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Author(s): David P. Auerswald

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Inward Bound: Domestic Institutions and Military Conflicts

David P. Auerswald

In this article I explore the propensity of democracies to use military force when involved in international disputes. I argue that the use of force by democracies in large part results from the domestic circumstances confronting their chief executives and that those circumstances vary predictably across democracies based on the structure of their domestic institutions. For example, U.S. presidents must garner public support before elections and maintain widespread congressional support if they involve the country in long-term military conflicts. Conflicts are risky without either of these domestic prerequisites. Consider President Lyndon Johnson's decision to escalate U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Johnson and his advisors reached their decision in 1964 but waited until early 1965, after the November 1964 national election, to announce this decision publicly and implement it on the ground. President George Bush's 1990 decision to double the number of troops deployed to Kuwait and move from deterring an attack on Saudi Arabia to compelling an Iraqi withdrawal was made in a similar manner. The Bush administration decided on its new policy in early October but announced that decision only after Congress recessed and the midterm elections were completed.

My argument is relatively straightforward. I first examine what domestic circumstances affect an executive's decision to use force.[1] If we assume that chief executives want to remain in office, one important part of their calculus will be how those entities with the power to directly terminate office tenure will react to military con-

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1. Presidents and premiers (prime ministers) are both dubbed the "executive," though I recognize (and indeed rely on) the differences between them. Similarly, for convenience I refer to a congress, a national assembly, and a parliament as the "legislature," though this is not an accurate label in the strictest sense.

International Organization 53, 3, Summer 1999, pp. 469–504

flict. Depending on the democracy, executives are accountable to the public through elections, to the legislature through confidence votes, or both. Assuming that international failure or stalemate risks domestic punishment, executives will become less adventuresome as they become accountable to more domestic actors. A similar process occurs as the domestic impediments to conflict increase. The greater the chance of legislative meddling in conflict policy (that is, the less the executive controls the domestic conflict agenda), the less the chance that the executive can do what he or she sees as necessary to ensure international success. As executive agenda control declines, an executive will be increasingly reluctant to initiate conflict. Combined, accountability and agenda control allow us to predict that domestically strong executives—those who are rarely accountable and whose initiatives the legislature cannot overturn—will be more likely to use force than weak executives when involved in an international dispute.

Whether an executive is domestically strong or weak depends on the country's domestic institutional structure (that is, the established rules of interaction between an executive, a legislature, and the public).[2] Domestic institutions determine to whom the executive is accountable for office tenure as well as the extent to which the legislature can challenge the executive's conflict decisions. As domestic institutions change, so too should the executive's calculus of the domestic risks involved in using force. Comparing executives by democratic regime type, I find that domestically strong presidents are more likely to use force than weaker presidents or premiers in majority parliamentary governments, who in turn are more likely to use force than premiers in coalition parliamentary governments. These relationships should hold true as long as the national survival of the democracy is not threatened.

I explore the relationship between domestic institutions, an executive's decisional calculus, and democratic conflict behavior by comparing U.S., British, and French responses to the crises in Suez in 1956 and Bosnia in 1995.[3] Within each dispute, similar international circumstances confronted the British and French. From a domestic institutional perspective, however, we would expect their behavior to differ in significant ways. This is indeed what occurred: executives faced with similar international circumstances but different domestic pressures behaved differently. We would also expect relatively consistent executive behavior over a number of conflicts when we hold domestic institutions constant. Such was the case with both American and British behavior when we compare the Suez and Bosnian cases.

2. For summaries of similar new institutional approaches, see Shepsle 1989; and Shepsle and Weingast 1995. This literature is too vast to list here, but examples in comparative politics include Bates 1981; North 1990; and Geddes 1991; and in American politics, McCubbins and Sullivan 1987; Krehbiel 1991; and Cox and McCubbins 1993.

3. A more appropriate empirical test of my probabilistic argument is a large-*n* study. Unfortunately, there were simply too few cases involving democracies contemplating or actually using force against opponents who could not threaten their national survival for me to produce reliable statistical results. Suez and Bosnia were the only cases involving multiple democracies where significant empirical material was available to uncover the decision-making calculus of each democracy's executive. So although the case study method is not the preferred testing method, it captures details necessary for an initial test.

My argument has broad implications for international relations theory, particularly for explanations of democratic foreign policy. I challenge the assumption that all democratic states engage in similar foreign policy behavior and demonstrate that there is a continuum of democratic conflict behavior, with some democracies being more predisposed than others toward involvement in international conflict. My analysis should also help to resolve the debate between students of public opinion and state-societal relations by identifying when societal influence is most likely to have an impact on conflict decisions. Finally, my findings should help to explain why a democratizing state's choice of institutional structure may greatly affect its subsequent international behavior and the future of the democratic peace.

The Executive's Decisional Calculus and the Use of Force

In contrast to realist theories positing a concern for maintaining relative power, a variety of domestic explanations have been advanced in the last decade to explain elite conflict decisions. For instance, the diversionary theory of war predicts that leaders sometimes decide to use force internationally to shift public attention away from domestic problems.[4] Another literature discusses how a leader's political survival may depend on and provide incentives for conflict success,[5] recently dubbed "audience costs" by James Fearon.[6] These scholars argue that a leader's accountability to the public can lead to escalation even in a seemingly trivial foreign policy dispute, decreasing that leader's flexibility both before and after conflict begins. What this argument fails to consider, however, are variations in accountability across democracies.

Accountability

A common theme running though the audience cost literature is that executive policies depend on maintaining the support of those groups to which the leader is accountable. The often unspoken assumption is that executives have strictly ordered preferences, valuing personal survival over national survival, national survival over tenure in office, and office tenure over any one policy alternative (assuming the peaceful transition of power in democracies simplifies these categories to national survival, office tenure, and policy). Assuming otherwise would require deriving a unique preference ordering for each individual elite, depending on their personal proclivities, which rules out generalizable predictions for executive behavior.[7] This assumption is consistent with David Mayhew's observation that an official must maintain office

4. See Levy 1989; and James and Oneal 1991.

5. See Kilgour 1991; Bueno de Mesquita, Siverson, and Woller 1992; Martin 1992; Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995; and Smith 1996.

6. Fearon 1994.

7. That does not, however, mean that strategies (means) for achieving desired outcomes (values) may not change with circumstances. Clark 1998, 251–52.

before being able to make or implement anything other than very short-term policy decisions.[8] By extension, the same relationship should hold true for national survival and office tenure. One cannot have the latter without the former.[9]

Threats to office tenure may result in unilateral escalation by a democracy already involved in a military exchange.[10] They also may generate caution if an executive is at all capable of strategic decision making. If an executive believes that international success is a prerequisite for continued office tenure once involved in a military conflict, then that executive may be very reluctant to enter into conflicts that are likely to result in defeat or stalemate. Either outcome may result in the executive being turned out of office. Moreover, this calculation should weigh most heavily on executives who face frequent threats to office tenure. Executives will be especially cautious internationally when their domestic institutions contain procedures for immediate challenges to office tenure.

Accountability during elections. The most obvious threat to office tenure in democracies occurs during an election. During an election an elite's core reelection constituency can hold him or her accountable for foreign policy behavior, and though the public may not attend to policy details, they are certainly able to comprehend and reward international success and punish failure or stalemate.[11] We have only to think of Harry Truman's or Lyndon Johnson's political fate to realize that the electorate did not or would not have rewarded the 1952 Korean or 1968 Vietnam stalemates. At the same time, however, neither did the public reward George Bush in the 1992 election for his Gulf War success.

We can reconcile these examples by assuming that voters are myopic in their evaluations of public officials. The assumption of short-term evaluations rests on the idea that individuals' beliefs are "selected" or "activated" by recent rather than temporally distant events.[12] The short length of rally events (both positive and negative) also suggests that voters' attention soon shifts from foreign policy crises to domestic concerns.[13] The rapid decline in Bush's record level of public support following the 1991 Gulf War is explained by a shift in attention to the domestic economy. With this in mind, a conflict immediately before an election affects the electorate's voting decision more than a temporally distant event.[14] A conflict early in the election cycle allows the executive numerous opportunities to win back public confidence

8. Mayhew 1974.

9. This assumption is also supported by prospect theory: Individuals are willing to take great risks to avoid losses, but they will take fewer risks when it comes to potential gains. To quote Jack Levy, "Future losses hurt more than future gains gratify." Levy 1992. In this instance, office tenure is the potential loss, achieving international goals is the potential gain.

10. Fearon 1994.

11. See Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida 1989; and Shapiro and Page 1994.

12. Iyengar and Kinder 1987.

13. Brody 1991.

14. Assuming that the electorate makes retrospective rather than anticipatory evaluations is not crucial to this point.

before the next election, thus decreasing the impact of electoral opinion on elite calculations early in the election cycle.

For these reasons, executives are more likely to use force early in an election cycle.[15] They can do so with relative domestic impunity, since the public will soon shift its attention to other events. However, there are significant risks associated with using force immediately before an election when the public may base voting decisions on the outcome of the conflict. Moreover, a rally around the flag is less likely in the two or three months before balloting.[16] Thus the prospect of electoral sanctions will have more impact on executive decisions immediately before an election than during other phases of the election cycle.[17] The risk to office tenure should make executives hesitate before using force during an election. This prospect leads to my first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: If a national election is immediately forthcoming, executives will be reluctant to initiate international conflict or make threats.

A calculating democratic executive will not risk conflict and the chances of international failure immediately before an election. Executives will not only be less likely to initiate conflict before an election; they will also be less likely to make coercive diplomacy threats. After all, these threats may lead to conflict, either because the threats are not credible or because the international opponent is extremely motivated to achieve its foreign policy goals.[18] The executive's international signals will reflect that reluctance, emboldening an international adversary and further decreasing the chances of international success should a conflict eventually occur. That prospect should make a democratic executive even more hesitant to use force.[19]

Accountability in the absence of an election. The possibility of electoral punishment may not always affect executive behavior, however. Elections frequently do not occur immediately after a decision is made on whether and how to use force. Or an executive might purposely delay using force until after an election to shift the relevant means of accountability to a more favorable venue from the executive's perspective.[20] Thus, although public accountability can have a powerful influence on a

15. For empirical support for this idea, see Gaubatz 1991.

16. On its face, the rally effect would suggest the opposite conclusion—that conflict immediately before an election would be especially attractive. Brody, however, argues that the public takes cues from elites, and rallies depend on opposition elites remaining silent. Brody 1991, 63–67. Normally, elites take a wait-and-see attitude to gauge the political ramifications of criticizing executive conflict policies. Auerswald and Cowhey 1997. Yet opposition elites would almost certainly voice criticism to using force immediately before an election, diminishing or possibly reversing the rally effect, which is why executives are unlikely to attempt rallies immediately before an election.

17. Policymakers serving a fixed number of terms may still be affected by the possibility of electoral sanctions even at the end of a final term. They may want to maintain their political party's reputation or solidify their place in history, just to name two reasons for caution.

18. See George and Smoke 1974; and Lebow 1981.

19. For a more detailed discussion, see Auerswald forthcoming.

20. This is consistent with findings in the aforementioned Vietnam and Gulf War examples, and in Gaubatz 1991; and Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995, 851.

decision maker's preferences, electorally based sanctions are subject to manipulation by elites through the timing of international conflicts (or the timing of elections).

In nonelection periods, executives may hesitate to use force when institutional rules facilitate legislative dismissal of the executive. Accountability to the legislature should instill caution in an executive. Legislators have an incentive to remove executives if that removal helps them electorally. Censuring the executive puts the issue immediately before the electorate in the form of new elections. We would not expect legislators to terminate executive tenure if the executive maintains day-to-day public support for his or her conflict decisions (that is, is quickly successful internationally). The reason is that legislators, like executives, probably care more about maintaining office than about any one specific policy. Terminating a successful executive is self-defeating because a successful executive will be reelected and the insurgent legislators punished. However, terminating an unsuccessful executive is appealing because an unsuccessful executive will be replaced and the insurgent legislators rewarded.

Executives should therefore become risk averse when subject to legislative dismissal. Those executives should be less likely to initiate conflict unless assured of rapid international success. By the same token, those same executives should be less likely to engage in coercive diplomacy threats because they do not want to raise domestic expectations of success, thereby increasing their chance of being removed by an impatient legislature. As before, executive hesitancy to fight or even threaten to do so may embolden an international adversary, further decreasing the chances of the democracy's international success in combat. This prospect leads to my second hypothesis:[21]

Hypothesis 2: If an executive's office tenure is subject to legislative confidence, in the absence of a strong probability of immediate success the executive will be reluctant to use force or engage in coercive diplomacy.

Agenda Control

An executive's decision to use force is affected by domestic circumstances in a second way. The need to maximize the chances of international success forces the executive to be wary of situations where he or she does not have total control over the nation's conflict decisions. In particular, the executive must worry about the legislature. Agenda control measures an executive's ability to limit legislative input into conflict decisions; that is, it refers to the executive's ability to initiate or resist combat without being challenged or overturned by the legislature.[22]

21. For a discussion of the implications for coercive diplomacy, see Auerswald forthcoming.

22. While the democratic peace literature has yet to show a relationship between domestic institutional impediments facing democratic leaders and their decisions to use force, the American politics literature has demonstrated that agenda control is a powerful tool in policy formation, and conflict initiation is certainly one type of policy formation. For a summary of domestic structural examinations of the democratic peace, see Maoz and Russett 1993; and Morgan and Campbell 1991. For normative approaches, see, for example, Doyle 1986; Ember, Ember, and Russett 1992; and Dixon 1994. For a comparison and critique, see Chan 1997; and Brown, Lynn-Jones, and Miller 1996. The new-institutionalist literature on agenda control and institutional veto gates serves as the basis for the following discussion See, for ex-

In some democracies executives can initiate conflict and maintain total control over subsequent conflict decisions regardless of the preferences of other domestic actors. An ideal type that provides the executive with total agenda control has three characteristics. First, the executive possesses defensive ex ante veto power over the use of force. Deciding when force should not be used is a prerequisite of agenda control for any chief executive. Second, the executive is able to initiate combat when necessitated by international circumstances. Third, the executive possesses ex ante veto power over the legislature's possible alternatives to military conflict or at least possesses final ex post veto power over legislative constraints on the use of force. The former allows the executive to block legislative restraints on his or her plan to use force before the legislature votes. The latter allows the executive to use force even when confronted by legislative opposition.

Executives in democracies possessing all three components of this ideal type have total agenda control. They possess a veto over the use of force, initiation power to use force, and a veto over alternatives to military force. Virtually all executives in democracies possess the first two powers. All executives can refuse to use force and can initiate conflicts, giving every executive a minimal amount of agenda control. Significant variation exists, however, in the extent to which executives possess the third agenda control component, as I will show when comparing the ideal type to the parliamentary, pure-presidential, and premier-presidential institutions of great power democracies.[23] This third component of agenda control is crucial to an executive's ability to veto legislative alternatives to military force, and executives without it have relatively low agenda control.

The greater the legislative impediments to an executive's ability to implement policy initiatives (that is, the weaker the third component of executive agenda control), the less likely an executive will be to decide to use force. This is especially true when the executive risks losing office in the absence of an international success, because from an executive's perspective legislative meddling decreases the chances of success. Even when failure does not risk office tenure, as is the case in the United States, an executive would certainly prefer international success to failure or stalemate.[24] Either way, the legislature (in those countries where the executive lacks total agenda control) can undermine an executive's conflict decisions in three ways. First, the legislature may overturn the conflict decision, which can lead to international failure and corresponding domestic embarrassment or threats to office tenure. Second, legislative input into the decisional process may alter policy to such an extent

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ample, McKelvey 1976; Shepsle and Weingast 1987; Baron and Ferejohn 1989; and Weingast 1989. Applications exist in comparative politics, for example, Huber 1992; and in international relations, for example, Tsebelis 1994. Executive agenda control may be disadvantageous in some bargaining situations. Mayer 1992.

23. These categories are not exhaustive, yet they represent the democratic states that have used force over the last fifty years. For definitions of presidential systems, see Shugart and Carey 1992, 23–25. Definitions of parliamentary systems are extrapolated from Lijphart 1984 and 1992.

24. Success is important in its own right from a policy perspective. Moreover, failed conflict initiatives can affect unrelated issue areas, especially if we accept Neustadt's dictum that the president's power is the power to persuade. Neustadt 1980.

that international success is impossible to achieve, with the same resulting domestic consequences. Third, legislative actions may send detrimental signals internationally, potentially emboldening an international adversary and further weakening the chances of success.[25]

Under some domestic circumstances, such as when a legislature is divided, an executive lacking complete agenda control will not always be reluctant to use force. A divided legislature is less able to constrain an executive, or only able to for a short time or in very specific circumstances, which means that the legislature has less impact on the chances of international success. Under these conditions, the executive should be less hesitant to use force. In the United States, for example, legislative divisions have allowed presidents to neutralize congressional opponents and cement short-term control of conflict policy, such as when President Reagan appealed for aid to the Nicaraguan Contra rebels, capitalizing on a divided legislature to secure it. Expectations regarding agenda control are the focus of my third hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3a: If the legislature can overturn or hinder the executive's decision to use force, the executive will be reluctant to use force.

Hypothesis 3b: If the legislature can overturn or hinder the executive's decision to use force but is extremely divided, the executive will be less reluctant to use force than if the legislature were not divided.

Institutions and the Executive's Calculus

In this section I explore how my argument works in different institutional structures. Table 1 categorizes democracies by their mix of agenda control and accountability during nonelection periods. Distinctions between severe and low accountability, or between total and partial agenda control, are relative measures. Executives facing low accountability are not free to participate in illegal or treasonous behavior, but they do face lesser penalties for other types of behavior than their counterparts in systems with severe accountability. Agenda control distinctions follow a similar relative scale. Executives in systems granting them partial agenda control can still initiate conflicts or refuse to use force, but they lack the ability to veto legislative alternatives to military force. Given the relative nature of these categories, notice the wide variation in democratic regimes, with parliamentary executives facing severe accountability but variable agenda control and presidential executives enjoying the same spread of agenda control but facing lower accountability.[26]

25. For a complete discussion of this last point, see Auerswald forthcoming.

26. Countries appearing in the case studies that follow are highlighted in bold print in Table 1. For comparison, the table includes democracies with the military potential to be significant regional powers as well as countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe that score above the median on the Freedom House seven-point scale of democratization. Freedom House 1996. Former communist country definitions are through 1996 and are from Derbyshire and Derbyshire 1996; Banks, Day, and Muller 1997; Easter 1997; Roeder 1998; Shugart 1996; and *Chronicle of Parliamentary Elections*, vols. 28–30. Note that Shugart calls Russia and Ukraine presidential-parliamentary systems. Shugart 1996. Israel is still listed as a parliamentary government because the premier, though directly elected in 1996, remains respon-

TABLE 1. *Select nation-states, accountability, and agenda control*

	Total agenda control	*Partial agenda control*
Severe accountability	*Majority parliamentary* Albania Bulgaria (1990–91, 1997–) Canada (1935–63, 1968–79, 1980–) **England** Germany (1957–61) Greece (1974–89, 1993–) Hungary (1990–94) India (1971–77, 1980–89, 1991–93) Japan (1964–83, 1986–93, 1994–96) Turkey (1965–71, 1983–91)	*Coalition parliamentary* Bulgaria (1991–97) Canada (1963–68, 1979) Czech Republic (1993–) Estonia (1992–) **France (Fourth Republic)** Germany (1949–57, 1961–) Greece (1989–93) Hungary (1994–) India (1977–80, 1989–91, 1996–) Israel Japan (1983–86, 1993–94, 1996–) Latvia Slovak Republic Slovenia Turkey (1973–80, 1991–)
Low accountability	*Pure presidential* Russia South Korea Ukraine *Premier-presidential* **France (Fifth Republic)** Poland	*Pure presidential* Argentina Brazil **United States** *Premier-presidential* Lithuania

Note: Boldface indicates countries discussed in case studies.

Table 2 outlines my argument for different types of democratic regimes. Each regime type displays a unique pattern of domestic pressures on conflict behavior except in the two to three months before an election. Before elections, executives in any democratic category are accountable to the electorate and face losing office for international failure or stalemate. They should be very reluctant to use force. Moreover, their likelihood of success decreases when they also lack agenda control; these executives will be extremely reluctant to initiate conflict.

Coalition Parliamentary Governments

Premiers in coalition governments will only reluctantly use force. They must pay particular attention to achieving immediate success or risk a parliamentary revolt, especially if the governing coalition is fragile. With unexpected elections always a possibility should the government coalition dissolve, the legislature will be especially vigilant of the premier's success or failure in international conflicts, hoping to capitalize domestically on the premier's international failure. The more fragile the

sible to Parliament. Including Japan and Germany assumes they reinterpret their constitutions to make possible offensive force.

TABLE 2. *Government institutions and conflict behavior*

Domestic institutional type	Accountability: Selectorate with power to threaten office tenure	Agenda control: Freedom from legislative interference in conflict or coercive diplomacy decisions	Likelihood of executive initiating armed conflict or making threats
All regime types before an election	Electorate	Variable (as listed below)	Low—very low (depending on agenda control)
Coalition parliamentary governments	Majority in Parliament	Partial agenda control	Low
Domestically weak pure-presidential and premier-presidential governments	Minimal (except in highly unusual circumstances)	Partial agenda control	Medium
Majority parliamentary governments	Majority party in Parliament	Total agenda control	Medium–high
Domestically strong pure-presidential and premier-presidential governments	Minimal (except in highly unusual circumstances)	Total agenda control	High

coalition, the more frequent these unexpected or unscheduled elections, and the more incentive for premiers to contemplate armed conflict only when assured of success.

Premiers leading coalition governments will be even more hesitant to initiate conflict because of the real possibility of legislative interference in conflict decisions. Coalition premiers have only partial agenda control because coalition partners may be able to leverage changes to ongoing policy initiatives,[27] as happened with the French in the Algerian conflict. Combined, accountability to an opportunistic legislature and partial agenda control make it unlikely that conflicts will be initiated by coalition premiers. Diversionary conflicts are especially unlikely given the very real chance of parliamentary interference.

Weak Presidents

Presidents with partial agenda control are somewhat more likely to use force than coalition premiers. These presidents do not immediately risk office tenure for international failure, but they must worry about legislative actions that might result in their being labeled bunglers. In the United States, for example, presidents possess only partial agenda control. They may enjoy some leeway when using force,[28] in large part because the Constitution allows presidents to initiate conflicts and collective-action problems, and electoral disincentives associated with confronting the president make

27. See Laver and Shepsle 1990; and Kaarbo 1996.
28. See Sundquist 1981; Blechman 1990; Hinckley 1994; and Lindsay 1994.

congressional action unlikely. Yet presidential control may be limited to short-term military conflicts, with Congress restraining the president in longer conflicts through legislation such as the War Powers Resolution.[29] We would expect some hesitancy to use force from these domestically challenged presidents, though a divided legislature may make it easier for the executive to control conflict decisions and thus more likely that the executive will initiate conflict. Diversionary conflicts are possible, though not without risking policy reversal should the legislature object.

Majority Parliamentary Governments

Executives in majority parliamentary governments are relatively likely to use force. They are only rarely threatened with removal by Parliament because the majority party has presumably selected a premier that represents its preferences. Although the rank-and-file of the majority party can threaten the premier's tenure in office, this is not without risks both for the party and for individual legislators of that party. Defeating their own premier on a confidence vote necessitates a new election, which could cost the party its majority status. Moreover, defecting from the party leadership risks intraparty sanctions that might end an individual legislator's career. Of course, these disincentives to sanctioning the premier can be overcome in especially egregious circumstances that threaten the party's image. Majority party premiers also need not worry about Parliament voting to change policy, at least given a modicum of party discipline. Combined, difficult accountability and total agenda control make it reasonably likely that majority party premiers will use force when involved in an international dispute. Diversionary conflicts are possible if they show a high probability of success.

Strong Presidents

Domestically strong presidents are very likely to use force when confronted with an international dispute because they have total agenda control and risk no severe domestic sanctions for their policy decisions. These types of democracies include most premier-presidential and some pure-presidential governments. Executives in these governments have almost unlimited discretion to become involved in and conduct military operations. The executive fears neither having decisions overturned by the legislature (because of agenda control) nor the domestic repercussions of a foreign policy failure (because of the rules of accountability)—at least until the next election, and by then subsequent events may have dampened public hostility. The executive can safely ignore domestic concerns regarding conflict and focus instead on the international or personal ramifications of the conflict. Strong presidents are very likely to initiate conflicts, including diversionary conflicts.

Consider French presidents in the Fifth Republic, who have almost total agenda control during conflicts and cannot be removed by the legislature. The president can

29. Auerswald and Cowhey 1997.

use force as commander-in-chief, and can delay legislative constraints by returning legislation for reconsideration or by declaring a short-term national emergency. Given that the president selects the premier, in practice many of the premier's powers allow the president to limit dissent within the national assembly. The premier can initiate legislation, introduce amendments, or reject amendments that are contrary to government policy. The premier can even block the assembly's power to declare war by refusing to allow a vote. Although the assembly could then call a no-confidence vote, which might depose the premier, the president can dissolve the national assembly once every twelve months, forcing a new legislative election. If nothing else, calling new elections is a way of delaying legislative action. From an institutional perspective, the French president is rarely if ever faced with a loss of agenda control during military conflicts.

Preference Variation

It might seem from the preceding discussion that I have assumed uniformly dovish legislatures and hawkish executives. This is not the case. The effect on executive behavior of partial or complete agenda control does not depend on variations in executive and legislative preferences. Expectations regarding conflict behavior and accountability are also relatively unaffected by the convergence or divergence of executive-legislative preferences. That is, an executive's calculus does not change significantly when the legislature defines international failure as anything that contradicts its preferences rather than defining it as international stalemate or combat failure.

A dovish executive cannot be made to use force regardless of agenda control. A hawkish legislature is powerless to do so because all executives possess the exclusive ability to decide when force will not be used. A dovish legislature will concur with a dovish executive's preferred policy, similarly making legislative preferences irrelevant. Hawkish executives with complete agenda control are in a similar position; the legislature is powerless to affect behavior regardless of preferences. Relative preferences only matter for hawkish executives with partial agenda control. A dovish legislature could constrain them. After all, these executives cannot prevent or veto legislative alternatives to using force. Yet the resulting executive hesitancy is identical to our earlier expectations. Legislative opposition is less likely if both the executive and the legislature are hawkish; yet a hawkish executive with partial agenda control cannot always count on legislative support, since even a hawkish legislature's preferences may change. The executive with partial agenda control therefore must always assume that the legislature could be dovish, if not now, then in the future. Those executives should exercise caution before using force, again consistent with my earlier predictions.

Next consider accountability. Legislative preferences should not have a dramatic effect on presidential executives because legislatures can do little to threaten a president's office tenure should the president ignore them. We might expect preference

variations to affect executives that are highly accountable to the legislature, such as in parliamentary democracies. Yet legislative preferences have little effect even in parliamentary governments. In majority parliamentary governments this is so for two reasons: premiers are elected agents of their parties, and defections from within a majority party are very unlikely. In cases when legislative and executive preferences disagree, we therefore would expect an effort to compromise, resulting in a moderate chance of using force—which is exactly what the original model predicts. Even when a hawkish premier and Parliament agree, the associated domestic risks of international failure or stalemate should induce a modicum of caution in even these hawkish premiers. The exception is with uniformly dovish preferences, when we would not expect force at all.

In a coalition government, a hawkish premier faced with either a hawkish or dovish legislature should still hesitate before using force. A dovish Parliament will not reward the premier for conflict success or failure, whereas a hawkish Parliament will still punish the premier for combat failure. We are left with the predictions of the original model. And though a dovish premier might face pressure to use force from a hawkish Parliament, the premier still has incentives to hesitate until sure of success as a means of avoiding the domestic sanctions associated with failed conflict. Again, uniformly dovish preferences will not produce conflict. Overall then, complicating our model does not produce dramatic changes in expected behavior by either presidents or premiers.

The Suez and Bosnian Conflicts

Does categorizing democracies by regime type predict the behavior of democratic states in military conflicts? To answer that question, and to compare the relative likelihood of democracies deciding to use force, I examine U.S., British, and French responses to the 1956 Suez Canal crisis and the Bosnian conflict during the summer of 1995. I argue that international or public constraints alone do not explain each country's response to these crises. Only by focusing on the domestic institutional circumstances facing each executive involved can we adequately explain the behavior of democratic states in military conflicts.

The two cases were chosen to minimize differences in international stimuli facing the democracies involved rather than to test hypotheses in an exhaustive manner.[30] Admittedly, governments never face identical international pressures during military conflicts, but the British and French confronted similar dilemmas within each case. As such, behavioral variations within the cases are likely a result of domestic considerations. The two cases also have similar intra-alliance dynamics. Suez and Bosnia threatened the very fabric of the NATO alliance. Finally, the cases compare the reactions of a single country-type to multiple conflicts. Both Suez and Bosnia involved

30. This is consistent with Katzenstein's and George's case selection criteria. See Katzenstein 1978; and George 1979, 57–58.

the same pure-presidential and majoritarian parliamentary governments (the United States and Britain). If domestic institutions dictate state behavior, we should expect British and U.S. behavior to be consistent across conflicts.

The Suez Canal Crisis

The 1956 Suez Canal crisis is familiar to most students of international relations and is detailed elsewhere.[31] In brief, Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalized the Suez Canal on 26 July after the United States refused to finance the Aswan High Dam project. The major nations using the canal immediately protested Egypt's action. In August, the United States, Britain, and France convened a twenty-two nation conference in London to discuss the future of the canal. Eighteen members of this so-called London Conference agreed that the canal should be managed by the international Suez Canal Board rather than by Egypt, but Nasser rejected the plan. A second London Conference, convened in September, proposed a Suez Canal Users Association (SCUA) as a further alternative to Egyptian control of the canal. Hopes of an agreement with Egypt based on the SCUA were dashed when negotiations among Britain, France, and Egypt deadlocked throughout most of October. On 29 October Israel invaded the Sinai Peninsula under a secret agreement reached with Britain and France. With the pretext of a failed British–French ultimatum to separate the warring parties, British and French forces occupied the northern canal zone after heavy fighting against the Egyptians. U.S. diplomatic and economic pressure forced the British and French into a cease-fire on 6 November.

At first glance, neorealist theory explains the actions of each democracy during the crisis. Yet when examined closely, we see unresolved questions. For the British, nationalization of the Suez Canal represented a severe blow to their influence in Iraq and Jordan. Moreover, Egyptian control of the canal denied the British a potential military staging area in the Middle East.[32] Nationalization of the canal hurt the French by bolstering resistance forces in Algeria who received military and moral support from Egypt. For both the British and the French, nationalization of the canal threatened their oil supplies—Britain received 75 percent of its oil through the canal, and France received 47 percent.[33] From a realist perspective, joint British–French military action would not be unexpected.[34] The United States faced a far lesser threat to either its regional influence or its oil reserves. U.S. regional influence might even have been helped by the peaceful resolution of the crisis, whereas conflict could hurt its standing in the Arab world and might even draw it into conflict with the new Egyptian patron, the Soviet Union.[35] On the other hand, the United States might have

31. Fry 1989.

32. See United Kingdom, Public Records Office, Prime Minister's Personal Files (hereafter referred to as PREM), 11/1098:413, Nationalization of the Suez Canal; PREM 11/1104:149, Operation Musketeer; Eden 1960, 54; Carlton 1988, 135–36; and *London Times*, 28 July 1956, 6; 2 August 1956, 8; 3 August 1956, 8.

33. Farnie 1969, 724–25

34. This was certainly the U.S. belief. U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 6.

35. Eisenhower considered U.S.–Soviet conflict over Suez a low probability. U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 28.

felt bound to use force in support of its allies.[36] From a realist perspective then, we would expect British and French military action and indeterminate U.S. behavior.

Public opinion also has an inconsistent impact on all three states' behavior. If public opinion uniformly affected elite behavior,[37] we would expect the United States and England to remain aloof from conflict and the French to hesitate before initiating conflict. U.S. intervention was problematic given that the American public wanted to avoid hostilities despite their having ranked Suez as by far the most serious problem confronting the United States—in a September poll, of those respondents who knew of the Suez Canal crisis (85 percent), 55 percent believed that the United States should not intervene militarily even in support of Britain and France, with only 23 percent supporting intervention.[38] Given those numbers, the only way for the Eisenhower administration to avoid an electoral backlash would be to stay out of the crisis. The U.S. electorate was firmly opposed to military intervention, and the government acted consistent with that preference.

The French public was initially hesitant to use force, and French policy reflected this—in a September poll, a meager 20 percent of respondents supported immediate military intervention, whereas 49 percent supported diplomatic efforts to resolve the crisis.[39] Yet the French public would not wait forever, especially given that they supported military preparations in the event that diplomacy failed (44 percent, versus 37 percent opposed) and a vast majority (74 percent) believed the crisis outcome would have some effect on the Algerian conflict. Again, French government behavior was consistent with public preferences.

British behavior contradicted the majority preferences of the public. In August only 33 percent of those polled supported military action, with that number dropping to 22 percent in September. Conversely, support for economic and political action rose as the crisis evolved, from 47 percent in August to 65 percent in September. When asked in September how the British should respond if Egypt closed the canal, only 27 percent supported military intervention, whereas 64 percent thought the matter should be referred to the UN.[40] British prime minister Anthony Eden ignored public preferences and intervened militarily.

We get more consistent results by considering each leader's personal predilection for using force. Private statements from the first week of the crisis could perhaps represent each principal actor's immediate reaction to events, that is, the actor's reaction before the domestic or international implications of the crisis were assimilated into the decision process. Eden seemed to have a personal animosity toward Nasser.[41] His personal sense of betrayal could have led to the British government's desire to use force regardless of any diplomatic outcome.[42] French president Guy

36. U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 20, 117–18.
37. See Nincic 1988; James and Oneal 1991; Morrow 1991; Zaller 1994; and Smith 1996.
38. Gallup Organization 1972, 1447, 1451, 1454–55, 1457.
39. Gallup Organization 1976a, 191–219.
40. Gallup Organization 1976b, 367–400.
41. U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 4, 10, 147.
42. Ibid., 61.

Mollet seemed less personally offended by the canal crisis than worried about the future.[43] Perhaps because of that, he was willing to forgo using force if a diplomatic solution could be reached.[44] U.S. president Dwight Eisenhower felt no personal slight in Nasser's actions.[45] Indeed, he approached the crisis in a more contemplative manner, ruling out force except in very unusual circumstances.[46] We would therefore expect Britain to be the most eager to use force, France moderately so, and the United States unwilling to use force.

Despite our ability to arrive at relatively good predictions of each nation's behavior based on the initial reactions of their leaders, divining an individual leader's preferences is difficult independent of the context or environment in which they interact. For example, Eden may have decided to use force because of personal animosity toward Nasser (an explanation based on individual personality), but that animosity could be the result of Britain's international vulnerability in the aftermath of Egypt nationalizing the canal (a realist explanation). Eden could have also been free to express that anger because he was relatively insulated from public opposition to conflict and assured of parliamentary support for intervention (a domestic institutional argument). In general, analyzing conflict behavior based on more abstract individual personality traits is problematic. Even using fairly rigorous measurement tools, one can arrive at diametrically opposed policy implications based on identical personality traits.[47] Less formal assessments are fraught with even more subjective bias, which leads me to drop personality analyses from this and the Bosnia case study.[48]

The Suez Canal crisis cannot be explained solely through realism or public opinion, and neither approach can explain the behavior of all three Western nations. Based on unilateral calculations of international power, British or French military intervention would not be unexpected. U.S. behavior is less tractable from a realist perspective. And although the United States certainly restrained its allies, it should have been able to indefinitely prevent the subsequent conflict had U.S. pressure been the sole determinant of British–French behavior. Alternatively, public opinion can explain U.S. opposition to conflict and the delay before French intervention, but it cannot explain British behavior. Finally, although the personality of each leader provides a seemingly accurate explanation for each state's conflict behavior, separating each leader's reactions to the crisis from the international or domestic predicament facing them is impossible. Only by considering domestic institutions can we consistently explain all three countries' actions. In fact, an analysis of domestic institutions can even explain why Eden could ignore public opinion while Mollet and Eisenhower could not. It can also explain why the United States chose not to use force,

43. Ibid., 76.
44. Ibid., 101.
45. Ibid., 64.
46. Ibid., 12, 39.
47. For attempts, see Kowert and Hermann 1997; or Winter et al. 1991.
48. As an example of subjective bias, see Kingseed 1995, 32–35, 154.

TABLE 3. *Expected and observed behavior for the 1956 Suez Canal crisis*

	Britain (majority Parliament)	*France Fourth Republic (coalition Parliament)*	*United States (weak presidential)*
Institutional expectations	Moderate to high chance of conflict	Low chance of conflict	Very low chance of conflict due to upcoming elections
Realist expectations	High chance of conflict	High chance of conflict	Indeterminate chance of conflict
Public opinion expectations	Low chance of conflict	Moderate chance of conflict	Low chance of conflict
Observed behavior	Force used	Force used	Conflict avoided

whereas realism leaves that question unanswered. Table 3 compares observed behavior in the Suez Canal crisis to the expectations of each theory.

One reason President Eisenhower did not act militarily in the Suez Canal crisis was because the November 1956 presidential election made the administration immediately accountable to the electorate for its military conflict behavior.[49] In terms of domestic accountability, intervention was risky electorally in the absence of immediate victory (hypothesis 1). Failure or stalemate risked electoral defeat. Incomplete agenda control posed additional domestic risks for an administration contemplating military intervention. Hypothesis 3 warns that the threat of legislative action causes executives without agenda control to only reluctantly use force. The administration's behavior supports this hypothesis. The administration believed that any military action involving U.S. troops would eventually require congressional approval, and a Democratic Congress was not likely to grant that approval on the eve of an election.[50] The Democratic party platform had already attacked Eisenhower for supposed blundering in the Suez Canal affair.[51] As the crisis unfolded, presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson spared no effort in criticizing the administration's foreign policy decisions during the fall campaign.[52] A reconvened Congress would likely charge the administration with war-mongering for electoral reasons, which might hurt Eisenhower at the polls. Congressional Democrats might even deny the administration the right to

49. See Discussion at the 302nd Meeting of the National Security Council, November 1, 1956, *National Security Archives,* 9; and Memorandum of a Conference with the President, October 29, 1956, *National Security Archives,* 3, 5.

50. See U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 11–12, 63, 95; and Eisenhower 1958–61, 4:193, 198, 204–205.

51. Democratic National Committee, The Democratic Platform, 1956, *National Security Archives,* rec. 65111.

52. At the height of the crisis Stevenson warned Eisenhower in a publicly released telegram against taking military action that would pit the United States against Britain and France. For the text of the telegram, see *The New York Times*, 1 November 1956, A1. On receipt of the telegram, Eisenhower remarked "that if anyone wanted to know how political this issue had become, this was shown by the telegram which the President had received." Quoted from Discussion at the 302nd Meeting of the National Security Council, November 1, 1956, *National Security Archives,* 6.

use force.[53] Eisenhower was reluctant to recall Congress, though he did keep the Democratic leadership and Stevenson informed as to international developments, in large part to forestall Democratic criticism.[54]

The administration decided very early in the crisis against the threat or actual use of force and maintained that position throughout the crisis.[55] Instead, the United States proposed a series of international conferences in a dedicated effort to reach a negotiated solution to the canal crisis. It even called on the UN Security Council to resolve the crisis peacefully.[56] The administration repeatedly warned the British and French against using force unless Egypt closed the canal to foreign shipping and added that even then the United States would not participate in joint military action.[57] When fighting began, Eisenhower addressed the nation, saying, "there will be no United States involvement in these present hostilities."[58] Instead, the United States exerted diplomatic and financial pressure on the British to cease hostilities, causing a severe drop in the pound sterling.[59]

British intervention during the Suez Canal crisis was made possible by Eden's domestic circumstances. This might come as some surprise given hypothesis 2. We would normally expect executives to only rarely use force when their office tenure is subject to legislative confidence. But as I also argued earlier, executives leading majority parliamentary governments infrequently lose confidence votes. Despite being subject to parliamentary confidence, Eden could use force given his command of a nearly sixty-seat majority in the House of Commons. Large majorities meant he faced little risk to office tenure for using force. They also meant that Parliament could do little to overturn or hinder his use of force, diminishing the cautionary impact of hypothesis 3.

Eden's peril lay in the opposite direction. Eden believed he risked significant penalties domestically were he to appease Nasser by failing to use force. The Suez Group, a hawkish faction within the Conservative party, threatened to punish Eden regardless of the consequences for the Conservative party had Eden not made every effort to retake the canal.[60] This was a serious threat. A few dozen defections from within Conservative ranks at the wrong moment could bring down an inactive Eden government. With the Conservatives trailing in public opinion polls, that might spell

53. U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 47.

54. See Ibid., 48, 70; Eisenhower 1958–61, 4:184–85, 197; and Memorandum from Special Assistant to the Secretary of State (John Hanes) to the Secretary of State (Dulles), October 31, 1956, *National Security Archives*.

55. See U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 12, 25, 39, 48; and Discussion at the 302nd Meeting of the National Security Council, November 1, 1956, *National Security Archives,* 4.

56. See U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 48–49, 70; U.S. Dept. of State 1956, 636; and Eisenhower 1958–61, 4:205, 282.

57. See U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 334, 373, 492, 816, 833, 866, 877; U.S. Dept. of State 1956, 624; Eisenhower 1958–61, 4:205; Eden 1960, 118–19; and Memorandum of a Conversation between the Secretary of State (Dulles) and the Vice President (Nixon), July 30, 1956, *National Security Archives,* rec. 66098.

58. See U.S. Dept. of State 1956, 649; and Eisenhower 1958–61, 4:282.

59. Eden 1960, 183–87, 201–203.

60. See Epstein 1964, 41–49, 62; Robertson 1965, 38; and Beloff 1989, 325–26. For an inside description of the Suez Group, see Amery 1990.

an end to Conservative government.[61] Eden therefore immediately committed to re-establishing control of the canal, through unilateral force if necessary.[62] Intervention was relatively risk-free from a domestic perspective as well as the only way to avoid losing office. Indeed, he rejected any negotiated solution that fell short of controlling the Suez Canal, destroying the Egyptian army, and forcing Nasser from power.[63]

Eden did not immediately intervene, however. He could have attacked in September when military preparations were complete, but he did not.[64] Subsequent delays centered around finding a rationale for using force that would placate both the United States and the British Labour party and minimize detrimental signals from either source. The Eden government was first concerned about U.S. reaction to intervention, in large part because the British saw the United States as the main deterrent to Soviet intervention on behalf of Egypt.[65] The British knew that U.S. interference on behalf of Nasser would significantly lessen the chance of British success, but that was seen as an unlikely event. More importantly, the absence of U.S. support for Britain would signal a divided West to the Soviets, and Soviet intervention represented Eden's worst-case scenario.[66] Given Eisenhower's request that the British do nothing militarily, the Eden government needed an excuse to use force if it was to maintain U.S. support.[67] The British participated in the first and second London conferences while searching for that excuse.[68] Avoiding U.S. neutrality was important enough that Britain kept its invasion plan from the United States despite U.S. suspicions.[69]

Domestically, Eden also needed a legitimate reason to occupy the canal if he was to forestall parliamentary opposition.[70] Eden did not believe Labour no-confidence votes would succeed, even though Labour privately warned the government against

61. Epstein 1964, 63–64. In public opinion polls Conservative support consistently lagged behind Labour support in July (36 percent and 41.5 percent, respectively), September (39.5 percent and 42.5 percent, respectively), and October (36 percent and 40 percent, respectively). See Gallup Organization 1976b, 376–400.

62. See PREM 11/1098:410–13; Eden 1960, 55; and Kyle 1991, 164–65.

63. See United Kingdom, Public Records Office, Cabinet Document (hereafter referred to as CAB) 134/1225:5, Egypt (Official) Committee, meetings 1–9 (Sept. 5–Nov. 2, 1956), and papers 1–12 (Aug. 24–Nov. 2, 1956); and United Kingdom Public Records Office, Foreign Office Document (hereafter referred to as FO), 800/731, Minutes to the Prime Minister, from Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (Anthony Nutting), October 10, 1956.

64. See CAB 134/1216:25–27, Standing Egypt Committee, meetings 1–46 (July 27–Nov. 21, 1956); CAB 134/1217:199, Standing Egypt Committee, papers 1–69 (July 28, Nov. 21, 1956); Robertson 1965, 76, 94; and *London Times*, 1 August 1956, 8; 4 August 1956, 4; and 11 August 1956, 5.

65. See CAB 134/1217:136, Standing Egypt Committee, papers 1–69 (July 28–Nov. 21, 1956). See also PREM 11/1104:149, 175, Operation Musketeer; and Kyle 1991, 317.

66. U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 61, 98.

67. Ibid., 48, 61, 70.

68. See Eden 1960, 88, 95, 97–100, 113; Robertson 1965, 86, 108–18; and Farnie 1969, 725.

69. See U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 379–80, 488; Telephone Call from Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge to the Secretary of State (Dulles), October 2, 1956, *National Security Archives,* rec. 60380; Briefing Paper for the 300th Meeting of the National Security Council, October 12, 1956, by Undersecretary of State William Leonhart, *National Security Archives,* rec. 62428, 2–3; and Telegram from Secretary of State (Dulles) to United States Embassy in United Kingdom, October 26, 1956, *National Security Archives,* rec. 69284.

70. CAB 134/1225:21–26, 54.

using force.[71] Rather, the Cabinet believed that Nasser paid attention to British parliamentary debates as representing British opinion.[72] Domestic arguments would embolden Nasser, lessen the chance of international success, and increase the chance of rebellion from within the Conservative party. In response, Eden refused to recall Parliament, since parliamentary debate might send the wrong signals internationally and lessen Britain's chances of success.[73] Another reason Eden took part in the first and second London conferences was to placate parliamentary opposition. Most importantly, the Eden Cabinet kept secret its eventual negotiations with Israel and France and carefully worded the British–French ultimatum in part to minimize Labour's opportunity for criticism.[74]

French prime minister Mollet was accountable to a governing coalition as fragile as it was broad ideologically.[75] For that reason, he had domestic reasons for hesitating before using force unless sure of quick success. His coalition partners would defect at the first sign of failure given the growing public discontent with French North African policy and the fact that new elections might improve their standing in a new government.[76] Indeed, the French public saw the canal crisis as an extension of the Algerian war, since the French had long suspected Nasser of covertly supporting the Algerian rebels.[77] Should the crisis come to blows, Mollet's coalition partners would defect at the slightest hint of stalemate or failure given public dissatisfaction.[78]

Mollet was reluctant to use force immediately, consistent with hypothesis 2, despite tremendous domestic pressure in favor of intervention.[79] A policy of delay was not without risks. Everyone from the U.S. government to "important political personages" in France believed that Mollet had to use force in the absence of an early diplomatic solution or face expulsion from office.[80] Indeed, throughout August the feeling in the National Assembly was that military action was necessary if the September London conference failed to persuade Nasser.[81] After the September conference formed the SCUA rather than taking more direct action, Mollet came under attack from hawkish members of his cabinet for apparently compromising on French

71. See PREM 11/1159:29, 45–46, Letters from Hugh Gaitskell to the Prime Minister; and *The London Times*, 9 August 1956, 5; 14 August 1956, 8.

72. According to Epstein and Hewedy, this was with good cause. See Epstein 1964, 77; and Hewedy 1989, 167.

73. See PREM 11/1099:195, Policy of Britain and France Following the Crisis; PREM 11/1160:25, Recall of Parliament; and Eden 1960, 76, 120.

74. See CAB 134/1225:54; and Kyle 1991, 318.

75. Cointet 1990, 128. Furniss describes the internal fragmentation of each coalition party, the weakness of any premier given that fragmentation, and the large cabinet coalitions necessitated by France's electoral system. Furniss 1954, 5–9, 25.

76. In July, only 19 percent of the public supported the government.

77. See U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 380; Luethy 1956, 42; Rodnick 1956, 63; Robertson 1965, 23–24, 50, 129; Crosbie 1974, 57–58, 86; and Peres 1990, 147.

78. See Eden 1960, 64; Crosbie 1974, 82. For statements by Assembly members in opposition to Nasser's actions, see *Le Monde*, 28 July 1956, 2.

79. See Luethy 1956, 57; and Rodnick 1956, 63, 91.

80. See U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 379–80, 488; Rodnick 1956, 99–100; and *Le Monde*, 9 September 1956, 2.

81. *Le Monde*, 14 September 1956, 2; 18 September, 1.

demands. Soon after, French foreign minister Christian Pineau told his U.S. counterpart during the UN-sponsored October talks that France would not accept a negotiated solution short of Egyptian capitulation.[82] The failure of these face-to-face talks heightened the domestic pressure in France for a military solution.[83]

Where the British seemed determined to use force, regardless of Egyptian concessions, the French took a moderate position, consistent with hypotheses 2 and 3. Early in the crisis, Pineau told U.S. officials, "If Nasser should accept [international control of the canal,] there would be no need for military action and the French would be very pleased."[84] French and British behavior differed in a second way. Whereas the British delayed using force because they worried about U.S. and parliamentary signals, the French delayed because they worried that unilateral intervention would fail or at best lead to another protracted Algerian conflict. Either outcome risked Mollet's tenure. The French were militarily incapable of acting alone. They lacked regional military staging facilities and were short on bombers, and they needed the British, the Israelis, or both to achieve success. Throughout September and October the French pushed the British to ignore the United States (whose motives the French distrusted) and discuss a British–French attack.[85] When the British balked at the idea of joint intervention, the French approached the Israelis, to whom the French had been covertly supplying arms.[86] The eventual planned Israeli attack solved both Eden and Mollet's domestic and international problems. Israel's actions would trigger "legitimate" British intervention, and Israeli aircraft and military bases would solve the French deficiencies in air support, greatly increasing their chances of success.[87]

Democratic state behavior during the Suez Canal crisis is consistent with a domestic institutional explanation. Eisenhower was very reluctant to use force. Intervention was difficult without congressional concurrence, an unlikely event before a general election, and more importantly, intervention was risky on the eve of an election. Mollet was slightly less cautious, deciding to use force only after receiving British–Israeli commitments that greatly increased his chances of success, despite public and parliamentary pressure for immediate intervention. Eden was the least cautious of the three. He used force despite Labour and public support for a diplomatic solution. His only concession was in preventing an outright British–U.S. dispute that could give the Soviets an opportunity to intervene.

82. See Telephone call to Mr. McCardle from Secretary Dulles, October 11, 1956, *National Security Archives*; and Briefing Paper for the 300th Meeting of the National Security Council, October 12, 1956, by Undersecretary of State William Leonhart, *National Security Archives,* 2–3.

83. Discussion at the 302nd Meeting of the National Security Council, November 1, 1956, *National Security Archives,* 3.

84. U.S. Dept. of State 1990, 101.

85. See Rodnick 1956; and Eden 1960, 132–33, 150.

86. See Crosbie 1974, 66–68; Peres 1990, 140–42; and Kyle 1991, 266–68, 320.

87. See CAB 134/1225:5; FO 800/725, Secretary of State's Personal Papers, Basic Documents Relating to the Suez Operation; PREM 11/1105:501, British and French Communications to Israel and Egypt; Farnie 1969, 727; and Kyle 1991, 320–22.

Bosnia

The Bosnian conflict began in June 1991 when the former Yugoslav republics of Croatia and Slovenia declared independence. UN peacekeepers arrived in the summer of 1992, and that fall the UN Security Council voted to impose a no-fly zone over Bosnia to limit the scope of violent conflict. In 1993 NATO countries supported the UN effort by declaring six Muslim enclaves safe havens from the fighting. Throughout 1994 NATO used sporadic and limited air strikes to protect UN safe havens, culminating in May 1995 air strikes that led to more than 370 UN peacekeepers being held hostage by Bosnian Serb forces.

The Western response to the Bosnian conflict during the summer of 1995 is of the most interest for our purposes; specifically when NATO decided to use air power to protect UN safe havens in Bosnia, action that eventually led to the Dayton Agreement and the deployment of NATO ground troops outside of Western Europe. This period highlights divisions among the three major Western powers over actions in Bosnia. To be sure, British and French forces had participated in UN peacekeeping before that summer, and all three Western powers had participated in enforcing the UN no-fly zone over Bosnia, but the summer of 1995 marked the first real discussions of more direct regional action. In Bosnia the Western powers were thus confronted with a similar international dilemma. Each country was under pressure to maintain alliance cohesion while redressing well-publicized human rights abuses in Bosnia. The British and French were under somewhat more immediate pressure, however, since they had ground troops in Bosnia while the United States did not. Individual Western responses to the crisis differed, in large part due to the domestic institutional circumstances confronting each country's leadership.

British and French international concerns should have been quite similar from a neorealist perspective, yet neorealism yields indeterminate predictions regarding their behavior. On the one hand, the Bosnian conflict posed little direct threat to either country and could thus be safely ignored. The European powers might have taken cues from the United States, the alliance leader. As militarily weaker powers, perhaps they were unwilling to commit to an increased ground presence in the absence of U.S. direction and military support.[88] On the other hand, either nation may have decided to take a more active stance in the conflict to cement its role as the European leader of the NATO alliance. We might also expect military intervention by the European powers if either was attempting to supplant U.S. leadership of NATO. Thus the absence of a direct threat or reliance on U.S. leadership would point toward inaction. An effort to challenge U.S. leadership of NATO would point toward military intervention. A neorealist perspective gives us contradictory predictions.

From a neorealist perspective, the U.S. position as the world's dominant economic and military power also yields conflicting predictions as to its response to Bosnia. The Bosnian conflict neither challenged U.S. power nor posed a significant direct

88. Clinton certainly believed the allies had the military capabilities to take unilateral action and pushed them to do so. Woodward 1996, 259. British–French military capabilities seem to support his position. Kerr 1995, 66–68, 167–68.

threat to the nation, both of which might lead to balancing behavior on the part of the United States. We would therefore expect the United States to do nothing. At most, the United States might pass the responsibility for responding to the conflict to its European allies.[89] Or the United States might be pressured into acting because of its concerns about prestige or NATO alliance cohesion.[90] Although the Bosnian conflict posed no direct threat to NATO members, it might spread to involve NATO countries such as Turkey, Greece, or Italy. Moreover, NATO members were supplying troops to the UN peacekeeping effort, dubbed UNPROFOR. As the NATO leader, the United States might be expected to direct the Western response to Bosnia, if for no other reason than to maintain alliance cohesion and morale, to keep alliance members satisfied with the international status quo, and to preserve the NATO alliance as a vital tool against future threats. We see some of each type of behavior during the Bosnian conflict.

As in Suez, public opinion data are not optimal predictors of all three nations' behavior in Bosnia. British public opinion data would suggest a dramatic change in British policy that never occurred. The public's strong support for protecting the Bosnian population (64 percent support in June) began to decline dramatically in July (52 percent), with opposition to that mission growing from 27 percent in early June to 39 percent in late July. At the same time, only a minority (14 percent) supported existing British policy, whereas a vast majority (65 percent) in late July disapproved of Prime Minister John Major's policy choices up to that point. Moreover, any change in policy would receive broader support than the status quo, in that withdrawal and escalation were equally supported by 38 percent of respondents. We would therefore expect a change in British policy rather than a continuation of the status quo, though it is unclear what form that change should take.[91]

Public opinion is better at predicting U.S. policy. The Clinton administration's support for the UN but opposition to deploying ground troops nicely tracks public opinion. Throughout the summer, roughly two-thirds of respondents consistently supported helping UN peacekeepers either regroup or withdraw. That support did not extend to the use of ground troops to enforce a peace or protect the Bosnian population. When asked about ground troops, only 28–40 percent of respondents throughout the summer supported such efforts, compared to 58–64 percent who opposed them. We should not confuse these numbers with support for the administration's policies, however, since public approval of Clinton's Bosnian policy stayed flat at roughly 36 percent throughout the summer, whereas public disapproval rose from 43 percent in early June to 56 percent in late July.[92] In summary, the U.S. public would support air strikes but not ground troops.

89. See Clinton 1994–, 3:896, 1209; and Christensen and Snyder 1990.

90. Gilpin 1981.

91. See Hastings and Hastings 1997, 209, 272; and Market and Opinion Research International poll, 21 July 1995.

92. Poll data are from Hastings and Hastings 1997, 276; NBC-*Wall Street Journal* poll, 6 June 1995; *USA Today* poll, 8 June 1995; Harris poll, 14 June 1995; *Los Angeles Times* poll, 14 June 1995; Times Mirror Co. poll, 14 June and 21 July 1995; Time-CNN poll, 21 July 1995; and *Washington Post*–ABC News poll, July 1995.

TABLE 4. *Expected and observed behavior for the 1995 Bosnian conflict*

	Britain (majority Parliament)	*France Fifth Republic (premier-presidential)*	*United States (presidential)*
Institutional expectations	Moderate to high chance of conflict	High chance of conflict	Low chance of conflict
Realist expectations	Indeterminate chance of conflict	Indeterminate chance of conflict	Indeterminate chance of conflict
Public opinion expectations	Indeterminate chance of conflict	High chance of conflict	Moderate chance of conflict
Observed behavior	Force used after troops regroup	Force used after increased deployment	Force used, but limited to air strikes

French attitudes toward the Bosnian crisis suggest a willingness to support the use of force, though poll wording makes it impossible to distinguish support for using ground troops from support for air strikes. At the end of May, immediately after the UN hostage episode, a slim majority of the public wanted French forces to remain in Bosnia (52 percent) rather than be withdrawn (41 percent). A larger majority (70 percent) supported allied military action should the fighting continue in Bosnia, though 55 percent believed that the allies would be unable to influence the Bosnian situation until the warring parties themselves grew tired of fighting.[93] French military action would not be unexpected given these expressed public preferences.

Again, international or societal concerns cannot fully explain each state's policy choices in Bosnia. Western nations differed in their responses to the crisis in large part because of the domestic institutional circumstances confronting each country's leadership. Table 4 summarizes domestic institutional expectations and observed behavior.

Initial positions. French presidents in the Fifth Republic have total agenda control and are not accountable to either the legislature or the electorate at the beginning of the president's term. The French president in mid-1995 was Jacques Chirac. He won office on May 17 and was supported by a large parliamentary majority led by Alain Juppe, a member of Chirac's party. Given his domestic circumstances, hypotheses 1–3 suggest that Chirac would be very likely to use force in Bosnia. He tried to do exactly that. On taking office, the Chirac government reinforced the French contingent to UNPROFOR and demanded more flexibility to use force when necessary. Both actions were consistent with an executive domestically unafraid of using force—one that possessed total agenda control and risked no threat to office tenure.

French policy demonstrated a willingness to use force. The French government believed that the main cause of UNPROFOR ineffectiveness and the main threat to French troops were the restrictive UN rules of engagement. Immediately after being

93. U.S. Information Agency Office of Research and Media Reaction, *Opinion Analysis*, 12 June 1995.

elected, Chirac demanded that these rules be changed.[94] Without the ability to use force, the French warned that they would not hesitate to withdraw from Bosnia.[95] To give the French more control over their own troops and the firepower at their disposal, Chirac sought direct control of the French UNPROFOR contingent and proposed a 5,000-person NATO Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) to operate outside the UN command structure.[96] The multilateral RRF concept would serve a second purpose of encouraging other nations to further reinforce UNPROFOR.[97] Combined, new rules of engagement and the French-led RRF were designed to maximize Chirac's ability to use force.[98]

The British were less willing than the French to escalate in Bosnia. Lightly armored British troops were deployed to Bosnia as part of UNPROFOR, with particular concentrations around the besieged cities of Goradze and Sarajevo. British prime minister Major had the domestic ability to escalate without legislative interference, using his agenda control, but risked tenure in office had he escalated and then failed to achieve UNPROFOR's objectives; and failure seemed a likely possibility in the summer of 1995. At the opposite extreme, withdrawal would also point to the current British deployment's failure to achieve that same mission. In the aftermath of the May 1995 hostage episode, the Major government received signals from Parliament that Conservative back-benchers would equate either withdrawal or unilateral escalation in a drawn-out civil war to failure. Indeed, the right wing of the Conservative party supported reinforcements but opposed active British participation in the Bosnian civil war.[99] As a result, Major made every effort to secure the existing British deployment from harm without significant escalation.[100] He informed a recalled Parliament on 31 May that he was reinforcing British troops to protect them from harm, yet he ruled out British reprisals for the hostage episode.[101]

Consolidation rather than withdrawal or escalation were thus the British orders of the day. Major unilaterally deployed an additional 1,200 troops to Bosnia on 31 May to help the British contingent of UNPROFOR regroup in more secure locations and placed the 5,000-person 24th Air Mobile Brigade on standby.[102] The British also supported the French RRF as yet another means of protecting UNPROFOR troops without having to withdraw or unilaterally escalate their presence in the conflict,

94. *Le Monde*, 13 May 1995, 3.

95. See *The Washington Post*, 1 June 1995, A18; and *Defense News*, 5 June 1995, 1. Chirac reasoned that France's credibility was tied to UNPROFOR's credibility. See Clinton 1994–, 3:885.

96. *Le Monde*, 3 June 1995, 1.

97. *Reuters World Service*, 14 June 1995.

98. See U.S. Senate 1996a, 17; *The London Times*, 31 May 1995, 10; *Le Monde*, 2 June 1995, 2; *The Washington Post*, 1 June 1995, A18; and *Defense News*, 5 June 1995, 1.

99. *The London Times*, 31 May 1995, 1. British Conservatives also told U.S. officials that they opposed massive escalation. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997.

100. See U. S. Senate 1996a, 10; *The Sunday Times*, 4 June 1995; and *The Chicago Tribune*, 1 June 1995, 1. The British did say that they would not remain in Bosnia at all costs. *The London Times*, 4 May 1995, 15.

101. See *The London Times*, 30 May 1995, 10; 31 May 1995, 1; and 1 June 1995, 1–2, 10.

102. See *The London Times*, 29 May 1995, 1, 10; and 30 May 1995, 11; and *The Washington Post*, 1 June 1995, A18.

either of which would rouse Conservative back-bench ire.[103] Major took both unilateral and cooperative action to secure British forces in the wake of the hostage episode. He avoided withdrawal or massive escalation and the corresponding domestic sanctions these policies risked.

We would expect U.S. presidents to be more hesitant about using force than either their British or French counterparts. U.S. presidents are accountable only at elections but face significant legislative constraints on long-term conflict behavior given their incomplete agenda control. Those institutional characteristics allowed Clinton to propose new policy initiatives but did not guarantee their enactment. Most importantly, U.S. institutional characteristics made Clinton the most hesitant of the three leaders when considering military intervention.

Clinton initially responded to the UN hostages and continued Serb assaults on UN safe havens by pledging U.S. troops to help UN forces either regroup in more secure areas or withdraw from Bosnia altogether.[104] The alternative, argued the administration, required that U.S. troops support a NATO withdrawal from Bosnia under combat conditions—with all the casualties that would create—according to the existing NATO operations plan (OpPlan) 40104.[105] The administration also believed that to reject OpPlan 40104 would spark congressional criticism for the administration's alleged wasting of U.S. credibility and the ruining of NATO.[106] Despite this pledge, the administration soon distanced itself from using force, as hypothesis 3 predicts. In congressional testimony and in public, the administration backed away from deploying ground troops and repeatedly downplayed scenarios requiring U.S. deployments to Bosnia.[107]

Shared agenda control ruled out direct U.S. participation in the RRF. In short, legislative constraints prevented U.S. participation.[108] Congressional leaders warned the administration that Congress would not support deploying ground troops to Bosnia unless it was necessary to rescue NATO peacekeepers.[109] Deploying troops despite congressional misgivings would be extremely difficult, possibly requiring the administration to make concessions in other areas such as unilaterally lifting the arms embargo.[110] Congress even refused to finance the RRF.[111] The administration could

103. See *The Sunday Times*, 4 June 1995; *The Washington Post*, 4 June 1995, A1; and *Agence France Presse*, 9 June 1995.

104. Clinton 1994–, 3:766–67.

105. Clinton 1994–, 3:776, also 766.

106. Congressional leaders were outraged by Clinton's proposal but grudgingly supported OpPlan 10104, though they much preferred air strikes. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997; see also U.S. Senate 1995b, 2–12, 27–29.

107. For congressional opposition to a ground troop deployment and the administration response, see House International Relations Committee 1995a, 5–9; Senate Armed Services Committee 1995, 15, 27–30, 37, 41–43, 49; Senate Armed Services Committee 1996, 11, 18; *State Department Dispatch* no. 6, vol. 26, art. 6; Clinton 1994–, 3:776, 791, 805, 810, 811; *The Washington Post*, 4 June 1995, A1; and *The Sunday Times*, 4 June 1995.

108. See House International Relations Committee 1995a, 9; Senate Armed Services Committee 1995, 56; also author interviews with executive branch officials, 1996, 1997.

109. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997.

110. Ibid.

111. Author interviews with Senate Appropriation Committee staff, 1998; see also *Congressional Quarterly* 53 (24):1766; Clinton 1994–, 3:895; and *Agence France Presse*, 20 June 1995.

only provide approximately $50 million in RRF logistical and air support using Defense Department contingency funds.[112] Administration officials realized, however, that this limited fund could not support sustained RRF operations and that its overuse would invite future congressional restrictions.[113] Instead, the Clinton administration supported the RRF "in principle."[114] It would increase European responsibility for European problems and decrease the need for U.S. intervention.

Air strikes. The situation in Bosnia continued to deteriorate throughout July, with the Bosnian Serbs attacking the Srebrenica and Zepa safe havens with relative impunity. The debate over NATO strategy saw the allies deciding between French demands for multilateral ground attacks, the British desiring further reinforcements without escalation, and the United States arguing for air strikes.[115] Domestic institutional constraints again played a significant role in each state's unilateral behavior as well as the behavior of the NATO alliance as a whole.

As before, lack of selectorate sanctions and total agenda control allowed Chirac to push for strong military action without worrying about the domestic consequences of his proposal's success or failure. For instance, Chirac proposed retaking Srebrenica from the Bosnian Serbs with a large-scale ground assault.[116] He also volunteered 1,000–3,000 French troops to help protect the UN safe haven of Gorazde if the United States would fly them to the area in helicopter gun-ships (which the French did not have) and likened subsequent U.S. and British inaction to the appeasement of Hitler during World War II.[117]

Consistent with being somewhat hesitant to escalate without a guarantee of success, the British Conservative government initially opposed any NATO military action in Bosnia because they feared ground assaults would be especially dangerous for British troops in Gorazde. They wanted to avoid either large numbers of casualties or having to withdraw from Bosnia in disgrace, either of which would spell failure.[118] At the same time, however, the British were unwilling to reinforce their troops to effective battlefield levels without some guarantee of allied support.[119] The British finally committed to U.S.-led air strikes but only after their Goradze contingent was safely redeployed.[120]

The Clinton administration again hesitated to use force consistent with a president operating under partial agenda control. U.S. congressional efforts to lift the arms embargo, coupled with the deteriorating situation in Bosnia, necessitated a new Clinton administration policy.[121] Lacking agenda control, however, Clinton was not about to

112. *Congressional Quarterly* 53 (26):1942
113. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997; see also Clinton 1994–, 3:887, 895.
114. Clinton 1994–, 3:885, 887.
115. U.S. Senate 1996a, 17–18.
116. See *The New York Times*, 13 July 1995, A6; *Le Monde*, 15 July 1995, 1–2; and *The Washington Post*, 14 July 1995, A26.
117. See *The International Herald Tribune*, 17 July 1995; *The Washington Post*, 16 July 1995, A25; and *The Economist*, 29 July 1995, 38.
118. *Press Association Newsfile*, 20 July 1995.
119. Author interviews with executive branch official, 1997.
120. Ibid.
121. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997; see also Woodward 1996, 265, 333.

insert U.S. ground troops into the middle of a hot war and told the French as much.[122] Yet in early 1995 Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole had introduced a measure (S.21) to allow the United States to arm the Bosnian Muslims. As one UN safe haven after another collapsed, Dole scheduled a vote on the bill.[123] Administration officials knew that lifting the embargo would necessitate U.S. intervention with ground troops, and the French and British had repeatedly said they would not stay in Bosnia if the embargo were lifted. To avoid using force, the administration stressed that possible outcome in congressional testimony.[124] Clinton also threatened a presidential veto of S.21, linking the end of the embargo to the collapse of UNPROFOR and subsequent U.S. ground combat.[125]

Despite Congress voting to lift the embargo with a veto-proof majority, Clinton resisted using force in a second way. The administration aimed to sustain its veto by reminding Democratic senators who voted against the arms embargo that they needed to side with the president on the veto-override vote,[126] an intense administration lobbying effort that succeeded in weakening S.21,[127] and by initiating an American-engineered change in the operating procedures for NATO forces in Bosnia (eliminating the "dual key" requirement for NATO air strikes). These efforts made it less likely that the Congress would lift the embargo and force the allies to withdraw. Moreover, eliminating the dual key requirement on NATO action made it more likely that the allies would not need U.S. rescue.

With regard to the latter, in a 21 July NATO ministerial meeting the allies agreed to threaten major air strikes against any party that attacked the remaining UN safe havens of Gorazde, Bihac, Sarajevo, or Tuzla.[128] This decision helped all three leaders. For the United States, the NATO decision limited U.S. involvement in Bosnia to air strikes, massive though they might be—a policy that was acceptable to Congress and would keep the United States out of ground combat.[129] The British supported the changes in NATO operating procedures after completing their redeployment out of Goradze, when their chances of suffering defeat or more hostages—either of which might lead to Conservative defections—greatly declined. The French supported air strikes because it gave them greater flexibility to use force and had the additional bonus of deepening U.S. involvement in Bosnia.[130]

122. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997; see also Secretary of State Warren Christopher's remarks on NBC-TV's "Meet the Press," 16 July 1995.

123. *Congressional Quarterly* 53 (27):2008–2009.

124. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997; see also House International Relations Committee 1995a, 16–17, 20–21; Senate Armed Services Committee 1996, 10–11, 21–22; *The International Herald Tribune*, 13 July 1995; *The Independent*, 13 July 1995, 1; and *Agence France Presse*, 27 July 1995.

125. See Clinton 1994–, 3:897, 1089; House International Relations Committee 1995b; Senate Armed Services Committee 1996, 20.

126. See Clinton 1994–, 3:1150, 1188; *State Department Dispatch,* vol. 6, no. 32, art. 4; author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997.

127. *Congressional Quarterly* 53 (29):2201.

128. *State Department Dispatch,* vol. 6, no. 30, art. 1.

129. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997.

130. Ibid.

From Clinton's perspective, the administration's ability to sustain a veto was linked to the NATO procedural changes.[131] The administration immediately informed Congress of these developments in an effort to forestall congressional action that might lead to a U.S. ground deployment.[132] The necessity for congressional concurrence before using force (because of shared agenda control between Congress and the president) also determined Clinton's post-veto emphasis on air strikes rather than ground intervention. Clinton vetoed S.21 on 11 August as promised.[133] With the August congressional recess delaying a veto-override attempt until early September, Clinton believed that preventing future congressional initiatives and the use of ground troops required that substantial diplomatic progress be made toward a negotiated peace.[134] The president seized on a policy developed by National Security Advisor Anthony Lake. Lake's strategy threatened massive air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs for any further attacks on UN safe havens. At the same time, his strategy gave all parties to the conflict one last chance to negotiate peace under NATO auspices.[135] On 9 August Lake briefed the NATO allies on the U.S. strategy, arguing that the U.S. initiative was the only way out of the dilemma in Bosnia.[136] From a purely domestic U.S. perspective, the new initiative and air strikes (when necessary) would prevent the introduction of U.S. troops and diffuse congressional pressure to lift the arms embargo.

The NATO allies carried out their threat of massive air strikes on 30 August, in response to a 28 August shelling of a Sarajevo market. The NATO attack combined with a Croat Muslim offensive led to a September agreement among the warring parties to begin peace talks in Dayton, Ohio. In response to these developments, Senator Dole postponed the veto-override vote on the arms embargo measure, and British and French peacekeepers remained in Bosnia.[137]

The Western response to the Bosnian conflict is consistent with my domestic institutional model. British prime minister Major's policy options were somewhat constrained by his need to maintain back-bench support. Conservatives in Parliament equated withdrawal with succumbing to terrorism and at the same time feared that massive escalation would risk British troops. Major chose the middle ground—reinforcing British troops in more secure locations and resisting escalation until his troops were secure; that is, he resisted escalation until the risks of failure declined. Presidents in premier-presidential systems have total control of the domestic conflict agenda and are relatively immune to domestic sanctions. As a result, they should be less hesitant to use force. French president Chirac's behavior reflected that willing-

131. Clinton 1994–, 3:1157.

132. For text, see *Congressional Record*, 25 July 1995, S10651–52; 26 July 1995, S10699–701; and 1 August 1995, H8089–90; and Clinton 1994–, 3:1208–10, 1253–56.

133. Clinton 1994–, 3:1253–55.

134. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997; see also *Congressional Quarterly* 53 (30):2282–84; *Congressional Quarterly* 53 (31):2386.

135. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997.

136. Author interviews with executive branch officials, 1997; see also House International Relations Committee 1995b; Woodward 1996, 257–59; and Clinton 1994–, 3:1239.

137. *Congressional Quarterly* 53 (35):2734.

ness. U.S. president Clinton had only partial control of the domestic conflict agenda. It was unlikely that Clinton could use force over the long term without congressional concurrence, leading to more cautious policies than either U.S. ally. The Clinton administration did not participate in the RRF or the French-backed assault plan. Pressured by Congress with the possibility of lifting the arms embargo, and thus committing 25,000 troops to combat, the administration changed U.S. policy to prevent that eventuality.

Conclusions and Implications

I have described a domestic institutional approach to conflict policy. I argue that an examination of domestic institutions reveals generalities within and across democratic regime types about their willingness to resort to violence during international disputes. I first discussed how an executive's calculus in the decision whether to use force is affected by domestic relationships of accountability and agenda control. I then demonstrated how variations in domestic institutions affected accountability and agenda control. Combined, the causal argument proceeded as follows: institutional characteristics determine accountability and agenda control, which affects an executive's calculus as to whether or not to use force or signal a threat, and that in turn determines the likelihood that the democracy will engage in military conflict.

Using this argument, I teased out the similarities and differences within and between categories of democratic regimes. Strong presidential governments are more likely to use force than either weaker presidential governments or majority parliamentary governments, which, in turn, are more likely to use force than coalition parliamentary governments. These predictions were borne out in two case studies: the Suez Canal crisis in 1956 and the Bosnia conflict in 1995. Examining intragovernmental bargaining and pressure is not the only explanation of United States, British, and French behavior, but it provided a more consistent explanation than did neorealism, public opinion, or individual personalities.

Though the case studies focused on militarily strong states and their decisions regarding force, the model should be generalizable to states both weak and strong, including newly democratizing states, as long as their survival is not immediately threatened by a military conflict. I chose to explore cases of militarily strong states because those cases put special emphasis on the political dynamics of conflict decisions. For these states, the decision to use force is a matter of politics, not military feasibility (though sometimes it is couched in terms of the latter). Conflicts involving militarily weak states may risk their national survival, decreasing the impact of domestic institutional structure on conflict decisions. Moreover, debates within militarily weak states may focus on whether the state has adequate military capabilities to use force (though not always to win the resulting conflict) rather than on the purely political dynamics of whether and how to use force. My expectation is that the manner in which domestic institutions affect an executive's calculus will not change when examining militarily weaker nations.

Links between institutional variation and the use of force among existing democracies should be generalizable to emerging democracies, although demonstrating that relationship will have to wait for further research.[138] Based on a very preliminary reading, the "democratic" newly independent states (NIS) of the core of the former Soviet Union have (so far) modeled their domestic institutions along strong presidential lines (see Table 1). Almost without exception, NIS presidents possess near-total agenda control in both domestic and foreign policy issue areas and are accountable only to themselves in the absence of an impending election. They can initiate conflict and escalate to war without concern for domestic political constraints, as demonstrated by Russian behavior in Chechnya.[139] However, many democratizing states in Eastern Europe and the Baltics have selected inclusive parliamentary forms of government, an institutional form that gives premiers an incentive to hesitate before using force.

To return to broader questions of international relations, institutional constraints may help predict the future of the democratic peace by suggesting how norms interact with institutions. According to Michael Doyle, the Kantian peace relies on the polity desiring peace over conflict, leaders responding to the polity's desires, and international trust being built among democracies due to their respect for the rule of law.[140] The second component of the Kantian argument may collapse, however, if executives are well insulated from those they represent. A tentative implication is that war among democracies may be possible when an executive facing relatively low accountability has total agenda control and threatens the survival of another democracy, as may occur should democratic interests diverge in the post–Cold War world.[141] Those executives have few institutional constraints on conflict initiation, regardless of international opponent, and are well-insulated domestically should they decide to escalate into all-out war. Executives in parliamentary governments are accountable and should be less likely to engage in armed conflict with other democracies unless their survival is threatened. Thus as domestic political constraints differ based on institutional structure, so too may the degree to which normative political constraints matter, because norms of behavior are channeled through domestic institutions.[142]

Finally, I suggest a means of unifying the various literatures on domestic politics and conflict. Domestic audience costs are certainly applicable to parliamentary governments, as the existing literature would expect. Note, however, that I depart from

138. For instance, this model requires that civilians maintain some control of the military, in that institutional checks on a civilian leader's ability to use force may be irrelevant if military elites are free to behave as they see fit. If we assume violent regime changes are possible, then a slightly altered model might be applicable to democratizing states. The military, rather than the legislature or the public, might be the most important domestic selectorate, with a threat to the executive's life or tenure in office being the highest sanction the military can impose.

139. The exception was immediately before the presidential election when Boris Yeltsin became very conciliatory. The Russian government renewed its military offensive soon after.

140. Doyle 1986.

141. Farber and Gowa 1997.

142. Braumoeller 1997, 397–98.

this literature on two points. Audience costs may not always cause parliamentary governments to escalate, as most of this literature would predict. Moreover, the audience-cost argument is less applicable to other government systems (at least in terms of institutionally generated costs). The impact of domestic veto gates on military conflict also varies with the type of democratic system. Majority parliamentary governments, premier-presidential systems, and some pure-presidential regimes give their executives agenda control, whereas other presidential systems and minority parliamentary governments do not. Similarly, public preferences do not always affect conflict decisions. Public pressure matters when an election (scheduled or otherwise) is a near-term possibility. Understanding the conflict behavior of democracies is thus more complex than has been previously acknowledged, and the analysis of domestic institutions is one useful way to understand this complexity.

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