there were no ‘opportunities’ reported in the New York Times (the 1969 bombing campaign in Cambodia, for example). I did not include these troop deployments, nor did I add any new opportunities. My results are substantively similar when I use both minor and major uses of force, but unsurprisingly, they occasionally fall just outside conventional standards of statistical significance.} Next, I identified several instances in which military responses to a set of opportunities involving multiple countries clearly did not target at least one of the countries.\footnote{These instances typically involved either South Korea or Isreal. In some cases, disputes between two countries were both coded as a military response, even though U.S. response clearly did not target one of the countries. This did not change all of the military responses related to Israel or South Korea, however. There were a number of circumstances under which the U.S. military did project military power precisely to influence the behavior of the Israeli, and less frequently the South Korean, government. I did not re-code that kind of opportunity.} Finally, I removed all observations prior to 1949 since my theory does not directly apply to the era before the establishment of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
Thus, between 1949-2000, U.S. presidents had 2,341 opportunities to use force. These opportunities included events such as reports of “the Cuban Missile Crisis on October 23, 1962; Libyan claims to the Gulf of Sidra on March 27, 1986; attacks by Bosnian Serbs on the United Nations safe havens of Goradze and Srebrenica on July 23, 1995; the bombing of a U.S. military housing complex in Saudi Arabia on June 27, 1996; and border clashes in Kashmir on August 27, 1997.”

Table 5.3 displays the distribution of opportunities by presidential administration and Figure 5.6 presents the distribution of opportunities by year. There clearly is some variability in the number of foreign crises that different presidents have faced. Beginning in the mid-1950s, there was an increase in the number of opportunities facing the Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson administrations before a period of relatively fewer opportunities during the

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</tbody>
</table>

Nixon, Ford, and Carter administrations. The greatest number of opportunities occurred during the Reagan administration – with a spike in opportunities in the Middle East and Central America – before a significant reduction in opportunities that corresponded with the end of the Cold War. On average, U.S. presidents responded militarily to slightly more than 6 percent of the cases, with Republican and Democratic presidents responding to 7.3 percent and 5.6 percent of opportunities, respectively. Despite having the most opportunities, Reagan still was most likely to respond militarily to an opportunity (8.6 percent) with Ford and Carter least likely to respond (3.7 percent and 4.3 percent respectively).

Key Explanatory Variables
My key explanatory variables remain unchanged. I again use Dem, PercentAppoint, and Dem*PercentAppoint to capture the percentage of JCS officers that presidents from each party have appointed during periods of unified government. I also use the same dichotomous variables for each category of CJCS appointment that I did in my
event count model. However, since no Republican president in the data inherited his CJCS from a Democratic president serving under unified government, I omit the interaction term \( \text{Dem} \times \text{Mod-Opposed} \). As a result, \( \text{Mod-Opposed} \), captures the effects for a Democratic president who has inherited his CJCS from a Republican president.

**Background Controls**

The general factors that influence the frequency with which presidents use military force might also influence the probability that they would do so in a particular instance. Accordingly, I include similar domestic and international measures to those that I utilized in the event count models.\(^{155}\) In order to control for presidential foreign policy experience, I also include either FirstYear, a dichotomous measure of whether it is the president’s first year in office, and SecondTerm, which is coded 1 if it is the president’s second term.\(^{156}\)

My new unit of analysis also allows me to introduce a number of other systemic variables that are particular to a given opportunity. Thus, I am able to use the measure, Soviet Involvement, as a more specific measure of potential Cold War effects. Soviet Involvement is coded 1 if the Soviet Union either was a direct participant in an opportunity or an ally to an involved state prior to the end of the Cold War, and 0 otherwise. I also include ColdWar in case the bi-polar structure of the international system had a general influence on international conflict. Similarly, I also include Troops Deployed to account for the number of U.S. troops deployed overseas at the outbreak of a given opportunity.

I also am able to control for a number of other variables that are particular to the states involved in an opportunity. I include a binary variable, Alliance, which is coded 1 if a country has at least one political-military alliance with the U.S. according to the COW

\(^{155}\) Approval refers to the most recent presidential approval poll prior to a given opportunity as reported by the Gallup poll. Unemployment instead refers to monthly, rather than quarterly, employment information from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

\(^{156}\) I also utilized the variable, months in office, which indicates the number of months the president has served in other specifications. I report the models including FirstYear because my results are slightly weaker in these specifications.
database. Additionally, the democratic peace literature suggests that democracies rarely, if ever, attack one another (Russell and Oneal 2001). In order to control for this effect, I include the variable, *Democracy*, which is coded 1 if a state is a democracy and 0 otherwise.\(^{157}\) State power may also influence presidential decisions to use force. Accordingly, I include two additional measures from the COW database. *MajorPower* identifies states considered to be major powers and *Capability Ratio* measures the relative military strength of the U.S. compared to the potential target. The last target-specific variable I include is a measure of bilateral trade flows, *Trade*, between the U.S. and the targeted country. A number of international relations scholars have argued that economic conditions play a significant role in considerations regarding the use of military force.\(^{158}\)

Finally, I attempt to control for the effects of previous or ongoing opportunities as well as competing priorities. The variable, *WorldDisputes*, counts the number of MIDs ongoing when the opportunity arises according to the COW dataset. Similarly, the variable, *CompetingOpp*, counts the number of opportunities from around the world that are ongoing on the day that a given opportunity is reported. These variables attempt to account for past and present levels of violence in the international system.

**Opportunities Data Results**

Figure 5.7 displays the raw data for the percentage of responses per opportunity against the variable *PercentAppoint*. For Republican presidents, there is no obvious relationship between these two measures; however, for Democratic presidents, the number of responses per opportunity does appear to increase as the percentage of officers appointed during unified government increases before dropping off again slightly. Figure 5.8 shows responses per opportunity against CJCS appointment categories. Consistent with my expectations, Republican and Democratic presidents both were more likely to respond with force when the preferences of the CJCS were

\(^{157}\) A state is coded as a democracy if it receives a 7 or greater on the Polity democracy scale (Jaggers and Gurr 1995).

\(^{158}\) For a review of these arguments, see Mansfield and Pollins (2001).
aligned with the president, but the change was larger for Democrats than for Republicans.

Figure 5.7
Military Responses per Opportunity vs. PercentAppoint (by Party)

Figure 5.8
Military Responses per Opportunity by CJCS Appointment Category
Next, I estimate standard maximum likelihood regressions that assume that the use of force is a function of the number of JCS appointments, background controls, and regional fixed effects. Each model predicts the probability that the U.S. utilized military force against a potential target within thirty days of an opportunity. Although there is nothing special about a cut-off of thirty days, this measure is consistent with previous research (Howell and Pevehouse 2007).

I display the results in Table 5.4. In Model 1, the results largely are consistent with my theory, with one qualification. One of the main coefficients of interest, Dem*PercentAppoint is statistically significant and correctly signed; however, the coefficient for PercentAppoint is correctly signed, but very small and not statistically significant. Thus, Democratic presidents do appear more likely to use military force when they have appointed their members of the JCS during a period of unified government, but Republicans do not. As in the event count models, however, the total effect for a Democratic president depends on the combination of Dem, PercentAppoint, and Dem*PercentAppoint. Similarly, all coefficients of interest are correctly signed in Model 2 with the exception of Aligned. Again, the coefficients for Dem and Dem*Aligned are statistically significant and consistent with my predictions. In this case, however, the coefficient on Opposed is correctly signed, but not statistically significant. Since there is no statistical relationship for Republican presidents, the effect obviously is larger for Democratic presidents than for Republican presidents in both models.

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159 Although not reported in the models, I also include fixed effects by region of the world. I include variables for North and Central America, South America, the Middle East, the Asia-Pacific region, Western Europe, and Eastern Europe. Africa is omitted as the baseline category.

160 Since the total effect for a Democratic president who has appointed the members of the JCS relies on the combination of these two terms, I estimated another model that included Rep and Rep*PercentAppoint but that omitted Dem and Dem*PercentAppoint. When directly compared to the baseline category, PercentAppoint still had a positive and statistically significant coefficient. Thus, I am confident that the effect for a Democratic president who has appointed the members of the JCS under unified government is statistically significant.
The results for the background controls generally are unsurprising. There is no evidence that presidents use force at different rates during their first year in office or during their second term. The coefficient on FirstYear and SecondTerm both are positive, but are not statistically significant. Similarly, I find no evidence that election years or approval ratings influence presidential decisions to use force. Once

161 Once again, I also specified a number of other models that included different variations of these variables for six months, eighteen months, two years, and quarters in office. I also ran other models that included party interactions for these variables, but in no specification did these changes the substantive results reported above. Additionally, none of these variables ever were statistically significant.
again, however, high unemployment rates do appear to correlate with the probability that a president will respond militarily to a foreign crisis. Thus, economic factors do seem to play at least some role in presidential decision-making about the use of force, either because they change presidential incentives or because they allow the president to recognize certain opportunities that he would not otherwise notice (Fordham 1996).

The relationship for other domestic institutions is a bit less clear. In both Model 1 and Model 2, the variable for *Unified* government is correctly signed, but not statistically significant with p values of 0.179 and 0.189, respectively. However, when I ran the same models while excluding my main coefficients of interest, the effects of unified government were substantively larger and statistically significant. I take this finding as consistent with my theory. It suggests that Congress can influence presidential decisions to use force, but that better access to information from senior military officers may make it easier and more likely that they will do so.

Additionally, it does appear that there is a relationship between ongoing international disputes and presidential decisions to use force. The intuition for this result is straightforward. The higher the number of foreign militarized disputes there are when a crisis arises, the more likely it is that the president will use military force to try to stabilize the international situation. My empirical results also seem to indicate that the U.S. does have limits in terms of its ability to intervene around the world. Both the number of potential opportunities and the number of U.S. troops deployed overseas appear to make the president less likely to use military force. Thus, the larger U.S. commitments are overseas, the less likely the president is to deploy troops. There does not appear to be a relationship between the probability of a military response and *HegPower*, however. In other words, presidents are not more likely to intervene when U.S. military capabilities are relatively greater. Nevertheless, presidents are less likely to use force as the relative capabilities of potential adversaries (*CapabilityRatio*) increase.
Several unique characteristics of the opportunity also are, in fact, influential. *Trade*, *Democracy*, and *Alliance* are all negatively signed and statistically significant. It seems somewhat intuitive that the U.S. would be less likely to initiate a military conflict with its allies and trading partners, especially during the Cold War. Moreover, scholars have laid out a number of competing explanations for why democracies and trading partners might not attack one another. Presidents were more likely to use force when there was Soviet involvement in an opportunity during the Cold War, but less

| Table 5.5: Probability of a Military Response, Including Controls (with Pres. FE) |
|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                                 | Model 1       | Model 2       |
| PercentAppoint                  | 0.46          | (0.50)        |
| Dem*PercentAppoint              | 3.06***       | (0.95)        |
| Aligned                         | 0.18          | (1.37)        |
| Dem*Aligned                     | 1.94*         | (1.19)        |
| ModOpposed                      | 0.21          | (1.13)        |
| Opposed                         | -0.35         | (0.84)        |
| FirstYear                       | 0.41          | (0.31)        |
| SecondTerm                      | 0.42          | (0.33)        |
| Unified                         | 0.59          | (0.52)        |
| PercentVeteran                  | 0.00          | (0.03)        |
| Approval                        | 0.01          | (0.01)        |
| Unemployment                    | 0.42***       | (0.09)        |
| Election                        | -0.13         | (0.26)        |
| HegPower                        | 7.88          | (9.80)        |
| WorldDisputes                   | 0.07*         | (0.04)        |
| CompetingOpps                   | -0.31         | (0.19)        |
| MajorPower                      | -0.57         | (0.58)        |
| Democracy                       | -0.77***      | (0.31)        |
| Alliance                        | -1.07**       | (0.49)        |
| Trade                           | -0.10*        | (0.05)        |
| Soviet Involvement              | 0.59**        | (0.28)        |
| ColdWar                         | -0.19         | (0.68)        |
| CapabilityRatio (log)           | -0.17*        | (0.10)        |
| TroopsDeployed (log)            | -0.11**       | (0.05)        |
| Constant                        | -11.48***     | (3.59)        |
| (N)                             | 2144          | 2144          |
| Pseudo-R²                       | 0.15          | 0.14          |

Logistic regressions estimated. The dependent variable is coded 1 when the United States responds militarily within 30 days to an opportunity, and 0 otherwise. *** = p < 0.01, one-tailed test; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.10. Huber/White/sandwich standard errors clustered on country-president combinations reported in parentheses. Though not reported to save space, models also contain fixed effects terms by region of the world. Since presidential fixed effects already account for all the variation from the partisan affiliations of individual presidents, the variable *Dem* is excluded from the model.
likely to use force in general. In other words, my results indicate that presidents paid relatively less attention to international conflicts that did not involve their superpower rival. Somewhat surprisingly, however, *MajorPower* just falls outside of statistically significance, though the coefficient is correctly signed. This result seems to be driven the low number of *MajorPower* opportunities combined with a small number of responses targeted at China and Soviet Union early in the Cold War.

Although not reported, both of my models also include regional fixed effects. These fixed effects are jointly significant, and several of the regions are individually significant. U.S. presidents are more likely to respond to crises in the Asia-Pacific region, North or Central America, and the Middle East than they are to countries in Africa. Presidents are not, however, statistically more likely to send troops to South America, Western Europe, or Eastern Europe. Once again, I also ran regression models including presidential fixed effects and all of my main results were substantively similar (see Table 5.5 and Figure 5.9 for results).
Figure 5.10 displays the predicted changes in the use of force for Democrats and Republicans. Consistent with the event count models, a Democratic president who has appointed the majority of the officers on the JCS is roughly two times more likely to use force than a Democratic president who has appointed all of the officers on the JCS under divided government. In contrast, the predicted change for a Republican president in the same situation is twelve percent. Again, however, a Democratic president who does not have any appointees on the JCS is much less likely to use force than a Republican president with no appointees; nevertheless, there is no statistical difference between a Democratic and Republican president when both have appointed all of the officers on the JCS.

It is curious that there are no statistical differences between presidents of both parties when they have appointed all JCS members under unified government. My theory, along with my survey findings in Chapter 3, implies that there is likely to be at least
some preference gap between a Democratic president and his senior military advisors, even under the best conditions. I offer three possible suggestions to account for this discrepancy. First, it may be that Democratic presidents face incentives to pursue a more moderate foreign policy – when compared to other Democratic elites – so that they can be elected or re-elected. As a result, their induced preferences may, in fact, be quite similar to those of their military advisors on the JCS. In contrast, it also may be that there are some rare senior military officers whose preferences are more closely aligned than my appointments model would imply. If so, Democratic presidents could identify and select these officers under periods of unified government. Finally, it also may be that professional norms serve to moderate the preferences of senior military officers to some limited degree. In other words, they may gain some psychological benefit by following service norms of subordination to civilian control. Thus, it could be that only when the preferences of senior officers diverge greatly from those of the president that they have a strong incentive to use their private information strategically.

I also cannot be entirely sure why the effects of Republican JCS appointments seem so starkly different than those of Democratic presidents. Although my theory predicts that the effects of preference alignment should be greater for Democrats than for Republicans, I nevertheless expected a positive relationship for Republicans. One plausible explanation may be that the high base rate of Republican officers in the senior officer corps virtually guarantees that a Republican president usually will have access to informative military advice. In some cases, Democratic presidents may not be able to find a liberal-leaning officer for every appointment. Thus, when a Republican president inherits officers from a previous administration, they likely will still get some conservative officers. The opposite may not always be true for a Democratic president. As a result, Democratic presidents might have to rely more heavily on the appointment process in order to get members of the JCS who will provide them with reliable military advice. Finally, it also may be the case that Republican presidents simply have a higher prior belief in the efficacy of military
force.\textsuperscript{162} If this is the case, it may simply be that a Republican president who does not receive reliable information from his military advisors will be more inclined to use military force than a Democratic president in a similar situation. Unfortunately, my quantitative analysis cannot differentiate between these potential alternatives. It also may be the case that an individual president’s behavior is no consistent with the prediction of my theory. In the next section, I will discuss this possibility in greater detail.

\textit{Robustness Checks}

I also conducted several additional tests to confirm that my results would hold under other specifications. As with the event count models, I estimated models for both before and after the War Powers Resolution. I also controlled for decade effects to account for any changes in the international threat environment that might have varied over time. I included several other variables, most notably one for whether or not the president was a military veteran as well as other measures of the partisan composition of Congress. In all cases, my results remained comparable to those presented above.

Again, I controlled for fixed effects by presidential administration in case there was something about a president’s individual temperament related to the use of force that I do not capture using party ID alone. The inclusion of presidential fixed effects has no impact on the substantive results reported above. Even when controlling for presidential administration, $Dem*PercentAppoint$ is highly correlated with the probability that a president will respond to a crisis using military force. Although the fixed effects for presidential administration are jointly significant, their inclusion does not greatly increase model fit. Additionally, none of the estimated coefficients for Republican presidents are ever lower than those for Democratic presidents although the coefficients for Ford and Clinton are virtually identical (see Table 5.5).

\textsuperscript{162} Analysis of the TISS data provides some support for this claim. When asked questions about the relative effectiveness of military alternatives compared to diplomatic solutions across a variety of issues areas, Republican elites are more likely than Democratic elites to rate military options favorably.
I also ran a series of other specifications in which I eliminated the observations from one president at a time. My results were substantively and statistically the same as those presented earlier under most specifications. However, a distinct empirical difference emerged when I excluded Reagan’s observations from my analysis. Figures 5.11 and 5.12 respectively display the raw data for PercentAppoint and JCS appointment categories, divided by party. In both cases, the results appear consistent with my predictions. Democratic and Republican presidents both have used force more when they have had officers who share their preferences when Reagan’s observations are excluded.

**Figure 5.11**
**Military Responses per Opportunity vs. PercentAppoint (Reagan excluded)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Republican Presidents</th>
<th>Democratic Presidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of Military Responses per Opportunity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

X axis denotes the percentage of JCS officers appointed during a period when the president's party controls the Senate.
Next, I repeated my main statistical tests. Table 5.6 presents these results. Under this specification, the coefficient on *Dem* is correctly signed and statistically significant. Additionally, the coefficient on *PercentAppoint* is large, positive and statistically significant in Model 1, but the coefficient on *Dem*\(^{*}\)PercentAppoint is not statistically significant. Thus, without Reagan’s observations, the relationship for Republicans looks similar to the relationship for Democrats and is much more consistent with my original theoretical predictions. In Model 2, however, none of the coefficients of interest are statistically significant. Nevertheless, the divergent results in both of these models are somewhat sensitive to the inclusion of presidential fixed effects. Table 5.7 displays the results when I account for presidential fixed effects, but omit the Reagan observations. In Model 1, both *PercentAppoint* and *Dem*\(^{*}\)PercentAppoint are correctly signed and statistically significant. However, *PercentAppoint* has a p-value of 0.097, which is just barely within the accepted limit for statistical significance. In Model 2, the coefficients on *Aligned* and *Opposed* are correctly signed, but they are not statistically significant. In this case, there only appears to be an effect for Democrats
since Dem*PercentAppoint is positive, large and statistically significant. In either
case, there is clear evidence that the Democrats are more likely to use force when they
have appointed officers who share their preferences and these results are quite robust.
Additionally, there is some weak evidence that a similar relationship holds for other
Republican presidents, but only when we omit observations from the Reagan
Administration.

| Table 5.6: Probability of a Military Response, Including Controls (Excluding Reagan) |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
|                                        | Model 1                                | Model 2                                |
| Dem                                    | -2.25***                               | -2.69** (1.12)                        |
| PercentAppoint                         | 2.01*** (0.61)                         |                                         |
| Dem*PercentAppoint                     | 0.63 (0.72)                            |                                         |
| Aligned                                | 0.70 (0.50)                            |                                         |
| Dem*Aligned                            | 1.54 (1.20)                            |                                         |
| ModOpposed                             | 0.66 (1.11)                            |                                         |
| Opposed                                | -0.43 (0.72)                           |                                         |
| FirstYear                              | 0.37 (0.33)                            | 0.23 (0.31)                            |
| SecondTerm                             | 0.91** (0.41)                          | 0.58 (0.37)                            |
| Unified                                | 0.55 (0.54)                            | 0.93* (0.53)                           |
| PercentVeteran                         | 0.01 (0.02)                            | 0.01 (0.02)                            |
| Approval                               | 0.00 (0.01)                            | 0.01 (0.01)                            |
| Unemployment                           | 0.31*** (0.12)                         | 0.25** (0.13)                          |
| Election                               | -0.27 (0.33)                           | -0.15 (0.31)                           |
| HegPower                               | 0.13 (4.37)                            | 0.73 (4.62)                            |
| WorldDisputes                          | 0.11** (0.05)                          | 0.08 (0.05)                            |
| CompetingOppps                         | -0.03 (0.20)                           | 0.04 (0.20)                            |
| MajorPower                             | -0.68 (0.55)                           | -0.63 (0.55)                           |
| Democracy                              | -1.02** (0.41)                         | -1.08*** (0.48)                        |
| Alliance                               | -1.22** (0.56)                         | -1.15** (0.54)                         |
| Trade                                  | -0.08 (0.06)                           | -0.08 (0.06)                           |
| Soviet Involvement                     | 0.93** (0.35)                          | 0.85** (0.34)                          |
| ColdWar                                | -1.73*** (0.63)                        | -1.07* (0.57)                          |
| CapabilityRatio (log)                  | -0.23** (0.12)                         | -0.24** (0.12)                         |
| TroopsDeployed (log)                   | -0.11* (0.06)                          | -0.12* (0.07)                          |
| Constant                               | -5.11*** (1.71)                        | -5.48*** (1.85)                        |
| (N)                                    | 1618                                   | 1618                                   |
| Pseudo-R²                              | 0.16                                   | 0.16                                   |

Logistic regressions estimated. The dependent variable is coded 1 when the United States responds
to an opportunity within 30 days, and 0 otherwise. *** = p < 0.01, one-tailed test; ** = p <
0.05; * = p < 0.10. Huber/White/sandwich standard errors clustered on country-president
combinations reported in parentheses. Though not reported to save space, models also contain fixed
effects terms by region of the world.
Although my original theory does not provide a clear reason to exclude Reagan from my analysis, there are several possible reasons why Reagan’s behavior may have been different from that of other presidents. First, the reputation of the Joint Chiefs may have been weakened by recent failures during the Desert One operation in Iran, giving Reagan and other political leaders less reason to value military expertise (Perry 1989; Herspring 2005). Second, Reagan may have been in a relatively strong position politically vis-à-vis the Joint Chiefs because Republicans controlled the Senate and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PercentAppoint</td>
<td>1.20* (0.68)</td>
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<td>2.52** (1.11)</td>
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<td>Dem*PercentAppoint</td>
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<td>FirstYear</td>
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<td>SecondTerm</td>
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<td>PercentVeteran</td>
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<td>-0.06 (0.04)</td>
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<td>0.01 (0.01)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-1.23** (0.56)</td>
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<td>Soviet Involvement</td>
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<td>0.84** (0.36)</td>
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<td>ColdWar</td>
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<td>-0.05 (0.65)</td>
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<td>-0.11* (0.07)</td>
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<td>-10.87** (4.81)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>1618</td>
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<td>1618</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pseudo-R²</td>
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<td>0.17</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Logistic regressions estimated. The dependent variable is coded 1 when the United States responds militarily within 30 days to an opportunity, and 0 otherwise. *** = p < 0.01, one-tailed test; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.10. Huber/White/sandwich standard errors clustered on country-president combinations reported in parentheses. Though not reported to save space, models also contain fixed effects terms by region of the world. Since presidential fixed effects already account for all the variation from the partisan affiliations of individual presidents, the variable Dem is excluded from the model.
because a large portion of the public perceived that Carter’s foreign policy program had been weak and ineffective. As a result, members of the Joint Chiefs may have found fewer allies in Congress who were willing to stand up to Reagan. CJCS General David Jones and Army Chief of Staff Edward ‘Shy’ Meyer, in particular, had to deal with a public campaign launched by Senator Strom Thurmond that identified them as ‘political’ and ‘liberal’ officers who had been appointed by the Carter Administration. Since Thurmond and other members of the SASC already were encouraging Reagan to fire members of the JCS, the Chiefs may have been reluctant to oppose a popular president out of fear that it would result in their termination and the destruction of their reputation (Riker-Coleman 2001).

Figures 5.13 and 5.14 also display the relationship between military responses per opportunity against PercentAppoint and JCS Appointment category, respectively. Once again, Reagan is the only president for whom the relationship is not consistent with my theory. For both the Eisenhower and Bush administrations, the number of responses per opportunity clearly increases as the percentage of officers appointed under unified government increases; however, neither Nixon nor Ford appointed officers during a period of unified government so we cannot assess the effects within their presidencies. For Nixon, however, we can compare his uses of force by JCS appointment category. In this case, the results are consistent with my theory. Nixon used force at higher levels after he appointed his CJCS than he did when he was advised by Johnson’s CJCS. This pattern also is consistent with a considerable body of qualitative evidence which suggests that Nixon’s appointment of Admiral Thomas Moorer to replace General Earle Wheeler may have contributed to more aggressive military policies in Laos, Cambodia, and Jordan (Perry 1989; Blechman and Kaplan 1978; Mobley 2009). Thus, although my statistical results are sensitive to the removal of the Reagan opportunities, doing so actually leads to results that are even more consistent with my theory than the results I reported earlier. Nevertheless, it is not obvious that I have strong enough theoretical grounds to remove Reagan entirely from my analysis at this point. However, my analysis suggests that future research should
consider ways to extend my theory to better account for variation in the reputation of the JCS and the foreign policy strength of individual presidents.

**Figure 5.13**
Military Responses per Opportunity vs. PercentAppoint (by President)

**Figure 5.14**
Military Responses per Opportunity vs. CJCS Appt. Category (by President)
Limitations of this Approach

Although my quantitative analysis is robust to both period effects and the use of the various controls, there are several possible reasons why my current findings may not be generalizable. The first involves limitations of the data. Although there are 8 possible categories of appointments developed in my model, we only have observed seven of these cases in reality. More importantly, two of these cases – Constrained Democrat and Moderately-Opposed Republican – have occurred only once, during the presidencies of Bill Clinton and George W. Bush respectively. Although including fixed effects for president attempts to mitigate this problem to a degree, it remains nonetheless. Until we observe additional instances of these cases, we should be somewhat skeptical in accepting my theory. Nevertheless, we should not ignore the fact that the existing evidence does, in fact, largely support my theory. Until we are able to observe additional cases, these quantitative findings should be corroborated with qualitative evidence.

Additionally, since the data rely on New York Times reports, there may be additional bias in the data. Reported opportunities may be affected by the location of the Times bureau chiefs or, more significantly, they may be shaped by expectations that the president intends to use military force. If the stories reported are driven by such factors, they may bias the results reported above in favor of my expectations although I attempted to minimize this problem by identifying unique opportunities. However, these data are a significant improvement over previous sources, and my results do hold for my tests involving both trends and opportunities.

Although an opportunities-based approach does have several benefits, it does not solve one problem. To the extent that states can assess the likelihood of a U.S. military response, they may have an incentive to behave in a less provocative manner when they think the U.S. will take military action to stop them. If states are more likely to create opportunities at times when the U.S. is least likely to respond, this behavior could complicate the interpretation of my results. It is not obvious which way this might bias my results. One the one hand, foreign leaders who pay attention to whether
or not the U.S. has a unified political-military team should be less likely to act if they expect a military response to be more likely; as a result, any resulting bias would work against my results. However, if the behavior of the most resolved nations does not change much in either case, not accounting for this factor could bias the results in my favor. I did not find a satisfactory approach to mitigate with this problem; nevertheless, future research should attempt to deal with this issue more directly.

Another potential problem of this study deals with a measurement issue. In the real world, military deployments are not divided neatly into major and minor uses of force. Moreover, it is not necessarily clear that the decision to deploy a Battalion of Marines is equivalent to a decision to put nuclear forces on high alert or to reposition an aircraft carrier. Future research should collect more precise information about each use of force that would allow for additional tests involving different specifications of the dependent variable. To the degree that these decisions involve different considerations, my quantitative evidence may miss central aspects involved in the relationship between presidents and the general officers who advise them.

Finally, this empirical project fails to account for one central component of my informational theory – military advice. Although the use of an ‘opportunities’ database does allow me to analyze some of the situational aspects of presidential decision-making, I do not have a measure that captures what signal the CJSC or the service chiefs sent the president. Although in theory it may be possible to collect data about the advice the military gave the president for every opportunity above, in reality it is not practicable. Additionally, this approach also limited my ability to examine the influence of other senior officers, such as the Combatant Commanders, who many have argued have grown in influence since the passage of the GWNA. Thus, in the next chapter, I will analyze three cases in detail to identify whether the mechanisms implied by my theory play a significant role in explaining the strong correlation that my quantitative results have demonstrated above.
Conclusion

As I have demonstrated in this chapter, presidents are more likely to use military force when members of the JCS who share their preferences advise them. However, this effect is stronger for Democrats than for Republicans. Although my informational theory provides some basis for this asymmetry, the evidence presented above is insufficient to determine why the asymmetry is so large. Much of this asymmetry appears to be driven by behavior early in the Reagan administration that is not consistent with my theoretical predictions. Additionally, it may be that the high base rate of conservative officers virtually ensures that there always will be reliable advice available for a Republican president when he needs it. Or, it instead may be the case that, in general, Republican presidents simply have higher prior beliefs about the efficacy of military action. Future research should consider both how variation in the reputation of the JCS and the political power of the president may influence use of force decisions.

While these and many other research questions remain, the central findings of this chapter imply that future students of civil-military relations should pay far more attention to the institutional factors that shape civil-military dialogue and policy outcomes. While much of civil military relations scholarship has been located solely in the subfield of international relations, future scholars will benefit from taking an interdisciplinary approach that incorporates institutional and behavioral factors from the American politics subfield.

Additional qualitative research that examines individual use of force decisions can and should supplement this quantitative study. Qualitative analysis may be able to capture significant aspects of the use of force decision-making process that are difficult or impossible to measure. It also may help to isolate whether the private and public signaling mechanisms laid out in Chapter 2 adequately explain the quantitative evidence in this chapter. In the next chapter, I will analyze five cases in detail to identify whether the mechanisms implied by my theory play a significant role in explaining the strong correlation that my quantitative results have demonstrated above.
Chapter 6

Studies in Military Influence and the Use of Force

“The military doesn't start wars. The politicians start wars.”
– General William Westmoreland

“The civilian leadership is put in a position where they have to get the blessing of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs before they can do anything. That is turning civilian control of the military on its head.”
– Bernard Trainor

Introduction

In the last three chapters, I used large datasets to test a few of the primary predictions of my informational theory. In general, I found evidence suggesting that political institutions shape how closely the preferences of the president and his senior military advisors are aligned; additionally, I demonstrated that variation in preference alignment influences presidential decisions about whether to use military force. In this chapter, I employ a vastly different approach. I examine in detail some important presidential decisions about the deployment of military capabilities during the Joint Chiefs era.

I have selected five significant American foreign policy crises from the last fifty years and examined the role that senior military officers played during the debate leading up to the president’s final decision. The case studies include the Laotian Crisis (1961-1962), the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962), the EC-121 spy plane shoot-down near North Korea (1969), the first Gulf of Sidra incident (1981), and the Bosnian crisis (1992-1995). Of course, these case studies are not representative of all presidential decisions about whether to use military force. Nevertheless, I intentionally included cases from both Republican and Democratic administrations, and I selected several cases that run counter to my initial expectations.
These cases together serve several purposes. First, they highlight the fact that presidents often enter office with military advisors who do not share their policy preferences; moreover, the cases illustrate that presidents often invest significant effort to identify and appoint military officers who share their beliefs about international politics. Kennedy, Nixon, Reagan, and Clinton all assumed the presidency with Joint Chiefs who did not fully support their foreign policy agendas. To varying degrees, each of these presidents eventually shaped the preferences of the Joint Chiefs through the appointment process.

Second, these cases also draw attention to the mechanisms – the withholding of information, the inflation of costs, and public dissent – that military officers use to influence presidential decisions regarding the use of force. In two of the cases, the Laotian and Bosnian crises, the Joint Chiefs effectively used these tools to delay the use of force until the president appointed different military advisors who shared his preferences. In the case of North Korea, however, the CJCS managed to prevent an unwanted military response entirely by withholding information and raising the public costs of action. The Cuban Missile Crisis and the Gulf of Sidra incident both represent hard cases for my theory. Although military influence is evident to some degree in both cases, the decision-making process during these crises highlights the fact that the president often receives advice from a variety of sources and faces other important concerns that also shape his decision.

Finally, these cases lend credence to the main assumptions that inform my analysis. They illustrate how presidents seek out information about the costs and consequences of policy choices, and they highlight the fact that ideological divisions are prevalent even among ‘apolitical’ military officers. In each of the cases I consider, presidents are skeptical of the advice they receive from the ‘holdover chiefs’ they have inherited from a previous administration. Most importantly, however, these cases show what it looks like for military officers to use their information strategically during a real world foreign policy crisis, illustrating the messy and complicated tactics that my simple
theory only begins to capture. The nature of civil-military relations at the highest levels is exceptionally dynamic and nuanced, but it also is highly political.

**Laos, 1961**

The Kennedy Administration faced its first major foreign policy challenge in Laos, early in 1961. Despite several years of massive military and economic support from the Eisenhower Administration\(^{163}\), the Laotian government appeared likely to fall under the control of the Pathet Lao. Just before Kennedy’s inauguration, the Soviet Union openly had joined North Korea in providing arms and equipment to this organized group of communist guerrillas.\(^{164}\) Then, in late January, the Pathet Lao seized major portions of the Plain of Jars and began to make preparations to challenge the frail, U.S.-supported government. As the situation deteriorated, the administration stepped up its diplomatic efforts. By March, Kennedy was contemplating a limited U.S. intervention to signal resolve, halt the guerrillas’ advances, and improve the U.S. bargaining position. Although several factors contributed to President Kennedy’s initial decision not to use military force, the Joint Chiefs of Staff’s staunch opposition to any form of limited intervention almost certainly played a key role.\(^{165}\)

The crisis in Laos now tends to be overlooked in light of the Bay of Pigs debacle and the increasing American involvement in Vietnam; nevertheless, this foreign policy challenge occupied more of Kennedy’s time and attention than any other during his first two years in office.\(^{166}\) Due to high levels of Soviet, North Korean and North Vietnamese involvement, the Eisenhower Administration held the belief that the U.S. must stop communist expansion in Laos.\(^{167}\) Moreover, Eisenhower personally

\(^{163}\) Schlessinger (1965), p. 303; George, Hall, and Simons (1971), p. 38. Between 1955 and 1960, the U.S. sent $300 million worth of budgetary aid and technical military assistance into Laos. This aid totaled more than twice the per capita income of Laos, making it the highest U.S. aid recipient during that time.

\(^{164}\) George, Hall, and Simons (1971), p. 36.

\(^{165}\) See, for example, Betts (1977) and Petraeus (1986). Feaver (2003) also classifies the crisis in Laos as a case of military shirking.


indicated to Kennedy that he anticipated that the U.S. would have to intervene, even though he had not yet taken such measures.\textsuperscript{168}

There is no evidence that Kennedy disagreed with Eisenhower’s assessment of the consequences of a U.S. failure in Laos; it is clear, however, that Kennedy envisioned a much different approach to the problem than did his predecessor.\textsuperscript{169} In fact, during the campaign, Kennedy frequently had cited the worsening situation in Laos as an example of the flaws of Eisenhower’s approach to foreign policy.\textsuperscript{170} Whereas Eisenhower held “the conviction that if we ever resort to force [in Laos], the thing to do is to clear up the problem completely,”\textsuperscript{171} Kennedy envisioned a more flexible approach in which military force supplemented vigorous diplomatic action. Using this new approach, the new president was confident that the U.S. could stop the communist advance in its tracks.

By early March, President Kennedy had announced to the American people his limited objective of ensuring a ‘neutral’ Laos that would not be a “Cold War pawn.”\textsuperscript{172} Initially, the president supported a diplomatic approach to the crisis, but he concurrently encouraged the development of military options.\textsuperscript{173} Although Kennedy did not expressly rule out conventional military operations, Charles Stevenson recalled that the president was clear that he was looking for “a political use of military forces, not the start of a regular military operation.”\textsuperscript{174} Rather than following Eisenhower’s advice to “go in there and fight it out”\textsuperscript{175} to settle the issue once and for all, Kennedy instead intended to pursue the modest goal of a neutral Laos using diplomatic efforts supplemented by a limited use of military force.

\textsuperscript{168} Schlessinger (1965), p. 163.
\textsuperscript{169} Stevenson (1972), p. 129.
\textsuperscript{170} Ibid; Sorensen, p. 640.
\textsuperscript{172} Sorensen (1965), p 645.
\textsuperscript{173} Stevenson (1972), p. 133. Several other accounts also suggest that the president initially was inclined to take military action. See, for example, Hilsman (1967), p. 127-130.
\textsuperscript{174} Stevenson (1972), p. 178.
\textsuperscript{175} Sorensen, p. 640.
Unfortunately for Kennedy, however, he had not yet had a chance to shape the ranks of the senior military through the appointment process. Instead, the president had to rely on the advice of his predecessor’s military advisors, whom Eisenhower had selected to implement his ‘New Look’ policies and to develop the doctrine of ‘massive retaliation.’ Kennedy quickly learned that these officers – whom Kennedy and his civilian staff referred to as the ‘holdover Chiefs’ – did not share his views about the value of ‘flexible’ uses of military force.

The members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff uniformly and vehemently opposed any limited use of force during the Laotian crisis in 1961. Moreover, with the lone exception of Admiral Arleigh Burke, none of the Chiefs recommended the use of military force at all.\textsuperscript{176} They did, however, develop several military options for the president, but these generally relied on an ‘all or nothing’ approach, requiring the use of large numbers of conventional forces and, potentially, the use of nuclear weapons. None of these options were limited in any sense of the word.

Several of the president’s civilian advisors did suggest limited options, however. Early in March, for example, Secretary of State Dean Rusk questioned CJCS Lyman Lemnitzer about the possibility of airlifting a division of Marines into the Plain of Jars to halt the Pathet Lao’s advance and signal American resolve. Lemnitzer replied, “We can get them in all right. It’s getting them out that worries me.”\textsuperscript{177} He went on to argue that such an operation simply was not feasible, citing the rough terrain and inadequate logistical infrastructure. Later, during a discussion with McNamara and the president, Lemnitzer raised concerns that the Pathet Lao could attack before the airlift was complete. Since the airstrips could support only enough aircraft to carry 1,000 marines per trip, the guerrillas could attack the marines piecemeal, causing significant casualties and forcing a major U.S. escalation. According to Roger Hilsman,

\textsuperscript{176} Arleigh Burke argued that the United States should take a stand in Laos in order to settle the issue in Southeast Asia once and for all.

\textsuperscript{177} Quoted in Hilsman (1967), p. 128.
Lemnitzer’s argument was sufficient to convince Kennedy to drop this option from serious consideration.\textsuperscript{178}

The Chiefs formally presented their initial advice regarding the situation during a meeting with the president on March 20 and 21. They argued forcefully against any form of limited intervention, including a proposal by State Department representative Walt Rostow to position American troops in Thailand as a demonstration of American resolve. According to the Chiefs, such an action was likely to provoke a large North Korean response, leaving U.S. troops drastically outnumbered. They made similar arguments against a State Department proposal to deploy troops to “hold key centers for diplomatic and bargaining purposes, not to conquer the country.”\textsuperscript{179}

The members of the JCS repeatedly stressed that they could not guarantee the success of a military operation without a massive U.S. commitment. They also indicated that this operation would be problematic because of the difficult terrain, harsh climate, and logistical challenges. The Chiefs recommended the deployment of a minimum of 60,000 troops, some of which would have to be diverted from Berlin; moreover, they argued that they could not guarantee success unless the president authorized the use of nuclear weapons against China and North Korea if the Chiefs deemed their use necessary.\textsuperscript{180}

After assessing the situation, Kennedy continued to focus on the diplomatic approach. Temporarily tabling the use of military force, he encouraged the ‘holdover chiefs’ to develop more flexible options. There is no evidence, however, that they actually did so; in fact, they appear to have done exactly the opposite. According to Charles Stevenson, the JCS troop estimate “was up to 140,000 by the end of April.”\textsuperscript{181}

\begin{flushright}
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\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{180} Hillsman (1967), p. 129; Stevenson (1972), p. 143.
\textsuperscript{181} Stevenson, p. 151.
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Additionally, they never presented the president more than one fully developed option at any of the NSC meetings.\textsuperscript{182}

In early April, there appeared to be a break-through as the Soviet Union agreed to call for a ceasefire. Nevertheless, by April 26, it became clear that public Soviet comments did not have the intended effect. Pathet Lao attacks had increased, apparently as part of an effort to “overrun the country before the ceasefire could take effect.”\textsuperscript{183} As a result, the president turned his focus back to his military options. Several of Kennedy’s civilian advisors have indicated the recent Bay of Pigs debacle made the president inclined toward strong action, including the use of military force. According to Roger Hilsman, Kennedy was concerned that the Soviets (and the American people) would view inaction as another sign that he was irresolute and not up to the task.\textsuperscript{184} In response, he immediately ordered the 150 U.S. ‘civilian’ special operations advisors who already were in Laos to don their military uniforms as a signal of American commitment.

During a National Security Council meeting on April 27, the holdover Chiefs nevertheless continued their resolute opposition to a limited, or political, use of force. According to Richard Betts’ account of the meeting, “most civilian participants tentatively favored a limited show of force in Southeast Asia, which they hoped would produce diplomatic results.”\textsuperscript{185} Walt Rostow presented the State Department proposal to deploy 25,000 troops to Thailand in order to augment Averall Harriman’s bargaining position at the upcoming Geneva negotiations over Laos. Once again, the Chiefs adamantly opposed this proposal, arguing that 25,000 troops was grossly inadequate and insisting that they be granted permission to use tactical nuclear weapons in the event of any deployment. According to Arthur Schlessinger, the members of the JCS offered “unrelenting opposition to limited intervention except on the impossible condition that the President agree in advance to every further step they

\textsuperscript{182} Rostow (1972), p. 664-665.
\textsuperscript{183} Schlessinger (1965), p. 283.
deemed sequential, including, on occasion, nuclear bombing of Hanoi and even Peking.” Army Chief of Staff George Decker, in particular, wanted to avoid any troop movements and argued that Laos could turn into another Korea. Betts argued that Decker did not want to “risk the Army in Laos, but he hesitated to advise unequivocally against it…he hedged with so many warnings and conditions that his advice had the effect of a veto.” Although several accounts of this meeting indicate that Decker and the other Chiefs sometimes offered conflicting or contradictory advice, they all nevertheless supported the all or nothing line and opposed all forms of limited intervention.

It is impossible to know for sure whether the Chiefs intentionally inflated their estimates or withheld information, but virtually all previous accounts of the crisis have argued that the advice was strategic in nature. Such a deployment would have required the U.S. to divert conventional forces out of Europe in the face of growing concern over Berlin; as a result, the president was unlikely to approve the request. Moreover, the U.S. eventually did send 8,000 troops into Thailand after negotiations faltered in 1962 without incident. Finally, the effect of the Chiefs’ advice was to confuse the president and leave him uncertain about the outcome of a military operation. According to Averell Harriman, the military’s advice “convinced Kennedy that in this particular case the risks attached to direct intervention were too high and the outcome too uncertain.”

On April 29, the president ultimately decided against a military deployment of any kind. Prior to the Geneva negotiations, Kennedy flatly told U.S. envoy Averell

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186 Ibid.
187 Ibid., p. 178.
188 Hilsman (1967), p. 133. Vice President Lyndon Johnson reportedly was so confused by the military advice that he recommended that the President have the chiefs put their views in writing. According to Schlesinger (1965, p. 283), the president received separate recommendations from each of the service chiefs and their corresponding civilian service secretaries; for a corroborating account, Stevenson (1972), p. 152.
189 See, for example, Schlesinger (1965); Hilsman (1967); Hall, George, and Simons (1971); Stevenson (1972); Rostow (1972); Betts (1977); Petraeus (1986); Freedman (2000); and Feaver (2003).
190 Stevenson (1972), p. 143.
Harriman, “I want a negotiated settlement in Laos. I don’t want to put troops in…it’s your problem.” The president did, however, initiate covert operations against the North Vietnamese. He also alerted a special marine task force in Okinawa and Japan, approved repair work on a helicopter base in Thailand, and authorized the pre-positioning of supplies in the region. Nevertheless, Kennedy chose not to implement any of the limited military options suggested by individuals from the State Department. Instead, the administration focused its attention solely on diplomatic negotiations and the Pentagon dissolved its Laos working group in early May. After Kennedy met with Kruschev in June of 1961, a negotiated settlement over Laos seemed possible. Nevertheless, the Laotian problem would continue to fester before again rearing its ugly head again in the summer of 1962.

Two of Kennedy’s biographers claim that JCS Chairman General Lemnitzer softened his views on a limited intervention less than a week later, after arriving on the ground in the region with Averell Harriman. Schlessinger, for example, states that Lemnitzer sent Kennedy a cable supporting a limited deployment, but that Kennedy rejected this advice out of hand. Nevertheless, when he returned, Lemnitzer still suggested that such a force must be at least 40,000 troops and that the use of tactical nuclear weapons might be necessary if North Korea or China intervened. In either case, Kennedy, by this point, seemed to place no credibility in the Joint Chiefs advice at all. Describing the debate of intervention in Laos, Walt Rostow claimed that Kennedy “never saw the military less clear in mind, less helpful to a President, than in the early months of his administration.”

Although most scholars agree that the military’s advice made the president less likely to intervene in Laos in 1961, other factors also played a role. First, U.S. allies from the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) offered little multilateral support. Britain agreed only to send limited naval support and a token group of military

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advisors; even regional ally Thailand offered only a few thousand troops. Since Laotian troops were ill-equipped and undisciplined, the U.S. would bear the brunt of any military involvement. In the face of potential escalation involving North Korea, China, or the Soviet Union, the stakes indeed were high.

Additionally, members of Congress appeared to have no appetite for military intervention. Most of the Democratic leadership opposed any direct intervention, though they remained open to the possibility of a show of force in Thailand. In contrast, however, southern Democrats and Republicans opposed the president’s approach altogether. They criticized him for appeasing the communists, and taking the soft line of accepting a neutral Laos. Moreover, they insisted that if Kennedy let Laos fall under Pathet Lao control that it would be a major defeat under any circumstances. While they did not voice their views on the possibility of a major conflict, several Republican members of Congress, including Barry Goldwater, did cite concerns about any “political use of force.” Although there is no direct evidence that members of the JCS influenced Congressional opinion, there is evidence that Kennedy was concerned that Decker and Lemnitzer were meeting with conservative members of Congress and the media behind his back.

Finally, it also is possible that the recent Bay of Pigs fiasco influenced Kennedy’s decision. It is unclear, however, whether the Bay of Pigs made Kennedy more or less likely to use force in Laos. Previous scholars have argued that it made the president more prone to use force, but also that it made Kennedy increasingly skeptical of expert military advice. In either case, debates over Laos and Cuba did convince Kennedy that the military was not providing him with useful information on which to base his decisions. As a result, by the end of 1961, the president began to seek alternative ways

196 Ibid., p. 133-134. Several prominent U.S. journalists also voiced concerns, including Joseph Alsop and Keyes Beech. Beech argued in the Saturday Evening Post that a limited use of force only would result in a “tactical retreat under cover of a show of American strength, which may save face but will not save Laos.”
197 Ibid., p. 134.
to acquire military advice from outside the formal military hierarchy. This outside advice would play a role in Kennedy’s decision to use force in Laos in 1962.

Laos, 1962

In the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs debacle, Kennedy’s attempts to appoint new members of the JCS who shared his views were not totally successful. Theodore Sorensen recalled, “The President was convinced after the Bay of Pigs that he needed military advice that neither Bundy’s civilian staff nor the holdover Chiefs of Staff were able to give.”

Kennedy appointed new officers to head the Air Force and the Navy, General Curtis LeMay and Admiral George Anderson. LeMay had become a “legend in his service” because of his service during World War II, the Berlin airlift and Korea. The process to select LeMay began shortly after Kennedy assumed office, and LeMay was the clear Air Force establishment pick. Although the president did consider reneging and choosing a different nominee following the Bay of Pigs debacle, he decided against doing so because of strong opposition from southern Democrats. Consistent with my theory, Kennedy anticipated Congressional opposition from Republicans and southern Democrats and begrudgingly chose to appoint LeMay. Nevertheless, it is not obvious whether conservative Democrats supported LeMay because of his political ideology or because of his status as a war hero.

Kennedy took more care to find a suitable replacement as the Chief of Naval Operations, unexpectedly choosing Anderson from his position as Commander of the U.S. Sixth Fleet. According to some accounts, however, Kennedy still appeared dissatisfied with this choice because Anderson was not “creative or imaginative enough” for the Navy’s top job; nevertheless, the president thought he was the best of the available options. Thus, his selection illustrates the unique challenge that

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199 Barlow 153 – Sorensen, FT 202
Democratic presidents face when there are few liberal officers available in the senior ranks of the officer corps. 

Consequentially, however, Kennedy also selected former Army Chief of Staff Maxwell Taylor to head the Cuba Study Group tasked with reviewing the failures at the Bay of Pigs. After retiring from the military, the general had been openly critical of the Eisenhower Administration’s New Look policies in his book, *The Uncertain Trumpet*. In it, he argued that the military had to develop more flexible approaches to deal with the changing international environment, and insisted that Eisenhower’s over-reliance on air power and nuclear weapons had led to an unbalanced force. Taylor claimed that the U.S. needed to renew its focus on conventional forces and to develop new counterinsurgency capabilities. Rather than relying on a doctrine of ‘massive retaliation,’ Taylor believed that the U.S. should develop a doctrine of “flexible response” that “would give multiple choices to our political leaders.” From the start, Taylor’s ideas had a warm reception at the White House.

Upon Taylor’s completion of the Cuba report, Kennedy was so impressed that he offered the retired general the position of CIA Director. Taylor demurred, suggesting that he would better be suited for a position that would directly draw on his military expertise. As a result, Kennedy instead kept Taylor on as his personal Military Representative (MILREP), an unprecedented position that placed him as a military advisor outside the formal chain of command. According to Taylor, his job was to look over those issues which would come to the President from the Pentagon or the CIA, I tried to find out where they were coming from and find out what was going on. Start thinking about it, and so when they came up… I was ready to take their papers, which always came to me. The President wanted me to bring the paper over. I had that little General Staff kind of memorandum on the top

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204 Another plausible interpretation is that Anderson’s appointment highlights the challenges that presidents who possess imperfect information face when they try to identify officers who share their preferences. Since my theory relies on the simplistic assumption that presidents have perfect information about the ideology of all potential nominees, this suggests another possible area for future theoretical exploration.


summarizing what was in that, giving the pros and cons and then…saying what my opinion was.²⁰⁷

Because of concerns that Taylor’s appointment would cause friction within the Pentagon, however, Kennedy initially commissioned him to work on several special projects in order to assess the U.S. military’s ability to respond to a number of crises around the world.²⁰⁸ Taylor’s first assignment was to go to Indochina with Walt Rostow to size up the insurgencies in Laos and Vietnam.

Following his trip in November 1961, Taylor suggested that the U.S could position naval forces and introduce a small contingent of several thousand troops into Thailand in the event that negotiations failed as one of several potential escalations.²⁰⁹ According to Taylor, however, the Joint Chiefs had reservations about such a plan. Taylor claimed that they thought that success would be unlikely “without the introduction of U.S. forces on a substantial scale and they believed that the modest force [he] recommended would be unconvincing and indecisive.”²¹⁰ Nevertheless, Taylor’s advice was incorporated into State Department plans, developed first by Walt Rostow and updated later by Averell Harriman and Roger Hilsman. Moreover, Taylor and Rostow maintained close contact with Bobby Kennedy, and copied him on their communications regarding Laos. The president’s brother quickly had become a supporter of Taylor’s and several observers have argued that the MILREP used this personal relationship effectively to make sure the president heard his views on military matters.²¹¹

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 165-167.
²⁰⁹ More notably, however, the Taylor-Rostow report also recommended the introduction of at least 8000 troops into Vietnam. Although the Kennedy Administration did not immediately deploy the full contingent of troops Taylor recommended, the report did lead to the introduction of several thousand military advisors in Vietnam by the end of the year. Many consider the report to have been an essential turning point in the Administration’s policy in Vietnam; by the end of 1962, more than 16,500 U.S. soldiers were in Vietnam serving as advisors.
²¹¹ Freedman (2000), p. 340. Of course, Taylor had direct access to the president, but his close personal relationship provided another important avenue of influence. Taylor and Bobby Kennedy became so close that Kennedy named one of his sons after the general.
In April 1962 following months of inconclusive negotiations over Laos, Pathet Lao forces attacked a number of Royal Laotian Army strongholds. President Kennedy viewed this belligerence as an intentional threat to negotiations. Fearing that the broader goals of a negotiated communist withdrawal and a neutral Laos were in jeopardy, Kennedy again convened his senior advisors to consider his options.

Averell Harriman and Roger Hilsman presented the State Department’s plan. Essentially, it drew upon the ideas earlier articulated by Taylor and Rostow. The proposal called for diplomatic initiatives backed up by a limited use of military force. First, the U.S. would signal to the Soviet Union, Britain, and India that the U.S. would not permit the Laotian government to fall to Communist forces under any circumstances. These messages simultaneously would be augmented with a political use of force to provide “credible evidence that the United States meant what it said.” This plan required the president to send the U.S. Seventh Fleet to the Gulf of Siam, deploy several thousand troops to Thailand, and begin improvements on lines of communication to prepare for the possibility of direct intervention. Although Maxwell Taylor was not present for this meeting, Harriman did mention that the MILREP supported the plan. Secretary of Defense McNamara and General Lemitzer also did not attend this initial meeting; they were returning together from a tour of Southeast Asia.

Once again, however, the holdover Chiefs voiced staunch opposition to the operation. Although they did not oppose the naval display, the Chiefs argued that the U.S. should not begin troop movements. Army Chief George Decker and Commandant of the Marine Corps David Shoup, in particular, opposed any form of force beyond naval repositioning. Instead, they proposed increasing the levels of arms and equipment supplied to the Royal Laotian forces while engaging in a number of diplomatic protests. If an intervention were necessary, they again demanded authorization to use

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overwhelming force to meet any reaction by the Communists.\textsuperscript{214} The two new Chiefs – Air Force Chief of Staff Curtis LeMay and Chief of Naval Operations George Anderson – were slightly less vocal in their opposition to the troop movements, but mostly because they believed such a show was unnecessary. Anderson thought the Seventh Fleet sent a sufficient signal on its own and LeMay thought only direct measures would lead to a stable outcome. Nevertheless, all the Chiefs agreed that the U.S. needed to be prepared to use sufficient force in the case of any direct involvement. As the meeting concluded, Kennedy made the decision to initiate naval movements, but to postpone the decision on troops until the next day.

The NCS meeting the following day was brief, ending with a presidential order to move several thousand soldiers and marines into Thailand and to begin improvements on supply lines into Laos. Taylor, McNamara, and Lemnitzer all attended this meeting. Taylor stated that he had looked at the military aspects of the proposal and that he supported the plan.\textsuperscript{215} McNamara informed the president that he also backed the initial troop movements; Lemnitzer, on the other hand, raised several concerns before conceding that he did not object to the order.\textsuperscript{216} He then focused his comments on the requirements for a possible offensive operation in Laos.

Lemnitzer and the other Chiefs argued that any direct intervention in Laos should begin by seizing the entire southern panhandle (including portions of North Vietnam) supplemented by a massive bombing campaign. If such operations did not lead to an immediate communist surrender, then the Chiefs recommended an “all-out attack on North Vietnam itself” and suggested that the U.S. might need to use nuclear weapons to deal with a potential Chinese response.\textsuperscript{217} In contrast, Harriman and Hilsman argued that the next step should be to increase pressure and improve the U.S. bargaining

\textsuperscript{214} Hilsman (1967), p. 145.
\textsuperscript{215} Hilsman (1967), p. 127-155. There are few other accounts of Taylor’s role in the meeting. Although it is clear that he supported the plan, it is somewhat unsurprising that he would have remained relatively quiet during the meeting since his advice conflicted with that of the JCS. Both he and Kennedy already were aware of the increasing conflict between the MILREP and the other Chiefs. Additionally, Kennedy did have several other opportunities to meet privately with Taylor to discuss his views.
\textsuperscript{216} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{217} Ibid.
position with a modest move; they envisioned establishing a defensive position along
the Mekong River near the Laotian border.

Kennedy rejected the JCS proposal outright, but requested that both sides continue
working on potential next steps. Nevertheless, Kennedy was clear that he did not want
to occupy Laos; he wanted to signal that a Pathet Lao attack into the Mekong Delta
would result in a clash with U.S. troops.218 Before concluding the meeting, the
president directed Lemnitzer to initiate the troop movements and to step up logistical
operations.

Within weeks, however, it was clear that the limited deployment had the intended
effect. The Pathet Lao stopped their advance and negotiators announced the signing of
a formal agreement for a “government of national unity” in early June. On July 23,
1962, the Geneva conference ended when all fourteen participating countries signed
the Declaration on the Neutrality of Laos, effectively ending the Laotian crisis.

Although the members of the JCS were not successful in blocking the deployment to
Thailand, they nevertheless managed to delay the president’s decision to send troops
into the region for months. By the spring of 1962, however, the president also had
access to the alternative military advice offered by Maxwell Taylor. The MILREP
openly had supported the State Department’s sequential plan to introduce military
forces, and probably played a role in shaping its military components. Although there
is little record of Taylor’s involvement during the crisis, the New York Times reported
that the president had consulted privately with the MILREP before announcing his
decision.219 Moreover, the plan as implemented fits neatly with the ideas Taylor had
expressed in his writings.

Of course, Taylor’s advice was not the only new factor affecting the president’s
decision. Other changes also made the president more likely to intervene. Negotiations

219 Frankel, Max. 1962. “U.S. Ships and 1,800 Marines on Way to Indochina Area; Laos Decrees
had dragged on for months with no obvious solution in sight. McNamara and other civilian leaders had more time to visit the region for themselves to gather information and prod military leaders about their concerns. Additionally, Eisenhower recently had offered public support for Kennedy’s foreign policy approach, which several Kennedy biographers have claimed gave the president needed political cover to pursue a limited military response in the face of Republican opposition. Nevertheless, it was not obvious that the immediate political or military situation was any worse than it had been ten months earlier; in fact, it may have been better. In either case, Taylor’s behind-the-scenes involvement in Laos exacerbated the conflict between the MILREP and the members of the JCS. It had become clear that this unique arrangement would not last.

**Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962**

From the start, Kennedy’s appointment of Taylor as MILREP had been extremely controversial. Consequently, both Kennedy and Taylor had gone to great pains to reassure the members of the JCS and the Congress that the MILREP would not usurp the authority of the Chiefs. Nevertheless, the president admitted that the Joint Chiefs should have been able to perform all of the functions he assigned to the former general. According to McGeorge Bundy, Kennedy “would never really feel secure” about the military until “young generals of his own generation in whom he has confidence” filled the senior ranks at the Pentagon. In the mean time, however, Kennedy relied on Taylor to fill the void. The president already had used many of the ideas outlined in Taylor’s book as the basis for his foreign policy statements during the campaign. Kennedy also liked that Taylor could “conduct a conversation” and give the president a “feeling of confidence and reassurance.” According to one White House staffer, Taylor was “a military man who spoke the president’s language.”

Unfortunately for the Joint Chiefs, however, the MILREP’s position between them

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221 According to some accounts, Taylor had become the primary source of Kennedy’s military advice by the end of 1961. See, for example, Barlow (1981), p. 170-174.
223 As quoted in McMaster (1997), p. 15.
224 Ibid., p. 15-16.
and the president had the opposite effect, especially following Laos; Taylor’s presence increasingly made them skeptical that Kennedy listened to their advice at all.

In the aftermath of Laos, Kennedy used the appointment process to remove the remaining holdover Chiefs and replace them with officers who shared his views regarding the use of force in foreign policy. Because they thought they were being pushed out of the loop, several of the Chiefs had become reluctant to share information with members of MILREP staff. Kennedy, and Taylor, recognized that the current relationship could not last. Thus, instead of renewing General Lemnitzer for a second term as Chairman as expected, the president announced that he had appointed Lemnitzer to replace General Lauris Norstad as the next Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR). Then, Kennedy broke the traditional service rotation and recalled Taylor from retirement to fill the role of Chairman. The president also decided not to re-nominate General George Decker for a customary second-term as Army Chief of Staff, forcing him into retirement. Kennedy also reportedly allowed Taylor to handpick the nominee to replace Decker. After consulting with McNamara, Taylor recommended General Earle Wheeler, a relatively junior staff officer with close ties to McNamara but no experience as a senior commander. Finally, Kennedy eliminated the position of MILREP for good. With Taylor at the Pentagon, the position no longer was necessary.

Several weeks after Taylor and Wheeler had assumed their new posts in the Pentagon, the Kennedy Administration faced its most severe foreign policy challenge during the Cuban Missile Crisis. In the broadest sense, this case is consistent with my theory; Kennedy’s military advisors unanimously recommended the use of military force, and Kennedy initiated an act of war by establishing a blockade around Cuba. Nevertheless, traditional accounts of this episode rightly focus on serious disagreements between the

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229 When Kennedy asked Taylor who he should name to replace his as MILREP, Taylor simply replied, “No one.” The president followed his suggestion without further discussion.
Joint Chiefs and many of Kennedy’s civilian advisors about how to use force in this situation.

According to the conventional narrative, Kennedy judiciously applied the minimum force necessary to support his efforts at coercive diplomacy in the face of the overly aggressive Chiefs who were intent on initiating a global war.\(^{230}\) To some extent, this characterization does fit reality. Air Force Chief LeMay consistently and unabashedly recommended massive air strikes and a full-scale invasion of Cuba while the other service Chiefs offered more nuanced, but still aggressive, recommendations. Nevertheless, Maxwell Taylor’s advice differed significantly from, and was much less aggressive than, that of the other Chiefs; moreover, he provided the president with several military options, worked to minimize public dissent among the Chiefs, and supported the president’s political decisions. Although all aspects of this difficult case do not fit neatly with the predictions of my informational theory, Taylor’s military advice clearly did have an effect on Kennedy’s decision-making. Nevertheless, a detailed analysis of the role of military advice during this crisis highlights several limitations of my theory and implies several avenues for future research.

Taylor first learned of the possibility of Soviet ballistic missiles in Cuba on his first day as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. Despite these initial reports, however, the Kennedy Administration worked to keep Cuba out of the public eye prior to the upcoming midterm elections. On October 11, when the president saw photos of crates in Cuba that intelligence analysts believed to be Soviet IL-28 bombers, he asked Director of Central Intelligence John McCone that the information “be withheld at least until after the election.”\(^{231}\) Kennedy’s negotiated settlement in Laos and the Bay of Pigs disaster had left the president open to opponents’ political attacks that he was a “do nothing” president who was soft on Communism.\(^{232}\) According to McCone, Kennedy was concerned that “if it got into the press, a new and more violent Cuban

\(^{230}\) Schlessinger (1967) and Kennedy (1968) both generally take this view although Kennedy carefully distinguishes between the Joint Chiefs and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Maxwell Taylor. This characterization also has been dramatized in the movie, *Thirteen Days.*


issue would be injected into the campaign.”

The DCI agreed to limit future reports to top presidential advisors only.

Although he wanted to keep the Cuban issue out of the limelight, the president had, in fact, convened a Special Group focused on developing a covert program, code-named Operation Mongoose. As MILREP, Maxwell Taylor had been named Chairman of this Special Group in November 1961. For months, the group jointly had been developing the plan for this operation. The CIA was to “undermine the Cuban government, incite insurrection, and assassinate Castro” preceding the launch of a full-scale U.S. military invasion of Cuba. The JCS already had overseen massive rehearsals off the coast of North Carolina in preparation for the invasion; the largest, Operation Quick Strike, included 65,000 U.S. troops. Ever since the group’s start, when Bobby Kennedy told its members “the Cuban problem carries top priority in the U.S. government” and warned them “no time, money, effort, or manpower is to be spared,” it increasingly had been preparing for a major conflict. In fact, it was Taylor’s personal request to facilitate planning for Operation Mongoose that eventually led Kennedy to approve the recommencement of U-2 photo reconnaissance flights for October 14.

The overflight of western Cuba on Sunday, October 14 revealed Soviet preparations of medium range (MRBM) missile sights. After intelligence analysts had developed and studied the photographs, Kennedy gathered his most trusted advisors to formulate the American political and military response. This group of fourteen men comprised the Executive Committee (EXCOM) of the National Security Council. It included Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense McNamara, Secretary of the Treasury Douglas Dillon, DCI McConne, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, Special Counsel Theodore Sorensen, Under Secretary of State George Ball, Deputy Undersecretary for Political Affairs U. Alexis

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236 Quoted in Reeves (1993), p. 263.
Johnson, Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America Edwin Martin, diplomat Llewellyn Thompson, Deputy Secretary of Defense Roswell Gilpatric, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs Paul Nitze, and JCS Chairman Taylor.

Taylor was the only military officer who attended the meetings; none of the other members of the Joint Chiefs participated in any of the EXCOM deliberations. Additionally, Kennedy did not even allow the Chiefs to discuss developments with their immediate staffs for the first four days of the crisis. Taylor recalled that he only could discuss the matters with the Chiefs themselves, but that after the first day he “got a concession that they could talk to their vice Chiefs.”

Kennedy also forbade Taylor from even informing Admiral Robert Dennison, the officer who as commander of CINCLANT would oversee the eventual operation, about what went on in EXCOM meetings. Taylor later remarked about “how red [Dennison’s] nose got when he asked questions which had every right to be answered, and [Taylor] would have to say I’m very sorry; I can’t tell you today, maybe tomorrow.”

During the crisis, Kennedy only met with the other Chiefs on two occasions prior to initiation of the blockade, once at Taylor’s request and once to inform them of his decision. In fact, even the first meeting occurred after the president had informed the EXCOM members of his tentative decision in favor of the blockade. This meeting occurred to appease the Chiefs and take heat off of Taylor, not to solicit the Chiefs’ advice. Taylor recalled, “In the middle of the [Cuban Missile Crisis], for example, they weren’t getting to see the president, and I urged the president, ‘Please invite them over. It’ll make my job a lot easier.’ And he did.” The other Chiefs, particularly Curtis LeMay, believed that Taylor was not presenting their views to the president. According to LeMay, “we didn’t agree with Taylor in most cases, so we felt that the

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239 Ibid. In fact, when Kennedy recalled commander of the Tactical Air Command Walter Sweeney to Washington to brief him on potential air strikes, no one Dennison that Sweeney, who was under his control for the duration of the operation, was leaving.
President was not getting…unfiltered military advice.” 241 His concerns were well-founded.

Kennedy’s decision to include only Taylor in the EXCOM deliberations was consequential because the Chairman’s advice differed substantially from – and was less aggressive than – that of the other service Chiefs. Although several observers have argued that the Joint Chiefs advice was unified, Taylor dutifully would report the ‘unanimous’ JCS position at the beginning of each meeting before offering his own “personal view,” which often directly contradicted the unanimous position. For example, during the EXCOM meeting on the evening of October 16, Taylor stated, “Mr. President, I should say that the Chiefs and the commanders feel so strongly about the dangers inherent in a limited strike that they would prefer taking no military action than to take that limited first strike (italics mine).” 242 Less than one minute later, however, Taylor followed up by saying, “personally Mr. President, my inclination is all against the invasion (italics mine).” 243 He then explained that he thought the other Chiefs had overestimated the number of sorties necessary for a successful air strike before stating “that’s not the one I recommended.” 244 Taylor and McNamara then insisted that the Chiefs develop five separate air strike options the following night to give the president a real set of alternatives. The next day, Kennedy quickly accepted McNamara and Taylor’s recommended option, which was not the other Chiefs’ preferred course of action. 245

Although Taylor’s final position on 20 October was to support the air strikes, he also played a key role in shaping the other options under consideration. For example, after Taylor voiced his opposition to the full-scale invasion, it never again came up as a

242 May and Zelikow (2002), p. 65. Taylor made these statements during the 6:30 pm meeting of the EXCOM on 16 October.
247 Ibid., p. 65-66.
244 Ibid., p. 66.
245 Ibid., p. 73-86. McNamara and Taylor discussed and laid out all the potential options before presenting their personal recommendations. Taylor noted that his opinion differed from the other Chiefs.
serious option in the EXCOM meetings. Both McNamara and Taylor continued to recommend that the military continue its preparations for a larger assault in case it later became necessary (which Kennedy thought was prudent), but the Chairman repeatedly told the president that he did not have to “make an advance decision on that issue.” The president could initiate a more limited course of action, and only later would he escalate if the situation dictated such action necessary. Since the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs did not support the recommendation of the other Chiefs, however, there was no advocate for the invasion during EXCOM deliberations and it quickly faded as a real alternative.

Taylor also made no effort to block consideration of the blockade as a potential option; in fact, he initially encouraged the blockade. When McNamara first introduced the possibility of initiating a blockade with no air strikes during an EXCOM meeting, he stated that he and Taylor had discussed this option prior to the meeting as a course of action that “lies in between the military course we began discussing a moment ago and the political course.” Taylor told McNamara and Deputy Secretary of Defense Gilpatric that there was no reason the military could not implement a blockade on its own; however, the chairman did note that implementation of the air surveillance portion of the blockade would be extremely difficult. Not only did Taylor make no effort to block consideration of this option, but he also initially supported the blockade option on 17 October. It was only after new aerial photography analyzed on that evening confirmed the presence of additional intermediate range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) that Taylor changed his mind and supported the more aggressive plan. Even then, Taylor conceded that the U.S. reasonably could give the Soviets 24 hours of

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246 Ibid., p. 65-66. Kennedy still seemed to be considering the full invasion as a potential option. He was surprised when Taylor said he opposed an invasion and “But you’re not for the invasion?” Taylor and other members of the EXCOM then went on to discuss the potential risks of Soviet escalation, especially in Berlin. After this discussion, the idea of an invasion only came up as a contingency plan and it was not considered a ‘live’ option. The debate turned to the question of whether to implement a blockade or to initiate air strikes.
247 Ibid., p. 127.
248 Ibid., p. 58.
249 Taylor later repeated these warnings both in EXCOM meetings and during the President’s meeting with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on April 19.
advance warning prior to initiating the attacks if it would be “worthwhile politically,” a condition that LeMay and Anderson did not support.\textsuperscript{251}

Taylor also presented a number of military arguments \textit{against} his final recommendation for air strikes even though none of the other EXCOM members asked him to do so. The Chairman went to great lengths to explain that air strikes alone would not be a permanent solution to the problem. He argued, “We can’t take this threat out by actions from the air…Conceivably diplomatic action might stop it, but only diplomatic action, or occupation as far as I can see.”\textsuperscript{252} Each time McNamara discussed the air strike option Taylor was quick to chime in that “I would stress the point, Mr. President that we’ll never be guaranteeing 100 percent.”\textsuperscript{253} During the EXCOM meetings, he made similar qualifications at least six times. Later, Taylor also reiterated the commander of the Tactical Air Command’s assessment that he could guarantee, at most, that 90 percent of the missiles would be neutralized or destroyed.\textsuperscript{254} Moreover, Taylor clearly explained to the president that it would take “five days to do the complete job” of destroying all \textit{known} missile sites.\textsuperscript{255} Once again, Taylor’s advice differed significantly from General LeMay’s; the Air Force Chief of Staff believed the attacks could be successful much more quickly. But he never had an opportunity to share that view with the president before Kennedy made the final decision. The fact that Taylor presented strong military arguments both for and against the air strikes suggests, consistent with my theory, that Taylor was doing his best to

\textsuperscript{251} May and Zelikow (2002), p. 130. In response, Kennedy stated that he thought there was no political value to advance notice of more than seven hours.
\textsuperscript{252} Ibid., p. 85.
\textsuperscript{253} Ibid., p. 83.
\textsuperscript{254} Although Graham Allison has argued that this assessment was incorrect, both Taylor and Sweeney based their judgment on the fact that they were unsure whether prior reconnaissance had identified all the missile sites. Even if they could destroy all of the known sites, they could not know for certain whether or not the limited reconnaissance missions had, in fact, identified all of the missiles; see, for example, Barlow (1981), p. 211, 336. In fact, Kennedy specifically asked General Sweeney, “Can you guarantee that there won’t be a missile fired at the United States?” Several accounts suggest that LeMay was furious when he learned about the exchange at the meeting, which he was not invited to attend, since he believed that the U.S. attack would be completely successful (Barlow 1981, p. 335; Daniel and Hubbell 1963, p. 67-68); in contrast, Taylor reportedly concurred with the assessment that there was no guarantee that the Cuba would not be able to launch a missile. Although there has been much speculation, there is no definitive evidence indicating that Kennedy did not understand the distinction between the destruction of all known missile sites and all missile sites.
\textsuperscript{255} May and Zelikow (2002), p. 58.
provide the president with his true assessment of the risks and costs associated with military action. When Kennedy announced his final decision, Taylor assured him that he and the other Chiefs would support the plan. For the remainder of the crisis, Taylor’s positions during EXCOM debates was to delay “any binding decision to conduct an air strike or invade unless the Soviets unequivocally challenged the quarantine or flatly refused to withdraw the missiles.”

Although Taylor ultimately recommended the air strike option on October 20, Kennedy instead chose the blockade. Nevertheless, the Chairman’s advice played at least some role in the president’s decision not to launch air strikes. According to Pierre Salinger, Kennedy stated,

> We chose a quarantine over an air strike because there is no certainty of hitting all the targets. We are also uncertain how many of the sites are operational. While we were hitting one, another might launch its missiles against us. And quarantine is far less likely to provoke a nuclear response.

Thus, it seems clear Taylor’s – and Sweeney’s – professional military advice was at least one of the important factors that Kennedy articulated when explaining his decision. Kennedy’s second reason, however, highlights one of the limitations of my theory.

In attempting to isolate the marginal effects of military advice, my theory assumes that the only information the president receives comes from the military. As this case clearly illustrates, however, he also receives large amounts of information from other diplomatic, economic, and intelligence sources. These sources certainly play a role in the president’s decision-making process during an international crisis. Although my theory intentionally brackets this issue to focus on the effects of military advice, future


\[257\] Some have argued that Sweeney’s estimates were strategic. According to this view, the TAC commander was trying to get the president to accept a more aggressive course of action rather than a more limited ‘surgical’ strike on only the missiles. This view is not consistent with the evidence, however. As noted previously, Kennedy already had ruled out the ‘surgical’ strike based on the advice of Taylor and McNamara during previous EXCOM deliberations. Sweeney provided the 90 percent estimates for the more aggressive set of air strikes, known as option III.
theoretical work should focus more broadly on how presidents aggregate, analyze, and prioritize multiple streams of information.

In the case of the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy’s decision seems largely to have been informed by his concern over the Soviet response and the threat of wider conflict. On this issue, General Taylor could claim no expertise; in contrast, virtually all of the civilian advisors in the EXCOM could. The overwhelming consensus among this group, especially as time went on, was that aggressive action would be more likely to provoke the Soviet Union into counter-escalation that could lead to the prospect of major war. 258 Kennedy wanted to give the Soviet leadership every possible opportunity to reconsider their position and back down. In this case, then, Taylor’s advice did appear to play a role, but it was not the only – and probably not even the most – important factor.

Several prominent scholars have argued that Taylor’s advice did not differ significantly from the Chiefs’ position. Graham Alison and Arthur Schlesinger, for example, have invoked Taylor’s own words as evidence that his position essentially was the same as that of the other Chiefs. 259 In Taylor’s autobiography, he writes “I was a twofold hawk from start to finish, first as a spokesman for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, secondly from personal conviction.” 260 Although Taylor certainly supported more aggressive military action by the end of deliberations, the evidence nevertheless seems to belie his own account; Taylor’s advice changed throughout the process. In his biography, Taylor most likely is responding to attacks – leveled by LeMay and others – that the Chairman had betrayed the other Chiefs by not advocating forcefully in favor of their views. He later admitted, “Bobby Kennedy…writing on the Cuban Missile Crisis, damned the Joint Chiefs except Taylor. Well, that got me into the doghouse with all my friends.” 261

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259 Kennedy (1968), p. 119-120.
Despite several frequently quoted Kennedy statements, the president also clearly differentiated between the Chiefs and Taylor. When meeting with Newsweek correspondent Ben Bradlee after the crisis had ended, a discussion of Cuba “brought about an explosion by the President about his forceful lack of admiration for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, except for Maxwell Taylor, whom he called ‘absolutely first class.’”\(^ {262}\)

Throughout the rest of his tenure as CJCS, Taylor became one of the few confidants that Kennedy allowed into his inner circle of advisors whom the president had not already known for many years.

**EC-121 Crisis, 1969**

On April 14, 1969, two North Korean fighters shot down an unarmed American EC-121 reconnaissance aircraft, carrying thirty-one crewmen, in international waters approximately ninety miles off the coast of North Korea. From the outset, President Nixon favored retaliation for the unprovoked attack. The U.S. had conducted similar missions for nearly fifteen years without incident, and the president believed that “force must be met with force.”\(^ {263}\) He was extremely concerned that a failure to respond would destroy U.S. credibility around the world, damaging the prospects for victory in Vietnam and weakening the broader U.S. security situation. Like Kennedy in Laos, Nixon entered this crisis with ‘holdover chiefs’ from the previous administration who opposed retaliation.\(^ {264}\) In this case, however, the president also faced opposition from the leadership of the Departments of Defense and State. Throughout the crisis, the Joint Chiefs used their private information strategically to delay the planning process, limit the military options under consideration, and influence the broader public debate. Although several factors influenced Nixon’s decision not to strike back against North Korea, the Chiefs’ actions – especially those of General Earle Wheeler – made it more difficult for the president to do so.

\(^{262}\) Benjamin Bradlee (1975), p. 122.  
\(^{263}\) Quoted in Haig (1992), p. 204.  
\(^{264}\) There was one exception, however. Chief of Naval Operations Thomas Moorer reportedly favored action, but he did not meet directly with Nixon throughout the crisis. Following the EC-121 incident, Nixon and Kissinger increasingly began to turn to Moorer for military advice. The president eventually nominated him as the CJCS.
According to Alexander Haig, the president ran into a “Pentagon stone wall of delays, excuses, and obfuscations.”

Nixon wanted to respond forcefully to the North Korean attack in order to improve U.S. credibility. During the campaign, he had relentlessly attacked President Johnson for his fecklessness when the North Koreans had seized the Navy spy ship, the USS Pueblo, earlier in the year. Nixon argued, “When respect for the United States falls so low that a fourth-rate military power like Korea will seize an American naval vessel on the high seas, it’s time for new leadership.” In Nixon’s eyes, the EC-121 incident provided him with an opportunity to assert his leadership and send a strong signal not only to North Korea, but also to the rest of the international community. Shortly after the incident, during a phone conversation with his National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, Nixon referred to an intelligence report in which Egyptian President Nasser commented to Jordanian King Hussein that “after all, it isn’t so risky to defy the United States – look at North Korea and the Pueblo.” Nixon then continued, “I just think we have to do something here.”

Kissinger later would criticize Nixon and argue that the president “didn’t have [a forceful response] in his heart.” Nevertheless, the National Security Advisor’s comments at the time seem to contradict this recollection. According to NSC staffer H.R. Haldeman’s daily diary, Kissinger told him repeatedly during the crisis that he believed Nixon was determined to respond forcefully to the attack. At one point, Haldeman even recorded that Kissinger had told him that the president already had

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265 Haig (1992), p. 208. Although Haig was serving as Kissinger’s military assistant on the National Security Council, he recounts how he still had an extremely difficult time acquiring even basic information from the Secretary of Defense’s office and the Joint staff.


267 Several of Nixon’s conversations throughout the crisis also indicate that he made a direct linkage between North Korea and the war in Vietnam. Nixon believed that weak action in North Korea would embolden U.S. enemies in North Vietnam.


269 Ibid.

decided to bomb a North Korean airfield at noon on April 21st. Additionally, the transcripts of Nixon’s conversations with Kissinger and other senior advisors show that Nixon wanted to respond, but that he felt constrained by the bureaucracy. On April 15th, for example, the president told Kissinger that he was determined to do something even if he had “to overrule everybody in the State Department.”

Late in the evening on April 17th, Nixon again stated that a “bold move was necessary” and argued that the long-term consequences of inaction far outweighed the short-term risks of action. According to Nixon, “every time the U.S. fails to react, it encourages some pipsqueak to do something.” It was not until late on April 18th that the president began to waver. Nevertheless, even after making his final decision, Nixon immediately regretted not launching a retaliatory strike. He later would claim that not doing so was “the worst mistake of his administration in the field of foreign policy.”

Although Kissinger and the other members of the NSC strongly supported retaliation, Secretary of State William Rogers, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, and the Joint Chiefs opposed the use of force. In general, they thought that such an action would lead to an unnecessary escalation on the Korean peninsula and detract from the effort in Vietnam. Laird and Wheeler, in particular, coordinated their efforts to delay preparations for an attack while they worked to raise the political costs of intervention. It is not clear whether Rogers intentionally synchronized his efforts with the Pentagon; nevertheless, his tactics produced similar effects.

Upon entering office, Nixon had anticipated a warm reception from the members of the Joint Chiefs. He assumed that his hard line on Vietnam would win the respect of the Chiefs and gain their loyalty and support. With the exception of Chief of Naval

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273 FRUS, p 36.
Operations Admiral Thomas Moorer, however, the Chiefs were skeptical that the new Administration “understood the complexity of American involvement in Indochina.”\textsuperscript{277} Prior to the first NSC meeting, General Wheeler had even attempted to resign, telling the new president that he deserved a JCS Chairman of his own choosing.\textsuperscript{278} Although my theory suggests that Nixon should have taken Wheeler up on his offer, the president did not do so. In this case, it appears that Nixon thought the general simply was extending a courtesy; moreover, he apparently did not anticipate Wheeler’s opposition to the president’s policies.\textsuperscript{279} Over time, Nixon began to recognize this split, and he increasingly relied on Admiral Thomas Moorer, whom he later appointed as the next CJCS. At the time of the EC-121 crisis, however, Wheeler still served as the president’s primary military advisor, putting him in a position to influence Nixon’s decision.

Throughout the crisis, the Joint Chiefs delayed the development of fully elaborated retaliatory options; in fact, they did not provide the president with detailed information about the forces required or operational timelines for the various military options until after Nixon had decided not to retaliate.\textsuperscript{280} On April 15\textsuperscript{th}, the chiefs forwarded their analysis of the available courses of action to the president. Rather than providing Nixon with a full range of military options, they instead provided nine general response categories based on “precedents established in the Pueblo incident” noting that they would have to be adjusted “if a more positive approach is desired.”\textsuperscript{281} The memorandum then recommended the joint implementation of five of these options, none of which were retaliatory.\textsuperscript{282} The Chiefs also warned that the retaliatory courses of action would “require a period of time for movement of forces and detailed

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{277} Ibid., p. 205.
\bibitem{278} Wheeler also began to suffer significant health issues that may have lead to him to want to resign. In 1975, Wheeler died of a massive heart attack, though health problems began to limit his work as CJCS in late 1969.
\bibitem{280} Mobley (2003), p. 120.
\bibitem{281} FRUS, p. 16. Document 7: Paper Prepared by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 15 April, 1969.
\bibitem{282} Ibid., p. 17.
\end{thebibliography}
planning” and “would probably involve withdrawing some naval forces from the Southeast Asia area.”

Nixon did, in fact, request the Chiefs to develop a “more positive approach.” The president forwarded a list of eight questions that he wanted the Joint Chiefs to answer before the NSC meeting on April 16. Kissinger later would describe this meeting as “unfocused and inconclusive” because the “military options were reviewed in a haphazard way” with no concrete operational plans put forward for “serious consideration.” During the meeting, Wheeler briefly outlined ten potential options, but provided few details and no specific plans. Instead, he highlighted the potential risks involved with each option. The JCS Chairman made no recommendation in favor of any option, concluding, “this is the menu of military options. Some would have effect; some no effect.” Despite the president’s earlier request for specific military plans, Wheeler produced none. Nixon later would learn that the Chairman did not even formally order the CINCPAC commander, Admiral John S. McCain Jr., to develop retaliatory options until April 17, nearly three days after the incident had occurred and one day after Wheeler was tasked to provide detailed options to the president.

For his part, Kissinger tried to use an alternative source of military advice to develop retaliatory options. Under the direction of Colonel Alexander Haig, Kissinger’s senior military assistant, the NSC staff worked to develop “various kinds of military moves, from the mining of Wonson harbor to…attacking an airfield.”

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283 Ibid., p. 17.
284 Ibid., p. 16.
285 Ibid.
287 FRUS, p. 29-34. Document 13: Minutes of a National Security Meeting, 16 April, 1969. According to minutes of the meeting, the JCS Chairman stated that every option – except for armed reconnaissance flights and the drone reconnaissance option – either would produce no effect, provoke a North Korean escalation, or take a significant amount of time to prepare.
288 Ibid., p. 30.
289 Mobley (2003), p. 117, 128; FRUS, p. 22. Even before he was ordered to do so, however, Admiral McCain had developed a number of military options and forwarded his recommendation in favor of retaliation to Wheeler.
meeting on April 16, Kissinger also tasked Haig to develop the ‘hard option’ of air strikes targeting a North Korean airfield. According to Kissinger, however,

> What all of these plans lacked was the forces to implement them or a specific operational plan or a particular reparation we would demand from North Korea. In their absence, we were engaged in academic exercises.\(^{291}\)

Without detailed operational information from the Pentagon, even Haig’s military expertise was insufficient to generate usable retaliatory options.

In addition to blocking the development of military options, Laird and the Joint Chiefs engaged in obfuscation to delay the movement of naval forces necessary to implement the air strike option. Rather than initially focusing on ground-based air strikes from aircraft based in Guam, Japan, or South Korea, Laird and Wheeler told Nixon that they would need to move elements of the Seventh Fleet from North Vietnam into the Sea of Japan in order to conduct air strikes. According to Kissinger, the “decision to move the carriers was time wasting.”\(^{292}\) Because they needed to be replaced by other carriers before departing, it would take the aircraft carriers at least seventy-two hours to get into position.\(^{293}\) In his memoirs, Alexander Haig recounts a conversation with Laird’s personal military assistant during which he could not even determine what carriers the Navy was moving, let alone their current location.\(^{294}\) Apparently, he also could not get the information from any of the Joint Chiefs; instead, he had to go “outside channels.”\(^{295}\)

Although Haig remained convinced that Laird had not ordered the Chiefs to move the carriers, recently released documents indicate that Wheeler had issued movement orders late on April 16.\(^{296}\) The convoluted replacement plan nevertheless had ensured that their movement would take time. Additionally, neither the Chairman nor Laird

\(^{291}\) Ibid.
\(^{292}\) Ibid., p. 319.
\(^{293}\) Mobley (2003), p. 117-120.
\(^{295}\) Ibid., p. 206-207.
\(^{296}\) Mobley (2003), p. 118.
had authorized movement into the Sea of Japan; instead, they only had ordered movement to a pre-assigned holding point.\textsuperscript{297} As a result, the carriers did not move into the Sea of Japan until April 21, two days after the president had decided against retaliatory action.\textsuperscript{298} According to Henry Kissinger, the U.S. “assembled no force that could pose a credible threat until long after the crisis.”\textsuperscript{299}

After the North Korean fighters shot down the EC-121, Wheeler and Laird also had ordered the suspension of all scheduled reconnaissance flights near North Korea without notifying the president or the NSC staff. When Nixon learned of this action on April 17, he reportedly was outraged. The cancellation of flights had made planning for retaliatory options more difficult for CINCPAC and it also had signaled weakness and a lack of determination to U.S. enemies in the region.\textsuperscript{300} In contrast, Laird and the Chiefs believed that it offered the benefit of portraying the reintroduction of reconnaissance flights with armed fighter escorts as an appropriate response. Although eventually the president chose this armed reconnaissance option, Haig claims that Nixon “regarded this recommendation as feeble.”\textsuperscript{301}

These operational delays allowed Wheeler, Laird, and Rogers time to present their arguments against retaliation to Nixon and the American public. In the JCS assessment of air strikes, for example, they cited only one ‘pro’ argument, “It is a measured response,” compared to four ‘cons.’\textsuperscript{302} According to the Chiefs, the action involved the “sustained risk of retaliation,” the potential for “significant loss to the attacking force,” and the possibility of “action continuing in order to cover the withdrawal of the force.”\textsuperscript{303} Additionally, the “airfield from which the North Korean aircraft were

\textsuperscript{297} Ibid., p. 120.  
\textsuperscript{298} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{299} Kissinger (1979), p. 321.  
\textsuperscript{300} Mobley (2003), p. 126-128.  
\textsuperscript{301} Haig (1992), p. 207.  
\textsuperscript{303} Ibid., p. 6.
launched...is not favorably located to be an effective target.” In contrast, the armed reconnaissance option involved five ‘pro’ arguments and only three ‘cons.’

By the evening of April 17, Wheeler and Laird finally had conceded that it was possible to launch air strikes more quickly using a land-based option with aircraft based in Guam. Nevertheless, they argued that a carrier-based air strike was preferred over the ground-based attack. B-52s were indiscriminate, less maneuverable, and more likely to lead to U.S. casualties than were carrier-based fighters. According to Laird and the Chiefs, they also were more likely to provoke North Korean escalation and Soviet involvement. These attacks were likely to lead to an escalation on the North Korean peninsula that would divert essential resources away from the conflict in Vietnam. Additionally, the Joint Chiefs provided information suggesting that the U.S. military did not have sufficient resources to handle increased conflict in Korea for more than thirty days. Consequently, they presented the carrier-based attacks as the president’s only real option for retaliation. Since they had delayed the movement of the carriers, Nixon would have to retaliate more than six days after the initial incident, or choose not to attack at all.

There also is evidence that the JCS – or members of the Joint staff – may have leaked information to the press, though this connection is, admittedly, highly speculative. Initially, Nixon appeared to receive some leeway from members of Congress. Republican Hugh Scott (R, PA), for example, urged the Administration to consider “all appropriate measures.” More importantly, Mendel Rivers (D, SC), the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, “there can be only one answer for America: retaliation, retaliation, retaliation.” Additionally, Kissinger and Nixon

304 Ibid.
305 Ibid.
307 FRUS, p. 39-41.
308 Grose (1969), NYT, April 16.
309 Ibid.
both thought that the public would rally behind a strong U.S. response. Over the next few days, however, the New York Times published several articles with quotes from ‘senior Pentagon officials’ who warned that any form of retaliation is “fraught with risks.” In one article, a ‘Pentagon planner’ laid out all of the military options under consideration, detailing the “immense associated risks” for each option. In another article, the NYT cited a ‘Pentagon official’ as urging the U.S. to consider diplomatic action. Of course, there is no clear evidence linking any of these statements directly to any of the members of the JCS. Nevertheless, by April 18, Nixon’s political advisors had begun to cite concerns about how members of Congress and the public would perceive an ‘overreaction.’

Later that day, Nixon announced that the U.S. would resume armed reconnaissance flights in international waters near North Korea. On April 19, he officially decided against retaliation. Although opposition from Secretary of State Rogers also played a role in blocking military action, most previous accounts agree that Laird and the Joint Chiefs successfully outmaneuvered Kissinger and the NSC staff. They had delayed military action long enough so that there was little public appetite for a military response. Moreover, they left the president facing profound uncertainties about the risks surrounding any of his military options. According to biographer Walter Isaacson, Kissinger believed that the “Pentagon had usurped the president’s authority.” Nixon finally conceded that using force with a “divided team would be a real risk.” Following this decision, Nixon and Kissinger spent months trying to get the JCS to develop a full set of contingency plans for use in the event of a future

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310 FRUS, p. 34-37. Document 15: Record of a Telephone conversation between President Nixon and the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), April 17, 8 pm; FRUS, p. 37-38.
311 Beecher (1969a), “U.S. Scout Plane with 31 is Lost, Reported Downed by 2 North Korean MIG’s,” NYT, April 16.
314 Document 16: Memorandum from Richard L. Sneider of the National Security Council Staff to the President’s Assistant for National Security Affairs (Kissinger), April 18.
316 See, for example, Hirsch (1983), Perry (1989), Kissinger (1979), and Haig (1992). Feaver (2003) also codes the incident as a case of military ‘shirking.’
provocation; despite frequent administration attention on the issue, the president did not approve the final plans until late September 1969.\footnote{Wampler (2010), Document 16: Memorandum, Assistant Secretary of Defense Nutter to Secretary of Defense Laird, Korean Contingency Options, September 22; also see Wampler’s introduction to the document collection, “How Do You Solve a Problem Like Korea,” p. 4-5; Perry (1989) and Herspring (2004) also both provide evidence that Kissinger and Nixon increasingly began to rely on the advice of Admiral Thomas Moorer and that they attempted to open back-channel communication networks to spy on senior leaders the Pentagon.}

Gulf of Sidra, 1981

When Ronald Reagan assumed the presidency twelve years later, he also was committed to an aggressive approach to U.S. foreign policy that would demonstrate American military strength at home and abroad. Unlike Nixon, however, Reagan did not assume that his senior military advisors would support his policies; in fact, he believed that they would not. Many observers, especially Republican members of Congress, had accused Carter of overtly politicizing his appointments to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. As a result, Reagan and Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger came into office skeptical of the Joint Chiefs’ advice, especially that of Chairman David Jones and Army Chief of Staff Edward ‘Shy’ Meyer; nevertheless, Reagan did find that his preferences aligned closely with at least one of the Carter chiefs, CNO Thomas Hayward.

In response to increasing concerns over international terrorism and Libyan aggression in neighboring Chad, the new president decided early in his term that he would increase economic, diplomatic, and military pressure on Colonel Muammar Gaddafi.\footnote{Davis (1990), p. 39.} In August 1981, as part of this broader program, Reagan ordered the U.S. Sixth Fleet to conduct Freedom of Navigation (FON) operations in contested international waters, across the so-called ‘Line of Death’ that Gaddafi unilaterally had claimed for Libya in 1973. This provocative military exercise led to a direct confrontation in which two U.S. F-14 fighters destroyed two Sukhoi Su-22 Fitter aircraft that had launched out of Tripoli.\footnote{Ibid., p. 47; see also, Vistica (1995), p. 120-128 and Stanik (2003), p. 51-56 for more detailed accounts of the engagement.} Although some elements of this case seem...
consistent with aspects of my broader argument, Reagan’s decision to launch aggressive FON operations in the Gulf of Sidra in 1981 does not neatly fit the expectations of my informational theory. Admiral Hayward proposed the operation directly to Reagan and Weinberger, and advocated for its implementation. Both Jones and Meyer raised some concerns over the operation, but they were marginalized during the debate; additionally, both officers seem to have believed that Reagan was committed to the operation and that dissent would not have been worth the costs.

When Reagan assumed office, he inherited a set of Carter appointees that Republican members of Congress roundly had criticized as “political generals.” In particular, they had targeted Chairman David C. Jones as a “liberal general” who was beholden to the Carter Administration. By selecting Jones, Carter again had broken the traditional service rotation and passed over the qualified Army candidates. As Air Force Chief of Staff, Jones publicly had supported Carter both on his final decision to eliminate the B-1 bomber program and on the highly controversial Panama Canal treaties. During the general’s extremely contentious confirmation hearings in 1978, Senator Jesse Helms (R, NC) repeatedly questioned Jones about his political independence from the White House, especially on the Panama Canal issue. Additionally, Senators Robert Byrd (D, WV), Jake Garn (R, UT), and Henry ‘Scoop’ Jackson (D, WA) all insinuated that Jones was too closely aligned with Carter.

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323 General David C. Jones, oral history, interviewed by LTC Maurice A. Maryanow and Dr. Richard Kohn, (United States Air Force Historical Research Agency collection, August-October 1985, January-March 1986, K239.0512-1664), p. 67, 253-255. Jones denied that he was a ‘liberal general,’ stating instead that he had been a “nonpolitical moderate who tried to rise above any personal, parochial, service, or whatever interest.”
325 Jones oral history, p. 214. Jones initially voiced his opposition to the president’s plan to eliminate the B-1 program privately. According to General Lew Allen, this opposition led Carter to delay his decision. Nevertheless, Jones came under immense criticism when he publicly supported the president’s decision during his Congressional testimony on the issue. See General Lew Allen oral history, interviewed by Dr. James C. Hasdorff, 1986 (USAFHRA collection, K239.0512-1694), p. 66.
326 “Nominations of David C. Jones, Thomas B. Hayward, and Lew Allen,” Hearings Before the Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, May 18, May 22, 1978, especially p. 11-13, 33-34.
and Jackson, both Democrats, eventually stated that they were satisfied with General Jones’ responses.\textsuperscript{327}

The incumbent chairman’s reappointment hearings in 1980 were even more controversial than the first, however. Focusing on Jones’ support for the SALT II treaty (while also noting support from Generals Meyer and Allen), Senator Helms again sharply criticized the CJCS. He “reminded the general that the military officer had a duty to the nation rather than simply to the president he served.”\textsuperscript{328} Then, Helms tried to make Jones promise that he would retire immediately if Ronald Reagan won the upcoming presidential election, a commitment that Jones refused to make.\textsuperscript{329}

Although their appointment proceedings were less of a public spectacle than Jones’, Army Chief Shy Meyer and Air Force Chief Lew Allen also came under criticism as ‘liberal’ generals.\textsuperscript{330} CNO Thomas Hayward, however, did not; in fact, several accounts suggest that Carter nominated Hayward to appease critics in the Senate Armed Services Committee. Hayward’s nomination in 1978 corresponded with those of Jones and Allen. At the time, the \textit{NYT} reported that Hayward’s nomination was a nod to Senate Republicans and ‘Scoop’ Jackson Democrats who raised concerns when Carter chose to break the norm of service rotation for the chairman.\textsuperscript{331} Since Admiral Hayward was the ‘next-in-line’ for CNO, his appointment was intended to mitigate concerns of overt politicization. Although my theory assumes that individual appointments are independent of one another, this example clearly illustrates that they often are not. In some cases, a president may find it sufficient to have several officers who can provide him with reliable information. Future theoretical work should examine in greater detail how the military hierarchy affects the prioritization of appointment decisions.

\textsuperscript{327} Ibid., p 14-15.
\textsuperscript{328} Riker-Coleman, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{329} Ibid.; also see “General Jones Wins Approval By Senate: Joint Chiefs’ Chairman Confirmed Despite Republicans’ Opposition,” \textit{NYT}, June 20, 1980.
\textsuperscript{330} Perry (1989), p. 278-283. Both Meyer and Allen also contributed solely to Democratic Congressional candidates following their retirement from the military.
\textsuperscript{331} Weinraub (1978).
Reagan came to office amid rumors that Jones’ forced resignation was imminent. Since the election, Helms and other Republican Senators privately had been requesting his ouster.\footnote{David Broder, Bill Peterson, Martin Schram, and George C. Wilson (1980), “Black New York Businessman-Judge Is in Line to Be HUD Secretary,” The Washington Post, December 20, p. A6.} In December, calls for Jones’ removal became public.\footnote{Michael Getler (1980), “Brown Cautions Against Ousting Joint Chiefs Head,” The Washington Post, December 22, p. A1.} In response, James R. Schlesinger – a moderate Republican who had served as Secretary of Defense under Nixon as well as Energy Secretary under Carter – and Carter Defense Secretary Harold Brown argued that Jones’ removal would threaten American civil-military relations and norms of military professionalism.\footnote{According to General Jones, he considered Schlesinger “a very close friend” because of their service together. Jones, oral history, p. 141.} Brown also pointed out that the Carter Administration had kept at least two military officers in place, former Chairman George Brown and SACEUR Alexander Haig, who had been “under considerable criticism from other Democrats.”\footnote{Getler (1980).} This controversy forced Reagan into a situation where opponents could accuse him of ‘politicizing’ the military if he asked the Chairman to step down, something Jones previously had indicated he did not intend to do. In the end, Reagan believed that the costs of forced removal did not outweigh the benefits and he allowed Jones to serve out the remaining eighteen months of his term.\footnote{Joint Chiefs Head Retained By Reagan: Decision to Keep General Jones as Senior Military Officer Deals Rebuff to Conservatives,” NYT, Feb 9, 1981; also see Riker-Coleman, p. 15.} Similar to Kennedy after he decided to retain Lyman Lemnitzer, Reagan instead would attempt to find other sources of military advice.

By all accounts, Jones’ relationship with the Administration remained extremely contentious.\footnote{Herspring (2005), p. 265-276; Perry (1989), p. 279-283; Weinberger (2001), p. 293. According to Weinberger, “Jones was an able man, but I never felt that he was quite as comfortable with me as his successors were.”} During the final eighteen months of his tenure, General Jones clashed repeatedly with Weinberger over basing systems for the MX missile, the need to move forward on arms control talks with European allies, the pace of growth in military budget proposals, and the reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. According to the accounts of Dale Herspring and Mark Perry, the Chairman and Weinberger clashed in front of a group of senior military officers during the Secretary’s first meeting with
military leadership in January 1981.\textsuperscript{338} This conflict, and Weinberger’s skepticism of Jones, prompted the new Secretary of Defense to assemble a group of outside analysts at Washington’s National Defense University to develop proposals for U.S. military strategy; he did not invite the members of the JCS to attend their first meeting in the spring.\textsuperscript{339}

General Shy Meyer later stated that this decision convinced him that Reagan and Weinberger were committed to finding military advice outside the military chain of command. According to Meyer,

\begin{quote}
That [the creation of the outside strategy group] really did it for me. I’d been in the Army all my life and knew a hell of a lot more about strategy – what forces we could commit where – than any group of nonmilitary people. So I almost resigned. I didn’t because, really, the group was just set up to get Jones. And it was powerless, but really, that told me where Weinberger was coming from.\textsuperscript{340}
\end{quote}

Additionally, Reagan initially excluded the chiefs from the National Security Planning Group (NSPG) – which replaced Carter’s NSC Special Coordination Committee (NSCSCC) – that planned military operations and provided oversight of covert operations.\textsuperscript{341} Under Carter, the CJCS had been a full member of the NSCSCC.\textsuperscript{342} During the early years of the Reagan Administration, however, Weinberger sometimes identified individual officers to attend meetings and brief the NSPG without the CJCS or other members of the chain of command present. Because he did not believe that they shared his foreign policy preferences, Reagan acted quickly to marginalize the chiefs and find alternative sources of military advice. The officers who replaced Jones, General Jack Vessey and Admiral William Crowe, both attended the meetings.\textsuperscript{343}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[340] Ibid. Although much of Perry’s account sometimes draws on interviews and statements that were not for attribution, this quote from General Meyer is a direct quote, given on-the-record.
\item[342] Executive Order 11985, accessed online at \url{http://www.fas.org/irp/offdocs/eo/eo-11985.htm}.
\item[343] Although I was unable to find documentation of a formal change, a comparison of the participant lists at NSPG meeting during and after Jones’ term demonstrates a clear difference. For a selection of these documents, see \url{http://web.me.com/jasonebin/The_Reagan_Files/NSPG_Meetings.html}.
\end{footnotes}
During the presidential campaign, Reagan had railed against Carter’s “foreign policy of weakness.” He pledged to voters that he would restore American honor and military prowess around the world. Shortly after taking office, the new president decided that Libya was prime target for a show of American strength. The Carter Administration had avoided direct confrontations with Gaddafi and was unable to convince U.S. allies in Europe to support economic sanctions. At the urging of Secretary of State Alexander Haig, Reagan decided to implement a systematic effort to increase economic, diplomatic, and military pressure on Libya the day after he took office.

Because of growing concerns about international terrorism in the wake of the Iranian hostage crisis and because of evidence of increasing Libyan military cooperation with the Soviet Union, Reagan believed both that Gaddafi posed a threat and that action against him would be symbolic internationally and at home. According to the senior North African analyst in the State Department, “Gaddafi presented this marvelous target because you could fight the Soviets, you could fight terrorism, and you could fight evil Arabs.” Consequently, Reagan directed his foreign policy team to treat Gaddafi as a Soviet puppet and a danger to U.S. interests in the Middle East. The president then ordered a full review of the U.S. policy on Libya, signaling his intent to break with Carter’s policy of limited engagement. His first public action was to close the Libyan people’s bureau in Washington on May 6.

Reagan initially rejected the use of direct military action unless it could be tied to a specific Libyan action. Instead, the first steps that the new administration took were to increase covert action while ramping up diplomatic efforts to make Libya an

344 Davis (1990), p. 38. 
346 Davis (1990), p. 39. 
348 As quoted in Martin and Walcott (1988), p. 73. 
351 Davis (1990), p. 41.
international pariah. Haig, in particular, believed that it was important for the administration to take several initial steps to prepare the Congress and the public for stronger action if it became necessary. In the mean time, the goal of U.S. policy in Libya was to isolate, embarrass, and weaken the Libyan regime.

Nevertheless, by the summer, Libya’s continued military presence in Chad and the country’s increased military cooperation with the Soviet Union convinced Reagan that he should threaten military intervention. When Libyan forces initially entered Chad in 1980, President Carter chose not to involve the U.S. directly. Because Chad had little strategic value and because Carter was focused on the hostage crisis in Iran, he largely left the issue to the somewhat impotent Organization of African Unity. Reagan saw the issue differently; if left unchecked, he believed that Libyan aggression in Chad could embolden the Soviet Union, Gaddafi, and sponsors of terrorism around the world. After minimal U.S. responses in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and Angola, the new president decided to draw the line in Libya by increasing military pressure. According to Haig,

> Our signal to the Soviets had to be a plain warning that their time of unrestricted adventuring in the Third World was over, and that America’s capacity to tolerate the mischief of Moscow’s proxies, Cuba and Libya, had been exceeded.

That signal came in the form of a massive Naval exercise off the coast of Libya. Largely circumventing Jones and the JCS structure, CNO Thomas Haywood floated an idea to Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger. The Admiral recommended that the Navy conduct a large Freedom of Navigation operation in the Gulf of Sidra that President Carter previously had rejected. Reagan approved initial planning for the Gulf of Sidra operation in March 1981.

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355 Ibid., p. 75.
The dispute over the waters off the coast of Libya had persisted for nearly eight years. In 1973, Gaddafi had claimed the Gulf of Sidra as his own, stating that it “constitutes an integral part of the territory of the Libyan Arab Republic and is under its complete sovereignty.” In response to Gaddafi’s claim, the Nixon State Department issued a demarche calling the action “unacceptable as a violation of international law.” Additionally, the protest asserted, “The United States Government reserves its rights and the rights of its nationals in the area of the Gulf of Sidra affected by the action of the Government of Libya.” Other nations, including the Soviet Union, also contested the claim. By 1980, only the governments of Sudan and Burkina Faso had recognized the claim.

Between 1973 and 1978, the Nixon and Carter Administrations had challenged Gaddafi’s claim on three occasions by conducting routine, small-scale naval exercises in the disputed waters. In December 1979, however, Carter National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski and Hayward proposed a large-scale FON exercise to assert U.S. rights in the gulf and to highlight Gaddafi’s inability to back up his claims militarily. Jones and the other chiefs raised concerns that such an action could provoke a military incident that might escalate into a larger confrontation, a sentiment shared by most of Carter’s other civilian advisors. Additionally, aggressive military action might incite retribution against Americans citizens in Libya and complicate negotiations involving the release of the American hostages in Tehran. Carter ordered the military to suspend all military operations in the Gulf of Sidra, granting implicit recognition to Gaddafi’s claim.

Despite Carter’s non-confrontational approach, relations between the U.S. and Libya continued to degenerate. In April 1980, a mob overran and burned down the U.S.

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358 As quoted in Martin and Walcott (1988), p. 68.
360 Ibid.
361 Stanik (2003), p. 28.
362 Ibid. p. 29.
embassy in Tripoli; the next month, Carter discontinued the U.S. diplomatic mission in Libya. Then, in September, the administration did not publicly acknowledge or respond to two military confrontations between U.S. aircraft and Libyan fighters. On September 22, two Libyan MIG’s allegedly engaged a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft; the pilot evaded and escaped unharmed, but did not have the capability to return fire. Several days later, Libyan fighters again challenged U.S. aircraft, but did not engage when they realized that two F-14s were escorting the reconnaissance aircraft. The Administration did not send a formal protest to Gaddafi and did not acknowledge the incident publicly, though it was widely reported. The Administration again debated conducting the FON operation, but Carter decided against it, not wanting to escalate military tensions in the midst of an electoral campaign.

Reagan, on the other hand, appears to have wanted to escalate military tensions in order to challenge Gaddafi. Although Administration officials were careful to state publicly that a military challenge was not expected, they did concede that they believed it was possible. Nevertheless, the CIA issued an internal report on Libya noting that Gaddafi had “ordered his forces to attack any U.S. ship or aircraft entering the Gulf of Sidra, which made the chance of an incident occurring between U.S. and Libyan forces extremely high.” Thus, when Hayward and Weinberger presented the idea to Reagan it seemed likely that these operations would provoke a military confrontation. The week before the operation commenced Newsweek called it Reagan’s “first direct challenge to the Libyan strongman.”

Several accounts have suggested that the development of the Administration’s military policy with respect to Libya was marked with “fights between political appointees and

365 Ibid. 30.
369 Stanik (2003), p. 40. Stanik references CIA Report, Director of Central Intelligence (1980), Libya: Aims and Vulnerabilities, p. 2. 8; I was unable to locate the original document.
career soldiers;”^371 nevertheless, Jones and the other chiefs – with the exception of Hayward – had little say in the debate about whether or not Reagan would authorize the Gulf of Sidra exercise. No JCS representative attended the meeting during which the president authorized planning the operation; instead, Weinberger presented the argument on behalf of the JCS. ^372 Since the operation was purely Naval operation, the CNO then took the lead on supervising the planning of the exercise. Additionally, only Hayward and other representatives from the Navy attended the two NSPG coordination meetings in June. ^373 General Jones did not even attend the NSC meeting on July 31 when Reagan officially authorized the execution of the FON, though there is no evidence suggesting that Reagan deliberately scheduled the meeting so that the Chairman would be away from Washington. ^374

Although they played only a marginal role in the planning of the operation, the chiefs had at least some doubts about the operation. According to Joseph Stanik, “Pentagon officials were gravely concerned about the risks associated with a major naval exercise inside the gulf.”^375 Jones and others reportedly believed that Colonel Gaddafi was not as big a threat as the president made him out to be; confronting him directly might give the Libyan leader a higher profile than he deserved and increase military tensions unnecessarily. ^376 Nevertheless, Jones approved a DoD risk assessment that placed the risk of operations in the Gulf of Sidra as ‘low.’ ^377 The chairman insisted, however, that various contingency plans for military escalation were developed, briefed, and pre-cleared with the Secretary of Defense and the President; he wanted to ensure that the naval force was prepared for any Libyan provocation. ^378 It is likely, however, that this clearance process would have occurred even without Jones’ insistence. Admiral

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^372 National Security Planning Group Records, Box 91305 (Reagan Library) NSPG 03/04/1981. Although the full transcripts of these meetings still remain classified, the participant list does not include any military officers.
^373 NSPG Records, Box 91305 (Regan Library), NSPG 0015 06/11/1981 [Libya] and NSPG 0016 06/18/1981 [Libya]. All files from these meeting have been declassified.
^376 Ibid.
^377 Ibid., p. 47.
Hayward and other senior Navy planners were in the midst of implementing several significant changes to the Navy’s peacetime rules of engagement (ROE) that were set to go into effect during the operation.

In addition to urging the president to conduct the exercise, the CNO also had spearheaded the push to change the ROE. In 1979, he had ordered a thorough review of the existing rules, but they were not implemented during Carter’s term. Reagan approved the changes, authorizing a much more aggressive posture than previously had been allowed. The old ROE required pilots to request permission from the task force commander to return fire even after being shot at by an enemy aircraft or ship; additionally, the previous rules required pilots to immediately hold their fire if an enemy pilot disengaged at any point. Under the new rules, which came to be known in the Navy as the ‘Reagan Rules,’ pilots immediately could return fire if fired upon. Additionally, Reagan stated that he wanted any U.S. pilot who had been fired upon to pursue the Libyan plane that initiated the attack “all the way into the hangar.”

Several weeks after the president made these comments, two U.S. pilots followed the president’s guidance, though the Libyan aircraft they pursued never made it to the hangar.

In August 1981, the U.S. Sixth Fleet initiated its FON exercise in the Gulf of Sidra, which consisted of routine Naval maneuvers as well as a live-fire Open Ocean Missile Exercise (OOMEX). After flying nearly one hundred sorties near the American aircraft without firing on August 18, two Libyan SU-22s opened fire on two U.S. F-14s operating thirty miles off the coat of Libya the following day. The Libyan fighters missed their targets and quickly were shot down by the U.S. aircraft. Gaddafi, who had been in Aden at the time of the incident, admitted that his aircraft had fired first, but argued that his aircraft has intercepted the F-14s as they were on the way to attack Tripoli in an unprovoked act of American aggression. Reagan defended his actions unapologetically. Two days later, on the deck of the USS Constellation,
Reagan stated, “Libya created an artificial line, claiming waters that are actually international waters. We decided it was time to recognize what are the international waters and behave accordingly.”\textsuperscript{382} He then continued, “We responded as we will respond…when any of our forces are attacked. They’re going to defend themselves.”\textsuperscript{383}

Although the Gulf of Sidra case does highlight the preference divergence that occurs as a result of a presidential transition, Reagan’s decision to use force diverges from the predictions of my theory. Although Reagan had not appointed any of the sitting members of the JCS, they did not use their private information to block military action. For the most part, Reagan and Weinberger successfully managed to cut the chiefs out of the process. Nevertheless, they did rely on the advice of Admiral Thomas Hayward and former general and Secretary of State Alexander Haig, whose preferences aligned more closely with their own. Unlike the EC-121 case, Reagan also did not face any of the time constraints normally associated with a foreign policy crisis. As a result, he was able to plan the operation over the course of many months, allowing Weinberger and other civilian officials to become more familiar with the details of the action.

It also is not clear how serious the reservations of Generals Jones, Meyer, and Allen were. Although they did raise some concerns privately, it is likely that they had little expectation that their opposition would change the president’s decision. Weinberger and Reagan already were able to obtain information from Hayward and other naval officers who the president was more likely to believe. Additionally, during the summer of 1981, Jones and Meyer also were extremely involved in the budget debate, which they both considered their foremost priority. Both officers actively were trying to resist the administration’s rapid military escalation program, pushing instead for a more gradual, long-term approach focused on quality instead of quantity.\textsuperscript{384} Opposing

\textsuperscript{383} Ibid.
the president and Weinberger on every issue could lead them to be further isolated with even less influence in the Administration.

Jones and the other chiefs also had little incentive to voice their dissent publicly. Reagan’s rhetoric on defense policy generally was quite popular, especially in the wake of the failed hostage rescue attempt. Additionally, the Carter chiefs were unlikely to find many allies on the SASC now that the Senate had come under Republican control. Moreover, even if they could find sympathetic members in Congress, legislators had little incentive to oppose the military initiatives of a president who campaigned on the fact that Democrats were too weak on the issue of foreign policy. As a result, public dissent from the holdover chiefs was unlikely to have much impact on the president’s use of force decisions. According to General Shy Meyer, “In a lot of ways we were lame ducks. We had been there under Carter.”

**Bosnia, 1992**

In contrast with the paucity of research done on the Gulf of Sidra case, civil-military relations scholars have paid a significant amount of attention to the role that military advice played during the debate over U.S. intervention in Bosnia from 1992-1995. CJCS Colin Powell’s behavior during the early stages of the Yugoslav crisis, in particular, prompted a serious policy discussion about the power of the Chairman post Goldwater-Nichols Act era. According to some accounts, Powell over-stepped his bounds as an apolitical military advisor and directly inserted himself into the policy debate; consequently, several scholars have cited civil-military relations during the Bosnia debate as an example of inappropriate military influence. Nevertheless, the content and influence of military advice regarding the use of force in Bosnia differed over the course of the crisis, most notably when presidential administrations changed

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386 Weigley (1993) and Kohn (1994) both argue that Powell’s actions were inappropriate and that he broke several norms related to American civilian control; Avant (1996-1997) and Huntington (Powell et. al 1994) both argue that Powell’s behavior was consistent with civil-military norms given the domestic political context in which the debate took place. My informational theory is an explicitly positive theory; however, in my final chapter I briefly will discuss some of the normative implications of my theory and main empirical findings.
and when General John Shalikashvili replaced Powell as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.\textsuperscript{387}

My informational theory suggests three distinct periods for evaluation. The first involves the initial debates about U.S. policy during 1992 when Powell advised President George H.W. Bush. The second concerns the period of relative non-involvement during the first year of the Clinton Administration and the final months of Powell’s tenure as CJCS. The last period begins with Clinton’s selection of General John Shalikashvili and ends with Clinton’s decision to send U.S. troops to Bosnia to enforce the terms of the Dayton Accords. Although I cannot treat the change in administrations as a purely exogenous shift,\textsuperscript{388} the continuation of the crisis over various regimes does provide a useful comparison. Additionally, institutional constraints forced Clinton to work with Powell for the first ten months of his administration before he had an opportunity to appoint General Shalikashvili. As a result, the Bosnia crisis provides an excellent case with which to assess my theory.\textsuperscript{389}

The appointment of General Colin Powell represents the only case in which a Republican President has broken the traditional service rotation when nominating the CJCS. Despite facing a Democratic-controlled Senate, President Bush had little difficulty getting Powell confirmed for several reasons. First, Powell’s preferences likely were more moderate than those of the expected Air Force ‘establishment’ nominee, General Robert T. Herres.\textsuperscript{390} Consequently, his appointment represented a net gain over the military establishment pick for Democrats in Congress as well as for

\textsuperscript{387} This case draws on, and extends, the previous analysis conducted by Feaver (2003, p. 256-272) and Goldstein (2000).
\textsuperscript{388} Foreign policy was an issue in the campaign; nevertheless, I do not intend to overstate the effects of this issue on the outcome of the election. Ross Perot’s decision to run as a third-party candidate and the lagging state of the economy were far more important factors in shaping the election outcome. It seems unlikely that Bush would have won the election had he changed his stance on Bosnia.
\textsuperscript{389} Of course, there were a number of diplomatic and military changes that occurred during this period. When appropriate, I note how these changes affect presidential decisions. Clearly, I do not hold all other factors perfectly constant; nevertheless, the changes do provide me with an opportunity to compare the effects of both military advice and public military statements during the periods of interest.
\textsuperscript{390} Halloran (1989a), “Scramble on to Succeed Chairman of Joint Chiefs,” \textit{NYT}, August 7; General Herres also has made substantial contributions to a number of Republican candidates since retiring from the military.
the administration. Additionally, Powell was the first African-American nominated to be the CJCS. Democratic members of the Congressional black caucus openly supported his candidacy and lobbied for his approval. Following his confirmation, Powell immediately became a trusted Bush advisor, a position that only was enhanced following military successes in Panama and Kuwait. As a result, there is general consensus that Powell became the most influential CJCS in U.S. history. During the Bosnia debate in 1992, in particular, he played a central role in shaping President Bush’s decision not to commit U.S. forces to direct military action. Consistent with my informational theory, Powell did not think that the benefits of intervention outweigh the costs based on his private information and ‘expert’ assessment. As a result, the Chairman sent a clear don’t go signal and President Bush chose not to directly intervene in Bosnia using military force.

In contrast with the presidents from the other cases I have presented, President Bush demonstrated little appetite for direct U.S. military involvement in Bosnia throughout his final year in office. Although he previously had pushed for intervention in Panama and Kuwait, most accounts suggest that Bush did not desire to use significant military force in Bosnia under any conditions. Accordingly, there is little evidence that Powell’s military advice and public statements on Bosnia made the president any less likely to intervene; if anything, his public criticism of limited military action provided Bush with a political justification not to act even in the face of significant electoral pressure to “Do something.”

Initially, most political elites agreed with the president that the conflict was purely a European problem; consequently, they believed that the U.S. approach should focus solely on diplomacy. The Bush Administration attempted to manage the conflict by supporting the UN arms embargo, pursuing diplomatic action through NATO and the UN, and supporting the introduction of European troops as part of the United Nations

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392 Weigley (1993); Kohn (1994); Herspring (2004). Of course, not all scholars viewed Powell’s extensive influence as a positive development.
393 See, for example, Baker (1995); Halberstam (2001); Powell (1995); Power (2003); Langston (2003).
Protection Force (UNPROFOR). Nevertheless, the violence intensified in the aftermath of the Bosnian Muslims’ vote for independence during a referendum on March 1, 1992. By the summer, the situation had deteriorated significantly.

Pressure intensified on President Bush to “Do something.” Although the Bush Administration discussed several options over the summer, the president again resisted making any military commitments. Most senior administration officials still anticipated that Bosnia was likely to become a “tar baby” or a “quagmire” that would involve the U.S. in a “centuries-old ethnic struggle.” Nevertheless, Democratic members of Congress, especially Joe Biden (D, DE), increased their criticism of the Bush approach; additionally, presidential candidate Bill Clinton began to raise Bosnia as a campaign issue. Although Clinton focused most of his energy on the economy, Bosnia presented him with an opportunity to undermine Bush’s credibility on foreign policy, especially as media coverage increasingly focused on Serbian ‘detention camps’ that evoked Holocaust comparisons. Clinton said that UN demands to close the camps and halt the aggression “should be backed by collective action, including the use of force, if necessary.” He also suggested that the U.S. should provide “appropriate military support,” including American-led air strikes.

In early August, Bush did support a Security Council measure authorizing “all necessary means” to ensure that European forces could provide humanitarian relief. On the same day that the resolution passed, however, Bush stated, “military force is an option I haven’t thought of yet.” He also made a public statement urging diplomacy and criticizing the “people coming at [him] saying, ‘Commit American forces.’”

Nevertheless, a solid majority of Americans then supported both of the use of U.S. air

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402 Ibid.
strikes and the introduction of U.S. peacekeepers, and even more were dissatisfied with Bush’s handling of the situation.\textsuperscript{403} By the end of August, electoral pressures forced the Administration into a debate about military intervention.

During the deliberations, Powell signaled clear opposition to an increased role for the U.S. military. Although Powell did present the president with several options, he nevertheless argued that any limited military option was likely to be costly and unsuccessful.\textsuperscript{404} Even a minor use of force might necessitate major U.S. involvement to end the conflict and enforce the peace. Consequently, it would be difficult to maintain U.S. public support for participation in a conflict that did not clearly involve vital U.S. interests. According to Powell, such an operation would require as many as 250,000 troops and a five-year commitment.\textsuperscript{405}

My informational theory suggests that Powell should not have had an incentive to overstate troop requirements since Bush’s policy preferences were closely aligned with his. Nevertheless, several participants in these debates have suggested that Powell did inflate these figures. Brent Scowcroft, for example, admitted that he thought troop estimates “probably” were inflated.\textsuperscript{406} Of course, accusations of inflation do not prove that Powell did deliberately overstate military requirements. In the fall of 1992, the CIA believed that there were approximately 200,000 armed combatants in Bosnia;\textsuperscript{407} thus, it is not obvious that a force of 250,000 troops was inconsistent with stated Army doctrine if the military mission was to intervene to end the civil war and enforce a peace. Moreover, most official records from this time period remain classified, making it difficult to analyze the force levels for the other military options Powell presented.

It is possible, however, that Powell was concerned that electoral incentives had shifted the Bush’s preferences, making intervention more attractive to the president.

\textsuperscript{404} Halberstam (2001), p. 34-36.  
\textsuperscript{405} Bush (1999), p. 281.  
\textsuperscript{406} As quoted in Feaver (2003), p. 259.  
Nevertheless, there is no evidence that Bush ever seriously believed that he should use force in Bosnia or that Powell believed the president was inclined to do so. Thus, a more plausible explanation is that Powell instead was targeting Bosnia hawks outside the Administration, especially Clinton and the Democrats in Congress. At the time, Bush trailed the Democratic candidate by 13 percentage points in the polls.\(^408\) Even if Powell was confident that Bush would not commit U.S. forces in Bosnia, Powell still had fifteen months remaining on his term as CJCS. If Bush lost the election, the debate about intervention likely would continue into the next term.

In addition to providing personal advice to the president, Powell also presented a vigorous case to the public against intervention in Bosnia during the final months of Bush’s term. In August, the JCS staff representative presented figures to Congress that were even higher than those briefed to the president, with estimates of 400,000 troops for a high-intensity mission to end the conflict and 120,000 troops for a limited mission to establish a humanitarian corridor.\(^409\) Additionally, Powell granted a remarkable on the record interview with *New York Times* correspondent, Michael Gordon, on 28 September. During the interview, the CJCS openly argued against limited intervention, especially U.S. air strikes. Gordon reported that Powell believed air power alone was unlikely to be successful; moreover, Powell thought air strikes were likely to “be the first step toward deeper involvement and could lead to Serbian retaliation against the United Nations relief effort.”\(^410\) The Chairman also opposed the military enforcement of a no-fly zone, stating, “Before we start shooting everybody up just so everybody can have something to write about, let’s see if the demarches works.”\(^411\) According to Powell, he conducted this interview with the full knowledge of his civilian bosses in the Administration.\(^412\)

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\(^411\) Ibid.

\(^412\) Powell et al. (1994); Powell (1995).
When the president announced his support for a ban on Serbian combat flights over Bosnian airspace only two days later, the New York Times presented this decision as a rejection of Powell’s position. Nevertheless, the Administration’s actions seem entirely consistent with the case Powell presented during the interview. Although Bush did support the establishment of a no-fly zone, he opposed the use of U.S. aircraft to enforce the ban using military force. Consequently, the initial UN authorization and the resulting NATO mission, Operation Sky Monitor, did not provide an enforcement mechanism. Instead, U.S. and NATO aircraft only monitored violations of the no-fly zone using extended-range surveillance aircraft that were not even authorized to enter Bosnian airspace. U.S. forces did not engage in any air strikes or air-to-air combat operations until much later, after Powell no longer was CJCS; in fact, the first incident that used military power to enforce the ban did not come until 1994 after the mission had been expanded and changed to Operation Deny Flight. By supporting the establishment of the no-fly zone but not enforcing it, Bush was able to claim that he was doing something without getting directly involved in the conflict or risking the lives of U.S. military personnel.

Powell’s on-the-record interview did evoke public criticism in the press, however. A NYT editorial criticized the Chairman for his reluctance to use force in Bosnia, comparing him to McClellan during the Civil War. Although President Bush already had made his decision not to enforce the no-fly zone, Powell nevertheless responded to the criticism weeks before the presidential election in an October 8 NYT Op-ed piece titled “Why Generals Get Nervous.” He defended his record as CJCS and argued,

416 Ibid.
President Bush, more than any other recent president, understands the proper use of military force. In every instance, he has made sure that the objective was clear and that we knew what we were getting into. We owe it to the men and women who go into harm’s way to make sure that their lives are not squandered for unclear purposes.\textsuperscript{420}

Powell also addressed Bosnia directly, arguing,

The crisis in Bosnia is especially complex. Our policy and the policy of the international community has been to assist in providing humanitarian relief to the victims of the terrible conflict, one with deep ethnic and religious roots that go back a thousand years. The solution must ultimately be a political one. Deeper military involvement beyond humanitarian purposes requires great care and a full examination of possible outcomes.\textsuperscript{421}

Since his retirement, Powell has emphasized that he cleared his opinion piece with both the Secretary of Defense and the NSC.\textsuperscript{422} Nevertheless, the timing of the article is curious since it came after the president made his decision. Although there is no evidence of coordination for purely political purposes, Thomas Langston has suggested that the Bush Administration viewed the Powell op-ed as politically beneficial. It provided justification and political cover for Bush’s decision not to intervene directly in Bosnia.\textsuperscript{423}

After the election, Powell continued to make a public case against limited military intervention, except under only very specific circumstances. He presented his first written articulation of the “Powell Doctrine” in a \textit{Foreign Affairs} article published just before Clinton’s inauguration. The incumbent Chairman argued,

We should always be skeptical when so-called experts suggest that all a particular crisis calls for is a little surgical bombing or a limited attack. When the "surgery" is over and the desired result is not obtained, a new set of experts then comes forward with talk of just a little escalation--more bombs, more men

\textsuperscript{420}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{421}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{422}Powell (1995), p. 558-559.
\textsuperscript{423}Langston (2003), p. 102.
and women, more force. History has not been kind to this approach to war-making. In fact this approach has been tragic…

Powell also reiterated similar themes in remarks he gave during Bush’s last visit to the Pentagon. According to Peter Feaver, these comments “can be read as a warning to the incoming president, with the subtle and perhaps not unintended effect of tying Clinton’s hands to a particular approach to the use of force.” Because these articles and public comments came after both the election and Bush’s decision not to intervene, it seems unlikely that the sitting president was Powell’s target.

Virtually every account of the decision-making process suggests that President Bush was inclined not to intervene in Bosnia from the start of the conflict. National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft, for example, suggests that the president was detached from the issue. According to his account, Bush found Bosnia extremely confusing, asking Scowcroft repeatedly, “Now, tell me again what this is all about.” The president simply did not think that the crisis in Yugoslavia involved vital U.S. national interests, especially since he already was dealing with other pressing foreign policy issues. As a result, Bush concluded, “American boys should not die for Bosnia.” Powell’s military advice thus may have merely reflected that he shared and the president shared the same preferences over policy outcomes.

Powell clearly ‘influenced’ Bush’s decision-making on Bosnia, but there is little evidence that he actually ‘blocked’ the president from using force. Most evidence suggest that President Bush probably would not have decided to intervene directly

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428 At the same time, he was monitoring the Kurdish issue that had arisen in the wake of the Gulf War, a flare-up in Kashmir, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union.
429 As quoted in Power (2003), p. 263.
430 Gibson and Snider (1999) make the distinction between military influence that blocks civilian leaders from implementing their policy preferences and military influence that facilitates civilian policy goals. This case also highlights that what constitutes a ‘good’ military outcome is dependent not only on objective facts about the costs of a particular course of action, but also on the political preferences of the interested policymakers. Democratic and Republican policy-makers receive different utility levels from the same military outcomes.
even if he had complete personal access to all the information that General Powell possessed. Although it is impossible to demonstrate conclusively that Bush still would not have used force if he were advised by a different CJCS, the existing evidence nevertheless is consistent with the predictions of my informational theory. Moreover, Powell’s public comments late in 1992 also set the stage for subsequent debates about intervention in Bosnia during the first ten months of the Clinton Administration.

**Bosnia, 1993**

President Clinton assumed office with the intention of using military force to influence the situation in Bosnia. Nevertheless, the uncertainty created by Powell’s private military advice and the political costs associated with ignoring Powell’s public comments prevented Clinton from using force in Bosnia until after he replaced Powell as the CJCS. During the tenure of General John Shalikashvili, Clinton gradually implemented a more aggressive policy in Bosnia, first using air strikes and later introducing U.S. peacekeepers. Consistent with my informational theory, Shalikashvili’s advice and public stance on Bosnia allowed President Clinton more freedom to pursue his preferred policies; however, diplomatic failures, electoral pressures, and humanitarian concerns also influenced the timing and scope of U.S. action in Bosnia.

Throughout the campaign, Bill Clinton had vigorously criticized President Bush for not using military force to guarantee the delivery of humanitarian aid supplies in Bosnia.\(^{431}\) He also had issued several statements supporting the use of air strikes in order to deter attacks against relief organizations. At one point, Clinton even had gone so far as to suggest that the U.S. should build a multinational coalition and “shoot its way” into Sarajevo.\(^{432}\) Although these statements certainly were easier to make as a presidential candidate, Clinton’s public comments and his advisors’ public accounts both suggest that Clinton assumed the presidency with a desire to use force to improve

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the situation in Bosnia. In fact, when the president assumed office, he was committed to pursuing a “lift and enforce” policy. This approach involved developing international support for lifting the arms embargo and enforcing the no fly zone using U.S. and NATO air strikes. Clinton quickly would realize, however, that the CJCS did not even support his plan.

Following the inauguration, General Powell immediately picked up where he had left off in his opinion pieces, continuing to argue against any limited use of force in Bosnia. According to Powell, Clinton suggested several air strike options during their first post-election meeting. The general then deliberately described the risks of such an approach, eventually dissuading Clinton from pursuing this option. In his memoir, Powell also states that he worked diligently during NSC meetings to “patiently explain” to Clinton and his other senior advisors that force was not a feasible option in Bosnia. Several accounts – including Powell’s – suggest that he was not always so restrained, however. During a heated debate with UN ambassador Madeleine Albright, Powell stated that he had a ‘near aneurysm’ after Albright asked him, “What’s the point of having this superb military you’re always talking about if we can’t use it?” Although Powell’s patience may be in question, there is no doubt that he remained adamantly opposed to the use of force in Bosnia during his time in the Clinton Administration.

At Clinton’s request, Powell and the joint staff did, however, present the president with a wider array of military options designed to accomplish more limited objectives. Vice Chairman of the JCS Admiral David Jeremiah presented the administration with a plan to secure the airport and end the siege on Sarajevo that involved 70,000 troops; Powell later presented a more limited plan that required at least 25,000 troops to protect relief organizations attempting to bring supplies to the city. In both cases,

437 Ibid.
senior advisors argued that these estimates were both unrealistic and politically unfeasible. \textsuperscript{439} According to Ambassador to Yugoslavia Warren Zimmerman, Powell “never said, ‘No, we won’t,’ or ‘No, we can’t.” Instead, he provided “figures on what it would take that were both unacceptable and because of who was supplying them, uncontestable.” \textsuperscript{440}

Powell also continued to make public statements that raised the political costs of military action. According to one White House staffer, the Chairman was challenging the president’s position during briefings with members of Congress and trying to use Bosnia to weaken the president politically. \textsuperscript{441} The Chairman also made several controversial statements during public testimony in April just as representatives of the administration were trying to bolster European support for “lift and enforce.” Early in his presentation Powell claimed, “we are not fighting the president;” nevertheless, the CJCS did not conceal his opposition to the use of air strikes in Bosnia. \textsuperscript{442} After arguing that a military solution in Bosnia would require a massive amount of force and a long-term commitment on the ground, Powell provocatively asked, “Are we going to bomb people into an agreement?...We did that in December 1972 and 3 years later they won anyway. Some of you remember it as Vietnam.” \textsuperscript{443} Powell later emphasized again that a military solution in Bosnia would require “several thousand people for a number of years.” \textsuperscript{444}

Although Clinton did send Secretary of State Warren Christopher to consult with European allies on “lift and strike” in early May, there is little evidence that Clinton already had decided to use air strikes. Even as the negotiations were ongoing, Clinton said that if he decided to use military force, he “would have a very specific, clearly

\textsuperscript{439} Madeleine Albright was typically the lone exception; she wanted to take action even in the face of heavy costs.
\textsuperscript{440} Quoted in Power (2003), p. 284.
\textsuperscript{442} Quoted in Goldstein (2000), p. 391.
\textsuperscript{443} Ibid.
defined strategy to pursue and very clear tactical objectives for the use of air power, which would have a beginning, middle, and an end, and which not only I but our military advisors had advised me could be achieved.”445 In essence, Clinton publicly had stated that he would not intervene militarily unless the CJCS told him he thought such an operation would be successful.

At the same time, however, Powell continued to appeal privately to the president, trying to convince him that intervention in Bosnia would not be successful. The CJCS gave the president a book by Robert Kaplan, titled *Balkan Ghosts*, which recounted the region’s history of violent ethnic conflict. According to several accounts, Clinton’s reading of this book and Powell’s arguments about potential quagmire increased the president’s uncertainty about the prospects of military action in the Balkans. After a meeting with soldiers returning from Somalia, Clinton pulled Powell and Secretary of Defense Les Aspin aside and discussed his growing concerns about “lift and strike.” After the meeting, Aspin called National Security Advisor Tony Lake and told him, “he’s going south on this policy…we’re out there pushing a policy that the president’s not comfortable with.”446

Although it is unclear whether Clinton would have carried through with the operation even if they had not done so, the Europeans rejected the concept “lift and strike” in early May. After the Serbs voted down a proposed peace plan a few weeks later, Clinton backed down from his earlier threats and decided against the use of air power.447 The president would not order military action until months later, after he had replaced Powell with General John Shalikashvili.

**Bosnia, 1994-1995**

After enduring months of public conflict with the military over Bosnia, gays in the military and other issues, President Clinton went to great pains to identify a CJCS whose preferences were more closely aligned with his. After personally meeting with

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447 Feaver (2003), p. 266.
every eligible senior officer and interviewing a select group of those he found most promising, Clinton realized that he had found his man in Shalikashvili. Breaking the traditional service rotation, the president appointed the Polish-born Army officer instead of nominating one of the available Air Force officers.448

By late 1993, Shalikashvili already had made a number of public comments that led the NYT to brand him as “a critic of early Western inaction in Bosnia.”449 Shortly after assuming command as the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe in 1992, the general indicated a willingness to consider the use of force in Bosnia, stating during a press conference that “a NATO mission to the Balkans was plausible.”450 In spring 1993 interview, however, Shalikashvili ratcheted up his rhetoric, stating,

The United States did not lead on this operation from the very beginning, as it did in previous crises…We are not [talking about] fighting a first-rate, fully combat-capable outfit like we have been preparing for I don’t know how many years…Never underestimate the mess and the nastiness you get into, but I think we’ve had too much over-estimating.451

During his confirmation hearings, Shalikashvili went even further in expressing his support for a potential military operation in Bosnia. In fact, he confidently suggested that a force of approximately 50,000 peacekeepers – half of which would be U.S. troops – could enforce a peace agreement between the warring factions. Moreover, he asserted that “from the beginning, I…have been recommending that kind of commitment by the U.S.”452

John McCain, and several other Republican Senators, interrogated the general on his ‘can-do’ attitude regarding Bosnia. In response, Shalikashvili responded that the U.S. had other interests in the region beyond the human tragedy; according to the general,

449 Gordon (1993), “NATO Commander is Picked to Lead the Joint Chiefs,” NYT, August 11.
continued inaction could destroy NATO’s credibility and the war could spread into other parts of Europe, threatening U.S. allies and broader regional stability.\textsuperscript{453} In response to McCain’s accusation that the general was too supportive of air strikes, Shalikashvili defended his willingness to use air power in support of diplomatic efforts during his testimony, arguing,

\begin{quote}
I do not think that air strikes in themselves would bring an end to the conflict and…be decisive. If those air strikes have to be utilized to break the siege of Sarajevo in the future, I am hopeful…to what degree they will be successful, only time will tell.\textsuperscript{454}
\end{quote}

Although military operations in Somalia dominated the administration’s foreign policy agenda almost immediately after Shalikashvili became CJCS and loomed large throughout his term, the issue of air strikes in Bosnia again became salient by February of 1994. The Serbian artillery shelling of a Sarajevo marketplace on February 5 prompted serious debate about a new approach to the Bosnia issue. Clinton opposed an initial French proposal that would require the introduction of U.S. ground forces, but Shalikashvili helped shape a more limited U.S. plan that threatened air strikes if Serbs did not end the siege of Sarajevo.\textsuperscript{455} After twelve days of negotiations, the U.S. and NATO threat was sufficient; the Serbs complied with NATO demands and no air strikes were initiated. Nevertheless, one week later, when six Serb jets bombed a Bosnian factory, U.S. F-16s shot down five of the six aircraft, marking the first combat engagement in NATO’s history. According to Ivo Daalder’s account, Shalikashvili’s appointment corresponded with a “newfound willingness to implement air strikes” and aggressively enforce the no-fly zone.\textsuperscript{456}

Shalikashvili did raise questions about the effectiveness of using limited air strikes to defend the Goradze safe area early in April. On April 5, for example, the CJCS stated, “Right now, it is our judgment that the conditions in Goradze do not lend them to the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[453] Ibid.
\item[454] Ibid., p. 12.
\item[456] Ibid., p. 26.
\end{footnotes}
use of air power.” Because the Serbs were employing small arms rather than heavy weapons in Goradze, Shalikashvili thought that such attacks would be counterproductive and ineffective since they could lead to retaliation. To some degree, the general was proven right. Less than a week after these statements, NATO aircraft attacked two Serb air defense sites, prompting Bosnian Serbs to capture 450 peacekeepers as hostages. After NATO stopped the air attacks, the hostages were released.

Instead of using ‘pinprick attacks,’ Shalikashvili believed that NATO allies should support a more aggressive air campaign that would put direct pressure on the Serbs. Clinton appears to have agreed with the Chairman’s assessment. On April 21, Clinton proposed a major new plan to broaden NATO power to conduct air strikes. Unfortunately, France and Britain continued to push for an alternative approach that deployed UNPROFOR troops to various safe havens, making more aggressive bombing campaigns impracticable. Despite his misgivings about limited bombings, Shalikashvili continued to be a public advocate for the NATO approach while still pressing for a more expansive mission. During a speech at Georgetown in November 1994, the Chairman argued, “I’m not saying we cannot use air power to help enforce the UN protected zones in Bosnia…For those limited purposes, air power is a legitimate [tool], but you have to understand what is lurking around the corner.”

When Serbian militias attacked the UN safe area of Bihac, Shalikashvili and Clinton pressed NATO to use a more aggressive air campaign to save the region, but allies with troops on the ground resisted. Instead, they required U.S. troops on the ground as a pre-condition to support U.S. plans. According to British Defense Minister Malcolm Rifkind, “Those who call for action by the world must match words [with] deeds, and that doesn’t require just a few aircraft.” After Bihac fell, the Clinton administration

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458 Ibid.
460 Ibid.
increasingly pushed “its allies for a wide-ranging air campaign against the Serbs” that they opposed until July of 1995.

If it were not for NATO resistance, it seems likely that the president would have launched a major air campaign sooner than he did. According to a NYT article in July 1995, “Shalikashvili favors bombing to back up UN ultimatums. The general has agonized, however, as the military credibility of NATO and the U.S. erodes with each ineffective pinprick air attack against the Bosnia Serbs.” According to Shalikasvili himself,

“I am of the view...that if you use military force, and if you are hesitant and you are timid, you would have all the till effects of having used military force and probably none – or very few – of the benefits...That is the dilemma we are facing today in Bosnia.”

Although several critics later argued that Powell was undermining the administration’s position, he appears to have been speaking on the president’s behalf. The CJCS continued, “The problem has not been with my colleagues in this administration. The problem has been our ability to convince our international partners.” By the end of August, however, Clinton finally had convinced NATO allies to move into less vulnerable positions. When the Serbs launched a mortar attack on Sarajevo, the president authorized “Operation Deliberate Force,” a two-week bombing campaign that used nearly 3500 sorties to target an expansive set of Serb targets. Along with Bosnian ground offensives, this operation helped force the Serbs to the negotiating table at Dayton.

Shalikashvili also played a central role in privately recommending the use of U.S. troops as peacekeepers in Bosnia; in almost all cases, Clinton approved his proposals. In late 1994, Shalikashvili and Perry together pushed Clinton to expand the U.S.

463 Ibid.
464 Ibid.
commitment on the ground. Following the attack on Bihac in November 1994, they
told the president that the U.S. could support the withdrawal of UN troops if
necessary.\footnote{Daalder (2000), p. 31-35.} This public agreement later played a significant role in constraining U.S.
policy options; if UN troops chose to withdraw, it committed the U.S. to send troops
to facilitate their retreat, putting U.S. credibility on the line in the event of a
UNPROFOR failure. When Congress passed Senator Bob Dole’s proposal to lift the
arms embargo, it forced the president to choose between vetoing the arms embargo
legislation (which would trigger UNPROFOR withdrawal and the promised U.S.
deployment) or intervening directly.

In May 1995, Shalikashvili and Perry also urged Clinton to promise the introduction
of U.S. troops to help UNPROFOR redeploy out of vulnerable positions in the eastern
enclaves if they requested support.\footnote{Ibid., p. 50-54.} This plan presented the president with a more
aggressive policy choice and signaled U.S. resolve; if UNPROFOR decided to
withdraw from Bosnia, it would give Clinton one final opportunity to pursue more
aggressive action with fewer constraints. Although the U.S. was never asked to deploy
these troops, the public statement helped convince UNPROFOR to reposition its
troops prior to Operation Deliberate Force.\footnote{Ibid.}

In addition to advising the president to commit U.S. troops, Shalikashvili also
presented the case for ground forces to the public. In the summer of 1995, for
example, the Chairman publicly stated that U.S. troops would have to participate in
limited military operations, arguing,

Some, at least in my profession, would prefer that we put a sign outside the
Pentagon that says ‘We only do the big ones.’ That is because we feel
comfortable with yesterday. We understand terms like ‘overwhelming force’…
but as strong as the temptation may be to do this, the fact is that we cannot.\footnote{Goldstein (2000), p. 399-400.}
Following the conclusion of Operation Deliberate Force, Shalikashvili also publicly defended his position that the U.S. should deploy troops to enforce the Dayton Accords. Responding to Republican critics of U.S. military involvement, the CJCS argued, “We cannot come in and out of the alliance and choose to lead when it’s to our benefit.”470

Finally, Shalikashvili played a major role in shaping the both the structure and mission of U.S. troops deployed to enforce the Dayton Accord during Operation Joint Endeavor. Several accounts have documented the Chairman’s impact on the Dayton Accord, including his insistence that the military annex include a ‘silver bullet’ paragraph, which allowed U.S. troops to defend themselves against even perceived threats. When U.S. forces deployed under the banner of the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR), nevertheless, the plan essentially was the same one Shalikashvili had endorsed during his 1993 confirmation hearings.471

Although NATO’s resistance probably slowed the U.S. military response, General Shalikashvili’s advice clearly had a significant impact on President Clinton’s decision-making about how and when to use force in Bosnia. As soon as the general assumed his position as the CJCS, he consistently advised that U.S. troops could enforce a peace agreement and that U.S. air power could support diplomatic efforts. Shalikashvili did not believe that NATO’s ‘pinprick bombing’ was likely to be effective, but the experience on the ground seems to support this assessment. Finally, it is difficult to identify instances when Clinton’s decisions significantly broke from the CJCS’s advice even though the crisis lasted for several years. According to Secretary of Defense William Perry, Shalikashvili’s “recommendations have profoundly influenced our policy in Bosnia.”472

470 Ibid., p. 401.
Conclusion

The various conflicts between the president and the Joint Chiefs of Staff over use of force decisions in Laos, Cuba, North Korea, Libya, and Bosnia highlight the fact that political ideology and domestic institutions play a significant role in shaping the civil-military dialogue at the highest levels of American foreign policy. In most cases, the president’s ability to pursue his preferred foreign policy agenda rests, at least partly, on whether or not he has appointed officers whose foreign policy attitudes are similar to his own. The military’s ability to use its information strategically, both privately and in public, appears central in this regard.

Several themes run throughout these cases. The most important is that divisions over political ideology, not civil-military differences, shaped the most salient dimension of interaction between political leaders and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Presidents actively tried to find military officers who shared their beliefs about how to use force in support of foreign policy goals, and they were extremely skeptical of advice from officers who have different preferences.

Second, the process of finding reliable military advisors also is relatively easier for Republican presidents than for Democratic presidents. Even when Republican presidents inherited all of their officers from a Democratic administration, they often had at least some ‘conservative’ officers available, as was the case with Reagan and Hayward, and Nixon and Moorer. Democrats, on the other hand, had to look much harder to find the officers they wanted. Both Kennedy and Carter anticipated confrontation from moderate Democrats in the Senate; consequently, they didn’t ‘politicize’ every nominee. And even when Democratic presidents did find their preferred military advisors, these officers still often held more moderate views about the use of force than the president they served as was evident in both the Cuban Missile Crisis case and in Bosnia during 1994 and 1995.

Finally, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs played a particularly significant role in every case except for the Gulf of Sidra incident. Clearly, we would expect Powell and
Shalikashvili to loom large since both were appointed after the Goldwater-Nichols Act had passed; nevertheless, Maxwell Taylor and Earle Wheeler also managed to use their position as the Chairman to their advantage, giving them relatively more influence than the other chiefs. Opposition from LeMay and Anderson certainly made Taylor’s job more challenging during the Cuban Missile Crisis, but the president largely ignored their advice anyway. It was only under the Reagan administration that the Chairman was not able to use the powers of his office effectively, and it is worth noting that General David Jones was the major proponent of the Goldwater-Nichols reforms, continuing to fight Weinberger even after he retired from active duty.

The case studies analyzed in this chapter are complicated and nuanced; nevertheless, they collectively serve to highlight the central points of my broader argument. These cases illustrate how presidents seek out information about the costs and consequences of policy choices, and they highlight the fact that ideological divisions are prevalent even among ‘apolitical’ military officers. In each of the cases I consider, presidents are skeptical of the advice they receive from the ‘holdover chiefs’ they have inherited from a previous administration. Additionally, these cases enrich our understanding of what a military ‘signal’ looks like in the context of a complicated foreign policy debate that sometimes last days, weeks, or even months.

As Adam Berinsky has stated, “Foreign policy is often as contentious and partisan as domestic policy. Theories of war and politics must account for the effects of the domestic political process.” So it also is with civil-military relations and the use of military force. Political ideology and domestic institutions play an important role in shaping the civil-military dialogue and in determining foreign policy choices. Although civilian and military leaders often square off against one another during policy debates, I have demonstrated that our understanding of use of force decisions is much improved when we pay closer attention to the ways that political institutions structure civil-military interaction at the highest levels.

\[\text{Berinsky (2005), p. 5.}\]
Chapter 7

Conclusion

“Nor indeed is it sensible to summon soldiers, as many governments do when they are planning for a war, and ask them for purely military advice.”
– Carl von Clausewitz

“May we never confuse honest dissent with disloyal subversion.”
– President Dwight Eisenhower

Summary
In this dissertation, I have explored how political ideology and domestic political institutions structure civil-military debates about how and when to use military force. I have argued – counter to previous scholarly and media accounts – that civilian elites and senior military officers do not have systematically different opinions concerning these issues; rather, I have demonstrated that political ideology and partisan identity are the primary determinants of elite attitudes about how and when to use military force. I also have argued that the current set of domestic political institutions leads to predictable patterns of preference alignment between military advisors and civilian political leaders. These patterns appear to have significantly shaped the way the United States has used military force during the modern era. Throughout each of my empirical chapters, however, I also have noted a distinct partisan asymmetry. Democrats face unique challenges when identifying, appointing, and dealing with senior military leaders.

According to my analysis in Chapter 3, there is only a civil-military gap in a limited sense. I do find differences, on average, between the attitudes of elite civilian leaders and senior military officers when I compare them in the aggregate, but these differences disappear when I condition on an individual’s political ideology and partisan identification. There are, however, large and significant differences in the
foreign policy attitudes of Republicans and Democrats that hold both for military officers and for elite civilians. Republican elites are inclined to believe that the international system is dangerous and that the U.S. must be prepared to use overwhelming military force to solve international problems. In contrast, Democrats are likely to believe in using military force gradually to supplement diplomatic efforts, escalating these campaigns only when necessary. Nevertheless, there are a large number of conservative Republicans and a small number of liberal Democrats in the senior ranks of the officer corps. Liberals and Democrats enter the officer corps at much lower rates than do Republicans; they also tend to leave the military before reaching the senior ranks of the military.

Building on this foundation, I demonstrate that the resulting distribution of preferences within the senior officer corps also has implications for four-star military appointments. The disproportionate number of conservative officers in the senior officer corps leads to an asymmetry in the ability of presidents from the two political parties to appoint senior officers who share their preferences, especially when the opposition party controls the Senate. In Chapter 4, I show that Democratic presidents are only likely to appoint liberal officers who share their preferences when their co-partisans control the Senate. In contrast, Republican presidents are likely to appoint conservative officers when both Democrats and Republicans control the Senate, though my theory and qualitative analysis suggest closer preference alignment occurs when Republicans control the Senate. Contrary to popular notions that senior military officers are apolitical servants of the state, presidents of both parties appear to identify like-minded officers and ‘politicize’ their senior military appointments, especially when their co-partisans control the Senate.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I show that these predictable patterns of civil-military preference alignment and divergence appear to have profoundly affected presidential decisions to use military force during the JCS period. Presidents from both parties are more likely to use military force when advised by military officers who they have appointed when their co-partisans control the Senate than they are otherwise, though the effects are
larger for Democratic administrations than for Republican administrations. A Democratic president who has appointed all five members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is approximately twice as likely to use military force than if he has not appointed any of these officers. A Republican president, on the other hand, is only 20 percent more likely to do so, though the effects are slightly larger when I exclude data from the Reagan Administration. These results are robust to a number of alternative specifications and tests.

The evidence from the historical case studies I analyzed in Chapter 6 provide external validity for my quantitative analysis and identified private signaling and public dissent as mechanisms of military influence. Close inspection of particular debates about U.S. military policy in Laos, Cuba, North Korea, Libya, and Bosnia illustrates that ideological differences, and not civil-military divisions, shape the most salient dimension of interaction between political leaders and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. These case studies also provide considerable evidence that presidents must work hard to identify and appoint military officers who share their beliefs about international politics. Nevertheless, taken together, these cases suggest that this process appears marginally easier for Republican presidents than for Democrats.

During the rest of this chapter, I will talk in greater detail about the limitations and implications of these findings. I first will discuss the limitations of my theory and my methodological approach. Then, I will identify some of the normative implications that follow from my empirical findings. I do not purport to offer solutions or answers to all the issues I raise; instead, I simply attempt to identify relevant tradeoffs that future policymakers should consider. I will conclude with a discussion of possible areas for future research.

**Limitations of My Approach and Findings**

Although I have attempted to conduct a thorough and careful analysis, there are several potential limitations of my approach. In addition to the measurement issues I addressed in earlier chapters, there are several other concerns that are worth
mentioning. The first two relate directly to my focus solely on the effects of military advice. For the most part, these concerns fall outside the scope of the current project; consequently, they raise important questions that future scholars and policymakers should consider. The third issue deals with the generalizability of my theory, especially in the post 9-11 world.

Admittedly, my theory focuses primarily on relations between the military and the president. In order to develop a parsimonious and empirically tractable theory, I chose to simplify the role of certain actors in the process or to bracket them off from consideration entirely. For example, I assumed that the Senate and sections of the mass public would respond to military dissent by increasing political costs on the president. While I think that this assumption represents a reasonable approximation of their influence in the process, reality clearly is more complex. Legislators have electoral and strategic concerns that may drive their calculations above and beyond military information; similarly, members of the mass public may not pay sufficient attention to foreign policy to be aware of military dissent or to be able to differentiate between varying signals. Future theoretical models may be able to account for this complexity.

My empirical analysis also omits the role that operational military commanders play in this process. Although this assumption was reasonable for the earlier years of the period under examination when JCS members also had operational responsibilities, since the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act, combatant commanders increasingly are involved in political decisions. The involvement of Wesley Clark in Kosovo and Tommy Franks in Afghanistan and Iraq highlight the need for future examinations of this subject to more fully incorporate these important players into theoretical and empirical analyses.

I also chose to largely ignore other civilian advisors within the administration. As my case studies in Chapter 6 highlight, however, political appointees such as the Secretaries of State and Defense and the National Security Advisor also provide the
president with information that he uses when making foreign policy decisions. These cases raise several interesting questions about when and why alliances might form between military officers and civilian advisors in the Administration that my theory is not designed to answer. They also highlight the fact that the president cares about other things besides the information he receives from his military leaders. Although it is outside of the scope of my particular research project, other scholars might focus on how the president aggregates, prioritizes and integrates the different streams of political, economic, and military advice he receives.

The second issue is related to the first. My theory assumes that senior military leaders possess private information about the consequences of military action. There are several possible reasons to question this assumption. One approach is to claim that senior military officers are not competent to make political assessments about whether or not to use force since such judgments might also require diplomatic, economic, and political expertise.

I do not intend to imply – as others have – that military expertise guarantees that senior military leaders can best determine what national security policies are in the interest of the United States (Upton 1917; Huntington 1957; Johnson 1997; McMaster 1997). Instead, I highlight the fact that what is in the U.S. national interest may be contested among partisan political elites; consequently, particular senior military leaders may be able to use their private information about the consequences of military action to promote policies they prefer and to oppose policies they do not. In my account, military expertise itself is objective, but I admit – and even expect – that military advisors might misrepresent or withhold information to achieve their political goals. The question of whether a particular set of goals is ‘in the national interest’ is an inherently political and ideological judgment. Depending on their partisan or ideological orientation, individuals may interpret the same objective facts in very different ways. For example, in a September 2010 Pew Research Center Poll, 68 percent of Republicans still said the U.S. decision to use force in Iraq was the ‘right
decision’ compared to only 28 percent of Democrats and 36 percent of Independents.474

Others might argue that military leaders do not, in fact, possess private information about the costs and consequences of military operations even if we limit our analysis to ‘purely military concerns.’ The proliferation of outside research agencies and think tanks may have minimized any exclusive claim to military expertise, especially in recent years. Moreover, military leaders simply may not be competent. Assessments of costs, casualties, and military outcomes are, of course, complicated and difficult. Additionally, the military has, in recent years, begun to contract out some of its analytical work. Nevertheless, the military often has a monopoly on collection capabilities and senior leaders also can use the classification system to control the flow of information even to outside analysts. Moreover, in crisis situations like the EC-121 incident or the Cuban Missile Crisis, presidents may not have time to consult with outside sources or to check the military’s claims. Although I stand by my assumption for these reasons and those I laid out in Chapter 2, I concede that military expertise itself may be variable, either across military advisors or over time. Consequently, future scholars could examine whether institutional and technological factors may influence the ability of senior military officers to control information.

Finally, there may be limits to the generalizability of my theory. My survey analysis relies primarily on the TISS survey data, which were collected in 1998-1999. Although I consistently can trace my arguments about political ideology in the officer corps back to at least 1960 using a variety of less systematic, but, nevertheless, comparable surveys, it is possible that the September 11th terrorist attacks changed the underlying dynamics.

I do not provide a systematic analysis of foreign policy attitudes in the post-9/11 world; however, events in the Bush and Obama administrations seem to comport with

474 Pew Research Center Poll, August 25-September 6, 2010. Results available online at http://www.pollingreport.com/iraq.htm. Also, see Gaines et al. (2007) on the point that ideological and partisan preferences lead to different interpretations of the same facts.
my theory. As I explained in Chapter 1, the use of force authorization vote in Iraq broke clearly along party lines (Price 2008). Additionally, heightened tensions between the Obama Administration and the holdover Bush generals also are consistent with my theory. A number of journalists have focused on President Obama’s appointment powers as a way to reshape the senior leadership of the U.S. military (Shanker 2010; Wilson and Jaffe 2011; Economist 2011). Nevertheless, the development of unmanned aerial drones that are capable of conducting attacks – at low cost to U.S. military personnel – may have significant implications for presidential use of force decision-making.

A larger concern is whether or not my findings related to the appointment process can be generalized to other Democratic presidents besides Bill Clinton. President Clinton is the only Democratic president during the Joint Chiefs era who had to make appointments while Republicans controlled the Senate. Clinton’s reputation as a ‘draft-dodger’ during the Vietnam War and his conflicts with senior military leaders over social issues related to ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell’ and the proper role of women in combat roles may have made him particularly susceptible to attacks by Republican Senators. Consequently, it is possible that my results were driven by something particular about Clinton, and not about Democratic presidents or the composition of the officer corps in general. Although my analysis of appointments during the Kennedy and Carter administrations seems consistent with the underlying logic of presidential anticipation of Senate opposition (primarily from conservative southern Democrats), my results about partisan control of the Senate may not be broadly applicable.

One related issue has to deal with the recent trend of Democratic presidents appointing Republican Secretaries of Defense. My theory is silent on this issue, and sufficient data currently is not available to evaluate the effects of this development. Nevertheless, this trend could be evidence that, in recent years, Democratic presidents are even more constrained than they have been or than my theory might suggest. Moreover, Republican Secretaries of Defense – serving during Democratic
Administrations – also may be able to influence the appointment process by recommending more conservative officers. Consequently, a Republican SecDef may be able to make it even less likely that a Democratic president could identify and appoint senior officers who share his preferences. Future research should consider this issue more systematically.

**Normative Issues and Implications**

My findings also raise a number of interesting and important normative issues related to democratic theory and civilian control of the military. I do not purport to offer solutions to all of these issues in this dissertation. In the following section, however, I outline several important issues and highlight some of the relevant tradeoffs for future consideration.

One of the primary tenets of modern democratic theory and related models of political development is that civilian control of the military is a necessary pre-requisite for democratic flourishing (Tilly 1992; Bates 2001; North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009). These models often do not specify precisely what constitutes civilian control of the military in practice, however. In the U.S. system, in particular, discussions of civil-military relations often focus excessively on interactions within the Executive branch, ignoring important issues of inter-branch competition related to the broader republican system of checks and balances. Nevertheless, a central implication derived from my theoretical framework – and my empirical findings in Chapters 5 and 6 – is that sometimes a tradeoff may exist between presidential control of the military and democratic control of the Executive.

Most recent examinations of American civil-military relations privilege the interactions of the president and the military (Feaver 2003). To some extent, this dissertation does so as well, although I do give a prominent role to the legislature in my discussions of both the Senate’s confirmation power and public dissent. Nevertheless, as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, the president holds a unique position in the military establishment and the interactions within the Executive
branch are often the most obvious place to look when contemplating questions of military influence, especially in the modern era. Consequently, some contemporary scholars raise concerns any time that senior military officers appear to provide information that may undermine the president’s preferences.

In the American system, however, the civilian principal is divided – between the president and the Congress – with respect to control of the military (Avant 1996-1997). Moreover, legal scholars almost universally agree that the Framers intended the Congress, and not the president, to determine whether the nation would enter into wars, both large and small (Berger 1974; Ely 1993; Adler and George 1996; Fisher 2004; Irons 2005). According to Louis Fisher,

> Questions about framers’ intent invariably cause scholars to scatter and divide. Not so with the war power. There is remarkable agreement among experts on the war power that the framers broke with available monarchical precedents and vested in Congress the sole power to initiate hostilities against other nations.\(^{475}\)

In fact, the republican theories upon which the Framers drew appear far more concerned with how to control an Executive who stood atop the military establishment than they were with how the president would control the military. Montesquieu, for example, argued, “so that the one who executes is not able to oppress, the armies entrusted to him must be of the people and be of the same spirit of the people.”\(^{476}\)

Similarly, James Madison and Alexander Hamilton took particular care to explain how Congressional war powers and the power of the purse served to limit Executive power, thus bolstering republican control of the military (see, for example, Federalist 8, 25, and 41). As I have explained in detail in other parts of this dissertation, they also ensured that military appointments were subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. According to this line of reasoning, unchecked presidential control of the

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\(^{476}\) Montesquieu (1989[1748]), p. 165.
military poses a particular challenge to broader notions of civilian control of the military in a republican system.

Over time, however, the Congress has, nevertheless, ceded considerable ground to the president on the issue of deployment decisions (Adler and George 1996; Fisher 2000, 2002; Ornstein and Mann 2006). Although scholars have identified a number of reasons for this expansion of Executive power, one of the most prominent factors cited is the Executive’s ability to control foreign policy information that he acquires from his position as Commander-in-Chief (Corwin 1948; Dahl 1950; Peterson 1994; Canes-Wrone, Howell, and Lewis 2008).

My findings suggest that presidential control over foreign policy information is not absolute, however; rather, it is conditional on whether or not the president is advised by military officers who share his foreign policy preferences. When he is, senior military advisors are less likely to release information that would undercut the president’s – and their own – policy positions, thus allowing the president to use force free from constitutionally-prescribed, republican constraints. In contrast, when the preferences of the president and his military advisors diverge, senior officers are more likely to reveal their opposition to Congress and the mass public.

Under some circumstances, then, military leaders may provide a useful check on Executive over-reach that is consistent with democratic theory and that can minimize concerns over the emergence of an ‘Imperial Presidency.’ Especially in cases where military officers provide Congress and the public with additional information about the costs or consequences of a proposed policy, the expert advice of military officers may serve to further public debate. My empirical analysis suggests that this point may go too far, however. In several of the cases I examined, military officers used their control over information to thwart broader public debate or to misrepresent the facts at hand. There is, indeed, a fine line between stifling public debate and promoting it. Nevertheless, it is clear that – in the context of a republican democracy – professional military officers should not lie or misrepresent facts to achieve their political goals.
Open political activity by active duty military officers in a democracy also may bring other complications that could have long-term effects on the norms underlying democratic society (Brooks 2009). Moreover, military dissent also could have other deleterious effects especially if it served to make officers’ believe that they could disobey legitimate orders because they had sufficient political support to do so. More consideration is still needed about the costs and benefits that open political activity by senior military officers brings to processes of democratic choice and accountability.

Nevertheless, absent the presentation of accurate information from senior military leaders about the costs and consequences of military action, my theory suggests that the president inevitably will continue to gain power in the realm of foreign policy at the expense of the other branches. Consequently, my findings suggest that normative analyses that focus exclusively on relations between the president and his senior military advisors may miss other important factors related to the military’s role in furthering debate and choice in a republican society. Scholars and policymakers may determine that the military is not the appropriate institution to check the Executive branch, but senior military leaders, nevertheless, have fulfilled this role at various and predictable times over the last sixty years.

My findings also raise serious questions about the professionalism and political neutrality of the senior U.S. officer corps, however. In Chapter 3, I demonstrate that senior officers in the military do not necessarily represent the “spirit of the people” of which Montesquieu spoke. They are unrepresentative of society and the political elite,

477 Risa Brooks (2009) has begun an important debate on the costs and benefits of political activity by military officers in a democracy. She concludes that political activity by military leaders can bring potential benefits, but that the long-term consequences of such behavior are damaging to the underlying norms and conventions in a democratic society. Future scholars should critique and engage her arguments in this field. One possible line of inquiry is whether institutions could be changed to provide more legitimate mechanisms through which senior officers could provide their expert advice to the public and the Congress in transparent ways under oath. Better formal mechanisms for professional military advice outside the Executive branch might minimize illegitimate means of dissent such as unauthorized leaks of information. Don Snider (2008) has approached the issue by developing a typology of the ethical considerations that military officers should contemplate before determining whether or not to dissent publicly. He argues that public dissent should occur only rarely, and for limited reasons.
although we do not fully understand why liberals and Democrats are under-represented among the senior ranks of the U.S. military. Moreover, as cases like Laos in 1961 and the EC-121 incident in 1969 clearly demonstrate, these officers sometimes misrepresent or withhold information to further their own policy preferences. Despite the common belief that senior military officers are apolitical servants of the state, they often engage in exceptionally political, and sometimes unethical, behavior. As such, their influence does not accord with modern democratic ideals of openness, transparency, and accountability. Along with the degree of autonomy and responsibility society grants its professional officer corps comes a responsibility to act authentically and with integrity. In the words of Army Chief of Staff Martin Dempsey, “We [the members of the U.S. military] are not a profession just because we say we are.”

It is not clear from my qualitative analysis that military leaders always act maliciously to promote their preferred policy outcomes, however. In some cases, their personal biases may lead to unintentional, but nevertheless consequential, interpretations or presentations of their expert knowledge. According to Risa Brooks, “the subjectivity inherent in judging policy outcomes thus complicates the debate about where to draw the line defining the political means that military leaders may appropriately employ on their behalf.”

In some cases, military advisors may be able to limit themselves to providing civilian leaders with only objective facts, especially when doing so is consistent with their preferred policies or when they have political allies in the Congress. In other cases, however, as probably was the case for Colin Powell in Bosnia, senior military leaders may sincerely believe that they are providing their ‘best military advice,’ even as they stress certain costs or risks associated with a military operation while ignoring other factors. It can be extremely difficult to disentangle personal biases from objective

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assessments. As a result, a standard of military professionalism based on the presentation of objective facts simply may be unreasonable given human psychological and cognitive constraints. I leave open to further inquiry the question of whether it is reasonable, or even possible, to expect professional military officers to provide purely objective, unbiased information to their political leaders. If it is not, institutional reforms and greater media awareness focused on improving transparency may be desirable.

Although Huntington’s ideal model of objective control assumes that there is a clear wall between the political and the military, my findings in Chapters 5 and 6 suggest that this is rarely, if ever, the case. In the words of Carl von Clausewitz, “at the highest levels, the art of war turns into policy.” The ideology of senior military officers clearly appears to shape the content of military advice. Huntington argues that ‘objective control’ through military professionalism and ‘subjective control’ through political intervention are fundamentally incompatible, but it is not obvious that his assertion is true. Theorists of civilian control dating back to Plato and Aristotle have argued for mixed systems of civilian control that rely on various combinations of professional education, incentive alignment, and punishment systems (Golby 2011). In a republican system of checks and balances subjective control is inevitable, and even intended. Huntington’s ideal conception of a purely professional military that is not involved in politics cannot exist in a republican state, but efforts among the officer corps to develop and maintain a professional ethic may still benefit society as a whole.

Political pressures exerted onto the officer corps through the appointment process make the development of an apolitical professional ethic more difficult, but they do not necessarily make it impossible. There is utility to be gained from an expert officer corps that strives to be as politically neutral and impartial as possible. To the extent

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481 In fact, Huntington (1960, p. 189-192; 260-263) admits that, because of our Constitutional system, objective civilian control is difficult to achieve and that it occurred in the U.S. only rarely. He also identifies a number of reasons why military leaders might attempt to undermine their civilian superiors. Huntington, nevertheless, prefers objective control as an ideal type to maintain civilian control while minimizing the political influence of the military. According to Huntington (1960, p. 83), “The antithesis of objective civilian control is military participation in politics.”
that professional norms and the military’s corporate climate of self-enforcement have prevented military officers from openly disobeying their civilian superiors from both parties, military professionalism clearly enhances civilian control. As I have noted above, the transmission of relevant expert knowledge also may help civilian leaders make political value judgments that they otherwise have difficulty making.

Nevertheless, my findings suggest that dependence on professionalism alone to maintain the tradition of civilian control in the U.S. would be folly; in a republic, where notions of the national interest are contested, civilian political leaders must also be prepared to use institutional checks like punishment mechanisms and the appointment process to maintain the appropriate balance.

**Areas for Future Research**

This dissertation has filled in several theoretical and empirical gaps in the foreign policy literature, but there is still much work to be done in this field. Surveys comparing the attitudes of civilian and military elites are scant; more survey work to test the validity and reliability of existing findings among elites is necessary. Moreover, the collection of panel data that could help future scholars directly test socialization and selection effects within the officer corps is an obvious next step for the study of the formation of officer attitudes. Scholars also should focus on a major unanswered question that cannot be answered with existing data: why do liberals and Democrats enter the military at such low rates, and leave the military at relatively high rates? The field also is ripe for the introduction of a number of more advanced survey tools, including the use of survey experiments that might help identify how civilian elites and members of the mass public respond to military signals.

Another obvious area for future inquiry would be to examine the broader applicability of my informational theory to civil-military relations and military influence in other advanced democracies. Although researchers would need to account for the ways in which institutions differ from American political institutions, it, nevertheless, is possible to apply many of the same principles to different settings. Do partisan and ideological differences trump civil-military differences in other societies? Can
political leaders identify and appoint officers who share their preferences? If so, does the resulting preference alignment influence policy choices and outcomes? Although I would expect that many of the same patterns would hold in these different contexts, it also is possible that ideology and political institutions interact in more complicated ways in parliamentary or multi-party systems.

Finally, future scholars should continue to work toward the development of a more general theory of foreign policy decision-making. In this dissertation, I have identified one important feature that affects presidential decisions about the use of force. However, I also have suggested that presidents must consider a number of other economic, political, and diplomatic alternatives to military action. Future models thus could strive to develop a model that simultaneously can account for the effects of both military and non-military advice.

A Final Note
In this dissertation, I have argued that political ideology and domestic political institutions structure civil-military debates about how and when to use military force. I have demonstrated – counter to previous scholarly and media accounts – that civilian elites and senior military officers do not have systematically different opinions concerning these issues; rather, political ideology and partisan identity are the primary determinants of elite attitudes about how and when to use military force. I also have shown that these ideological differences have real and profound policy consequences related to the use of military force. Students and practitioners of American foreign policy and civil-military relations must therefore pay greater attention to these issues if they expect to fully understand and effectively implement U.S. foreign policy. Rather than illuminating important policy considerations, accounts that focus solely on flawed and misleading characterizations of civil-military divisions may serve to obscure and confuse the analysis of important policy debates and decisions.
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