

**PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARD THE USE OF FORCE AND PRESIDENTIAL  
CRISIS RESPONSES**

A Dissertation

by

DAVID J. BRULÉ

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of  
Texas A&M University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2006

Major Subject: Political Science

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**ABSTRACT**

Public Attitudes toward the Use of Force  
and Presidential Crisis Responses. (August 2006)

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This dissertation explores the role of public opinion in U.S. presidential decisions to employ various alternatives in response to an international crisis. Presidents may choose from a range of force alternatives, including non-force alternatives, troop mobilizations, air strikes or ground assaults. Using the Poliheuristic Theory, I argue that public attitudes toward the use of force in a given crisis play a key role in the decision making process leading to such choices. The direction and intensity of public opinion is driven by a relative value assessment by which the public determines whether the benefits of a use of force are worth the costs. Presidents are aware of this relative value assessment and rule out crisis responses that are likely to violate the public's preferences in the first stage of the decision making process. In the second stage, presidents choose among the remaining alternatives by weighing the relative merits of each with respect to military and international-strategic implications.

To test hypotheses following from this theoretical argument, I employ two methodological approaches. The first is statistical analysis. I develop a new data set of presidential crisis response choices and expand an existing data set on U.S. public attitudes toward the use of force, from 1949 to 2001. Using two extant data collections identifying international crises, I conduct Ordered Logit analyses, which produce results that are largely supportive of the hypotheses. The second methodological approach is the

case study method. I conduct two detailed case studies of decisions to use force in Bosnia (1995) and Afghanistan (2001). These analyses are also supportive of the theoretical argument. I conclude that presidents are largely responsive to public opinion in the selection of crisis responses.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Does public opinion influence the manner in which the president responds to international crises? The conventional wisdom asserts that public support is a necessary condition for the successful implementation of military action abroad (e.g., Gelb 1972; Mueller 1973; Weinberger 1984). U.S. military operations carried out since World War II appear to indicate that the president typically adheres to this truism: presidents tend to use force when the public is supportive of military action, but forego forceful responses when the public is opposed to military involvement (see Brulé and Mintz 2005). For example, in response to the impending French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954, 68% of Americans polled by Gallup opposed direct military action to help the French in their fight against the communists in Vietnam.<sup>1</sup> President Eisenhower's response was consistent with public opinion – the U.S. took no forceful military action (see also e.g., DeRouen 2003). On the other hand, the American public supported the use of force against Iraq in 1991 to force Saddam's armies from Kuwait (Sobel 2001). President Bush subsequently launched an air and land offensive in the Persian Gulf (see Mintz 1993).

But presidential responses to international crises are not always as consistent with public opinion as these examples suggest. For example, President Kennedy refused to launch an attack against Cuba despite public support for military action following the Cuban missile crisis. President Nixon approved the invasion of Cambodia in 1970 over

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This dissertation follows the style of *American Political Science Review*.

<sup>1</sup> Poll data are accessed from the Roper Center via Lexis-Nexis.com.

public opposition. In 1989, President Bush ordered the invasion of Panama to overthrow the Noriega regime in the face of opposition to such action.

At times, presidential decisions to use force are congruent with public opinion and, at other times, they are not. What explains this apparent inconsistency? Previous explanations are as varied as the extent to which presidents are cowed by public opinion. Much of the research on the democratic peace suggests that democratic leaders are unable to pursue military responses to international crises in the face of public opposition (e.g., Doyle 1986; Maoz and Russett 1993; Dixon 1994). But other research (e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986; Margolis and Mauser 1989; Storrs and Serafino 1993) entertains the possibility that public opinion is the object of elite manipulation – presidents work to persuade the public to support their foreign policy proposal.

Additionally, the literature points to at least three other explanations of the intersection between public opinion and the use of military force abroad. According to the first of these, public opinion places a cap on the maximum amount of force the public is willing to allow the president to unleash abroad (e.g., Russett 1990; Sobel 2001). Another view points to different types of presidents – some who are responsive to public opinion and some who are not (Foyle 1999). The final perspective asserts that the public simply does not matter in presidential decisions to use force (e.g., Lipset 1966; Cohen 1973; Morgenthau 1973).

But presidents may have little choice but to abide by the wishes of the public. Given that presidents risk electoral punishment or eroding their political capital for defying the will of the public (e.g., Fiorina 1981; Aldrich, Sullivan and Borgida 1989; Abramson, Aldrich and Rhode 1990), presidents should be reluctant to engage in

behavior that endangers their domestic political fortunes (e.g., Mintz 1993; Mintz, et al. 1997; Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 1999). In other words, if presidents are to avoid political retribution, they must choose military options that are congruent with public preferences. But little systematic research explores the role of public opinion in presidential decisions to use force (but see Brulé and Mintz 2005).

This dissertation will examine the effect of public opinion on the type of response used by U.S. president in an international crisis. When faced with a crisis, presidents may choose from a range of policy alternatives. These alternatives include, for instance, economic sanctions or diplomatic efforts. Presidents may also employ such military force alternatives as the mobilization of forces, air strikes, and/or the insertion of ground forces. Because presidents are reluctant to defy the preferences of the citizenry when making foreign policy decisions, they rule out alternatives that clearly violate the wishes of the people (Mintz, et al. 1997; Mintz 2004). I argue that that the extent to which the public supports or opposes the use of force is driven by its prospective evaluations of the foreign policy benefits of using force relative to the expected costs in terms of American blood (e.g., Russett 1990; Larson 1996; Mueller 1996).

I use Poliheuristic Theory (e.g., Mintz, et al. 1997; Mintz 2004), which posits a two-stage decision making process, to develop hypotheses about the role of public opinion in presidential crisis response decisions. I contend that presidents eliminate crisis response alternatives in the first stage of the decision making process that are clearly at odds with the public's assessment – regardless of the potential benefits of those alternatives on other decision making dimensions (i.e., military, international-strategic). For example, if a large majority of the public supports military involvement in a crisis,

the president is likely to reject such non-force alternatives as economic sanctions and diplomatic efforts. Conversely, if the president is faced with a large majority of the public opposing the use of force, he is likely to eliminate the military alternatives from consideration. But public opinion is frequently ambivalent or indifferent toward international crises (e.g., Redd 2001; Brulé and Mintz 2005). In these cases, the president is likely to rule out passive, non-force alternatives as well as the alternatives that place large numbers of U.S. troops in harm's way. In the second stage of the decision making process, the president selects a choice among the remaining alternatives on the basis of that alternative's ability to maximize expected benefits with respect to such military and international-strategic concerns as relative capabilities, and the president's foreign policy reputation.

I test the hypotheses using two different research methods. First, I use statistical analyses to examine presidential crisis response choices across all crises involving the U.S. during the period 1949-2001. This method is advantageous for at least two reasons. It allows the systematic comparison of many cases at once, ensuring that the patterns revealed are not limited to just one or two crises. It also limits the possibility that the results support the argument by chance, which may occur when a small number of cases are examined (see e.g., King, Keohane and Verba 1994). In addition to the statistical analysis, I also examine two individual cases in detail. These case studies not only illustrate the theoretical argument, they also facilitate the testing of the hypotheses by revealing limitations of the theory. The case study method also aids in the effort to examine nuance in key theoretical concepts that cannot be readily captured by operationalized variables.

## OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation proceeds in seven chapters following this introduction. Chapter II reviews the literature and develops the theoretical framework for addressing the research problem. As highlighted above, this theoretical argument contends that presidential crisis decision making follows a two-stage process in which public opinion toward the use of force limits the alternatives the president considers in response to an international crisis; presidents rule out choices that are clearly inconsistent with public preferences in the first stage. In the second stage of the decision making process, the president chooses the alternative that maximizes net benefits with respect to military and international-strategic factors. The chapter postulates that public opinion is an expression of the extent to which the public is willing to tolerate casualties. Consequently, presidents may choose alternatives that address this public concern without ruling out all military force alternatives.

Chapter III introduces the empirical research design used to test the theories summarized in Chapter II. This chapter describes the case selection procedure as well as how each of the variables is measured. I use two prominent data sources to identify the crises involving the U.S. – International Crisis Behavior and Militarized Interstate Disputes. To test the hypotheses, I develop a new categorical measure of the presidential use of force, reflecting the different ways in which the president can respond to an international crisis. I also describe a new data set on public opinion toward the use of force to assess the impact of the public on presidential crisis response choices.

Chapter IV tests the hypotheses developed in Chapter II using the research design described in Chapter III. The results using two different sets of cases indicate that public

opinion is systematically associated with the president's crisis response choice. Specifically, presidents choose alternatives that place more troops in harm's way when the public is supportive of military action, and presidents pursue "safer" alternatives when the public is not clearly supportive of the use of force. The results also reveal that military and international-strategic factors, thought to be important in the second stage of the decision making process, fail to systematically influence the president's decision.

Chapters V and VI supplement the quantitative analysis with in-depth case studies of President Clinton's 1994 decision to launch air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs and President Bush's 2001 decision to conduct a limited invasion of Afghanistan. In these chapters, I take a closer look at the theoretical argument. First, I examine whether public opinion is congruent with general attitudes concerning expected combat fatalities. Second, I disaggregate the public into the traditionally studied segments of the elite (or attentive) and mass publics to see if either group has a disproportionate influence on presidential crisis response choices. I also consider whether society's memory of a previous crisis experience (e.g., Vietnam, Gulf War) influence popular expectations and preferences about the use of force in response to the current crisis. Finally, I am able to assess the particular challenges posed by the crisis for the military and international-strategic dimensions.

Chapter VII reviews the theoretical argument and findings presented in the dissertation. It details the contributions of the study as well as the implications of this research for other areas of international relations research. I conclude that public opinion is capable of restricting the set of options available to the president and that, once this set

is reduced, the president's final choice is driven by case-specific military and international-strategic factors.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE AND THEORY

Public opinion figures prominently in the research on domestic politics and international relations. In international crises, this informal democratic institution is thought to strengthen a leader's hand, inform an adversary, or constrain the set of available alternatives (e.g., Maoz and Russett 1993; Fearon 1994; Schultz 2001; Bueno de Mesquita, et al. 1999). But relatively little is known about the manner in which the preferences of the citizenry affect the choices of their national executives in international crisis decision making. For U.S. presidents, public support for the use of force is thought to be essential for the effective conduct of military operations abroad (e.g., Gelb 1972; Mueller 1973; Weinberger 1984; DeYoung and Milbank 2001; see also Kull and Destler 1999; Kull and Ramsay 2001).

Even scholars who are skeptical of a central role for the mass public in every-day foreign policy decisions allow for the possibility that public opinion has a significant impact on presidential decisions to use force. For instance, in a recent *American Political Science Review* paper, Jacobs and Page (2005) found that public opinion does not significantly affect foreign policy, except for issues of great salience to the domestic audience. Moreover, the authors admit that no other foreign policy issue is more provocative and salient to the public than those concerning the use of military force abroad (see also e.g., Barnett 1990; Hurwitz and Peffley 1987; Mueller 1973). Jacobs and Page have therefore left the door open for the possible influence of public opinion on use of force decisions. Despite the apparent centrality of public opinion in presidential decisions to use force, relatively little empirical research has explicitly evaluated the

influence of public attitudes on presidential conflict behavior (but see Brulé and Mintz 2005).

As an effort to advance understanding of the role of public opinion in presidential decisions to use force, this chapter summarizes the predominant bodies of knowledge about the relationship between opinion and force. Since Rosenau's (1961) groundbreaking study of the opinion-foreign policy linkage, there has been remarkably little progress in theory-building or understanding the actual influence of public attitudes on crisis response choices (e.g., Holsti 1992; Sobel 2001). After summarizing and critiquing the main strands of relevant research, this chapter will build on existing theoretical insights to develop an account of public opinion and the presidential use of force that goes beyond the current theoretical and empirical limitations.

#### OPINION MANIPULATION, CONSTRAINTS, AND THE USE OF FORCE

The primary perspectives of public opinion and foreign policy differ markedly in their assumptions concerning the nature of public opinion as well as the president's response to levels of support. Generally, there are two competing accounts of the role of public opinion in presidential decisions to use force. One of these describes a top-down process of public opinion formation in which the president and other elites move public opinion toward a favored policy. The other perspective suggests that public opinion – specifically, a lack of support – serves as a constraint on certain policy options. But these perspectives fail to fully specify the causal mechanisms at work in both of the relevant levels of analysis in a manner that is consistent with observation. Consequently, we need to look to studies examining the impact of the use of force on public opinion to fully

understand how public attitudes are shaped by exogenous factors and how presidents respond to public attitudes.

### **Opinion Manipulation: The “Top-down” Process**

According to the “top-down” process of public opinion formation (e.g., Wittkopf and McCormick 1993), presidents influence the public through leadership and manipulation (e.g., Margolis and Mauser 1989). Presidents may increase public support for specific policies by “going public” (Kernell 1986), adding salience to world events. This view assumes that the public is largely uninformed and lacks coherent, stable opinions on foreign policy issues (e.g., Lippmann 1922; Almond 1950). Rather than follow public opinion, presidents manipulate it in order to marshal support for their desired policies.

Until the Vietnam War, the scholarly consensus on the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy was one in which policy makers were thought to have *carte blanche* in national security policy decisions (e.g., Gamson and Modigliani 1966; Verba et al. 1967; Mueller 1973). Buttressing this claim are early studies of citizens’ foreign policy judgments, which suggest that public opinion on foreign policy is largely uninformed, indifferent, and unstable (e.g., Lippmann 1922; Almond 1950; Converse 1964). Ordinary citizens regard foreign policy issues as too remote, abstract, or confusing to warrant the expenditure of time and energy necessary to understand them (e.g., Graber 1984; Rielly 1995; Kegley and Wittkopf 1996). Consequently, some scholars and policy makers considered the independence of foreign policy from public opinion as both an empirical fact and a normative good (e.g., Lipset 1966; Cohen 1973; Morgenthau 1973).

Although this account of an inattentive public suggests that foreign policy decisions on the use of force abroad are free from interference by the public, public opinion is not free from elite influence. The president and other foreign policy makers may manipulate public opinion through the framing of alternatives and public relations campaigns (see e.g., Rosenau 1961; Margolis and Mauser 1989; Wittkopf and McCormick 1993). A malleable public affords presidents the opportunity to simultaneously satisfy their own foreign policy goals, while appearing to do the people's bidding. Thus, according to this explanation, public support for the use of force is a result of opinion manipulation.

A burgeoning body of research suggests that presidents not only manipulate public opinion in order to use force, but may also use force abroad in an effort to manipulate public opinion. The so-called diversionary theory of war argues that national leaders distract public attention from domestic problems by initiating foreign wars (e.g., Blainey 1988; Levy 1989; Morgan and Bickers 1992). Rooted in the sociological in-group/out-group hypothesis (Simmel 1955; Coser 1956), which posits an increase in intra-group cohesion in the face of an external threat, diversionary theory argues that leaders may exaggerate the threat posed by a foreign state when faced with domestic unrest or revolution. When the relevant domestic groups are confronted by a common menace, they are expected to put aside their differences and unite in support of the national leader in his or her effort to defeat the enemy (e.g., Levy 1989). This explanation of diversionary theory has enjoyed the support of a number of historical and anecdotal accounts of war initiation (see e.g., Hastings and Jenkins 1983; Mayer 1971).

However, early empirical research failed to uncover the link between internal turmoil and external conflict.<sup>2</sup>

Subsequent efforts to examine the role of domestic problems in the use of force abroad typically focus on more innocuous forms of domestic discontent. In the American case, supportive evidence for incentives to divert initially appear in the form of the “rally-‘round-the-flag” effect – a short-term boost in presidential approval ratings following the use of force (e.g., Mueller 1973; Lee 1977; MacKuen 1983). U.S. presidents may have an incentive to use force in order to raise their public approval ratings. When presidential popularity is low, presidents may manufacture or add salience to international crises in order to boost their popularity. Indeed, much of the use of force literature suggests that presidents are motivated to engage in aggressive foreign policy under deteriorating domestic political conditions in order to bolster their domestic popularity (Marra, Ostrom and Simon 1990; Russett 1990; DeRouen 1995). A number of studies find that presidents are more likely to use force when faced with such domestic political conditions as declining public approval (e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Oneal 1991; Morgan and Bickers 1992) and a flagging economy (e.g., DeRouen 1995; Hess and Orphanides 1995; Fordham 1998a).

But the diversionary explanation for the presidential use of force suffers from two serious theoretical problems. The first concerns the value of incentives to divert – specifically, using force to address domestic political problems fails to improve the leader’s position and may make the domestic situation worse. The “rally-‘round-the-flag” effect is thought to be too small and short-lived to offer sufficient incentives for presidents to engage in a diversionary use of force (Brody and Shapiro 1989; Lian and

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<sup>2</sup> Levy (1989) offers a comprehensive review of these early empirical studies.

Oneal 1993). Additionally, using military force in response to a declining domestic economy may crowd out private investment and put upward pressure on prices, exacerbating flagging growth and inflation (see e.g., Fordham 1998a). Thus, once the initial boost in popularity subsides, diverting presidents may find themselves in worse standing with an economically miserable citizenry than before the diversion (see also Meernik and Waterman 1996).

A second theoretical problem concerns the conspiratorial nature of the argument. The explanation is rather cynical, relying on an assumption of duplicitous behavior by the president (Richards, et al. 1993; Lian and Oneal 1993; Meernik and Waterman 1996). To be sure, assuming that presidents rarely use force in response to genuine threats to U.S. national security interests requires a supporting assumption about the nature of the public's foreign policy beliefs and attitudes toward foreign policy issues. Historically, public opinion toward foreign policy has been considered inattentive, unstable, and responsive to elite manipulation (Holsti 1992), which is consistent with the diversionary explanation. But recent research suggests that the public is actually "pretty prudent" (Jentleson 1992; Oneal, Lian and Joyner 1996; Jentleson and Britton 1998). In other words, public attitudes toward foreign policy are structured, coherent, and largely resistant to elite manipulation (e.g., Caspary 1970; Hurwitz and Peffley 1987; Edwards 2003). These studies cast doubt on the malleability of public opinion, making the diversionary theory less believable.

Overall, the "top-down" perspective conceives of a public whose opinions are malleable and readily subject to manipulation. Presidents may manipulate public opinion through framing, public relations campaigns, or the actual use of force. However, the

top-down process of opinion formation is challenged by studies that suggest that public opinion on foreign policy issues is stable and coherent (e.g., Caspary 1970; Hurwitz and Peffley 1987; Page and Shapiro 1992). Moreover, Jentleson (1992) and Jentleson and Britton (1998) contend that public support for the use of force is structured by the perceived “prudence” of the policy objectives. A recent study by Edwards (2003) also argues that presidents’ efforts to garner support through public addresses are typically ineffective and often counterproductive. This stands in stark contrast to the view of the American public as the unwitting object of elite manipulation.

### **Public Opinion as a Constraint on Presidential Decision Making**

Unlike the top-down account, the other theoretical perspective posits an active role for the public. The constraints account holds that public opinion serves as a constraint on foreign policy decision making (e.g., Russett 1990; Powlick and Katz 1998; Foyle 1999; Sobel 2001). Stemming from Key’s (1966) theory of public opinion as a “system of dikes” that channels the flow of policy, this perspective contends that mass public opinion is capable of limiting the use of force. It figures prominently in the structural, or institutional constraints, explanation of the democratic peace phenomenon (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992; Maoz and Russett 1993). The constraint perspective draws micro-theoretical support from empirical studies finding that public opinion is coherent (e.g., Achen 1975; Wittkopf 1990), stable (e.g., Caspary 1970; Page and Shapiro 1992), and influenced by such reasonable factors as individuals’ core values (Hurwitz and Peffley 1987; Stimson 1991), international events (e.g., Mueller 1973; Jentleson 1992), and additional information revealed through national debates (Zaller 1992; 1994).

Given that public opinion on foreign policy is largely “sensible” (Ninic 1992), the possibility exists that voters may punish leaders who ignore the constraint imposed by public preferences (e.g., Fiorina 1981; Abramson, Aldrich, and Rhode 1990; Mintz and Geva 1993). Indeed, like domestic issues, voters consider foreign policy issues in their retrospective evaluations of elected officials’ performance (e.g., Kusnitz 1984; Aldrich, Sullivan, and Borgida 1989). Consequently, when public support for a specific policy is inadequate, presidents are unable to implement that policy. On the other hand, when public support is deemed adequate, presidents have free rein to pursue their desired course of action.

Mounting evidence appears to support the view that public opinion acts as a constraint on foreign policy outcomes. Empirical studies exploring the public’s impact on levels of defense expenditures in the U.S. appear to confirm this suggestion. A number of studies (e.g., Bartels 1991; Hartley and Russett 1992; Knopf 1998) find that changes in public preferences with respect to military spending are followed by policies reflecting public opinion. Similarly, large-N studies of the correspondence between public preferences and foreign policy outputs suggest a link between citizens’ judgments and the policies leaders pursue (e.g., Monroe 1979; Page and Shapiro 1983).

But the public-opinion-as-constraint perspective is flawed methodologically, as well as theoretically. One methodological flaw is related to research designs, which have provided supportive evidence of the perspective. A correspondence between public opinion and a policy output does not point to a specific causal mechanism at work in the relationship. Indeed, a direct relationship between public support for a given policy and the implementation of that policy may be construed as supportive of the top-down



perspective. Such a relationship may be the result of successful opinion manipulation by the president through framing or agenda setting. Connecting the direction and intensity of public preferences with the ultimate policy outcomes does not sufficiently isolate the unobserved process underlying public opinion formation.

A second methodological flaw is related to the leap between studies finding a role for public opinion in non-violent foreign policy and the untested assumption that public opinion constrains the use of military force abroad (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992; Maoz and Russett 1993; Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995). An abundance of case studies reveal a clear pattern: leaders are aware of – and constrained by – public opinion in use of force decisions (e.g., Russett 1990; Mintz 1993; Foyle 1999; Sobel 2001; DeRouen 2003). Yet there is a dearth of systematic evidence investigating this relationship.

Finally, the public-opinion-as-constraint perspective implies a possible outcome that seems to be inconsistent with its own view of the relationship between public opinion and the use of force. While this perspective focuses on the conditions under which presidents are able to act (i.e., public support), it ignores the possibility of constraints on presidential *inaction*. Specifically, this constraints perspective suggests that public opposition to a policy places it largely beyond the administration's consideration. But public support for a policy does not necessarily rule out the pursuit of other, less costly alternatives. The constraining effect of public opinion is akin to a price cap – the public places limits on the amount it is willing to pay for a “good.” If the public is willing to pay a relatively high price for a good, it should be willing to pay a lower price for a comparable good. In decisions concerning the use of force abroad, public opposition to

the use of force constrains that alternative, making the pursuit of a less costly, non-force alternative more likely. Conversely, public *support* for the use of force affords the president greater freedom of action to carry out any policy – up to and including the use of force. Thus, public support provides the president with a “blank check,” giving him considerable latitude in decisions to use force.

The blank check perspective suggests that leaders are concerned about being punished in the next election if they use force in the face of public opposition. But leaders are relatively unconcerned about electoral retribution if they fail to use force in defiance of widespread support for that course of action. Unless we assume that the president’s utility for the use of force constantly exceeds his utility for other foreign policy alternatives, there is little reason to expect public support for the use of force to be systematically related to military action abroad.

The public-opinion-as-a-constraint perspective seems intuitively pleasing and plausible at first blush. However, like the opinion manipulation perspective, this account of the role of public opinion in decisions to use force is plagued with theoretical shortcomings and a dearth of convincing, systematic evidence. Neither of these explanations appear to have well-developed micro-theoretical accounts of how exogenous factors shape public support and opposition toward the use of force. Moreover, these explanations fail to specify macro-theoretical accounts of how public opinion shapes specific military responses to international crises. To better understand the mechanisms at work (at both the micro and macro levels), it may be useful to examine a research agenda that treats public support and opposition as an endogenous

variable – the impact of the use of force on public support for and opposition to ongoing military operations.

### **Toward Understanding the Role of Public Opinion in Decisions to Use Force**

Much of the research investigating public attitudes toward the use of force examines the relationship between U.S. troop casualties and public opinion (e.g., Mueller 1973; 1994; Lorell, Kelley and Hensler 1985; Gartner and Segura 1998). The U.S. public is thought to be, in general, averse to troop losses (Mueller 1973; 1994; Gartner and Segura 1998). In other words, as the number of U.S. troop casualties increases, public support for ongoing military operations erodes. However, some scholars (e.g., Lorell, Kelley and Hensler 1985; Larson 1996 see also Nincic and Nincic 1995; Mueller 1996) contend that focusing on the costs associated with military force provides only half of the picture. Instead, public support or opposition toward ongoing military operations is a product of cost-benefit calculation by the mass public – are the objectives worth the costs?

This cost-benefit assessment by the public may not be limited to retrospective evaluations. In observing a correspondence between foreign policy objectives and ex ante public opinion toward military intervention, Jentleson (1992; see also Jentleson and Britton 1998) concludes that the public is more likely to support the use of force when a crisis threatens American interests. Indeed, in international crises that are of great importance to the U.S. and its interests abroad, the public appears to be willing to tolerate troop fatalities in order to achieve the president's foreign policy objectives (e.g., Larson 1996; Mueller 1996; Kull and Destler 1999). According to Mueller (1996: 8), “[a] substantial loss of American lives may have been tolerable if the enemy was the bombers

of Pearl Harbor or international Communism, but risking lives for a goal as ungraspable and vaporous as policing a small, distant, perennially-troubled, and unthreatening place has proved difficult to manage.” Public opinion toward military involvement in a crisis appears to be driven by the public’s relative value assessment – the expected benefits of foreign policy success relative to the anticipated costs in terms of American blood.

Not only is there evidence that the public bases its support for or opposition to the use of force on its relative value assessment, additional research suggests that presidents and other foreign policy makers are aware of these determinants of public support (e.g., Kull and Destler 1999; Kull and Ramsay 2001). Presidents are thought to regard public attitudes as an estimate of the extent to which the public believes that the foreign policy objectives are worth the anticipated level of U.S. casualties. Indeed, efforts to “educate” the public in order to increase public support for a proposed foreign policy are often attempts to convince the public that the benefits of an operation outweigh the costs (see e.g., Powlick 1991; Hinckley 1992; Storrs and Serafino 1993). If the president uses public opinion toward the use of force to gauge the public’s relative value assessment, the level of public support or opposition should condition the way the president carries out a use of force.

### **The Use of Force in the Empirical Literature**

Presidents have at their disposal a range of crisis response alternatives that vary categorically according to the manner in which force is employed. For example, a president may respond to a crisis with a non-violent signal such as a show of force or a mobilization. Similarly, a president may respond violently with an aerial bombardment or a ground assault. In order to satisfy public opinion, presidents may use force in such a

way as to bring about a desired foreign policy outcome that risks the lives of many U.S. troops. On the other hand, presidents may also carry out a use of force in a manner that places a premium on service members' lives while jeopardizing the success of the foreign policy objectives (e.g., Pape 1996; Daalder and O'Hanlon 1999; Horowitz and Reiter 2001). But previous research fails to rigorously examine *types* of military force. Most use of force studies examine a count of uses of force (e.g., Fordham 1998a), a force/no force dichotomy (e.g., Miller 1995; Wang 1996) or the level of force used (e.g., Meernik 1994; DeRouen 1995). None of these conceptualizations capture the thrust of how force is employed.<sup>3</sup> Nor do they meaningfully capture the twin concerns of foreign policy success and U.S. troop fatalities.

I seek to take the above criticisms to heart in the construction of a theoretical framework specifying the role of public opinion in presidential decisions to use force. Using literature on military strategy and coercive diplomacy, I develop a categorical concept of military force type – crisis response choice. Then, I explicitly incorporate the public's relative value assessment as the driving force behind support and opposition toward military involvement in an international crisis. At the macro-theoretical level, I specify how the public's relative value assessment – expressed as public opinion – influences the president's crisis response choice.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

When confronted by an international crisis, presidents may choose a response

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<sup>3</sup> Blechman and Kaplan (1978) distinguish between different types of military components employed in a use of force – land units, air units, or sea units. But such a typology can potentially conflate a use of force primarily consisting of sea units with an operation characterized by an assault by land forces – for instance, an amphibious assault. Other studies examine military strategy – maneuver, attrition, and punishment (e.g., Bennett and Stam 1996; Reiter 1999). Focusing on strategy fails to distinguish between types of force.

from a wide range of policy alternatives. In order to arrive at an ultimate decision, presidents carry out a two-stage decision making process (e.g., Mintz, et al. 1997; Mintz 2004). In the first stage, alternatives that clearly defy public preferences are ruled out. Blatant defiance of the will of the people may result in electoral retribution or a loss of political capital, preventing the president from pursuing his foreign policy or domestic political agenda. Consequently, presidents monitor public opinion polls during the decision making process.

In order to identify which alternatives to rule out in the first stage, the president regards public opinion toward the use of force as an estimate of the public's relative value assessment – the prospective benefits of a foreign policy success relative to the costs of placing U.S. troops in harm's way. Presidents eliminate alternatives that fail to comport with public preferences over foreign policy success and U.S. troop fatalities in the first stage of the decision making process. The surviving crisis response alternatives promise the greatest likelihood of a foreign policy success within the limits of the public's threshold for casualties. In the second stage of the decision making process, an ultimate selection is made among surviving alternatives based on the alternatives' ability to maximize utility with respect to military and international-strategic concerns.

### **Crisis Response Alternatives**

Rather than characterize presidential responses to international crises as a dichotomous “use of force/no use of force” outcome (Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Oneal 1991; Morgan and Bickers 1992), I develop a new concept that better captures the range of alternatives available to the president – “crisis response.” Crisis response refers to the president's choice of one option within a set of general alternatives available in

response to an international crisis. Each crisis response is a generic category that may include a variety of specific tactics or choices. In general, the president can respond to an international crisis with any of the following: 1) pursue non-force responses; 2) engage in a show of military force; 3) employ an aerial bombardment; and 4) utilize land forces in a ground assault. Although these alternatives are qualitatively different from each other in a number of respects, they are ranked from lowest to highest in terms of each category's capacity to bring about a foreign policy success. Conversely, the alternatives are ranked from highest to lowest in terms of each category's capacity to minimize U.S. troop casualties.

### **Non-force responses**

Non-force responses include policy responses that do not include the use of military force. For example, the president may issue a verbal denunciation of one or more participants in an international crisis. The president may pursue negotiations or offer to provide a mediator. Diplomatic or economic sanctions may be imposed. The president may also *threaten* the use of force. Of course, the president may choose to do nothing. The central feature of the non-force category is that no military force is actually employed. Consequently, when a non-force response is selected, no U.S. troops are placed in harm's way. The primary disadvantage of choosing a non-force alternative as a policy response to an international crisis is that the success of the policy rests nearly entirely with the target of the policy (see e.g., Schelling 1966). For instance, in the year and a half during which the Clinton administration actively sought the restoration of the Aristide government in Haiti, the president at various times employed policies of negotiations with the military junta, diplomatic and economic sanctions, and threatened

to use military force to achieve his foreign policy objective (Morely and McGillion 1997). Nearly all of these efforts were ineffective and none of them produced immediate results.

### **Show of force responses**

A show of military force typically entails the deployment of military forces near the borders or coastline of a target state. This crisis response may also include deploying troops into crisis situations in which no sustained fighting is anticipated (e.g., Lebanon 1958, Bosnia 1995). The defining feature of this category of crisis response alternatives is that while military forces are mobilized and deployed, they are not expected to attack and/or be attacked. Thus, the expected level of U.S. troop fatalities is near zero, but slightly higher than non-force policies due to the (albeit small) possibility that U.S. forces may be attacked or killed in accidents. A show of military force is not much of an improvement over non-force alternatives in terms of the likelihood of foreign policy success. Although this crisis response category is useful for deterring a target, it is typically not effective in compelling desired behavior (see e.g., Schelling 1966; Pape 1996). For example, the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia following the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was largely successful in deterring further Iraqi aggression. However, Operation Desert Shield failed to compel Iraqi compliance with U.S. and coalition demands that Iraq withdraw from Kuwait.

### **Aerial bombardment responses**

The third crisis response category – aerial bombardment – includes any actual violent use of military force by which a target is attacked, but land forces are not placed in harm's way. Operations that fall within this category are air strikes, missile strikes,



and naval bombardments. The characteristic distinguishing aerial bombardment from other categories of military force is that bombs and/or missiles are delivered to a target from a relatively safe distance. Compared with other use of force alternatives, aerial bombardment promises minimal friendly casualties. For example, during NATO's 1999 air war with Serbia, the U.S. suffered no combat fatalities (Byman and Waxman 2000: 35). Moreover, as the firebombing of Dresden, the destruction of Hiroshima, and the pinpoint accuracy of precision-guided ordinance in the Gulf War attest; aerial bombardment is capable of achieving *operational* objectives. But aerial bombardment alone appears to have limited utility in achieving *foreign policy* objectives (see e.g., Clodfelter 1989; Pape 1996; Daalder and O'Hanlon 1999). Indeed, the capacity of this crisis response category to achieve foreign policy success appears to rest with the strategy underlying the operation as well as the attributes of the target (Pape 1996; Horowitz and Reiter 2001; Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002).<sup>4</sup> Like economic sanctions (e.g., Hufbauer, Schott and Elliot 1990) and naval blockades (e.g., George, Hall and Simons 1971), the success of an aerial bombardment largely depends on the amount of pain and suffering a target can endure (see Pape 1996). History suggests that few targets are quick to acquiesce in order to stop the bombing (Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002). Most bombing campaigns require complementary land forces or the credible threat of a ground invasion to compel targets to acquiesce. This was the case in Bosnia in 1995 when NATO air strikes against Bosnian Serbs were buttressed by a Bosnian Croat ground campaign (Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002). Thus, while aerial bombardment is successful in keeping potential U.S.

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<sup>4</sup> Coercive military strategies that may be carried out through aerial bombardment include punishment and denial (Pape 1996; Horowitz and Reiter 2001; Mueller 1998). Because this research is interested in the use of different types of military components, I will not take the military strategy underlying the use of force into account.

casualties in check, this crisis response category is seldom effective in achieving a foreign policy success alone.<sup>5</sup>

### **Land force assault responses**

The final crisis response category involves the use of land forces in direct confrontation with enemy forces. Land force assaults include clashes, raids, or invasions in which ground forces are inserted into territory where they are expected to attack or be attacked. Operations in which land forces are backed by air or naval support are also included in this crisis response category. The hallmark of land force assault responses is the relatively high expectation of U.S. casualties. Even in minor operations, the proportion of battle-related fatalities can be disheartening. For instance, in the 1975 SS *Mayaguez* rescue mission, 18 of the 109 Marines directly participating in the assault were killed. Another 23 U.S. service members supporting the operation died in accidents (Rowan 1975; United States Congress 1975).

In spite of the risk to the lives of U.S. troops, land force assault responses appear to promise a greater likelihood of achieving foreign policy objectives than operations that fall within other crisis response categories. For example, from 1991 until 2003, the U.S. led an economic sanctions regime and conducted intermittent aerial bombardments against Iraq – actions which were aimed at obtaining unfettered access to Iraqi weapons and weapons programs (see e.g., Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002). However, these foreign policy objectives were not fully realized until after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq

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<sup>5</sup> Of course, the extent to which a policy is successful largely depends on the objectives of the policy. For example, consider the 1986 Operation El Dorado Canyon in which the U.S. conducted air strikes against Libya in response to Libya's sponsorship of terrorism. If the foreign policy objectives of this operation were simply to "punish" Libya for its sponsorship of terrorism, the operation may be regarded as successful. But if the foreign policy objectives included deterring additional sponsorship in the future, the air strikes cannot be regarded as successful – Libya continued its sponsorship of terrorist activities (see e.g., Pape 1996; Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002).

in March 2003. Other recent U.S. military operations that featured the use of land forces brought about the downfall of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001-2002, forced the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait in 1991, stopped Panamanian-government complicity in the international drug trade in 1989, and eliminated Cuban and Soviet influence in Grenada in 1983 (Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002). As these operations illustrate, land force assault responses tend to be well-suited for successfully implementing foreign policy objectives during international crises.

It is evident from the preceding discussion that the president's choice among the crisis response alternatives is characterized by a tradeoff between efforts to maximize the likelihood of foreign policy success and minimize expected casualties. As the risk to U.S. troops decreases, the likelihood of foreign policy success also declines. Below, I develop a Poliheuristic account of presidential crisis response choice.

### **Poliheuristic Theory**

Poliheuristic Theory (Mintz 2004; Mintz, et al 1997) explicitly acknowledges the primacy of domestic politics in democratic leaders' foreign policy decisions. It also posits a central role for public opinion in decisions to use force. The theory postulates a two-stage decision making process. In the first stage, leaders employ a noncompensatory decision making strategy, which reduces the menu of alternatives through the elimination of options that are unacceptable on a critical decision making dimension. A high score on a less critical dimension cannot compensate for a low score on the key dimension. In the second stage, leaders choose among the remaining alternatives by using analytic decision rules (see Mintz 2004).

Unlike other decision making approaches (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992; Steinbruner 1974), the Poliheuristic Theory identifies a key dimension that must be satisfied in order for an alternative to be accepted. Alternatives are not evaluated simultaneously. Instead, leaders reduce the set of alternatives in the first stage by rejecting those options that fail to breach a minimum threshold on the key decision dimension. Because leaders are often self-interested politicians who seek to ensure their domestic political survival, Mintz (1993; 2004) suggests that this key dimension is typically domestic politics – the *sine qua non* of decision making. For example, if a given alternative seriously threatens the electoral prospects of a democratic leader, that alternative is rejected. A high score on other dimensions cannot compensate for a low score on the domestic political dimension.

In the second stage, a choice is selected from the remaining alternatives based on its ability to maximize expected benefits on other relevant dimensions (Mintz et al., 1997). In other words, decision makers choose from the remaining options based on an alternative's ability to maximize expected net benefits. These remaining dimensions are nontrivial (e.g., Mintz, Geva and DeRouen, 1994) and previous studies applying Poliheuristic Theory (e.g., Mintz, 1993; Redd, 2001; DeRouen, 2003) propose that decision makers evaluate the remaining alternatives on military and strategic dimensions. For example, an alternative may maximize expected benefits on the military dimension when the alternative can be implemented with relatively low costs, or when the alternative has the greatest probability of success. Similarly, an alternative may maximize expected benefits on the strategic dimension when the alternative does not

threaten to undermine alliance arrangements, enable the enlargement of an adversary's influence, or compromise the nation's international credibility.

The two-stage, multi-dimensional decision making strategy posited by the poliheuristic theory does not privilege process validity over outcome validity, or vice versa (see Mintz, 2004). Indeed, it mirrors the manner in which decisions are often made (e.g., Mintz et al., 1997). Additionally, the theory has exceptional predictive power (e.g., DeRouen, 2000; 2003; Redd, 2001; Sathasivam, 2003).

### **Domestic Political Dimension: Public Opinion**

Consistent with Poliheuristic Theory (e.g., Mintz, et al. 1997; Mintz 2004), when considering how to respond to an international crises, the president rejects alternatives that threaten his domestic political fortunes in the first stage of the decision making process. Throughout the postwar period, opinion polls concerning policy proposals have been prevalent, facilitating the communication of the public's wishes to elected officials (Margolis and Mauser 1989; Russett 1990; Holsti 1992; Powlick 1995). In the search for a response to an international crisis, presidents can refer to public opinion polls in which respondents are asked whether the United States should "send troops," or use "military force" in order to resolve the crisis. Reviewing the results of opinion polls may aid the president in identifying and rejecting alternatives that the public finds particularly objectionable.

Although presidents seek to rule out alternatives that clearly defy public preferences, international crises are rarely so simple that presidents and policy makers may formulate a response directly from public opinion (e.g., Russett 1990). Moreover, opinion poll results may not present the president with an unequivocal picture of support

or opposition concerning a proposed course of action. Instead, opinion polls may suggest that the mass public is largely ambivalent or indifferent toward military involvement in an international crisis, providing the president with “mixed signals” concerning public preferences. Rather than granting the president greater discretion in his choice of a crisis response, these mixed signals complicate presidential efforts to avoid domestic political punishment. If the president chooses to send combat troops when the public is indifferent, mounting U.S. casualties may turn a majority of Americans against him (e.g., Mueller 1973; 1994; Gartner and Segura 1998). On the other hand, if the president relies on diplomacy when public opinion is evenly divided, a large segment of Americans may criticize the president for not doing enough to resolve the crisis.

**Micro-theoretical foundations: relative value**

How does the president select the alternative(s) to eliminate in the first phase of the decision making process? Previous scholarship on public opinion and the use of force (e.g., Larson 1996; Mueller 1996; Kull and Destler 1999) suggests that the public chooses whether to support or oppose a military endeavor on the basis of a cost-benefit calculation. That is to say, members of the citizenry ask themselves about the relative value of the operation: *are the foreign policy objectives worth the costs?* Like domestic policy, foreign policy is “judged in terms of expected costs and benefits for the individual and his or her family, friends, favored groups, and the nation or world as a whole” (Page, Shapiro and Jacobs 1987: 23).

According to this line of thought, public opinion toward military involvement in a crisis is an aggregation of relative value assessments conducted by individual members of society. Individuals weigh the potential benefits resulting from a foreign policy success

against the expected costs to the country. When the preponderance of individuals believes that the costs outweigh the benefits, public opinion is supportive of military involvement. When the bulk of these individuals believe that the benefits are not worth the costs, public opinion is opposed to the use of force. But when there is no prevailing assessment of the relative value of a proposed foreign policy – no sizable majority of individuals believes that the costs outweigh the benefits or vice versa – public opinion is either ambivalent or indifferent to the use of force.

### *Costs*

In the event that the president chooses to use force abroad, “casualties to U.S. service men is the most highly visible and important costs to the public” (Lorell, Kelley, and Hensler 1985: 28). To be sure, the costs of military operations are frequently measured in terms of blood and treasure, but as Russett (1990: 46) observes, “[o]f the two, blood (American) seems the more important.” In Korea, Vietnam, and – to a lesser extent – the two wars with Iraq, U.S. casualties have eroded American public support for military operations (e.g., Mueller 1973; 1994; Lorell, Kelley, and Hensler 1985; Gartner and Segura 1998). Consequently, the public’s prospective estimate of U.S. casualties is an essential part of public support or opposition to military alternatives (e.g., Luttwak 1994; Mueller 1996).

### *Benefits*

The benefits considered by the public are the expected results of the president’s foreign policy objectives. Benefits are not as one-dimensional as costs – i.e., casualties. Although one of the expected benefits is typically the resolution of the crisis, the public may evaluate the merits of a foreign policy according to the extent to which it serves the

U.S.'s "vital interests" or fulfills the humanitarian needs of an unfortunate people (e.g., Ladd 1980; Rielly 1991; Jentleson and Britton 1998; Haass 1999). Benefits may also be gauged with respect to such goals as challenging aggression or promoting democracy (Russett and Nincic 1976; Jentleson 1992; Nincic 1997; Jentleson and Britton 1998). In short, the expected benefits of the president's foreign policy objectives vary across crises. Thus, the public assesses the merits of these objectives on the basis of each case (e.g., Larson 1996; Mueller 1996).

When presented with an international crisis involving the use of military force, the public conducts a relative value assessment. Public attitudes toward the use of force are driven by the extent to which the public believes that the foreign policy objectives of a proposed military operation are worth the costs in terms of expected casualties. The public is willing to tolerate more casualties when the foreign policy objectives are deemed worthwhile (Larson 1996). But the public "does not have – and never has had – much stomach for losing American lives in ventures and arenas that are of little concern" (Mueller 1996: 8). To come to the point, public opinion toward the use of force is congruent with the public's relative value assessment. Therefore, public support for the use of force indicates a greater tolerance for U.S. casualties, while opposition signifies greater aversion to casualties.

### **Hypotheses: Presidential Responses to Public Opinion**

Presidents and policy makers are aware that public attitudes toward the use of force are shaped by a relative value assessment (e.g., Kull and Destler 1999; Kull and Ramsay 2001). Indeed, presidents and policy makers attempt to manipulate the relative value assessment inherent in public opinion toward the use of force by convincing the



public that the merits of an intervention outweigh the costs (e.g., Powlick 1991; Hinckley 1992; Storrs and Serafino 1993). But such efforts – euphemistically referred to as “education” campaigns – frequently fail to increase public support for a policy (see e.g., Sobel 1993; Edwards 2003).

How does public opinion affect the president’s crisis response choice? In the first stage of the decision making process, the president can infer the public’s relative value assessment – the public’s estimate of the expected benefits of a foreign policy success relative to anticipated U.S. casualties – from public opinion polls. The president can then rule out crisis response alternatives that clearly violate the preferences of a sizeable segment of the public. For example, when the bulk of the public supports the use of force, the president may conclude that the public is mostly tolerant of U.S. casualties, preferring a foreign policy success. In this case, the president may rule out alternatives that have a low probability of achieving foreign policy success – i.e., non-force alternatives such as diplomatic efforts or economic sanctions – to circumvent potential domestic political punishment.

*H1*: Public support for the use of force is likely to be associated with higher Crisis response alternatives.

If an overwhelming majority of Americans oppose military involvement in an international crisis, the president may conclude that the public is largely averse to U.S. casualties in the crisis under consideration. In order to avoid domestic political retribution, the president may simply discard the alternative that is likely to result in the highest number of American fatalities – Land force assault.

*H2: Public opposition to the use of force is likely to result in the selection of lower Crisis response choices.*

Presidential decision making in the face of public ambivalence or indifference is not as straightforward as situations in which public preferences are unequivocal. In these cases, the president is reluctant to risk the lives of U.S. service members because no sizeable segment of the public stands in support of military involvement, indicating that the public is not clearly tolerant of troop fatalities. But the president is also disinclined to risk a foreign policy failure because the public is not unambiguously opposed to forceful action. In such situations, presidents can be expected to reject alternatives that lay at the extremes in terms of anticipated casualties and foreign policy success. In other words, mixed signals or apathy on the part of the public should lead presidents to reject non-force alternatives as well as the utilization of land forces in the first stage of the decision making process.

*H3: Public ambivalence or indifference about the use of force is likely to result in the selection of intermediate Crisis response choices.*

The above discussion focuses on the first stage of the Poliheuristic decision making process. In this stage, presidents rule out alternatives that clearly violate the public opinion prerequisite. Thus, the hypotheses are stated in such a way as to specify negative relationships between the levels of public opinion and the various crisis response choices. In the following subsections, I discuss how military and international-strategic considerations shape the president's ultimate choice in the second stage of the Poliheuristic decision making process.

### **The Military Dimension**

While any number of nontrivial dimensions can be considered in the second stage of the decision making process (Mintz, Geva and DeRouen 1994), presidents weigh the implications of the remaining alternatives on the military and strategic dimensions (see e.g., Mintz 1993; Brulé 2005). The remaining alternatives are evaluated in the second stage according to their ability to maximize benefits (minimize costs) simultaneously on the military and strategic dimensions. On the military dimension, remaining alternatives are assessed with respect to such military considerations as capabilities, logistics, and the likelihood of success. Alternatives that have the capacity to defeat enemy forces in the target area, are well-suited to such logistical factors as distance to the crisis location, and promise the highest probability of successfully achieving the foreign policy objectives articulated by the president will have the highest “score” on the military dimension (see Brulé 2005).

Since World War II, U.S. troops have faced the prospect of fighting forces with a similar level of military capabilities in relatively few situations – e.g., the Chinese in Korea and Vietnam as well as the Soviets in Berlin and Cuba. Yet an aversion to military defeat is a prominent consideration to presidents (e.g., Russett 1990; Haass 1999). This does not mean that presidents are reluctant to take risks and approve daring, uncertain operations (see also Kahneman and Tversky 1979; Mintz 1993; Vertzberger 1998). For example, military operations like those aimed at rescuing U.S. hostages in Iran and Cambodia hold little room for error and offer a relatively low probability of success (see e.g., Rowan 1975; Brulé 2005). But a risky operation may be the “best” alternative remaining after the president has ruled out other options expected to damage his domestic

political fortunes. When considered in conjunction with international-strategic factors (see below) and, perhaps, normative considerations, presidents may be unwilling to bring all of the U.S.'s military might to bear on a crisis (e.g., Tannenwald 1999).

In addition to the fighting capabilities of the U.S. military, presidents have the luxury of projecting force virtually anywhere on the globe (Haass 1999). Forward-deployed forces in Europe and East Asia can be quickly positioned to intervene in nearby crises. Similarly, naval and air forces can be routed to troubled areas with relative ease and speed. Consequently, distant crises are rarely ignored on the basis of their locations. However, distance coupled with terrain may be a factor. For example, vast distances characterized by dense jungles or harsh desert may influence the president's crisis response choice (Bennett and Stam 1996).

Although the U.S. possesses sufficient military capabilities to overcome a number of logistical and operational obstacles, relative capabilities and distance can be expected to play a role in influencing the president's choice. To be sure, both of these concerns may impact the expected duration of an operation should the president choose to employ the military in response to a crisis. A stubborn adversary may thwart U.S. attempts to achieve objectives and kill many U.S. troops, prolonging military operations and reducing domestic support for the intervention (e.g., Russett 1990; Mintz 1993). Likewise, mobilizing and deploying troops to locations far from U.S. shores or overseas bases may make an alternative such as a land force assault less attractive.

*H4:* As the U.S. relative capabilities increase, presidents are more likely to choose higher Crisis response choices.

*H5*: When the location of a crisis is near the U.S., the president is more likely to choose higher Crisis response choices.

### **The International-Strategic Dimension**

The strategic dimension for the U.S. is largely concerned with the implications of the remaining alternatives for such factors as the global balance of power and grand strategy. Until 1989, the Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union dominated world affairs. During the Cold War, the U.S. typically challenged Soviet efforts to obtain military or materiel advantages. Similarly, the U.S. grand strategy of containment sought to prevent the Soviet Union's expansion of political influence (see e.g., Gaddis 2005). For example, consider the Carter administration's decision to launch a rescue mission to free U.S. hostages in Iran in 1980 (see e.g., Brulé 2005). A noteworthy international development that occurred during the hostage crisis was the Soviet invasion of Iran's neighbor, Afghanistan, in December 1979, which would have implications for U.S. military action in Iran. If the U.S. failed to take action to free the hostages, it might signal a lack of resolve to the Soviets, undermining U.S. foreign policy credibility (e.g., Excerpts from President's Interview 1980). However, a large-scale use of force against Iran held the potential to push the nascent revolutionary regime into the arms of the Soviet Union (e.g., Hoffman 1980). This result would undermine the grand strategy of containment.

Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. has yet to articulate a grand strategy as singular and coherent as Kennan's strategy of containment. But a variety of competing visions has served (at least) four overarching foreign policy goals: 1) nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, 2) "democratic enlargement" – promotion of democracy, 3)

the war on terrorism, 4) maintenance of strategic alliances such as NATO (see e.g., Posen and Ross 1996; Brinkley 1997; Art 1998; Haley 2004). Clearly, there is a large variety of overarching foreign policy goals and grand strategies over time and across crises. This complicates the task of objectively assessing the president's concerns with the international-strategic implications of a crisis response alternative across a large number of cases. In general, we should expect a difference in the president's crisis response choice according to whether a crisis occurs during the Cold War or post-Cold War period.

*H6:* The Cold War is likely to critically affect the president's crisis response.

In summary, the president rules out crisis response alternatives in the first stage of the decision making process on the basis of each alternative's ability to satisfy the public opinion prerequisite. Alternatives that clearly violate the public's preferences with respect to the public's relative value assessment of a use of force are rejected. In the second stage of the process, the president selects a crisis response choice among surviving alternatives by identifying that which maximizes benefits (minimizes costs) in terms of military and international-strategic concerns.

## CONCLUSION

Although public opinion toward foreign policy has been treated as malleable and unstable (e.g., Lippmann 1922; Almond 1950; Converse 1964), recent research suggests that it is coherent, stable and rational (e.g., Caspary 1970; Hurwitz and Peffley 1987; Page and Shapiro 1992). But these attributes of mass public opinion are not sufficient to specify the particular causal mechanisms that link public opinion to presidential decisions to use force. Using insights from empirical studies examining the influence of casualties

on public opinion and the Polyheuristic Theory, I have developed an explanation that seeks to remedy previous shortcomings in the literature. As a starting point, I have identified four types of presidential crisis responses and linked them theoretically to expected casualties and the likelihood of foreign policy success. Then, I describe the micro-theoretical foundations concerning the determinants of public attitudes toward the use of force. Specifically, public opinion is driven by the public's ex ante relative value assessment of using force abroad. Presidents have an understanding of the forces at work in shaping public opinion and – because they are reluctant to deliberately defy the preferences of the citizenry – they rule out alternatives that are clearly at odds with the public in the first stage of the decision making process. The president's ultimate crisis response choice is selected during an analytic process in which the remaining alternatives are weighed on the military and international-strategic dimensions.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

In this chapter, I will describe the research design for empirically evaluating the hypotheses concerning the impact of public attitudes toward the use force as well as military and international-strategic factors on the president's selection of a crisis response across international crises. The aim is to make as explicit as possible the procedures by which cases were selected, data were collected, and variables operationalized and measured. Because different research designs may produce contradictory results, it is also necessary to discuss how the research design described here differs from other designs used to evaluate the presidential use of force. Indeed, empirical studies of the presidential use of force have employed a diversity of measures and case selection criteria. When these differences are not explicitly acknowledged, a body of disparate findings may thwart the progressive accumulation of scientific knowledge about the presidential use of force.

This chapter will proceed as follows. First, I will discuss the case selection procedures. I use two different data collections to identify international crises. Second, I describe the dependent variable, which is an ordinal, categorical measure of presidential crisis response choice. Third, I explain how the key independent variables specified by the theoretical argument are measured. Fourth, I detail a set of control variables intended to take account of alternative explanations of the use of force. Finally, I briefly contrast this research design with previous studies and conclude.



## DATA

I identify a set of relevant international crises during the years 1949 to 2001 using the International Crisis Behavior data (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000). In order to assess the robustness of the findings, I also employ the Militarized Interstate Disputes data (Jones, Bremer, and Singer 1996). These data sets were compiled for somewhat different purposes and use different definitions and criteria. If similar results obtain across both datasets despite these differences, we can have greater confidence in the relationships indicated by the findings.

The unit of analysis is the international crisis, which facilitates inferences about crisis-specific factors. In this study, each observation is a crisis or incident in which the United States responded in some way. This design eliminates many of the problems associated with temporal dynamics (Mitchell and Moore 2002). There are 206 crises in the ICB data in which the U.S. was involved in some way and 215 according to the MID data.

There is some debate concerning the underlying process by which presidents perceive international crises. Many studies of the presidential use of force assume (either implicitly or explicitly) that there is a constant stream of possible opportunities to use force (James and Hristoulas 1994; Hess and Orphanides 1995; Fordham 1998a; 1998b). These research designs examine some unit of time (e.g., years, quarters, etc.) in order to draw inferences about temporal factors that serve as facilitating conditions for the use of force. But other research (e.g., Meernik 1994; Wang 1995; Meernik and Waterman 1996) examines crises in order to draw inferences about attributes of the crisis or U.S.

adversaries and allies participating in the crisis. These studies imply that opportunities to use force arise because of exogenous events.

Research design choices appear to have serious consequences for the conclusions of use of force studies. Some scholars (e.g., Leeds and Davis 1997; Smith 1996; Fordham 1998a) suggest that presidents perceive crises on the basis of certain factors, leading to selection effects. This self-selection process may produce bias if presidents select themselves into crises on the basis of unobserved factors associated with the dependent variable (e.g., King, Keohane, and Verba 1994: 135; Collier and Mahoney 1996). For example, a president may choose to get involved in a crisis based on his current approval rating. But when such factors are correlated with the dependent variable but not included in the estimation, the effect of included explanatory variables may be attenuated, leading to erroneous inferences (e.g., King, Keohane, and Verba 1994: 130; Collier and Mahoney 1996). Because the research design I have developed is aimed at estimating the influence of crisis-specific factors, I must elucidate how temporal factors such as approval ratings and economic conditions are likely to influence the results.

#### DEPENDENT VARIABLE: CRISIS RESPONSE CHOICE

In order to assess the theoretical argument, I developed a new categorical variable called crisis response choice, which consists of four outcomes: non-force, show of force, aerial bombardment only, and land force assault. This new measure serves as the dependent variable in this research. Each category corresponds to the modal manner in which force is employed in response to a given crisis. Previous operationalizations of the presidential use of force include a dichotomy between instances in which force was used and those in which it was not (e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Oneal 1991) as well

Table 3.1. Selected Empirical Studies of the Use of Force.

| <b>Study</b>              | <b>Units of Analysis</b>   | <b>Spatio-Temporal Domain</b> | <b>Dependent Variable(s)</b>   |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Blechman and Kaplan 1978  | Years                      | U.S., 1949-1976               | Uses of force per year   |
| Ostrom and Job 1986       | Quarters                   | U.S., 1949-1976               | Use of major force   |
| James and Oneal 1991      | Quarters, crises           | U.S., 1949-1976               | 1) Use of major force<br>2) Force level used   |
| Morgan and Bickers 1992   | Quarters, incidents        | U.S., 1953-1976               | 1) MID initiation<br>2) Days between presidential approval survey and MID initiation |
| Meernik 1994              | Opportunities to use force | U.S., 1948-1988               | Force level  |
| James and Hristoulas 1994 | Quarters                   | U.S., 1949-1976               | International crisis involvement   |
| DeRouen 1995              | Quarters                   | U.S., 1949-1984               | 1) Highest force level used<br>2) Presidential approval                              |
| Wang 1996                 | Crises                     | U.S., 1954-1986               | U.S. major response to crisis  |
| Meernik and Waterman 1996 | Opportunities to use force | U.S., 1953-1988               | Use of force   |
| Gowa 1998                 | Years                      | U.S., 1870-1992               | 1) MID involvements per year<br>2) Uses of force per year                            |
| Fordham 1998a             | Years, quarters            | U.S., 1949-1994               | 1) Uses of force per year/quarter<br>2) Opportunities to use force                   |
| Fordham 1998b             | Quarters                   | U.S., 1949-1994               | Uses of force per quarter  |
| Meernik 2000              | Months, crisis-months      | U.S., 1948-1990               | 1) Crisis occurrence<br>2) Use of force in crisis month                              |

as the frequency of uses of force during a time period such as quarters or years (e.g., Gowa 1998; Fordham 1998a). Although some studies examine the level of force used by the president, the level varies according to the extent of violence or number of units deployed to the crisis (e.g., Meernik 1994; DeRouen 1995; Howell and Pevehouse 2005). Table 3.1 summarizes many of the previous use of force operationalizations. These previous definitions of the use of force fail to distinguish between the modes of crisis response choice I identify and prevent the assessment of the theoretical linkages I have specified in the previous chapters.

### **Non-Force Response**

I indicate that a crisis resulted in a non-force response when the policy pursued did not include the use of military force. Such responses consist of, for example, verbal denunciations, negotiations, sanctions, threats to use force, and no response (i.e., nothing). In crises identified by the ICB data, the outcome of the dependent variable is coded as non-force when “major Response” is less than 6 and the U.S. is a crisis actor.<sup>6</sup> If the U.S. is not coded as a crisis actor but is involved in some way in the crisis, ICB identifies these crises as well. In these crises, the outcome of the dependent variable is coded as non-force when “U.S. Involvement” is less than 7.<sup>7</sup> In crises identified by the

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<sup>6</sup> The five categories of Major Response in the ICB data that are collapsed here are: 1) No response, 2) Verbal act, 3) Political act, 4) Economic act, 5) Other non-violent act. However, in some instances, another ICB Major Response category, “Covert or Semi-military,” is included here when the extent of U.S. involvement is military aid.

<sup>7</sup> The categories of U.S. Involvement in the ICB data that are collapsed here are: 1) U.S. not involved, 2) U.S. non-intervention or neutrality, 3) U.S. political involvement, 4) U.S. economic involvement, 5) U.S. propaganda involvement. Cases coded as U.S. covert or Semi-military involvement are included when U.S. troops are mobilized or deployed to the crisis area.

MID data, I coded the outcome as non-force when “hostility Level” was equal to 1 or 2 (“no militarized action” and “threat to use force,” respectively).<sup>8</sup>

### **Show of Force**

I code a crisis as having a show of force outcome if military forces are utilized in a non-violent manner. A show of force response includes outcomes in which military forces were placed on alert, mobilized or deployed in response to the crisis. In crises identified by the ICB data, the outcome of the dependent variable is coded as show of force when “major Response” is equal to 6 or 7 (“non-violent military act” and “multiple including non-violent military act,” respectively) and the U.S. is a crisis actor. If the U.S. is not coded as a crisis actor but is involved in some way in the crisis, the outcome of the dependent variable is coded as show of force when “U.S. Involvement” is equal to 7 (“U.S. semi-military involvement”). In crises identified by the MID data, I coded the outcome as non-force when “Hostility Level” was equal to 3 (“Display of force).

### **Aerial Bombardment**

I code crises as having an aerial bombardment outcome when U.S. forces carry out an attack, but no ground forces are employed. Aerial bombardment responses include air strikes, missile strikes, and naval bombardments. Despite the interest in aerial bombardment as an independent and dependent variable (e.g., Pape 1996; Daalder and O’Hanlon 1999; Horowitz and Reiter 2001), neither the ICB nor the MID data code crises such that uses of force that entailed only aerial bombardments can be identified. Consequently, I examined the narratives of the crises listed for ICB in Brecher and Wilkenfeld (2000) to identify whether a crisis resulted in an aerial bombardment by the

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<sup>8</sup> I also coded as Non-force instances in which Customs agents or Coast Guard personnel seized cargo or fishing vessels.

U.S. Similarly, I obtained details concerning the crises listed in the MID data using Fordham and Sarver (2001). Additionally, I cross-checked these sources with additional sources such as *The New York Times*, Pape (1996), Grimmett (1999), and *Facts on File*.

### **Land Force Assault**

The dependent variable is coded as having a land force assault outcome if land forces were in direct confrontation with enemy forces at some point during the crisis. Like the aerial bombardment outcome, the ICB and MID data do not identify land force assaults in their variable operationalizations. Once again, I turned to the narratives (e.g., Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000; Fordham and Sarver 2001) and other sources (e.g., *The New York Times*; Pape 1996; Grimmett 1999; *Facts on File*) to identify whether U.S. military involvement in a crisis could be characterized by a land force assault. It should be emphasized that crisis outcomes that included *both* aerial bombardment *and* land force assault were coded as land force assault responses.

These four outcomes of crisis response choice may be conceptualized as ordered when understood in terms of their expected effects with respect to casualties and foreign policy success. However, there is nothing inherently ordinal about the dependent variable. Indeed, each category of crisis response choice can be thought of as qualitatively different the others. This will have implications for the choice of estimators, which I discuss near the end of this chapter. Crisis response choice is coded as follows:

- 0 Non-force response
- 1 Show of force
- 2 Aerial bombardment
- 3 Land force assault

By these criteria, 141 crises identified in the ICB data resulted in non-force responses by the U.S. (68%); in 36 crises, the U.S. responded with a show of force (17%); the president ordered aerial bombardments in 15 crises (7%); and 14 crises resulted in land force assaults (7%). Crisis responses according to the crises identified in the MID data break down in the following way: the president responded with a non-force alternative in 74 crises (34%); 95 crisis ended in a show of force (44%); aerial bombardments were employed in 27 crises (12.5%); and land force assault characterized the thrust of the president's crisis response in 19 crises (8.8%).

Figures 3.1 and 3.2 display the frequency of each crisis response according to the data set used to identify crises. The modal category for crises identified by the ICB data is Non-force, while the nodal category in the MID data is Show of force. The differences in the distributions of the dependent variable across these two datasets are due primarily to coding decisions used to identify crises. ICB identifies crises on the basis of three conditions: "a threat to one or more basic values, along with an awareness of a finite time for response to the value threat, and a heightened probability of involvement in military hostilities" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000, 3). A Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) is identified as any explicit threat, display, or use of military force by one state against another (Jones, Bremer and Singer 1996, 166-167). Clearly, the two datasets differ markedly. On the one hand, ICB includes a wider range of interstate behaviors such as alliance formations or dissolutions, economic or diplomatic sanctions, and treaty violations – none of which are required to escalate to the threat of a use of force in order to be identified as a crisis (see Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000). On the other hand, the more narrow definition of MID lends itself to the identification of actions that were not

necessarily directed by an individual with the responsibility of foreign policy making. Consequently, MID data include many more inadvertent clashes, as well as fishing boat incidents (see e.g., Fordham and Sarver 2001).

The key difference between the two data sets concerns the perceptions of high-ranking foreign policy officials. If historical documents indicate that a leader perceived an interstate crisis in which military force was a possibility, ICB includes these crisis. But MID do not code cases on the basis of perceptions, only actions. These different coding decisions are clear in the differences between the distributions and will, as will be seen in Chapter IV, have implications for observed relationships.

#### KEY INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The key independent variables are those that are explicitly identified by the theoretical framework. The Poliheuristic explanation I set forth in the previous chapter points to a key variable on the domestic political dimension (public opinion), two key variables on the military dimension (relative capabilities and contiguity), and a key variable on the international-strategic dimension (Cold War years).

##### **The Domestic Political Dimension: Public Opinion**

On the domestic political dimension, public opinion is divided according to the direction and intensity of aggregate preferences – Public support, Public opposition, and Ambivalence/indifference. These variables portray the extent to which the American public supports the use of military force in response to an international crisis. The source for these data is Mintz and Brulé (2004).

These data were collected by conducting thorough searches of opinion poll data using the name of the target state in order to find poll questions that pertain to public



Figure 3.1. Dependent Variable, International Crisis Behavior Data

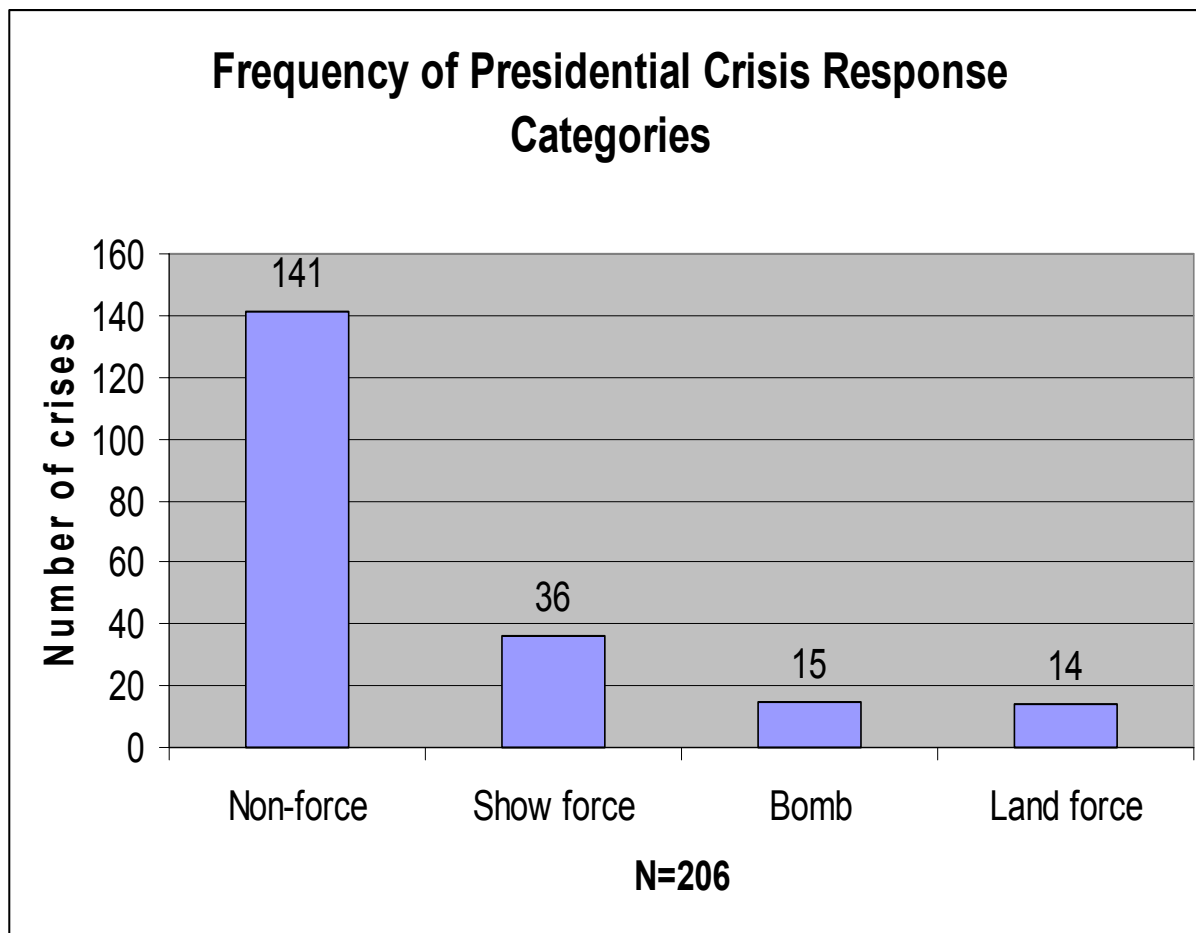
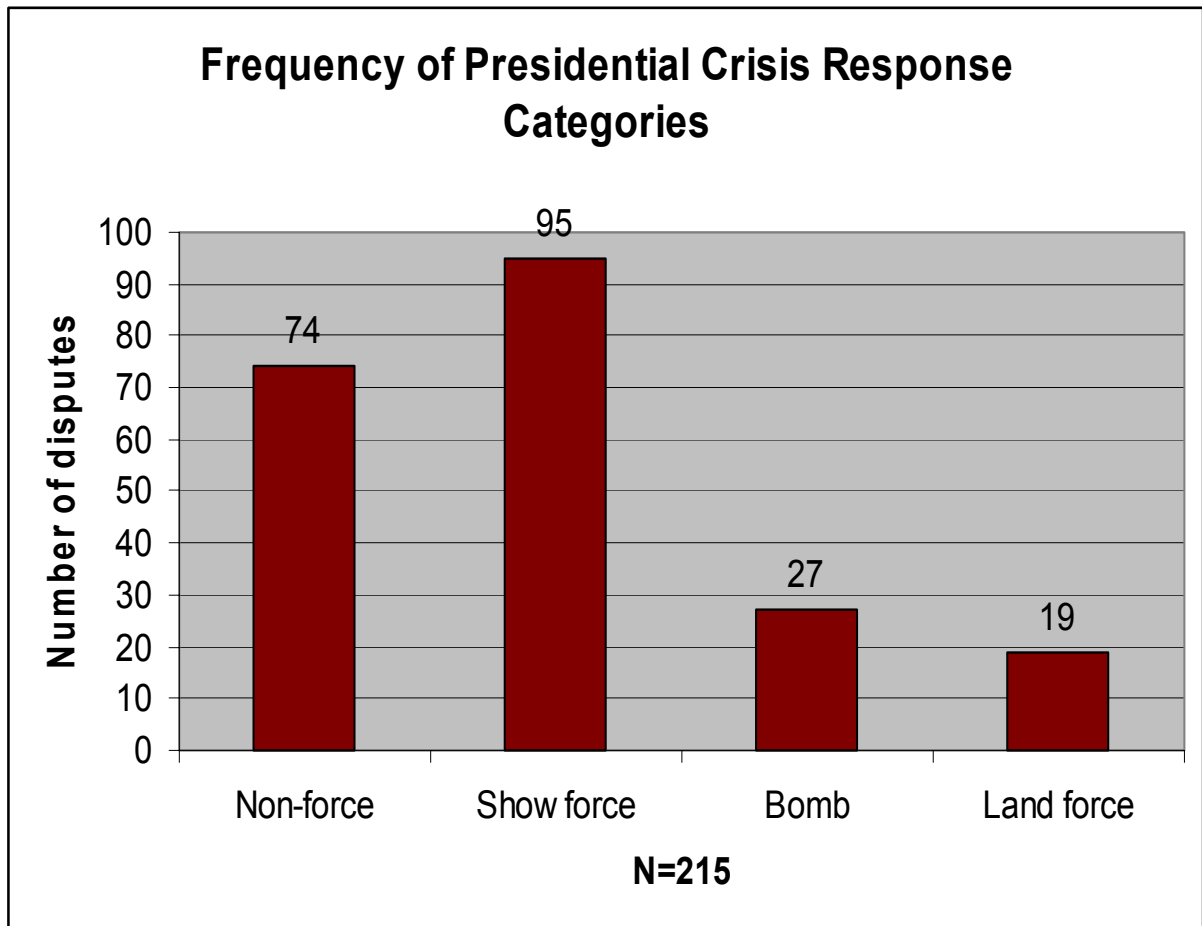


Figure 3.2. Dependent Variable, Militarized Interstate Disputes Data



preferences concerning the U.S. use of military force against these countries.<sup>9</sup> Polls conducted any time before the ultimate crisis response and the up to five years prior to the ultimate crisis response were included.<sup>10</sup> In order to ensure temporal sequence, evaluations of completed or ongoing military operations are not included. From these questions, the values corresponding to the proportion of persons polled who indicate that they support and oppose the use of force were recorded (Mintz and Brulé 2004).

Two problems encountered during the collection of the data center on priming effects and conditional statements. First, in some cases, pollsters apparently sought a different reaction from respondents based on the inclusion of certain information in the question. For example, one poll asked the following question during the 1991 Persian Gulf crisis: “Iraq has over a million troops, more than 5,000 tanks and more than 500 combat aircraft. Do you think the United States should or should not invade Iraq to force it to withdraw from Kuwait?” During the same time period, pollsters also queried respondents with the following question: “Would you favor or oppose using U.S. troops to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait?” Clearly, the former question was designed to elicit a different response from the latter. Whenever possible, I simply avoided questions that appeared to have been laden with priming statements when other, neutrally worded and temporally proximate polls were available.

The second problem encountered during the data collection surrounds the use of conditional statements in poll questions. A number of poll questions consist of conditional, “if... then” statements. These questions were not used unless they were

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<sup>9</sup> The Roper Center’s polls and surveys database available via lexis-nexis.com was searched.

<sup>10</sup> Because non-force responses and shows of force may be precursors to eventual violent military responses, I include all relevant polls prior to the cessation of the crisis for crises in which non-force and show of force responses were the ultimate crisis response.

directly concerned with the central issue of the international crisis in question. For example, in the crisis preceding the Persian Gulf War of 1991, pollsters asked respondents whether they favored the use of force if the U.S. hostages held in Iraq were released. Because the central issue in the 1991 Persian Gulf crisis centered on Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the issue of the U.S. hostages held by Hussein was of peripheral importance. Consequently, such polls were not used. However, poll questions consisting of conditional statements eventually approximated reality, they were included in the construction of the public opinion variables. For example, respondents were asked prior to the commencement of Operation Desert Storm whether they favored the use of force in the event that economic sanctions against Iraq failed to persuade Hussein to withdraw his forces from Kuwait before January 15, 1991. The conditions specified in this query were satisfied by events and, accordingly, this poll was used in the construction of the public opinion variables.

### **Public support**

The primary independent variables are dichotomous and are constructed from raw proportions of persons polled. Public support takes on the value of "1" when the proportion of persons polled who indicate that they support the use of force is greater than 60%. I expect Public support to have a positive effect on presidential crisis response choices, resulting in higher responses.

### **Public opposition**

Public opposition is equal to "1" when the proportion of persons polled who indicate that they are opposed to the use of force exceeds 60%. Public opposition should

have a negative effect on presidential crisis response choice. Specifically, opposition should result in lower crisis response choices.

### **Public ambivalence/indifference**

Ambivalence/indifference assumes the value of “1” when both Public support and Public opposition are equal to zero – the proportion of persons who support the use of force and the proportion of those opposing the use of force are both less than 60%. In other words, the segments of the public opposing and supporting the use of force are approaching equality or neither group has a clear majority. I expect Public ambivalence/indifference to be associated with intermediate crisis response choices.

### **No guidance**

Because opinion polls were not conducted for all crises in which the U.S. became involved, limiting the analyses to only those crises for which data are available may contribute to selection bias. In order to compare the effect of public opinion with crisis in which the public did not register its preferences, I include a dichotomous variable reflecting crises in which no polls were taken. This variable – termed, “No guidance” – indicates the absence of opinion polls pertaining to a crisis; that is, the public does not register its preferences and, consequently, the president is unable to make use of its guidance.

Intuitively, one might expect No guidance to be associated with intermediate crisis response choices – show of force and aerial bombardment – because it may be thought of as laying between support and opposition. But previous theoretical literature (see e.g., Kusnitz 1984; Russett 1990; Powlick 1991; Stimson 1991; Foyle 1999) suggests that democratic leaders may rule out certain alternatives on the basis of expected

opposition. A lack of opinion poll data may indicate that the president was reluctant to emphasize U.S. participation in an international crisis, which accounts for few news stories and, consequently, the lack of polling activity. Consequently, it may be more likely that No guidance is associated with non-force alternatives due to efforts by the president to bury U.S. participation in a crisis.

### **Alternate measures of public opinion**

In addition to our use of two data sets, I assess the robustness of relationships by defining public opinion for three different time periods during the course of the crisis. The first of these is the average of all public opinion polls taken during the course of the crisis. The second is the earliest poll available relevant to the crisis. Finally, I define a set of dummy variables corresponding to the last poll taken prior to the president's major crisis response choice. This gives a total of nine public opinion dummy variables. If I consistently obtain the expected results across these measures, more confidence can be had in the observed relationships.

I should also address here the potential charge that the operational definitions of the categorical measures of public opinion appear to be arbitrary. Admittedly, defining the thresholds for public support and opposition at greater than 60% seems to be devoid of rigorous theoretical guidance. Why not 61%? To address this matter, I conduct sensitivity analyses in which I sequentially redefine the threshold values of support and opposition, and then re-estimate their influence on the dependent variable. This procedure assesses the sensitivity of the operational definitions and tells us which ranges of values are associated with the president's crisis response choice (see Appendix B).

Figure 3.3. Average Public Opinion, International Crisis Behavior Data

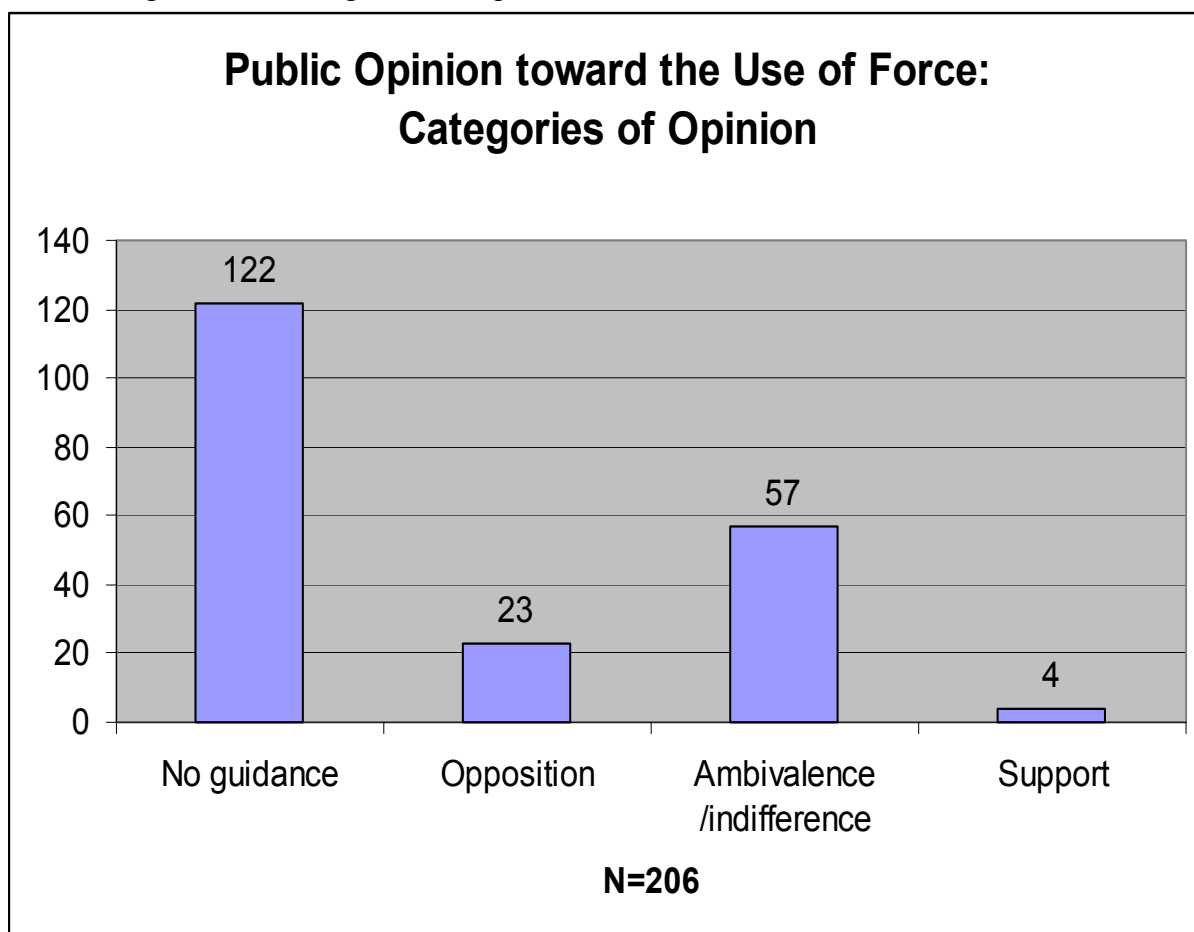
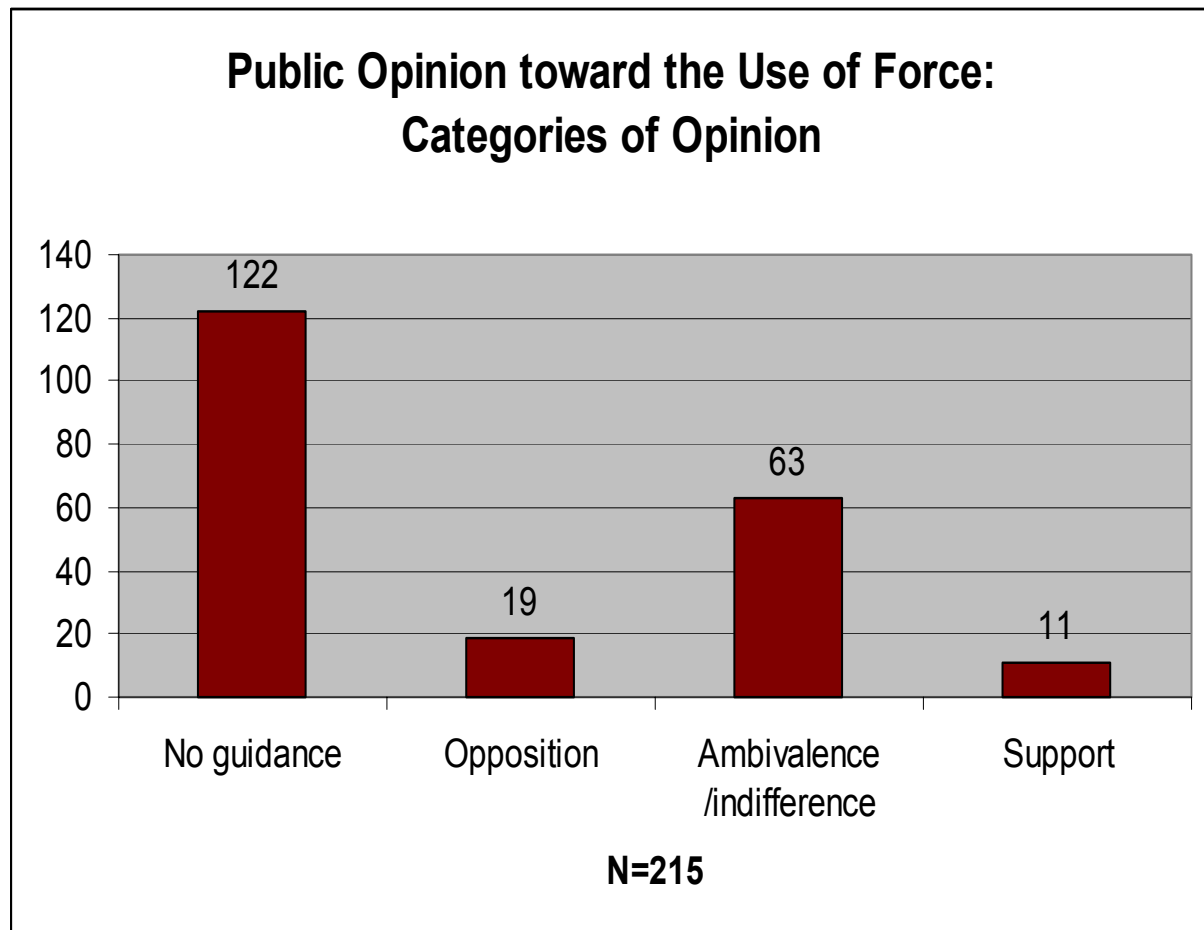


Figure 3.4. Average Public Opinion, Militarized Interstate Disputes Data





Figures 3.3 and 3.4 show how the public opinion data are distributed when the average of all polls are used to construct the categories of public opinion toward the use of force. In the ICB data, No guidance is the modal category, accounting for 59% of the crises. The public was opposed to the use of force in 11% of the crises. In 28% of the crises, public opinion was ambivalent or indifferent. The public was supportive of the use of force in only 2% of the crises. Oddly, in crises defined according to the MID data, No guidance accounts for the same number of crises as the ICB crises – although the crises identified by each dataset are not identical. No guidance accounts for public opinion in 56% of the crises identified by the MID data. The public was opposed to the use of force in 9% of the crises and, in 29% of the crises; public opinion was ambivalent or indifferent. The public was supportive of the use of force in 5% of the crises identified by the MID data.

Figures 3.5 and 3.6 display the distribution of the public opinion categories when only the earliest available poll pertaining to the crisis is used to compute the dummy variables. In the ICB data, the public initially opposed the use of force in 12% of the crises. The public's initial reaction to the use of force was ambivalence or indifference in 25% of the crises and, in 3.3% of the crises identified by the ICB data; the public was supportive of the use of force at the outset. According to crises identified by the MID data, the public was opposed to the use of force in the earliest available polls in 12% of the crises. The public was ambivalent or indifferent about the use of force in 26% of the crises. In 5.5% of the crises identified by the MID data, the public was initially supportive.

Figure 3.5. Initial Public Opinion, International Crisis Behavior Data

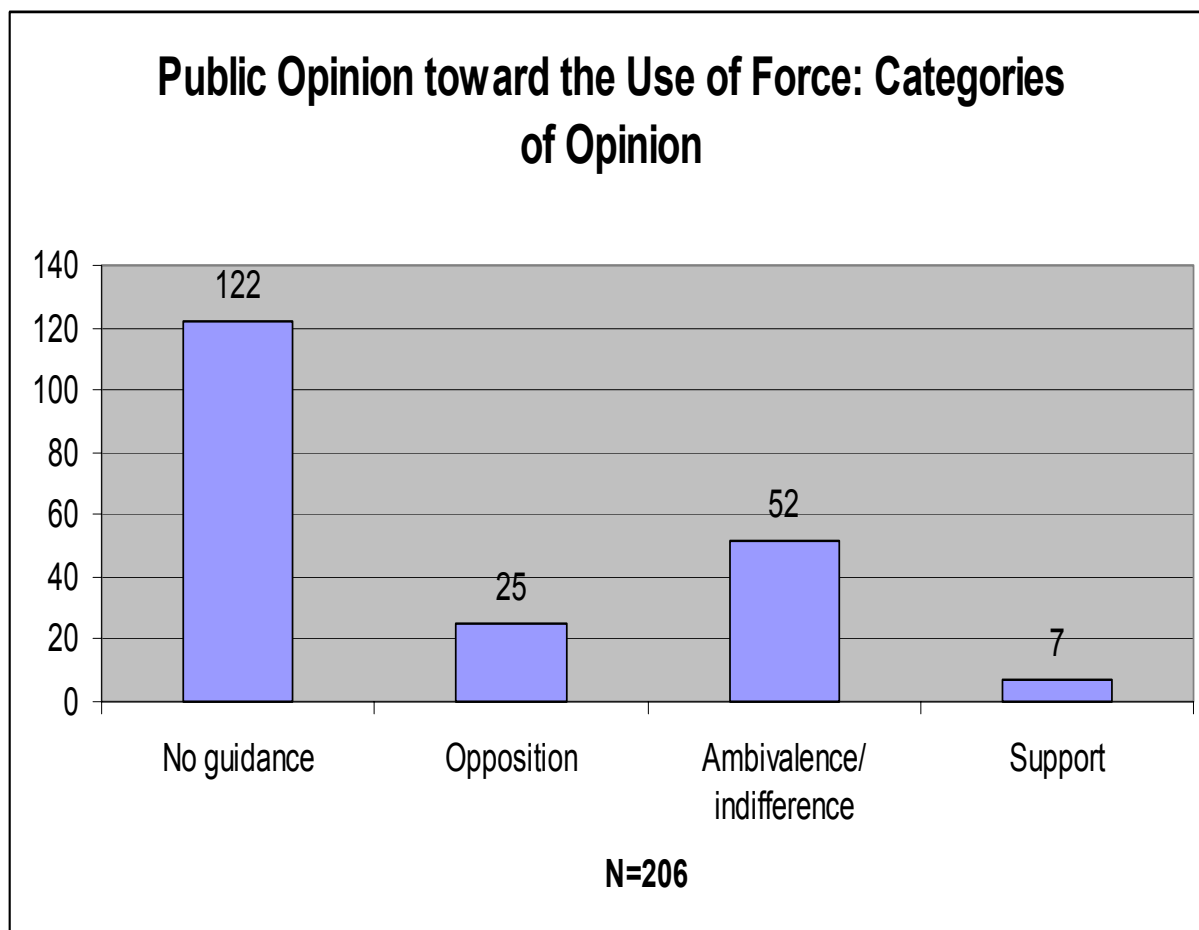


Figure 3.6. Initial Public Opinion, Militarized Interstate Disputes Data

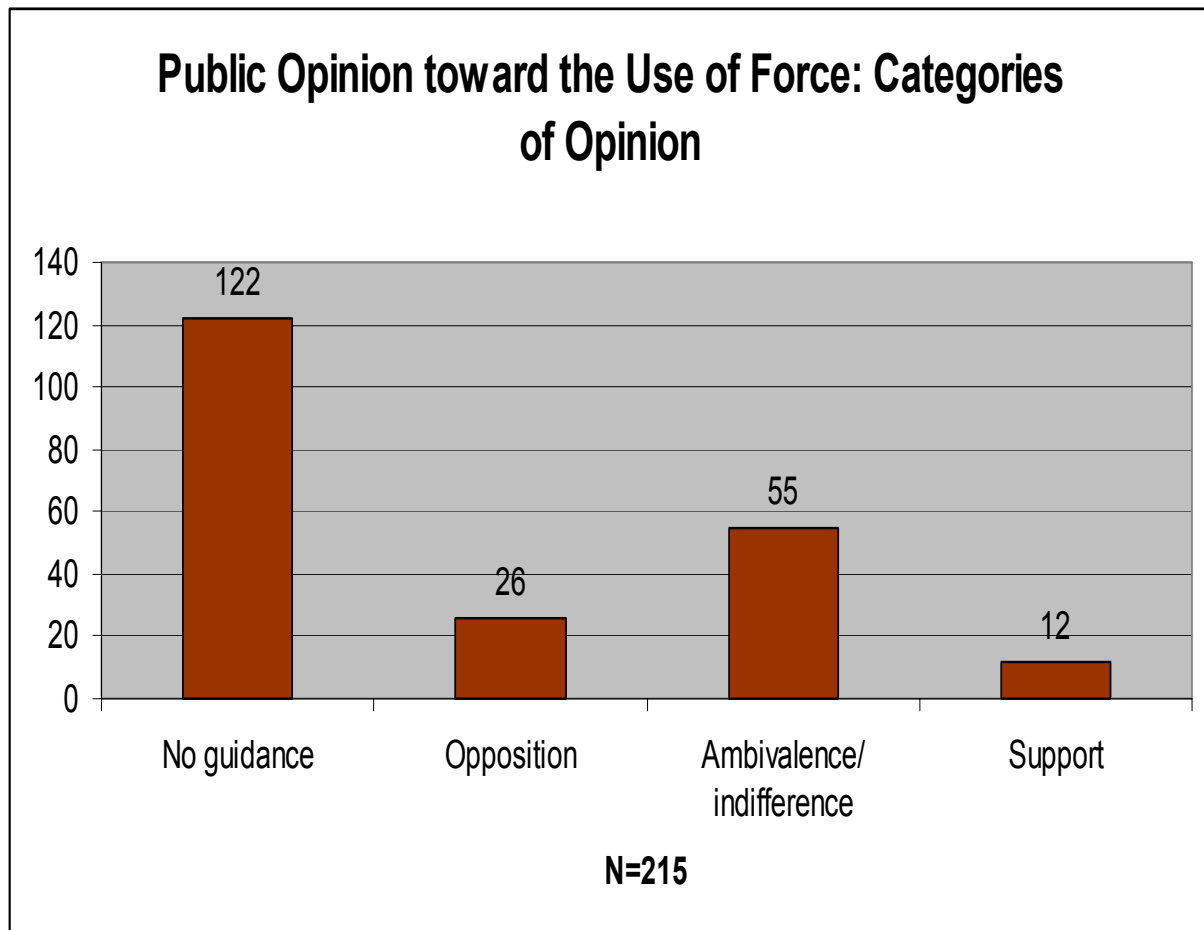


Figure 3.7. Latest Public Opinion, International Crisis Behavior Data

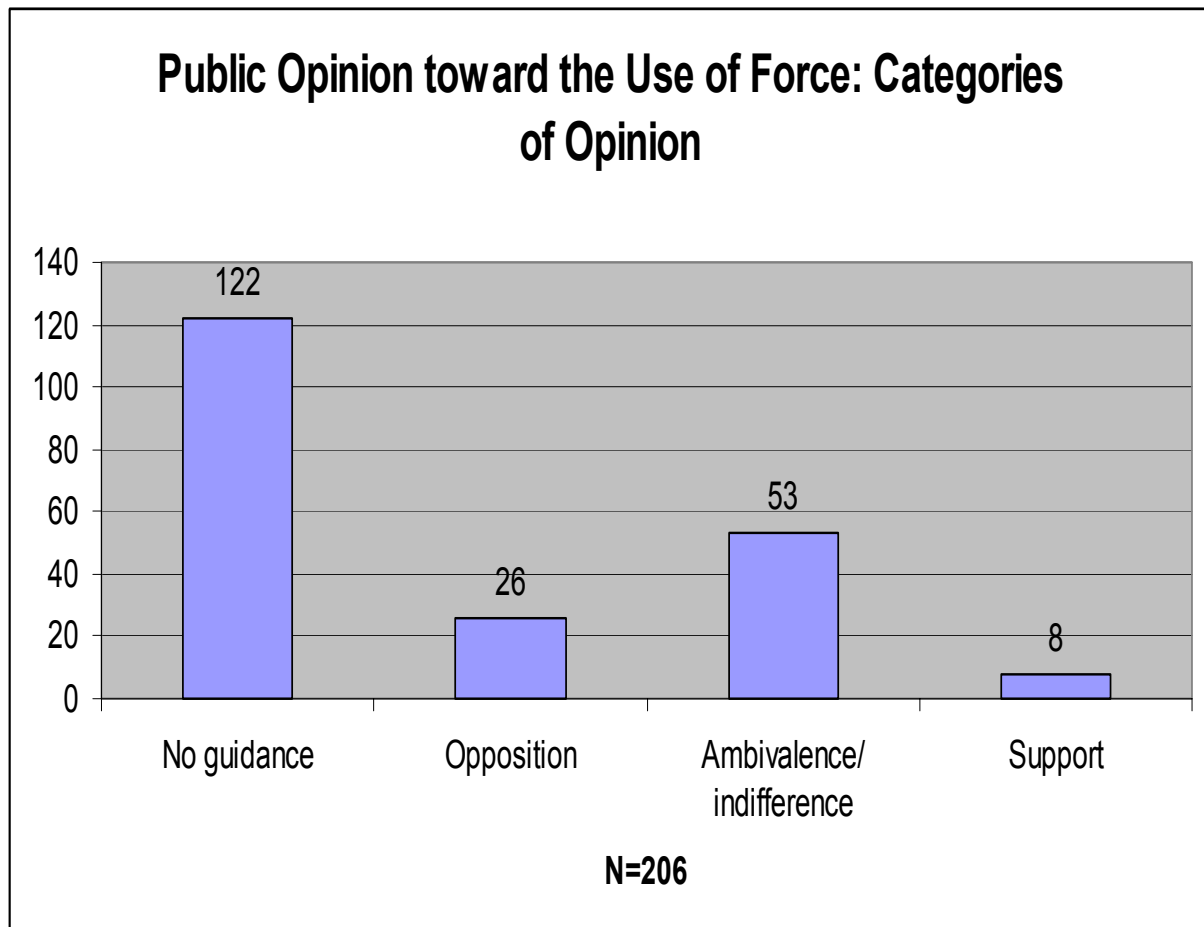
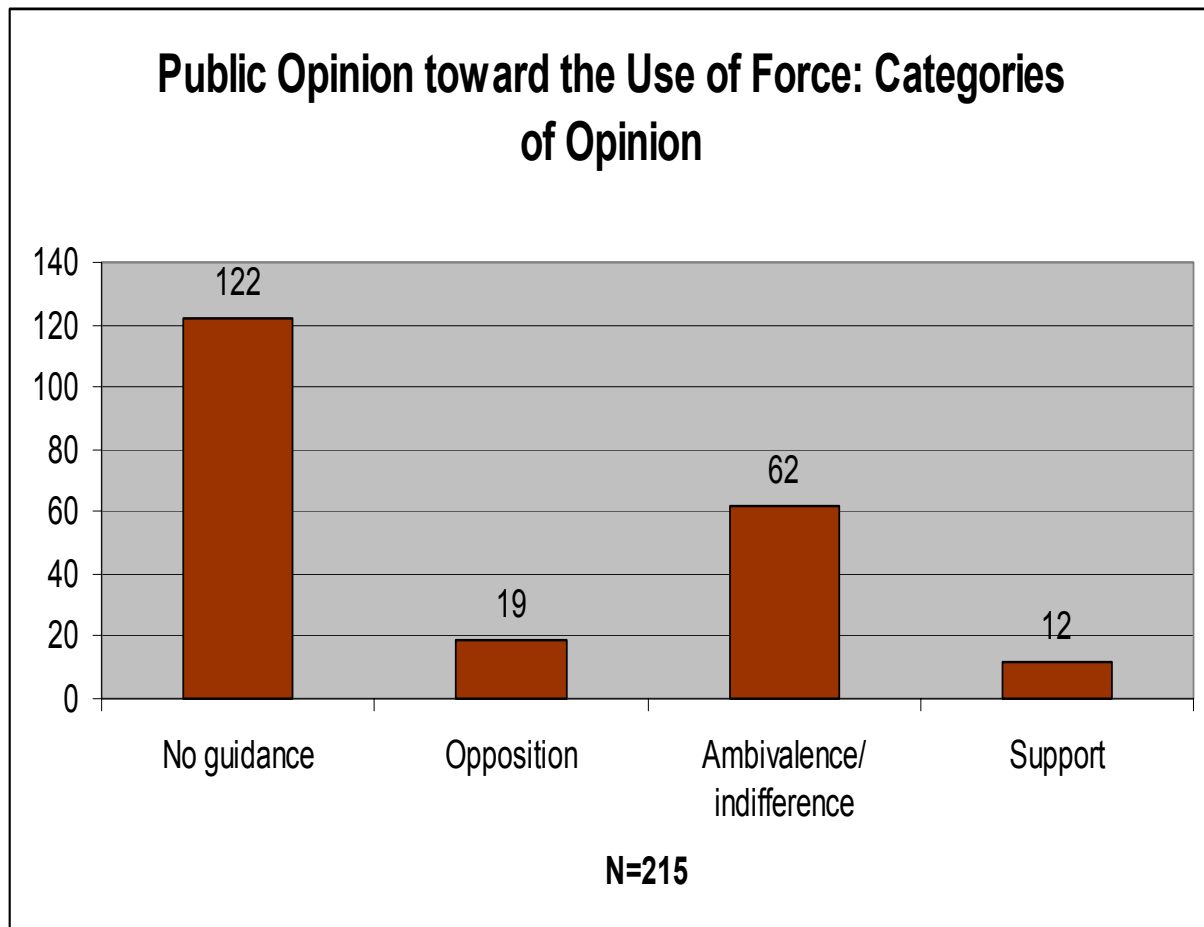


Figure 3.8. Latest Public Opinion, Militarized Interstate Disputes Data



Figures 3.7 and 3.8 show how the public opinion data are distributed when the last poll prior to the president's major crisis response is used to construct the categories of public opinion toward the use of force. In 12.6% of the crises identified in the ICB data, the latest poll available to the president before the ultimate crisis response indicated that the public was opposed to the use of force. The latest polls indicated that the public was ambivalent or indifferent toward the use of force in 26% of the crises. Public support accounts for 4% of the latest poll results according to the ICB data. In the MID crises, the public was opposed to the use of force in 8.8% of the crises. The public was ambivalent or indifferent in 29% of the crises and, according to the latest poll information available, the public indicated support for the use of force in 6% of the crises identified by the MID data.

It worth emphasizing here that the distributions of categories of public opinion are remarkably similar across the ICB and MID datasets. Despite the different data collection criteria used by these collections, the categories and time periods used to compute them produce comparable distributions. I suspect that these similarities have to do with the salience of crises recorded by both datasets, which resulted in polling for a similar number of crises.

### **Military Dimension: Relative Capabilities**

In order to assess Hypotheses 4a and 4b on the military dimension, I examine the impact of relative capabilities on the president's crisis response choice. Relative capabilities are thought to be an important factor in both crisis onset and escalation (e.g., Blainey 1988; Waltz 1979; Organski and Kugler 1980). According to the Poliheuristic account, the U.S. is less likely to resort to forceful crisis response alternatives when doing

so may lead to a protracted conflict with a powerful state. I include the variable Relative capabilities from the COW data on national material capabilities (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972). To measure Relative Capabilities, I calculate the U.S.'s share of capabilities within the dyad (i.e.,  $\text{U.S. capabilities} / (\text{U.S.} + \text{Target's capabilities})$ ), subtract .5, and take the absolute value. The variable ranges from 0 (equality) to .5 (one state possesses all capabilities within the dyad).

As a measure of the expected difficulties for military operations, Relative capabilities has some shortcomings. For example, it does not gauge the will of the U.S.'s adversary, difficulty of terrain, or the favored tactics of the U.S.'s enemy (e.g., guerilla warfare, suicide attacks) – all of which may diminish the advantages of a U.S. preponderance of military power (e.g., Bennett and Stam 1996). If the adversary is expected to be willful – thwarting U.S. objectives and killing many U.S. troops – domestic support for the intervention may erode (e.g., Russett 1990; Mintz 1993).

### **Military Dimension: Contiguity**

Hypotheses 5a and 5b suggest that presidents are more likely to respond to international crises with forceful alternatives when the crisis is geographically proximate to U.S. shores, allies or overseas bases. In the literature, geographic proximity has been shown to exert a strong influence on the probability that two states experience a crisis (e.g., Bremer 1992). Although U.S. presidents have the luxury of projecting force virtually anywhere on the globe (Haass 1999), crises that are located near the U.S. or its forward-deployed bases may be particularly tempting targets for the U.S. U.S. military forces can be inserted with relative logistical ease when they are already located near a crisis. I include a dummy variable, Contiguity, that equals 1 when a crisis is located in a

state sharing a land border – or is separated by 150 miles or less of water – with the U.S., its allies, or states hosting an American military installation.

### **International-Strategic Dimension: Cold War**

Hypothesis 6 indicates a significant role of the Cold War period in presidential crisis response. I include a dummy variable that takes on the value of “1” for the years 1949-1989 and zero otherwise. Although crisis opportunities increased during this period as the U.S. became one of two superpowers engaged in a proxy war for global power and influence, the looming risk of war with the Soviet Union also served as a constraint on U.S. military intervention (Gaddis 2005; Gowa 1998).

### **CONTROL VARIABLES**

In addition to the variable explicitly identified by the theoretical framework, a number of other explanations exist for the presidential use of force. Although these are frequently “diversionary” arguments – the president responds to declining domestic circumstances by using force abroad – other factors such as the “supply” of international crises and war involvement may also influence presidential decisions.

### **Presidential Approval**

The primary way in which public opinion enters into previous analyses of the use of force is presidential approval ratings (e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Oneal 1991; DeRouen 2000). The logic behind inclusion of this measure has been rooted in the “rally-‘round-the-flag” phenomenon (e.g., Mueller 1973). Given that presidents can boost their approval ratings by using force abroad, they may be more likely to undertake foreign adventures during times in which their approval is low (see e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986). However, with the exception of DeRouen (1995), most of these studies find a



positive relationship between presidential approval and the use of force (e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Oneal 1991).<sup>11</sup> I include a standard measure of Presidential approval to gauge the effect of presidential incentives to distract the public from poor domestic political conditions. Presidential approval is measured quarterly as the lag of the average percent of persons responding in the affirmative to periodic Gallup polls which ask, “do you approve of the job (name of president) is doing as president?”<sup>12</sup>

Although I expect a negative relationship between Presidential approval and higher crisis response choices, selection effects may attenuate the impact of this variable. If presidents are selecting themselves into international crises on the basis of low approval ratings, this reduces the observed variation in the Presidential approval variable and is unlikely to be significantly associated with a use of force (e.g., Fordham 1998a).

### **Economic Indicators**

In order to weigh the effect of the economy on the use of force, I will include three measures of domestic economic conditions. A number of previous studies find that when economic conditions are poor, presidents are more likely to use force (e.g., Russett 1990; DeRouen 1995; 2000; Fordham 1998a). While many of these use the “misery index” (e.g., James and Oneal 1991; Ostrom and Job 1986), Fordham (1998a) shows that diverse economic effects may have varying effects across different groups, which may facilitate or impede the use of force. Therefore, I will include quarterly measures of the unemployment rate along with the rate of inflation (consumer price index). Additionally,

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<sup>11</sup> Morgan and Bickers (1992) find that as presidential approval among the president’s co-partisans declines, use of force is more likely. Additionally, Meernik (1994) and Meernik and Waterman (1996) find no relationship between presidential approval and the use of force.

<sup>12</sup> The source for Presidential approval is Fordham (1998a); updated from 1994 to 2001 from *The Gallup Poll* (retrieved from The Roper Center via Lexis-Nexis.com).

I will include the quarterly growth rate of gross domestic product.<sup>13</sup> Like Presidential approval, selection effects may obscure the impact of the economy on the president's crisis response choice.

### **Elections**

A body of research on elections and the presidential use of force (e.g., Stoll 1984; Gaubatz 1991) contends that presidents may exploit their primacy in foreign policy in an effort to secure reelection or the election of their preferred successors. Previous studies (e.g., Fordham 1998a; 1998b; Stoll 1984) find that presidents tend to use force more frequently during elections. Thus, I include a dummy variable for elections, which takes on the value of "1" during the three quarters preceding a presidential election.

### **Concurrent Crises**

The realist tradition contends that uses of force are primarily a function of forces located in the international environment, rather than domestic political influences (see e.g., James and Oneal 1991; Meernik 1994). According to this perspective, we might expect presidents to be more likely to use force when they are inundated with international crises. The measure of concurrent crises is a quarterly count of the "universe" of new or ongoing crises, not just those to which the United States responds. In analyses using the ICB2 data, the measure reflects a count of all international crises recorded in the ICB2 data set. In analyses using MID data, the measure is a count of all new or ongoing disputes according to the MID data set (Jones, Bremer and Singer 1996).

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<sup>13</sup> All economic variables are lagged. The sources for inflation, unemployment, and GDP are Fordham (1998a) from 1949 to 1994; updated to 2001 with data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (retrieved from <http://www.bea.doc.gov/>) and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/>).

### **Cumulative Battle Deaths**

The United States' involvement in wars is thought to reduce the probability that a president will use force in response to other crises. As Fordham (1998a) observes, the pool of available military resources with which force can be used elsewhere is reduced when large number of personnel are committed to a war. Moreover, Mueller (1973) shows that the when high casualties are sustained, public opinion tends to turn against the use of force. Thus, I control for the impact of casualties sustained during the Korean, Vietnam, and first Gulf War conflicts. Like Mueller, the measure is the log of the cumulative war dead occurring during the year of observation.<sup>14</sup>

### **CONCLUSION**

This chapter has laid the basis for the quantitative analysis of the influences of presidential crisis response choice in the next chapter. It has described the most suitable measures for capturing the impact of domestic and international factors thought to be associated with the presidential use of force. It has also discussed some of the limitations of these variables in the research design. Table 3.2 summarizes the independent variables, displaying the definitions, sources, and examples of previous studies including the variables. Although this study is novel with respect to the measurement of the dependent variable and the inclusion of explicit measures of public opinion toward the use of force, the table suggests that the empirical framework used to evaluate the president's crisis response choice is the result of a cumulative process. Many of the variables are prominent in presidential use of force research as well as international conflict studies.

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<sup>14</sup> A quarterly measure of battle deaths was unavailable. The source for cumulative battle deaths is Meernik (2001).

The next chapter will subject the research design described in this chapter to a series of statistical analyses in order to assess the impact of the independent variables on presidential crisis response choice.

Table 3.2. Independent Variables

| Independent Variable            | Operational Definition  | Sources   | Hypothesized influence      |
|---------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|
| Public support                  | Greater than 60% of respondents indicate that they support the use of force | Mintz and Brulé (2004); Roper Center Public Opinion Research Collection (various years) | <b>Positive:</b> This study |
| Public opposition               | Greater than 60% of respondents indicate that they oppose the use of force  | Mintz and Brulé (2004); Roper Center Public Opinion Research Collection (various years) | <b>Negative:</b> This study |
| Public ambivalence/indifference | Public support and opposition are both less than or equal to 60%            | Mintz and Brulé (2004); Roper Center Public Opinion Research Collection (various years) | <b>Positive:</b> This study |
| No guidance                     | No opinion polls are available pertaining to the crisis                     | Mintz and Brulé (2004); Roper Center Public Opinion Research Collection (various years) | <b>Negative:</b> This study |

Table 3.2 (continued).

| Independent Variable  | Operational Definition  | Sources  | Hypothesized influence   |
|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| Relative capabilities | The U.S.'s share of national capabilities in a conflict dyad  | Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972   | <b>Positive:</b> This study<br><b>Negative:</b> Organski and Kugler 1980; Bremer 1992; Meernik 2000  |
| Contiguity            | The crisis state is nearer than 150 miles to the U.S. or states hosting its forward-deployed forces   | Stinnett, et al. 2002  | <b>Positive:</b> This study; Bremer 1992   |
| Cold War              | Years from 1949-1990  | Fordham 1998a  | <b>Positive:</b> This study; Gowa 1998; Fordham 1998a  |
| Presidential Approval | The average percent of persons responding in the affirmative to periodic Gallup polls which ask, "do you approve of the job (name of president) is doing as president?" | Fordham 1998a;<br><i>The Gallup Poll</i> (retrieved from The Roper Center via Lexis-Nexis.com).  | <b>Positive:</b> Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Oneal 1991; Morgan and Bickers 1992; Wang 1996; Meernik 2000; Howell and Pevehouse 2003<br><b>Negative:</b> Meernik 1994; DeRouen 1995; DeRouen 2000<br><b>No Influence:</b> Meernik and Waterman 1996 |
| GDP growth rate       | The percent change in the quarterly U.S. gross domestic product.  | Fordham 1998a; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (retrieved from <a href="http://www.bea.doc.gov/">http://www.bea.doc.gov/</a> ). | <b>Negative:</b> Russett 1990; Miller 1995; Leeds and Davis 1997; Gowa 1998; Fordham 1998a; Fordham 2002   |

Table 3.2 (continued).

| Independent Variable | Operational Definition   | Sources   | Hypothesized influence  |
|----------------------|--|---|---|
| Unemployment         | The quarterly unemployment rate.   | Fordham 1998a; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (retrieved from <a href="http://www.bls.gov/">http://www.bls.gov/</a> )             | <b>Positive:</b> Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Oneal 1991; DeRouen 1995; Fordham 1998a; Fordham 1998b            |
| Inflation            | The quarterly inflation rate (cpi).  | Fordham 1998a; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis (retrieved from <a href="http://www.bea.doc.gov/">http://www.bea.doc.gov/</a> ) | <b>Positive:</b> Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Oneal 1991; DeRouen 1995; Fordham 1998a; Fordham 1998b            |
| Election cycle       | Dichotomous measure that takes on the value of “1” during the three quarters preceding an election during peacetime. | Fordham 1998a   | <b>Positive:</b> Stoll 1984; Fordham 1998a; Fordham 1998b   |
| Concurrent crises    | The number of other crises occurring during the same quarter.  | Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000; Jones, Bremer and Singer 1996  | <b>Positive:</b> Wang 1996; DeRouen 2000; Howell and Pevehouse 2003<br><b>No Influence:</b> Fordham 1998a         |
| Cumulative war dead  | The log of the sum of battle deaths occurring during the Korean, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf Conflicts.                | Meernik 2001  | <b>Negative:</b> Ostrom and Job 1986; James and Oneal 1991; DeRouen 1995; Meernik and Waterman 1996; DeRouen 2000 |

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

I argued in the second chapter that the president's crisis response choice is influenced by 1) the level of public support or opposition to the use of force, 2) factors affecting the likelihood of military success, and 3) implications of using force for the United States' international-strategic goals. Specifically, presidents employ a Poliheuristic decision making process when considering how to respond to an international crisis. In the first stage, presidents rule out alternatives that are incongruent with the public's preferences – weighing the twin concerns of foreign policy success and troop fatalities. The president makes an ultimate choice by evaluating the surviving alternatives with respect to the likelihood of military success and the implications of each choice for the U.S.'s international-strategic position. The theory offers explicit expectations concerning the impact of public opinion, military factors and concerns over geopolitical implications. This chapter tests this theory against all of the crises in which the U.S. was involved during the years from 1949 until 2001.

This chapter proceeds in five parts. The first is a discussion of the estimation technique employed to gauge the impact of the independent variables on Crisis response choice. The second is a general summary of all of the empirical findings. The next two parts entail more careful scrutiny of the influence of the variables corresponding to the two stages of the decision making process. The final part is a discussion of the robustness of the findings, which checks the ability of the relationships to hold up in a different set of crises. Ultimately, I conclude that public opinion is a robust predictor of presidential crisis response



choices, while other factors are sensitive to model specification as well as the source data used to identify crises.

#### ESTIMATION TECHNIQUE

I evaluate the impact of the independent variables on the president's crisis response choice using maximum likelihood estimation. Because the dependent variable, Crisis response choice, is categorical rather than continuous, ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation is inappropriate. When used to estimate a model including a categorical dependent variable, OLS assumes that the distances between categories are equal. This assumption is violated in cases where the dependent variable is ordinal (e.g., Greene 2003; Long 1997; Maddala 1983).

I use Ordered Logit to estimate the hypothesized relationships. Although the categories of the dependent variable may be regarded as qualitatively different from each other – which implies that Multinomial Logit or Multinomial Probit is the appropriate estimator – the theoretical argument suggests that crisis response choices are rank-ordered in terms of the extent to which each category is expected to risk the lives of troops as well as produce foreign policy success. This suggests that either Ordered Probit or Ordered Logit is the appropriate estimator (Greene 2003; Long 1997).<sup>15</sup>

The Ordered Logit model allows us to exploit information about the ordinal nature of the dependent variable by considering a latent linear regression model (see e.g., Long 1997; Greene 2003):

$$y^* = \beta' X + \varepsilon$$

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<sup>15</sup> To evaluate whether the dependent variable could be treated as nominal, I estimated the specified models using Multinomial Logit. However, Hausman tests indicated that the independence of irrelevant alternatives assumption (IIA) could not be satisfied (Hausman and McFadden 1984). Moreover, the estimator failed to converge at a maximum of the log-likelihood function.

where  $y^*$  is an unobserved, underlying index of the conditional propensity of the president to choose a given crisis response choice. What we do observe is

$$y = 0 \text{ (non-force) if } y^* \leq \tau_1$$

$$y = 1 \text{ (show of force) if } \tau_1 < y^* \leq \tau_2$$

$$y = 2 \text{ (aerial bombardment) if } \tau_2 < y^* \leq \tau_3$$

$$y = 3 \text{ (land force assault) if } y^* > \tau_3$$

Each  $\tau$  is an unknown threshold parameter to be estimated with

$$\Lambda(Z) = \frac{\exp(Z)}{1 + \exp(Z)}, \text{ where } Z - \text{ given the set of independent variables identified in the}$$

previous chapter – takes the following linear form:

$$Z = \beta_1(\text{Public Support}) + \beta_2(\text{Public Opposition}) + \beta_3(\text{Public Ambivalence/indifference}) + \beta_4(\text{No Guidance}) + \beta_5(\text{Relative Capabilities}) + \beta_6(\text{Contiguity}) + \beta_7(\text{Cold War}) + \beta_8(\text{Presidential Approval}) + \beta_9(\text{Growth}) + \beta_{10}(\text{Inflation}) + \beta_{11}(\text{Unemployment}) + \beta_{12}(\text{Ongoing Crises}) + \beta_{13}(\text{Battle Deaths}) + \varepsilon$$

It is also necessary to point out that the public opinion variables are exhaustive, mutually-exclusive categorical variables. Public support, Public opposition, Public ambivalence/indifference, and No guidance exhaust all of the possibilities of public opinion. Inclusion of all four of these variables in a single estimation would result in perfect multicollinearity, making estimation mathematically impossible. Consequently, it is computationally essential that one of these categories be excluded from estimation. This poses no problems for Ordered Logit estimation (or estimation in any regression framework), but the estimates obtained for the included variables will reflect those variables' effect on the dependent variable relative to the excluded variable (see e.g., Lewis-Beck 1980). I exclude

No guidance from the specifications, which means that the coefficients for Public support, Public opposition, and Public ambivalence/indifference indicate their influence on Crisis response choice in comparison with No guidance.

#### SUMMARY OF GENERAL FINDINGS

The quantitative analyses provide credible support for the theoretical framework presented in chapter II. Tables 4.1 through 4.4 show the results of Ordered Logit analyses with different definitions of public opinion and various model specifications among international crises identified by the ICB data. To check the robustness of the findings, I replicated the analyses using the MID data. These analyses are summarized in Tables on pages 108 through 111. Here, I briefly summarize the overall findings and discuss the statistical analyses in greater detail below.

All of the Ordered Logit models confirm that Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference significantly increase the likelihood that a higher Crisis response choice is selected by the president, supporting Hypotheses 1 and 3. Indeed, the influences of Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference are impervious to the source data (i.e., ICB or MID) utilized, the definition of measurement (i.e., average, latest, initial), or the model specification. Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference are remarkably robust predictors of presidential crisis response choice.

The estimated relationships between Public opposition and Crisis response choice appears to fail to offer general support Hypothesis 2. Public opposition increases the likelihood that a higher Crisis response choice is selected relative to the excluded reference category, No guidance. However, Public opposition reduces the probability

Table 4.1. Ordered Logit Estimates of Domestic and International Influences on Presidential Crisis Response, 1949-2001

|                                    | Average Public<br>Opinion | Initial Public<br>Opinion | Latest Public<br>Opinion |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Public support                     | 3.39***<br>(.678)         | 3.14***<br>(.435)         | 3.62***<br>(.825)        |
| Public opposition                  | .867*<br>(.600)           | 1.28***<br>(.541)         | 1.21**<br>(.674)         |
| Public<br>ambivalence/indifference | 2.51***<br>(.562)         | 2.43***<br>(.525)         | 2.33***<br>(.551)        |
| Relative capabilities              | 1.36*<br>(.834)           | .854<br>(.708)            | 1.42*<br>(1.01)          |
| Contiguity                         | .554*<br>(.427)           | .601**<br>(.339)          | .571*<br>(.406)          |
| Cold War                           | -.035<br>(.358)           | -.235<br>(.405)           | -.063<br>(.384)          |
| Presidential approval              | .001<br>(.014)            | .007<br>(.015)            | .011<br>(.017)           |
| GDP growth rate                    | -.06<br>(.061)            | -.059<br>(.06)            | -.067<br>(.061)          |
| Inflation                          | -.078<br>(.065)           | -.041<br>(.060)           | -.037<br>(.063)          |
| Unemployment                       | .14<br>(.128)             | .121<br>(.138)            | .163<br>(.142)           |
| Election year                      | .509*<br>(.334)           | .685**<br>(.346)          | .544**<br>(.323)         |
| Concurrent crises                  | -.110<br>(.090)           | -.104<br>(.086)           | -.167**<br>(.094)        |
| Cumulative battle deaths           | 2.71e-05***<br>(1.28e-05) | 2.45e-05**<br>(1.46e-05)  | 2.47e-05**<br>(1.35e-05) |
| $\tau_1$                           | 3.31                      | 3.13                      | 4.01                     |
| $\tau_2$                           | 4.79                      | 4.57                      | 5.47                     |
| $\tau_3$                           | 5.78                      | 5.53                      | 6.45                     |
| Chi-square                         | 138.15***                 | 155.33***                 | 108.01***                |
| N                                  | 206                       | 206                       | 206                      |

The numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors; \*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test.

Table 4.2. Alternative Specifications with Average Public Opinion: Domestic and International Influences of Presidential Crisis Response Choice, 1949-2001

|   |                         |                   |                   |                   |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Average Public support                  | 3.55***<br>(.610)       | 3.41***<br>(.64)  | 3.13***<br>(.731) | 3.26***<br>(.754) |
| Average Public opposition               | 1.15**<br>(.536)        | 1.14**<br>(.505)  | 1.08**<br>(.489)  | 1.04**<br>(.517)  |
| Average Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.60***<br>(.524)       | 2.68***<br>(.555) | 2.62***<br>(.522) | 2.62***<br>(.562) |
| Relative capabilities                   |                         |                   |                   | 1.07*<br>(.827)   |
| Contiguity                              |                         |                   |                   | .346<br>(.345)    |
| Cold War                                |                         |                   |                   | -.011<br>(.409)   |
| Presidential approval                   | .006<br>(.014)          | .005<br>(.013)    |                   |                   |
| GDP growth rate                         | -.053<br>(.062)         | -.06<br>(.062)    |                   |                   |
| Election year                           | .502**<br>(.299)        | .457*<br>(.314)   |                   |                   |
| Concurrent crises                       | -.105*<br>(.072)        |                   |                   |                   |
| Cumulative battle deaths                | 2.06e-05*<br>(1.39e-05) |                   |                   |                   |
| $\tau_1$                                | 1.91                    | 2.12              | 1.87              | 2.87              |
| $\tau_2$                                | 3.37                    | 3.53              | 3.25              | 4.26              |
| $\tau_3$                                | 4.35                    | 4.48              | 4.19              | 5.21              |
| Chi-square                              | 61.01***                | 42.10***          | 29.88***          | 49.25***          |
| N                                       | 206                     | 206               | 206               | 206               |

The numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors; \*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test.

Table 4.3. Alternative Specifications with Latest Public Opinion: Domestic and International Influences of Presidential Crisis Response Choice, 1949-2001

|  |                       |                   |                   |                   |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Latest Public support                  | 3.70***<br>(.767)     | 3.57***<br>(.756) | 3.28***<br>(.697) | 3.33***<br>(.675) |
| Latest Public opposition               | 1.50***<br>(.556)     | 1.45***<br>(.556) | 1.43***<br>(.548) | 1.38**<br>(.609)  |
| Latest Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.38***<br>(.505)     | 2.47***<br>(.562) | 2.35***<br>(.527) | 2.37***<br>(.580) |
| Relative capabilities                  |                       |                   |                   | .996<br>(.972)    |
| Contiguity                             |                       |                   |                   | .308<br>(.311)    |
| Cold War                               |                       |                   |                   | -.052<br>(.416)   |
| Presidential approval                  | .011<br>(.015)        | .008<br>(.014)    |                   |                   |
| GDP growth rate                        | -.063<br>(.062)       | -.078<br>(.061)   |                   |                   |
| Election year                          | .541**<br>(.287)      | .499*<br>(.315)   |                   |                   |
| Concurrent crises                      | -.129**<br>(.066)     |                   |                   |                   |
| Cumulative battle deaths               | 1.9e-05*<br>(1.4e-05) |                   |                   |                   |
| $\tau_1$                               | 2.07                  | 2.33              | 1.87              | 2.77              |
| $\tau_2$                               | 3.51                  | 3.72              | 3.22              | 4.12              |
| $\tau_3$                               | 4.48                  | 4.65              | 4.13              | 5.04              |
| Chi-square                             | 50.47***              | 38.05***          | 28.36***          | 57.62***          |
| N                                      | 206                   | 206               | 206               | 206               |

The numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors; \*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test.

Table 4.4. Alternative Specifications with Initial Public Opinion: Domestic and International Influences of Presidential Crisis Response Choice, 1949-2001

|   |                      |                   |                   |                   |
|---|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Initial Public support                  | 3.36***<br>(.439)    | 3.36***<br>(.453) | 3.02***<br>(.453) | 2.97***<br>(.428) |
| Initial Public opposition               | 1.41***<br>(.525)    | 1.35***<br>(.505) | 1.35***<br>(.467) | 1.34***<br>(.484) |
| Initial Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.52***<br>(.471)    | 2.63***<br>(.511) | 2.50***<br>(.495) | 2.49***<br>(.519) |
| Relative capabilities                   |                      |                   |                   | .619<br>(.652)    |
| Contiguity                              |                      |                   |                   | .368*<br>(.250)   |
| Cold War                                |                      |                   |                   | -.148<br>(.394)   |
| Presidential approval                   | .007<br>(.014)       | .006<br>(.014)    |                   |                   |
| GDP growth rate                         | -.058<br>(.060)      | -.071<br>(.059)   |                   |                   |
| Election year                           | .652**<br>(.313)     | .628**<br>(.329)  |                   |                   |
| Concurrent crises                       | -.089*<br>(.061)     |                   |                   |                   |
| Cumulative battle deaths                | 1.8e-05<br>(1.5e-05) |                   |                   |                   |
| $\tau_1$                                | 2.04                 | 2.23              | 1.87              | 2.34              |
| $\tau_2$                                | 3.46                 | 3.62              | 3.22              | 3.69              |
| $\tau_3$                                | 4.42                 | 4.56              | 4.13              | 4.61              |
| Chi-square                              | 94.82***             | 80.16***          | 51.60***          | 69.83***          |
| N                                       | 206                  | 206               | 206               | 206               |

The numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors; \*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test.

that the president selects higher Crisis response choices relative to Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference. I discuss the substantive interpretations of the Public opposition coefficients in greater detail below as well as offer some possible explanations for why the relationship between Public opposition and Crisis response choice appears to defy expectations.

Turning to military and international-strategic factors, Relative capabilities exerts a statistically significant influence on Crisis response choice in some (but not all) specifications, providing qualified support for Hypothesis 4. Although the coefficients are positive (as expected) across all model specifications, the U.S.'s share of capabilities relative to those of its likely adversary in a crisis significantly contributes to the likelihood that the president chooses a higher Crisis response choice primarily in the ICB data. The performance of Contiguity challenges my expectations as well. In most of the analyses of the ICB data, the impact of Contiguity on Crisis response choice is positive and significant, as expected. But when the relationship is considered in the MID data, Contiguity exerts a negative effect on Crisis response choice. Consequently, Hypothesis 5 is supported by the evidence from the analyses of the ICB data, but refuted by those of the MID. Hypothesis 6 suggests that Cold War years should critically affect the president's Crisis response choice. However, the coefficients for Cold War fail to attain statistical significance in any of the specifications.

The performance of the control variables is largely underwhelming. Many of these fail to attain statistical significance. Some attain significance in the MID data, but not the ICB and vice versa. The controls that are systematically associated with Crisis response choice exert an influence on the dependent variable that is at odds with previous research.



For example, Presidential approval is positive and significant in the models estimated with the MID data, but insignificant in those estimated with the ICB data. Inflation also exerts a positive and significant influence on Crisis response choice in some of the MID specifications. Election year and is positive and significant in the three models in the ICB data, but fails to have a significant influence on Crisis response choice in any of the models estimated using the MID data. Finally, Cumulative battle deaths is positive and significant in some of the ICB specifications, but not systematically associated with Crisis response choice in any of the models using the MID data.

The Ordered Logit estimates presented in the Tables are not immediately interpretable. Consequently, I employ simulation procedures developed by King, Tomz, and Wittenberg (2000) to estimate the predicted probabilities of observing each Crisis response choice outcome under various values of the independent variables. In the next section, I investigate the substantive impacts of the theoretically-relevant independent variables on Crisis response choice in the International Crisis Behavior data, leaving a summary of the MID findings for a subsequent summary.

## PUBLIC OPINION

Public opinion taps the domestic political dimension. In the first stage of the Poliheuristic decision making process, presidents assess the direction and intensity of public attitudes toward the use of force, ruling out Crisis response choices that clearly defy public preferences. I measure public attitudes toward the use of force using three different criteria: 1) the first poll pertaining to the crisis, 2) the last poll preceding the president's major response, and 3) the average of all polls taken during the course of the crisis. These measures capture (in a theoretical sense) the extent to which the public believes that the

foreign policy objectives are worth the costs of American lives. I include these different measures in separate estimations. I will consider the results of each in turn.

### **Average Public Opinion**

The dummy variables computed from the average of all public opinion polls conducted during the course of a crisis offer a mixed view of the role of the public in presidential crisis decision making. The coefficient for Average Public support is positive and significant, suggesting that when the mean level of support over the crisis-relevant polls exceeds 60%, the president is likely to choose a higher Crisis response choice – i.e., Aerial bombardment or Land force assault. Conversely, when the average level of public support exceeds 60%, presidents are likely to rule out lower crisis responses – i.e., Non-force alternatives and Show of force. This finding is consistent with Hypothesis 1.

The effect of Average Public opposition requires some understanding of dummy variable regression (see e.g., Lewis-Beck 1980). The positive sign of the coefficient is somewhat misleading. Its coefficient suggests that crises in which the mean level of opposition is greater than 60% are more likely to result in a higher Crisis response choice than crises in which no polls were collected (i.e., No guidance). However, as we will see below, Average Public opposition exerts a negative impact on Crisis response choice when considered in comparison with Average Public support or Average Public ambivalence/indifference. Consequently, the observed impact of Average Public opposition is consistent with Hypothesis 2.

The coefficient for Average Public ambivalence/indifference is positive and significant, as expected. This indicates that when the average level of public support and opposition both fail to breach 60%, presidents are likely to choose higher crisis response

choices. The coefficient provides qualified support for Hypothesis 3. But we need to take a closer look at the findings to determine whether Average Public ambivalence/indifference is associated with intermediate Crisis response choices.

Table 4.5 shows the predicted probabilities associated with each Crisis response choice according to the category of average public opinion. These probabilities were calculated from the full specification displayed in the first column of Table 4.1. The value in each cell represents the predicted probability of the crisis response choice in that column when the corresponding public opinion condition is present – while all the other variables are held at baseline values (that is, continuous variables are held at their means and dummy variables at zero). For example, in the top-right cell, .247 represents the predicted probability of a Land force assault when Average Public support exceeds 60%.

The predicted probabilities are derived from the King, Tomz, and Wittenberg (2000) procedure in which repeated simulations are conducted to estimate expected values for each  $\beta$  coefficient, as well as expected probabilities derived from transforming the coefficients. The simulations provide a distribution of expected probabilities for each outcome on the dependent variable, given the set of independent variables. This makes it possible to construct confidence intervals and conclude whether variations in the independent variables produce statistically significant differences in the probability of choosing a given crisis response.

In Table 4.5, the shaded cells contain the highest observed probability for the corresponding crisis response choice category. This gives us a good idea about how each category of public opinion is associated with each Crisis response choice. Thus, a crisis is likely to result in a Non-force alternative when there is No guidance from the public;

we are likely to observe a show of force when the public is (on average) ambivalent or indifferent about the use of force; and we are likely to observe either an Aerial bombardment or a Land force assault when average public opinion is supportive of military involvement in a crisis. With the exception of the effect of Average Public opposition, this is largely consistent with my expectations. As the average level of support increases, presidents seek to attain foreign policy objectives by choosing alternatives that pose a greater risk of troop casualties. That the highest observed predicted probability for the Show of force crisis response category corresponds to Average Public ambivalence/indifference confirms Hypothesis 3, as Show of force is an intermediate Crisis response choice.

### **Initial Public Opinion**

The dummy variables computed from the public attitudes collected from the first opinion polls pertaining to the crisis also offer a mixed view of the role of the public in decisions concerning international crises. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, the coefficient for Initial Public support is positive and significant, suggesting that when the initial level of support is in excess of 60%, the president is likely to choose a higher Crisis response choice – i.e., Aerial bombardment or Land force assault.

Like Average Public opposition, the coefficient for Initial Public opposition is positive and significant. Again, this is simply a result of dummy variable regression. Recall that Hypothesis 2 argues that Public opposition should be associated with lower Crisis response choices. Although crises in which the initial level of opposition is greater than 60% are likely to result in a higher Crisis response choice than crises in which no polls were collected (i.e., No guidance), Initial Public opposition (as evidenced by Table 4.6) has a negative impact on Crisis response choice relative to Initial Public support and Initial Public

Table 4.5. Probabilities of Response Category by Average Public Opinion Condition.

| Presidential Crisis Response    |           |               |                    |                    |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Average Public Opinion          | Non-Force | Show of force | Aerial Bombardment | Land force Assault |
| Public support                  | .232*     | .317*         | .202*              | .247*              |
| Public ambivalence/indifference | .401*     | .336*         | .144*              | .119*              |
| Public opposition               | .759      | .172          | .039               | .03                |
| No guidance (baseline)          | .888      | .084          | .016               | .012               |

Note: Probabilities computed from Average Public Opinion Model in Table 4.1. \*The difference between the baseline and experimental value is statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

ambivalence/indifference. Thus, the positive coefficient can be construed as supportive of Hypothesis 2.

Because it is positive and significant, the coefficient for Initial Public ambivalence/indifference offers tentative support for Hypothesis 3. Although this result indicates a direct relationship between a lack of clear support or opposition and Crisis response choice, the Ordered Logit estimate is insufficient to tell us which Crisis response choice is likely to be selected under such conditions.

Table 4.6 shows the predicted probabilities associated with each Crisis response choice according to the category of initial public opinion. Again, the shaded cells contain the highest observed probability for the corresponding crisis response choice category.

According to the table, a crisis is likely to result in a Non-force alternative when there is No guidance from the public. But Initial Public support yields the highest predicted probabilities for the remainder of the Crisis response choice categories. In other words, Initial Public support is more likely than the other categories of public opinion to result in a Show of force, an Aerial bombardment, or a Land force assault. If presidents choose crisis responses on the basis of the initial public opinion poll, it will be difficult for analysts to predict how the president will respond to high levels of public support.

### **Latest Public Opinion**

The public opinion dummy variables computed from the last polls immediately preceding the president's major crisis response offer a remarkably similar picture to those of Initial public opinion. The coefficient for Latest Public support is positive and significant, which indicates that when the latest level of support exceeds 60%, the president is likely to

choose a higher Crisis response choice – i.e., Aerial bombardment or Land force assault.

This finding provides additional support for Hypothesis 1.

The coefficient for Latest Public opposition, like Average Public opposition and Initial Public opposition, appears to have the wrong sign. However, this is, again, a result of dummy variable regression. Latest Public opposition has a positive impact on Crisis response choice relative to the excluded category of public opinion – No guidance – but a negative impact on the dependent variable relative to Latest Public support and Latest Public ambivalence/indifference. Intuitively, one might expect that all of the measures of Public opposition would have a negative impact on Crisis response choice regardless of which category of public opinion serves as the reference. I will discuss some possible explanations for this apparent challenge to intuitive expectations below.

Latest Public ambivalence/indifference is positive and significant, as expected. This indicates that when the latest level of public support and opposition both fail to breach 60%, presidents are likely to choose higher crisis response choices. The coefficient provides qualified support for Hypothesis 3. But, as before, we need to inspect the predicted probabilities to determine whether Latest Public ambivalence/indifference is associated with intermediate – i.e., Show of Force or Aerial Bombardment – Crisis response choices.

Table 4.7 shows the predicted probabilities computed from the Latest Public Opinion Model in Table 4.1. Again, the shaded cells contain the highest observed probability for the corresponding crisis response choice category, facilitating interpretation of the Ordered Logit estimates. According to the simulations, a crisis is likely to result in a Non-force alternative

Table 4.6. Probabilities of Response Category by Initial Public Opinion Condition.

| Presidential Crisis Response    |           |               |                    |                    |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Initial Public Opinion          | Non-Force | Show of force | Aerial Bombardment | Land force Assault |
| Public support                  | .250*     | .323*         | .198*              | .226*              |
| Public ambivalence/indifference | .399*     | .321*         | .150*              | .129*              |
| Public opposition               | .662*     | .223*         | .065*              | .048*              |
| No guidance (baseline)          | .877      | .089          | .019               | .014               |

Note: Probabilities computed from Initial Public Opinion Model in Table 4.1. \*The difference between the baseline and experimental value is statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .



when there is No guidance from the public. A Show of force is the likely response when the public is ambivalent or indifferent about the use of force, which provides more precise support for Hypothesis 3. Finally, either an Aerial bombardment or a Land force assault is the likely outcome when latest public opinion is supportive of military involvement in a crisis. Again, these results are largely consistent with my expectations. As the latest level of support increases, presidents seek to attain foreign policy objectives by choosing alternatives that pose a greater risk of troop casualties.

#### PUBLIC OPPOSITION: DEFYING (INTUITIVE) EXPECTATIONS?

Despite the supportive evidence concerning the role of Public support in presidential crisis decision making, the coefficients for Public opposition do not provide unambiguous support for Hypothesis 2. The simulations summarized in Tables 4.5 through 4.7 indicate that Public opposition effectively lowers the probability that the president chooses higher Crisis response choices relative to Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference. But Public opposition consistently increases the probability of the selection of higher Crisis response choices relative to the excluded category of public opinion – No guidance. Intuitively, we might expect significant public opposition to the use of force to constrain democratic leaders' conflict behavior even when compared to crises for which public attitudes were not tapped. Here, I take a closer look at the impact of Public opposition.

#### **Explaining the Effect of Opposition**

The findings discussed so far concerning the role of public opinion in presidential crisis response appear to suggest the following: on the one hand, the president is responsive to supportive and ambivalent/indifferent attitudes; but on the other, the president is more likely to choose a military response when faced with opposition than when no guidance from

Table 4.7. Probabilities of Response Category by Latest Public Opinion Condition.

| Presidential Crisis Response    |           |               |                    |                    |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Latest Public Opinion           | Non-Force | Show of force | Aerial Bombardment | Land force Assault |
| Public support                  | .205*     | .288*         | .216*              | .289*              |
| Public ambivalence/indifference | .448*     | .319*         | .128*              | .103*              |
| Public opposition               | .659      | .202          | .054               | .046               |
| No guidance (baseline)          | .889      | .081          | .016               | .012               |

Note: Probabilities computed from Latest Public Opinion Model in Table 4.1. \*The difference between the baseline and experimental value is statistically significant at  $p < .05$ .

the public is available. There are three possible explanations for these seemingly inconsistent findings.

The first possible explanation is that presidents simply ignore public opinion when making choices about international crises (see e.g., Gamson and Modigliani 1966; Verba et al. 1967; Mueller 1973). A correspondence between high levels of public support and the president's Crisis response choice may be coincidental. Given that the public is frequently attentive to prominent foreign policy crises (e.g., Schattschneider 1960; Jacobs and Page 2005), public attitudes may be shaped by the same events that influence the president's ultimate decision (e.g., Mueller 1973; Jentleson 1992; Zaller 1992). In those relatively rare crises in which there is a mismatch between public preferences and presidential decisions, the president may be making decisions based on information that is not available to the public.

But the empirical evidence presented in this chapter appears to be at odds with the notion that presidents ignore public opinion. Coincidence alone cannot account for the systematic relationships between the measures of public opinion and Crisis response choice. Indeed, when Average public opinion is operationalized as an ordinal variable, the fit between public opinion and Crisis response choice is remarkable ( $\gamma = .73$ ;  $\chi^2 = 84.68$ ,  $p < .001$ ).<sup>16</sup> The notion that presidents ignore the public would seem more plausible if we found a correspondence between public preferences and a more broadly defined measure of the use of force. But given that there is a fairly good match between each category of opinion and the expected categories of Crisis response choice, it is difficult to accept that presidents simply ignore the public.

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<sup>16</sup> Specifically, the Average public opinion ordinal variable was operationalized such that No guidance = 0, Average Public opposition = 1, Average Public ambivalence/indifference = 2, and Average Public support = 3.

The second possibility is that – rather than simply responding according to the wishes of the public – presidents use public opinion as a foreign policy instrument to signal resolve to potential adversaries. The presence of opinion polls indicates saliency, not just at home but also abroad (e.g., McCombs and Shaw 1972; Gans 1980; Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Powlick and Katz 1998). A possible explanation is that presidents increase the salience of international crises by “going public” (e.g., Baum 2004; Kernell 1986), incurring potential audience costs and signaling their resolve to back up threats and promises with military force (e.g., Fearon 1994; Smith 1998; Schulz 2001). If the president subsequently backs down, he faces punishment from the citizenry or opposition party in the legislature.

This signaling account of crisis bargaining explains why presidents may be more likely to use force when faced with domestic Public opposition. But in a strategic setting, such a process would be unlikely to produce the observed results with respect to Public support. The literature on audience costs and strategic signaling (e.g., Fearon 1994; Smith 1998; Schulz 2001) finds that adversaries frequently anticipate each others’ actions. The decisions of U.S. adversaries are conditioned by their beliefs about the likelihood that the president will engage in a military use of force against them if they do not comply with his demands. Public opinion is thought to be the ultimate source of signaling credibility (e.g., Sobel 2001; Schultz 2001; Baum 2004). Thus, Public opposition should embolden the U.S.’s adversary to ascertain whether the president is bluffing, producing a positive relationship between Public opposition and Crisis response choice. This is, in fact, what we observe in most of the model specifications presented here – that is, relative to No guidance. However, the signaling account also suggests that Public support should bolster the president’s threats, which would result in the capitulation of the target and produce a negative relationship

between Public support and Crisis response choice. The empirical results presented in this chapter do not bear out this expectation of the signaling account.

The final possible explanation is that the results are due to selection effects. A selection bias imposed by “nature” may account for the unexpected relationship between Public opposition and Crisis response choice (King, Keohane and Verba 1994). Unlike researcher-imposed selection bias (e.g., King, Keohane and Verba 1994; see also Achen and Snidal 1989; Collier and Mahoney 1996), selection imposed by nature – “selection effects” – refers to bias resulting from the possibility that individuals select themselves into certain processes on the basis of unobserved factors associated with the dependent variable or one of the included explanatory variables (e.g., King, Keohane and Verba 1994: 135; Fordham 1998a).

When a crisis arises, presidents frequently have the capacity to choose either to become involved or to stay out of it. These crisis-selection decisions may be based (in part) on expected public attitudes toward the use of force. If the public is expected to oppose military involvement, the president may be reluctant to get involved in these crises (e.g., Kusnitz 1984; Powlick 1991; Stimson 1991; Foyle 1999) – perhaps because the alternatives available to the president in resolving the crisis are limited by public opposition. Similarly, presidents may downplay the U.S.’s role in crises in which public support is not anticipated (see e.g., Baum 2004), reducing the likelihood that opinion polls are conducted (e.g., Russett 1990; Powlick and Katz 1998; Sobel 2001). But among the crises in which Public opposition arises, the president may be more committed to using force than in those for which opinion polls have not been taken. Such a selection process would explain the positive relationship between public opposition and crisis response choice, relative to No guidance.

The selection effects explanation for the effect of Public opposition on Crisis response choice is perhaps the most accurate of the possibilities. It is largely consistent with the theoretical framework and the empirical results. Indeed, looking at the predicted probabilities in Tables 4.5 through 4.7, it is evident that the expectation of each Crisis response choice category when the public is opposed to the use of force comports with Hypothesis 2 when considered relative to Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference. In other words, if we imagine that the row containing the predicted probabilities for No guidance is absent from the tables, we see that we are more likely to observe a Non-force outcome under Public opposition and less likely to observe Show of force, Aerial bombardment, or Land force assault outcomes under Public opposition than Public support or Public ambivalence/indifference. When considered relative to these categories of public opinion, the influence of Public opposition is consistent with Hypothesis 2.

Unfortunately, the current research design is inappropriate for identifying the extent to which selection effects are responsible for the qualified support for the hypotheses presented in this chapter. The Public opinion variables are measured at the crisis level – the poll results collected pertain to the crises and not to general attitudes concerning the use of force against the likely adversaries. I leave to future research to explore the impact of selection on the observed relationships, which may prove to be worthwhile endeavor.

### **A Closer Look at Public Opposition and Crisis Response Choice**

Although the current research design is poorly-suited for detecting selection effects as an explanation for the ambiguous relationship between Public opposition and Crisis response choice, I am able to take a closer look at the findings to determine 1) whether the theoretical

expectations concerning this relationship are accurate and 2) whether the case selection criteria are appropriate. First, the theory I develop in Chapter II argues that Public opposition limits the president's utility for Land force assault alternatives. Consequently, a statistical test of the influence of Public opposition on the probability that the president chooses a Land force assault alternative will directly evaluate this claim. Second, it is possible that I have included some cases that should be excluded (namely, crises that are part of costly wars) because the process driving decision making in these crises are thought to be different from those driving other international crises (see e.g., Blechman and Kaplan 1978; Ostrom and Job 1986; Fordham 1998a). Thus, inclusion of these crises may bias the coefficient capturing the relationship between Public opposition and Crisis response choice.

To directly evaluate the relationship between Public opposition and the Land force assault choice, I redefine the dependent variable such that

- 0 Non-force response
- 0 Show of force
- 0 Aerial bombardment
- 1 Land force assault

Now, the dependent variable is dichotomous and captures the probability that the president chooses a Land force assault alternative. According to the framework in Chapter II, presidents should be reluctant to choose this alternative when faced with Public opposition because the public does not believe that the foreign policy objectives pursued by the U.S. are worth the risks to American troops. This indicates a negative relationship between Public opposition and Land force assault.

Table 4.8 shows the results of this analysis.<sup>17</sup> The coefficient for Public opposition is negative and significant in two of the three. When Public opposition is defined as the mean of all polls taken during the course of a crisis greater than 60%, the president is unlikely to choose a Land force assault alternative. Similarly, the president is unlikely to choose a Land force assault alternative when the first poll taken after the start of a crisis indicates that Public opposition to the use of force exceeds 60%. But the coefficient for Latest Public opposition fails to attain statistical significance. Recall that Latest Public opposition is measured as the last poll taken prior to the president's major response is in excess of 60%. This result indicates that there is no systematic relationship between Latest Public opposition and Land force assault. Once again, the insignificant coefficient for Latest Public opposition in Table 4.8 – in a statistical sense – means that the effect of Latest Public opposition is no different from crises in which no public opinion polls were taken, No guidance. Given that we already know the relationship between No guidance and Land force assault (i.e., negative), this insignificant result is not a refutation of the hypothesis.

Two crises were anomalies, failing to comport with the theory in the evaluation of the relationship between Latest Public opposition and Land force assault. According to the latest polls available, large segments of the public opposed using force in response to the Iran Hostage Crisis (1979-1980) and the War in Lebanon (1982-1983). In spite of public opposition, the U.S. sent ground troops to engage hostile forces in both crises. In the Iran Hostage Crisis, Iranian revolutionaries held American hostages and threatened to kill them if any military moves were made against Iran. Although public opinion at that time indicated that most Americans were anxious for their release, the public was also reluctant to advocate

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<sup>17</sup> I also conduct an examination of the Land force assault dichotomous dependent variable using the crises identified by the MID data. This analysis is included in Appendix B.



Table 4.8. Logit Estimates of Public Opinion and Land Force Assault, 1949-2001

| Variable                     | Average Opinion     | Latest Opinion    | Initial Opinion     |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Public support               | 2.87**<br>(1.56)    | 3.03***<br>(1.11) | 2.22**<br>(1.28)    |
| Public opposition            | -15.67***<br>(.525) | .610<br>(.899)    | -15.53***<br>(.524) |
| Ambivalence/<br>indifference | 1.42**<br>(.648)    | .898<br>(.721)    | 1.42**<br>(.634)    |
| Relative<br>capabilities     | 1.98<br>(2.51)      | 1.78<br>(2.68)    | 1.31<br>(2.51)      |
| Contiguity                   | .457<br>(1.19)      | .534<br>(1.20)    | .489<br>(1.16)      |
| Cold War                     | 1.56**<br>(.749)    | 1.86**<br>(1.00)  | 1.44**<br>(.728)    |
| Constant                     | -6.45**<br>(2.41)   | -6.56**<br>(2.81) | -5.71**<br>(2.42)   |
| Log pseudo-<br>likelihood    | -44.63              | -47.07            | -44.91              |
| N                            | 206                 | 206               | 206                 |

\*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test.

a military operation which may have placed the hostages in additional danger. President Carter sent a small rescue force with orders to conduct a lightning-quick raid to liberate the hostages without detection (see e.g., Brulé 2005). Although this decision appears to have violated the “letter” of public opinion, it did not violate the “spirit” of the public’s preferences – preserve the lives of the hostages.

In the War in Lebanon, U.S. Marines were sent in as part of an international peacekeeping force trying to stabilize the country, which had been torn by a civil war between Christians and Muslims (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000; Grimmett 1999). In addition, Israel and Syria were actively supporting the opposing forces in Lebanon. The U.S. forces in Lebanon ultimately engaged Syrian-backed forces in a number of clashes (e.g., Bernstein 1983; Smith 1983). Although there was adequate public support – according to the theory in Chapter II – for a peacekeeping presence in Lebanon, President Reagan faced clear opposition from the public for a wider U.S. role consisting of open hostilities toward Syria and its protégés in Lebanon.

U.S. involvement in Lebanon in the early 1980s is an illustrative case of “mission creep.” Like that case, there is some suggestion that, once engaged in a military conflict, democratic leaders disregard public opposition and desperately seek to “win,” fearing that the political retribution associated with capitulation may be worse than a costly victory (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999; Downs and Rocke 1994; see also Fearon 1995). Indeed, some empirical studies of the use of force (e.g., Blechman and Kaplan 1978; Ostrom and Job 1986; Fordham 1998a) exclude crises that were part of interstate wars for this reason. Because the ICB (as well as the MID) data disaggregate wars (particularly, the Vietnam and Korean Wars) into separate crises, it is possible that the results are driven by the president’s disregard

for public opposition to these intra-war crises and use force in spite of the public's preferences. To check this possibility, I re-estimated the models without crises that were part of the Vietnam and Korean Wars. First, I only excluded the Korean War crises, and then only the Vietnam War crises. Finally, I excluded all of the crises that were part of those two wars. The exclusion of these intra-war crises made no substantive difference in the results. They are included in Appendix B.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the ambiguity associated with the performance of the Public opposition variables, the results are largely supportive of the theoretical framework. Public support is consistently associated with higher levels of Crisis responses, while Public ambivalence/indifference is associated with intermediate Crisis responses. Relative to No guidance, Public opposition is related to lower Crisis responses. I was also able to verify that Public opposition typically leads to the rejection of Land force assault alternatives. But the evidence presented in this chapter tends to point to a selection effect: presidents select themselves into international crises on the basis of expected opinion. Presidents are more likely to become involved in crises in which opinion is expected to be supportive, and less likely to enter into crises in which the public is expected to oppose the use of military force. In other words, presidents anticipate public opinion in decisions about crisis selection. Such a process of anticipation is likely to attenuate the effect of opposition on the president's ultimate Crisis response choice – making crises in which the public opposed the use of force statistically indistinguishable from those for which no public opinion data was available.

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<sup>18</sup> I also conducted these analyses excluding the Vietnam and Korean Wars using crises identified by the MID data. The results of these analyses also appear in Appendix B.

## MILITARY AND INTERNATIONAL-STRATEGIC FACTORS

According to the theoretical framework set forth in chapter II, presidents choose a final Crisis response choice from the remaining set of alternatives on the basis of the choice's ability to satisfy military and international-strategic criteria in the second stage of the Poliheuristic decision making process. Presidents choose the alternative that is expected to successfully achieve military success as well as enhance the U.S.'s geopolitical position. Three variables – Relative capabilities, Contiguity, and Cold War – are meant to gauge the impact of military and international-strategic factors on the president's Crisis response choice.

### **Relative Capabilities**

Hypothesis 4 suggests that presidents are likely to employ alternatives they believe will be the most effective, indicating that presidents are likely to choose higher crisis response choices when the U.S. enjoys a preponderance of power over its opponent. This expectation tends to be borne out in the analyses: the U.S.'s share of capabilities in the dyad tends to contribute to a higher Crisis response choice. However, a robust finding in the international conflict literature is that parity of military capabilities between adversaries tends to be associated with a greater likelihood of conflict (e.g., Organski and Kugler 1980; Bremer 1992). While the performance of Relative capabilities offers support for Hypothesis 4, the results do not appear (*prima facie*) to be consistent with the bulk of studies examining international conflict. According to the logic of power shift theories (e.g., Organski and Kugler 1980; Gilpin 1981; see also Schelling 1966), military success in battle is not the soul purpose of accumulating capabilities. Instead, the threat of using overwhelming force is the mechanism that determines crisis outcomes among disparate states. When a relatively weak

state is threatened by a more powerful opponent, the weaker state is likely to back down without a fight, resulting in a lower likelihood that force must be used to resolve the crisis.

Indeed, there appears to be some support for both the power shift explanation as well as the theoretical argument specified in chapter II when the changes in predicted probabilities are compared. Table 4.9 shows the predicted probabilities of each Crisis response choice category according to shifts in Military and International-Strategic variables. The row corresponding to Relative capabilities displays the predicted probabilities when that variable is equal to its maximum. A cursory inspection of the values along that row indicates an increase, followed by a decrease in the predicted probability of the Crisis response choice. Increasing U.S. capabilities relative to those of the likely adversary reduces the probability of the president choosing Non-force alternatives only slightly – 1.3%. But when the U.S.’s share of capabilities is shifted from the mean to the maximum, the probability of a Show of force increases by 10%. The maximum of Relative capabilities is most closely associated with the Aerial bombardment alternative. The predicted probability of an Aerial bombardment rises by 12% when Relative capabilities is raised from its mean to the maximum. But the impact on the probability of a Land force assault is smaller – 10%. The predicted probabilities displayed in Table 4.9 suggests that increases in Relative capabilities are associated with higher Crisis response choices, but that these changes decline at the highest Crisis response choice – Land force assault.

### **Contiguity**

Hypothesis 5 indicates that Contiguity should be positively associated with higher Crisis response choices. From a military operations standpoint, crises that occur near the U.S. should have lower logistical costs connected to the deployment of troops and supplies (e.g.,

Bueno de Mesquita 1981). The analyses indicate that this is the case. The coefficient for Contiguity is positive and significant in each of the models using the ICB data. But an inspection of the changes in predicted probabilities across the four Crisis response choices suggests something akin to a declining marginal utility for higher levels of Crisis response choices with increases in Contiguity. When Contiguity is equal to “1,” the probability of the president choosing Non-force alternatives falls by 8%. However, the gap between the baseline probability and the predicted probability for crises that are contiguous with the U.S. begins to climb dramatically for the remaining three Crisis response categories. Shifting Contiguity from zero to “1” yields a 63% increase in the probability of a Show of force; the probability of an Aerial bombardment increases by 75%; and the probability of a Land force assault rises by 88%.

### **Cold War**

Hypothesis 5 suggests that years of the Cold War (1949-1989) should critically affect the president’s Crisis response choice. This period was marked by an intense and ongoing competition for power and influence between the United States and the Soviet Union (Gaddis 2005). The hypothesis does not offer a direction (positive, negative) of the expected relationship. On the one hand, one may expect that such intense efforts would be characterized by higher Crisis response choices by the president, attempting to counter Soviet activities. This was the case in Southeast Asia from the 1950s until the 1970s. On the other hand, presidents may be expected in such circumstances to exercise restraint in order to

Table 4.9. Probabilities of Response Category by Military and International-Strategic Factors.

| Presidential Crisis Response       |           |               |                    |                    |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                                    | Non-Force | Show of force | Aerial Bombardment | Land force Assault |
| Relative capabilities <sup>a</sup> | .875*     | .091*         | .018*              | .013*              |
| Contiguity <sup>b</sup>            | .812*     | .135*         | .027*              | .022               |
| Cold War <sup>b</sup>              | .891      | .079          | .015               | .011               |
| (Baseline probability)             | .887      | .083          | .016               | .012               |

Note: Probabilities computed from Average Public Opinion Model in Table 4.1.

<sup>a</sup> The predicted probability is computed by shifting Relative capabilities from its mean value to its maximum.

<sup>b</sup> The predicted probability is computed by shifting the dichotomous independent variable from zero to one.

\*The difference between the baseline and experimental value is statistically significant at  $p < .10$ , one-tailed test.

prevent “pushing” some countries into the arms of the Soviet Union (Hoffman 1980), or engaging in direct confrontation with the Soviets (Allison 1971). These cases can be illustrated with references to the Iran hostage crisis and the Cuban missile crisis, respectively. Clearly, the relevance of the Cold War and the implications of using the various Crisis response choices in each crisis are difficult to delineate *a priori* in a systematic study. Not surprisingly, crises occurring during the period from 1949-1989 do not appear to be statistically distinguishable from those occurring from 1990-2001.

#### CONTROL VARIABLES

Seven variables included in the models account for alternative explanations of the use of force, generally. Overall, the performance of these variables does not bode well for these alternative explanations. Only three of the controls – Election year, Concurrent crises, and Cumulative battle deaths – attain statistical significance in any of the specifications summarized in Tables 4.1 through 4.4.

Presidential approval, GDP growth rate, Inflation, and Unemployment all capture some aspect – either directly or indirectly (e.g., see DeRouen 1995) – of the top-down, diversionary theory of the use of force. According to the diversionary account, presidents use force abroad in order to distract voters from deteriorating domestic circumstances. In other words, the president manipulates the public for domestic political gain. As I pointed out in chapter II, Presidential approval is the primary way in which public opinion is considered in the bulk of studies on the presidential use of force (e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986; Morgan and Bickers 1992; DeRouen 1995). When considered in the ICB models (Tables 4.1 - 4.4), Presidential approval is not related to Crisis response choice. Similarly, the three economic measures – GDP growth rate, Inflation, and Unemployment – also fail to have a significant



effect on the president's Crisis response. These null findings are consistent with previous studies of the use of force that employ crises, disputes, or "opportunities" as the units of analysis (e.g., Meernik 1994; Wang 1996). Such studies typically fail to find an effect of such trend variables as approval ratings and economic performance. However, studies that use quarters or years as the units of analysis tend to find such a relationship (e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986; Morgan and Bickers 1992; Fordham 1998a). This is, once again, suggestive of a selection effect in which presidents select themselves into crises on the basis of such factors as approval ratings or economic performance. Once in the crisis, however, the effect of such variables is attenuated (see e.g., Fordham 1998a).

Akin to the logic of the diversionary theory, the basis for including Election year is rooted in the possibility that presidents seek to gain favor with the voters during an election campaign by using force abroad. According to the analyses summarized in Tables 4.1 through 4.4, this possibility appears to be well-founded. The coefficient for Election year is positive and significant, indicating that presidents choose higher Crisis responses during election years. A presidential election year reduces the probability of the president choosing a Non-force alternative by 7%. But during election years, the probability of a Show of force rises by 60%. The impact on the predicted probability is even greater for the probability that the president chooses either an Aerial bombardment (76% increase) or Land force Assault (77% increase). A number of previous studies have found that presidential elections significantly increase the likelihood of a use of force (e.g., Stoll 1984; Fordham 1998a; 1998b). The findings with respect to Election year are clearly consistent with this body of research.

Concurrent crises are included to take into account demands on U.S. resources as well as the amount of attention the president can devote to any given crisis at one time. Although there is much research on opportunities to use force (e.g., Leeds and Davis 1997; Fordham 1998a; Miller 1995), these do not provide a consistent description of what impact the number of ongoing international crises should have on the likelihood that the president uses force. Clearly, if no opportunities – however conceptualized – exist, the president should be unlikely to use force abroad.<sup>19</sup> However, some of the specifications indicate that the number of ongoing crises reduce the president's propensity to choose higher Crisis responses. Using the estimates from Model 4.3, a shift in the Concurrent crises variable from its mean value to its maximum increases the probability of a Non-force response by 7%. The predicted probability of a Show of force, Aerial bombardment, or Land force assault each decrease by approximately 50% when the number of ongoing crises increases from 4 to 10.

Cumulative battle deaths is thought to be associated with fewer available military resources for use in a new crisis (e.g., Fordham 1998a). Moreover, Mueller (1973) argues that mounting casualties produce public opposition to the president and the use of force generally. But the coefficient for Cumulative battle deaths is positive and significant in all but one of the models displayed in Tables 4.1 through 4.4. When the Cumulative battle deaths variable is raised from its mean to its maximum, the probability of the president choosing a Non-force alternative is reduced by 19%. The same operation produces a 132% increase in a Show of force, a 233% increase in Aerial bombardment, and a 200% increase in Land force assault. In light of the theoretical basis for including a measure of war deaths, this set of findings is surprising. One possible explanation is centered on the process of case

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<sup>19</sup> However, some scholars (e.g., James and Hristoulas 1994; Fordham 1998a) argue that the incentives produced by domestic politics and the capabilities at the disposal of the president provide him with the capacity to manufacture a crisis at almost any time, regardless of the presence of ongoing crises.

selection. Studies of the presidential use of force (e.g., Ostrom and Job 1986; Meernik 1994; Fordham 1998a) typically examine uses of force that were not part of wars. I include all crises identified by the ICB data – even those that are part of an ongoing war. The ICB data set disaggregates the Korean and Vietnam Wars into separate “intra-war crises.” Since most of these crises entailed a violent use of force (i.e., Aerial bombardment, Land force assault), it is unsurprising that Cumulative battle deaths has a positive impact on Crisis response choice.

### ROBUSTNESS CHECKS

As an additional robustness check, I also estimated the relationships described above using a different source data set, Militarized Interstate Disputes (MID), to identify the crises. The MID data were collected for somewhat different purposes from the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) data used in the analyses discussed above. Moreover, the two data sets employ different definitions of what constitutes an international crisis. Specifically, for an event to be considered by the MID, a state must threaten, show, or actually use military force against another state (Jones, Bremer, and Singer 1996). This is not necessary for an event to be included in the ICB data, where practically any act by one state, which is perceived as negative by another, can serve as a crisis trigger (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000). Testing the theoretical framework against two different case selection criteria provides an unsympathetic assessment for the hypotheses. If the results are similar across data sets, this should enhance confidence in the hypothesized relationships and, by implication, the account of Crisis response choice developed in chapter II.

Tables 4.10 through 4.13 show the replicated results of Ordered Logit analyses using the MID data rather than ICB data. The Ordered Logit estimates confirm the robustness of the

influence of the public opinion variables. These variables are not sensitive to the source data (i.e., ICB or MID) utilized, the definition of measurement (i.e., average, latest, initial), or the model specification, suggesting that these variables are remarkably robust predictors of presidential crisis response choice. Although Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference remain positive and significant among crises identified by the MID data, the coefficients for the effect of Public opposition again require an understanding of dummy variable regression. The estimated coefficients for Public opposition tend to indicate that Public opposition increases the likelihood that a higher Crisis response choice is selected relative to No guidance. But because the coefficient for Public opposition is typically smaller than those for Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference, Public opposition reduces the probability that the president selects higher Crisis response choices relative to Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference. This constitutes tacit support for Hypothesis 2.

An obvious difference between the analyses utilizing the MID data and the ICB results is that the coefficient for Public ambivalence/indifference is larger than that for Public support across the specifications. This suggests that Public ambivalence/indifference has a larger impact on the predicted probability of higher Crisis responses than Public support. Table 4.14 summarizes the predicted probabilities for each Crisis outcome according to the category of public opinion. The shaded cells indicate the highest estimated probability for the outcome. Looking down the columns corresponding to the Crisis response choice categories, it is evident that the probability of observing either an Aerial bombardment or a

Table 4.10. Robustness Checks: Ordered Logit Estimates of Domestic and International Influences on Presidential Crisis Response (MID), 1949-2001

|                                    | Average Public<br>Opinion | Initial Public<br>Opinion | Latest Public<br>Opinion |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Public support                     | 1.54**<br>(.806)          | 1.62**<br>(.719)          | 1.77**<br>(.882)         |
| Public opposition                  | .433<br>(.443)            | 1.27***<br>(.367)         | .895*<br>(.569)          |
| Public<br>ambivalence/indifference | 2.29***<br>(.60)          | 2.02***<br>(.602)         | 2.01***<br>(.492)        |
| Relative capabilities              | .45<br>(.761)             | .407<br>(.755)            | .328<br>(.728)           |
| Contiguity                         | -1.03***<br>(.366)        | -1.08***<br>(.359)        | -1.09***<br>(.366)       |
| Cold War                           | -.295<br>(.429)           | -.357<br>(.467)           | -.376<br>(.451)          |
| Presidential approval              | .018**<br>(.008)          | .019***<br>(.008)         | .018**<br>(.008)         |
| GDP growth rate                    | -.008<br>(.027)           | -.008<br>(.028)           | -.006<br>(.028)          |
| Inflation                          | .045<br>(.041)            | .057*<br>(.039)           | .055*<br>(.041)          |
| Unemployment                       | .066<br>(.074)            | .038<br>(.083)            | .039<br>(.087)           |
| Election year                      | -.266<br>(.324)           | -.257<br>(.361)           | -.281<br>(.369)          |
| Concurrent crises                  | .116<br>(.124)            | .094<br>(.125)            | .092<br>(.119)           |
| Cumulative battle deaths           | 1.8e-06<br>(1.2e-05)      | -2.85e-07<br>(1.3e-05)    | 1.23e-06<br>(1.3e-05)    |
| $\tau_1$                           | 1.48                      | 1.28                      | 1.16                     |
| $\tau_2$                           | 4.22                      | 3.88                      | 3.79                     |
| $\tau_3$                           | 5.41                      | 5.03                      | 4.94                     |
| Chi-square                         | 101.29***                 | 197.39***                 | 143.94***                |
| N                                  | 212                       | 212                       | 212                      |

The numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors; \*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test.

Table 4.11. Robustness Checks: Alternative Specifications with Average Public Opinion (MID)

|   |                       |                   |                   |                    |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Average Public support                  | 1.64**<br>(.944)      | 1.65**<br>(.909)  | 1.68**<br>(.895)  | 1.68**<br>(.787)   |
| Average Public opposition               | .680**<br>(.394)      | .709**<br>(.402)  | .699**<br>(.416)  | .461<br>(.488)     |
| Average Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.53***<br>(.564)     | 2.52***<br>(.554) | 2.52***<br>(.552) | 2.28***<br>(.583)  |
| Relative capabilities                   |                       |                   |                   | .595<br>(.682)     |
| Contiguity                              |                       |                   |                   | -.964***<br>(.378) |
| Cold War                                |                       |                   |                   | -.057<br>(.371)    |
| Presidential approval                   | .009<br>(.007)        | .010*<br>(.007)   |                   |                    |
| GDP growth rate                         | -.022<br>(.027)       | -.027<br>(.024)   |                   |                    |
| Election year                           | -.235<br>(.284)       | -.237<br>(.297)   |                   |                    |
| Concurrent crises                       | .111<br>(.107)        |                   |                   |                    |
| Cumulative battle deaths                | -4.2e-06<br>(1.1e-05) |                   |                   |                    |
| $\tau_1$                                | .636                  | .465              | .030              | .07                |
| $\tau_2$                                | 3.24                  | 3.06              | 2.61              | 2.76               |
| $\tau_3$                                | 4.44                  | 4.26              | 3.81              | 3.96               |
| Chi-square                              | 55.53***              | 47.55***          | 22.88***          | 56.46***           |
| N                                       | 215                   | 215               | 215               | 212                |

The numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors; \*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test.

Table 4.12. Robustness Checks: Alternative Specifications with Latest Public Opinion (MID)

|  |                       |                   |                   |                    |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Latest Public support                  | 1.90**<br>(1.02)      | 1.90**<br>(1.01)  | 1.93**<br>(.991)  | 1.86**<br>(.825)   |
| Latest Public opposition               | 1.12**<br>(.530)      | 1.12**<br>(.529)  | 1.12**<br>(.511)  | .903*<br>(.580)    |
| Latest Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.24***<br>(.428)     | 2.24***<br>(.422) | 2.24***<br>(.419) | 2.01***<br>(.476)  |
| Relative capabilities                  |                       |                   |                   | .437<br>(.618)     |
| Contiguity                             |                       |                   |                   | -1.01***<br>(.375) |
| Cold War                               |                       |                   |                   | -.154<br>(.371)    |
| Presidential approval                  | .009*<br>(.007)       | .011*<br>(.007)   |                   |                    |
| GDP growth rate                        | -.023<br>(.027)       | -.026<br>(.024)   |                   |                    |
| Election year                          | -.224<br>(.331)       | -.224<br>(.338)   |                   |                    |
| Concurrent crises                      | .071<br>(.104)        |                   |                   |                    |
| Cumulative battle deaths               | -4.6e-06<br>(1.1e-05) |                   |                   |                    |
| $\tau_1$                               | .609                  | .507              | .043              | -.138              |
| $\tau_2$                               | 3.10                  | 2.99              | 2.51              | 2.45               |
| $\tau_3$                               | 4.25                  | 4.15              | 3.66              | 3.60               |
| Chi-square                             | 78.89***              | 54.04***          | 29.80***          | 76.73***           |
| N                                      | 215                   | 215               | 215               | 212                |

The numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors; \*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test.

Table 4.13. Robustness Checks: Alternative Specifications with Initial Public Opinion (MID)

|   |                       |                   |                   |                    |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Initial Public support                  | 1.76**<br>(.879)      | 1.77**<br>(.868)  | 1.80**<br>(.852)  | 1.71***<br>(.691)  |
| Initial Public opposition               | 1.55***<br>(.303)     | 1.56***<br>(.302) | 1.55***<br>(.289) | 1.30***<br>(.378)  |
| Initial Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.24***<br>(.547)     | 2.23***<br>(.535) | 2.23***<br>(.518) | 2.01***<br>(.569)  |
| Relative capabilities                   |                       |                   |                   | .492<br>(.642)     |
| Contiguity                              |                       |                   |                   | -1.01***<br>(.371) |
| Cold War                                |                       |                   |                   | -.136<br>(.391)    |
| Presidential approval                   | .010*<br>(.007)       | .011*<br>(.007)   |                   |                    |
| GDP growth rate                         | -.024<br>(.028)       | -.027<br>(.026)   |                   |                    |
| Election year                           | -.212<br>(.318)       | -.214<br>(.326)   |                   |                    |
| Concurrent crises                       | .074<br>(.106)        |                   |                   |                    |
| Cumulative battle deaths                | -5.9e-06<br>(1.1e-05) |                   |                   |                    |
| $\tau_1$                                | .632                  | .533              | .047              | -.073              |
| $\tau_2$                                | 3.09                  | 2.99              | 2.48              | 2.48               |
| $\tau_3$                                | 4.24                  | 4.14              | 3.63              | 3.63               |
| Chi-square                              | 119.20***             | 65.71***          | 41.15***          | 104.99             |
| N                                       | 215                   | 215               | 215               | 212                |

The numbers in parentheses are robust standard errors; \*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test.



Land force assault is greater when the public is ambivalent or indifferent than when the public is supportive of military involvement in a crisis.

As I discuss in Chapter III, the MID and ICB data were collected using different coding rules. Recall that a key implication of these differences for the present research is that the dependent variable is distributed differently across the ICB and MID crises. Specifically, the modal category of Crisis response choice in crises identified by the MID data is the Show of force option, while the mode for crises identified using ICB is Non-force. There is also some divergence in the case selected. These differences in case selection and definition are likely responsible for the different outcomes across these two data sets.

The military and international-strategic factors do not fare as well in the MID data as in the ICB. Relative capabilities fails to exert a statistically significant influence on Crisis response choice, which offers no robust support for Hypothesis 4. The coefficient for Contiguity, while statistically significant in the MID data, suggests that Contiguity has a negative effect on Crisis response choice, appearing to refute Hypothesis 5. Again, the coefficients for Cold War fail to attain statistical significance in any of the specifications.

The control variables perform slightly better in the MID analyses. Although many of these fail to attain statistical significance, among the controls that are systematically associated with Crisis response choice include Presidential approval, which contributes to the president choosing higher Crisis responses. According to the incentives provided by the rally effect, the estimated impact of Presidential approval is in the wrong direction – i.e., presidents should seek to use force when faced with low approval (Morgan and Bickers 1992; DeRouen 1995). But like the results presented here, most of the empirical studies (Ostrom and Job 1986; Morgan and Bickers 1992; Wang 1996) find a positive relationship

Table 4.14. Probabilities of Response Category by Average Public Opinion Condition (MID).

Presidential Crisis Response

| Average Public Opinion          | Non-Force | Show of force | Aerial Bombardment | Land force Assault |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Public support                  | .116*     | .482          | .214*              | .187*              |
| Public ambivalence/indifference | .055*     | .376*         | .272*              | .297*              |
| Public opposition               | .246*     | .571          | .114*              | .068               |
| No guidance (baseline)          | .328      | .551          | .078               | .043               |

Note: Probabilities computed from Average Public Opinion Model in Table 4.9. \*The difference between the baseline and experimental value is statistically significant at  $p < .10$ , one-tailed.

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Overall, the additional analyses using the MID data are generally supportive of parts of the theoretical framework. Specifically, similar relationships between the public opinion variables and Crisis response choice are observed using a different set of crises. However, the variables indicating military and international-strategic factors fail to offer robust support.

But this exercise constitutes a “hard test” for the theory, one in which public opinion appears to have passed.

## CONCLUSION

The empirical results presented in this chapter are largely supportive of the theoretical framework presented in Chapter II. Consistent with the first stage of the Poliheuristic account of crisis decision making, presidents tend to rule out alternatives that clearly defy public preferences concerning military involvement in international crises. Specifically, presidents tend to choose higher Crisis response choices (i.e., Aerial bombardment and Land force assault) when the public is supportive of the use of force. When the public is ambivalent or indifferent about the use of force, presidents tend to choose intermediate responses (i.e., Show of force and Aerial bombardment). In other words, presidents appear to reject alternatives that lack sufficient public support. These relationships are robust, holding up in spite of the variable definitions, model specifications, or source data for identifying crises.

Compared with Public support and Public ambivalence/indifference, Public opposition is systematically associated with lower Crisis response choices – although Public opposition tends to have a positive effect relative to No guidance. In other words, presidents are likely to choose higher Crisis response choices when faced with Public opposition than if no public opinion polls were available. This finding suggests that presidents may anticipate the direction and intensity of public opinion toward the use of force and select themselves into crises in which they expect some minimum level of support.

The performance of the public opinion variables strongly suggests that presidents make tradeoffs concerning foreign policy success and U.S. casualties, conditional on the

direction and intensity of public opinion toward the use of force. When the public is supportive of the use of force, presidents are more willing to risk the lives of troops in order to achieve foreign policy objectives. Presidents are increasingly less willing to sacrifice troops for foreign policy goals as support fades into indifference, ambivalence, or opposition.

The analyses provide limited evidence in favor of the account of the second stage of the Poliheuristic decision making process. Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 indicate that presidents choose a final crisis response from among the remaining alternatives based on that alternative's ability to maximize expected benefits on the military and international-strategic dimensions. As an assessment of the president's calculations with respect to the military dimension, the U.S.'s share of relative capabilities is associated with higher Crisis response choices in some of the estimations. Another indicator of military concerns, Contiguity, is supportive of the framework in some models, but challenges my expectations in others. In terms of international-strategic factors, a variable for Cold War years failed to demonstrate a systematic impact on presidential crisis response choices.

## CHAPTER V

### CLINTON'S DECISION TO LAUNCH AIR STRIKES IN BOSNIA, 1992-1994

The quantitative analysis in the previous chapter found that the Poliheuristic account of presidential crisis response is a useful framework for explaining such decisions. Primarily, the analysis indicates that public attitudes toward military involvement in a crisis have a profound effect on the president's Crisis response choice. But statistical analysis tends to be poorly-suited for the evaluation of some of the more nuanced claims developed in Chapter II. The case studies in Chapters V and VI are intended to assess and illustrate three central aspects of the theoretical argument as well as explore these nuanced theoretical concerns. The first aspect assessed concerns whether the determinants of public opinion toward the use of force (i.e., public's expected level of casualties and expected value of foreign policy success) are consistent with observed public opinion in the way the theory specifies? Second, does the president respond to public opinion by rejecting alternatives that clearly violate public preferences? Finally, is the president's choice among surviving alternatives a product of military and international-strategic concerns? Other theoretical concerns that will be considered in the case studies include the roles of different segments of the public (i.e., elites versus masses) in the president's decision as well as the impact of the societal memory of previous U.S. military ventures (e.g., Vietnam and the Gulf War).

The two cases studies trace presidential Crisis response choices to the Bosnian crisis (1992-1994) and the crisis that ensued with Afghanistan immediately following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. In the Bosnian crisis, President Clinton ultimately chose to utilize air strikes in response to Bosnian Serb assaults on UN-established Muslim safe havens. After demanding that the ruling Taliban regime turn over terror mastermind Osama

bin Laden, President George W. Bush chose to respond to Afghan refusals with a limited invasion in cooperation with Afghan rebels.

I chose these two cases from the more than 200 crises involving the U.S. on the basis of standard criteria. First, the cases were similar on a number of key independent variables (Lijphart 1971; King, Keohane and Verba 1994; Van Evera 1997). The presidents burdened with decision making were new-comers to the office, facing the crises in the first year of office. Both crises occurred after the end of the Cold War. The maneuvering and bargaining typified by the Cold War era, which is thought to influence presidential decisions on foreign policy (see e.g., Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000; Gaddis 2005), do not need to be considered in the analysis. Both of the crises also took place after the U.S.'s stunning victory in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. That victory is thought to have changed popular perceptions about the utility of military force since the Vietnam experience (e.g., Sobel 1996). By choosing cases that are similar on a number of respects, I hope to isolate the key causal mechanisms associated with presidential Crisis response choices (see e.g., Collier 1993).

I also chose these two cases because they are, as will be seen, theoretically informative (see e.g., Van Evera 1997). The Bosnia case in particular offers large within-case variance. Both cases are useful for testing alternative hypotheses from competing theories. Finally, given that much of the data used in these case studies is readily available, the findings presented here can be replicated.

In order to apply the Poliheuristic account developed in Chapter II to the two cases, I identify the alternatives considered by the president during the crisis. Next, I discuss the “values” of the relevant variables associated with each decision making dimension – domestic political, military, and international-strategic. In other words, I discuss the climate

of public attitudes toward military involvement as well as the implications of each alternative for military and international-strategic factors. After analyzing the decision in terms of the two-stage Poliheuristic process, I discuss whether the decision was compensatory. I assess whether the alternative pursued by the president was actually the result of process by which the he sought to yield the highest possible net gain across all dimensions.

## THE BOSNIAN CRISIS

By the time Bill Clinton took office in 1993, Yugoslavia had splintered into several republics. The fighting in Bosnia between Muslims, Serb and Bosnian Serb paramilitary groups and Croats had been escalating for nearly a year, with the Bosnian Serb forces capturing 70% of the country (Johnston 1993; Zimmerman 1996). “Ethnic cleansing” – the practice of expelling or killing non-co-ethnics – punctuated the fighting. Refugees – predominantly Muslim – were scattered across Europe and images of gaunt Muslim men in Serb prison camps were beamed to the U.S. (Gutman 1992). The Clinton administration’s ultimate response to the crisis in the former Yugoslav republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina was a series of air strikes, which facilitated a negotiated peace between warring factions and the insertion of U.S. peacekeepers to enforce/monitor the framework.

Between 1919 and 1991, Yugoslavia was a federation of six republics with a complex patchwork of ethnic groups.<sup>20</sup> Equally complex – indeed, too complex to recount here – is the complete story of the roots of the crisis that began there in 1991 (see Kaplan 1993; Woodward 1995). However, it is necessary to offer some background information here.

With the rise to power of Serbian strongman Slobodan Milosevic, who favored Serb

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<sup>20</sup> The six republics included Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Slovenia. The primary ethnic groups living in Yugoslavia prior to 1991 were Serbs, Croats, Bosnian Muslims, Slovenes, Albanians, Macedonians, Magyars, and Poles. Ethnic identity appears to have been mainly characterized by religious identity, which include Orthodox Catholic (Serbs and Macedonians), Roman Catholic (Croats, Slovenes, Magyars, and Poles), and Islam (Bosnian Muslims and Albanians). See Kaplan (1993).



supremacy over the other republics in Yugoslavia, nationalist tensions began to be unmasked throughout Yugoslavia (Zimmerman 1996). In response, Slovenia and Croatia succeeded from the federation in June of 1991. Although the Serbian army made only a half-hearted attempt to retain Slovenia, a brutal war broke out between the nascent Croat republic and the federal forces of Yugoslavia (Haass 1999). A United Nations (UN) effort, spearheaded by the European Community (EC) and Council for Cooperation and Security in Europe (CSCE), was able to secure and oversee a cease fire between Croatia and the remnants of Yugoslavia in the spring of 1992 (Johnston 1993; Zimmerman 1996). However, sporadic fighting would continue in disputed Croatian territories until late 1995.

The “crisis-within-a-crisis” that would capture the world’s attention began with Bosnia-Herzegovina’s formal declaration of independence in March 1992 (Haass 1999). Emboldened by the EC’s recognition of Slovenia and Croatia as well as the UN efforts to facilitate Croat sovereignty, the Bosnian government appealed for international recognition and protection from impending action by Yugoslav forces to regain control the most ethnically-diverse republic in the federation. Indeed, this ethnic diversity appears to have contributed to the inevitable fighting that would ignite Bosnia.<sup>21</sup> Bosnian Serbs sought to maintain unity with Serb-dominated Yugoslavia, while Bosnian Croats identified with the newly independent Croatia. The Bosnian Muslim population seemed to be inundated by the rising tide of increasingly militant nationalism sweeping the Balkan Peninsula (Haass 1999; Woodward 1995; Zimmerman 1996).

Consistent with the expectations of the international community, fighting broke out in Bosnia on April 6, 1992 (Zimmerman 1996). A three-way melee ensued, with Bosnian Serb

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<sup>21</sup> According to the Bosnian Census, the ethnic makeup in 1991 was 43.6% Muslim, 31.4% Serb, 17.3% Croat, and 7.7% other.

forces supported by Belgrade fighting Croatian paramilitary units supported by Zagreb – both of which were attacking Bosnian Muslim militias and civilians. The Bosnian Muslims clearly bore the brunt of the losses in terms of lives and territory, while the Bosnian Serbs conquered more than two-thirds of the country and mounted a brutal siege of Sarajevo – the nation’s capital and host of the 1984 Winter Olympics (Johnston 1993).

During the George H. W. Bush administration, the U.S. largely deferred to Europe under the auspices of the CSCE to take charge of the growing crisis. The Europeans seemed eager to take on the task (Rosegrant and Watkins 1996). During this “hour of Europe,” however, European governments seemed divided over what to do. The bulk of the Europeans advocated a policy of “unity and democracy” – which was also the stated policy of the Bush administration – while the balance, including Germany, pushed for recognition of the new Yugoslav republics (Zimmerman 1996). The Europeans also lacked a decisive response to the fighting that erupted between and within the newly-independent republics. By June of 1992, the “hour of Europe” ended when the Europeans requested that the UN Security Council take the initiative in the crisis (Hoffman 1996, 98). The UN, which had already deployed peacekeepers to Croatia, expanded the mandate of the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) to include Bosnia, imposed an arms embargo on the country, and announced – but did not enforce – a no-fly zone over Bosnia (Johnston 1993; Haass 1999). As fighting intensified, the UN declared several cities – including Sarajevo, Srebrenica, and Zepa – as “safe havens” to be off limits to Serb or Croat aggression. This UN declaration was simply ignored (Johnston 1993; Ullman 1996).

During the 1992 presidential campaign, Candidate Clinton criticized the Bush administration’s reluctance to get involved in the Bosnian crisis. In addition to a general

disengagement from the wars in the Balkans, the Bush administration expressed little sympathy for the any side in the conflict. This lack of sympathy for any party stemmed from the belief that none of the warring parties were innocent (Sobel 2001, 196). As media reports of Serb atrocities against Muslim civilians continued to saturate the evening news, the Clinton campaign announced a pledge to participate in Allied air strikes if Clinton were elected. Clinton called for the preservation of a multi-ethnic state in Bosnia and rejected the Bush administration's stance of neutrality. He made clear that he believed the Serbs were the primary aggressors and that a peaceful, multi-ethnic state could only be achieved if the Serbs lost the will to fight (Ullman 1996).

Upon taking office, however, Clinton did not launch air strikes against aggressive forces in Bosnia. Instead, he called for tighter sanctions and enforcement of the ban on military flights in Bosnian airspace. Contradicting his campaign stance of backing a multi-ethnic state, Clinton expressed hope that the Vance-Owen plan – which called for the division of Bosnia into ten ethnically-distinct, autonomous provinces – would resolve the conflict.<sup>22</sup> But Clinton also put forward his campaign pledge to the Europeans of air strikes coupled with lifting the arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims. Like the Bush administration, Clinton believed that the Bosnian crisis was primarily within the purview of the EC and CSCE. Consequently, he sought European support for air strikes and the lifting of the arms embargo, which would be dubbed, “lift and strike.”

Secretary of State Warren Christopher was sent to Europe in May 1993 to sell the lift and strike policy to the U.S.'s NATO allies. However, these efforts proved unsuccessful because of the Europeans' fears of Serb reprisals against their troops serving as part of the

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<sup>22</sup> Clinton would later withdraw his support for the Vance-Owen plan, leading (in part) to its failure. See, for example, Boutros-Ghali (1999) and Sobel (2001).

UNPROFOR in response to air strikes. Moreover, the Clinton administration refused to consider sending U.S. ground forces to Bosnia, which hurt the White House's position in the eyes of the Europeans – Clinton was willing to expose European troops to Serb acts of vengeance by conducting air strikes, but was unwilling to place U.S. troops in such a situation. Because Clinton was unwilling to initiate air strikes unilaterally (Clinton 1995, 182), U.S. efforts to implement the lift and strike policy faded.

While Christopher's requests for forceful action fell on deaf ears in the capitals of Europe, the U.S. and its NATO allies dropped humanitarian supplies in besieged Muslim communities in Bosnia and began patrolling the UN no-fly zone (Grimmett 1999). But negotiations among the warring parties stagnated and the Serb sieges of UN safe havens continued. In addition, Bosnian Croats and Muslims began fighting in areas not controlled by the Serbs and the Bosnian Serbs assaulted UN personnel seeking to deliver humanitarian aid (Kissinger 1996). Europe began to pressure the United States to take the lead in restarting negotiations and Congress set in motion a series of non-binding resolutions declaring its support of the Bosnian Muslims (Drew 1995; Zimmerman 1996). As the Clinton presidency passed the one year mark, no real progress toward securing Clinton's foreign policy goals was evident. Indeed, in February 1994, the Serb siege of Sarajevo reached a new nadir with the shelling of a market which killed scores of civilians (Lippman 1994).

The Clinton administration threatened to launch air strikes against Serb positions in response to the marketplace shelling in Sarajevo (Lippman 1994). Meanwhile, peace seemed possible with a U.S. negotiated agreement cobbling together a Bosnian Croat and Muslim federation (U.S. Department of State 1994). Notably, Serb nationalist and Yugoslav

president Slobodan Milosevic endorsed the peace plan, but Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic balked at the agreement. Consequently, the creation of a Bosnian federation of Croats and Muslims had the effect of building a unified counter to Bosnian Serb efforts, but did little to bring about peace. In fact, Bosnian Serbs ignored U.S. and NATO threats and continued to storm UN safe havens. Although U.S. planes patrolling the no-fly zone shot down four Serb military aircraft on March 1, 1994 (Grimmett 1999), Bosnian Serb forces showed little regard for Clinton's pledges to take more forceful action if the Serbs failed to comply with the international community's demands.

Following the Serb shelling of the UN safe haven of Gorazde in early April 1994, NATO forces finally delivered on their promises. On April 12, President Clinton announced that U.S. forces had participated in air strikes against Serb positions around Gorazde and promised more strikes if the Bosnian Serbs failed to lift the sieges of other safe areas in Bosnia (Rosegrant and Watkins 1996; Grimmett 1999). Ultimately, it would take a sustained NATO bombing campaign of Serb positions and installations beginning in August 1994 to break the sieges of the Muslim enclaves and bring the Serbs to the bargaining table (Daalder 1998; Haass 1999). The Dayton Peace Accords signed by representatives of the three warring groups in November 1995 marked the end of the Balkan wars and paved the way for a U.S.-led NATO peacekeeping mission (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 2000).

#### THE ALTERNATIVES

Clinton's inauguration marked a shift in the position of U.S. foreign policy toward the crisis in Bosnia, but brought about little immediate change in U.S. action aimed at quelling the conflict. The Clinton administration clearly sided with the Bosnian Muslims, who appeared to be suffering the most from the fighting, and plainly criticized the Bosnian Serbs

as the aggressors (Ullman 1996). But the new administration seemed as paralyzed over what to do as the Europeans had been; policy meetings concerning the crisis are characterized as more like group therapy than policy making (Drew 1995, 150).

The paralysis of the new administration was due, in part, to the complexity of the conflict. Several factors were unclear to policy makers at the time: the nature of the conflict, the U.S.'s interests concerning the Balkan Peninsula, and the effectiveness of forceful action on the part of the U.S. in resolving the crisis (Haass 1999: 39). First, it was unclear whether the conflict was a civil war between ethnic groups in Bosnia, or an interstate war involving Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Croatia, both of which had designs on Bosnian territory to integrate into ethnically homogenous nation-states (Gompert 1996). Either way, the conflict began to assume the trappings of a humanitarian disaster as Bosnia hemorrhaged refugees and the populations of "safe havens" were cut off from food and medical supplies (Woodward 1995). Second, the nature of U.S. interests in the region had yet to be established. Some policy makers and presidential advisors characterized the crisis as an unfortunate event with no strategic implications for the U.S. (see e.g., Quinn-Judge 1994; Haass 1999), while others believed that the crisis presented the U.S. with an opportunity to enforce international norms and stop the spread of violence to other parts of Europe with ethnically diverse societies (Haass 1999; Daadler 1998). Finally, there was no consensus with respect to the effectiveness of forceful action to stop the crisis. Would U.S. military activity exacerbate an already fragile humanitarian situation, or would the insertion of American troops entangle the U.S. in an inextricable quagmire representing ancient ethnic hatreds (Drew 1995)?

Clearly, the layers of complexity represented by the Bosnian crisis complicated policy making. Eventually, President Clinton developed and articulated his preferred policy objective: he did not simply wish to stop the fighting in Bosnia, but to stop the fighting and preserve a viable, multiethnic state there (e.g., Drew 1995; Daalder 1998). Although Clinton advocated U.S.-led NATO air strikes from July 1992 until April 1993, he wavered and seemed to withdraw his proposal early in his presidency. Consequently, a large number of possible Crisis responses remained “up in the air” until Clinton ultimately decided to initiate the use of force against the Bosnian Serbs in April 1994.

During the period beginning with his inauguration (January 1993) and the order to lead NATO air strikes (April 1994), Clinton considered a number of alternatives in pursuit of this two-pronged foreign policy objective. Each of these alternatives can be assigned to one of the four Crisis response categories. In terms of Non-force alternatives, the president could do nothing. Doing nothing would eventually lead to peace with the ethnic cleansing and partitioning of Bosnia between Croatia and Yugoslavia. Similarly, the president could pursue a negotiated peace between warring parties. During 1992-1993, the viable peace proposals solidified Serb and Croat gains, creating a Muslim state within a patchwork of noncontiguous city-states surrounded by Serb or Croat-held territory.<sup>23</sup> Alternatively, members of Congress as well as prominent White House advisors favored lifting the arms embargo on Bosnia – either generally to benefit all warring parties, or selectively in order to provide an advantage to the Muslims in defending themselves and possibly reversing Bosnian Serb gains (e.g., Broder and McManus 1993; Zimmerman 1996).

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<sup>23</sup> This was the essence of the failed Vance-Owen plan developed by former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and British statesman Lord David Owen (see e.g., Daalder 1998; Haass 1999).

The Clinton administration also seriously considered at least two alternatives that can be characterized as Show of force responses. The president could send ships and warplanes to the Balkans to patrol the waters and skies to deter violations of UN sanctions and the no-fly designation (e.g., Broder and McManus 1993; Drew 1995). Similarly, the president could send U.S. peacekeeping troops as part of the UNPROFOR mission, or a new mission under U.S. command and control, to observe and verify compliance with UN resolutions.

A more forceful alternative utilizing air power was also contemplated. An Aerial bombardment response entailed either limited air strikes against forces – primarily, Bosnian Serb – attacking UN designated safe havens (*Economist* 1994), or a sustained bombing campaign against Bosnian Serb and/or Bosnian Croat forces and installations (Rosegrant and Watkins 1996).

Finally, a Land force assault alternative remained within the realm of possibility for the Clinton administration. This would have involved inserting U.S. combat forces into Bosnia. Essentially, U.S. forces would act as a “peacemaking” force, engaging any offensive forces in Bosnia until peace between the warring parties was established. Estimates of the number of U.S. troops required for a successful peacemaking operation were in the hundreds of thousands.<sup>24</sup>

The alternatives that the Clinton administration considered in pursuit of creating a viable, peaceful, and multiethnic Bosnia can be summarized as follows:

***A. Non-force alternatives***

- 1) continue current course of action; e.g., diplomatic efforts, negotiations
- 2) lift the arms embargo on Bosnia

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<sup>24</sup> In a CBS interview in January 1993, former Defense Secretary Cheney indicated that it would take hundreds of thousands of troops to “pacify that part of Yugoslavia” (quoted in Sobel 2001, 208; see also Perry 1995).



***B. Show of force alternatives***

- 3) step-up sanctions/no-fly zone enforcement
- 4) send U.S. troops as observers/peacekeepers

***C. Aerial bombardment alternatives***

- 5) carry out air strikes against parties assaulting safe havens

***D. Land force assault alternatives***

- 6) insert U.S. troops to engage aggressive forces

While an exhaustive set of all possible alternatives available to the president at that time was probably much larger than the six items above, this is a good representation of the choice set that could have been constructed, given the information available during the crisis. It should be obvious that the specific alternatives considered by the Clinton team have opposing implications with respect to foreign policy success and risk of troop casualties. Moreover, as we move from item number 1 (“continue current course of action”) up to item number 6, each alternative promises a greater likelihood of foreign policy success as well as a reduction in the minimization of friendly fatalities. By March 1993, Clinton chose a combination of responses dubbed “lift and strike” – lift the arms embargo on the Muslims and conduct air strikes against Bosnian Serb installations and forces. Although there is evidence that Clinton had arrived at the air strikes component of this policy during the 1992 presidential campaign (Ullman 1996), it was not until the spring of 1994 that the president actually implemented the policy. In the sections that follow, I discuss the process that lead to Clinton’s series of decisions.

## STAGE 1: THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL DIMENSION

Recall that, according to the Poliheuristic account developed in chapter II, the president rules out Crisis response choices in the first stage of the decision making process which threaten his electoral fortunes. Given that the public is the arbiter of the president's political fate, public attitudes toward the use of force are intimately linked to the president's decision in the first stage. The president should reject alternatives that fail to clearly comport with public preferences.

During the 1992 presidential campaign, Clinton seized upon the Bosnian crisis to call into question the Bush administration's supposed preeminence in foreign policy. President Bush had largely deferred to Europe concerning how to respond to the growing crises in the Balkans. Europe's efforts seemed timid and futile in the face of Serb aggression, while President Bush was publicly reluctant to pledge U.S. military resources to UN-led efforts to assuage the crises. Meanwhile, intense American media coverage of Balkan atrocities contributed to a sense of urgency among commentators and public figures (Drew 1995; Zimmerman 1996). These factors opened the way for the Clinton campaign to draw attention to the Bush administration's "failed" Bosnia policy in the service of defeating the incumbent in the upcoming election.

At the end of July 1992, the Clinton campaign announced that, if elected, Clinton would carry out air strikes against Serb forces in Bosnia. However, Clinton would not have the capacity to implement his preferred policy until late January of the following year. The Clinton campaign's advocacy of air strikes seemed to have promoted public interest in such a crisis response. By the time Clinton took office in January 1993, a series of detailed opinion polls had been conducted on public preferences toward a variety of Crisis response choices.

Clinton would not actually carry out air strikes against Serb positions in Bosnia until April 1994 – by which time, a useful collection of polls were available (see e.g., Sobel 1998).

Rather than order air strikes upon his inauguration – as advocated during the campaign – President Clinton appealed to the international community to tighten sanctions, take action to prevent the spread of the crisis to Macedonia, and enforce the UN flight restriction over Bosnian airspace (Drew 1995). Although NATO pursued these efforts, the U.S.’s European allies rejected Clinton’s “lift and strike” policy – in spite of the Serb capture of the UN safe haven of Srebrenica in April 1993.

However, it is not clear that the Europeans’ reluctance to launch air strikes was sufficient to prevent Clinton from pursuing this alternative. To be sure, Clinton’s statements throughout this period suggest that the range of acceptable policies that might serve the ultimate aim of the Clinton administration – establishing a peaceful, multi-ethnic state in Bosnia – was limited by public opinion. While a significant segment of the American people were disgusted by the horrors of the Balkan war, others were reluctant to risk the lives of U.S. troops to quell a conflict that seemed as much like a tribal feud as it did a humanitarian catastrophe (e.g., Sobel 2001).

### **Relative Value and the Balkan Intervention**

Recall that, according to the theoretical framework developed in chapter II, public attitudes toward the use of force are driven by the extent to which the public believes that the foreign policy objectives of a proposed military operation are worth the costs in terms of expected casualties. The public is willing to tolerate more casualties when the foreign policy objectives are deemed worthwhile (Larson 1996). In other words, the public conducts a relative value assessment when considering whether to support or oppose military action in

an international crisis. Opinion polls concerning the Bosnian crisis indicate that the public was unsure of whether the foreign policy benefits of a U.S. intervention were worth any U.S. troop fatalities.

Public opinion polls from the period preceding U.S. air strikes in Bosnia are suggestive of a sharp ambivalence about U.S. military intervention in the conflict. A majority of respondents consistently supported sending U.S. troops for the purpose of distributing humanitarian relief supplies (Sobel 1996). But American sympathy for the plight of Bosnian civilians was not tantamount to interests worthy of entering the conflict as a combatant. For example, a May 1993 Gallup poll showed a narrow split among the public concerning the U.S. interests at stake in the Balkans: 49% believed that U.S. national security interests were at stake, while 47% did not. Such polls led the Clinton administration to admit that “the American people, seeing no vital interests at stake, would not support the level of commitment and casualties that might be required for an intervention to succeed” (Gompert 1996: 132).

Another way to assess the extent to which the public believed that the benefits of armed intervention in the Balkans were worth the costs is by comparison to previous U.S. conflicts. Some scholars (e.g., Roskin 1974; Vertzberger 1990) argue that decision makers and opinion leaders use analogical reasoning to identify appropriate responses to international crises. By the same token, we may expect the public to compare a present crisis to previous cases, which may have a profound impact on its willingness to tolerate casualties. For example, the public is thought to have compared Vietnam to Korea (Karnow 1983; Khong 1987) and the experience of Vietnam continues to have consequences for how a large portion of the American public perceives military involvement abroad (Holsti and Rosenau

1984; Sobel 2001).<sup>25</sup> Similarly, the 1991 Gulf War has had an impact on the public's expectations of casualties as well as the utility of military force to achieve foreign policy objectives in subsequent conflicts (Daalder and O'Hanlon 1999). Whereas Vietnam is the archetypal military defeat in the collective conscience of America, the Gulf War evokes a model of a near-costless and speedy victory.

Not surprisingly, during the prelude to U.S. air strikes in Bosnia, public opinion pollsters frequently referred to Vietnam and the Gulf War to gauge public expectations concerning a use of force in the Balkans. For example, one prominent question asked by the Gallup organization several times during this time was "If the United States were to send troops to Bosnia, do you think that situation would end up being more like the Vietnam War or more like the Persian Gulf War?" In January 1993, 41% of respondents believed that U.S. involvement in Bosnia would resemble Vietnam, while 47% thought it would be like the Gulf War. By May 1993, the proportion of respondents expecting another Vietnam had risen only slightly to 43%, with an increase in those anticipating a Gulf War-like victory also rising to 49%. Similarly, when asked about the comparison between Vietnam and a U.S. armed intervention in Bosnia, the public seemed torn. In May 1993, 48% of respondents found the comparison at least somewhat convincing, while 43% did not. Just before the first U.S.-led air strikes were launched in April 1994, this ambivalence persisted; 41% found the comparison of Bosnia with Vietnam convincing, while 56% did not. That the public was of two minds about the expected costs and likelihood of success in Bosnia is evident from these polls.

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<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the Bush administration frequently referenced Vietnam when justifying its reluctance to become involved in Bosnia (Gompert 1996).

The results of poll questions comparing the Bosnian crisis to Vietnam as well as those querying the public's perception of U.S. interests at stake in that conflict are telling. They suggest that the public held contradictory notions about its expectations of costs in terms of casualties. The number of respondents believing that a U.S. intervention in Bosnia would resemble a Gulf War-style victory with few casualties consistently outweighed those anticipating a Vietnam-like quagmire. However, the differences between these two groups remained narrow during the entire period.

### **Public Opinion and the Rejection of Alternatives**

Consistent with the discussion of relative value above, public opinion on the use of force in Bosnia was largely ambivalent during the entire crisis. The figure on page 136 plots the intensity of public support and opposition to the use of force in the Bosnian crisis from the middle of 1992 until April of 1994, just before air strikes were launched. Each data point represents the average of all polls taken that month concerning public attitudes toward forceful action by the U.S. in Bosnia. By "forceful action," I mean that the poll question queried public preferences toward military force in general, or air strikes and/or sending in ground forces, in particular. To summarize the general movement of public opinion during the period, the moving average for support and opposition are included in the figure.

Throughout the period covered in the figure, the public appears to be torn between support and opposition, with a slightly greater tendency toward opposition. On the one hand, it was difficult to turn a blind eye to the horrors of the crisis reported by the media, but on the other hand, the public did not seem convinced that military involvement was likely to be effective or without risks. Average monthly opposition to the use of force exceeded 60% during three months, while support for the use of force never breached the 60% threshold.

Throughout much of the 16-month period from Clinton's inauguration until NATO air strikes were carried out, members of the Clinton administration insisted that forceful action was nearly impossible in the face of the opposition of the American people (Rosegrant and Watkins 1996). Although Clinton denied that opinion polls served as a guide to policy making, he admitted in 1994 that "I have used polling information to make sure I know where the American people are, what they know, what they don't know" (Sobel 2001, 214). Like President Clinton, Secretary of Defense William Perry explicitly acknowledged his concern for public opinion with this statement: "[If] we wanted to determine the outcome of that war (in Bosnia) ... we would have to enter with substantial ground combatant forces. We're not prepared to recommend that. I don't believe the American people are prepared to accept that" (Sobel 2001, 225). Secretary of State Warren Christopher – who rarely explicitly recognized the role of public opinion in foreign policy formulation – approached the problem as an effort to sell a policy to the public: "If we made the recommendation (to use force in Bosnia), we would certainly ... try very hard to persuade the American people ... to carry it out" (Sobel 2001, 220). Throughout this period, the Clinton administration seemed to be grappling with a response to the Bosnian crisis.

But the important point here is that public opinion placed limits on the alternatives available throughout the period leading to the Clinton's administration's decision to launch air strikes. Recall from chapter II that when both support and opposition are below 60% (i.e., ambivalent/indifferent), the president is likely to rule out Crisis response choices laying at the extremes of the choice set (i.e., Non-force responses and Land force assault) and should ultimately choose between the two intermediate Crisis response categories (i.e., Show of force or Aerial bombardment alternatives). As figure 5.1 shows, public attitudes toward the

use of force were predominantly ambivalent – although tending toward opposition during three months. However, the average levels of support and opposition for the entire period are 38.75% and 50.67%, respectively. Moreover, the moving averages for support and opposition never exceed 60% during the Clinton presidency. Consequently, Clinton ruled out Non-force and Land force assault alternatives in the first stage of the Poliheuristic decision making process.

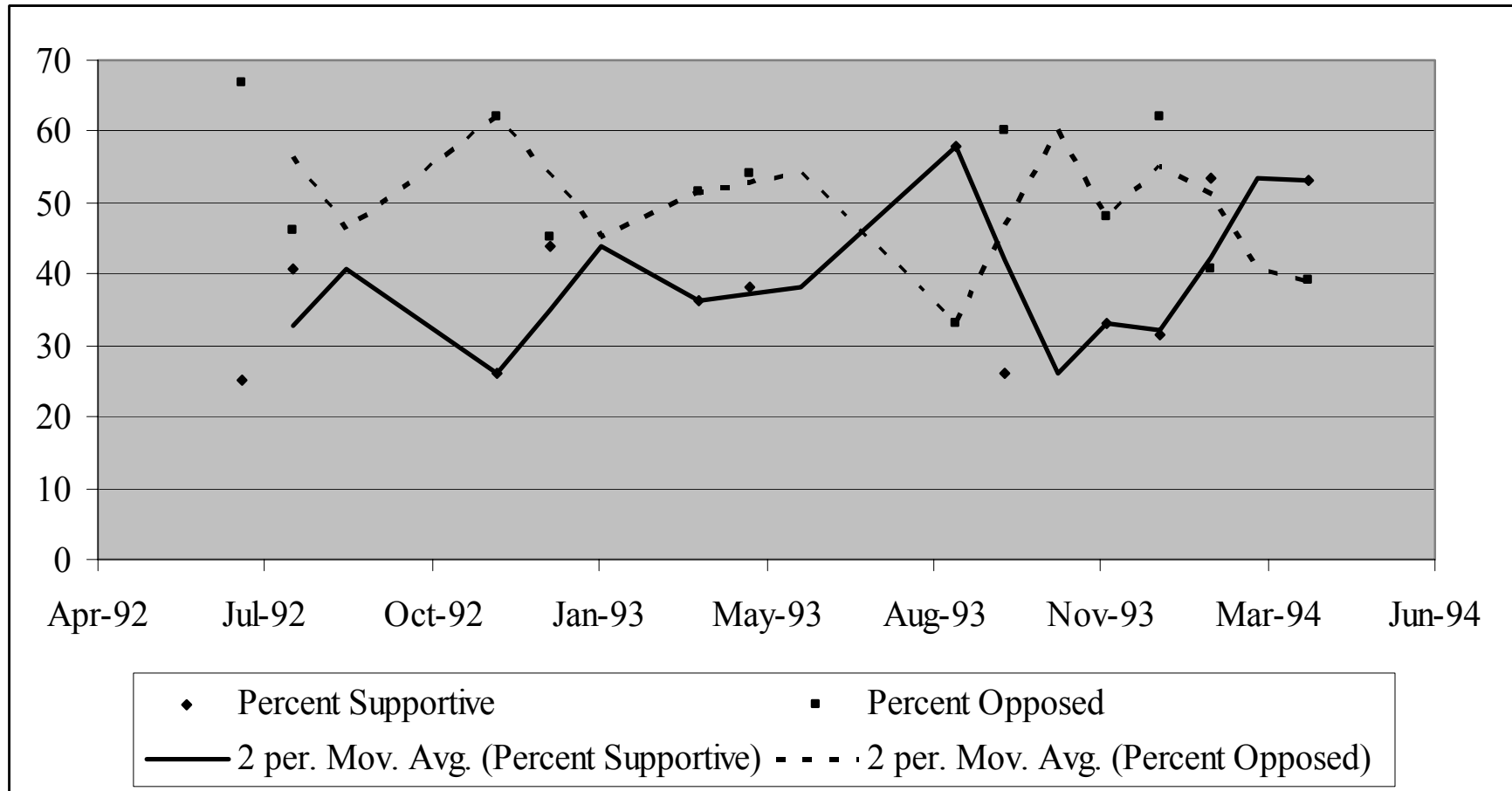
### **The Impact of Elites**

Up until now, I have treated the public as an undifferentiated entity, which is segmented only with respect to those portions of the public that favor or oppose military involvement in a given crisis. However, a large literature (e.g., Almond 1950; Rosenau 1961; Neumann 1986) posits a distinction within the public according to an elite or attentive public versus a mass, inattentive public. While some studies (e.g., Wittkopf 1990) find similar preferences across the elite and the mass publics, others find marked differences between these groups concerning the overall direction – interventionist versus isolationist – of U.S. foreign policy (Rielly 1991; Page and Barabas 2000). It is worth exploring whether elites had a disproportionate impact on President Clinton’s decision to rule out troops and Non-force alternatives in the first stage of the decision making process.

There is some evidence that the Clinton White House felt pressure from elite opinion during the Bosnian crisis. A group of “liberal humanitarians,” embodied by such organizations as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, seemed to advocate military force to end the crisis in Bosnia (Western 2002; Human Rights Watch 1995). A Human Rights Watch memo calls for the U.S. to engage in active “interference” of Bosnian Serb efforts to conquer UN-established safe havens. Similarly, members of the elite press



Figure 5.1. Public Opinion toward the Use of Force in Response to the Bosnian Crisis, July 1992 – April 1994.



Note: The data points were computed by taking the monthly average of all polls asking respondents whether they supported or opposed any sort of military force by the U.S. in Bosnia. Average support for the entire period is 38.75%, while Average opposition is 50.67%.

elite press used the editorial pages of, for example, *The New York Times* and *Washington Post* to implore the Clinton administration to take forceful action in Bosnia (Auerbach and Bloch-Elkon 2005). Another elite group – consisting of members of Congress and prominent citizens led by Senator Robert Dole – called for lifting the arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims (*Congressional Quarterly* 1992; Zimmerman 1996).

At first blush, it seems difficult to determine whether Clinton's decision was a response to one (or all) of these elite groups or the public in general. But a closer look at the specific policy recommendations of the elites offers some insight into whether President Clinton heeded the elites over the masses. The human rights organizations advocated the use of U.S. ground troops to engage Bosnian Serbs in order to protect safe havens and stop ethnic cleansing. Members of the media primarily offered criticism of the Clinton administration for backing off of its "lift and strike" position (see e.g., Auerbach and Bloch-Elkon 2005). The group led by Senator Dole sought to allow the transfer of arms to the Bosnian Muslims so that they could defend themselves against the better-equipped Bosnian Serbs.

In the end, Clinton was unable to muster sufficient public support for the deployment of ground troops, as the humanitarian groups demanded. Nor was Clinton able to secure support – either at home or abroad – for lifting the arms embargo. Domestic public opinion was generally tepid toward lifting the arms embargo, while the U.S.'s NATO allies along with Russia opposed lifting the ban (Zimmerman 1996). However, the advocacy of military intervention espoused by the elite press seems largely consistent with the aggregate preferences of the mass public. Editorials frequently called for action but not at great risk to U.S. service members' lives (e.g., Lewis 1993;

Rosenthal 1994; Safire 1994) – specifically, calls to carry out the threat of air strikes. Although the opinions of elite members of the media and the mass public were largely congruent throughout the Bosnian crisis, I cannot conclude that the preferences of journalists had a disproportionate influence on actual policy.

Although Clinton was cognizant of the range of alternatives the public would accept, he did not arrive at an ultimate decision until April 1994. Prior to initiating air strikes, Clinton wavered between calling for Show of force (i.e., enforcement of the UN no-fly zone, insertion of peacekeepers) and Aerial bombardment (i.e., lift and strike) responses during negotiations with NATO allies for the balance of the period leading to air strikes in April 1994. However, he kept a close eye on public opinion during these months to insure that he did not overstep his bounds. In the sections that follow, I discuss the president's calculus concerning military and international-strategic factors.

## STAGE 2: MILITARY AND INTERNATIONAL-STRATEGIC FACTORS

In the second stage of the decision making process, the Clinton administration weighed the implications of the remaining alternatives on the military and international-strategic dimensions. The surviving alternatives were evaluated in the second stage according to their ability to maximize benefits (minimize costs) simultaneously with respect to military and strategic factors.

### **Military Dimension**

On the military dimension, the president compared the implications of the remaining alternatives – no-fly zone enforcement, sending in U.S. peacekeepers, and air strikes – for such military considerations as capabilities, logistics, and the likelihood of success. Although the Bosnian Serbs had significant forces relative to the Bosnian

Muslims and Croats, their military capabilities would not be sufficient to substantially frustrate the U.S.'s pursuit of these alternatives (Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002).

Logistical concerns were also of little consequence; the U.S. would be able to pursue the surviving alternatives with relative ease given the presence of aircraft carriers in the Adriatic and Mediterranean as well as land-based assets in Italy and Turkey (Grimmett 1999). In the Bosnian crisis, the likelihood of success became a salient factor.

The likelihood of success on the military dimension was defined as establishing the conditions necessary to turn Bosnia into a peaceful, multi-ethnic state. The Clinton administration saw these conditions as the halt in Serb aggression (Broder and McManus 1993; *Economist* 1994; Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002). Obviously, peace is not satisfied in the presence of war, but the fighting also continued to be accompanied by ethnic cleansing. The successful Serb siege of each Muslim enclave was typically followed by the expulsion and/or massacre of the local population (Gompert 1996). As long as ethnic cleansing continued, the task of preserving Bosnia's multi-ethnic character would become nearly impossible.

None of the alternatives surviving the first stage of the decision making process held much promise of bringing about the conditions necessary to turn Bosnia into a peaceful, multi-ethnic state. Enforcement of the no-fly zone over Bosnia would deny Serb forces air support as well as the transfer of troops and material via aircraft. But like a naval blockade, the success of this coercive measure depends largely on the target's ability to cope with the action (see e.g., George, Hall and Simons 1971). If the Bosnian Serbs could sustain their sieges without air support or air deliveries of reinforcements and supplies, denial of Bosnian air space would do little to stop Serb aggression.

The contribution of U.S. troops to peacekeeping operations was also unlikely to satisfy the military objectives. If there is no peace to keep, peacekeepers under UNPROFOR rules of engagement (ROE) serve as little more than observers. Permitted only to act in self defense, UNPROFOR peacekeepers were not authorized to interfere in the activities of warring parties, nor were they able to engage any group observed committing unlawful acts (Berkowitz 1994). The Bosnian Serbs had already proved that international observation alone would not deter their efforts. Consequently, a U.S. contribution to UNPROFOR appears unlikely to have yielded the desired result.

Although air strikes would have a more direct impact on Serb military assets on the ground, the success of this alternative would depend on two key variables. The first variable is the strategy of the military conducting air strikes. The U.S. could seek to “punish” the Serbs by targeting civilian populations and economic centers, or the U.S. could pursue a “denial” strategy in which air strikes would target deployed forces and military installations (Pape 1996). The second variable concerns the extent to which the target is susceptible to a bombing campaign. Air strikes intended to “punish” assume that the target’s political leaders are unwilling to countenance civilian losses and/or that attacks on economic centers would damage the ability of the target to sustain operations (Pape 1996). On the other hand, a “denial” strategy tends to assume that target forces are “conventional” in terms of tactics and organization. The success of denial strategy is largely contingent on whether target forces are concentrated along a frontline, while supported by identifiable command and support centers in the rear (e.g., Pape 1996; Daalder and O’Hanlon 1999; Horowitz and Reiter 2001).

A punishment strategy was never seriously considered by the Clinton administration. Although the U.S. had carried out such campaigns during World War II, bombing population and economic centers inside Serb-held Bosnian territory would have been directly counter to one of the prominent aims of U.S. policy – preserving the lives of innocents (e.g., Perry 1995). However, air strikes intended to deny the Bosnian Serb leadership the use of its military assets was contemplated (Beal 1997). However, these efforts would be complicated by the tactics and organization of the Bosnian Serb military structure. There was no conventional frontline in Bosnia; Bosnian Serb forces held 70% of the territory and much of the Muslim-held territory was encircled. Consequently, Bosnian Serb forces were diffused throughout most of Bosnia and frequently resembled small groups of armed bandits rather than recognizable, professional military units (Mueller 2004). Moreover, military installations throughout the former Yugoslavia tend to be small and located either under ground or within population centers.

In spite of the difficulties of targeting Bosnian Serb forces, the air strikes alternative appears to have maximized net benefits on the military dimension. Carrying out air strikes promised a greater likelihood of halting Serb aggression than no-fly zone enforcement or the insertion of U.S. peacekeepers. U.S. participation in no-fly zone enforcement would have done much to deny the Bosnian Serbs use of the airspace over Bosnia. But patrols by U.S. warplanes would have done little to stop the ground offensive and sieges of Muslim safe havens encircled by Bosnian Serb forces. Sending U.S. troops as part of a peacekeeping mission would have done practically nothing to contribute to peace in Bosnia. Although these forces on the ground would have gained the capacity to report on atrocities, they would have lacked the authority to intervene.

But air strikes offered some hope of creating peaceful conditions in Bosnia. At a minimum, air strikes would effectively provide close air support for Muslim and Croat ground forces repelling Serb advances (Daalder and O'Hanlon 1999; Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002). At a maximum, an aerial bombardment would break the Serbs' will and/or ability to continue fighting (see e.g., Pape 1996). Thus, the air strikes alternative appears to have been the best alternative according to the military dimension.

### **International-Strategic Dimension**

On the international-strategic dimension, the Clinton administration weighed the implications of the remaining alternatives for such factors as the global balance of power and grand strategy. With the end of the Cold War and collapse of Soviet-dominated World Communism, the U.S. became the undisputed, lone superpower. Consequently, the maintenance or improvement of the U.S.'s global power position was not seriously considered. But throughout the 1990s, the U.S. began to pursue a grand strategy "democratic enlargement" – the promotion of democracy around the world (see e.g., Posen and Ross 1996; Brinkley 1997). The Clinton administration, in particular, subscribed to the proposition that the larger the community of democratic nations, "the safer and more prosperous Americans will be, since democracies are demonstrably more likely to maintain their international commitments, less likely to engage in terrorism or wreak environmental damage, and less likely to make war on each other" (Talbot 1996). Another important aim of U.S. grand strategy was the maintenance of strategic alliances such as NATO (Art 1998; Haley 2004). President Clinton believed that NATO should "remain an anchor for European and Atlantic stability" – especially with the advent of a new wave of European and former Soviet democracies (Lake 1993).

The remaining alternatives were gauged according to the extent to which they served or threatened the international-strategic goals of democratic enlargement and the maintenance of NATO. With respect to promoting democracy, there were no easy choices in the Bosnian crisis. Any of the ethnic leaders the Clinton administration could choose to support were fervent nationalists with fascistic tendencies (Zimmerman 1996; Gompert 1996). However, the worst alternative appeared to be the Bosnian Serb leadership in Pale and Belgrade, who were clearly out of step with international community of democratic nations. An alternative that had the best chance of preventing a Serb-dominated Bosnia would also serve the grand strategy of democratic enlargement. Because air strikes would likely be more successful than no-fly zone enforcement or the insertion of peacekeepers in reversing Bosnian Serb gains, an aerial bombardment alternative seemed to have the highest score with respect to promoting enlargement of the democratic community.

Concerning the maintenance of NATO, the U.S.'s NATO allies were initially opposed to air strikes (Drew 1995). They feared that NATO air strikes would lead to Bosnian Serb reprisals against their UNPROFOR troops on the ground in Bosnia. Instead, NATO issued a series of threats to carry out air strikes, but subsequently backed down in the face of additional Serb atrocities (Rosegrant and Watkins 1996). The paralysis of the Atlantic alliance to carry out decisive action threatened their international prestige and endangered future efforts to signal their resolve. By early 1994, it was becoming clear that NATO must make good on its threats or become an irrelevant alliance (*Economist* 1994). Thus, by preserving the relevancy and respect of the NATO alliance, air strikes would serve to maintain the alliance as a force for stability in Europe.



Air strikes, rather than a continuation of no-fly zone enforcement or the insertion of peacekeepers, maximized net benefits on the international-strategic dimension. Because air strikes against Serb positions had some promise of ultimately degrading the influence of fervent Serb nationalism in a Bosnian government, this alternative would better serve the Clinton administration's grand strategy of democratic enlargement. Air strikes also had the best hope of preserving the NATO alliance. Bosnian Serb defiance of NATO threats during the period from March 1993 until April 1994 endangered the alliance's relevance and prestige. Forceful action would be required to reverse the damage to the alliance credibility.

In summary, the Poliheuristic analysis of Clinton's decision to launch U.S.-led NATO air strikes suggests that a number of alternatives failing to satisfy the public opinion prerequisite were rejected in the first stage of the decision making process. The public was largely ambivalent throughout the crisis period about using force in the Balkans. While a significant segment believed that greater involvement to rectify the growing humanitarian crisis was necessary, a comparable proportion of Americans seemed to suggest that the benefits simply failed to outweigh the costs of risking U.S. troops' lives. In accordance with this public ambivalence, the Clinton administration ruled out Non-force alternatives as well as Land force assault alternatives in the first stage of the decision making process. This left three alternatives: enforcement of the UN no-fly zone, insertion of U.S. peacekeepers, and air strikes against Serb positions and installations in Bosnia. These surviving alternatives were compared based on their ability to maximize net benefits on the military and international-strategic dimensions. In the end, the air strikes alternative had the best chance of reversing Serb gains and

establishing a peaceful, multi-ethnic state in Bosnia. Additionally, that alternative – if successful – was believed to be an adequate way to promote international democracy and buttress NATO's credibility as a force for stability in Europe and the Atlantic.

#### WAS THE DECISION COMPENSATORY?

Before we can conclude that Clinton's decision to launch air strikes against Serb positions in Bosnia was driven by a Poliheuristic process, we must assess whether the decision was actually compensatory. According to the Poliheuristic account of presidential crisis response I develop in chapter II, the president follows a noncompensatory strategy of decision making, ruling out alternatives in the first stage that fail to clearly satisfy public opinion without regard for how well these alternatives perform on other dimensions. Compensatory models include expected utility theory (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita, 1981; 1984) and the cybernetic theory (e.g., Steinbruner, 1974; Ostrom and Job, 1986). These models differ from one another in their assumptions of information processing. The expected utility approach asserts that decision makers choose from an exhaustive set of choices the alternative that is expected to yield the "largest net gain (expected utility)" (Bueno de Mesquita, 1984: 228). Cybernetic theory emphasizes the constraints placed on leaders' processing capabilities and suggests that they engage in a limited information search and respond to conditions within different decision environments, choosing the alternative that "satisfices" certain criteria across these environments (Ostrom and Job, 1986). However, according to both approaches, a low score for an alternative on one dimension can be compensated by a high score on another (Mintz, 1993).

In contrast to these compensatory models, the Poliheuristic Theory argues that a key dimension is noncompensatory – regardless of how well an alternative maximizes net benefits on less important dimensions, it cannot compensate for a low score on the key dimension. For President Clinton during the Bosnian crisis, I contend that the domestic political dimension was noncompensatory. Public opinion toward military involvement dominated the domestic political dimension. An alternative's performance with respect to military and international-strategic factors could not compensate for a poor showing among the public.

During the Bosnian crisis, public opinion toward military involvement in the Balkans indicated that the American public saw the need to do something forceful about the crisis, but not at the expense of U.S. service members' lives. Any alternative that failed to address these twin concerns may have endangered Clinton's electoral fortunes in the upcoming presidential race. Consequently, on this dimension, the alternatives can be ranked according to how well each choice optimizes between minimizing potential U.S. casualties, while maximizing success – where success is defined in terms of establishing peace in Bosnia. It should be clear by now that air strikes is the optimal choice given the constraints of public opinion. Because the Bosnian Serbs were thought to be responsible for the fighting, U.S. air power had the capacity to contribute to peace by degrading Serb forces and installations (Daalder 1998). Moreover, air strikes could be conducted with minimal risk to U.S. combat troops (Horowitz and Reiter 2001). The remaining alternatives sacrifice either the safety of troops or the likelihood of success. For example, the insertion of ground troops to engage Bosnian Serb forces – though likely to break the will of the aggressor – would have placed a potentially large number of U.S. service

members directly in harm's way. On the other hand, such alternatives as sending peacekeepers or enforcing the no-fly zone promised a reduced risk to U.S. troops, but held less promise in terms of establishing peace. Similarly, Non-force alternatives carried no risk to U.S. troops, but also promised little in the way of success in resolving the Bosnian crisis.

On the military dimension, operational success is paramount. As discussed above, the military objectives – establishing peace – served the foreign policy aim of creating a peaceful, multi-ethnic state in Bosnia. The alternatives can be ranked according to how well each choice was likely to successfully create the conditions under which peace could be established. Clearly, the deployment of U.S. combat troops into Bosnia to engage aggressive forces would have had the greatest promise of success. Soon after the U.S. cobbled together a federation between Croats and Muslims in Bosnia, the U.S. could have inserted a large number of ground troops into Bosnia via Croatia, enabling the deployment of armor and cavalry units. Such a deployment would likely have proved to be overwhelming to the scattered Bosnian Serb forces harassing Muslim enclaves. The next-best alternative in terms of operational success was the air strikes option. Air strikes promised to contribute to peace by degrading Bosnian Serb forces and/or serving as close air support for Bosnian Croat-Muslim defenders (Johnson, Mueller and Taft 2002). The capitulation of Bosnian Serb forces was both necessary and sufficient for peace in Bosnia.

Following the air strikes alternative, both of the Show of force alternatives – no-fly zone enforcement and deployment of U.S. peacekeepers – held the potential next-to-the worst potential for contributing to peace. At a maximum, these Show of force options

would have been useful for denying Bosnian Serbs the use of air space (in the case of no-fly zone enforcement) or deterring further Bosnian Serb attacks on Muslim enclaves (in the case of deployment of U.S. peacekeepers). But as I discuss above, denial of air space was unlikely to place the Bosnian Serbs at a relative disadvantage, as they would continue to be able to move troops and equipment overland. Similarly, given the Bosnian Serbs' history of disregard for international peacekeepers (Daalder 1998), the insertion of U.S. peacekeepers operating under rules of engagement restricting their behavior to observation would have done little to evoke desired behavior. Finally, the least effective set of alternatives involved Non-force responses. The Clinton administration had already experienced a number of disappointments in the performance of negotiations and economic sanctions. Lifting the arms embargo – an alternative initially favored by Clinton and promoted by Congress – also offered little hope in the way of resolving the conflict. A renewed flow of arms could potentially be intercepted by Bosnian Serb forces, or simply embolden the Muslims to keep fighting (Drew 1995).

On the international-strategic dimension, a decision maker using a compensatory decision making strategy would have ranked the alternatives according to their ability to maximize the goals of promoting democracy and maintaining the credibility of NATO. Again, the Land force assault alternative had the best chance of maximizing these factors on the international-strategic dimension. As I discuss above, U.S. combat troops could have promoted democracy through the support of the least autocratic faction in the war – the Bosnian Muslims – by actively interfering with Bosnian Serb aggression. Also, the insertion of combat troops would have served the aim of shoring-up NATO's credibility by fulfilling its series of threats.

The balance of alternatives simply would not have been as effective in immediately serving the international-strategic goals of the Clinton administration. Although air strikes would have (and, eventually, did) proved to be effective in degrading Bosnian Serb forces, the aerial bombardment option left much to chance in terms of U.S./NATO control over the outcome of the conflict, jeopardizing the goal of promoting democracy. Relative to a Land force assault, air strikes also signaled reluctance and timidity on the part of the NATO alliance relative to an overwhelming land force operation. The very nature of high-technological warfare by which damage is inflicted without sinking costs (i.e., ground troops, heavy equipment, and logistical infrastructure) into the conflict can be easily interpreted as a lack of willingness to commit to the outcome (Daalder and O'Hanlon 1999).

The Show of force and Non-force alternatives also failed to serve the international-strategic goals of the Clinton administration. Because they failed to provide sufficient support for the least-autocratic warring party – the Bosnian Muslims – none of these alternatives would have promoted the creation of a democratic Bosnia. Moreover, as piecemeal and largely ineffectual measures, the Show of force and Non-force alternatives supported the growing characterization of the NATO alliance as a paper tiger (*Economist* 1994).

Table 5.1 summarizes the scores of the alternatives on each dimension. The scores range from a minimum of “1” to a maximum of “6” – though, because some of the alternatives essentially tie with others, the actual minimum is 2. Higher scores on a dimension indicate that an alternative is relatively better able to satisfy that dimension's criteria. On the domestic political dimension, the alternatives are scored from highest to

lowest according to their expected ability to optimize between minimizing U.S. troop casualties and maximizing the expectation of stopping the fighting in Bosnia. On the military dimension, they are ranked according to their ability to successfully achieve the military objectives – stopping the fighting. On the international-strategic dimension, the alternatives are scored according to their ability to promote democracy as well as maintain the NATO alliance. The fifth column of Table 5.1 shows the total scores for each alternative.

Clearly, Clinton's decision was not compensatory. The Land force assault alternative was expected to bode well for U.S. international-strategic interests as well as yield high net benefits on the military dimension. But the combat troop option was rejected because of its inability to satisfy the domestic political imperative of minimizing U.S. troop casualties. Indeed, when the scores are summed across dimensions in accordance with expected utility or cybernetic theory, this option received a higher total score than the air strikes alternative. Had Clinton used another type of compensatory decision making strategy such as "majority of confirming dimensions" (MCD), in which the alternative that receives the highest score on the most dimensions is selected, (e.g., Russo and Doshier, 1983; Payne, Bettman and Johnson, 1993: 27), the table suggests that the combat troops alternative was again the most desirable considered. Although the compensatory models may have pointed to the implementation of a Land force assault option, this alternative's high scores on the military and international-strategic dimensions were unable to compensate for a low score on the domestic political dimension.

Table 5.1. The Bosnian Crisis: Scores of Alternatives on the Relevant Dimensions.

| Alternatives                             | Dimensions         |          |                         |       |
|--|--------------------|----------|-------------------------|-------|
|  | Domestic Political | Military | International-Strategic | Total |
| <i>Non-force alternatives</i>            |                    |          |                         |       |
| Continue current course of action        | 3                  | 2        | 2                       | 7     |
| Lift arms embargo                        | 4                  | 3        | 3                       | 10    |
| <i>Show of Force</i>                     |                    |          |                         |       |
| Enforce No-fly zone                      | 5                  | 4        | 4                       | 13    |
| Send U.S. peacekeepers                   | 5                  | 4        | 4                       | 13    |
| <i>Aerial bombardment</i>                |                    |          |                         |       |
| Launch air strikes against Bosnian Serbs | 6                  | 5        | 5                       | 16    |
| <i>Land force assault</i>                |                    |          |                         |       |
| Insert U.S. combat troops                | 5                  | 6        | 6                       | 17    |



## CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the process by which President Clinton arrived at the decision to launch air strikes against Bosnian Serb forces in 1994. In the first stage of the Poliheuristic procedure, Clinton ruled out the use of combat ground troops to quell the Bosnian Serb sieges of UN-established safe havens. He also ruled out Non-force alternatives, which had evoked nothing more than Bosnian Serb defiance. Public opinion toward military involvement during the Bosnian crisis indicates that the public – in the aggregate – favored a response that would break the sieges of Muslim enclaves without placing an undue risk on the lives of U.S. troops involved in the operation. By ruling out Land force assault and Non-force alternatives, President Clinton eliminated the alternatives that appeared to clearly flout the preferences of the public. In the second stage of the decision making process, the president chose a final response among the remaining alternatives on the basis of its ability to maximize expected benefits on the military and international-strategic dimensions. On the military dimension, the air strikes option received the highest “score” because it was able to promise a greater likelihood of operational success than Show of force alternatives. On the international-strategic dimension, the air strikes alternative held a greater potential to simultaneously promote democracy in the region as well as enhance the credibility of the beleaguered NATO alliance.

President Clinton’s decision was not compensatory. Despite the ability of the combat troop option to better serve the interest of peace in the region, the president was unwilling to pursue an alternative that ran counter to the wishes of the public. Thus, the high “score” of the combat troop option on the military and international-strategic

dimensions could not compensate for its low “score” on the more important domestic political dimension.

## CHAPTER VI

### **BUSH'S DECISION TO LAUNCH A LIMITED INVASION OF AFGHANISTAN,**

#### **2001**

On October 7, 2001, U.S. forces – in cooperation with coalition partners and a combination of Northern Afghan forces – launched a limited invasion of Afghanistan to topple the Taliban government and destroy al Qaeda elements headquartered there. The operation was the ultimate response to the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, DC on September 11, which claimed the lives of thousands of civilians. The American people were thought to be grief-stricken and vengeful, supporting a strong military retaliation (e.g., Milbank and Morin 2001; Lake 2002; Traugott et al. 2002). But rather than pursue a “brute-force” war fighting strategy (as the U.S. had done in every major war fought in the twentieth century), or an exclusive air power operation (as the U.S. had increasingly pursued since the mid-1980s); President Bush approved an alternative characterized by finesse and innovation (see e.g., Conetta 2002; O’Hanlon 2002). The ensuing action involved a mixture of air strikes, special operations missions, and light infantry maneuvers designed to target Taliban and al Qaeda forces only in a country with a political landscape as diverse and formidable as its topography (Neuman, Block and Whalen 2001).

This chapter analyzes President George W. Bush’s decision to launch Operation Enduring Freedom in the wake of the terrorist attacks. First, I briefly discuss the event leading to the action – the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in Washington, DC and New York City. Then, I identify the alternatives considered by the Bush administration in the wake of the attacks. Next, I apply the Poliheuristic account developed in chapter II

to the president's decision. I find that, in the first stage of the decision making process, the president ruled out Non-force alternatives, which were clearly incommensurate the public's preferences after the terror attacks. In the second stage, the president maximized net benefits across the military and international-strategic dimensions, choosing an alternative – a limited invasion of Afghanistan – that would overcome logistical difficulties and regional political realities. After analyzing the decision in terms of the two-stage Poliheuristic process, I discuss whether the decision was compensatory. I assess whether the alternative pursued by the president was actually the result of process by which the he sought to yield the highest possible net gain across all dimensions.

#### 9/11 AND AFGHANISTAN

Between 8:48 a.m. and 10:10 a.m., three hijacked commercial jetliners struck the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, DC. Another hijacked jet went down in Pennsylvania, killing all aboard. Almost immediately, Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda network was identified as the culprit.<sup>26</sup> President Bush announced later in the day that the United States was at war and would “make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them” (Bumiller and Sanger 2001).

The White House's verbal reaction to the 9/11 attacks signaled a departure from previous policies toward terror attacks. This was not the first act of terrorism carried out or supported by bin Laden's al Qaeda organization. For example, Al Qaeda participated in attacks against U.S. troops in Aden and Somalia in 1992-93, had links to the Manila air plot of 1994-95, carried out bombings of the U.S. embassies in East Africa in 1998, and

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<sup>26</sup> Newspapers published anonymous admissions by intelligence officials that the administration believed that al Qaeda was responsible for the attacks on September 12, 2001 (e.g., Bumiller and Sanger 2001).

deployed a “boat-bomb” in 2000 against the USS *Cole* in Yemen (National Commission 2004). But of these, only the 1998 attacks on the U.S. embassies in East Africa provoked a visible military response.

A military response to the terrorist attacks, however, was not the favored alternative of the entire Bush administration. Following a National Security Council meeting at Camp David on September 15, President Bush called on the Taliban government in Afghanistan to hand over bin Laden and other al Qaeda members (Purdum 2001). Secretary of State Colin Powell reached out to Taliban benefactors Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to put diplomatic pressure on Afghanistan to comply with U.S. demands. CIA chief George Tenet was authorized to begin funneling money to tribal leaders in northern Afghanistan – the Northern Alliance – to seek and destroy al Qaeda members and their camps (Woodward 2002). But the Taliban rebuffed the overtures of Pakistani and Saudi delegations. Taliban forces also successfully repulsed Northern Alliance attacks aimed at al Qaeda installations (Warshaw 2003).

As the Bush administration’s diplomatic and covert efforts appeared increasingly unlikely to succeed, Powell and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld began working to secure agreements with other states in and near Central Asia for overflight rights and use of U.S. military bases for launching offensive operations against Afghanistan. By the end of September, President Bush had decided to launch a “novel kind of war” against the Taliban and al Qaeda (Sanger and Bumiller 2001). A final ultimatum to turn over bin Laden and other al Qaeda members was issued to the Taliban on September 20 (Hundley 2001). Seventy-two hours later, the Taliban refused and U.S. forces were built up in the region (Cushman 2001).

## THE ALTERNATIVES

Following September 11, 2001, the Bush administration vowed to punish the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks. This would become Bush's foreign policy goal in the crisis. However, the administration was not of one mind on how to respond. Even after al Qaeda – headquartered in the Taliban's Afghanistan – was linked to the attacks, members of the Bush administration advocated a range of disparate policy responses. The primary difference of opinion concerned the choice of targets – should the U.S. target state sponsors of terror organizations or selectively target the terror organizations themselves? Targeting terror organizations only would require the cooperation of the states harboring terrorists, while going after the states would permit the U.S. a relatively free hand in seeking out terrorists within sovereign territory. Moreover, attaining the cooperation of states meant that U.S. operations would take on an appearance of law enforcement, rather than forceful military action.

At the National Security Council meeting at Camp David on September 15, Bush considered a number of alternatives thought to serve his objective of punishing the terrorists responsible for the attacks. Each of these alternatives can be assigned to one of the four Crisis response categories. In terms of Non-force alternatives, Secretary of State Colin Powell suggested negotiations with the regime of Afghanistan, as well as its neighbors and benefactors, to persuade the Taliban to hand over members of al Qaeda (Mufson 2001). Because the Taliban was not directly responsible for the attacks on U.S. soil, negotiating with the Taliban would not contradict the president's stated foreign policy goal. Alternatively, CIA director George Tenet argued in favor of arming tribal militant groups in northern Afghanistan that would destroy al Qaeda camps (Woodward

2002: 75-79). Arming the Afghan opposition had proved successful against the Soviets during the final decade of the Cold War (Daalder and Lindsay 2001).

Show of force alternatives were never seriously considered in the crisis with Afghanistan. As I discuss below, Afghanistan is a land-locked country with mountainous terrain. It is bordered primarily by states – Iran and Pakistan – that would be reluctant to allow U.S. forces on their soil (O’Hanlon 2002). These factors would make a Show of force operation unrealistic. Consequently, alternatives that included the massing or mobilization of U.S. forces on or near Afghanistan’s borders simply were not brought to light in discussions of the National Security Council.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Henry Shelton noted the availability of two Aerial bombardment responses. The first proposal was to send in cruise missiles and destroy suspected al Qaeda camps. This cruise missile strike would be a replay of the 1998 strikes ordered by Clinton following the al Qaeda attacks on the U.S. embassies in east Africa. Option two included manned bombers with the cruise missile strikes to conduct a sustained air campaign against terrorist camps as well as Taliban forces and infrastructure (Woodward 2002).

In terms of Land force assault alternatives, General Shelton and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld pointed out more ambitious military responses, which included the use of ground forces (Woodward 2002). There were two possible plans falling within this category. The first was a blitzkrieg-style campaign coupling air power with heavy armor and infantry forces on the ground. Such a full-scale assault had been previously employed by U.S. commanders in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War (O’Hanlon 2002). The other Land force assault alternative called for a limited insertion

of light infantry forces to work in concert with the Afghan Northern Alliance (O’Hanlon 2002; Conetta 2002). This ground operation would be just large enough to compel the concentration of Taliban and al Qaeda forces, making them suitable targets for bombing sorties (see e.g., Daalder and O’Hanlon 1999; Conetta 2002).

The alternatives that the Bush administration considered in pursuit of punishing the terrorists responsible for the 9/11 attacks can be summarized as follows:

***A. Non-force alternatives***

- 1) negotiate the extradition of al Qaeda members
- 2) arm the Northern Alliance

***B. Aerial bombardment alternatives***

- 3) carry out a limited cruise missile strike
- 4) carry out a bombing campaign

***C. Land force assault alternatives***

- 5) insert light infantry units
- 6) invade Afghanistan with heavy armor and infantry forces

Like Clinton’s decision to launch air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs (chapter V), it is clear that the specific alternatives considered by the Bush administration have opposing implications with respect to foreign policy success and risk of troop casualties. As we move from item number 1 (“negotiate the extradition of al Qaeda members”) up to item number 6, each alternative promises a greater likelihood of foreign policy success as well as a reduction in the minimization of friendly fatalities. By the end of September, President Bush had made his decision (Sanger and Bumiller 2001) – a light infantry force would be inserted into Afghan territory to act as a “fulcrum” for the “lever” of air power



(Conetta 2002: 17-18).

## STAGE 1: THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL DIMENSION

According to the Poliheuristic account developed in chapter II, the president rules out Crisis response choices in the first stage of the decision making process which threaten his electoral fortunes. Because the president's electoral fate is inextricably rooted in the public's evaluation of his performance, the president should reject alternatives that fail to clearly comport with public preferences.

Twenty-six days elapsed between the terror attacks on the U.S. and the start of military operations against Afghanistan. During that time, a host of public opinion polls were conducted, gauging Americans' reactions. Public attitudes toward military force against Afghanistan revealed two central features during that time. First, the public expected a long and costly conflict with many U.S. battle deaths. Second, the public seemed to clearly support a forceful response in spite of the expected costs. In other words, the public believed that the foreign policy objectives outweighed the costs of military involvement. The Bush administration ruled out Non-force responses and did not seriously consider Show of force responses as a result of public opinion. Thus, only the forceful Crisis response choices survived the first state of the decision making process.

### **Relative Value and the Use of Force against Afghanistan**

According to the theoretical framework developed in chapter II, public attitudes toward the use of force are driven by the extent to which the public believes that the foreign policy objectives of a proposed military operation are worth the costs in terms of expected casualties. The public is willing to tolerate more casualties when the foreign

policy objectives are deemed worthwhile (Larson 1996). In other words, the public conducts a relative value assessment when considering whether to support or oppose military action in an international crisis. Opinion polls following 9/11 indicate that the public believed the foreign policy benefits of a U.S. attack on Afghanistan were worth a good deal of sacrifice in terms of U.S. troop fatalities.

The attacks in New York City and Washington, DC had a profound impact on Americans' sense of security. Previous terrorist attacks in the U.S. or against its citizens abroad were typically viewed as isolated incidents perpetrated by a few fanatics. In contrast, the events of 9/11 were seen by the public as a national trauma committed by a sophisticated, transnational organization (Traugott, et al. 2002). Although a wave of patriotism and national unity swept over the country (Putnam 2002; Traugott, et al. 2002), substantial numbers of Americans believed that they or their family members would be targeted by a terrorist attack in the U.S. (Huddy, Khatib and Capelos. 2002). According to a poll conducted by CBS in late September, 78% of respondents believed that more attacks on the U.S. were likely to occur (Huddy, Khatib and Capelos. 2002; see also Traugott, et al. 2002). The foreign policy benefits of an attack against Afghanistan and al Qaeda would consist of a reduction in the level of insecurity being experienced by most Americans following the al Qaeda-orchestrated attacks.<sup>27</sup>

In chapter V, I used the public's analogical reasoning as an alternative indicator of the costs and benefits expected by the public. This constituted a comparison of an anticipated conflict with a prominent conflict in the past to assess the public's perception of the relative value of military involvement – which is in accordance with studies

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<sup>27</sup> Of course, some citizens and public figures believed that retaliation for 9/11 would lead to further attacks in the U.S. (e.g., Dembner 2001; Miga 2001).

suggesting that past conflicts continue to have consequences for how a large portion of the American public perceives military involvement abroad (Holsti and Rosenau 1984; Vertzberger 1990; Sobel 2001). For example, pollsters asked the public whether they believed a U.S. military intervention in Bosnia would be more like the U.S.'s experience in Vietnam or the Gulf War.<sup>28</sup>

Rather than summon societal memories of Vietnam or the Gulf War, the attacks of 9/11 evoked images of Pearl Harbor and the start of World War II (Schildkraut 2002). Newspaper editorials drew parallels between 9/11 and the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor (e.g., Bartley 2001; Brokaw 2001; Friedman 2001), anticipating a long and costly war in response to the attacks. The public tended to agree with the similarities. For example, when asked by an NBC News Poll, 91% of respondents indicated that the 9/11 attack was as bad as or worse than the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The connections acknowledged between Pearl Harbor and the terror attacks suggest that the public expected sacrifice.

President Bush reinforced public expectations by asserting that any operation conducted in Afghanistan – or anywhere else in the world – in the pursuit of terrorists would likely be a long and costly endeavor (Woodward 2002: 49). Regardless of the president's forewarning, the public supported launching a war against terrorists generally and Afghanistan, in particular. Perhaps most telling are four public opinion polls taken between September 15 and September 27 querying public support for the use of force, given an expectation of U.S. casualties. Table 6.1 summarizes these polls. Note that support for the use of force never dips below 66%, regardless of how ominous the

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<sup>28</sup> Vietnam is the paradigmatic costly and protracted defeat, while the Gulf War is the archetypal brief and costless victory (see e.g., Roskin 1974; Vertzberger 1990; Sobel 2001).

Table 6.1 Public Opinion toward Casualties in Response to 9/11, September 2001.

| <b>Support</b> | <b>Oppose</b> | <b>Question</b>  | <b>Date</b> | <b>Source</b>                      |
|----------------|---------------|--|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 65%            | 30%           | Would you support or oppose the US taking military action if you knew [that] 1,000 American troops would be killed?  | 15-Sep      | GALLUP,<br>C.N.N., U.S.A.<br>TODAY |
| 77%            | 9%            | Do you favor or oppose taking military action, including the use of ground troops, to retaliate against whoever is responsible for the terrorist attacks even if it means that US armed forces might suffer thousands of casualties? | 17-Sep      | PEOPLE & THE<br>PRESS              |
| 76%            | 16%           | Would you support or oppose the US continuing a campaign against terrorism if you knew that 5,000 US troops would be killed?   | 22-Sep      | GALLUP,<br>C.N.N., U.S.A.<br>TODAY |
| 66%            | 26%           | What if it meant getting into a long war with large numbers of US troops killed or wounded-- would you support or oppose taking military action against the groups or nations responsible for these attacks?                         | 27-Sep      | WASHINGTON<br>POST                 |

conjecture may be in terms of expected casualties. In the run-up to the U.S. military action against Afghanistan, Americans expected many casualties in a war on terrorism. But it also appears as though the public believed that the benefits of prosecuting such a war would be worth the costs.

### **Public Opinion and the Rejection of Alternatives**

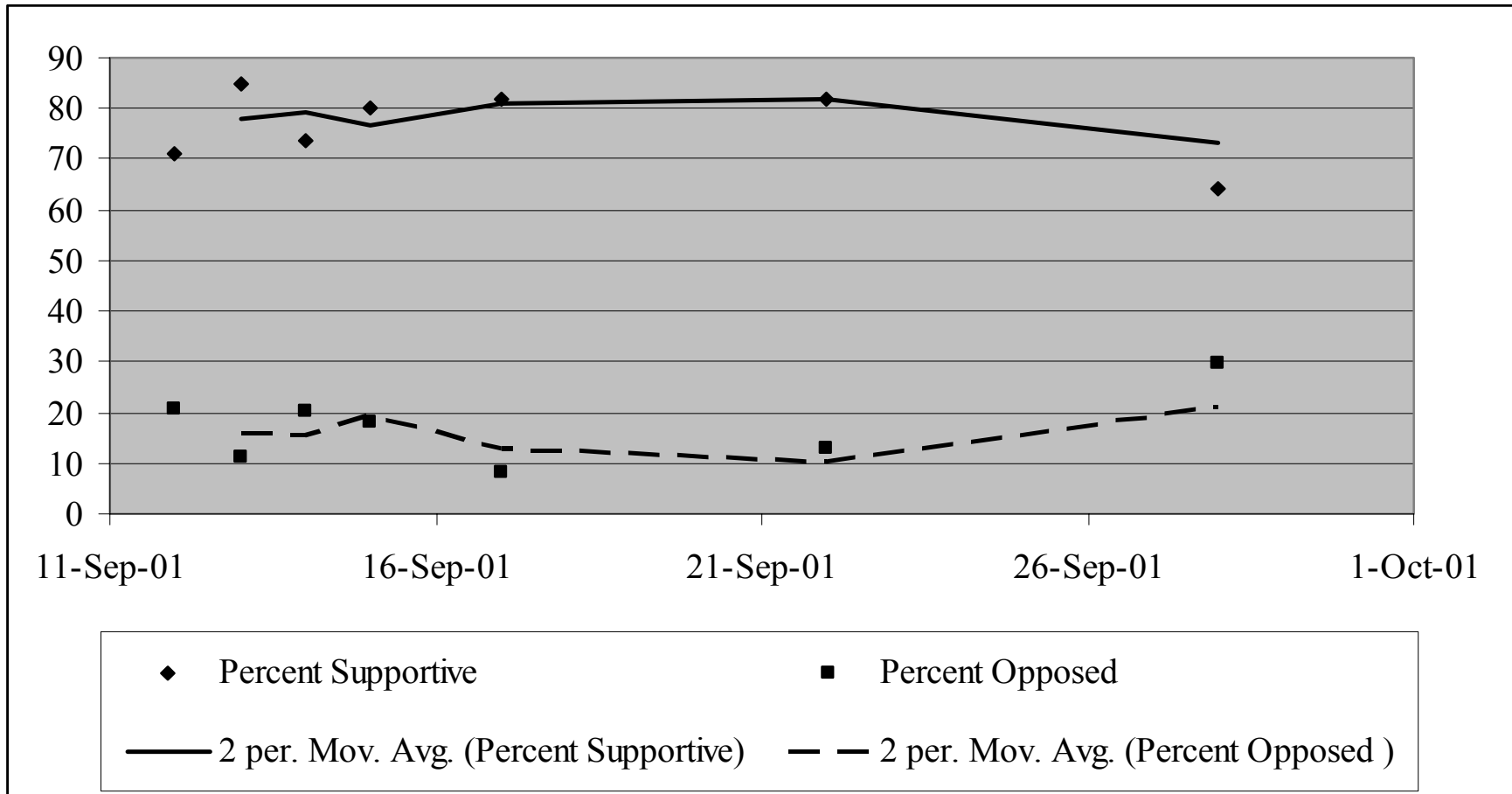
Consistent with the discussion of relative value above, public opinion was clearly supportive of a use of force in response to the 9/11 attacks (see Figure 6.1). Despite President Bush's frequent claim that he makes policy "based upon principle and not polls and focus groups" (e.g., Harris 2001; Foyle 2004), there is some evidence that he ruled out Crisis response choices that were clearly at odds with public preferences. Some scholars (Foyle 2004; Gibbs 2004) are unequivocal in their conclusions that the public guided the administration's response to the attacks: retaliate against al Qaeda and any nation harboring those responsible. President Bush acknowledged that "[w]hat Americans were feeling was that the country had suffered at the hands of al Qaeda" (Woodward 2002, 48). Moreover, the president, in a colloquial manner, indicated his intent to be responsive to public opinion: "The American people want a big bang" (Woodward 2002, 49). Secretary of State Colin Powell agreed: "The American people want us to do something about al Qaeda."<sup>29</sup>

Recall from chapter II that when Public support for the use of force exceeds 60%, the president is likely to rule out lower Crisis response choices (i.e., Non-force and Show of force alternatives). President Bush's decision making process appears to adhere with this account of Poliheuristic decision making. Figure 6.1 plots the intensity of public support and opposition to the use of force during the interlude between the terrorist

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<sup>29</sup> Quoted in Foyle (2004, 275).

Figure 6.1. Public Opinion toward the Use of Force in Response to the Afghan Crisis, September 2001.



Note: The data points were computed by taking the daily average of all available polls asking respondents whether they supported or opposed any sort of military force by the U.S. in Afghanistan. Average support for the entire period is 74.55%, while Average opposition is 19.18%

strikes and the initiation of military operations against Afghanistan.<sup>30</sup> Each data point represents the average of all polls taken during the corresponding day concerning public attitudes toward forceful action by the U.S. against parties responsible for the attacks. By “forceful action,” I mean that the poll question queried public preferences toward military force in general, or air strikes and/or sending in ground forces, in particular. To summarize the general movement of public opinion during the period, the moving average for support and opposition are included in the figure. Throughout the period covered in the figure, the public overwhelmingly supports forceful action. Average daily support for the use of force never falls below 60%, while opposition to the use of force never breaches 30%. Consequently, President Bush ruled out Non-force and Show of force alternatives in the first stage of the decision making process.

### **The Impact of Elites**

In chapter V, I distinguished between an elite (i.e., attentive) and mass (i.e., inattentive) public to explore whether elites have a disproportionate impact on presidential crisis decision making (see e.g., Almond 1950; Rosenau 1961; Neumann 1986). It is also worth exploring the relative impact of elites in President Bush’s decision to rule out Non-force and Show of force alternatives in the first stage of the decision making process following the 9/11 attacks.

A rift within the Bush administration emerged at a National Security Council meeting on September 12. While most of the members of the administration were contemplating how to deal with al Qaeda and Afghanistan, Vice President Richard Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld advocated an immediate operation against Iraq to remove the potential threat of Saddam Hussein (Woodward 2002; Warshaw 2003; Foyle 2004). Secretary

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<sup>30</sup> The polls used in the construction of Figure 6.1 did not use questions alluding to the costs or benefits of a use of force.

of State Powell was a vocal critic of this proposal, arguing that “the American people want us to do something about al Qaeda” (Woodward 2002, 184). With public opinion in mind, President Bush sided with Powell over Iraq: “Let’s not make the target so broad that it misses the point and fails to draw support from normal Americans” (Woodward 2002, 48). Although Bush backed toppling Saddam Hussein Iraq eventually, he felt that the only viable option in the short-run was to go after al Qaeda in Afghanistan (Woodward 2002). However, the missing detail from the difference of opinion in the White House in the aftermath of 9/11 was whether Cheney and Rumsfeld opposed action against Afghanistan in favor of Iraq. The evidence seems to suggest that these key members of the administration may have favored a multi-front war, with operations in Afghanistan and Iraq simultaneously (Foyle 2004; Gibbs 2004; Warshaw 2003), but this is largely speculative. Whatever the case, Bush chose an alternative that was consistent with public opinion rather than an option that satisfied members of his administration immediately after 9/11.

The American public – including elites and masses – seemed to be of one mind about how to respond in the wake of the terror attacks: take the fight to al Qaeda and Afghanistan (e.g., Entman 2003; Foyle 2004; Gibbs 2004). With the exception of a few columnists who suggested that the U.S. should go after Saudi Arabia, the American press largely echoed the president’s account of events and policy proposals (e.g., Entman 2003; Coe, et al. 2004). Some academic elites favored a measured, restrained military response (see e.g., Lake 2002; Layne 2002), but there does not seem to have been a vocal opposition among the American elite to the use of force against al Qaeda and Afghanistan.

Overall, it is very difficult to gauge the relative impact of elite versus mass opinion in President Bush’s decision to attack Afghanistan. This difficulty rests in the fact that opinions



across the elite-mass divide were largely indistinguishable. The main differences seem to have concerned the inclusion of additional targets and the intensity of the retaliation. But, citing the demands of the public in general, the president was wary of diffuse targets and restrained responses (Woodward 2002). As Colin Powell recalled of a September 15 National Security Council meeting, “where the president came down was that Afghanistan was the place that we had to attack because the world and the American people would not understand if we didn’t go after the source of the 9/11 terrorists.”<sup>31</sup>

Clearly, President Bush was aware of the range of alternatives the public would accept in response to the 9/11 attacks. Anything less than a military operation aimed at bin Laden’s al Qaeda organization in Afghanistan would likely result in an eventual public backlash against the Bush administration (Foyle 2004). Consequently, the president ruled out those alternatives that were not in step with public opinion – Non-force alternatives. In the sections that follow, I discuss the president’s calculus concerning military and international-strategic factors.

## STAGE 2: MILITARY AND INTERNATIONAL-STRATEGIC FACTORS

In the second stage of the decision making process, the Bush administration weighed the implications of the remaining alternatives on the military and international-strategic dimensions. The surviving alternatives were evaluated in the second stage according to their ability to maximize benefits (minimize costs) simultaneously with respect to military and strategic factors.

### **Military Dimension**

On the military dimension, President Bush weighed the implications of the surviving alternatives – cruise missile strike, bombing campaign, light infantry assault (limited invasion), and heavy armor-infantry assault (extensive invasion) – for such military

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<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Foyle (2004, 276).

considerations as capabilities, logistics, and the likelihood of success. In terms of capabilities, some of the al Qaeda foreign fighters and Taliban forces had a good deal of military expertise after a decade of fighting the Soviets (e.g., Neuman, Block and Whalen 2001; Conetta 2002; O'Hanlon 2002). In addition to their mastery of Afghanistan's brutal landscape and climate, much of the U.S. adversary's military hardware was supplied to the Afghan mujahideen during the war with the Soviets (Daalder and Linsay 2001).

The Taliban's and al Qaeda's capabilities, enhanced by terrain and expertise, appear to militate against the use of ground troops in Afghanistan. But two other factors favored inserting troops on the ground. The first was U.S. technology. Supported by satellite imaging and precision munitions delivered from the air, ground forces would be able to overcome the advantages associated with knowledge of local terrain (O'Hanlon 2002). The second factor was the Northern Alliance. Another heir to the anti-Soviet mujahideen, the Northern Alliance had been engaged in a civil war with the Taliban since the religious sect took power in 1996 (Daalder and Linsay 2001). A U.S. ground operation in Afghanistan would be effectively augmented by Northern Alliance forces working toward the overthrow of the Taliban (Conetta 2002; O'Hanlon 2002). Consequently, relative capabilities – and the factors influencing this balance – appeared to favor the insertion of U.S. ground forces.

Another concern on the military dimension surrounds the logistics of deploying troops and equipment to the theater of operations. Although many of the logistical impediments to launching a full-scale attack seemed to be easily overcome with the U.S. military's technology, a number of aspects of Afghanistan's terrain and location would prove difficult. Afghanistan is a land-locked country with mountainous features and an unforgiving climate (Neuman, Block and Whalen 2001). In order to supply and reinforce a heavy ground force in

Afghanistan, the U.S. would need reliable access to secure bases in the area as well as use of a seaport in the immediate vicinity (Conetta 2002; O'Hanlon 2002). However, as I discuss in greater detail below, the international-strategic circumstances made access to Afghanistan uncertain. Iran and Pakistan – the country's neighbors with sea access – were unwilling to host U.S. bases or permit U.S. forces to deploy via their territory (O'Hanlon 2002). This set of logistical circumstances reduced the estimation of using ground forces on the military dimension.

Aerial bombardment alternatives appeared to be relatively more attractive than ground force options in light of the set of logistical challenges. A cruise missile strike or bombing campaign could have easily overcome the logistical impediments associated with Afghanistan's location and terrain. U.S. air and naval forces were already in the theater of operations prior to 9/11 – specifically, Uzbekistan and the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia. Aircraft in the Persian Gulf region would be able to fly sorties from their bases to targets in Afghanistan (O'Hanlon 2002). Thus, either of the Aerial bombardment alternatives appears to have been better-suited with respect to logistical concerns than the ground force options.

The final concern on the military dimension is the likelihood of success. Each of the surviving alternatives was evaluated according to how well it was expected to punish the terrorists responsible for the 9/11 attacks as well as their allies. Cruise missile strikes launched against al Qaeda training camps during the Clinton administration had failed to either kill important al Qaeda leaders or thwart future attacks (Woodward 2002). The cruise missile option was regarded as carrying a low likelihood of success. Alternatively, a strategic bombing campaign pursued in cooperation with the Northern Alliance would probably be

successful in toppling the Taliban, but held little hope in rooting out members of al Qaeda. Ironically, the presence of the Northern Alliance made a bombing campaign rather unattractive. There was some suspicion on the part of U.S. military planners that the Northern Alliance would work against U.S. goals after the war (Daalder and Linsay 2001; Conetta 2002). An Aerial bombardment option would support the Northern Alliance's ground operations, but severely curb the U.S. role in establishing a post-War Afghan regime or in hunting remaining al Qaeda members (Daalder and Linsay 2001; Conetta 2002). These realities made Aerial bombardment alternatives undesirable in light of the likelihood of operational success. A ground force alternative – either a limited invasion or an extensive invasion – appeared to be more likely to bring about the desired outcome. With boots on the ground, American military personnel would be able to pursue U.S. objectives.

Overall, on the military dimension, a limited invasion promised the highest net benefits among the surviving alternatives. U.S. ground forces were expected to be augmented by the Northern Alliance, inflating the balance of capabilities in favor of the U.S. With respect to logistical concerns, an Aerial bombardment response had the best chance of overcoming the logistical difficulties associated with Afghanistan's location and terrain. But the U.S. would have to insert ground forces in order to successfully pursue al Qaeda members. The size of the U.S. ground force contingent would be dictated, in part, by the constraints of deploying and supplying troops.

### **International-Strategic Dimension**

On the international-strategic dimension, the Bush administration weighed the implications of the remaining alternatives for such factors as the global balance of power and grand strategy. The attacks of 9/11 altered U.S. policy goals. Similar to the start of the Cold

War, the U.S. would seek to assemble a coalition of partners in an ongoing war on terror that would be fought on several fronts (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). Because al Qaeda and its related organizations are transnational and rooted in the Muslim world, the U.S. would require international cooperation in stemming the flow of funding for terrorist operations, the capture of known terrorists, and intelligence gathering to thwart future attacks from states in that region (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). But the president would also need to signal resolve in going after states thought to harbor terrorists (Bumiller and Perlez 2001; U.S. Department of Defense 2001). Despite his Manichean division of the world into good and evil (e.g., Entman 2004), President Bush considered the implications of the remaining alternatives with respect to building and maintaining a global coalition in the war on terror, while simultaneously demonstrating a willingness to forcefully prosecute such a war.

The alternative that would receive the highest “score” on the international-strategic dimension would be the one that promised to both strengthen U.S. relations with states in the Muslim world and deter them from serving as bases of terrorist operations. Unfortunately, these dual goals would come into conflict (Tyler and Perlez 2001; Dunham 2001; Fidler 2001). The Bush administration began acquiring allies in the region – primarily, Russia and the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia – to facilitate combat operations and capture terrorists. Similarly, U.S. diplomats persuaded Pakistani President Musharraf to work with the U.S., allowing over-flights of Pakistani territory and aiding in sealing Pakistan’s border with Afghanistan (O’Hanlon 2002). But with the exception of Pakistan and Oman, Muslim states – although sympathetic in the wake of 9/11 – were reluctant to offer cooperation in support of a U.S. military operation against a Muslim state (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). The administration would have to tread lightly in order to avoid alienating Muslim governments.

A limited invasion promised the appropriate mix of sensitivity to Muslim governments and demonstration of resolve. In order to signal resolve, the selected alternative would have to achieve operational success. As demonstrated in 1998, cruise missile strikes were unlikely to be successful in dismantling al Qaeda and the Taliban. Similarly, a bombing campaign alone was also thought to be inadequate to achieve the foreign policy objectives – primarily, because such a strategy would effectively act as air support for the Northern Alliance, which had divergent goals from the U.S. An extensive invasion, while likely to succeed in toppling the Taliban and wreaking havoc with the al Qaeda organization, would likely alarm many members of the U.S. coalition in the Muslim world (Tyler and Perlez 2001; Dunham 2001; Fidler 2001). Consequently, a limited invasion optimized between the competing international-strategic goals of strengthening U.S. relations with states in the Muslim world and deterring states from serving as bases of terrorist operations.

In summary, the Poliheuristic analysis of Bush's 2001 decision to launch a limited invasion in Afghanistan suggests that a number of alternatives failing to satisfy the public opinion prerequisite were rejected in the first stage of the decision making process. The public was clearly supportive of a use of force against those responsible for the 9/11 attacks. Despite the expected costs of pursuing a war against terrorist organizations and the states providing them sanctuary, a large proportion of Americans believed that the benefits of prosecuting such a war would outweigh the costs of risking U.S. troops' lives. In accordance with this public support, the Bush administration ruled out Non-force alternatives as well as Show of force alternatives in the first stage of the decision making process. This left four alternatives: cruise missile strikes, aerial bombing campaign, limited invasion, and an extensive invasion enforcement. These surviving alternatives were compared based on their ability to maximize

net benefits on the military and international-strategic dimensions. In the end, the limited invasion alternative had the best chance of overcoming logistical impediments, while achieving the U.S.'s operational goals. Additionally, that alternative was believed to be optimal in terms of maintaining international support for the U.S.-led war on terror, while signaling U.S. resolve in going after states harboring terrorists.

#### WAS THE DECISION COMPENSATORY?

In chapter V, I assess whether President Clinton's decision to launch air strikes against Serb positions in Bosnia was actually driven by a Poliheuristic process, or it was the product of a compensatory process. I repeat this evaluation for President Bush's 2001 decision to launch a limited invasion of Afghanistan. The key claim of the Poliheuristic account of presidential crisis response I develop in chapter II, is that the president follows a noncompensatory strategy of decision making, ruling out alternatives in the first stage that fail to clearly satisfy public opinion without regard for how well these alternatives perform on other dimensions. This process is at odds with compensatory models such as expected utility theory (e.g., Bueno de Mesquita 1981; 1984) and the cybernetic theory (e.g., Steinbruner 1974; Ostrom and Job 1986). These compensatory models suggest that a low score for an alternative on one dimension can be compensated by a high score on another (Mintz 1993). In contrast to these compensatory models, the Poliheuristic Theory argues that a key dimension is noncompensatory – regardless of how well an alternative maximizes net benefits on less important dimensions, it cannot compensate for a low score on the key dimension.

Was President Bush's decision actually compensatory? In order to address this question, I will rank the entire set of alternatives considered according to how well they satisfied goals on each dimension. On the domestic political dimension, use of force responses

– including Aerial bombardment and Land force assault alternatives – clearly would have scored higher than Non-force responses. During the period between the 9/11 attacks and the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom, the American public was adamantly in support of a military endeavor aimed at those responsible for the attacks (Milbank and Morin 2001). The Bush administration believed that the public desired retaliation and was unyielding in its desire to see al Qaeda and the Taliban destroyed (e.g., Bowman, Matthews and Gibson 2001; McManus 2001; Sanger 2001). Consequently, the alternatives can be ranked on the domestic political dimension in terms of their ability to punish and/or destroy U.S. adversaries in Afghanistan, with the extensive invasion option receiving the highest score.

On the military dimension, the Bush administration had to optimize between competing goals of overcoming logistical constraints and asserting autonomy in Afghanistan in order to hunt members of al Qaeda (Conetta 2002; O’Hanlon 2002). Although the Non-force alternatives – negotiate the extradition of al Qaeda members and arm the Northern Alliance – may have overcome the logistical difficulties associated with Afghanistan’s location, these responses were unlikely to enhance U.S. influence in Afghanistan (Bumiller and Perlez 2001; U.S. Department of Defense 2001). Aerial bombardment alternatives would have been better able to satisfy these military goals than the Non-force alternatives (e.g., Marshall 2001). But these responses continued to leave too much to the Northern Alliance on the ground (Daalder and Lindsay 2001). As I discuss above, the limited invasion response was optimum in terms of overcoming logistical constraints and asserting autonomy in Afghanistan.

On the international-strategic dimension, the Bush administration also faced a pair of conflicting aims – demonstrate U.S. resolve to combat terrorism and encourage support and cooperation in the Muslim world for the U.S. war on terror. The Non-force alternatives would



have maximized the score with respect to gaining international cooperation from Muslim governments, but failed to demonstrate U.S. resolve. On the other hand, an extensive invasion of Afghanistan would have forcefully signaled U.S. resolve, but threatened to alienate many Muslim governments (Mahoney 2001; Kaplow 2001). The Aerial bombardment alternatives, at first glance, appear to be able to optimize between these competing international-strategic goals. However, as I discuss above, the alternative selected needed to promise the successful achievement of the Bush administration's stated foreign policy in order to demonstrate resolve. Relative to the Land force assault alternatives, neither of the Aerial bombardment responses under consideration had the potential to facilitate the U.S.'s stated aim of hunting terrorists in Afghanistan (Marshall 2001). The limited invasion alternative had the best chance of not offending Muslim governments while demonstrating the U.S.'s resolve in forcing compliance with its demands in the war on terror.

Table 6.2 shows the alternatives considered by the Bush administration in the wake of 9/11 rank-ordered according to each of the decision dimensions. Note that the limited invasion alternative receives the highest total score. A comparison of the total scores indicates that I cannot rule out that the process by which the president arrived at his ultimate decision followed an expected utility or cybernetic process. To be sure, this analysis is consistent with a decision making process by which the decision maker simply sums across the dimensions in order to select an alternative. Thus, President Bush's 2001 decision to launch a limited invasion in Afghanistan does not provide us with a critical case by which we can distinguish between noncompensatory and compensatory decision making processes by comparing the decision makers' evaluations of alternatives across dimensions. Nor can we rule out the possibility that the president's decision was noncompensatory. The alternative the president ultimately

Table 6.2. The Response to 9/11: Scores of Alternatives on the Relevant Dimensions.

| Alternatives                                  | Dimensions         |          |                         |       |
|---|--------------------|----------|-------------------------|-------|
|   | Domestic Political | Military | International-Strategic | Total |
| <i>Non-force alternatives</i>                 |                    |          |                         |       |
| Negotiate the extradition of al Qaeda members | 1                  | 1        | 1                       | 3     |
| Arm the Northern Alliance                     | 2                  | 2        | 3                       | 7     |
| <i>Aerial bombardment</i>                     |                    |          |                         |       |
| Launch cruise missile strikes                 | 3                  | 3        | 4                       | 10    |
| Commence bombing campaign                     | 4                  | 4        | 5                       | 13    |
| <i>Land force assault</i>                     |                    |          |                         |       |
| Limited invasion                              | 5                  | 6        | 6                       | 17    |
| Extensive invasion                            | 6                  | 5        | 2                       | 14    |

selected – limited invasion – did not have a low score that was compensated by a higher score on subsequent dimensions.

In order to judge between the theoretical perspectives, we must imagine a different set of circumstances – one in which an alternative rejected in the first stage of the decision making process would have received a higher score on a subsequent dimension (i.e., military or international-strategic dimension), but a low score on the key dimension (i.e., domestic political dimension). For instance, if all of the Aerial bombardment and Land force assault alternatives would have threatened to preclude cooperation from important Muslim governments, the Non-force responses would have been more favorably evaluated on the international-strategic dimension. Indeed, there is some evidence suggesting that this was the initial position of many Muslim governments in the region (e.g., Dunham 2001; Fidler 2001; Tyler and Perlez 2001). For example, the Taliban regime was a protégé of both Saudi Arabia and Pakistan – important, albeit reluctant, U.S. allies in the war on terror (Conetta 2002; Mahoney 2001; Kaplow 2001). However, many Muslim governments subsequently changed course upon the realization that President Bush faced severe domestic political consequences if he did *not* use force against Afghanistan after 9/11 (Conetta 2002; O’Hanlon 2002). In reaction to the unyielding position of the U.S., most Muslim governments chose to cooperate at some level rather than to find themselves on the wrong side of the U.S.’s war on terror.

Was the president’s decision noncompensatory? This question can be answered cautiously with a counterfactual: if the Muslim governments had refused to cooperate with a U.S. use of force, the evidence suggests that the president would have launched a military operation anyway. The Muslim governments themselves appear to have positioned themselves in anticipation of a U.S. use of force regardless of their approval (e.g., Dunham 2001; Fidler

2001; Tyler and Perlez 2001). The president's statements suggest that he was prepared to launch an attack with or without the blessings of the Muslim world (e.g., Bowman, Matthews and Gibson 2001; McManus 2001; Sanger 2001).<sup>32</sup> Thus, we can carefully conclude that the president's decision was noncompensatory.

The case of Bush's 2001 decision to launch a limited invasion in Afghanistan illustrates the interrelationships between decisional dimensions. These interrelationships complicate the discovery of the decision making process employed by the president – i.e., compensatory versus noncompensatory. Specifically, concerns along the international-strategic dimension were influenced by the domestic political dimension in a strategic interaction. Muslim governments recognized the American public's mood and behaved strategically (e.g., Putnam 1988; Fearon 1998).<sup>33</sup> Rather than oppose any use of force by the U.S., these governments severed ties with the Taliban and gave tacit approval for a limited invasion.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has examined the process by which President Bush arrived at the decision to launch a limited invasion into Afghanistan in the wake of the al Qaeda attacks of September 11, 2001. In the first stage of the Poliheuristic procedure, Bush ruled out negotiations with the Taliban regime for the extradition of al Qaeda members as well as providing materiel support to the Northern Alliance to bring about the ouster of the Afghan government. Public opinion toward military action following the events of 9/11 clearly favored a forceful response against the perpetrators of the attacks. Moreover, the public was unyielding in its preferences, believing that the benefits of military force were worthwhile regardless of the likely costs in

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<sup>32</sup> Indeed, the president had offered so many overt threats by the time international cooperation was secured that he had to carry out his threats or suffer domestic political ramifications. This is consistent with the audience costs perspective (e.g., Fearon 1994).

<sup>33</sup> There are some suggestions that the U.S. made concessions to Muslim governments as well, tailoring military strikes to minimize infuriating fundamentalists (Mahony 2001; Kaplow 2001).

terms of combat fatalities. By ruling out Non-force alternatives, President Bush eliminated the alternatives that appeared to clearly flout the preferences of the public. In the second stage of the decision making process, the president chose a final response among the remaining alternatives on the basis of its ability to maximize expected benefits on the military and international-strategic dimensions. On the military dimension, the limited invasion option received the highest “score” because it was better able to optimize between logistical constraints and the likelihood of operational success than the other surviving alternatives. On the international-strategic dimension, the limited invasion alternative held a greater potential to avoid alienating Muslim governments, while signaling U.S. resolve to strike at states harboring terrorists.

President Bush’s decision was not compensatory. However, the president’s decision making process was not (*prima facie*) inconsistent with other decision making approaches, such as the expected utility or cybernetic theories. Indeed, the limited invasion response received the highest total score of all of the alternatives considered. But this response was not selected solely on the basis of its score on subsequent dimensions – military and international-strategic dimensions. To the contrary, it appears as though considerations by Muslim governments in the wake of 9/11 altered the implications of a limited invasion. In other words, Muslim governments – behaving strategically – offered tacit approval for U.S. action in Afghanistan in response to American public opinion, rather than end up on the wrong side of a vengeful U.S. The cooperation of the Muslim world suggests an interrelationship among decisional dimensions that may complicate analysis. However, the possibility of strategic behavior – which raised the esteem of a limited invasion on the international-strategic dimension – points to the possibility that public opinion in the U.S. was noncompensatory.

Moreover, this strategic interaction indicates that not only was the president compelled to the public's bidding, but that other governments around the world appreciated his position.

## CHAPTER VII

### CONCLUSION

This dissertation has argued that presidents can tailor Crisis response choices to suit public opinion, military imperatives, and international realities. For instance, the president may pursue economic sanctions or diplomatic efforts. Presidents may also employ such military force alternatives as the mobilization of forces, air strikes, and/or the insertion of ground forces. Although factors such as relative capabilities and U.S. grand strategy are important in determining the president's choice, public opinion is the most important consideration. Presidents are reluctant to defy the preferences of the citizenry when making foreign policy decisions. Consequently, they rule out alternatives that clearly violate the wishes of the people (Mintz, et al. 1997; Mintz 2004). Because public attitudes toward the use of force are driven by the public's prospective evaluations of the foreign policy benefits of using force relative to the expected costs in terms of American casualties (e.g., Russett 1990; Larson 1996; Mueller 1996), presidents rule out alternatives that fail to comport with this relative value assessment.

I have also argued that presidential crisis decision making follows a Poliheuristic process (e.g., Mintz, et al. 1997; Mintz 2004), which posits a two-stage decision making process. Presidents eliminate crisis response alternatives in the first stage of the decision making process that are clearly at odds with the public's assessment – regardless of the potential benefits of those alternatives on other decision making dimensions (i.e., military, international-strategic). When a large majority stands in support of military involvement in a crisis, the president is likely to reject such non-force alternatives as economic sanctions and diplomatic efforts. Conversely, when the president is faced with a large majority of the public

opposing the use of force, he is likely to eliminate the military alternatives from consideration. But when the public is ambivalent or indifferent toward international crises (e.g., Redd 2001; Brulé and Mintz 2005), the president is likely to rule out, non-force alternatives as well as the alternatives that place large numbers of U.S. troops in harm's way. In the second stage of the decision making process, the president selects a choice among the remaining alternatives on the basis of that alternative's ability to maximize expected benefits with respect to such military and international-strategic concerns as relative capabilities, and the president's foreign policy reputation.

## FINDINGS

### **Quantitative Analysis**

In chapter IV, I used statistical analyses to examine presidential crisis response choices across all crises involving the U.S. during the period 1949-2001. This quantitative analysis indicates that public opinion is systematically associated with the president's crisis response choice. Specifically, presidents choose alternatives that place more troops in harm's way when the public is supportive of military action, and presidents pursue "safer" alternatives when the public is not clearly supportive of the use of force. However, relative to cases in which no public opinion polls are available, presidents are likely to choose higher Crisis response choices when faced with public opposition. I attribute this surprising finding to a selection effect – in anticipation of likely public opinion, presidents select themselves into international crises (or make public comments about ongoing crises) on the basis of expected public support, foregoing involvement in those in which they expect opposition.



The results also reveal that most of the military and international-strategic factors, thought to be important in the second stage of the decision making process, fail to systematically influence the president's decision.

### **Case Studies**

The statistical analysis provided a systematic comparison of all crises in which the U.S. was involved, revealing which variables – especially public opinion – were related with presidential crisis response choice. But it could not provide a detailed rationale for why public opinion influences crisis response choices. For example, the statistical analysis did not show whether public attitudes toward the use of force are driven by the public's relative value assessment. Consequently, I also examined two individual cases in detail. These case studies not only illustrate the theoretical argument, they also facilitate the testing of the hypotheses by revealing limitations of the theory. The case study method also aids in the effort to examine nuance in key theoretical concepts that cannot be readily captured by operationalized variables – such as factors affecting evaluations along the military and international-strategic dimensions.

In chapters V and VI, I analyzed President Clinton's 1994 decision to launch air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs and President Bush's 2001 decision to conduct a limited invasion of Afghanistan, respectively. The case studies support the account of public opinion and Crisis response choice I develop in chapter II. Public attitudes toward the use of force reflected the public's relative value assessments in the Bosnian crisis as well as the Afghan War. Moreover, presidents are sensitive to the concerns of the public, ruling out alternatives that fail to comport with the public's relative value assessment. In the Bosnian crisis, the public was torn between saving Bosnian lives and preserving the lives of U.S. service men and women. In response,

President Clinton ruled out options that weighted one of these goals over the other. In the wake of 9/11, the public unequivocally favored military action against those responsible regardless of the risks to U.S. combat forces. Consequently, President Bush rejected options that would minimize risk to U.S. troops at the expense of the foreign policy goals. The case studies also provide support for the role of military and international-strategic factors in the second stage of the president's decision making process, which were difficult to detect in the statistical analysis.

### CONTRIBUTIONS

This dissertation contributes to our understanding of the linkage between domestic politics and international conflict behavior by specifying the mechanisms by which public preferences are translated into presidential responses in crisis decision making. To that end, there are three contributions. First, I developed a new categorical dependent variable, crisis response choice, which enabled this research to exploit additional information than previously examined in the dichotomous, use of force/no use of force characterization of crisis outcomes. The examination of a categorical dependent variable revealed the president's ability to take the concerns of the public into consideration.

Second, this dissertation expands a new dataset on public opinion toward the presidential use of force, which contributes to the accumulation of scientific knowledge. A wealth of research questions concerning public opinion and the use of force abroad remain unaddressed, or under-addressed. These data and related materials will continue to serve the advancement of our understanding of the domestic-international nexus in political science.

Finally, this dissertation has shown the theoretical merit of assuming that public attitudes toward the use of force are driven by a relative value assessment by the public. The

public chooses whether to support or oppose the use of force based on its ex ante evaluation of whether the benefits of a foreign policy success outweigh the potential costs accrued in the currency of American blood. This assumption is both realistic and fruitful.

## IMPLICATIONS

Related to the theoretical contributions of the dissertation are the implications of this research for other international relations research. The theory developed here differs from others primarily by asserting that the public's concerns about the utility of U.S. casualties determine its preferences, and by extension, the president's crisis response decision. An obvious implication of the findings is that public attitudes toward the use of force are systematically related to the specific choices presidents make in response to international crises. This is contrary to the theoretical perspective asserting that the public simply does not matter in presidential decisions to use force (e.g., Lipset 1966; Cohen 1973; Morgenthau 1973).

But the ideas presented here also speak to two other debates in the international relations literature. First, the dissertation provides an explicit evaluation of one of the key assumptions of the democratic peace. This literature suggests that democratic leaders are unable to pursue military responses to international crises in the face of public opposition (e.g., Doyle 1986; Maoz and Russett 1993; Dixon 1994). In other words, democratic publics are the root of peaceful relations among democracies. I find qualified support for this assumption. Relative to crises in which the public is supportive or ambivalent/indifferent toward the use of force, public opposition is associated with lower crisis response choices. But to fruitfully incorporate this assumption into a dyadic formulation of the democratic peace, we must also assume that democratic publics are frequently averse to military action against each other (see

e.g., Mintz and Geva 1993; Owen 1994). Otherwise, as the results also bear out, democratic leaders may be essentially compelled to use force against each other when their publics are unyieldingly supportive of military actions (e.g., Brulé and Mintz 2005; Layne 1994).

Second, this dissertation also addresses the process by which public opinion and foreign policy decisions interact. Two perspectives offer competing explanations of this relationship. One of these posits a top-down process, arguing that policy makers manipulate the public through framing, issue campaigns, and actual uses of force (e.g., Margolis and Mauser 1989; Wittkopf and McCormick 1993; Ostrom and Job 1986). According to this literature, a direct relationship between public support and higher levels of crisis response is the result of efforts by the president to gain public approval for his most-preferred policy. A second perspective asserts an interactive process of mutual influence in which presidents propose policy alternatives with the preferences of the public in mind (e.g., Russett 1990a; Powlick and Katz 1998; Sobel 2001). Presidents use their agenda-setting powers to select crises in which they expect an acceptable level of public support (e.g., Kusnitz 1984; Stimson 1991; Foyle 1999). The quantitative analyses and case studies are supportive of the interactive account of the public opinion-foreign policy linkage. Presidents may attempt to persuade public opinion (e.g., Storrs and Serafino 1993; 2001; Hinckley 1992), but when they are unsuccessful, they act in accordance with the wishes of the public (see e.g., Edwards 2003).

Overall, this dissertation offers a rather optimistic view of the democratic control of foreign policy. The empirical analysis and case studies indicate that a key assumption of democratic theory is satisfied. In decisions to use force, presidents are typically unwilling to violate the preferences of the public.

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## APPENDIX A

## CRISES ANALYZED

Table A.1. International Crises

| Crisis Number | Crisis Name              | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|---------------|--------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 131           | Soviet Bloc-Yugoslavia   | 1949       | Soviet Union      |
| 132           | Korea War I              | 1950       | North Korea       |
| 133           | Korea War II             | 1950       | China             |
| 134           | Hula Drainage            | 1951       | Syria             |
| 135           | Punjab War Scare I       | 1951       | India             |
| 136           | Suez Canal               | 1951       | Egypt             |
| 137           | Catalina Affair          | 1952       | Soviet Union      |
| 138           | Burma Infiltration       | 1953       | Burma             |
| 139           | Invasion of Laos I       | 1953       | Laos              |
| 140           | Korea War III            | 1953       | North Korea       |
| 141           | E. German Uprising       | 1953       | Soviet Union      |
| 142           | Trieste II               | 1953       | Yugoslavia        |
| 143           | Qibya                    | 1953       | Israel            |
| 144           | Guatemala                | 1953       | Guatemala         |
| 145           | Dien Bien Phu            | 1954       | North Vietnam     |
| 146           | Taiwan Strait I          | 1954       | China             |
| 147           | Costa Rica/Nicaragua II  | 1955       | Nicaragua         |
| 148           | Baghdad Pact             | 1955       | Egypt             |
| 149           | Gaza Raid-Czech. Arm     | 1955       | Egypt             |
| 152           | Suez Nationalization War | 1956       | Soviet Union      |
| 153           | Qalqilya                 | 1956       | Israel            |
| 154           | Poland Liberalization    | 1956       | Soviet Union      |
| 155           | Hungarian Uprising       | 1956       | Soviet Union      |
| 156           | Mocoron Incident         | 1957       | Nicaragua         |
| 157           | Jordan Regime            | 1957       | Egypt             |



Table A.1 (continued).

| Crisis Number | Crisis Name                       | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 158           | France/Tunisia                    | 1957       | France            |
| 159           | Syria/Turkey Confrontation        | 1957       | Soviet Union      |
| 160           | Ifni                              | 1957       | Spain             |
| 161           | West Irian I                      | 1957       | Netherlands       |
| 164           | Abort. Coup Indonesia             | 1958       | Indonesia         |
| 165           | Iraq/Lebanon Upheaval             | 1958       | Iraq              |
| 166           | Taiwan Strait II                  | 1958       | China             |
| 168           | Berlin Deadline                   | 1958       | Soviet Union      |
| 170           | Central America/Cuba I            | 1959       | Cuba              |
| 171           | China/India Border I              | 1959       | China             |
| 172           | Shatt-Alb I                       | 1959       | Iraq              |
| 175           | Failed Assassination<br>Venezuela | 1960       | Cuba              |
| 176           | Congo Itanga                      | 1960       | Belgium           |
| 178           | Central America/Cuba II           | 1960       | Cuba              |
| 180           | Pathet Lao Offensive              | 1961       | Thailand          |
| 181           | Bay of Pigs                       | 1961       | Cuba              |
| 182           | Pushtunistan III                  | 1961       | Pakistan          |
| 185           | Berlin Wall                       | 1961       | Soviet Union      |
| 186           | Vietcong Attack                   | 1961       | Vietnam           |
| 187           | West Irian II                     | 1961       | Netherlands       |
| 190           | Goa II                            | 1961       | India             |
| 192           | Taiwan Strait III                 | 1962       | China             |
| 193           | Namtha                            | 1962       | Vietnam           |
| 194           | China/India Border II             | 1962       | China             |
| 195           | Yemen War I                       | 1962       | Egypt             |
| 196           | Cuban Missiles                    | 1962       | Soviet Union      |
| 197           | Malaysia Federation               | 1963       | Indonesia         |
| 198           | Dominican Rep./Haiti II           | 1963       | Haiti             |

Table A.1 (continued).

| Crisis Number | Crisis Name            | Start Year | Primary Adversary  |
|---------------|------------------------|------------|--------------------|
| 200           | Cuba/Venezuela         | 1963       | Cuba               |
| 202           | Cyprus I               | 1963       | Turkey             |
| 203           | Jordan Waters          | 1963       | Egypt              |
| 206           | Panama Flag            | 1964       | Panama             |
| 208           | Ogaden I               | 1964       | Somalia            |
| 210           | Gulf of Tonkin         | 1964       | Vietnam            |
| 211           | Congo II               | 1964       | Soviet Union       |
| 212           | Yemen War III          | 1964       | Egypt              |
| 213           | Pleiku                 | 1965       | Vietnam            |
| 214           | Rann of Kutch          | 1965       | India              |
| 215           | Dominican Intervention | 1965       | Dominican Republic |
| 216           | Kashmir II             | 1965       | Pakistan           |
| 218           | Rhodesia's Udi         | 1965       | Zimbabwe           |
| 219           | Yemen War IV           | 1966       | Yemen              |
| 220           | El Samu                | 1966       | Israel             |
| 221           | Che Guevara-Bolivia    | 1967       | Cuba               |
| 222           | Six Day War            | 1967       | Soviet Union       |
| 223           | Cyprus II              | 1967       | Greece             |
| 224           | Pueblo                 | 1968       | North Korea        |
| 225           | Tet Offensive          | 1968       | Vietnam            |
| 226           | Karameh                | 1968       | Israel             |
| 227           | Prague Spring          | 1968       | Soviet Union       |
| 228           | Esse Quibo I           | 1968       | Venezuela          |
| 229           | Beirut Airport Str.    | 1968       | Israel             |
| 230           | Vietnam Spring Off.    | 1969       | Vietnam            |
| 231           | Ussuri River           | 1969       | Soviet Union       |

Table A.1 (continued).

| Crisis Number | Crisis Name                | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|---------------|----------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 232           | War of Attrition           | 1969       | Egypt             |
| 233           | Ec-121 Spy plane           | 1969       | North Korea       |
| 235           | Football War               | 1969       | Honduras          |
| 237           | Invasion of Cambodia       | 1970       | Vietnam           |
| 238           | Black September            | 1970       | Syria             |
| 239           | Cienfuegos Sub. Base       | 1970       | Soviet Union      |
| 240           | Conakry Raid               | 1970       | Portugal          |
| 241           | Invasion of Laos II        | 1971       | Vietnam           |
| 242           | Bangladesh                 | 1971       | India             |
| 246           | Vietnam-Ports Mining       | 1972       | Vietnam           |
| 249           | Christmas Bombing          | 1972       | Vietnam           |
| 254           | Cod War I                  | 1973       | Iceland           |
| 255           | Yom Kippur War             | 1973       | Soviet Union      |
| 256           | Oman/South Yemen           | 1973       | Yemen (YPR)       |
| 257           | Cyprus III                 | 1974       | Greece            |
| 258           | Final N. Vietnam Offensive | 1974       | Vietnam           |
| 259           | Mayaguez                   | 1975       | Cambodia          |
| 260           | War in Angola              | 1975       | Soviet Union      |
| 261           | Moroccan March             | 1975       | Algeria           |
| 263           | Cod war II                 | 1975       | Iceland           |
| 265           | Lebanon-Civil War I        | 1976       | Syria             |
| 267           | Operation Thrasher         | 1976       | Zimbabwe          |
| 272           | Aegean Sea I               | 1976       | Greece            |
| 273           | Nagomia Raid               | 1976       | Zimbabwe          |
| 274           | Poplar Tree                | 1976       | North Korea       |
| 275           | Syria Mobilization         | 1976       | Syria             |

Table A.1 (continued).

| Crisis Number | Crisis Name                | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|---------------|----------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 277           | Shaba I                    | 1977       | Angola            |
| 278           | Mapai Seizure              | 1977       | Zimbabwe          |
| 279           | Belize II                  | 1977       | Guatemala         |
| 281           | Egypt/Libya Clashes        | 1977       | Libya             |
| 282           | Ogaden II                  | 1977       | Ethiopia          |
| 283           | Rhodesia Raid              | 1977       | Zimbabwe          |
| 286           | Chimoio-Tembue Raids       | 1977       | Zimbabwe          |
| 287           | Beagle Channel I           | 1977       | Argentina         |
| 289           | Litani Operation           | 1978       | Israel            |
| 291           | Cassinga Incident          | 1978       | South Africa      |
| 292           | Shaba II                   | 1978       | Angola            |
| 293           | Air Rhodesia Incident      | 1978       | Zimbabwe          |
| 294           | Nicaragua Civil War II     | 1978       | Nicaragua         |
| 295           | Beagle Channel II          | 1978       | Argentina         |
| 296           | Fall of Amin               | 1978       | Libya             |
| 298           | Sino/Vietnam War           | 1978       | Vietnam           |
| 301           | North/South Yemen II       | 1979       | Yemen (YPR)       |
| 303           | Afghanistan Invasion       | 1979       | Soviet Union      |
| 306           | Soviet Threat/Pak.         | 1979       | Soviet Union      |
| 307           | Rhodesian Settlement       | 1979       | Zimbabwe          |
| 309           | US Hostages in Iran        | 1979       | Iran              |
| 310           | Colombia/Nicaragua         | 1979       | Nicaragua         |
| 311           | Raid on Gafsa              | 1980       | Libya             |
| 315           | Solidarity                 | 1980       | Soviet Union      |
| 317           | Onset Iran/Iraq War        | 1980       | Iran              |
| 319           | Jordan/Syria Confrontation | 1980       | Syria             |

Table A.1 (continued).

| Crisis Number | Crisis Name            | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|---------------|------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 321           | Chad/Libya V           | 1981       | Libya             |
| 322           | Ecuador/Peru Border II | 1981       | Peru              |
| 324           | Iraq Nuclear Reactor   | 1981       | Israel            |
| 327           | Al-Biqa Missiles I     | 1981       | Syria             |
| 329           | Coup Attempt Gambia    | 1981       | Gambia            |
| 330           | Gulf of Syrte I        | 1981       | Libya             |
| 331           | Operation Protea       | 1981       | Angola            |
| 332           | Galtat Zemmour I       | 1981       | Mauritania        |
| 335           | Khorram Shahr          | 1982       | Iran              |
| 336           | Falklands/Malvinas     | 1982       | Argentina         |
| 337           | War in Lebanon         | 1982       | Syria             |
| 338           | Ogaden III             | 1982       | Ethiopia          |
| 340           | Libya Threat/Sudan     | 1983       | Libya             |
| 342           | Chad/Libya VI          | 1983       | Libya             |
| 343           | Invasion of Grenada    | 1983       | Cuba              |
| 344           | Able Archer 83         | 1983       | Soviet Union      |
| 347           | Operation Askari       | 1983       | South Africa      |
| 348           | Basra-Kharg Island     | 1984       | Iran              |
| 350           | Omdurman Bombing       | 1984       | Libya             |
| 351           | Vietnam-Thailand       | 1984       | Vietnam           |
| 352           | Sino/Vietnam Clashes   | 1984       | Vietnam           |
| 354           | Nicaragua MiG-21       | 1984       | Nicaragua         |
| 355           | Botswana Raid          | 1985       | South Africa      |
| 356           | Expulsion-Tunisians    | 1985       | Libya             |
| 357           | Al-Biqa Missiles II    | 1985       | Syria             |
| 358           | Egypt Air Hijacking    | 1985       | Libya             |

Table A.1 (continued).

| Crisis Number | Crisis Name                    | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|---------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 360           | Lesotho Raid II                | 1985       | South Africa      |
| 361           | Capture of Al-Faw              | 1986       | Iran              |
| 362           | Chad/Libya VII                 | 1986       | Libya             |
| 363           | Gulf of Syrte II               | 1986       | Libya             |
| 365           | South African Raid             | 1986       | South Africa      |
| 369           | Contras II                     | 1986       | Nicaragua         |
| 370           | Chad/Libya VIII                | 1986       | Libya             |
| 376           | Aegean Sea III                 | 1987       | Turkey            |
| 380           | S. African Intervention-Angola | 1987       | Angola            |
| 383           | Contras III                    | 1988       | Nicaragua         |
| 385           | Iraq Recapture-Al-Faw          | 1988       | Iran              |
| 386           | Libyan Jets                    | 1988       | Libya             |
| 388           | Cambodia Peace Conf.           | 1989       | Cambodia          |
| 391           | Invasion of Panama             | 1989       | Panama            |
| 392           | Kashmir III-Nuclear            | 1990       | India             |
| 393           | Gulf War                       | 1990       | Iraq              |
| 395           | Liberia/Sierra Leone           | 1991       | Sierra Leone      |
| 397           | Yugoslavia I-Croat./Sloven     | 1991       | Yugoslavia        |
| 398           | Bubiyah                        | 1991       | Iraq              |
| 399           | Foreign Intervention Zaire     | 1991       | Zaire             |
| 400           | Ecuador/Peru Border IV         | 1991       | Ecuador           |
| 401           | Nagornyy Karabakh              | 1991       | Azerbaijan        |
| 403           | Yugoslavia II-Bosnia           | 1992       | Yugoslavia        |
| 406           | Iraq No-Fly Zone               | 1992       | Iraq              |
| 408           | N. Korea Nuclear I             | 1993       | North Korea       |
| 409           | Operation Accountability       | 1993       | Lebanon           |

Table A.1 (continued).

| Crisis Number | Crisis Name               | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|---------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 411           | Haiti Military Regime     | 1994       | Haiti             |
| 412           | Iraq Deploy/Kuwait        | 1994       | Iraq              |
| 413           | Ecuador/Peru Border V     | 1995       | Ecuador           |
| 415           | Taiwan Strait IV          | 1995       | China             |
| 416           | Red Sea Islands           | 1995       | Eritrea           |
| 417           | Aegean Sea IV             | 1996       | Turkey            |
| 418           | Operation Grapes of Wrath | 1996       | Lebanon           |
| 419           | Desert Strike             | 1996       | Iraq              |
| 420           | N. Korea Submarine        | 1996       | North Korea       |
| 421           | Zaire Civil War           | 1996       | Zaire             |
| 422           | UNSCOM I                  | 1997       | Iraq              |
| 423           | Cyprus/Turkey Missiles    | 1998       | Turkey            |
| 424           | Eritrea/Ethiopia          | 1998       | Eritrea           |
| 425           | Ind/Pak Nuclear Test      | 1998       | India             |
| 426           | DRC Civil War             | 1998       | Angola            |
| 427           | US Embassy Bombings       | 1998       | Afghanistan       |
| 428           | UNSCOM II                 | 1998       | Iraq              |
| 429           | Kosovo                    | 1999       | Yugoslavia        |
| 430           | Kargil                    | 1999       | Pakistan          |
| 431           | East Timor II             | 1999       | Indonesia         |
| 432           | Caspian Sea               | 2001       | Iran              |
| 433           | Afghanistan/US            | 2001       | Afghanistan       |
| 434           | India Parliament Attack   | 2001       | Pakistan          |

Table A.2. Militarized Interstate Disputes

| Dispute Number | Dispute Name (if any)              | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|----------------|------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 634            |                                    | 1949       | China             |
| 2006           |                                    | 1949       | China             |
| 633            |                                    | 1950       | China             |
| 51             | Korean War                         | 1950       | North Korea       |
| 2052           |                                    | 1951       | China             |
| 1286           | Yugoslavia vs. Cominform countries | 1951       | Soviet Union      |
| 1702           |                                    | 1952       | Ecuador           |
| 50             |                                    | 1953       | China             |
| 208            |                                    | 1953       | Soviet Union      |
| 2035           |                                    | 1953       | China             |
| 2244           | Korean war truce violations        | 1954       | China             |
| 2033           |                                    | 1954       | China             |
| 1193           |                                    | 1954       | Nicaragua         |
| 1705           |                                    | 1954       | Ecuador           |
| 3209           |                                    | 1954       | Switzerland       |
| 3243           |                                    | 1955       | Peru              |
| 3242           |                                    | 1955       | Peru              |
| 2032           |                                    | 1955       | China             |
| 2843           |                                    | 1956       | Egypt             |
| 53             |                                    | 1956       | China             |
| 200            | Sinai War                          | 1956       | Egypt             |
| 3222           |                                    | 1956       | Mexico            |
| 607            | Turkey/Syria                       | 1957       | Syria             |
| 2049           |                                    | 1957       | China             |
| 2849           |                                    | 1957       | Soviet Union      |
| 2845           |                                    | 1957       | Chile             |



Table A.2 (continued).

| Dispute Number | Dispute Name (if any)                     | Start Year | Primary Adversary  |
|----------------|---|------------|--------------------|
| 2857           |   | 1958       | Albania            |
| 2187           |   | 1958       | North Korea        |
| 125            | US intervention in Lebanon                | 1958       | Lebanon            |
| 2215           | Soviet downing of a C-118 transport plane | 1958       | Soviet Union       |
| 2854           |   | 1958       | East Germany       |
| 173            |   | 1958       | China              |
| 608            | 1958-1959 Berlin Deadline Crisis          | 1958       | Soviet Union       |
| 2216           |   | 1958       | Soviet Union       |
| 1124           |   | 1958       | Guatemala          |
| 1742           | Cuban Threat                              | 1959       | Cuba               |
| 2870           |   | 1959       | Switzerland        |
| 2867           |   | 1959       | Dominica           |
| 246            | Bay of Pigs Invasion                      | 1960       | Cuba               |
| 253            | U-2 and RB47 Incidents                    | 1960       | Soviet Union       |
| 2002           |   | 1960       | China              |
| 2876           |   | 1960       | Austria            |
| 1363           |   | 1961       | Vietnam            |
| 1801           |   | 1961       | Dominican Republic |
| 2217           | Operation Mongoose                        | 1961       | Cuba               |
| 27             | Berlin Wall Crisis                        | 1961       | Soviet Union       |
| 2219           |   | 1961       | Soviet Union       |
| 3361           |   | 1961       | China              |
| 61             | Cuban Missile Crisis                      | 1962       | Soviet Union       |
| 172            |   | 1962       | China              |
| 1353           |   | 1962       | Vietnam            |

Table A.2 (continued).

| Dispute Number | Dispute Name (if any)    | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 2188           |                          | 1962       | North Korea       |
| 3244           |                          | 1962       | Peru              |
| 1108           | Yemen Civil War I        | 1962       | Egypt             |
| 2899           |                          | 1963       | Soviet Union      |
| 2218           |                          | 1963       | Soviet Union      |
| 1002           |                          | 1963       | Haiti             |
| 1803           |                          | 1963       | Ecuador           |
| 2189           |                          | 1963       | North Korea       |
| 2220           |                          | 1964       | Soviet Union      |
| 2909           |                          | 1964       | Soviet Union      |
| 611            | Vietnam War              | 1964       | Vietnam           |
| 1213           |                          | 1964       | Vietnam           |
| 2901           |                          | 1964       | Soviet Union      |
| 1379           | DMZ Clashes              | 1964       | North Korea       |
| 2906           |                          | 1964       | Egypt             |
| 251            |                          | 1965       | China             |
| 2916           |                          | 1965       | North Korea       |
| 2910           |                          | 1965       | Soviet Union      |
| 2929           |                          | 1965       | China             |
| 1216           |                          | 1965       | Vietnam           |
| 2921           | Helicopter in W. Germany | 1966       | Soviet Union      |
| 2608           |                          | 1966       | Guinea-Bissau     |
| 1805           |                          | 1967       | Ecuador           |
| 1217           |                          | 1967       | Vietnam           |
| 2934           |                          | 1967       | Soviet Union      |
| 2931           |                          | 1967       | Soviet Union      |

Table A.2 (continued).

| Dispute Number | Dispute Name (if any) | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|----------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 2930           |                       | 1967       | Soviet Union      |
| 345            |                       | 1967       | Soviet Union      |
| 347            | Seizure of USS Pueblo | 1968       | North Korea       |
| 1806           |                       | 1968       | Vietnam           |
| 2924           |                       | 1968       | Egypt             |
| 2928           |                       | 1968       | Soviet Union      |
| 350            |                       | 1969       | Peru              |
| 2941           |                       | 1969       | North Korea       |
| 2936           |                       | 1969       | China             |
| 1039           |                       | 1970       | Jordan            |
| 2221           |                       | 1970       | Soviet Union      |
| 1158           | Tuna Boats I          | 1971       | Ecuador           |
| 2946           |                       | 1971       | Cuba              |
| 2947           |                       | 1971       | China             |
| 2943           |                       | 1971       | Cuba              |
| 601            |                       | 1972       | Peru              |
| 2949           |                       | 1972       | Soviet Union      |
| 2948           |                       | 1972       | China             |
| 602            | Tuna Boats II         | 1972       | Ecuador           |
| 2950           |                       | 1973       | Libya             |
| 353            | Yom Kippur            | 1973       | Soviet Union      |
| 2951           |                       | 1974       | Cuba              |
| 2952           |                       | 1974       | Canada            |
| 356            | Seizure of Mayaguez   | 1975       | Cambodia          |
| 1472           |                       | 1975       | North Korea       |
| 2954           |                       | 1975       | Cuba              |

Table A.2 (continued).

| Dispute Number | Dispute Name (if any)             | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 2953           |                                   | 1975       | Canada            |
| 2958           |                                   | 1976       | Cuba              |
| 2957           |                                   | 1976       | Panama            |
| 362            | Tree Trimming Incident            | 1976       | North Korea       |
| 2335           | Israeli attack on US oil rigs     | 1976       | Israel            |
| 2960           |                                   | 1976       | North Korea       |
| 2222           | Seizure of two Fishing boats      | 1977       | Soviet Union      |
| 2962           |                                   | 1977       | Cuba              |
| 2192           | North Korean Economic Zone        | 1977       | North Korea       |
| 2223           | US aircraft task force to Iran    | 1978       | Iran              |
| 2193           |                                   | 1979       | North Korea       |
| 2225           | Soviet Combat Unit in Cuba        | 1979       | Soviet Union      |
| 2224           | Capture of US Torpedo Boat        | 1979       | Soviet Union      |
| 2968           |                                   | 1979       | Canada            |
| 3021           | US maneuvers in the Gulf of Sidra | 1979       | Libya             |
| 3020           | Iran hostage crisis               | 1979       | Iran              |
| 2967           |                                   | 1979       | Peru              |
| 2226           | Baltic Sea Maneuvers              | 1980       | Soviet Union      |
| 2227           | US threat after Tito's death      | 1980       | Soviet Union      |
| 3105           | US/Ecuador                        | 1980       | Ecuador           |
| 2228           | US seizure of Soviet cargo        | 1981       | Soviet Union      |
| 2972           |                                   | 1981       | Cuba              |
| 2971           |                                   | 1981       | North Korea       |
| 3099           | Gulf of Sidra air clash           | 1981       | Libya             |
| 3098           | Libyan air raids into Sudan       | 1981       | Libya             |
| 2979           |                                   | 1982       | North Korea       |

Table A.2 (continued).

| Dispute Number | Dispute Name (if any)  | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|----------------|--|------------|-------------------|
| 2978           |  | 1982       | Libya             |
| 2977           |  | 1982       | Nicaragua         |
| 3088           |  | 1982       | Libya             |
| 2229           | Militarization of Kuril Islands                              | 1982       | Soviet Union      |
| 2982           |  | 1982       | Soviet Union      |
| 3613           |  | 1982       | Yemen             |
| 2195           |  | 1983       | North Korea       |
| 3071           |  | 1983       | Iran              |
| 3072           | Libyan pressure on Sudan I                                   | 1983       | Libya             |
| 2347           |  | 1983       | Nicaragua         |
| 2981           |  | 1983       | Cuba              |
| 2176           |  | 1983       | Greece            |
| 3065           | Pressure on Libya  | 1983       | Libya             |
| 3634           |  | 1983       | Libya             |
| 3062           | USA/Syria clashes in Lebanon                                 | 1983       | Syria             |
| 3058           | Invasion of Grenada  | 1983       | Cuba              |
| 2231           | Deployment of Soviet SS-22 missiles and US Pershing missiles | 1983       | Soviet Union      |
| 3541           |  | 1984       | Iran              |
| 3051           | Libyan pressure on Sudan II                                  | 1984       | Libya             |
| 2230           |  | 1984       | Soviet Union      |
| 2196           |  | 1985       | North Korea       |
| 2232           | Shooting of Major Arthur D. Nicholson Jr.                    | 1985       | Soviet Union      |
| 2559           |  | 1985       | Czechoslovakia    |
| 3620           |  | 1985       | Libya             |

Table A.2 (continued).

| Dispute Number | Dispute Name (if any)        | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|----------------|------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 3625           |                              | 1985       | Iran              |
| 3636           |                              | 1986       | Libya             |
| 2578           |                              | 1986       | Iran              |
| 3637           |                              | 1986       | Soviet Union      |
| 2353           |                              | 1986       | Nicaragua         |
| 2233           |                              | 1986       | Soviet Union      |
| 2740           |                              | 1987       | Iran              |
| 2739           |                              | 1987       | Iraq              |
| 2742           |                              | 1987       | Cuba              |
| 2741           |                              | 1987       | Panama            |
| 2774           |                              | 1988       | Iraq              |
| 2834           |                              | 1988       | Iran              |
| 2775           |                              | 1988       | Libya             |
| 3901           |                              | 1989       | Panama            |
| 3903           |                              | 1989       | Libya             |
| 3900           |                              | 1989       | Canada            |
| 3950           |                              | 1990       | Cuba              |
| 3957           | Persian Gulf War             | 1990       | Iraq              |
| 3974           | Iraqi No-fly-zone Violations | 1991       | Iraq              |
| 3973           |                              | 1991       | Iran              |
| 3972           |                              | 1991       | Canada            |
| 3550           |                              | 1992       | Peru              |
| 3551           |                              | 1992       | Yugoslavia        |
| 3552           |                              | 1992       | Iraq              |
| 3568           |                              | 1993       | Iraq              |
| 4021           |                              | 1993       | North Korea       |

Table A.2 (continued).

| Dispute Number | Dispute Name (if any)     | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 4299           |                           | 1993       | Iraq              |
| 4016           |                           | 1993       | Haiti             |
| 4022           |                           | 1993       | North Korea       |
| 4046           |                           | 1994       | Yugoslavia        |
| 4065           |                           | 1994       | China             |
| 4269           |                           | 1994       | Iraq              |
| 4087           |                           | 1994       | North Korea       |
| 4270           |                           | 1994       | Iraq              |
| 4064           | Taiwan independence moves | 1995       | China             |
| 4196           |                           | 1996       | Cuba              |
| 4195           |                           | 1996       | Libya             |
| 4190           |                           | 1996       | Syria             |
| 4271           |                           | 1996       | Iraq              |
| 4183           |                           | 1997       | Canada            |
| 4174           |                           | 1997       | Russia            |
| 4273           | Operation Desert Fox      | 1997       | Iraq              |
| 4216           |                           | 1997       | Iran              |
| 4137           | NATO/Yugoslavia           | 1998       | Yugoslavia        |
| 4217           | Embassy retaliation       | 1998       | Sudan             |
| 4227           | Embassy retaliation       | 1998       | Afghanistan       |
| 4254           |                           | 1998       | Liberia           |
| 4342           | NATO v. Russia            | 1999       | Russia            |
| 4125           |                           | 1999       | North Korea       |
| 4088           | Taiwan independence moves | 1999       | China             |
| 4186           | KFOR v. Yugoslavia        | 2000       | Yugoslavia        |
| 4213           |                           | 2000       | Russia            |

Table A.2 (continued). Militarized Interstate Disputes

| Dispute Number | Dispute Name (if any)     | Start Year | Primary Adversary |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 4218           |                           | 2000       | North Korea       |
| 4298           |                           | 2000       | Yugoslavia        |
| 4220           |                           | 2000       | Russia            |
| 4261           |                           | 2000       | Venezuela         |
| 4197           |                           | 2000       | Russia            |
| 4343           |                           | 2000       | Yugoslavia        |
| 4336           |                           | 2001       | China             |
| 4281           | Taiwan independence moves | 2001       | China             |
| 4280           | spy plane collision       | 2001       | China             |
| 4283           | Taliban/Osama             | 2001       | Afghanistan       |



## APPENDIX B

### SENSITIVITY ANALYSES

This appendix includes two types of analyses. First, it includes explorations of the empirical thresholds of Public support and opposition. Second, the appendix includes alternative model specifications – variations on the number of variables included in a model as well as exclusions of certain crises. Concerning the former, one way to discover the precise state of public opinion associated with the Crisis response choices is to identify the values of support and opposition – using continuous measures of public opinion – associated with the cutpoint at which the probability of a given Crisis response choice is greater than .50 (see e.g., Long 1997). However, as I discuss in chapter III, the public did not register its preferences concerning military involvement for all of the crises in which the US is a participant. If continuous measures of public opinion are employed, there is no theoretically-informed way to replace missing values and many crises would be excluded from the analyses. Excluding a substantial number of observations on the basis of absent data may constitute a selection bias (see e.g., King, Keohane and Verba 1994; Collier and Mahoney 1996). An effort to avoid selection bias resulted in the decision to construct categorical measures of public opinion. But the categorical measures do not allow us to identify the specific values of support or opposition systematically associated with presidential Crisis response choices.

In order to empirically identify the threshold values of public opinion, I vary the measurement definitions of the Public support and Public opposition variables and reestimate the models. For example, I redefine Latest public support as polls in which more than 51% of respondents support military involvement and estimate its impact on Crisis response choice. Then, I redefine Latest public support as polls in which more than 52% of respondents support

military involvement and analyze the model again. I repeat this procedure, raising the threshold to the maximum value of public support. This series of analyses is conducted for all three measures of public support. Next, I redefined the three measures of public opposition, first, redefining Latest public opposition as polls in which more than 51% of respondents oppose military involvement and estimate its impact on the use of force. Then, I redefined Latest public opposition as polls in which more than 52% of respondents oppose military involvement and analyze the model again. Again, this procedure was repeated until I reached the maximum value of public opposition. These analyses enable us to identify the specific thresholds of support and opposition associated with presidential crisis decision making and also bolster the extent to which we are confident with our theoretical framework.

The specifications of the models constituting the sensitivity analysis are identical to those appearing on the last columns of the “Alternative Specifications” tables in chapter III. However, I also redefine Public ambivalence/indifference to account for crises in which public opinion polls were available, but that public support and opposition did not meet the defined levels. Consequently, the significance of the included public opinion variables suggests whether they differ systematically in their influences on Crisis response choice relative to No guidance. The specification is summarized

$$Z = \beta_1(\text{Public Support}) + \beta_2(\text{Public Opposition}) + \beta_3(\text{Public Ambivalence/indifference}) + \beta_4(\text{Relative Capabilities}) + \beta_5(\text{Contiguity}) + \beta_6(\text{Cold War}) + \varepsilon$$

where  $z$  is an underlying index of the propensity of the president to choose a given crisis response choice.

The results of the sensitivity analyses are displayed in the tables below. These results are largely unsurprising. All three measures of public support remain positive and significant when public support is defined as greater than 51% through the maximum observed values in

analyses using the ICB data to identify crises. But for the analyses in which crises are identified by the MID data, the significance of the effect of Average public support is obscured once it is defined as greater than 76%. The results of the threshold analyses for the measures of public opposition reveal a somewhat different pattern.

In general, all three measures of public opposition are consistently associated with lower Crisis response choices relative to Public support and Public Ambivalence/indifference beginning with the opposition greater than 49% threshold and for all thresholds up to opposition greater than 61%. Within this range, Public opposition has a larger positive impact on the response categories than No guidance. However, beyond the opposition greater than 61% the effect of some of the measures of Public opposition are statistically indistinguishable from No guidance. This suggests that higher levels of opposition have a similar impact on Crisis response choice as No guidance at these levels of opposition.

This appendix also includes alternative specifications of models shown or discussed in Chapter IV. Table B.13 is a replication using the MID data of the Logit analysis in which the dependent variable is redefined to take on the value of “1” when the crisis outcome was a Land force assault and zero otherwise. Tables B.14 and B.15 summarize the results of the analyses in which costly wars (i.e., Korean and Vietnam Wars) are excluded from the set of crises examined. In Tables B.16 and B.17, I show the results of specifications in which only one of the three theoretically-important public opinion variables (Public Support, Public ambivalence/indifference, and Public opposition) is included in the model without any of the others. These analyses weigh the impact of the included variables relative to the excluded categories. Finally, Tables B.18 through B.23 show additional empirical threshold tests. Although these are similar to those appearing near the front of the appendix, these consist of

only redefinition of the Public opposition dummy variables while excluding the other public opinion variables.

Overall, these analyses are very informative. In some cases, they point to the robustness of the findings presented in Chapter IV, while in others; the analyses suggest the limits of the measures employed. For example, the analyses showing the exclusion of the crises that were part of costly wars are very similar to the findings presented earlier. On the other hand, the analyses that include only one category of public opinion suggest the importance of including as many categories as mathematically possible.

Table B.1. Sensitivity Analyses of Latest Public Support (ICB; N=206)

| Variable                               | 54     | 55     | 57      | 58     | 59     | 63     | 67     | 69     | 80     | 81     |
|--|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Latest Public support                  | 3.64*  | 3.86*  | 4.09*   | 3.53*  | 3.51*  | 3.33*  | 3.48*  | 3.99*  | 3.40*  | 3.80*  |
| Latest Public opposition               | 1.38*  | 1.38*  | 1.37*   | 1.37*  | 1.37*  | 1.38*  | 1.38*  | 1.39*  | 1.40*  | 1.41*  |
| Latest Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.13*  | 2.10*  | 2.07*   | 2.27*  | 2.31*  | 2.37*  | 2.36*  | 2.38*  | 2.42*  | 2.43*  |
| Relative capabilities                  | .957   | 1.02   | 1.06    | .917   | .972   | .996   | .942   | 1.09   | .970   | .697   |
| Contiguity                             | .427*  | .442*  | .449*   | .314   | .301   | .309   | .397   | .447   | .380   | .285   |
| Cold War                               | .054   | .117   | .187    | .098   | .114   | -.052  | -.022  | -.148  | -.163  | -.113  |
| $\tau_1$                               | 2.83   | 2.94   | 3.04    | 2.82   | 2.89   | 2.77   | 2.75   | 2.79   | 2.66   | 2.44   |
| $\tau_2$                               | 4.23   | 4.38   | 4.51    | 4.20   | 4.26   | 4.12   | 4.10   | 4.14   | 3.99   | 3.78   |
| $\tau_3$                               | 5.28   | 5.38   | 5.54    | 5.14   | 5.19   | 5.04   | 5.02   | 5.06   | 4.90   | 4.69   |
| Chi-square                             | 62.50* | 74.13* | 159.52* | 62.68* | 59.95* | 57.62* | 48.49* | 55.14* | 47.60* | 53.94* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Latest public support > 87 failed converge.

Table B.2. Sensitivity Analyses of Latest Public Opposition (ICB; N=206)

| Variable                                   | 49     | 50     | 51     | 52     | 56     | 57     | 58     | 59     | 60     |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Latest Public support                      | 3.30*  | 3.29*  | 3.27*  | 3.25*  | 3.25*  | 3.25*  | 3.23*  | 3.32*  | 3.33*  |
| Latest Public opposition                   | 1.73*  | 1.70*  | 1.75*  | 1.72*  | 1.73*  | 1.69*  | 1.78*  | 1.46*  | 1.38*  |
| Latest Public ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.46*  | 2.46*  | 2.40*  | 2.35*  | 2.32*  | 2.33*  | 2.23*  | 2.36*  | 2.37*  |
| Relative capabilities                      | .913   | .905   | .842   | .831   | .840   | .859   | .714   | .987   | .996   |
| Contiguity                                 | .289   | .293   | .308   | .339   | .297   | .300   | .316   | .305   | .309   |
| Cold War                                   | -.097  | -.104  | -.124  | -.149  | -.155  | -.161  | -.150  | -.051  | -.052  |
| $\tau_1$                                   | 2.65   | 2.64   | 2.57   | 2.54   | 2.54   | 2.55   | 2.43   | 2.76   | 2.77   |
| $\tau_2$                                   | 4.00   | 3.98   | 3.90   | 3.87   | 3.87   | 3.88   | 3.75   | 4.11   | 4.12   |
| $\tau_3$                                   | 4.92   | 4.91   | 4.82   | 4.79   | 4.78   | 4.80   | 4.65   | 5.02   | 5.04   |
| Chi-square                                 | 45.76* | 45.96* | 47.95* | 48.65* | 55.94* | 56.46* | 60.08* | 56.80* | 57.62* |

Table B.2 (continued).

| Variable                               | 61     | 64     | 66     | 70     | 71     | 73     | 77     | 78     |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Latest Public support                  | 3.39*  | 3.36*  | 3.41*  | 3.37*  | 3.31*  | 3.29*  | 3.31*  | 3.28*  |
| Latest Public opposition               | 1.12*  | 1.20*  | .975*  | 1.05*  | 1.23*  | 1.33*  | 1.00*  | 1.12*  |
| Latest Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.42*  | 2.37*  | 2.44*  | 2.39*  | 2.30*  | 2.26*  | 2.29*  | 2.25*  |
| Relative capabilities                  | 1.09   | 1.03   | 1.17   | 1.08   | .928   | .848   | .765   | .702   |
| Contiguity                             | .304   | .318   | .319   | .328   | .344   | .348   | .245   | .261   |
| Cold War                               | .024   | -.006  | .033   | .004   | -.052  | -.078  | -.057  | -.082  |
| $\tau_1$                               | 2.93   | 2.84   | 3.00   | 2.90   | 2.71   | 2.61   | 2.55   | 2.47   |
| $\tau_2$                               | 4.30   | 4.20   | 4.38   | 4.26   | 4.05   | 3.95   | 3.89   | 3.80   |
| $\tau_3$                               | 5.22   | 5.12   | 5.31   | 5.19   | 4.97   | 4.86   | 4.81   | 4.72   |
| Chi-square                             | 66.40* | 67.22* | 74.03* | 71.99* | 75.84* | 75.49* | 58.51* | 60.66* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Latest Public opposition >94 failed to converge.

Table B.3. Sensitivity Analyses of Average Public Support (ICB; N=206)

| Variable                                    | 57     | 57.75  | 58     | 58.89  | 76     | 77     | 82     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Average Public support                      | 4.06*  | 4.06*  | 3.49*  | 3.09*  | 3.26*  | 3.53*  | 4.00*  |
| Average Public opposition                   | 1.02*  | 1.03*  | 1.03*  | 1.04*  | 1.04*  | 1.04*  | 1.04*  |
| Average Public ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.45*  | 2.47*  | 2.59*  | 2.63*  | 2.63*  | 2.62*  | 2.63*  |
| Relative capabilities                       | 1.27*  | 1.30*  | 1.12*  | 1.00   | 1.07*  | 1.08   | .823   |
| Contiguity                                  | .423   | .428   | .353   | .344   | .346   | .423   | .333   |
| Cold War                                    | .111   | .020   | .040   | .006   | -.012  | .006   | .062   |
| $\tau_1$                                    | 3.17   | 3.12   | 2.97   | 2.83   | 2.87   | 2.90   | 2.71   |
| $\tau_2$                                    | 4.61   | 4.55   | 4.36   | 4.22   | 4.26   | 4.29   | 4.09   |
| $\tau_3$                                    | 5.60   | 5.53   | 5.30   | 5.15   | 5.20   | 5.23   | 5.04   |
| Chi-square                                  | 64.38* | 57.32* | 58.71* | 52.14* | 49.25* | 45.41* | 48.65* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Average public support > 87 failed to converge.



Table B.4. Sensitivity Analyses of Average Public Opposition (ICB; N=206)

| Variable                                    | 50     | 52     | 52.17  | 53     | 53.5   | 54     | 55     | 56     | 56.5   |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Average Public support                      | 3.14*  | 3.12*  | 3.09*  | 3.06*  | 3.09*  | 3.12*  | 3.12*  | 3.11*  | 3.10*  |
| Average Public opposition                   | 1.68*  | 1.72*  | 1.76*  | 1.84*  | 1.76*  | 1.69*  | 1.65*  | 1.61*  | 1.51*  |
| Average Public ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.63*  | 2.56*  | 2.50*  | 2.38*  | 2.46*  | 2.51*  | 2.51*  | 2.51*  | 2.51*  |
| Relative capabilities                       | .757   | .722   | .671   | .652   | .729   | .760   | .770   | .754   | .716   |
| Contiguity                                  | .297   | .311   | .319   | .349   | .355   | .352   | .366   | .375   | .394   |
| Cold War                                    | -.176  | -.203  | -.227  | -.269  | -.247  | -.197  | -.203  | -.211  | -.228  |
| $\tau_1$                                    | 2.44   | 2.39   | 2.32   | 2.28   | 2.36   | 2.43   | 2.44   | 2.42   | 2.37   |
| $\tau_2$                                    | 3.80   | 3.73   | 3.65   | 3.59   | 3.69   | 3.77   | 3.78   | 3.76   | 3.72   |
| $\tau_3$                                    | 4.72   | 4.65   | 4.57   | 4.49   | 4.60   | 4.69   | 4.70   | 4.68   | 4.64   |
| Chi-square                                  | 39.90* | 40.99* | 42.75* | 45.03* | 42.78* | 41.94* | 41.95* | 42.21* | 42.65* |

Table B.4 (continued).

| Variable                                    | 57     | 58     | 58.5   | 58.7   | 59     | 60     | 60.7   | 60.9   | 61     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Average Public support                      | 3.12*  | 3.10*  | 3.14*  | 3.21*  | 3.26*  | 3.26*  | 3.28*  | 3.24*  | 3.24*  |
| Average Public opposition                   | 1.39*  | 1.44*  | 1.24*  | 1.16*  | 1.04*  | 1.04*  | .789*  | .854*  | .693   |
| Average Public ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.58*  | 2.53*  | 2.60*  | 2.61*  | 2.63*  | 2.63*  | 2.63*  | 2.58*  | 2.58*  |
| Relative capabilities                       | .765   | .726   | .750   | .973   | 1.07*  | 1.07*  | 1.20*  | 1.13*  | 1.13*  |
| Contiguity                                  | .408   | .410*  | .420   | .332   | .346   | .346   | .421   | .427*  | .450*  |
| Cold War                                    | -.211  | -.232  | -.133  | -.116  | -.012  | -.012  | -.019  | -.053  | -.058  |
| $\tau_1$                                    | 2.43   | 2.38   | 2.48   | 2.70   | 2.87   | 2.87   | 3.00   | 2.91   | 2.90   |
| $\tau_2$                                    | 3.80   | 3.73   | 3.85   | 4.08   | 4.26   | 4.26   | 4.41   | 4.30   | 4.30   |
| $\tau_3$                                    | 4.73   | 4.66   | 4.79   | 5.02   | 5.20   | 5.20   | 5.34   | 5.23   | 5.23   |
| Chi-square                                  | 41.77* | 42.46* | 43.09* | 50.97* | 49.25* | 49.25* | 54.58* | 53.93* | 55.22* |

Table B.4 (continued).

| Variable                                | 65     | 66     | 70     | 71     | 72     | 77     | 78     | 83     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Average Public support                  | 3.30*  | 3.27*  | 3.23*  | 3.17*  | 3.14*  | 3.11*  | 3.09*  | 3.06*  |
| Average Public opposition               | .547   | .623   | .708   | .895   | 1.02*  | 1.14*  | 1.27*  | 1.42*  |
| Average Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.56*  | 2.52*  | 2.47*  | 2.38*  | 2.35*  | 2.31*  | 2.27*  | 2.23*  |
| Relative capabilities                   | 1.28*  | 1.23*  | 1.14*  | .989   | .750   | .709   | .644   | .586   |
| Contiguity                              | .327   | .344   | .352   | .367*  | .240   | .262   | .277   | .292   |
| Cold War                                | -.058  | -.089  | -.118  | -.174  | -.191  | -.217  | -.243  | -.268  |
| $\tau_1$                                | 3.03   | 2.96   | 2.85   | 2.67   | 2.43   | 2.37   | 2.29   | 2.22   |
| $\tau_2$                                | 4.43   | 4.34   | 4.22   | 4.01   | 3.76   | 3.69   | 3.60   | 3.52   |
| $\tau_3$                                | 5.36   | 5.26   | 5.14   | 4.92   | 4.66   | 4.59   | 4.50   | 4.42   |
| Chi-square                              | 73.36* | 76.50* | 73.39* | 79.05* | 55.46* | 57.45* | 60.35* | 62.31* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Average public opposition > 93 failed to converge.

Table B.5. Sensitivity Analyses of Initial Public Support (ICB; N=206)

| Variable                                    | 49     | 52     | 55     | 57     | 74     | 76     | 80     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Initial Public support                      | 3.65*  | 3.60*  | 3.58*  | 3.56*  | 2.98*  | 3.19*  | 3.40*  |
| Initial Public opposition                   | 1.34*  | 1.34*  | 1.33*  | 1.33*  | 1.34*  | 1.34*  | 1.34*  |
| Initial Public ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.24*  | 2.33*  | 2.36*  | 2.40*  | 2.50*  | 2.50*  | 2.50*  |
| Relative capabilities                       | .721   | .765   | .804   | .830   | .619   | .438   | .417   |
| Contiguity                                  | .465*  | .427*  | .415*  | .401*  | .368*  | .359*  | .352*  |
| Cold War                                    | -.097  | -.057  | -.038  | -.022  | -.149  | -.083  | -.084  |
| $\tau_1$                                    | 2.49   | 2.56   | 2.61   | 2.65   | 2.35   | 2.24   | 2.22   |
| $\tau_2$                                    | 3.91   | 3.95   | 3.99   | 4.02   | 3.70   | 3.58   | 3.57   |
| $\tau_3$                                    | 4.87   | 4.90   | 4.93   | 4.95   | 4.61   | 4.50   | 4.49   |
| Chi-square                                  | 96.11* | 84.57* | 75.62* | 68.72* | 69.83* | 60.16* | 59.35* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Initial public support  $> 83$  failed to converge.

Table B.6. Sensitivity Analyses of Initial Public Opposition (ICB; N=206)

| Variable                                | 50     | 52     | 53     | 54     | 55     | 56     | 57     | 58     | 59     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Initial Public support                  | 2.92*  | 2.90*  | 2.88*  | 2.88*  | 2.94*  | 2.94*  | 2.92*  | 2.93*  | 2.98*  |
| Initial Public opposition               | 1.72*  | 1.69*  | 1.76*  | 1.73*  | 1.59*  | 1.64*  | 1.49*  | 1.37*  | 1.30*  |
| Initial Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.69*  | 2.61*  | 2.48*  | 2.45*  | 2.53*  | 2.47*  | 2.48*  | 2.55*  | 2.54*  |
| Relative capabilities                   | .507   | .522   | .461   | .492   | .530   | .519   | .438   | .449   | .501   |
| Contiguity                              | .291   | .342   | .348   | .301   | .288   | .295   | .311   | .310   | .320   |
| Cold War                                | -.250  | -.282  | -.282  | -.291  | -.216  | -.185  | -.219  | -.221  | -.134  |
| $\tau_1$                                | 2.16   | 2.15   | 2.09   | 2.11   | 2.21   | 2.22   | 2.12   | 2.13   | 2.25   |
| $\tau_2$                                | 3.50   | 3.49   | 3.42   | 3.43   | 3.55   | 3.55   | 3.46   | 3.49   | 3.61   |
| $\tau_3$                                | 4.43   | 4.41   | 4.32   | 4.34   | 4.47   | 4.47   | 4.37   | 4.41   | 4.53   |
| Chi-square                              | 54.17* | 55.42* | 57.61* | 62.69* | 71.57* | 72.33* | 76.17* | 74.02* | 72.60* |

Table B.6 (continued).

| Variable                                | 60     | 64     | 66     | 70     | 74     | 77     | 81     | 84     | 87     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Initial Public support                  | 2.98*  | 2.97*  | 2.99*  | 2.97*  | 2.95*  | 2.95*  | 2.91*  | 2.94*  | 2.92*  |
| Initial Public opposition               | 1.34*  | 1.26*  | 1.07*  | 1.18*  | 1.33*  | 1.43*  | 1.66*  | 1.54*  | 1.68*  |
| Initial Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.50*  | 2.50*  | 2.50*  | 2.41*  | 2.29*  | 2.26*  | 2.19*  | 2.20*  | 2.17*  |
| Relative capabilities                   | .619   | .594   | .569   | .683   | .427   | .492   | .422   | .520   | .476   |
| Contiguity                              | .368*  | .381*  | .410*  | .463*  | .350   | .321   | .333   | .290   | .308   |
| Cold War                                | -.149  | -.161  | -.122  | -.153  | -.117  | -.128  | -.171  | -.154  | -.177  |
| $\tau_1$                                | 2.35   | 2.32   | 2.33   | 2.41   | 2.20   | 2.25   | 2.15   | 2.25   | 2.19   |
| $\tau_2$                                | 3.70   | 3.67   | 3.69   | 3.76   | 3.52   | 3.56   | 3.45   | 3.55   | 3.49   |
| $\tau_3$                                | 4.61   | 4.58   | 4.61   | 4.66   | 4.41   | 4.45   | 4.33   | 4.44   | 4.37   |
| Chi-square                              | 69.83* | 69.79* | 75.85* | 69.99* | 65.59* | 66.53* | 68.44* | 73.75* | 75.63* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; two-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Initial public opposition > 92 failed to converge.

Table B.7. Sensitivity Analyses of Latest Public Support (MID; N=212)

| Variable                               | 55     | 57     | 58     | 59     | 63     | 64     | 67     | 69     | 80     | 81     |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Latest Public support                  | 2.25*  | 2.30*  | 2.12*  | 2.05*  | 1.87*  | 2.02*  | 1.82*  | 2.18*  | 1.25   | 3.28*  |
| Latest Public opposition               | .899*  | .897*  | .899*  | .900*  | .903*  | .901*  | .901*  | .901*  | .903*  | .901*  |
| Latest Public ambivalence/indifference | 1.90*  | 1.90*  | 1.95*  | 1.97*  | 2.00*  | 1.98*  | 1.99*  | 1.97*  | 2.01*  | 1.96*  |
| Relative capabilities                  | .412   | .419   | .436   | .443   | .437   | .444   | .437   | .454   | .395   | .404   |
| Contiguity                             | -1.04* | -1.05* | -1.03* | -1.03* | -1.02* | -1.02* | -1.03* | -1.02* | -1.04* | -1.03* |
| Cold War                               | -.103  | -.088  | -.118  | -.131  | -.155  | -.140  | -.150  | -.140  | -.155  | -.097  |
| $\tau_1$                               | -.130  | -.114  | -.118  | -.119  | -.139  | -.123  | -.139  | -.114  | -.186  | -.127  |
| $\tau_2$                               | 2.46   | 2.48   | 2.47   | 2.47   | 2.45   | 2.47   | 2.45   | 2.48   | 2.41   | 2.46   |
| $\tau_3$                               | 3.62   | 3.64   | 3.63   | 3.62   | 3.60   | 3.62   | 3.60   | 3.63   | 3.56   | 3.63   |
| Chi-square                             | 70.07* | 69.61* | 74.69* | 74.72* | 76.73* | 80.39* | 83.78* | 75.70* | 73.50* | 72.48* |

Note: \* p<.10; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Latest public support > 83 failed converge.

Table B.8. Sensitivity Analyses of Latest Public Opposition (MID; N=212)

| Variable                               | 49     | 50     | 51     | 52      | 53      | 54      | 55     | 56     | 57     | 59     |
|--|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Latest Public support                  | 1.83*  | 1.82*  | 1.82*  | 1.82*   | 1.83*   | 1.83*   | 1.84*  | 1.82*  | 1.84*  | 1.87*  |
| Latest Public opposition               | 1.48*  | 1.49*  | 1.46*  | 1.51*   | 1.37*   | 1.39*   | 1.30*  | 1.37*  | 1.11*  | .894*  |
| Latest Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.05*  | 2.02*  | 2.05*  | 1.92*   | 1.97*   | 1.95*   | 2.01*  | 1.91*  | 1.98*  | 2.03*  |
| Relative capabilities                  | .264   | .248   | .245   | .301    | .321    | .358    | .390   | .316   | .440   | .452   |
| Contiguity                             | -1.08* | -1.08* | -1.08* | -1.07*  | -1.08*  | -1.07*  | -1.06* | -1.06* | -1.02* | -1.01* |
| Cold War                               | -.167  | -.169  | -.178  | -.183   | -.180   | -.162   | -.169  | -.180  | -.228  | -.185  |
| $\tau_1$                               | -.311  | -.326  | -.335  | -.287   | -.272   | -.223   | -.200  | -.270  | -.192  | -.151  |
| $\tau_2$                               | 2.24   | 2.22   | 2.22   | 2.26    | 2.28    | 2.33    | 2.36   | 2.28   | 2.38   | 2.45   |
| $\tau_3$                               | 3.38   | 3.36   | 3.36   | 3.39    | 3.42    | 3.47    | 3.50   | 3.41   | 3.53   | 3.60   |
| Chi-square                             | 90.30* | 91.85* | 94.30* | 100.14* | 102.86* | 101.57* | 99.07* | 89.07* | 83.80* | 81.04* |



Table B.8 (continued).

| Variable                               | 60     | 61     | 63     | 64     | 71     | 73     | 76     | 78      |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Latest Public support                  | 1.87*  | 1.84*  | 1.84*  | 1.84*  | 1.86*  | 1.86*  | 1.89*  | 1.86*   |
| Latest Public opposition               | .903*  | 1.03*  | 1.16*  | 1.18*  | .890   | .906   | .545   | .847    |
| Latest Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.00*  | 1.92*  | 1.84*  | 1.82*  | 1.87*  | 1.85*  | 1.90*  | 1.85*   |
| Relative capabilities                  | .437   | .334   | .313   | .360   | .428   | .399   | .461   | .417    |
| Contiguity                             | -1.02* | -1.05* | -1.08* | -1.07* | -1.07* | -1.07* | -1.07* | -1.06*  |
| Cold War                               | -.155  | -.162  | -.140  | -.123  | -.114  | -.090  | -.070  | -.092   |
| $\tau_1$                               | -.139  | -.241  | -.250  | -.192  | -.128  | -.134  | -.070  | -.118   |
| $\tau_2$                               | 2.45   | 2.33   | 2.30   | 2.36   | 2.43   | 2.42   | 2.51   | 2.44    |
| $\tau_3$                               | 3.60   | 3.47   | 3.44   | 3.49   | 3.58   | 3.56   | 3.66   | 3.58    |
| Chi-square                             | 76.73* | 81.64* | 87.72* | 87.51* | 82.61* | 86.62* | 79.48* | 100.34* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Latest public opposition > 92 failed converge.

Table B.9. Sensitivity Analyses of Average Public Support (MID; N=212)

| Variable                                    | 52     | 57     | 57.75  | 58     | 63     | 67     | 69     | 72     | 76     | 77     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Average Public support                      | 2.45*  | 2.32*  | 2.24*  | 1.98*  | 1.68*  | 1.48*  | 1.58*  | 1.26*  | 1.81   | 2.55   |
| Average Public opposition                   | .437   | .439   | .442   | .450   | .461   | .464   | .459   | .463   | .450   | .443   |
| Average Public ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.13*  | 2.17*  | 2.18*  | 2.23*  | 2.28*  | 2.30*  | 2.27*  | 2.30*  | 2.23*  | 2.18*  |
| Relative capabilities                       | .650   | .627   | .629   | .616   | .595   | .571   | .572   | .518   | .584   | .646   |
| Contiguity                                  | -1.00* | -1.00* | -.995* | -.981* | -.965* | -.957* | -.963* | -.955* | -.976* | -.985* |
| Cold War                                    | .016   | .007   | -.005  | -.029  | -.057  | -.051  | -.029  | -.008  | -.008  | -.004  |
| $\tau_1$                                    | .166   | .140   | .135   | .110   | .074   | .060   | .077   | .048   | .100   | .154   |
| $\tau_2$                                    | 2.85   | 2.82   | 2.81   | 2.79   | 2.77   | 2.76   | 2.77   | 2.76   | 2.79   | 2.83   |
| $\tau_3$                                    | 4.05   | 4.01   | 4.01   | 3.98   | 3.96   | 3.96   | 3.97   | 3.96   | 3.98   | 4.03   |
| Chi-square                                  | 44.34* | 46.79* | 47.59* | 56.95* | 56.46* | 56.15* | 52.49* | 51.52* | 55.95* | 55.58* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Average public support > 79 failed converge.

Table B.10. Sensitivity Analyses of Average Public Opposition (MID; N=212)

| Variable                                    | 50     | 50.5   | 51     | 52     | 53     | 53.5   | 54     | 54.5   |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Average Public support                      | 1.54*  | 1.53*  | 1.53*  | 1.54*  | 1.54*  | 1.54*  | 1.54*  | 1.54*  |
| Average Public opposition                   | 1.59*  | 1.60*  | 1.57*  | 1.54*  | 1.56*  | 1.48*  | 1.56*  | 1.44*  |
| Average Public ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.00*  | 1.96*  | 2.00*  | 2.01*  | 1.98*  | 2.05*  | 1.93*  | 1.98*  |
| Relative capabilities                       | .249   | .233   | .236   | .302   | .313   | .349   | .311   | .331   |
| Contiguity                                  | -1.07* | -1.07* | -1.07* | -1.05* | -1.04* | -1.03* | -1.04* | -1.02* |
| Cold War                                    | -.179  | -.181  | -.187  | -.195  | -.196  | -.205  | -.193  | -.216  |
| $\tau_1$                                    | -.330  | -.345  | -.347  | -.291  | -.281  | -.255  | -.277  | -.273  |
| $\tau_2$                                    | 2.22   | 2.21   | 2.21   | 2.27   | 2.28   | 2.31   | 2.28   | 2.29   |
| $\tau_3$                                    | 3.36   | 3.34   | 3.35   | 3.41   | 3.41   | 3.45   | 3.41   | 3.42   |
| Chi-square                                  | 92.70* | 93.82* | 96.60* | 99.62* | 98.50* | 98.17* | 86.79* | 84.47* |

Table B.10 (continued).

| Variable                                | 55     | 55.65  | 56     | 56.7   | 56.75  | 57     | 58.4   | 59     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Average Public support                  | 1.54*  | 1.55*  | 1.55*  | 1.56*  | 1.60*  | 1.62*  | 1.64*  | 1.67*  |
| Average Public opposition               | 1.44*  | 1.18*  | 1.18*  | 1.06*  | .836*  | .826*  | .704*  | .567   |
| Average Public ambivalence/indifference | 1.98*  | 2.09*  | 2.09*  | 2.16*  | 2.24*  | 2.22*  | 2.25*  | 2.29*  |
| Relative capabilities                   | .331   | .363   | .363   | .384   | .404   | .515   | .522   | .516   |
| Contiguity                              | -1.02* | -.993* | -.993* | -.980* | -.967* | -.940* | -.935* | -.934* |
| Cold War                                | -.216  | -.227  | -.227  | -.240  | -.197  | -.158  | -.112  | -.060  |
| $\tau_1$                                | -.273  | -.250  | -.250  | -.240  | -.191  | -.056  | -.015  | .016   |
| $\tau_2$                                | 2.29   | 2.34   | 2.34   | 2.37   | 2.45   | 2.58   | 2.65   | 2.71   |
| $\tau_3$                                | 3.42   | 3.49   | 3.49   | 3.53   | 3.63   | 3.76   | 3.83   | 3.90   |
| Chi-square                              | 84.47* | 75.67* | 75.67* | 73.23* | 67.90* | 67.14* | 63.47* | 62.27* |

Table B.10 (continued).

| Variable                                    | 60     | 61     | 61.5   | 62     | 65     | 67     | 71     | 83     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Average Public support                      | 1.68*  | 1.63*  | 1.64*  | 1.60*  | 1.58*  | 1.58*  | 1.57*  | 1.57*  |
| Average Public opposition                   | .461   | .559   | .426   | .632   | .846*  | .846*  | .849*  | .863*  |
| Average Public ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.28*  | 2.15*  | 2.14*  | 2.01*  | 1.95*  | 1.93*  | 1.91*  | 1.89*  |
| Relative capabilities                       | .595   | .490   | .545   | .521   | .476   | .457   | .425   | .394   |
| Contiguity                                  | -.965* | -.967* | -1.00* | -1.05* | -1.05* | -1.04* | -1.05* | -1.05* |
| Cold War                                    | -.057  | -.099  | -.097  | -.115  | -.129  | -.138  | -.147  | -.120  |
| $\tau_1$                                    | .074   | -.042  | -.007  | -.051  | -.095  | -.116  | -.150  | -.156  |
| $\tau_2$                                    | 2.77   | 2.60   | 2.65   | 2.55   | 2.48   | 2.45   | 2.41   | 2.40   |
| $\tau_3$                                    | 3.96   | 3.78   | 3.82   | 3.71   | 3.63   | 3.61   | 3.56   | 3.55   |
| Chi-square                                  | 56.46* | 65.36* | 60.40* | 75.51* | 95.74* | 95.24* | 95.72* | 97.01* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Average public opposition > 92 failed to converge.

Table B.11. Sensitivity Analyses of Initial Public Support (MID; N=212)

| Variable                                | 50     | 52     | 57     | 63      | 67      | 74      | 79      | 80     |
|---|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| Initial Public support                  | 2.03*  | 2.11*  | 2.14*  | 1.71*   | 1.58*   | 1.69*   | 4.22*   | 3.63*  |
| Initial Public opposition               | 1.29*  | 1.29*  | 1.29*  | 1.30*   | 1.31*   | 1.30*   | 1.30*   | 1.29*  |
| Initial Public ambivalence/indifference | 1.93*  | 1.90*  | 1.90*  | 2.01*   | 2.03*   | 2.00*   | 1.87*   | 1.90*  |
| Relative capabilities                   | .493   | .497   | .500   | .492    | .483    | .482    | .350    | .409   |
| Contiguity                              | -1.04* | -1.04* | -1.04* | -1.02*  | -1.01*  | -1.02*  | -1.06*  | -1.05* |
| Cold War                                | -.095  | -.090  | -.083  | -.136   | -.140   | -.122   | .037    | -.024  |
| $\tau_1$                                | -.047  | -.041  | -.033  | -.074   | -.083   | -.072   | -.076   | -.069  |
| $\tau_2$                                | 2.51   | 2.52   | 2.52   | 2.49    | 2.48    | 2.49    | 2.49    | 2.49   |
| $\tau_3$                                | 3.66   | 3.67   | 3.68   | 3.64    | 3.63    | 3.64    | 3.69    | 3.66   |
| Chi-square                              | 77.54* | 76.66* | 79.46* | 104.99* | 112.34* | 109.47* | 113.11* | 91.43* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Initial public support > 83 failed to converge.

Table B.12. Sensitivity Analyses of Initial Public Opposition (MID; N=212)

| Variable                                | 49     | 50      | 51     | 53     | 54     | 56      | 57      | 59      | 60      |
|---|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Initial Public support                  | 1.70*  | 1.69*   | 1.68*  | 1.67*  | 1.69*  | 1.71*   | 1.70*   | 1.72*   | 1.71*   |
| Initial Public opposition               | 1.40*  | 1.46*   | 1.50*  | 1.53*  | 1.46*  | 1.32*   | 1.35*   | 1.29*   | 1.30*   |
| Initial Public ambivalence/indifference | 2.26*  | 2.16*   | 2.06*  | 1.97*  | 1.98*  | 2.07*   | 2.00*   | 2.03*   | 2.01*   |
| Relative capabilities                   | .366   | .346    | .308   | .332   | .443   | .526    | .451    | .470    | .492    |
| Contiguity                              | -1.07* | -1.07*  | -1.07* | -1.05* | -1.03* | -1.02*  | -1.03*  | -1.03*  | -1.02*  |
| Cold War                                | -.176  | -.175   | -.183  | -.196  | -.174  | -.142   | -.155   | -.130   | -.136   |
| $\tau_1$                                | -.232  | -.245   | -.282  | -.264  | -.149  | -.052   | -.127   | -.092   | -.074   |
| $\tau_2$                                | 2.34   | 2.32    | 2.27   | 2.29   | 2.40   | 2.51    | 2.43    | 2.47    | 2.49    |
| $\tau_3$                                | 3.51   | 3.47    | 3.42   | 3.43   | 3.54   | 3.67    | 3.58    | 3.62    | 3.64    |
| Chi-square                              | 99.69* | 101.45* | 98.42* | 89.94* | 94.94* | 104.80* | 103.99* | 107.20* | 104.99* |

Table B.12 (continued).

| Variable                                | 61      | 64      | 66     | 69     | 70     | 71      | 76     | 78      | 87      |
|---|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| Initial Public support                  | 1.70*   | 1.68*   | 1.70*  | 1.69*  | 1.68*  | 1.70*   | 1.70*  | 1.70*   | 1.70*   |
| Initial Public opposition               | 1.32*   | 1.50*   | 1.21*  | 1.26*  | 1.30*  | 1.16*   | 1.20*  | 1.09*   | 1.12*   |
| Initial Public ambivalence/indifference | 1.98*   | 1.87*   | 1.93*  | 1.89*  | 1.87*  | 1.89*   | 1.86*  | 1.86*   | 1.85*   |
| Relative capabilities                   | .456    | .359    | .440   | .381   | .352   | .372    | .344   | .393    | .372    |
| Contiguity                              | -1.02*  | -1.06*  | -1.04* | -1.04* | -1.05* | -1.04*  | -1.05* | -1.06*  | -1.06*  |
| Cold War                                | -.143   | -.153   | -.140  | -.153  | -.158  | -.134   | -.118  | -.112   | -.120   |
| $\tau_1$                                | -.111   | -.210   | -.127  | -.187  | -.217  | -.181   | -.194  | -.152   | -.175   |
| $\tau_2$                                | 2.45    | 2.33    | 2.43   | 2.36   | 2.33   | 2.37    | 2.35   | 2.40    | 2.37    |
| $\tau_3$                                | 3.59    | 3.47    | 3.57   | 3.50   | 3.47   | 3.51    | 3.49   | 3.54    | 3.51    |
| Chi-square                              | 104.68* | 106.19* | 94.35* | 93.12* | 91.99* | 104.15* | 99.47* | 102.52* | 100.01* |

Note: \*  $p < .10$ ; one-tailed tests. The number in the head of each column represents the threshold definition of the variable identified in the title of the table. Initial public opposition > 92 failed to converge.



Table B.13. Logit Estimates of Public Opinion and Land Force Assault, 1949-2001  
(MID; N=212)

| Variable                     | Average Opinion | Latest Opinion | Initial Opinion |
|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Public support               | 3.60*           | 3.87*          | 3.18*           |
| Public opposition            | -14.41*         | .537           | .030            |
| Ambivalence/<br>indifference | 1.68*           | 1.25*          | 1.74*           |
| Relative<br>capabilities     | 13.92*          | 13.98*         | 13.87*          |
| Contiguity                   | -.979           | -.834          | -1.04           |
| Cold War                     | 1.78*           | 1.81*          | 1.58*           |
| Constant                     | -17.62*         | -17.72*        | -17.36*         |
| Log pseudo-<br>likelihood    | -47.05          | -49.99         | -49.82          |

\*  $p < .10$  one-tailed test.

Table B.14. Ordered Logit Estimates of Public Opinion and Presidential Crisis Responses Short of Costly War, 1949-2001  
(ICB; N = various)

| Variable                     | Average<br>Opinion <sup>a</sup> | Latest<br>Opinion <sup>a</sup> | Initial<br>Opinion <sup>a</sup> | Average<br>Opinion <sup>b</sup> | Latest<br>Opinion <sup>b</sup> | Initial<br>Opinion <sup>b</sup> | Average<br>Opinion <sup>c</sup> | Latest<br>Opinion <sup>c</sup> | Initial<br>Opinion <sup>c</sup> |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Public support               | 3.13***                         | 3.16***                        | 2.89***                         | 3.34***                         | 3.39***                        | 3.00***                         | 3.20***                         | 3.23***                        | 2.92***                         |
| Public opposition            | 1.12**                          | 1.56***                        | 1.38***                         | 1.05**                          | 1.39**                         | 1.35***                         | 1.14**                          | 1.59***                        | 1.40***                         |
| Ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.34***                         | 1.99***                        | 2.18***                         | 2.51***                         | 2.24***                        | 2.36***                         | 2.17***                         | 1.80***                        | 1.99***                         |
| Relative capabilities        | .634                            | .365                           | .243                            | 1.66**                          | 1.55*                          | 1.19*                           | 1.15**                          | .846*                          | .765*                           |
| Contiguity                   | .483*                           | .496*                          | .505**                          | .613*                           | .586**                         | .628**                          | .782***                         | .814***                        | .800***                         |
| Cold War                     | -.285                           | -.352                          | -.360                           | -.161                           | -.179                          | -.264                           | -.493*                          | -.530*                         | -.520*                          |
| $\tau_1$                     | 2.25                            | 1.96                           | 1.84                            | 3.31                            | 3.20                           | 2.79                            | 2.58                            | 2.28                           | 2.21                            |
| $\tau_2$                     | 3.81                            | 3.49                           | 3.36                            | 4.76                            | 4.61                           | 4.20                            | 4.24                            | 3.93                           | 3.85                            |
| $\tau_3$                     | 4.39                            | 4.07                           | 3.94                            | 5.83                            | 5.67                           | 5.25                            | 4.93                            | 4.64                           | 4.53                            |
| N                            | 197                             | 197                            | 197                             | 203                             | 203                            | 203                             | 194                             | 194                            | 194                             |
| Chi-square                   | 58.68***                        | 68.20***                       | 84.37***                        | 44.75***                        | 44.60***                       | 63.50***                        | 46.33***                        | 70.90***                       | 67.94***                        |

\*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test. <sup>a</sup> Crises involving the Vietnam War are excluded; <sup>b</sup> Crises involving the Korean War are excluded; <sup>c</sup> Crises involving the Vietnam War and the Korean War are excluded.

Table B.15. Ordered Logit Estimates of Public Opinion and Presidential Crisis Responses Short of Costly War, 1949-2001  
(MID; N = various)

| Variable                     | Average Opinion <sup>a</sup> | Latest Opinion <sup>a</sup> | Initial Opinion <sup>a</sup> | Average Opinion <sup>b</sup> | Latest Opinion <sup>b</sup> | Initial Opinion <sup>b</sup> | Average Opinion <sup>c</sup> | Latest Opinion <sup>c</sup> | Initial Opinion <sup>c</sup> |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Public support               | 1.85**                       | 2.05**                      | 1.86***                      | 1.68**                       | 1.87***                     | 1.71***                      | 1.85**                       | 2.05**                      | 1.86***                      |
| Public opposition            | .651*                        | 1.09**                      | 1.53***                      | .467                         | .909*                       | 1.31***                      | .659*                        | 1.10**                      | 1.55***                      |
| Ambivalence/<br>indifference | 2.44***                      | 2.13***                     | 2.10***                      | 2.25***                      | 1.97***                     | 1.96***                      | 2.41***                      | 2.09***                     | 2.05***                      |
| Relative capabilities        | .664                         | .501                        | .512                         | .537                         | .379                        | .420                         | .599                         | .436                        | .429                         |
| Contiguity                   | -.817**                      | -.871**                     | -.879**                      | -.971***                     | -1.02***                    | -1.02***                     | -.824**                      | -.877**                     | -.888**                      |
| Cold War                     | -.229                        | -.325                       | -.312                        | -.081                        | -.176                       | -.159                        | -.259                        | -.352                       | -.341                        |
| $\tau_1$                     | .139                         | -.080                       | -.058                        | .003                         | -.209                       | -.157                        | .058                         | -.159                       | -.155                        |
| $\tau_2$                     | 3.01                         | 2.67                        | 2.65                         | 2.70                         | 2.39                        | 2.41                         | 2.93                         | 2.60                        | 2.56                         |
| $\tau_3$                     | 4.26                         | 3.88                        | 3.86                         | 3.92                         | 3.57                        | 3.59                         | 4.22                         | 3.85                        | 3.81                         |
| N                            | 203                          | 203                         | 203                          | 211                          | 211                         | 211                          | 202                          | 202                         | 202                          |
| Chi-square                   | 67.40***                     | 101.09***                   | 140.12***                    | 50.07***                     | 65.80***                    | 99.66***                     | 57.30***                     | 80.56***                    | 122.00***                    |

\*  $p < .10$ ; \*\*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .01$ ; one-tailed test. <sup>a</sup> Crises involving the Vietnam War are excluded; <sup>b</sup> Crises involving the Korean War are excluded; <sup>c</sup> Crises involving the Vietnam War and the Korean War are excluded.

Table B.16. Ordered Logit Estimates of Public Opinion and Presidential Crisis Responses, 1949-2001  
(ICB; N=206)

| Variable                     | Average<br>Opinion | Average<br>Opinion | Average<br>Opinion | Latest<br>Opinion | Latest<br>Opinion | Latest<br>Opinion | Initial<br>Opinion | Initial<br>Opinion | Initial<br>Opinion |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Public support               | 1.75*              |                    |                    | 2.03*             |                   |                   | 1.78*              |                    |                    |
| Public<br>opposition         |                    | .020               |                    |                   | .442              |                   |                    | .244               |                    |
| Ambivalence/<br>indifference |                    |                    | 2.16*              |                   |                   | 1.69*             |                    |                    | 1.87*              |
| Relative<br>capabilities     | .578               | .146               | .496               | .634              | -.041             | .599              | .565               | .104               | .200               |
| Contiguity                   | .696*              | .693*              | .467*              | .707*             | .688*             | .439*             | .693*              | .677*              | .539*              |
| Cold War                     | -.390              | -.489              | -.090              | -.158             | -.541             | -.387             | -.130              | -.505              | -.540              |
| $\tau_1$                     | 1.10               | .58                | 1.89               | 1.39              | .42               | 1.58              | 1.35               | .56                | 1.10               |
| $\tau_2$                     | 2.17               | 1.63               | 3.20               | 2.49              | 1.47              | 2.79              | 2.43               | 1.61               | 2.34               |
| $\tau_3$                     | 2.99               | 2.44               | 4.13               | 3.34              | 2.28              | 3.65              | 3.25               | 2.42               | 3.24               |
| Chi-square                   | 12.66*             | 7.40               | 35.88*             | 16.99*            | 6.81              | 51.34*            | 29.98*             | 6.89               | 37.21*             |

\*  $p < .10$  one-tailed test.

Table B.17. Ordered Logit Estimates of Public Opinion and Presidential Crisis Responses, 1949-2001  
(MID, N=212)

| Variable                     | Average<br>Opinion | Average<br>Opinion | Average<br>Opinion | Latest<br>Opinion | Latest<br>Opinion | Latest<br>Opinion | Initial<br>Opinion | Initial<br>Opinion | Initial<br>Opinion |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Public support               | .708*              |                    |                    | .985*             |                   |                   | .847*              |                    |                    |
| Public<br>opposition         |                    | -.387              |                    |                   | .058              |                   |                    | .486*              |                    |
| Ambivalence/<br>indifference |                    |                    | 2.02*              |                   |                   | 1.66*             |                    |                    | 1.51*              |
| Relative<br>capabilities     | -.291              | -.315              | .316               | -.263             | -.388             | .160              | -.288              | -.532              | .378               |
| Contiguity                   | -1.58*             | -1.59*             | -1.05*             | -1.58*            | -1.58*            | -1.12*            | -1.58*             | -1.57*             | -1.17*             |
| Cold War                     | -.033              | -.061              | -.118              | -.009             | -.096             | -.238             | .004               | -.137              | -.162              |
| $\tau_1$                     | -1.41              | -1.53              | -.397              | -1.36             | -1.57             | -.694             | -1.37              | -1.66              | -.553              |
| $\tau_2$                     | .761               | .642               | 2.22               | .825              | .596              | 1.78              | .809               | .517               | 1.83               |
| $\tau_3$                     | 1.81               | 1.69               | 3.39               | 1.88              | 1.64              | 2.90              | 1.86               | 1.56               | 2.95               |
| Chi-square                   | 22.27*             | 27.03*             | 52.66*             | 22.35*            | 22.88*            | 70.93*            | 22.91*             | 37.24*             | 48.07*             |

\*  $p < .10$  one-tailed test.

Table B.18. Sensitivity Analyses of Average Public Opposition (ICB; N=206)

| Variable                  | 60.9  | 61    | 65    | 66    | 70    | 71    | 72    | 77    | 78    | 83    |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Average Public opposition | -.203 | -.383 | -.476 | -.398 | -.314 | -.128 | .036  | .152  | .279  | .420  |
| Relative capabilities     | .215  | .260  | .301  | .277  | .248  | .190  | .146  | .124  | .104  | .084  |
| Contiguity                | .710* | .725* | .707* | .707* | .705* | .699* | .695* | .699* | .703* | .707* |
| Cold War                  | -.460 | -.443 | -.437 | -.446 | -.456 | -.474 | -.489 | -.499 | -.508 | -.518 |
| $\tau_1$                  | .645  | .686  | .724  | .702  | .676  | .621  | .580  | .559  | .540  | .522  |
| $\tau_2$                  | 1.69  | 1.74  | 1.77  | 1.75  | 1.72  | 1.67  | 1.63  | 1.61  | 1.59  | 1.57  |
| $\tau_3$                  | 2.51  | 2.55  | 2.59  | 2.57  | 2.54  | 2.48  | 2.44  | 2.42  | 2.40  | 2.38  |
| Chi-square                | 8.34* | 8.22* | 7.58* | 7.60* | 7.57* | 7.60* | 8.43* | 8.78* | 9.39* | 7.69* |

Note: \* p<.10; two-tailed tests. Average public opposition > 93 failed to converge.

Table B.19. Sensitivity Analyses of Latest Public Opposition (ICB; N=206)

| Variable                 | 61    | 64    | 66    | 70    | 71    | 73    | 77    | 78    |
|--------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Latest Public opposition | .178  | .256  | .013  | .093  | .268  | .364  | .037  | .152  |
| Relative capabilities    | .085  | .055  | .147  | .119  | .060  | .031  | .146  | .127  |
| Contiguity               | .691* | .689* | .693* | .691* | .686* | .682* | .695* | .700* |
| Cold War                 | -.510 | -.520 | -.487 | -.497 | -.516 | -.525 | -.489 | -.499 |
| $\tau_1$                 | .523  | .496  | .582  | .555  | .500  | .473  | .580  | .563  |
| $\tau_2$                 | 1.57  | 1.54  | 1.63  | 1.60  | 1.55  | 1.52  | 1.63  | 1.61  |
| $\tau_3$                 | 2.38  | 2.36  | 2.44  | 2.41  | 2.36  | 2.33  | 2.44  | 2.42  |
| Chi-square               | 7.32  | 7.22  | 8.18* | 8.07* | 7.94* | 7.22  | 8.34* | 8.51* |

Note: \* p<.10; two-tailed tests. Latest public opposition > 94 failed to converge.

Table B.20. Sensitivity Analyses of Initial Public Opposition (ICB; N=206)

| Variable                  | 64    | 66    | 70    | 74    | 77    | 81    | 84    | 87    |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Initial Public opposition | .144  | -.065 | .064  | .248  | .386  | .601* | .561  | .702* |
| Relative capabilities     | .128  | .161  | .139  | .141  | .108  | .100  | .050  | .023  |
| Contiguity                | .683* | .699* | .686* | .686* | .691* | .688* | .717* | .719* |
| Cold War                  | -.495 | -.481 | -.490 | -.511 | -.526 | -.542 | -.538 | -.548 |
| $\tau_1$                  | .574  | .591  | .576  | .575  | .544  | .536  | .489  | .464  |
| $\tau_2$                  | 1.62  | 1.64  | 1.62  | 1.63  | 1.60  | 1.59  | 1.54  | 1.52  |
| $\tau_3$                  | 2.43  | 2.45  | 2.44  | 2.44  | 2.41  | 2.40  | 2.35  | 2.33  |
| Chi-square                | 7.03  | 7.36  | 7.16  | 7.12  | 7.00  | 6.36  | 6.58  | 6.47  |

Note: \* p<.10; two-tailed tests. Initial public opposition > 92 failed to converge.



Table B.21. Sensitivity Analyses of Average Public Opposition (MID; N=212)

| Variable                  | 61     | 61.5   | 62     | 65     | 67     | 71     | 83     |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Average Public opposition | -.268  | -.415  | -.228  | -.010  | -.007  | -.007  | .009   |
| Relative capabilities     | -.343  | -.315  | -.336  | -.377  | -.378  | -.378  | -.381  |
| Contiguity                | -1.58* | -1.59* | -1.59* | -1.58* | -1.58* | -1.58* | -1.58* |
| Cold War                  | -.078  | -.070  | -.083  | -.095  | -.096  | -.096  | -.096  |
| $\tau_1$                  | -1.54  | -1.53  | -1.54  | -1.56  | -1.56  | -1.56  | -1.57  |
| $\tau_2$                  | .622   | .641   | .627   | .600   | .599   | .599   | .597   |
| $\tau_3$                  | 1.67   | 1.69   | 1.67   | 1.64   | 1.64   | 1.64   | 1.64   |
| Chi-square                | 26.81* | 23.14* | 32.40* | 35.49* | 33.91* | 35.52* | 30.66* |

Note: \* p<.10; two-tailed tests. Average public opposition > 92 failed to converge.

Table B.22. Sensitivity Analyses of Latest Public Opposition (MID; N=212)

| Variable                 | 61     | 63     | 64     | 71     | 73     | 76     | 78     |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Latest Public opposition | .157   | .258   | .323   | .035   | .055   | -.290  | .009   |
| Relative capabilities    | -.390  | -.402  | -.435  | -.385  | -.388  | -.340  | -.381  |
| Contiguity               | -1.57* | -1.56* | -1.57* | -1.58* | -1.58* | -1.59* | -1.58* |
| Cold War                 | -.095  | -.100  | -.110  | -.097  | -.100  | -.076  | -.096  |
| $\tau_1$                 | -1.56  | -1.57  | -1.60  | -1.57  | -1.57  | -1.53  | -1.57  |
| $\tau_2$                 | .604   | .597   | .563   | .594   | .591   | .631   | .597   |
| $\tau_3$                 | 1.65   | 1.64   | 1.61   | 1.64   | 1.63   | 1.68   | 1.64   |
| Chi-square               | 23.81* | 25.85* | 25.27* | 28.27* | 27.25* | 30.02* | 30.66* |

Note: \* p<.10; two-tailed tests. Latest public opposition > 92 failed to converge.

Table B.23. Sensitivity Analyses of Initial Public Opposition (MID; N=212)

| Variable                  | 61     | 64     | 66     | 69     | 70     | 71     | 76     | 78     | 87     |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Initial Public opposition | .503*  | .685*  | .357   | .405   | .435   | .302   | .346   | .219   | .248   |
| Relative capabilities     | -.526  | -.604  | -.472  | -.468  | -.465  | -.432  | -.433  | -.421  | -.424  |
| Contiguity                | -1.57* | -1.55* | -1.57* | -1.57* | -1.57* | -1.57* | -1.57* | -1.57* | -1.57* |
| Cold War                  | -.134  | -.142  | -.117  | -.113  | -.110  | -.113  | -.126  | -.114  | -.114  |
| $\tau_1$                  | -1.66  | -1.71  | -1.63  | -1.62  | -1.62  | -1.60  | -1.61  | -1.60  | -1.60  |
| $\tau_2$                  | .524   | .481   | .544   | .550   | .555   | .565   | .555   | .565   | .562   |
| $\tau_3$                  | 1.57   | 1.52   | 1.58   | 1.59   | 1.60   | 1.61   | 1.60   | 1.61   | 1.60   |
| Chi-square                | 35.81* | 39.30* | 41.50* | 36.61* | 34.08* | 38.27* | 34.72* | 39.43* | 35.58* |

Note: \* p<.10; two-tailed tests. Initial public opposition > 92 failed to converge.

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