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LEADERSHIP STYLE,
DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS,
AND FOREIGN POLICY CRISIS DECISION-MAKING

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

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* * * * *

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ABSTRACT

This project develops and tests, in the domain of foreign policy crisis decision-making, a theoretical framework that challenges the conventional assumption that all leaders will respond similarly to "pacifying" domestic constraints (e.g., checks and balances, executive accountability to the public). This framework incorporates research suggesting that leaders vary systematically in how they perceive and respond to domestic constraints: "constraint respecters" internalize constraints in their environments, while "constraint challengers" view constraints as obstacles to be overcome.

Output-related hypotheses derived from this framework are tested through a statistical analysis of 171 foreign policy crises. These findings suggest a contingent "monadic democratic peace": democracies behave quite pacifically toward all states when leaders who are most sensitive to pacifying domestic constraints are in power. As hypothesized, "dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers" holding power in both democracies and autocracies are most prone to use violence in responding to international crises, while "dispositionally pacific constraint respecters" in autocracies are somewhat less violence-prone, and "dispositionally pacific constraint respecters" in democracies are the most pacifically inclined of all combinations of leadership style and regime type.

Process-related hypotheses are tested through case studies that explore the decision-making processes employed by President Kennedy (a dispositionally pacific
constraint respecter) and President Reagan (a dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger) during four foreign policy crises. The results indicate that these different types of leaders do indeed perceive and respond to pacifying domestic constraints in systematically different ways. Specifically, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters perceive their policy options to be constrained by the preferences of key domestic actors, which they seek to accommodate. Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers view such opposition as illegitimate, misguided, and harmful to state interests, and they actively seek to circumvent such constraints.
Dedicated to Kris
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The Puzzle of Democracy and War: Monadic Theory, Dyadic Peace

Scholars and philosophers, going back to Kant (1795) have drawn a link between liberal polities and pacific foreign policy behavior. Much theorizing, then and now, has centered around the processes by which democratic norms and/or institutions may exert a constraining influence on decision-makers and promote the peaceful settlement of international disputes (e.g., Russett, 1993; Dixon, 1994). Many of these explanations have been (either explicitly or logically) monadic in form, suggesting that factors such as the public will, a separation of powers, and the presence of institutionalized opposition in democracies will inhibit attempts to use force, regardless of the regime type of the adversary. But empirical evidence appears to belie this notion: democracies only seem to be pacific in their relations with other democracies (Chan, 1984; Maoz and Abdolali, 1989; Russett, 1993).

Explanations for this dyadic democratic peace have come under fire for seeming post-hoc, or being logically monadic at their core. For instance, Layne (1994) has dismissed the institutional explanation as incapable of explaining the dyadic peace, since democratic institutions, including executive accountability to a presumably pacifically
inclined public, should logically constrain decisions for war independent of the opposing state's regime type. Other scholars persist in their conviction that democracies are demonstrably monadically pacific if one examines the appropriate dependent variable or otherwise modifies one's analytic approach (e.g., Babst, 1972; Benoit, 1996; Rummel, 1997). In short, theories suggesting that democracies should behave pacifically toward all other states are logically compelling and, although seemingly contradicted by much of the empirical evidence, retain a conspicuous following among modern scholars.

If these monadic arguments seem so logical to so many scholars, why aren't they supported by more evidence? The argument developed here is that such explanations seem compelling because they are very close to being correct, but are missing one crucial piece of the puzzle. The "missing link" between democratic constraints and pacific monadic behavior is leaders' perceptions of, and responses to, these domestic constraints.

In order to make the link between domestic constraints and policy behavior, it is generally assumed that these constraints operate similarly upon all leaders (a useful simplifying assumption for some purposes, perhaps). Leaders are simply assumed to recognize the constraints in their environments, and to behave in accordance with them—a strong structural argument (e.g., Morgan and Campbell, 1991, pp. 190-193; Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, 1992; Russett, pp. 30-40). For instance, Morgan and Campbell argue: "Leaders who have to stand for popular election should be expected to take public attitudes into account when making decisions...A leader who is answerable to some selection body will feel constrained by the desires of the members of that body" (Morgan and Campbell, p. 190). Similarly, Russett declares:
Democracies are constrained in going to war by the need to ensure broad popular support, manifested in various institutions of government. Leaders must mobilize public opinion to obtain legitimacy for their actions. Bureaucracies, the legislature, and private interest groups often incorporated into conceptualizations of the "state" must acquiesce... The complexity of the mobilization process means that leaders will not readily embark on an effort to prepare the country for war unless they are confident they can demonstrate a favorable ratio of costs to benefits to be achieved, at acceptable risk. Moreover, the complexity of the process requires time for mobilization, as the leaders of various institutions are convinced and formal approval is obtained... Leaders of nondemocracies are not constrained as leaders of democracies are, so they can more easily, rapidly, and secretly initiate large-scale violence (Russett, pp. 38, 40).

The problem with the assumption that all leaders will similarly recognize and submit to domestic constraints is twofold: 1) it contradicts much of the theory and research on political leadership and decision-making, and 2) whether or not leaders have the presumed perceptions of, and reactions to, domestic constraints is an empirical question that must be tested. Simply put, "a compelling explanation cannot treat the decider exogenously" (Hermann and Kegley, 1995, p. 514).

During the 1970s, there occurred an important shift in thinking among political scientists involved in research on decision-making—a change some have described as a major paradigm shift: the "cognitive revolution." This change emphasized the central importance of beliefs, perceptions, and other cognitive processes in explaining and predicting behavior, and revealed the dangers inherent in assuming a one-to-one correspondence between "objective" situational structures and the cognitive representations of individuals (e.g., George, 1979; Herrmann, 1988). Increasingly, the insights of the cognitive revolution are making their way into the mainstream of international relations theory, through work that emphasizes the importance of perceptions concerning other states' intentions, capabilities, and motives (e.g., Jervis.)
1976; Walt, 1987). Underlying this work is the recognition that the same objective international structure (e.g., a distribution of power that favors a potential adversary) may lead to very different state reactions, ranging from aggressive balancing behavior to no action whatsoever, depending upon decision-makers’ subjective perceptions of such factors as the aggressiveness of the potential adversary’s intentions. By and large, such refinements to structural realism and other theories have led to more determinate and better-specified theoretical frameworks. Simply put, the lesson is that decision-makers’ perceptions matter, and that often these subjective perceptions cannot be directly inferred from situational structures.

Unfortunately, these insights have not been systematically integrated into theories that seek to explain the impact of domestic political constraints. As noted, leaders are assumed to recognize and behave in accordance with these constraints in a rather uncomplicated fashion, regardless of variation in their individual leadership styles, perceptions, or motives. Indeed, many theorists explicitly postulate uniformity in perceptions across all decision-makers confronted with the same domestic structural pressures. Just as international structure-oriented theories have been made more determinate by integrating agency-based insights, so too will theories emphasizing domestic structure gain from taking decision-makers and their perceptions seriously.

Toward that end, this project integrates theory and research from political science, psychology, and management science, to produce a theoretical framework that specifies how leadership style and domestic political constraints will interact to shape the aggressiveness of leaders’ responses to international crises. This framework incorporates research suggesting that leaders vary systematically in their sensitivity to domestic
constraints: “constraint respecters” internalize constraints in their environment while “constraint challengers” view domestic constraints as obstacles to be overcome. In other words, potential constraints in any political environment must be activated by leaders’ responsiveness to them before they can influence policy behavior. This framework predicts that the combination of democratic constraints and “constraint respecting” leaders will lead to extraordinarily pacific foreign policy behavior toward all states, while other combinations of leaders and regime types will be considerably more war-prone. Process- and output-related hypotheses derived from this theoretical framework are tested using both statistical methods and case study analysis. The rest of this chapter is devoted to a general overview of the theoretical framework, hypotheses to be tested, and the quantitative and qualitative methods employed in the empirical analysis.

An Interactive Theory of Crisis Decision-Making

Regime Type and Potential Pacifying Constraints

A central argument of the framework developed here is that most domestic constraints are properly viewed as potential constraints, which, in order to influence policy behavior, must be activated through decision-makers’ recognition of, and response to, them.¹ For instance, executive accountability to an electorate that can remove one from office does not directly limit leaders’ options in a given decision-making episode. Instead, such constraints presumably have their influence as leaders anticipate the

¹ The exception is constraints that can directly prevent leaders from enacting their preferred policies (e.g., power-sharing arrangements requiring the leader to get other domestic actors’ consent before committing state resources toward a particular policy). Such constraints will inhibit the leader’s pursuit of his preferred policies regardless of whether or not he believes himself to be constrained.
political consequences of various policy decisions, or perceive normative reasons for adhering to these actors’ preferences.

At least five major categories of potential pacifying constraints have been identified in extant research: executive accountability to diverse constituencies, institutionalized extra-governmental political opposition, regularization of the executive selection process, power-sharing arrangements, and normative constraints. Chapter 2 examines the operation and presumed policy consequences of each of these categories of constraints, and considers how they vary by regime type. This analysis concludes that while leaders in both democracies and autocracies may face important decisional constraints (through their accountability to constituencies that can affect their continuation in office, and through the presence of political opposition and power-sharing arrangements), the extent to which such constraints are likely to exert a pacifying influence is a separate issue. Factors such as the diversity of the executive “selectorate,” the institutionalization of opposition, and the presence of democratic norms strongly suggest that democracies are characterized by a denser network of potential (or latent) pacifying constraints than autocracies.

This network of potential constraints, if adhered to, would exert a pacifying influence on democracies’ foreign policy behavior toward all states. Those seeking to explain the dyadic peace agree with this notion, but suggest these constraints are not adhered to when the opposing state is a non-democracy.² Research on political

² The reasoning is as follows: when a democracy confronts a non-democracy, the latter state is not presumed to share these constraints and the democracy does not want to be exploited. Yet, as critics of the democratic peace notion and advocates of the monadic peace have both pointed out, the logic by which certain (particularly institutional) constraints are assumed to lose their power is not clear. For instance, if the public is averse to war due to its costs in blood and treasure, this should be the case regardless of the
leadership suggests that there is a type of leader who virtually always adheres to such constraints, and that when such leaders are in power, democracies will be quite pacific in their behavior toward all states.

The Missing Link: Leaders' Varying Responses to Domestic Constraints

The causal logic underlying claims concerning the pacifying impact of domestic constraints relies upon the assumption that decision-makers perceive and respond to constraints in their domestic environments in a rather uncomplicated fashion (e.g., Russett, pp. 31-40). Perhaps because such an assumption is required in order to posit a direct link between domestic constraints and policy behavior, the belief that all leaders tend to respond similarly to domestic constraints has attained the status of the conventional wisdom among scholars working in this area. Theory and research on political leadership challenges this conventional wisdom.

Scholars seeking to classify leaders according to general typologies have discovered a crucial distinction. Some leaders are more dispositionally driven; their behavior is guided from within, by a set of core beliefs or goals, and tends to remain startlingly consistent across a range of situations. Other leaders are more situationally responsive, or pragmatic; their behavior is guided by the nature of the leadership context in which they find themselves at a given moment, and tends to vary dramatically.

---

regime type of the adversary.
according to the setting. The categorization of leaders as “crusaders” vs. “pragmatists” (Stoessinger, 1979) is based on this important distinction.\(^3\)

How sensitive leaders are to the political context has important implications for how they will respond to constraints in their domestic political environments. Chapter 2 draws out these implications to create a parallel leadership typology, which suggests that the “crusader” vs. “pragmatist” distinction also divides leaders into “constraint challengers” vs. “constraint respecters.”

Constraint respecters are very attuned to the preferences of key domestic actors, and perceive themselves to be constrained in their policy choices by the parameters imposed by these preferences. They seek to build consensus, avoid confrontation, and pursue participatory decision-making processes. In short, they internalize the constraints in their environment, by allowing their policy choices to be guided by the preferences of the constituencies to whom they are accountable, and by avoiding (or reversing) policies that provoke serious political opposition or are unlikely to receive support from those political actors with whom power is shared.

In contrast, constraint challengers tend to view the preferences of other domestic political actors as obstacles to be overcome in the pursuit of their own objectives. Such leaders govern according to a more directive management style, viewing others as tools to be used for the completion of the mission, rather than as actors with legitimate views that must be respected or accommodated. Therefore, such leaders seek to circumvent, crush, co-opt, or ignore potential opposition from constituencies and other governmental

---

\(^3\) Other similar typologies include: “ideologue” vs. “opportunist” (e.g., Ziller et al., 1977), “directive” vs. “consultative” (e.g., Bass and Valenzi, 1974), “task-oriented” vs. “relations-oriented” (e.g., Fiedler, 1967), and “transformational” vs. “transactional” (e.g., Burns, 1978).
actors, refusing to recognize these groups' preferences as legitimate policy constraints, even when they are backed by formal institutional checks on executive authority.  

The theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2 seeks to specify how leadership style and domestic political constraints interact to shape the aggressiveness of leaders' responses to international crises. The degree to which leaders are likely to challenge pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions is not merely a function of their orientation toward domestic constraints. For instance, a given constraint challenger might be rather dovish and refuse to use force despite domestic pressure to do so. Therefore, one additional element of leadership style must be added: leaders' "dispositional aggressiveness," based on their beliefs about the nature of world politics and the character of their adversaries.

Research on political leadership and decision-making has much to say about the leadership characteristics and beliefs that will shape one's sensitivity to domestic constraints and will predispose one to aggressive foreign policy actions. Chapter 2 draws on this research and shows that four characteristics work together to determine one's willingness to challenge pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions: task (vs. interpersonal) emphasis, need for power, distrust, and nationalism. The former two are more directly related to leaders' sensitivity to constraints, and the latter two are more closely tied to leaders' dispositional aggressiveness, but each characteristic has some influence on both dimensions. "Dispositionally aggressive constraint

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4 It is important to note that constraint challengers and respecters, as described, represent ideal types, occupying opposite ends of the dispositionally-driven vs. situationally-driven continuum. Some leaders come close to approximating these extreme portraits, but the majority of leaders fall somewhere in between these poles. Nevertheless, most leaders exhibit a tendency toward one or the other pole, and the closer a given leader is to either pole, the more confidence one may have in predicting which set of variables will play the most important role in shaping his or her decisions (dispositional versus situational variables).
challengers” are high on task emphasis and need for power, and are distrustful and nationalistic. “Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters” are interpersonally oriented, low on need for power, trusting of others, and non-nationalistic.

**Hypotheses**

This interactive theory of crisis decision-making produces a number of observable (hence, testable) implications. These hypotheses can be divided into two major categories: expectations regarding the crisis decision-making process, and expectations involving the ultimate policy output (the “crisis response”).

**Output-related Hypotheses**

The output-related expectations produced by the interactive theory of crisis decision-making concern how aggressively leaders respond to international crises. The concept “aggressiveness of the crisis response” is comprised of two related, yet distinct, elements: the degree to which violent crisis management techniques (as opposed to non-violent instruments) are relied upon, and the severity or scope of the violence employed in dealing with the crisis. These two components of the crisis response will be differentiated by the labels “centrality of violence,” and “severity of violence,” respectively. The operational definitions of these concepts will be discussed in the methods overview in this chapter (briefly) and in Chapter 3 (in greater detail). Including both dimensions of the crisis response as dependent variables in the empirical analysis
facilitates a more sophisticated and nuanced investigation of the relationships between key independent variables and specific aspects of the crisis response.5

Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers are expected to respond quite aggressively to international crises, regardless of whether they hold power in democracies or autocracies. Their dispositional aggressiveness, combined with their relative insensitivity to potential pacifying constraints, suggests that such leaders will distinguish themselves as the most violence-prone (both in terms of the centrality and the severity of violence). Their behavior should not differ markedly across regime types—potential pacifying constraints will not be recognized as such or internalized by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers.6

Due to their sensitivity to the domestic context, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters' behavior is expected to vary greatly depending on whether they hold power in democracies vs. autocracies. In democracies, where they are confronted by a dense network of potential pacifying constraints, they will perceive themselves to be powerfully constrained by political opposition, power-sharing mechanisms, public accountability, and norms of non-violence, such that they will be extremely unlikely to use force unless there is widespread domestic pressure for such a response—an inclination enhanced by their dispositional pacificity. In autocracies, however, they will perceive themselves to

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5 The centrality of violence variable yields important information about a leader's propensity to rely predominantly upon violent instruments when faced with a crisis, as opposed to using mixed (violent and nonviolent) methods, or relying solely upon negotiation, mediation, and other nonviolent techniques. Once leaders have decided to employ violent measures, the severity of violence variable indicates how far they are willing to take these techniques—do they restrict their use of violence to minor clashes so as to avoid escalation, or do they plunge into full-scale war?

6 Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies may be more likely than those in autocracies to utilize covert action and other less visible foreign policy instruments so as to avoid oversight from, or accountability to, the public and groups with whom power is shared. Overall, however, the
be powerfully constrained by the more narrow set of elite groups to whom they are accountable—groups not expected to be particularly pacific. When there is clear support among these elite constituencies for an aggressive crisis response, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters are expected to follow (while perhaps supplementing violent responses with non-violent techniques such as diplomacy, due to their dispositional reluctance to rely upon coercive instruments).

In short, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies are expected to be the most pacific of all combinations of leadership style and regime type—only here do leaders' dispositional pacificity and sensitivity to potential pacifying constraints align with a dense network of such constraints. Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will be found at the opposite end of the spectrum, employing very violent crisis responses independent of regime type. Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies will clearly not behave as pacifically as their counterparts in democracies, but due to their dispositional inclinations are unlikely to reach the levels of aggressiveness exhibited by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers—this category represents a moderate group that may tend toward the violent end of the spectrum but in general should fall between the two extremes typified by the other categories of leaders. These expectations are summarized in the following hypotheses. Note that the fundamental contrast between dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies, on the one hand, and all other combinations of leadership style and regime type, on the other, serves as the centerpiece of these hypotheses. Also note that H1

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influence of regime type on the aggressiveness of such leaders' foreign policy behavior is not expected to be substantial.

12
through H4 are identical to H5 through H8, except for the dependent variable (centrality vs. severity of violence).

The Centrality of Violence

H1: Within democracies, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will use violence as a more central crisis management technique than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters.

H2: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies will use violence as a more central crisis management technique than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies.

H3: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies will use violence as a more central crisis management technique than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies.

H4: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies and autocracies will not differ in the centrality of violence employed in dealing with crises.

The Severity of Violence

H5: Within democracies, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will use more severe forms of violence in dealing with crises than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters.

H6: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies will use more severe forms of violence in dealing with crises than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies.
H7: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies will use more severe forms of violence in dealing with crises than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies.

H8: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies and autocracies will not differ in the severity of violence employed in dealing with crises.

Figure 1.1 provides a visual representation of the expected differences in crisis response aggressiveness as leadership style and regime type vary.

Process-related Hypotheses

This interactive theory of crisis decision-making does not simply point us toward specific policy outputs; it also has much to say about the decision-making processes underlying these outputs. These expectations are presented below. The theoretical rationale behind each process-related hypothesis is discussed in Chapter 2.  

Process-Related Hypotheses For Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters

HR1: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will search for information about the views of key domestic actors concerning responses to the crisis situation, unless the leader perceives that these views have already been effectively communicated to him/her.

HR2: Where the leader discerns clear consensus among domestic political actors in favor of (or against) a particular foreign policy approach or action, dispositionally pacific

Note that for each category of leader, Hypotheses H1-H3 are derived from the leader’s presumed orientation toward constraints, while H4-H7 are expected consequences of the leader’s dispositional aggressiveness/pacificity.
constraint respecters (a) will perceive themselves to be constrained to act according to this consensus, and (b) will choose the consensus approach.

HR3: Where the leader discerns no clear consensus among these actors regarding the appropriate policy approach or action, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters (a) will perceive that this lack of consensus prevents them from making a decisive policy choice that largely favors the preferences of one set of actors over another, and (b) will either seek to identify and implement a compromise among the competing viewpoints that satisfies the minimal aspirations of key domestic actors (deferring action where no such compromise appears viable), or “table” the issue outright, putting off any decision until an acceptable compromise approach clearly emerges.8

HR4: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will view the other party to the crisis not as having unalterably malevolent intentions and implacable hostility towards the leader’s state, but as a potential negotiating partner with legitimate interests and concerns that might be accommodated.

HR5: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will view the use of force as a last resort, and b) will therefore seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques.

HR6: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and b)

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8 Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters may pursue foreign policy actions that do not conform to the above patterns (e.g., actions that do not represent a consensus or compromise approach) if either a) an extreme threat is perceived to the state’s vital interests, which the leader believes cannot be dealt with using any means other than the chosen response, or b) domestic political actors favor violent responses which the leader wishes to temporarily delay or supplement with non-violent methods.
will therefore devote considerable effort to insuring that violent responses are accompanied by non-violent actions.

**HR7: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will doubt the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis.**

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*Process-Related Hypotheses For Dispositionally Aggressive Constraint Challengers*

**HC1:** Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will *not* engage in an extensive search for information concerning the preferences of key domestic actors.

**HC2:** Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) *will not* perceive themselves to be constrained to pursue policies consistent with the preferences of key domestic actors, and b) will instead decide which policy actions to pursue based on their own conception of state goals and their own beliefs about how best to achieve these goals in the present situation.⁹

**HC3:** Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will rather quickly reach closure on a definition of the crisis situation and a preferred set of policy responses.

**HC4:** Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will view the other party to the crisis as having malevolent intentions and implacable hostility towards the leader's state.

**HC5:** Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will *NOT* view the use of force as a last resort, and b) therefore will *NOT* seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques.

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⁹ Unless the leader perceives that his/her preferred policies will provoke opposition from key domestic groups to such a degree that the leader's future effectiveness or continuation in office will be seriously jeopardized by the pursuit of such policies.
HC6: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will NOT perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and b) will therefore NOT devote great effort to accompanying violent responses with non-violent actions.

HC7: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will have confidence in the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis.

Methods

Overview

The output-related hypotheses will be tested through a statistical analysis of 171 foreign policy crises, involving 39 heads of state drawn from a wide variety of cultures, regions, ideologies, and political systems. The process-related hypotheses will be tested in a series of case studies involving President Kennedy (a dispositionally pacific constraint respecter) and President Reagan (a dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger). These methods are meant to complement each other: statistical analysis will reveal general patterns of crisis responses, and a qualitative assessment of the decision-making process in specific cases will provide insight into the causal mechanisms underlying these observed patterns. While methodological issues—ranging from the operationalization of key variables to epistemological concerns involving the identification of "crises" and the severity of crisis triggers—are covered in depth in Chapter 3, a brief overview of the methods utilized in the quantitative and qualitative analysis is presented here.
Statistical Analysis

The unit of analysis for the statistical tests is the foreign policy crisis, defined as a situation in which “three conditions, deriving from a change in a state’s external or internal environment, are perceived by the highest-level decision-makers of the state: (a) a threat to basic values, (b) an awareness of finite time for response to the external threat to basic values, and (c) a high probability of involvement in military hostilities” (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1998). Based on this definition, an initial list of crises was compiled using the New York Times and Keesing’s Contemporary Archives; through consultation with area specialists in Israel, Canada, and the United States, this list was refined (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, pp. 40-41). These crises were then examined in depth and coded by graduate students (in consultation with area specialists) for a range of variables, through the use of sources including newspapers, scholarly articles, historical accounts, memoirs, and official documents (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, pp. 58-59, 62).

The Crisis Response

The dependent variables tap two related, yet distinct aspects of the crisis response.¹⁰ Centrality of violence involves the relative importance of violent methods in the context of all the crisis management techniques employed by the leader’s state during the crisis. Possible values on this variable, as coded by Brecher and Wilkenfeld (1998), range from (1) violence not being used at all, to (2) violence being used, but playing a

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¹⁰ Obviously, “no violence” on the centrality dimension will mean “no violence” on the severity dimension. However, once violence is employed, these dimensions may diverge sharply. An examination of both dependent variables is intended to provide a more nuanced picture of the crisis response tendencies and thresholds exhibited by various types of leaders in autocracies and democracies.
minor role relative to other, non-violent crisis management techniques, to (3) violence playing an important role, yet still supplemented by non-violent methods, to (4) violence serving as the preeminent crisis management technique. Violence severity isolates violence from other techniques and focuses on the intensity of the violence employed. This variable is also measured according to an ordinal scale: (1) no violence, (2) minor clashes, (3) serious clashes, and (4) full-scale war (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1998).

**Leadership Style**

In order to assess leaders' levels of distrust, nationalism, need for power, and task/interpersonal emphasis, this project employs the trait assessment system developed by M. Hermann (1987a, 1987b). This technique utilizes content analysis of spontaneous verbal material (press conference answers and interview responses) to develop scores for each characteristic. Using this system, Hermann developed scores on eight characteristics for 69 heads of state; these data are used in this project. Leaders' scores on each of the four relevant characteristics were standardized, then combined to create a single index of leaders' willingness to challenge pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions. Within each geographical region, leaders were split into three equal groups based on their position along this dimension (dispositionally pacific constraint respecters, moderates, and dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers).

\[11\] Only 39 of 69 leaders are represented in the empirical analysis, since many leaders did not experience foreign policy crises, and a few leaders held power in states that could not be classified as either democracies or autocracies (regimes some have called "anocracies").
Regime Type

Key domestic structural characteristics of each state during each foreign policy crisis were assessed using Jaggers and Gurr's (1996) Polity III data set. Polity III's creators\textsuperscript{12} utilized a variety of historical and contemporary source materials to develop annual data (1800-1994) on authority characteristics and regime type, for all independent states with populations of greater than 500,000 in the early 1990s. For each state experiencing a foreign policy crisis, its summary autocracy score was subtracted from its summary democracy score, yielding a scale ranging from -10 (strong autocracy) to 10 (strong democracy).\textsuperscript{13} Most scores clustered around the two ends of this continuum, allowing clear differentiation between autocratic and democratic systems.

The Nature of the Crisis Trigger

In order to control for the potentially confounding effects of situational provocation, the nature of the event that triggered each crisis will be included as a control variable. The trigger, or precipitating cause, of a foreign policy crisis is defined as “the specific act, event or situational change which leads decision-makers to perceive [the three conditions indicating a crisis: a threat to basic values, finite time to respond, and a high probability of involvement in military hostilities]” (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1998). This project separates crisis triggers into two categories: non-violent and violent triggers.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} Erika Gurr, Mark Lichbach, Keith Jaggers, and Ted Robert Gurr.

\textsuperscript{13} The annual summary autocracy and democracy scores measure “institutionalized democracy,” and are comprised of the following indicators: competitiveness of political participation, regulation of political participation, competitiveness of executive recruitment, openness of executive recruitment, and constraints on chief executive (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995, p. 472).

\textsuperscript{14} Brecher and Wilkenfeld array crisis triggers along a loosely ordinal scale from verbal acts (1), political
Statistical Techniques

In order to test output-related Hypotheses H1 through H8, it is necessary to determine whether significant differences exist in the crisis responses of different types of leaders in democracies vs. autocracies. Contingency table analysis (employing Tau-c\(^{15}\)) is the appropriate technique for this purpose. Ordered probit analysis will also be utilized in order to control for the effects of a wider variety of variables than could be included in the contingency table analysis (e.g., the power discrepancy between the crisis adversaries, the nature of the perceived threat to basic values). Furthermore, ordered probit will be used to test for the presence of significant interactions among variables in the model (e.g., leadership style and regime type).

Case Studies

Qualitative methods will be employed to trace the causal processes underlying decision-making in key crises, allowing hypothesis testing concerning the proposed causal mechanisms, and hypothesis generation concerning the role of underestimated, omitted, or misspecified variables and relationships. Based on criteria detailed in Chapter 3, four cases were selected, involving two different types of leaders in democratic systems: President John F. Kennedy (a dispositionally pacific constraint respecter) and President Ronald Reagan (a dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger). Foreign acts (2) and economic acts (3) through non-violent military acts (7), indirect violent acts (8), and violent acts (9). Splitting triggers into violent and non-violent triggers combines categories 8 and 9 (violent) and categories 1-5, plus 7 (non-violent). Crisis triggers assigned #6 are "internal verbal or physical challenges to the regime or elite" (ranging from strikes and demonstrations to assassinations and coups) and therefore cannot be directly classified as either non-violent or violent triggers.

\(^{15}\) Tau-c is used because the independent and dependent variables are ordinal-level variables, and because the number of rows and columns in the relevant contingency tables is not equal.
policy crises involving Laos (1961) and Vietnam (1961) were selected for Kennedy; crises involving Grenada (1983) and Libya (1986) were selected for Reagan.

Archival research, memoirs, and secondary source materials will be utilized in the case studies. Cases will be examined in parallel fashion, according to George's (1979) method of structured, focused comparison: the same set of questions will be asked concerning each case, in order to maintain parallel structure and to preserve the reliability of the measurement strategies. A sample of these questions is as follows:

**Perceived Constraints**

Is there evidence that the leader perceives himself to be constrained by the preferences of key domestic actors, by institutional checks on authority, or by normative guidelines for dealing with disputes? Or are such potential constraints either ignored altogether, or seen as illegitimate and national interest-threatening obstacles to be overcome?

**Strategies For Dealing With Opposition**

Is there anticipated or actual domestic or international opposition to the leader's preferred response(s)? If so, how does the leader deal with this opposition?

**Generation of Response Options**

What types of response options are considered by the leader? Do these emerge from the leader's own belief system, from the preferences of other actors, or some combination of these sources? What is the relationship between violent and non-violent instruments, in the leader's mind (e.g., must violent responses be preceded or accompanied by non-violent techniques?) Which options are either implicitly or explicitly rejected, and why?
Hypothesis Generation Questions

In general, what else is going on in this case? Do certain variables appear to be having an important impact on decision-making, despite expectations that they would be relatively unimportant? Are any of the expected causal arrows reversed or absent? Are the expectations simply wrong, or are there extraordinary circumstances in this case that lead to the conclusion that the general “rule” still holds, though its scope conditions must be further circumscribed?

Overview of the Dissertation Structure

The remaining chapters are organized as follows. Chapter 2 draws on theory and research from political science, psychology, and management science to develop an interactive theory of crisis decision-making. Process- and output-related hypotheses are then derived from this framework. Chapter 3 focuses on the quantitative and qualitative analytic techniques that will be used in the empirical tests of the hypotheses, and addresses important methodological and epistemological issues. Chapter 4 presents the results of the statistical analysis of 171 foreign policy crises, and assesses the degree to which each of the output-related hypotheses is supported by the evidence. Chapters 5 and 6 present the results of the case studies involving Presidents Kennedy and Reagan, respectively. These chapters include not only an evaluation of the process-related hypotheses for each type of leader, but also the identification of new hypotheses that have emerged from the case study analysis. Chapter 7 reviews the major empirical findings, draws conclusions concerning the theoretical implications of these results, and identifies crucial avenues for further research.
## CENTRALITY/SEVERITY OF VIOLENCE

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Figure 1.1: Expected differences in crisis response aggressiveness, by leadership style and regime type.
CHAPTER 2
AN INTERACTIVE THEORY OF CRISIS DECISION-MAKING

As discussed in Chapter 1, the gap between theory and evidence regarding democracy and war presents an important puzzle for scholars of international relations. While a significant body of theory suggests democracies should be monadically pacific, empirical evidence indicates they are only pacific in their relations with other democracies. The theoretical framework that will be developed in this chapter produces a novel solution to this puzzle, by integrating extant work on domestic constraints with research on political leadership and decision-making. This theoretical synthesis challenges the conventional wisdom that all leaders respond similarly to domestic constraints (a strong structural argument). Instead, it suggests that a) leaders vary systematically in how they perceive and respond to domestic constraints, and b) potential constraints in any political environment must be activated by decision-makers' responsiveness to them, before they can influence policy behavior. Consequently, the "missing link" between democratic constraints and pacific monadic behavior is leaders' perceptions of, and responses to, these constraints. Furthermore, this framework suggests that for certain leaders (those less sensitive to domestic constraints), domestic structure/regime type plays a minimal role in shaping their behavior—such leaders will
tend to respond similarly to foreign policy crises regardless of whether they hold power
in democracies or autocracies.

This chapter is organized as follows. First, an analysis of the theoretical links
between domestic constraints and war-proneness reveals that democracies are
categorized by a denser network of potential pacifying constraints than non-democratic
states. Second, these arguments are integrated with theory and research on political
leadership and decision-making to produce a theoretical framework suggesting how
different types of leaders will perceive and respond to domestic constraints in
democracies and non-democracies, in the domain of crisis decision-making. Finally,
output-related hypotheses (focusing on how aggressively leaders respond to foreign
policy crises) and process-related hypotheses (emphasizing the perceptions of, and
decision-making processes employed by, different types of leaders during such crises) are
derived from this framework and are formally stated to conclude the chapter.

Regime Type and Potential Pacifying Constraints

Extant research identifies several varieties of domestic political constraints that
presumably exert a pacifying influence on decision-makers. These range from power-
sharing institutional arrangements (Russett, 1993) to the presence of institutionalized
opposition (Morgan and Campbell, 1991) to norms of non-violent dispute resolution
(Dixon, 1994). A careful analysis of the assumed causal mechanisms underlying such
constraints suggests that most of these constraints are appropriately viewed as potential
constraints vis-à-vis the immediate decision-making process. For instance, executive
accountability to an electorate that can remove one from office does not directly limit
leaders' options in a given decision-making episode. Instead, such constraints presumably have their influence as leaders anticipate the political consequences of various policy decisions, or perceive normative reasons for adhering to these actors' preferences.

Certain direct constraints do exist (for instance, power-sharing arrangements requiring the leader to get other domestic actors' consent before committing state resources toward a particular policy). Such constraints have the ability to inhibit leaders' pursuit of their preferred policies regardless of whether or not they believe themselves to be constrained. However, such direct constraints are the exception, as the following analysis will reveal. Most constraints are either open to multiple interpretations or can be overcome in the short term (though the longer-term political or personal consequences may be very serious).

A few examples from the American system will serve to illustrate these points more fully. Constraints on the war-making powers of the executive in the United States are notoriously ambiguous and porous. Constitutional murkiness regarding the appropriate roles of the President vs. Congress in the domain of foreign policy generally, and war powers in particular, has been described as an "invitation to struggle" (Corwin, 1957). Invested with the power to declare war, Congress can claim to have some legitimate authority over decisions to use force, but as struggles surrounding the validity of, and adherence to, the War Powers Resolution have made clear, Presidents have repeatedly claimed for themselves the authority to initiate military action, and they have generally been successful in doing so without Congressional support. Congress could certainly cut off funds for operations they have not authorized, and could even impeach
the President ("direct constraints"), but these are retrospective rather than anticipatory sanctions, and their deterrent value is limited by the fact that Congress has traditionally declined to directly challenge the President in this way. The constraining power of executive accountability to the public, as noted above, is likewise ambiguous, particularly given the relative freedom allowed at certain periods within the election cycle and the well-known "rally around the flag" effect. Normative constraints are the least direct type of constraint: their influence is commensurate with the degree to which decision-makers accept and apply these norms, and by definition they cannot be imposed upon decision-makers from external sources.

This all means that there is a considerable gap between de jure and de facto constraints on the executive in the American system. Potential constraints are myriad, and for leaders who are hypersensitive to them for normative or practical reasons, they may be viewed as frustratingly insurmountable. But direct constraints are strikingly absent, and for those who are inclined to accept political risks and are prepared to subordinate public approval, congressional support, constitutional safeguards, or democratic norms to other objectives, these constraints have proven surprisingly ephemeral. The crucial point is that the dense network of potential constraints in the American system (and in democracies more generally—as will be shown momentarily) have adequate constitutional and normative weight to be viewed as highly constraining. But they also are porous and ambiguous enough to be regarded as insubstantial or even illegitimate, particularly in the context of crisis decision-making: what one leader views as legitimate Congressional or public opposition that deserves to be accommodated may be seen by another as activity that is misguided, harmful to state interests, or even
treasonous. Which interpretation of these potential constraints is embraced by any leader in a given situation cannot be deduced from the nature of the constraints themselves, just as leaders' perceptions of threat cannot be deduced solely from the distribution of power in the international system. In order to determine how these potential constraints will be viewed and incorporated into the policymaking process, one must know something about the decision-makers themselves—a point that will be fully elaborated in the next section.

It is important to recognize that leaders in both democracies and autocracies may face important decisional constraints (Maoz and Abdolali, 1989; Morgan and Campbell, 1991; Hagan, 1994). It would therefore be misleading to suggest that democratic leaders are surrounded by an impenetrable web of domestic constraints, while autocratic leaders are free to behave as they wish. However, an analysis of the types of constraints that generally exist in democracies vs. autocracies, with an eye toward whether these constraints truly exert a pacifying pressure, strongly suggests that democracies are characterized by a denser network of potential (or latent) pacifying constraints than autocracies.

One type of constraint involves the diversity of the groups to which a leader is accountable (Morgan and Campbell, 1991; Russett, 1993; Rummel, 1997). The more broad-based the electorate (or "selectorate," in autocratic systems) that selects the leader, the greater opportunity there is for groups with diffuse interests and concerns to have some ability to affect the continuation of the leader in office. Accountability to a diverse electorate/selectorate with conflicting interests presumably encourages moderation among leaders contemplating war, both because there is unlikely to be a unified constituent push for bellicose actions, and because some of these groups must ultimately
bear the costs of military action in blood and treasure.\(^1\) This is in fact Kant's argument: "If the consent of the citizens is required in order to decide that war should be declared... nothing is more natural than that they would be very cautious in commencing such a poor game, decreeing for themselves all the calamities of war" (Kant, [1795] 1957, p. 12). The executive selection procedures in democracies generally make leaders accountable to a much broader range of constituencies and interests (including the general public) than are represented within the more narrow elite "selectorates" responsible for choosing autocratic leaders.

A second type of domestic constraint involves organized political opposition arising from groups outside of the ruling group or regime (Kilgour, 1991; Morgan and Campbell, 1991). When political opposition is highly institutionalized, well-organized and protected by law (e.g., the permanent political parties, interest groups, and movements characteristic of democracies), these opposition forces serve as well-prepared, equipped and motivated critics of the ruling group's policies. In such a situation, the leader can anticipate vocal opposition to decisions for war that do not enjoy the support of a wide range of constituencies. However, when political opposition is actively suppressed by the ruling group, the leader is clearly less constrained by anticipated or actual opposition activity.

A third source of domestic constraint concerns the degree to which the executive selection process is well-established, or regularized (Morgan and Campbell, 1991). If a

\(^1\) The argument that accountability to diverse constituencies increases moderation is consistent with research on accountability in psychology (e.g., Lemer and Tetlock, 1999), which has shown that accountability to multiple audiences with diverse views increases integrative complexity, a change that has been linked to a more complete survey of alternatives short of war, leading to less aggressive foreign policy behavior (e.g., Driver and Streufert, 1969; Driver, 1977).
leader must stand for regular election by the public or owes his/her position to the
consent of a specific elite group (e.g., a junta or party committee), then the leader is
presumably more constrained than if his or her position is based upon some unalterable
attribute, such as heredity. That is, a leader who is subject to an institutionalized
mechanism for executive selection must be concerned about the views and preferences of
someone other than himself/herself when contemplating decisions for war; a leader ruling
by divine right is less constrained.

The executive selection process may be regularized in both autocracies and
democracies, presumably leading to the perception by leaders that they are constrained by
an electorate/selectorate that can remove them through established procedures; however,
exceptions (such as selection by birthright or seizure of power) will occur in autocratic
states. Furthermore, the mere fact that one is accountable to some body or set of
constituents may be less important in explaining war-proneness than the diversity and
distribution of the interests and preferences reflected in that selection body (criteria
which, as already discussed, tilt the preponderance of constraints toward democratic
systems).

A fourth type of constraint that should affect decisions for war involves power
sharing: how many different actors, or institutions, within the state must agree in order to
commit state resources? The greater the number of groups or institutions that must
approve a decision for war, or have some authority to reverse such a decision, the more
constrained the leader is assumed to be (Morgan and Campbell, 1991; Maoz and Russett,
1993; Russett, 1993). The argument here is that when the leader favors military action,
the need to enlist the support of other actors or institutions allows less bellicose groups to
stop, stall, or moderate the leader's plans. If the leader does not favor war, calls for aggressive action by other governmental entities will likewise meet with opposition. At a minimum, decisions for war are presumed to be slowed by such institutional arrangements, allowing more time for negotiation and the reduction of tensions.

Constraints involving power-sharing may occur in both autocracies and democracies. Certain autocratic institutional arrangements, involving a politburo, a revolutionary council, or a coalition of autonomous actors may require consensual decision-making comparable to that associated with cabinet government in parliamentary systems. However, dispersal of formal decision-making authority across two or more independent institutions (e.g., the executive and the legislature) will tend to be found in democracies, while extreme concentrations of executive, legislative, and judicial authority (e.g., in the hands of one person, or a small group) will occur in autocratic states. Moreover, just as the extent to which executive accountability is pacifying depends on the diversity and interests of the groups to whom one is accountable, whether or not power-sharing constraints are pacifying in any particular instance depends upon the preferences and orientations of the multiple actors/institutions that the executive must "get on board" in order to commit state resources. For instance, in "cartelized systems," (see Snyder, 1991), multiple actors share the power to decide for war (indicating a high level of constraint on any single actor), but due to the parochial interests of these groups in war and expansion, the resulting, "logrolled" policy outcome is far more provocative, overreaching, and costly than any single group would have preferred. In autocratic systems, leaders must often share power with the military, the secret police, and other groups who are not presumed to be particularly pacific in terms of their interests or
preferred tactics. In democratic systems, because presidents must share power with a popularly elected legislature, and prime ministers share power with cabinet members representing the majority of a popularly elected assembly, individual constraints involving the diversity of the executive “selectorate,” political opposition, and power-sharing tend to merge into a reinforced network of interlocking constraints.

Each of the four types of constraints considered above is of the institutional variety: they involve specific institutional arrangements governing executive selection, the expression of opposition, or the diffusion of war-making authority. A separate category of constraints is normative in nature, arising from the prevailing (generally unwritten) rules, practices and values within a society regarding how conflicts should be resolved and opposition dealt with. When a society values compromise, negotiation, and non-violent methods of conflict resolution within its borders and eschews the heavy-handed, forceful imposition of one domestic group’s will upon others, these same norms are believed to govern that society’s interactions with other states, especially when those other states embrace similar normative codes (e.g., Kant, 1795; Doyle, 1986; Russett, 1993).

Such normative constraints are by definition more prevalent in democratic systems. Respect for the rule of law and basic human rights, an emphasis on the non-violent resolution of disputes and a belief in the virtue of bargaining, compromise and negotiation are clearly associated with, if not the exclusive preserve of, democratic societies. Indeed, much of the work on the democratic peace assumes that democratic norms are clearly of a different character than those prevailing within autocratic systems,
and deserve some or all of the credit for the absence of war among democracies (e.g., Doyle, 1986; Maoz and Russett, 1993; Dixon, 1994).

To summarize, it is clear that domestic constraints can affect leaders in both democracies and autocracies, through their accountability to constituencies that can affect their continuation in office, and through the presence of political opposition and power-sharing arrangements. However, it is also clear that the constraints in democratic systems should be expected to exercise a more consistent pacifying influence, due to the diversity of the executive “selectorate,” the institutionalization of opposition, the presence of democratic norms, and the reinforcing and interlocking character of these constraints.

The crucial conclusion to be drawn is that the processes and structures discussed above create a dense network of potential constraints in democracies which, if adhered to, would exert a pacifying influence on foreign policy behavior toward all states. Those seeking to explain the dyadic peace agree with this notion, but suggest these constraints are not adhered to when the opposing state is a non-democracy.\(^2\) Research on political leadership suggests that there is a type of leader who virtually always adheres to such constraints, and that when such leaders are in power, democracies will be quite pacific in their behavior toward all states.

\(^2\) The reasoning is as follows: when a democracy confronts a non-democracy, the latter state is not presumed to share these constraints and the democracy does not want to be exploited (see Russett, pp. 30-40). Yet, as critics of the democratic peace notion and advocates of the monadic peace have both pointed out, the logic by which certain (particularly institutional) constraints are assumed to lose their power is not clear. For instance, if the public is averse to war due to its costs in blood and treasure, this should be the case regardless of the regime type of the adversary.
The “Missing Link”: Leaders’ Varying Responses to Potential Pacifying Constraints

As previously noted, the causal logic underpinning arguments concerning most of the above constraints’ policy impact relies on the assumption that decision-makers simply recognize these constraints and behave in accordance with them. Indeed, in order to make a direct link between domestic structure and policy behavior (as many theorists seek to do), such an assumption is required. Unfortunately, theory and research on political leadership and decision-making cast serious doubt on this assumption. Furthermore, whether or not leaders have the presumed perceptions of, and responses to, domestic constraints is an empirical question that must be tested. The theoretical contradiction is resolved by the integrative framework developed in this chapter. The empirical void is addressed by a series of quantitative (Chapter 4) and qualitative (Chapters 5 and 6) analyses of hypotheses derived from this framework.

In contrast to the conventional wisdom that all leaders respond similarly to constraints in their environment, theory and research on political leadership and decision-making strongly suggest that leaders vary systematically in how they perceive, and respond to, domestic constraints. Specifically, this body of work anticipates considerable variation in the degree to which leaders will challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions: some leaders will adhere closely to potential pacifying constraints, perceiving themselves to be powerfully constrained to behave non-violently, while others will assertively seek to circumvent such constraints, viewing them as obstacles that must be surmounted in order to pursue the forceful policies that the leader views as appropriate. Furthermore, this research has identified
those underlying leadership characteristics, perceptions, and beliefs that shape leaders' responses to potential pacifying constraints. These characteristics fall into two major categories: 1) leaders' sensitivity to the domestic political context, and 2) leaders' "dispositional aggressiveness."³

Leaders' Sensitivity to the Domestic Political Context

Scholars who have attempted to classify leaders according to general typologies have repeatedly identified a key distinction. Some leaders are more dispositionally driven; their behavior is guided from within, by a set of core beliefs or goals, and tends to remain startlingly consistent across a range of situations. Other leaders are more situationally responsive, or pragmatic; their behavior is guided by the nature of the leadership context in which they find themselves at a given moment, and tends to vary dramatically according to the setting.⁴ This crucial distinction has given rise to such leadership typologies as "crusader" vs. "pragmatist" (e.g., Stoessinger, 1979), "ideologue" vs. "opportunist" (e.g., Ziller et al., 1977), "directive" vs. "consultative" (e.g., Bass and Valenzi, 1974), "task-oriented" vs. "relations-oriented" (e.g., Fiedler, 1967), and "transformational" vs. "transactional" (e.g., Burns, 1978).

³ As noted later in this chapter, these two categories are not as neatly separable as the posited dichotomy indicates (e.g., one's dispositional aggressiveness will tend to shape one's sensitivity to the political context, and vice versa).

⁴ One psychological explanation for why some individuals are more dispositionally driven while others are more situationally responsive involves the source from which they draw their "validation": dispositionally driven individuals receive their validation internally, through their adherence to a set of beliefs or principles, while situationally driven individuals seek external validation by pursuing actions and articulating positions that are favored by others whose esteem is valued.

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How sensitive leaders are to the political context has important implications for how they will respond to constraints in their domestic political environments. The more situationally responsive, pragmatic leaders are very attuned to the views and preferences of their constituencies and other domestic political actors; they construct advisory networks that will provide them with detailed information concerning the political landscape, and are more flexible and sensitive to these situational cues. Such leaders generally seek to build consensus, avoid confrontation, and pursue participatory decision-making processes. In short, they internalize the constraints in their environment, by allowing their policy choices to be guided by the views and preferences of the constituencies to whom they are accountable, and by avoiding (or reversing) policies that provoke serious political opposition or are unlikely to receive support from those political actors with whom power is shared.

In contrast, the less sensitive, dispositionally driven leaders tend to view the preferences of other domestic political actors as obstacles to be overcome in the pursuit of their own objectives. They seek out advisors with similar views, and selectively perceive information from the environment, through the lens of their own attitudes, beliefs, and motives. Such leaders govern according to a more directive management style, viewing others as tools to be used for the completion of the mission, rather than as actors with legitimate views that must be respected or accommodated. Therefore, such

5 It is also likely that normative and institutional constraints at the international level, such as international norms and law, international institutions, and the views and preferences of other states' leaders, are accorded much more weight in decision-making by pragmatic, situationally sensitive leaders than their more dispositionally driven counterparts. Some evidence supports this proposition: in previous research, the author has found that leaders' task vs. interpersonal orientation (one of the variables used to measure leaders' sensitivity to context) is strongly related to the degree to which their states pursue unilateral vs. multilateral foreign policies.
leaders seek to circumvent, crush, co-opt, or ignore potential opposition from constituencies and other governmental actors, refusing to recognize these groups’ preferences as legitimate policy constraints, even when they are backed by formal institutional checks on executive authority. Based on their divergent orientations towards domestic political constraints, these two categories of leaders will be referred to as “constraint respecters” and “constraint challengers,” respectively.

It is important to note that constraint challengers and respecters, as described, represent ideal types, occupying opposite ends of the dispositionally-driven vs. situationally-driven continuum. Some leaders come close to approximating these extreme portraits, but the majority of leaders fall somewhere in between these poles. Nevertheless, most leaders exhibit a tendency toward one or the other pole, and the closer a given leader is to either pole, the more confidence one may have in predicting which set of variables will play the most important role in shaping his or her decisions (dispositional versus situational variables).

Two characteristics identified in extant research play a central role in determining whether a given leader will be a constraint challenger or a constraint respecter: leaders’ task (versus interpersonal) orientation, and need for power. Constraint challengers are task-oriented and high on need for power; constraint respecters are interpersonally-oriented and low on need for power.
**Task Versus Interpersonal Orientation**

Task versus interpersonal orientation refers to the extent to which, in one's dealings with others, one is relatively more concerned with getting the task accomplished, versus attending to the feelings and needs of others. A large body of work, spanning the fields of political science, psychology, and management science, focuses on the measurement, conceptualization, and behavioral consequences of the task versus interpersonal distinction among leaders.

Bales (1950) has shown that different leaders often emerge within groups to perform separate functions (task-related functions versus affect-focused, or "group maintenance" activities). The behavior of task leaders primarily falls into such interaction categories as presenting suggestions and opinions, while affect leaders concentrate on showing solidarity, agreement, and tension release.

Byars (1972, 1973) applies Balesian small group theory to the study of political leadership orientations on the macro or societal level. He contends that developing societies require leaders who balance the "task" and "affective" (interpersonal) leadership orientations in order most effectively to achieve their economic development goals. Task oriented leaders focus intensively on economic development, while affect oriented leaders seek to perform socioemotional or expressive-integrative functions to overcome the hostilities and antagonisms presumably produced by development activities and the consequent erosion both of traditional norms and of the legitimacy of the political leadership. Occasionally one leader can serve both functions by simultaneously having

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* Other personal characteristics, such as self-monitoring and cognitive complexity, have also been singled out as important determinants of whether individuals are more dispositionally or situationally driven.

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high task and affect orientations; more often, different leaders must fulfill the task-related and affect-based needs of society.

Fiedler's (1967) contingency model of leadership features an assessment device called the Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) Scale, which illustrates in stark terms the different views held by task- and relationship-motivated people concerning others in their environment. Task-motivated individuals tend to estimate the value of others, even outside of the work environment, in terms of their contribution to the accomplishment of the work-related task (the co-worker with whom they can work least well is considered to be unpleasant, quarrelsome, etc., as a person). In contrast, relationship-motivated individuals estimate others' worth according to their intrinsic value as relational beings (work is not all-important and even co-workers with whom they have trouble working are believed to have positive qualities on a personal basis).

Throughout the management science literature, the task vs. interpersonal distinction is repeatedly linked to autocratic vs. democratic decision processes, respectively (McGregor, 1960; Likert, 1967; Hersey and Blanchard, 1982). Task oriented leaders tend to pursue their management duties in a more directive, dictatorial fashion (challenging constraints) while relations oriented leaders favor a more democratic or participatory managerial process (internalizing constraints). For instance, Blake and Mouton's (1964) Grid Theory sets forth the implications for effective leadership of varying combinations of concern for people and concern for production. Leaders with a

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7 Labeling task oriented leaders as autocrats and relations oriented leaders as democrats has some descriptive accuracy with regard to decision or management processes, but also has unfortunate normative connotations which are not intended. In many situations, task oriented leadership may lead to tremendous accomplishments and decisive action, while relations oriented leadership may be associated with stagnation or paralysis.

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maximum concern for production and a minimum concern for people are expected to
display an "authority-obedience" management style: the leader dictates orders to
subordinates and expects unconditional compliance; disagreement is equated with
insubordination and is suppressed (Blake and Mouton, pp. 18-56). In contrast, those with
a minimum concern for production and a maximum concern for people will pursue a
"country club" management style: the leader encourages an open exchange of views in a
non-confrontational environment, and rejects the hierarchical establishment and
imposition of objectives in favor of the collaborative creation of general goals based on
consensus (Blake and Mouton, pp. 57-84).8

Need for Power

In addition to task/interpersonal orientation, a second characteristic shapes
leaders' willingness to challenge or respect political constraints in their environment: the
degree to which they are motivated by the need for power. Need for power involves the
desire to influence, control, or dominate other people and groups (Winter, 1973;
McClelland, 1975). Research on the power motive has identified several key behavioral
consequences of the need for power, both among leaders and the general population.
Most importantly for the purposes of this project, the power motive has been found to be
associated with strong in-group attachments and out-group hostility, a tendency to use

8 "...Points of similarity and agreement are brought to the fore under an atmosphere of sweetness and light. Issues which are likely to provoke real disagreement and break up the group are tabled and eventually buried. Decisions are made by the group in most instances, particularly those which are of significance and where the benefit of group support is important" (Blake and Mouton, p. 64).
Leaders who are high in need for power generally seek to create harmony and conform to normative guidelines among an inner group that constitutes their power base (an essential requirement for maintaining power in most contexts), while simultaneously directing the group’s hostility toward actors outside of this core group. “Thus Power seems to facilitate the fulfillment of both functions of a leader: achieving solidarity within the group, and directing the group toward an external goal, through the sharp differentiation of those to whom the leader is friendly and conforming and those to whom he is competitive and challenging” (Winter, pp. 117-18). To the degree that political opposition or other governmental actors with whom some formal authority is shared are categorized as members of the out-group, such leaders will tend to competitively challenge the policy constraints they represent.

Research on how power-motivated individuals behave in interpersonal bargaining situations confirms and extends these insights. Terhune (1968a, 1968b) has found that those motivated by the need for power are more competitive, manipulative, and exploitative toward their opponents in Prisoner’s Dilemma (PD) games and in the Princeton International Game (PING), an international relations simulation. Specifically, in PD games, subjects high in need for power ("Nepos") exhibited a tendency to defect.

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9 Among the general population, other behaviors related to the need for power include: the tendency to seek and occupy positions of prestige and formal social power, participation in directly competitive sports, relatively great risk-taking when gambling, the consumption of large quantities of alcohol, hostility towards out-groups and higher-status individuals, the choice of lower-status individuals as friends, and the tendency to play an active and influential role in small group settings (Winter, 1973; Winter and Stewart, 1977).

10 In this study (Terhune, 1968a), the “nepos” category includes subjects above the median on need for power and below the median on need for achievement and need for affiliation. Subjects designated
when they expected cooperation from their partner, thereby playing the partner for a "sucker" in order to achieve personal gains. Indeed, in offering explanations for their behavior, Nepos consistently expressed more self-interested motives, as opposed to a concern for maximizing mutual gains. Nepos also were more likely to engage in "deadlocks" (five or more Defect-Defect trials in succession)\(^ {11} \), and to describe the opposing player with such terms as "yielder," "competitor," "gambler," and "resister" (Terhune, 1968b).

In the PING simulation (Terhune, 1968a), subjects high in need for power viewed cooperation as a means to other goals rather than an end in itself, exhibited a penchant for secrecy and espionage, sent more hostile messages to other nations, and were more likely to engage in manipulative actions toward other nations (these actions included lies, deception, forgery of messages, etc.). In choosing their "national goals," Nepos also tended to emphasize objectives related to power-status, military goals, and sovereignty-independence, and devoted a greater proportion of national manpower to military research and deployment, the instruments of raw power in this simulation.

These findings strongly suggest that when power motivated individuals deal with international or domestic opponents, they have a tendency to conceive of the situation in zero-sum, competitive terms, and display a willingness to violate certain norms of openness and "fair play" (democratic norms?) by exploiting and manipulating the opponent if necessary to achieve one's goals, generally defined in terms of acquiring,

\[^{11} \text{In 30-trial PD games, about 2/3 of nepos engaged in deadlocks, compared with 1/2 of the naffs and 1/3 of the naches (Terhune, 1968a, p. 41).}\]

"naches" and "naffs" are those scoring above the median on need for achievement and need for affiliation, respectively, but below the median on the other two motives.
maintaining, or expanding the instruments of power. Indeed, Winter notes that the need for power in political leaders is generally associated with “combat against political, personal, and system foes” (Winter, p. 48). When such a leader confronts domestic political constraints, this orientation suggests a willingness to “bend the rules” or to circumvent the authority of those with whom one shares formal power or to whom one is theoretically accountable. Indeed, the pervasive drive to enhance one’s own power position that apparently accompanies the power motive could be seen as inherently (perhaps unconsciously) pitting power-motivated leaders against systems wherein their authority is checked by other institutions or actors.

Finally, it is important to note that, as with task emphasis, the need for power has been linked to an autocratic style of organization and decision-making. At the societal level, power images and themes in cultural indicators such as children’s readers and popular novels have been found to be the most pronounced in states with totalitarian forms of government (McClelland, 1961). At the individual level, the same pattern has been noted, often with negative consequences for leader-follower relations: “excessive power motivation, especially without concerns for affiliation, may lead people to become too highly organized, superior, outspoken, and impatient—that is, dictatorial. In the long run, persons with very high n Power may thus create the seeds of their own destruction or loss of power, because their followers see them as not effective in promoting their own goals. The leaders may then be driven to an ever-increasing cycle of intensified attempts to control, and increasing disaffection of their followers” (Winter, p. 124).

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12 This is especially the case where high levels of the power motive are accompanied by low levels of the need for affiliation.
One additional insight may shed light on the underlying psychological basis for power-motivated leaders’ behavior. Terhune notes that “as hypothetical leaders of real nations, the Nepos would place a premium on autonomy and freedom. Thus, the Nepos’ “need for power” seems to be a need to avoid control by others. This is exactly what Veroff (1967) concludes after years of studying power-motivated people” (Terhune, 1968a, p. 54). If this conclusion is correct, it has profound consequences for how power-motivated leaders will respond to domestic political constraints (essentially an avenue by which others exert some influence over the leader): a fundamental need to avoid being controlled by others may be tantamount to a fundamental need to exercise one’s decision-making authority unencumbered by the checks and balances imposed by other political actors and institutions.

*Leaders’ Dispositional Aggressiveness*

As indicated above, leaders’ propensity to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions is a consequence of two interrelated categories of attributes: their sensitivity to the domestic political context (the “constraint challenger” vs. “constraint respecter” distinction highlighted above), and their dispositional aggressiveness. Knowing the degree to which a given leader is sensitive to the domestic context may provide great insight into types of decision-making processes that leader is likely to employ (e.g., participatory vs. directive). But it doesn’t provide much guidance concerning the likely substantive content of the resulting policies. For instance, a given constraint challenger might be quite “dovish” in terms of his foreign policy attitudes, and therefore refuse to resort to military force even in the face of
widespread calls for action among his domestic constituencies or other governmental actors with whom he shares power. This is why it is necessary to add one additional piece to the puzzle: leaders’ “dispositional aggressiveness,” based on their beliefs about the nature of the political universe and the character of their adversaries. Only when this component is added will it be possible to develop a profile of the type of leader who will tend to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions, versus the type of leader whose foreign policy behavior will be most pacified by such domestic constraints.

Research in political science and psychology suggests that certain core beliefs (distrust and nationalism) concerning the nature of the political universe and the character of one’s adversaries shape one’s propensity to perceive both hostile intentions on the part of others and opportunities to exploit one’s opponents. Such perceptions have been linked to aggressive behavior—actions designed to defend one’s interests in the face of perceived threats, or to promote these interests where opportunities are believed to have arisen. In short, the posited causal pathway in the domain of crisis decision-making is from core beliefs to specific types of perceptions (concerning the intentions and character of the adversary, and the utility of various policy instruments) to crisis responses. The following section conceptually defines distrust and nationalism, then reviews evidence concerning their consequences for leaders’ perceptions and crisis responses.

**Distrust**

Distrust (Tucker, 1965; Stuart and Starr, 1982) is conceptualized as the belief that others’ statements and actions are generally insincere, and that one should regard with
suspicion the motives underlying others’ behavior. Leaders’ beliefs could obviously be arrayed along a continuum of distrust, ranging from extremely strong, even naïve, beliefs in the trustworthiness and sincerity of others (including one’s political opponents), to the extreme, pathological paranoia exhibited by rare leaders such as Joseph Stalin, who cannot seem to trust even their closest advisers, confidants, or family members. Distrust may be directed against a particular target (e.g., John Foster Dulles’ conception of the Soviet Union, as examined in Holsti, 1962), but distrust is here conceptualized as a general, dispositional suspicion that shapes one’s views of a range of domestic and international actors. Therefore, as one moves from the “naïve” toward the “paranoid” end of the continuum, one increasingly believes that other actors, in general, are not to be trusted.

Holsti (1962) demonstrated the existence of a strong relationship between Dulles’ beliefs about the Soviet Union and his attributional behavior. That is, Dulles’ beliefs triggered a system of information processing (the “inherent bad faith” model) that led him to discount, or to reinterpret as essentially hostile, seemingly cooperative initiatives on the part of the USSR. Research on cognitive consistency and stereotyping has likewise shown that the stronger or more stereotypical one’s beliefs about a particular object or group, the more likely one is to reject or filter out disconfirming information in the interests of preserving these beliefs. In short, the strength and content of one’s beliefs can affect how one processes information, thereby shaping one’s perceptions in a given situation.

Distrustful beliefs are particularly likely to lead to perceptions, in specific situations, that others’ behavior is driven by hostile, threatening motives. Research has
shown that perceptions of hostile intent on the part of others is a key determinant of aggressive interpersonal and interstate behavior. In order to fully establish these connections, the rest of the discussion of distrust is divided into two parts. First, the theoretical and empirical links, in political science and psychology, between perceived intentions and aggressive behavior, will be briefly reviewed. Second, research will be highlighted that explicitly demonstrates this entire causal chain—from distrustful beliefs to attributions of threatening intentions to aggressive actions.

Psychological research has shown that attributions of others’ intentions play a key role in aggressive interpersonal behavior (Johnson and Rule, 1986; Baumeister, Stillwell, and Wotman, 1990). “When individuals perceive ambiguous actions by others as stemming from malevolent intentions, they are much more likely to retaliate than when they perceive the same actions as stemming from other motives” (Baron and Richardson, 1994, pp. 209-10). When perceptions of hostile intentions are manipulated in the laboratory, individuals respond aggressively to those who apparently harbor hostile intent, even when not attacked (Epstein and Taylor, 1967; Gaebelein and Hay, 1974; Taylor, Shuntich, and Greenberg, 1979; Ohbuchi and Kambara, 1985).

In a very suggestive study, Greenwell and Dengerink (1973) have shown that perceived intentions may be even more important than overt actions in producing aggressive responses. Each subject was told he would be participating in a “reaction-time

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13 Applications of prospect theory to international relations (e.g., Boettcher, 1995; Levy, 1997) suggest that how decision-makers frame a situation (as a potential loss or a potential gain) can greatly affect their propensity to engage in risky behavior; individuals tend to be risk-acceptant to avoid losses. It is reasonable to assume that distrust leads decision-makers to perceive crisis situations in terms of high threat and potential loss, while trust reverses these tendencies, or at least seriously retards the process of escalating threat perceptions. Therefore, distrustful beliefs may place decision-makers in the domain of losses, leading to more risk-acceptant foreign policy behavior, while a trusting orientation helps to frame the situation as one which requires no immediate action and entails no imminent loss.
competition” with one other subject (actually a confederate of the researcher), and that the winner of each round would have the opportunity to determine the severity of the electric shock the loser would receive as a penalty for losing. Subjects were shown a set of lights presumably indicating the severity of shock the “opponent” (the confederate) intended to deliver. When the lights showed the subject was steadily increasing the shock settings, subjects increased theirs in response, even when the shocks they received were actually of constant intensity, and when the lights showed the subject was keeping the shock intensities constant, the subjects did not increase theirs, even when they were subjected to shocks of increasing intensity. The researchers noted that “while attack is an important instigator of aggressive behavior, it appears that the physical discomfort experienced by a person may be subordinate to the symbolic elements that are incorporated in that attack” (Greenwell and Dengerink, p. 70). Thus, “the apparent motives or intentions behind another person’s actions—especially when these are potentially provocative—may often be far more important in influencing our tendency to aggress against him or her than the nature of these actions themselves” (Baron and Richardson, p. 145).

In international relations research, perceptions of other states’ intentions have been linked to the aggressiveness of foreign policy behavior. Perceiving others’ intentions as hostile may lead to arms buildups, conflict spirals, and war in the long term, and in short-term crisis situations, “the exaggeration of adversary hostility can lead to the expectation of an adversary attack and a decision to act preemptively to gain the advantages of striking first and to minimize the costs of a war which is perceived to be inevitable” (Levy, 1989, pp. 280-81; Jervis, 1976). The concept of the security dilemma,
and much of realist thought, is premised on the notion that the inability to determine or predict the intentions of others, coupled with the anarchic nature of the international system, requires states essentially to make worst-case assumptions and to take potentially provocative self-help measures in response to capabilities (Waltz, 1979; Jervis, 1978). Even some scholars who question whether states automatically take actions to balance power distributions in the absence of evidence concerning intentions have argued that states will respond to the perceived intentions of others, by engaging in balancing behavior against states with seemingly hostile ambitions and the requisite capabilities to give effect to these ambitions (Walt, 1987). Image theory (Cottam, 1994; Herrmann and Fischerkeller, 1995) suggests that perceptions of another state's motives, in addition to perceptions of its relative capabilities and relative cultural sophistication, play a key role in shaping foreign policy behavior toward that state. Specifically, perceptions of threatening, revisionist motives on the part of the target state are associated with a “script” of policy responses ranging from containment to the use of force.

Finally, it is important to note that some research has gone beyond simply linking beliefs to perceptions, or linking perceptions to the character of one’s behavior. Several studies have clearly shown that distrustful beliefs lead to perceptions that others’ behavior, in specific situations, is motivated by hostile or threatening intentions, and that these perceptions are in turn associated with aggressive interpersonal or interstate behavior. Driver (1977) found distrust to be strongly related to decisions to go to war in the Inter-Nation Simulation (INS). He labels distrust a “stress-inductive” belief, and notes that “trust...acts as a filter in the perception of threat. A high state of trust reduces the credibility of any threat and as a result reduces the necessity for aggressiveness. A
low level of trust, on the other hand, tends to increase threat credibility and, in turn, increases the incidence of aggressive behavior” (Driver, p. 340).

Research in psychology has identified a dispositional dimension closely related to, if not synonymous with, distrust: “hostile attributional bias.” Hostile attributional bias, or the tendency to perceive hostile intent on the part of others even when it is really lacking, plays an important role in producing aggressive behavior in both children and adults (e.g., Dodge, Pettit, McClaskey, and Brown, 1986; Sancilio, Plumert, and Hartup, 1989). For instance, Dodge and Coie (1987) showed groups of boys videotapes of incidents in which one child provoked another (for example, by knocking over the child’s building blocks). The intentions behind these actions were varied systematically so that to outside adult observers they were clearly hostile, prosocial (designed to help), or ambiguous. Subjects were then asked to explain the intentions of the actor in each event. Dodge and Coie found that boys who had been rated by their teachers as high in reactive aggression (aggression in response to prior provocation) or overreactive aggression (tendencies to engage in strong retaliation in response to even very mild provocations) were more likely to perceive the actor’s intentions as hostile when they were in fact ambiguous.14 Dodge, Price, Bachorowski, and Newman (1990) also investigated the relationship between hostile attributional bias and aggression among a group of male adolescents incarcerated in a maximum-security prison for juvenile offenders. They found not only that hostile attributional bias was related to reactive (but not proactive)

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14 Boys rated high in proactive aggression (aggression performed in order to dominate or control others in the absence of prior provocation) were much less likely than these other groups to exhibit hostile attributional bias (Dodge and Coie, 1987).
aggression, but that the greater the subjects’ hostile attributional bias, the greater the number of interpersonally violent crimes they had committed.

**Nationalism/Ethnocentrism**

Nationalism (Druckman, 1968; LeVine and Campbell, 1972) is here conceptualized as a view of the world in which one’s own nation or group is virtuous, exceptional, and superior in key respects to other nations and groups, which are generally seen as hostile, meddlesome, or weak.¹⁵ Nationalism implies strong emotional attachments to one’s own group, with an emphasis on national honor and identity. This definition of nationalism has much in common with the concept of ethnocentrism, or “in-group bias.” Increasingly nationalistic beliefs are associated with an increased tendency to categorize, in very stark “us vs. them” terms (as opposed to seeing one’s self or group as part of a broader collective or community), and to focus on maintaining and preserving the identity and security of the in-group.

This vigilance, coupled with suspicion and contempt toward outsiders, may lead to the perception that many threats to the group exist—as do opportunities for exploiting and eliminating inferior and meddlesome out-groups. Image theory (Herrmann and Fischerkeller, 1995) explicitly links perceptions of the target state as relatively weak in terms of capabilities and inferior in terms of cultural sophistication to a preference for aggressive foreign policy actions, designed to exploit the target state: the “colony image”

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¹⁵ Hence the distinction between nationalism and patriotism: the latter implies favorable views of, and attachments to, one’s own nation without the corresponding negative images of other countries.
and the "degenerate image" are two such constructs.\textsuperscript{16} Hurwitz and PeflQey (1987), by constructing a hierarchical model of foreign policy attitudes using structural equation modeling, have found that the core value "ethnocentrism" leads to the general posture "militarism," which in turn predicts militarily assertive attitudes on such issues as defense spending, nuclear arms policy, and military involvement.

Finally, a series of studies have gone beyond linking nationalistic beliefs with aggressive attitudes or preferences, and have demonstrated a clear relationship between nationalism and aggressive behavior.\textsuperscript{17} Extreme forms of nationalism, particularly when focused at the level of the ethnic group, have been historically associated with attempts to purify the state, region, or world of foreign influences and to reshape others in the image of one's nation or group, converting or destroying resisters (e.g., Smith, 1993). As with distrust, research employing international relations simulations has demonstrated a relationship between nationalistic attitudes and aggressive (simulated) foreign policy actions (Crow and Noel, 1977).

\textsuperscript{16} It should be noted that image theory, as articulated by Herrmann, suggests that images of others are used as cognitive justifications for underlying motivations. That is, the image of another state as weak and culturally "backward"—and consequently in desperate need of assistance or tutelage—may be constructed as a way to "balance" one's underlying desire to exploit that state through direct intervention. However, the underlying motivation—the perceived opportunity to exploit—is almost certainly a product of certain cognitive processes that involve estimates of the target country's relative power and cultural "character," in comparison with one's own state. In short, the perceptions of others that are associated with nationalism are likely to lead both to perceived threats and to perceived opportunities to exploit or eliminate the target state.

\textsuperscript{17} It is worth noting that the beliefs underlying distrust and nationalism are clearly related to key philosophical and instrumental beliefs that have been linked to aggressive foreign policy behavior by scholars employing an "operational codes" framework (Walker, 1977; George, 1979). For instance, philosophical question #1 in this scheme is, "What is the "essential" nature of political life? Is the political universe essentially one of harmony or conflict?" Philosophical question #2 is, "What is the fundamental character of one's political opponents?" Relevant instrumental beliefs include those concerning the efficacy of various instruments (including military force) for achieving one's goals, and beliefs about the best timing for actions and the calculation of risk.
The Inseparability of Leaders' Sensitivity to Context and Dispositional Aggressiveness

Up to this point, the two key elements of leadership style with implications for leaders' willingness to bypass potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions have been treated as separate factors. That is, the determinants of sensitivity to the domestic political context (task/interpersonal orientation and need for power) have been viewed as unrelated to one's dispositional aggressiveness, and the beliefs shaping dispositional aggressiveness (distrust and nationalism) have been treated as irrelevant for the leader's sensitivity to context. Research on the perceptual and behavioral consequences of these four characteristics, however, suggests that each characteristic can shape both one's sensitivity to context and one's dispositional aggressiveness. While distrust and nationalism are more directly related to dispositional aggressiveness, and task emphasis and need for power are more closely tied to leaders' sensitivity to the political context, these four characteristics work together as a group to shape leaders' willingness to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions.

There are at least three avenues by which distrust and nationalism may influence one's sensitivity to the domestic political context. First, such beliefs shape the degree to which the international environment is viewed as containing threats to state interests and opportunities for advancing these interests through exploitative action—conditions requiring the use of forceful foreign policy instruments. The more strongly a leader believes such actions are necessary to preserve or promote state interests, the more likely he or she is to view domestic impediments to such actions as wrongheaded and illegitimate, if not treasonous. In such a context, sweeping away these domestic obstacles
is not only a justifiable course of action, but becomes a moral obligation, for the good of the state.

Hagan (1994) argues precisely along these lines in setting forth four leader orientations that affect how leaders view constraints: moderate/acquiescent, pragmatic, militant, and radical. These orientations reflect increasing degrees to which leaders perceive the international political realm to be fraught with dangers that threaten state interests (Hagan, pp. 199-200). In other words, the degree to which leaders perceive the external environment to be threatening is explicitly linked to how they will tend to perceive domestic political constraints. Leaders with a moderate or acquiescent orientation do not see the international environment as particularly threatening, and “recognize significant internal economic, societal, and political constraints on their use of national power” (Hagan, p. 199). Leaders exhibiting a pragmatic orientation view the world as dangerous, but differentiate among threats and see adversaries as having limited goals and ambitions; such leaders generally seek compromise and negotiation (Hagan, pp. 199-200). In contrast, leaders with militant or radical orientations view the international environment as extremely threatening to state interests, and tend to aggressively challenge domestic constraints that interfere with their use of the confrontational political, economic, and military tactics which are deemed necessary to deter and roll back a host of enemies (Hagan, p. 200).

Secondly, distrust and nationalism have important implications for how one views one’s political adversaries and the nature of conflict (zero-sum vs. positive-sum), not only abroad but at home. Even leaders who are not particularly task-oriented or motivated by the need for power may begin to behave manipulatively and seek to circumvent and
exploit domestic opposition if they are highly suspicious and distrustful of others.\textsuperscript{18} In contrast, constraint challengers’ confrontational “edge” may be softened by a trusting view of others, which allows them to lower their guard and makes them more likely to listen to, and accommodate, a presumably non-threatening political opposition. Nationalism may have similar effects, insofar as it reflects a general tendency to categorize in terms of “us” vs. “them,” and to view conflict in zero-sum terms.

The third avenue by which distrust and nationalism may influence one’s orientation toward domestic constraints involves such beliefs’ ability to affect one’s level of conceptual complexity.\textsuperscript{19} This characteristic is related to one’s ability to see ambiguity in the environment, to differentiate among various actors’ preferences and to recognize a range of possible compromise solutions as opposed to zero-sum confrontations and outcomes. As such, conceptual complexity is related to one’s sensitivity to the political context and one’s willingness to challenge domestic constraints. Driver and Streufert (1969) show that high stress makes complex individuals temporarily simple. Since “threat-provoking” beliefs increase stress during crisis situations, it is reasonable to conclude that high levels of distrust and nationalism have the ability to create “tunnel vision” during a crisis, leading to less sensitivity to the nuances of the domestic and

\textsuperscript{18} Hermann (1999) notes: “Distrust of others often makes leaders not rely on others but do things on their own in order to prevent any sabotage of what they want done. Loyalty becomes a \textit{sine qua non} of working with the leader and participating in policy making.”

\textsuperscript{19} Conceptual complexity refers to the degree to which individuals tend to differentiate between objects, people, and events in their environment, as opposed to seeing things in “black and white,” unidimensional terms (Schroder, Driver, and Streufert, 1967; Driver and Streufert, 1969; Hermann, 1983). When placed in stressful situations, low complexity individuals tend to see fewer options short of the use of force, while higher complexity people generally are able to generate a range of highly differentiated responses with various instruments that do not necessarily entail aggression. Using the Inter-Nation Simulation (INS), Driver found subjects’ levels of complexity to be significantly related to aggression.
international environment, and a greater willingness to perceive actors and issues in “black vs. white,” or “us vs. them” terms.  

Distrust and nationalism can certainly affect one’s sensitivity to the domestic political context, but there is also evidence suggesting this is a two-way street: task/interpersonal emphasis and need for power can play a role in determining one’s dispositional aggressiveness. Scholars studying the power motive have repeatedly found this characteristic to be related to aggressive actions toward “political, personal, and system foes” (Winter, p. 48). Indeed, the motive that is associated with exploitative bargaining tactics, the tendency to “sucker” opponents, and a penchant for confrontation cannot be assumed to affect leaders’ behavior toward domestic opposition alone. In studying the motive profiles of American presidents, Winter (1973) found that presidents scoring higher on need for power were more likely to involve the United States in war.  

Using the Princeton International Game (PING) Terhune (1968a, 1968b) found that “Nepos” (those subjects above the median on need for power, and below the median on need for affiliation and achievement) were more likely to send hostile messages, pursue manipulative strategies, and put forth more military effort. Overall, the Nepos initiated conflict more often than cooperation toward other states.  

The effects of the power motive on one’s “dispositional aggressiveness” are most pronounced when they are accompanied by reinforcing tendencies grounded in the

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20 Through use of the Inter-Nation Simulation, Driver concludes that “[high complexity participants] with stress-inductive attitudes [e.g., distrust] may function in the INS like [low complexity participants]” (Driver, 1977, p. 351).

21 McClelland (1975, pp. 314-359) also finds that high need for power, especially when accompanied by low need for affiliation, is associated with political violence and war across several different countries and time periods.
leader's task vs. interpersonal orientation. For instance, both Winter (1973) and McClelland (1975) note that highly aggressive foreign policy behavior, fitting the "conquistador" or "empire-builder" personal dominance profiles, is most likely to occur when a high need for power is accompanied by a low need for affiliation. In other words, the desire to dominate and control others is explosive when combined with a lack of concern for others' feelings, needs, and well-being. Importantly for our purposes, need for affiliation is closely related, conceptually and empirically, to interpersonal orientation on the task vs. interpersonal dimension. Therefore, individuals who are quite high on both need for power and task emphasis (that is, very low on interpersonal emphasis) are expected to exhibit dispositional aggressiveness perhaps equaling or surpassing that evidenced by highly distrustful and nationalistic individuals.22

Along the same lines, leaders who are very low in need for power and are interpersonally oriented may behave as if they were dispositionally pacific, even if they do not have particularly low levels of distrust and nationalism. This is because the absence of a strong drive to dominate and control others, married to a concern for others' feelings and well-being, inhibits aggressive foreign policy actions. Need for affiliation, which as noted is closely related to interpersonal orientation, has been linked to social reform movements, humanitarian efforts, and the absence of warfare (especially when

22 However, it is important to keep in mind that need for power is not expected, in general, to be as good a predictor of aggressive foreign policy behavior as distrust and nationalism, because the relationship between need for power and aggressive behavior appears to be more complex. Need for power may be expressed in any number of ways, many of which are non-violent and by all objective accounts only make the individual feel powerful (such as alcohol consumption and gambling). Also, as emphasized by McClelland, one's level of "inhibition" or stage of maturity may serve as important moderating variables between high need for power (even when accompanied by low need for affiliation) and aggressive actions towards others, distinguishing the personalized, "dominance-submission" power drive from the more altruistic, "socialized" power drive (see McClelland, 1975, pp. 263-265).
need for power is low) (McClelland, 1975, pp. 314-359). In short, the ideal-typical “constraint respecting” leadership style, which involves great sensitivity to domestic groups’ needs and preferences, cannot be said to stop at “the water’s edge”—such leaders will tend to exhibit concern for others internationally as well.

Two Ideal-Typical Leadership Styles

To summarize, theory and research suggests that distrust, nationalism, need for power, and task/interpersonal orientation work together to shape leaders’ willingness to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions. Need for power and task emphasis are more directly related to one’s sensitivity to the political context, and distrust and nationalism are more closely associated with one’s dispositional aggressiveness, but each of these characteristics has some ability to influence one’s position on the other dimension, especially when they take on very high or low values. Therefore, combining these four characteristics into a single conceptual index would appear to be the most appropriate method for developing expectations concerning leaders’ crisis responses, and (as Chapter 3 discusses) creating a single empirical index that combines these characteristics is the most appropriate method of evaluating these expectations.24

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23 In American history, need for affiliation, when measured using societal indicators, is not only associated with reform movements, but has tended to rise dramatically after wars, especially during and after the Civil War. “It is as if doing violence to other people, the experiences of killing others and having friends and relations killed or wounded, arouses almost a reflex response of increased concern for other people” (McClelland, 1975, p. 346).

24 Such an approach reflects the notion that it is the preponderance of these beliefs, motives, and interpersonal styles, rather than any single characteristic in isolation, that shapes one’s willingness to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions. This approach also explicitly incorporates the insights that a) extremely high or low levels of any characteristic will exert
A leader who is high in distrust, nationalism, need for power, and task emphasis fits the profile of the ideal-typical "dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger": a constraint challenger with beliefs that encourage aggressive foreign policy behavior. For such leaders, their insensitivity to the political context and their desire to implement their dispositionally-informed preferences free from the interference of other actors (task emphasis and need for power) provide the opportunity to behave contrary to potential pacifying constraints; their deeply held beliefs concerning the nature of the political universe and the character of their adversaries provide the motivation to do so. As noted previously (with the example of the "dovish" constraint challenger), leaders may possess the opportunity without the motivation, and vice versa; where opportunity and motivation are conjoined, particularly through very high levels of the associated characteristics, the behavioral expectations are quite clear.

At the opposite end of the spectrum are those leaders who have neither the "opportunity" nor the motivation to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions. These leaders are the "dispositionally pacific constraint respecters": their sensitivity to other domestic actors' views and preferences, and their perception that these actors' views represent legitimate constraints (interpersonal emphasis and low need for power) combine with their trusting view of others and a non-nationalistic world view to make them the least likely type of leader to bypass potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy.

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more "pull" on a given leader's behavior than moderate or slightly high or low levels, and b) clearly conflicting pressures (e.g., very high need for power and task emphasis, but very low levels of distrust and nationalism) will place one in a moderate category of leaders, for whom expectations are less clear, and whose decision-making styles and crisis responses will combine elements of, and fall in between, the styles and responses associated with leaders whose characteristics reinforce each other.

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behavior. This does not mean that these leaders will never engage in aggressive foreign policy actions—they are in fact expected to do so when a wide range of domestic actors are pushing for such actions—but they will not seek to do so over the widespread objections of these actors.25

Leadership Style, Domestic Political Constraints, and International Crisis Responses: An Integrative Framework and Its Observable Implications

By integrating the preceding theory and research, it is possible to articulate a framework suggesting how leadership style and domestic political constraints will interact to shape the aggressiveness of leaders' responses to international crises. This rest of this chapter explicitly presents such a framework, and lays out the process- and output-related expectations that are logically deduced from this framework. Subsequent chapters will systematically test these expectations through quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Output-Related Expectations

The framework developed here seeks to explain two key aspects of the "aggressiveness of the crisis response": the centrality of violence to the crisis response, and the severity of violence employed in dealing with the crisis. Operational measurement of these two dependent variables is discussed in detail in Chapter 3, but the conceptual differences between these dimensions should be briefly highlighted here.

25 As discussed below, this sensitivity to the domestic context means that for the dispositionally pacific constraint respecters, regime type is a crucial variable shaping the aggressiveness of their behavior (unlike the dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers, for whom variations in the configuration of potential pacifying constraints are much less meaningful).
Centrality of violence refers to the role that violence plays, as a crisis management technique, relative to all other crisis management techniques employed in dealing with a crisis. Does violence play a) no role at all, b) a minor role relative to non-violent efforts, c) an important role (though still supplemented by non-violent methods), or d) is violence used as the preeminent crisis management technique? Severity of violence refers to the intensity of the violence that is used in response to a crisis, ranging from a) no violence, to b) minor clashes, to c) serious clashes, to d) full scale war.

Clearly, these two dimensions are related, yet capable of capturing different elements of the crisis response. Violence playing no role on the centrality dimension will obviously mean no violence on the severity dimension, but once violence is employed, centrality and severity may diverge sharply. For instance, violent crisis management techniques may be heavily supplemented with non-violent methods, yet the violence employed may be very severe (serious clashes or full scale war). On the other hand, violence may be relied upon as the sole crisis management technique, yet relatively mild forms of violence may be utilized (e.g., minor clashes). Including both dimensions of the crisis response as dependent variables in the empirical analysis facilitates a more sophisticated and nuanced investigation of the relationships between key independent variables and specific aspects of the crisis response.

Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers are expected to respond quite aggressively to international crises, regardless of whether they hold power in democracies or autocracies. Their dispositional aggressiveness, combined with their relative insensitivity to potential pacifying constraints, suggests that such leaders will distinguish themselves as the most violence-prone (both in terms of the centrality and the severity of
violence). Their behavior should not differ markedly across regime types—potential pacifying constraints will not be recognized as such or internalized by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers. Such leaders in democracies may be more likely than those in autocracies to utilize covert action and other less visible foreign policy instruments so as to avoid oversight from, or accountability to, the public and groups with whom power is shared. Overall, however, the influence of regime type on the aggressiveness of such leaders’ foreign policy behavior is not expected to be substantial.

Due to their sensitivity to the domestic context, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters’ behavior is expected to vary greatly depending on whether they hold power in democracies vs. autocracies. In democracies, where they are confronted by a dense network of potential pacifying constraints, they will perceive themselves to be powerfully constrained by political opposition, power-sharing mechanisms, public accountability, and norms of non-violence, such that they will be extremely unlikely to use force unless there is widespread domestic pressure for such a response—an inclination enhanced by their dispositional pacificity. In autocracies, however, they will perceive themselves to be powerfully constrained by the more narrow set of elite groups to whom they are accountable—groups not expected to be particularly pacific. When there is clear support among these elite constituencies for an aggressive crisis response, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters are expected to follow (while perhaps supplementing violent responses with non-violent techniques such as diplomacy, due to their dispositional reluctance to rely upon coercive instruments).

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26 As noted in the following section (process-related expectations) these hypothesized perceptions are consistent with those articulated by Hermann and Kegley (1995).
In short, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies are expected to be the most pacific of all combinations of leadership style and regime type—only here do leaders' dispositional pacificity and sensitivity to potential pacifying constraints align with a dense network of such constraints. Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will be found at the opposite end of the spectrum, employing relatively violent crisis responses independent of regime type. Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies will clearly not behave as pacifically as their counterparts in democracies, but due to their dispositional inclinations are unlikely to reach the levels of aggressiveness exhibited by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers—this category represents a moderate group that may tend toward the violent end of the spectrum but in general should fall between the two extremes typified by the other categories of leaders. These expectations are summarized in the following hypotheses.27

Note that the fundamental contrast between dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies, on the one hand, and all other combinations of leadership style and regime type, on the other, serves as the centerpiece of these hypotheses. Also note that H1 through H4 are identical to H5 through H8, except for the dependent variable (centrality vs. severity of violence).

27 Each of the following hypotheses assumes "ceteris paribus." Clearly, all other factors may not be randomly distributed across all crises. Accordingly, Chapter 3 discusses important features of the crisis situation whose effects will be controlled for in the empirical analysis.
The Centrality of Violence

H1: Within democracies, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will use violence as a more central crisis management technique than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters.

H2: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies will use violence as a more central crisis management technique than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies.

H3: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies will use violence as a more central crisis management technique than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies.

H4: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies and autocracies will not differ in the centrality of violence employed in dealing with crises.

The Severity of Violence

H5: Within democracies, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will use more severe forms of violence in dealing with crises than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters.

H6: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies will use more severe forms of violence in dealing with crises than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies.
H7: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies will use more severe forms of violence in dealing with crises than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies.

H8: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies and autocracies will not differ in the severity of violence employed in dealing with crises.

Process-Related Expectations

This integrative theoretical framework does not simply point us toward specific policy outputs; it also has much to say about the decision-making processes underlying these outputs. In the domain of crisis decision-making, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers and dispositionally pacific constraint respecters are expected to diverge dramatically on such crucial dimensions as: the scope of information search concerning other actors’ preferences, the degree to which policy options are perceived to be circumscribed by the preferences of key domestic actors, the extent to which the adversary is viewed as harboring implacably hostile intentions vs. complex or benign motives, and the degree to which violent responses are viewed as a last resort.

One of the defining attributes of dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers is their reliance upon internal beliefs, principles, and perceptions as a guide to decision-making. Their tendency is to define a situation based on their underlying beliefs and perceptions—not through a dialogue with others. Their inclination is to decide which policy actions to pursue based on their own conception of state goals and interests and their understanding of how, in the present situation, these goals are best achieved, and these interests are most appropriately served—not by surveying the political landscape.
and determining which policy responses would garner the broadest support. They tend to view political opposition to these national interest-focused policy preferences as illegitimate, misguided, and in some cases, treasonous (even if such opposition arises from actors who constitutionally or normatively can claim some legitimate role in the policy-making process). For these reasons, ascertaining the preferences of a range of key domestic actors is not viewed by such leaders as a necessary precursor to defining situations or formulating policy. Consequently, they will not engage in an extensive search for information concerning the preferences of these actors. Furthermore, because such (potentially time-consuming) searches are rendered unnecessary by such leaders’ reliance on internal guidance, they will be able to rather quickly reach closure on a definition of the crisis situation and a preferred set of policy responses.

Due to their basic need to avoid being controlled by others (need for power), the priority they place on accomplishing the mission over and above satisfying others’ preferences (task emphasis), their zero-sum view of the political universe and inclination to impute hostile motives to political opponents (distrust and ethnocentrism), and their consequent tendency to equate opposition with disloyalty and treason, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will not perceive themselves to be constrained to pursue policies consistent with the preferences of key domestic actors. Ignoring, circumventing, or crushing the potential constraints such opposition represents is not viewed by such leaders as a violation of sacred norms or a dangerous abrogation of constitutional procedures, but as a noble obligation to stand against those who would undermine the country’s interests, or as a pragmatic maneuver that the leader’s opponents would certainly exploit were they in the leader’s shoes.
The decision-making patterns hypothesized to be characteristic of dispositionally pacific constraint respecters stand in marked contrast to this approach. For such leaders, it is the political situation, rather than their internal beliefs and perceptions, that generally drives problem definition and policy choice. The decision-making process begins with a survey of the political landscape, in order to determine which definition of the problem is broadly accepted and which policy responses would likely receive widespread support or provoke opposition. Because this approach requires detailed knowledge of the views and preferences of key domestic actors, a thorough search for this information will accompany this initial stage, unless the leader perceives that he/she already has knowledge of these preferences.

Once the political landscape has been “mapped,” such leaders’ perceptions of, and responses to, this constellation of other actors’ preferences diverges dramatically from the approach of their constraint challenging counterparts. Due to their acute sensitivity to others’ preferences (interpersonal emphasis), lack of a desire to dominate or be in control (low need for power) and a tendency to view politics as non-zero-sum, disputes as amenable to compromise, and political adversaries as inherently reasonable and non-hostile (low distrust and nationalism), dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will conceive of their task in terms of discerning areas of agreement, working toward consensus or compromise outcomes, and not alienating or provoking opposition from any key set of domestic actors. That is, such leaders will view themselves as the agent of their constituencies and the equal of those actors with whom they share power, and they will therefore perceive their policy choices to be constrained by the preferences of these
key domestic actors. Potential constraints in their political environment become
internalized and will shape their policy decisions.

This decision-making pattern implies that where clear consensus among key
domestic actors can be discerned in favor of (or against) a particular foreign policy
approach or action, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will perceive themselves
to be constrained to act according to this consensus, and will choose the consensus
approach. Where no clear consensus emerges regarding the appropriate policy approach
or action, such leaders will perceive that this lack of consensus prevents them from
making a decisive policy choice that largely favors the preferences of one set of actors
over another. In such a situation, this type of leader will either seek to identify and
implement a compromise among the competing viewpoints that satisfies the minimal
aspirations of key domestic actors (deferring action where no such compromise appears
viable), or "table" the issue outright, putting off any decision until an acceptable
compromise approach clearly emerges.

At this point it is necessary to add a few caveats, because the above dichotomy
should not be defined too simply. It would be misleading to assume that dispositionally
aggressive constraint challengers will never compromise or will never perceive
themselves to be constrained. When they face strong, widespread opposition among
important constituencies who can affect their continuation in power or their future
effectiveness in office, even most constraint challengers will feel the heat and will begin
to moderate their policies or change course entirely. The point at which this occurs in
any particular case will depend not only on the severity and the scope of the opposition
that develops, but on the extremity of the specific constraint challenger's personal
characteristics. For instance, a leader who is very high on need for power and task emphasis may, despite extreme opposition, never reach the point of perceiving continued struggle to be “no longer worth it.” But for most leaders in most confrontational situations, that point will come sooner or later.

Similarly, it would be inaccurate to suggest that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will under no circumstances seek to circumvent or ignore potential constraints in their domestic environments. When such leaders perceive that vital state interests can be defended or promoted through no other means than the pursuit of policies that do not enjoy consensus or even minimal domestic support, then they are expected to choose these policies despite this opposition. Precisely what it takes to make a constraint respecter behave like a constraint challenger in a given case is a function of both the severity of the perceived threat or opportunity involving vital state interests and the extremity of the leader’s characteristics. For instance, a leader who is extremely interpersonally oriented (indicating an almost unhealthy obsession with pleasing everyone at the expense of accomplishing the task) may refuse to defy domestic opposition even when state interests are being severely compromised. But for most constraint respecters, the point of defiance will come sooner or later.

For the reasons highlighted above, when articulating expectations concerning the behavior of constraint challengers versus constraint respecters, the key distinction to be made is not between leaders who are entirely impervious to constraints and those who are hopelessly bound by them. Rather, the appropriate distinction involves first instincts and general approaches to policy formulation vis-à-vis the political context. Constraint challengers’ first instincts are to do all they can to insure that their preferred policies
prevail; they come to closure on policy preferences relatively quickly and do their utmost
to defeat or bypass domestic political opposition. Opposition is perceived as an obstacle
rather than a legitimate policy constraint. The first instincts of constraint respecters, in
contrast, are to survey the political landscape and to construct policies that will avoid
opposition and maximize political support. If opposition develops, the instinctive
approach is to compromise and accommodate, rather than become locked in a zero-sum
battle. The interests and preferences of key constituencies and other governmental actors
are generally seen as legitimate constraints on policy-making, rather than obstacles.
Constraint challengers and constraint respecters may ultimately both end up yielding to
domestic opposition, but for constraint challengers it tends to be a last resort; for
constraint respecters, it may be the first and only resort, in the sense that “opposition”
ever really develops because actors’ preferences are assessed and accommodated first,
through a consensus or compromise process, or if opposition does develop, attempting to
 crush or circumvent this opposition is not seriously considered or pursued. Similarly,
both types of leaders may ultimately defy domestic constraints, but such actions represent
a habitual, almost unconscious approach for constraint challengers, as opposed to an
extremely unpleasant eventuality constraint respecters will embrace only under extreme
compulsion.

These decision-making processes are expected to remain substantially consistent
regardless of regime type, but a few important exceptions should be briefly noted. First,
although dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will tend to challenge potential
pacifying constraints regardless of whether they hold power in democracies or
autocracies, the methods they use to challenge constraints are likely to differ. In

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autocracies, constraints may be dealt with through outright suppression of opposition (e.g., purges and other rather confrontational methods). In democracies, such leaders may be more likely to pursue covert operations, secret dealings with other nations, and other techniques that avoid public scrutiny and escape oversight from those actors with whom power is shared. This is especially likely to be the case when the leader is pursuing policies he or she knows are strongly opposed by the public or other governmental actors (e.g., Congress).

Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will also employ very similar decision-making processes regardless of whether they hold power in democracies or autocracies. That is, such leaders will perceive themselves to be constrained by the policy preferences of key domestic actors and will pursue very participatory, consensus- or compromise-seeking decision processes among this set of actors. However, the diversity and the nature of the groups by which such leaders perceive themselves to be constrained, and therefore accommodate, will vary according to regime type. In democracies, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will perceive themselves to be constrained by a diverse set of actors including the public, Congress, intra-administration opposition (and democratic norms); in autocracies, such leaders will perceive themselves to be constrained by the relatively narrow set of elite actors that can affect their continuation or future effectiveness in power.

A few theorists have challenged the conventional wisdom that all leaders respond similarly to constraints in their domestic political environments, and have advanced propositions concerning the interaction between leadership style and domestic constraints. These propositions are consistent with, and to some degree have helped to
inform, the framework developed here. For instance, Hagan (1994) argues that foreign policy behavior is a product of the interaction of domestic political constraints and leaders' strategies for dealing with these constraints. Leaders can either pursue confrontational strategies against domestic opposition ("mobilization," which includes logrolling and diversionary strategies) or can attempt to bargain with the opposition or avoid controversy altogether ("accommodation and deadlock"). The alternative strategies of mobilization and accommodation have much in common with our behavioral expectations for constraint challengers and constraint respecters, respectively. In essence, those choosing mobilization strategies for dealing with domestic opposition do not recognize this opposition as a legitimate constraint which must be accommodated or given a role in the policy process, while those choosing accommodation strategies seek to "bargain among the players necessary for the ratification and sustained implementation of the decision...[and avoid] domestically controversial actions that could discredit the overall leadership or provoke increased opposition" (Hagan, pp. 195-196), fitting the precise profile of the constraint respecting leader.

Hermann and Kegley (1995) likewise theorize about the interaction between types of leaders (responsive vs. ideologically driven) and types of political systems. They make predictions about the sorts of constraints different types of leaders will perceive in different political environments, and their consequent strategies for dealing with conflict. Hermann and Kegley hypothesize that ideologically driven leaders in democracies will perceive constraints as obstacles to be overcome, while responsive leaders in democracies will perceive themselves to be constrained by a range of constituencies. Ideologically driven leaders in autocracies will perceive that others share their view of the world and
are supportive of their actions, while responsive leaders in autocracies will perceive their behavior to be constrained by the preferences of elites who can affect their continuation in office (Hermann and Kegley, p. 524).

The expectations developed above can be formally stated as follows (note that hypotheses involving dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers begin with the letters “HC” and those involving dispositionally pacific constraint respecters start with the letters “HR”).

**Dispositionally Aggressive Constraint Challengers**

**HC1:** Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will not engage in an extensive search for information concerning the preferences of key domestic actors.

**HC2:** Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will not perceive themselves to be constrained to pursue policies consistent with the preferences of key domestic actors, and b) will instead decide which policy actions to pursue based on their own conception of state goals and their own beliefs about how best to achieve these goals in the present situation.  

**HC3:** Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will rather quickly reach closure on a definition of the crisis situation and a preferred set of policy responses.

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28 Unless the leader perceives that his/her preferred policies will provoke opposition from key domestic groups to such a degree that the leader’s future effectiveness or continuation in office will be seriously jeopardized by the pursuit of such policies.
Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters

HR1: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will search for information about the views of key domestic actors\(^{29}\) concerning responses to the crisis situation, unless the leader perceives that these views have already been effectively communicated to him/her.

HR2: Where the leader discerns clear consensus among domestic political actors in favor of (or against) a particular foreign policy approach or action, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters (a) will perceive themselves to be constrained to act according to this consensus, and (b) will choose the consensus approach.

HR3: Where the leader discerns no clear consensus among these actors regarding the appropriate policy approach or action, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters (a) will perceive that this lack of consensus prevents them from making a decisive policy choice that largely favors the preferences of one set of actors over another, and (b) will either seek to identify and implement a compromise among the competing viewpoints that satisfies the minimal aspirations of key domestic actors (deferring action where no such compromise appears viable), or “table” the issue outright, putting off any decision until an acceptable compromise approach clearly emerges.\(^{30}\)

The above hypotheses emphasize different types of leaders' orientations toward the political context and ways of dealing with domestic political opposition. But

\(^{29}\) In democracies these actors include extra-administration actors such as Congress, the public, the media, and interest groups, and intra-administration actors such as foreign policy bureaucracies and their top officials, as well as key advisors to the leader. In autocracies these actors include elite groups and individuals that have the power to affect the leader’s continuation in office.

\(^{30}\) Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters may pursue foreign policy actions that do not conform to the above patterns (e.g., actions that do not represent a consensus or compromise approach) if either a) an extreme threat is perceived to the state’s vital interests, which the leader believes cannot be dealt with using any means other than the chosen response, or b) domestic political actors favor violent responses which the leader wishes to temporarily delay or supplement with non-violent methods.
systematic differences in these leaders' dispositional aggressiveness produces some additional expectations concerning their perceptions and policy responses. Distrust and nationalism (and to a lesser degree, need for power and task emphasis) will lead dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers to attribute hostile intentions and implacable hostility to the adversary during international crises (as opposed to assuming that the other state(s) have complex motives, legitimate interests, or limited objectives that could be satisfied through appeasement or compromise). Furthermore, because the international realm is viewed as inherently conflict-prone, dangerous, and occupied by challenges (both threats to state interests and opportunities to promote these interests) that can only be dealt with through violent means, the use of military force will be viewed by such leaders as a legitimate and effective policy instrument—not a "last resort" to be employed only when all non-violent measures have been tried and have failed.

In contrast, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters' low levels of distrust and nationalism (and to a lesser degree, interpersonal emphasis and low need for power) will discourage the attribution of irreversibly hostile intentions to the adversary. Instead, the other party to the crisis will be viewed as a potential negotiating partner with legitimate interests and ambitions that might be addressed through negotiation or appeasement. Because they view the political universe as generally benign, populated by essentially reasonable actors who will respond favorably to good-faith initiatives, and characterized by opportunities for cooperation, reciprocity, and mutual gain, such leaders will regard negotiation and compromise as the most effective policy instruments. The use of force will be seen as a last resort, an instrument inferior to political/diplomatic approaches in terms of effectiveness. These expectations are formally stated below:
Dispositionally Aggressive Constraint Challengers

HC4: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will view the other party to the crisis as having malevolent intentions and implacable hostility towards the leader’s state.

HC5: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will NOT view the use of force as a last resort, and b) therefore will NOT seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques.

HC6: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will NOT perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and b) will therefore NOT devote great effort to accompanying violent responses with non-violent actions.

HC7: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will have confidence in the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis.

Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters

HR4: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will view the other party to the crisis not as having unalterably malevolent intentions and implacable hostility towards the leader’s state, but as a potential negotiating partner with legitimate interests and concerns that might be accommodated.

HR5: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will view the use of force as a last resort, and b) will therefore seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques.

HR6: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and b)
will therefore devote considerable effort to insuring that violent responses are accompanied by non-violent actions.

**HR7: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will doubt the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis.**
CHAPTER 3
DATA AND METHODS

In order to test the output- and process-related hypotheses derived from the framework articulated in Chapter 2, and in order to generate new hypotheses, multiple methods will be used. Statistical analysis of data taken from 171 foreign policy crises will allow general patterns to be discerned regarding the crisis responses employed by different types of leaders in democracies and autocracies. Because this statistical overview will help to identify cases that are consistent with, and contrary to, expectations, it will serve as a case selection guide for the case study portion of the analysis. The case studies are intended to provide an in-depth examination of the causal mechanisms that are responsible for the observed statistical relationships, allowing both hypothesis testing and the generation of new hypotheses.

Statistical Analysis

Identifying and Coding Foreign Policy Crises

The unit of analysis for the statistical tests is the foreign policy crisis, defined as a situation in which “three conditions, deriving from a change in a state’s external or internal environment, are perceived by the highest-level decision-makers of the state: (a)
a threat to basic values, (b) an awareness of finite time for response to the external threat to basic values, and (c) a high probability of involvement in military hostilities" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1998). Based on these criteria, an initial list of crises was compiled using the *New York Times* and *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*; through consultation with area specialists in Israel, Canada, and the United States, this list was refined (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, pp. 40-41). These crises were then examined in depth and coded by graduate students (in consultation with area specialists) for a range of variables, through the use of sources including newspapers, scholarly articles, historical accounts, memoirs, and official documents (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, pp. 58-59, 62). The resulting data set contains 895 foreign policy (actor) crises, from 1918 to 1994. Only crises involving two or more sovereign, internationally recognized states were included; this requirement excluded campaigns for independence, crises involving only terrorist or nationalist groups, and civil wars that did not include other states as crisis actors (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, pp. 41-42).

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1 Perceived threats to basic values include threats "to existence, of grave damage, to influence, territory, political system, economic threat, or limited threat to population and property" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 49).

2 This definition has two of three conditions in common with the three-element crisis definition used by Hermann (1972) and Holsti (1979), which involves short decision time, high perceived threat to important values, and surprise (instead of high perceived probability of involvement in military hostilities).

3 412 international crises, within this same historical period, were also identified and coded to create a separate data set. There is substantial overlap between these two data sets (e.g., a given international crisis generally involves two or more foreign policy crises for individual states). Data from the actor-specific data set (foreign policy crises) are used in this study, because the crisis responses of individual states are the focus of analysis. As Brecher and Wilkenfeld note, "the two separate data sets...although closely linked, are used to answer different types of questions pertaining to crisis phenomena. For example, behavioral characteristics such as the choice among various crisis management techniques—from pacific to violent—to achieve foreign policy objectives in crisis are best assessed for the individual actor" (1997, p. 40).

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Several issues involving the reliability and validity of measures taken from this
data set should be briefly addressed here. Data collection occurred in four stages\(^4\)between 1978 and 1995. In Stage 1, during which data for 51 of the 76 years were
gathered, each crisis was assigned to two coders; during stages 2 through 4, “where
[Brecher and Wilkenfeld] had increased confidence in both [their] training and coding
procedures, cases were assigned to single coders and only occasionally to a second coder
when a particularly complex crisis was being researched” (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997,
p. 58). For those crises coded independently by two coders, an intercoder reliability
score of .85 was achieved.\(^5\)

One potential problem involving both the reliability and the validity of the
measures relates to a systematic “Western bias” in the availability and content of sources.
Brecher and Wilkenfeld note that there was an “abundance of source materials in
English—a large majority of which was presented by American and British authors with
their own prejudices” (1997, p. 59). This bias was dealt with in three ways: extensive
consultation with regional specialists whose knowledge of the crises under investigation
was “broad and detailed;” the inclusion of coders with diverse language skills, allowing
the use of sources published in English, French, German, Hebrew, and Spanish; and a
comparison of conflicts, wars, disputes, etc., in the international literature with those

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\(^4\) Stage 1 (1978-86): data collected for the 1929-79 period; Stage 2 (1987-88): data collected for the 1980-
85 period; Stage 3 (1989-91): data collected for the 1918-28 and 1986-88 periods; Stage 4 (1993-95): data
collected for the 1989-94 period, and several variables and cases were recoded, added, or removed based on
new information that had become available since the original coding and the identification of problems

\(^5\) Brecher and Wilkenfeld note that .85 is “well within the range of acceptability for this type of research.
In fact, it was this high intercoder reliability score, coupled with the procedures developed to debrief each
case, that led us to conclude that single coders for Stages 2, 3, and 4 could be used with reasonable
confidence” (1997, p. 58).

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crises in the ICB case list (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, p. 59). Brecher and Wilkenfeld conclude that "despite these compensatory efforts, much information, particularly for recent crises, as well as for those pertaining to the Soviet bloc, China, and African states, was not as abundant as desired" (1997, p. 59). There is no reason to conclude, however, that crises in certain regions were systematically excluded from the data set as a consequence (the problem is a dearth of sources that describe these crises), or that coding with respect to these crises was systematically skewed in a particular direction by the necessary reliance upon chronologies and area experts' judgments, as opposed to a more comprehensive collection of sources. In short, extensive consultation with area specialists, the use of a range of primary and secondary sources in different languages, and extensive debriefing procedures for each case appear to have insured a reasonable degree of reliability and validity for those measures utilized in the present study.

Leadership Style

In order to assess leaders' levels of distrust, nationalism, need for power, and task/interpersonal emphasis, this project employs the trait analysis system developed by M. Hermann (1987a, 1987b). This system utilizes content analysis of spontaneous verbal

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6 "...the most extensive sources were available for cases in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. The African cases, most of which occurred in the most recent periods, show a high reliance on chronologies (30 percent) and very few instances (10 percent) in which a mix of all sources was available" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 59).

7 "In all four stages, [the coding] process culminated in a lengthy debriefing session with one of the senior ICB researchers. Conflicts between coders were resolved, and in some instances more research was required" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 58).
material (press conference answers and interview responses)⁸ to develop scores on eight personal characteristics of political consequence.⁹ Using this system, Hermann developed scores on these characteristics for 69 heads of state¹⁰; these data are used in this project.¹¹ Conceptualizations and coding procedures for the four characteristics included in this study are shown in Table 3.1.

In order to insure comparability, each leader's scores were standardized to a distribution with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10, based on the comparison group of the 69 heads of state.¹² Leaders' standardized scores on the four relevant characteristics were then averaged to create a single index of leaders' willingness to challenge pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions. Within each geographical region, leaders were split into three equal groups based on their position along this dimension (dispositionally pacific constraint respecters, moderates, and aggression-oriented constraint breakers).

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⁸ Relatively spontaneous materials are preferred over scripted speeches due to the potential confounding influence of speechwriters. Though leaders are often "prepped" for interviews/press conferences regarding what sorts of questions to expect and how to respond in general, these situations require the leader to form phrases and choose wording relatively independently, allowing his or her personal characteristics to have a greater influence on how words are selected and combined. For research exploring the differences between speeches and interviews in the assessment of personality at a distance, see Hermann, 1977, 1980a, 1986; Winter et al., 1991.

⁹ These characteristics are as follows: nationalism, belief in one's ability to control events, need for power, need for affiliation, ability to differentiate the environment, distrust of others, self-confidence, and degree of task (vs. interpersonal) emphasis.

¹⁰ Only 39 of 69 leaders are represented in the empirical analysis, since many leaders did not experience foreign policy crises, and a few leaders held power in states that could not be classified as either democracies or autocracies (regimes some have called "anocracies").

¹¹ For each leader, at least 50 press conference answers and interview responses of 100 words or more have been content-analyzed according to the procedures set forth in the "Handbook for Assessing Personal Characteristics and Foreign Policy Orientations of Political Leaders" (Hermann, 1987a).

¹² These standardization procedures are described in detail in Hermann, 1987b.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic and Conceptualization</th>
<th>Coding Procedures</th>
<th>Illustration From Reagan’s Interview Responses</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Need for Power:** Concern with "establishing, maintaining, or restoring one’s power, i.e., one’s impact, control, or influence over others" (Winter, 1973, p. 250). | Focused on verbs (action words): coded need power if verb context meets any of the following six conditions included in Winter’s (1973) need power coding scheme—1) indicates strong, forceful action; 2) indicates giving of help when not solicited; 3) indicates an attempt to control others; 4) indicates an attempt to influence, persuade, bribe others; 5) indicates an attempt to impress others; or 6) indicates concern for one’s own reputation or position. | “I would be forced to take my case to the people.”  
“And we were the first to do it.”  
“I have never been reluctant to use it.” |
| **Task emphasis:** Relative emphasis in interactions with others on getting the task done vs. focusing on feelings and needs of others (an interpersonal emphasis). | Looked in content for set of task words (e.g., results, goal, solution, achievement) and set of interpersonal words (e.g., sensitivity, understanding, appreciation, coordination). Score = % of task plus interpersonal words that were task words. | Task words: program, problem, decision, qualifications, earnings, answer, plan, study  
Interpersonal words: discrimination, safety, cooperation with, being fair, benefit the people |
| **Distrust of Others:** General feeling of doubt, uneasiness, and misgiving about others; an inclination to suspect and doubt the motives and actions of others. | Focus on nouns/noun phrases referring to groups speaker does not identify with; coded for distrust if context shows indications of doubts or misgivings or suggests particular group is going to harm speaker or group with which speaker identifies. Score = % of nouns meeting criteria. | “He has brazenly turned 180 degrees and ignored his campaign promises.”  
“You cannot pretend that the Soviet Union is not invading Afghanistan.” |

Table 3.1: Personal characteristics and coding procedures13 (Continued)

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13 The summaries in Table 3.1 are taken from Hermann, 1983, pp. 3-4.
Table 3.1 (Continued)

| Nationalism: View of the world in which one's own nation holds center stage; strong emotional ties to one's own nation with emphasis on national honor and identity. | Focus on nouns/noun phrases referring to nations or governments; coded nationalism if speaker identifies with nation or government mentioned and noun is modified by favorable term, term denoting strength, or phrase suggesting importance of national honor or identity; also coded nationalism if speaker does not identify with nation or government mentioned and noun is modified by a hostile term, term suggesting weakness, or phrase denoting meddlesomeness in affairs of others. Score = % of references to own or other nations/governments meeting criteria. | “…The U.S. is the only nation that can preserve the peace.”

“They’ve [Soviet Union] been getting more and more arrogant.” |

and dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers).14 Region was used to delineate the reference group for each leader due to certain regional differences in scores (e.g., Middle Eastern leaders tend to score higher on nationalism than North American leaders) that may be at least partly a function of situational phenomena. An alternative leader classification scheme, which compares each leader’s scores to those of all other leaders, was also employed, leading to similar though less significant results.

Any time “at-a-distance” measures are used in an attempt to operationalize variables involving leaders’ beliefs or interpersonal styles, important reliability and validity concerns must be addressed. Two major reliability issues will be discussed here:

14 The geographical regions were: Africa, Asia, Central and South America, CIS/former Soviet Union, Europe, Middle East, and North America.
inter-coder reliability, and the reliability of scoring between original language texts and translations into English (since the data set includes many non-English speaking leaders). Across a number of studies (e.g., Hermann, 1980a, 1980b, 1984a, 1987b; Hermann and Hermann, 1989), the inter-coder agreement on the characteristics included in the system have ranged from .78 to 1.00 between a set of coders and the creator of the system. Where disagreements emerged, subsequent discussions facilitated refinements of the coding system. In order to discern whether translation affects the scores, inter-coder agreement has been calculated between a native speaker coding text in the original language (Russian and French) and the system's creator, focusing on the translated text. In both cases, agreement averaged .92 across the characteristics (Hermann, 1980b, 1987a, 1987b).

The validity of these measurement techniques is also of critical importance. Although numerous validity-assessment strategies could be devised (using, for example, experimental research), the system's designer sought to find some means of comparing the results of this coding system with the experiences of those who had actually interacted with the heads of state under investigation. Therefore, in a series of studies Hermann (1984b, 1985, 1986, 1988) developed profiles of 21 leaders using this system, then used a set of rating scales to describe the types of leadership behaviors that would be expected from each leader, given his or her characteristics. These ratings were then compared with those produced by journalists and former government personnel who had observed or interacted with the leaders in question. As Hermann notes, "the correlations between the two sets of ratings averaged 0.84 across the set of leaders suggesting that the profiles derived from this at-a-distance technique furnished the author with similar types
of information on which to judge behavior as had the other raters’ experiences with the actual figures” (Hermann, 1999).

Regime Type

Key domestic structural characteristics of each state during each foreign policy crisis were assessed using Jaggers and Gurr’s (1996) Polity III data set. Polity III includes annual data (1800-1994) on authority characteristics and regime type, for all independent states with populations of greater than 500,000 in the early 1990s. Data collection across the three versions of Polity (beginning in the mid-1970s with Polity I) was conducted by four coders: Erika Gurr, Mark Lichbach, Keith Jaggers, and Ted Robert Gurr. Coding decisions for each of the variables during each “country-year” were made based on “a wide variety of historical and contemporary source materials...[and Ted Gurr] reviewed much of the coding, with special attention to questions of consistency” (Gurr, 1989, p. 8). Although no intercoder reliability tests were performed, Gurr states: “We are reasonably confident that the coding guidelines have been applied consistently, because they were developed and used by four people who worked with them intensively and over a long period of time” (Gurr, p. 9).17

15 “Authority characteristics and regime type data are coded annually beginning in 1800, for states that were then independent, or from the year in which the state first gained effective autonomy. Data for all variables is reported through 1994, or the year in which the state ceased to be part of the international state system. The Polity III dataset includes 157 contemporary states” (Jaggers and Gurr, 1996).

16 Polity I focused on measuring political system durability, and therefore did not include annual characteristics for each polity (these were added in the Polity II data set).

17 Gurr goes on to suggest that “the fact that coding was done by four individuals also lends confidence that the judgments do not reflect the idiosyncratic interpretations of one individual—and if they do, the idiosyncracies are explicit in the coding guidelines and thus subject to revision by other scholars” (Gurr, p. 9).
With regard to the completeness and accuracy of the source materials examined prior to coding, Gurr recognizes “a potential threat to the reliability and validity of the codings for some minor European and Latin American states during the nineteenth century for which source materials are scarce...A few of the predecessor states of Imperial Germany...were not coded for lack of adequate English-language sources” (Gurr, p. 9). The current project only includes twentieth century crises, a fact that reduces but does not eliminate this potential threat. Due to the coders’ apparent reliance on English-language sources, the possibility of a “Western bias” in the availability and the content of sources cannot be eliminated. Polity III does incorporate many corrections for “data entry errors and ‘dubious’ scores identified by the authors and other scholars who have used the [Polity II] dataset since its deposit with the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) in 1989” (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995, p. 472). This incorporation of recoding-related feedback from a range of scholars who have used earlier versions of the data set does provide some confidence that major errors have been identified and dealt with.

The general validity of the Polity III measures of autocracy and democracy was assessed through comparison with six other extant measures of regime type,18 which have been constructed using a variety of subjective and objective data sources (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995, pp. 473-476). For each year, each regime’s summary autocracy score was subtracted from its summary democracy score to yield a single Polity III summary measure that could be compared with measures of democracy developed by other

researchers. Correlation analysis revealed that the Polity III measure of democracy was strongly correlated with the other measures (Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients measuring degree of statistical association for overlapping years ranged from .85 to .92). Jaggers and Gurr concluded:

In general, the high level of association between the DEMOC - AUTOC variable and the other empirical indicators of regime type currently available increases our confidence in the empirical validity of our measuring devices and data. From this evidence we argue that not only do the Polity III indicators accurately tap into the empirical concepts of autocracy and democracy but, in addition, that the data they produce are free from systematic coding bias—or that all empirical researchers who have coded democracy share similar biases (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995, p. 476).

The current project utilizes these annual summary autocracy and democracy scores. These scores are indexes, constructed from a set of indicators that measure specific aspects of each regime's institutional structure. The indicators are: competitiveness of political participation, regulation of political participation, competitiveness of executive recruitment, openness of executive recruitment, and constraints on the chief executive. Table 3.2 shows possible values on each of these variables, and indicates precisely how specific attributes are weighted in producing the summary autocracy and democracy scores (each of which is an 11-point scale, ranging from 0 to 10).

These indicators are clearly intended to measure "institutional" democracy. Jaggers and Gurr note, "...given the paucity of the current, let alone historical, data on civil liberties, we have not attempted to single out, and then quantify, this dimension of democracy" (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995, p. 471). Nevertheless, Jaggers and Gurr contend that institutional democracy should be highly correlated with normative expressions of
democracy, and indeed they find the Polity III regime type measure to be highly
correlated with Freedom House's measure of civil liberties: $r = .87$ for the 1973-94 time
period (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995, p. 476).

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19 This table is taken from Jaggers and Gurr, 1995, p. 472.
For all of these reasons, the Polity III summary scores appear to be a reasonable basis on which to classify regimes as democracies and autocracies for the current project. That is, the types of constraints and authority characteristics deemed crucial for distinguishing between democracies and autocracies in the development of the theoretical framework in Chapter 2 are mirrored closely (though not identically) by the conceptual and empirical distinctions employed by the creators of Polity III. For each foreign policy crisis, the crisis actor’s summary autocracy score was subtracted from its summary democracy score, to yield the aforementioned scale, ranging from -10 (strong autocracy) to 10 (strong democracy). Most scores clustered around the two ends of this continuum, allowing clear differentiation between autocratic and democratic systems. This same procedure was used to identify the regime type of the crisis adversary during each crisis.

The Nature of the Crisis Trigger

One important control variable is the nature of the event that triggered each crisis. Is the trigger a verbal threat or demand, the severance of diplomatic relations, the imposition of economic sanctions, or a direct military attack? The trigger, or precipitating cause, of a foreign policy crisis is defined as "the specific act, event or situational change which leads decision-makers to perceive [a threat to basic values, finite time to respond, and a high probability of involvement in military hostilities]. A trigger may be initiated by: an adversary state; a non-state actor; or a group of states.

63 of 70 leaders' regimes (90%) fell into one of two categories: -6 to -9 (autocracies), and 7 to 10 (democracies). Based on this clustering, 32 regimes were designated autocracies, and 31 were designated democracies. Strong democracies were especially easy to identify: 30 of 31 democracies received scores of either 9 (3 regimes) or 10 (27 regimes).
military alliance). It may be an environmental change; or it may be internally generated" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1998). Brecher and Wilkenfeld array crisis triggers along a loosely ordinal scale from verbal acts (1), political acts (2) and economic acts (3) through non-violent military acts (7), indirect violent acts (8), and violent acts (9).

Although it may be quite difficult to arrange such triggers along a precise ordinal or interval scale, it certainly seems possible to identify general levels of provocation (higher vs. lower), based on such factors as whether the trigger involves violence against one’s state or one’s allies, or is instead confined to non-violent verbal, political, or economic acts.21 For the purposes of this study, triggers will be split into violent (categories 8 and 9) and non-violent (categories 1-5 and 7) triggers.22 It could be argued that triggers assigned to category #7 (non-violent military acts, such as troop movements) belong alongside the violent triggers in terms of the level of provocation they represent. While they are grouped together with the non-violent triggers in the findings reported in Chapter 4, alternative empirical analyses were run, which grouped non-violent military acts with violent triggers. Comparable results emerged from both sets of analyses.

Using “objective” criteria to measure “trigger severity” or the “nature of the crisis trigger” raises some important epistemological issues. A positivist approach would most likely seek to identify, define, and characterize an empirically measurable event external to the state’s decision-makers that could be said to have triggered a particular crisis. Non-positivists, however, would suggest that such an event, or trigger, cannot be

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21 See the next paragraph for a discussion of epistemological concerns involving the translation of objective features of an event into “degrees of provocation.”

22 Crises with triggers assigned #6 cannot be directly classified as having either violent or non-violent triggers, because they involve “internal verbal or physical challenges to the regime or elite” (ranging from strikes and demonstrations to assassinations and coups). There were only 7 such cases.
identified or characterized in a vacuum (that is, absent the “processes of apprehension” by which decision-makers in a particular state recognized and interpreted the event as an occurrence implying “crisis” conditions (high threat to basic values, short decision time, high probability of involvement in military hostilities)). While it may be possible to characterize certain features of a potential triggering event beyond much dispute (e.g., whether the event involved the use of military force), directly translating these objective features into the notion of trigger severity is more problematic. That is, a given leader might view a particular non-violent trigger (e.g., an ultimatum, the formation of an alliance) as more severe in terms of the threat to basic values it represents than a given violent trigger (e.g., an attack on an ally). In short, who decides how provocative a given trigger is: the analyst or the participants in the event? It should be clear by now that this project is premised on the notion that scholars must move beyond the assumption that objective situational features (e.g., domestic constraints) will be interpreted by all observers in ways that are easily predictable, and therefore exogenously specifiable, by an outside observer. Therefore, when the term “trigger severity” is used in Chapter 4, it should be understood to refer to objective characteristics (nonviolence vs. violence) of the “triggering event” that may or may not align perfectly with decision-makers’ estimates of the relative severity of specific triggers. The objective is to allow identifiable “objective” features of the crisis trigger to vary and to thereby determine whether or not these situational factors do affect leaders’ crisis responses in a systematic way (while understanding that these objective features must ultimately be filtered through leaders’ perceptions in order to affect their behavior).23

23 Having said this, I would not characterize as anti-positivist research that seeks to empirically determine

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One could also question whether it makes sense to identify "crises" or "triggers" at all according to objective situational features. Again, the question is, shouldn't the decision-makers themselves decide when they are or are not experiencing a foreign policy crisis, and shouldn't they, rather than the analyst, determine precisely which external event triggered this conclusion? Such concerns are, in the author's view, well-founded; but fortunately the present project largely avoids these pitfalls. Brecher and Wilkenfeld take what appears to be a reasonable middle-ground approach to identifying foreign policy crises: they define such crises in terms of three major characteristics (short decision time, high threat to basic values, and high probability of involvement in military hostilities), but they make decision-makers' perceptions of these conditions the principal determining factor. In other words, they do define "foreign policy crisis" according to some objective, analyst-imposed conditions, but they allow decision-makers to subjectively determine whether or not these crucial conditions exist in a given case—an approach that avoids many of the dangers associated with identifying crises based on completely "objective" situational features. Furthermore, the identification of the crisis trigger is not arbitrary but is directly connected to leaders' perceptions: the trigger is that event which led decision-makers to perceive the three critical conditions.\textsuperscript{24} In short, the terms "crisis" and "trigger" must be understood in the context of this project to be bounded by the definitional criteria imposed by Brecher and Wilkenfeld—the author

\textsuperscript{24} It must be recognized that it may not always be possible to directly link perceptions of the three "crisis conditions" to a specific event (instead, the trigger could be a combination of actions or a trend over some period of time).
readily accepts that some situations not fulfilling these criteria could reasonably be interpreted as crises by various decision-makers and analysts. The difficulties associated with the analytic choices made in this project should be explicitly recognized. But these choices are clearly defensible based on the above arguments, and an attempt to endlessly deconstruct these terms would likely result in unhelpful semantic controversy and the imposition of unreasonably difficult hurdles upon this research.

**Gravity of Threat to Values**

The gravity of the threat to basic values in a particular crisis is defined as "the most salient threat perceived by [the crisis actor's] decision makers during the crisis, from trigger to termination" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 662). Categories of threats include limited threats to population and territory, threats to economic interests, political threats (e.g., threat of regime overthrow), threats to territorial integrity, threats to international influence, threats of "grave damage" (large casualties in war, mass bombing), and threats to the existence of the state. In order to transform this categorical variable into an ordinal scale, specific types of threats were assigned values according to the procedures used by Brecher and Wilkenfeld to create one part of an index of decision-maker stress: threat to existence = 10; threat to influence of great power or superpower = 7; threat of grave damage, threat to territory, political threat = 6; economic threat, threat to influence of nongreat power or nonsuperpower = 4; limited threat, other = 1 (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 55).
Conflict Setting

Conflict setting refers to whether or not a particular crisis occurred in the context of a protracted conflict between a pair of adversaries. This variable is simply a dichotomous indicator of the setting: protracted conflict or non-protracted conflict. A protracted conflict is defined as an environment with “the prior condition of prolonged dispute over one or more issues and [with] the spillover effects of cumulative crises between the same adversaries” (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 6). The operational criteria used to identify a specific conflict as a protracted conflict is as follows: “there must be at least three international crises between the same pair of adversaries over one or more recurring issues during a period of at least five years” (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 6).

System Polarity

The vast majority of the crises examined here occurred during the Cold War—an era generally characterized as a period of bipolarity. If one were to rely on this simple definition of polarity, based on centers of military power, there would not be sufficient variation to include this variable in the statistical analysis. However, an alternative conception of system polarity that emphasizes its “wider structural meaning” (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 37) and differentiates between periods within the Cold War will be employed here. Brecher and Wilkenfeld explain:

25 For instance, the set of situations characterized by short decision time, high perceived threat to important values, and surprise (the crisis definition used by Hermann and Holsti) will not overlap perfectly with those situations identified as crises by the Brecher and Wilkenfeld criteria.

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Bipolarity, in the sense of two concentrations of military power, characterized the global system from 1945 to 1989. However, in the wider structural meaning of hostile centers of power and decision the term applies to the period 1945 to late 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis...After 1962, the marked diffusion of influence and nonmilitary power, highlighted by the increasing prominence of China and France, created a hybrid system of power bipolarity and decision multipolarity, which is designated polycentrism (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 37).

For the purposes of this project, system polarity is treated as a dichotomous variable, which can take on the values bipolar and non-bipolar. Bipolarity is here defined according to the Brecher and Wilkenfeld criteria, and the non-bipolar category includes crises that occurred under polycentrism or in the post-Cold War era.26

**Possession of Nuclear Weapons by Crisis Actor**

This variable is simply a dichotomous indicator of whether or not, according to available historical evidence (evaluated by Brecher and Wilkenfeld), the crisis actor had nuclear weapons at the time of the crisis. It does not take into account the size or sophistication of the actor’s nuclear arsenal—factors that are considered in the creation of the power discrepancy variable (below). This variable is included as a separate control variable because the power discrepancy variable includes a host of other factors (including the power of alliance partners and the relative power of the opposing state or coalition), and the independent effects of possession of nuclear weapons, at the actor level, on an actor’s crisis responses, should be taken into account.

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26 There are very few post-Cold War crises in the data set. They are included in the “non-bipolar” category with crises occurring under polycentrism (as opposed to being placed in a “non-polycentrism” category that includes crises emerging under bipolarity) because many have argued that the post-Cold War international system—though perhaps nominally unipolar—is comprised of a network of multiple “decision” centers that has much in common with the notion of polycentrism.
Power Discrepancy Between Crisis Actor and Adversary

"Power discrepancy" is a relational variable that measures the difference in capabilities between a state and its adversary(ies) during a particular crisis. Capabilities were measured based on several types of resources: "human (size of population); economic (a composite of several components, notably gross national product [GNP]); diplomatic (alliance relations with major powers); geographic (size of territory); and military (conventional and nuclear weapons, as well as military expenditure)" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p. 27). The discrepancy in capabilities between the crisis actor and its adversary(ies) was then calculated as follows:

The power of a crisis actor and the power available to it from tight alliance partners (if any)—immediately prior to the actor’s major response—was compared to that of its principal adversary or adversaries—whether or not they were themselves crisis actors—to create the final score. These scores were then grouped into five categories, where positive discrepancy indicates power greater than the adversary and negative discrepancy means power less than the adversary: high positive PD, low positive PD, power parity, low negative PD, and high negative PD (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, pp. 54-55).

The Crisis Response: The Centrality and Severity of Violence

The primary dependent variables in the output-focused portion of this study relate to how aggressively leaders respond in a crisis situation. Two important facets of response aggressiveness are examined here. One variable involves the centrality of violence to the crisis response: of all the crisis management techniques employed by the leader’s state, how important were violent methods? Possible values on this variable, as coded by Brecher and Wilkenfeld (1998), range from (1) violence not being used at all, to

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(2) violence being used, but playing a minor role relative to other crisis management techniques, to (3) violence playing an important role, yet still supplemented by other non-violent methods, to (4) violence serving as the preeminent crisis management technique. In addition to the centrality of violence, the severity of the violent acts initiated is also an important aspect of the crisis response. Violence severity, or intensity, is also measured according to an ordinal scale: (1) no violence, (2) minor clashes, (3) serious clashes, and (4) full-scale war (Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1998).

These two dimensions (centrality and severity of violence) are clearly related, yet tap distinct elements of the crisis response. The centrality of violence variable yields important information about a leader’s propensity to rely predominantly upon violent instruments when faced with a crisis, as opposed to using mixed (violent and nonviolent) methods, or relying solely upon negotiation, mediation, and other nonviolent techniques. Once leaders have decided to employ violent measures, the severity of violence variable indicates how far they are willing to take these techniques—do they restrict their use of violence to minor clashes so as to avoid escalation, or do they plunge into full-scale war? Obviously, “no violence” on the centrality dimension will mean “no violence” on the severity dimension. However, once violence is employed, these dimensions may diverge sharply. For instance, one could use violence as the preeminent crisis management technique, but only initiate small-scale military operations, or one could heavily supplement violence with negotiation and other nonviolent instruments, but employ relatively severe forms of violence. An examination of both dependent variables, rather than either in isolation, is intended to provide a more nuanced and complete picture of the
crisis response tendencies and thresholds exhibited by various types of leaders in autocracies and democracies.

**Statistical Techniques**

In order to test output-related Hypotheses H1 through H8, it is necessary to determine whether significant differences exist in the crisis responses of different types of leaders in democracies vs. autocracies. Contingency table analysis (employing Tau-c) is the appropriate technique for this purpose. Tau-c is used because the independent and dependent variables are ordinal-level variables, and because the number of rows and columns in the relevant contingency tables is not equal.

Ordered probit analysis will also be utilized in order to control for the effects of a wider variety of variables than could be included in the contingency table analysis (e.g., the power discrepancy between the crisis adversaries, the nature of the perceived threat to basic values). Ordered probit, rather than ordinary least squares regression analysis, is appropriate here because the dependent variables (centrality and severity of violence) are ordinal, rather than interval or ratio-level variables. Ordered probit analysis will also be used to test for the presence of significant interactions among variables in the model (e.g., leadership style and regime type).

**Case Study Analysis**

Based on the statistical analysis, four cases were selected for further study whose values on the dependent variable were consistent with the output-related hypotheses and represented "extreme values" on the dependent variable (e.g., dispositionally pacific...
constraint respecters in democracies using completely non-violent crisis management
techniques, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies using
violence as the preeminent crisis response).27 Ideally, cases involving policy responses
that were clearly contrary to expectations would be selected for study as well.
Unfortunately (or fortunately, from the perspective of hypothesis support), there were
very few of these, and they generally involved countries where archival research could
not be efficiently conducted (e.g., Iraq). The four crises selected for study involved
American Presidents; a great deal of source material on these cases, including archival
documents, was available in the United States. President John F. Kennedy’s scores on
the composite index described above clearly placed him in the “dispositionally pacific
constraint respecter” category, and President Ronald Reagan’s scores identified him as a
“dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger.” Two crises were chosen for each
for Reagan.

These cases are comparable in several key respects, allowing some degree of
quasi-experimental control over important variables. First, the American decision-
making context was similar. Interestingly, as will become clear in Chapters 5 and 6, the
Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense had very similar postures with respect

27 Cases exhibiting “extreme values” on the dependent variable were selected because they represent the
prototypical behavior of each type of leader. For instance, dispositionally aggressive constraint
challengers’ use of violence as the preeminent crisis management technique is both expected given the
theoretical profile of such leaders developed in Chapter 2 and empirically typical for such leaders based on
the statistical results (Chapter 4). Importantly, this pattern of crisis responses is neither expected nor
empirically typical for the other categories of leaders. Selecting crises that exhibit the prototypical policy
responses of each type of leader facilitates an examination of the decision-making processes and
perceptions underlying their distinctive behavior. Coupling such studies with an examination of the
processes underlying atypical policy responses for various categories of leaders would allow causal
to military intervention in the early 1960s and the early 1980s: during both presidencies, military leaders were still reeling from a costly land war in Asia (first Korea, then Vietnam) that made them very reluctant to agree to military intervention (particularly involving ground forces) unless overwhelming force was committed. Furthermore, actual or anticipated opposition from Congress and the American public to the use of force attended at least three of the four crises (with Libya a potential exception). In addition, the United States clearly enjoyed a favorable military balance with respect to the immediate target country in each case (although the possibility of intervention or escalation by a more powerful third party such as China or the Soviet Union was an important component of decision-making in several cases). Advances by Communist forces in less developed countries served as the crisis trigger in three of four cases (again, Libya is the exception). Significantly, all four crises involved violent crisis triggers. Finally, due to the way in which crises were selected into the Brecher/Wilkenfeld data set, these cases all involved perceptions among the highest level decision-makers of short decision time, threat to basic values, and a high probability of involvement in military hostilities. By no means were these four crisis situations identical, but the parallel nature of certain key situational features allows some degree of control over extraneous factors that may be capable of producing some variation in the decision-making processes under investigation.

A combination of primary and secondary sources was utilized in each case study. Archival research was conducted at the Kennedy and Reagan presidential libraries during inferences to be drawn with greater confidence and comprehensiveness; the study of atypical cases is therefore an important priority for future research in this area.

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Spring, 2001. Much more primary source material was available for the Kennedy cases than for the Reagan cases; as a result, it was necessary to rely upon key officials' memoirs (e.g., Weinberger, Shultz) to a greater degree in the Reagan cases. Obviously such sources present some special validity problems; these will be considered in the context of general reliability and validity issues in the following paragraphs.

Since evaluating several of the process-related hypotheses requires the assessment of leaders' perceptions and beliefs, a few words about the special difficulties of such research, and how these challenges will be handled in this project, are in order. When one is seeking to assess leaders' beliefs and perceptions through memoirs, meeting minutes, private statements to others, and perhaps behavior, one obviously must be extremely vigilant concerning the biasing influence of several factors. These factors include, but are not limited to, the following: the desire to present an acceptable or admirable image to the public or to one's inner circle, the distinction between "selling" certain policies or viewpoints and actually favoring them, and "hindsight bias" or simply incomplete memories concerning the beliefs, statements, and events in question.

Obviously, different types of sources are more or less susceptible to various sorts of biases. For instance, accounts contained in memoirs written for public consumption are particularly likely to be influenced by self-serving motives. For these reasons, it is important to emphasize the author's intention to err on the side of caution when drawing inferences regarding leaders' perceptions, and to make weaknesses, gaps, and potential biases in the empirical record explicit where these arise. Alternative interpretations for the evidence will be presented, along with clear assessments of the implications of identified weaknesses for the validity and testability of specific hypotheses. Descriptions
of key events and statements will be cross-checked with corroborating or conflicting
evidence where possible (this is particularly vital when relying on memoirs).

In order to maintain parallel structure and to preserve the reliability of the
measurement strategies, cases will be examined in parallel fashion, according to George’s
(1979) method of structured, focused comparison. This requires the same set of
questions to be asked concerning each case. These questions are as follows:

*Perceived Constraints*

Is there evidence that the leader perceives himself to be constrained by the preferences of
key domestic actors, by institutional checks on authority, or by normative guidelines for
dealing with disputes? Or are such potential constraints either ignored altogether, or seen
as illegitimate and national interest-threatening obstacles to be overcome?

*Strategies For Dealing With Opposition*

Is there anticipated or actual domestic or international opposition to the leader’s preferred
response(s)? If so, how does the leader deal with, and perceive the motives of, this
opposition? Does the leader attempt to achieve consensus or to compromise among
competing views?

*Generation of Response Options*

What types of response options (e.g., diplomatic, economic, military) are considered by
the leader? Do these emerge from the leader’s own belief system, from the preferences
of other actors, or some combination of these sources? How extensively (if at all) does
the leader search for information regarding the views of key domestic actors? What is
the relationship between violent and non-violent instruments, in the leader’s mind (e.g.,
must violent responses be preceded or accompanied by non-violent techniques?) Which
options are either implicitly or explicitly rejected, and why? How quickly does the leader embrace a specific definition of the crisis situation and a preferred set of policy responses? Is there change over time in the leader’s problem representation and response preferences, or do these remain resistant to change?

**Perceptions of the Crisis Adversary**

How does the leader perceive the motives and character of the other party (or parties) to the crisis? Does the leader recognize ambiguity or complexity in the actions, interests, and motives of the other actor(s)? Are the interests and objectives of the other actor(s) viewed as amenable to compromise or negotiation? Is the clash of interests underlying the crisis viewed as zero-sum or positive-sum?

**Hypothesis Generation Questions**

In general, what else is going on in this case? Do certain variables appear to be having an important impact on decision-making, despite expectations that they would be relatively unimportant? Are any of the expected causal arrows reversed or absent? Are the expectations simply wrong, or are there extraordinary circumstances in this case that lead to the conclusion that the general “rule” still holds, though its scope conditions must be further circumscribed?

The precise empirical “signposts,” or evaluative criteria, utilized in testing the process-related hypotheses in the context of the Kennedy and Reagan cases are discussed in the introductory sections of Chapters 5 and 6.
Conclusion

In summary, this project utilizes a multi-method research design in order to evaluate the hypotheses drawn from the interactive framework developed in Chapter 2. General patterns relevant to the output-related hypotheses will be examined through a statistical analysis of foreign policy crises. The perceptions and decision-making processes underlying these policy outputs will be investigated through case study analysis of four foreign policy crises, allowing both the testing of the process-related hypotheses and the generation of new hypotheses.

The next three chapters present the results of the empirical research. Chapter 4 focuses on the statistical analysis of foreign policy crises. Chapters 5 and 6 present the results of the case studies involving President Kennedy and President Reagan, respectively.
The comparisons that serve as the focus of this project (differences in the crisis behavior of various categories of leaders, holding power in different types of regimes) can be visualized in terms of a six-cell matrix.\(^1\) Table 4.1 identifies the specific leaders falling into each cell of this matrix, along with their countries and the number of foreign policy crises in which they each were involved. The distribution of leaders across these cells suggests that within democracies, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters are slightly more common, and within autocracies, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers are somewhat more prevalent (at a minimum, it is accurate to say that democracies and autocracies have divergent modal categories of leadership style). However, this apparent difference is not statistically significant (\(\tau_c = -.175, p = .209\)). A more precise test (correlating regime type with leaders' scores on the composite index of willingness to challenge constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions) suggests the presence of a weak relationship between leadership style and regime type (\(r = -.209, p = .098\)). Such a relationship would be consistent with some research suggesting that democracies and autocracies favor the selection of different types of leaders.

\(^{1}\) Of course, the more precise comparisons called for by the hypotheses would produce a four-cell matrix (dispositionally pacific constraint respecters vs. dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers, in democracies vs. autocracies).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIME TYPE</th>
<th>LEADERSHIP STYLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autocracies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leaders = 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crises = 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leaders = 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crises = 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bush (2) (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Demirel (1) (Turkey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Erhard (0) (West Germany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Johnson (8) (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kiesinger (0) (West Germany)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nehru (4) (India)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trejos (0) (Costa Rica)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trudeau (0) (Canada)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Truman (8) (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leaders = 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crises = 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leaders = 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crises = 29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Identification of Leaders, Countries, and Number of Crises by Regime Type and Leadership Style

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leaders (e.g., democratic systems reward leaders who exhibit greater pragmatism and contextual sensitivity) through the prevailing processes of executive recruitment and governance (see Hermann and Kegley, 1995).

Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 show the centrality of violence to the crisis response for various types of leaders within democracies and autocracies, respectively. As with each of the following tables, frequencies represent individual crises, and are accompanied by column percentages. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 provide a graphical depiction of these patterns.

As Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1 reveal, within democracies there is a stark contrast between the very limited role violence plays in the crisis responses of dispositionally pacific constraint respecters, versus the central role of violence in the crisis responses of dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers. Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies used purely non-violent crisis management techniques in dealing with the vast majority (86.2%) of the crises they faced. The other three categories of leaders relied upon purely non-violent crisis management techniques in only 37.9%, 40%, and 18.2% of crises. Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies used violence as an important crisis management technique in only 10.3% of crises, and never used violence as the preeminent technique—violence was always supplemented by non-violent methods of conflict resolution. Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies, however, used violence as an important technique in 27.3% of crises, and used violence as the preeminent crisis management technique in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters</th>
<th>Moderates</th>
<th>Dispositionally Aggressive Constraint Challengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Violence</td>
<td>25 (86.2%)</td>
<td>11 (47.8%)</td>
<td>2 (18.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence Minor</td>
<td>1 (3.4%)</td>
<td>1 (4.3%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence Important</td>
<td>3 (10.3%)</td>
<td>4 (17.4%)</td>
<td>3 (27.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence Preeminent</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>7 (30.4%)</td>
<td>6 (54.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response, within Democracies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters</th>
<th>Moderates</th>
<th>Dispositionally Aggressive Constraint Challengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Violence</td>
<td>11 (37.9%)</td>
<td>23 (46.9%)</td>
<td>12 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence Minor</td>
<td>3 (10.3%)</td>
<td>6 (12.2%)</td>
<td>2 (6.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence Important</td>
<td>13 (44.8%)</td>
<td>15 (30.6%)</td>
<td>5 (16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence Preeminent</td>
<td>2 (6.9%)</td>
<td>5 (10.2%)</td>
<td>11 (36.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3: Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response, within Autocracies
Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response
(Within Democracies)

- No Violence
- Violence Minor
- Violence Important
- Violence Preeminent

![Graph showing the centrality of violence to the crisis response within democracies. The graph is divided into three categories: Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters, Moderates, and Dispositionally Aggressive Constraint Challengers. Each category is represented by a bar chart showing the percentage of foreign policy crises involving violence.]

Figure 4.1: Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response (Within Democracies)
Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response
(Within Autocracies)

Figure 4.2: Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response (Within Autocracies)
54.5% of all crises they faced. These differences are not only substantively compelling, but are statistically significant, providing very strong support for hypothesis H1: dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies used violence as a much less central crisis management tool than did dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies (\(\tau_c = .610, p = .000\)).

Hypothesis H2 also receives strong support. As shown in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.2, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies used violence as an important technique in 16.7% of crises, and used violence as the preeminent crisis management instrument in 36.7% of all crises. As with their counterparts in democracies, such leaders in autocratic states used violence as a significantly more central crisis management technique than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies (\(\tau_c = .511, p = .000\)).

As hypothesized in H3, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies used violence as a more central crisis management technique than their counterparts in democracies (\(\tau_c = -.497, p = .000\)). Comparing the first bar in Figure 4.1 with the first bar in Figure 4.2 illustrates this difference. Specifically, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies used violence as an important or preeminent technique in 51.7% of all crises, while their counterparts in democracies did so in only 10.3% of crises. Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies also relied upon completely non-violent crisis management techniques twice as often as did their autocratic counterparts (86.2% versus 37.9% of crises). Interestingly, although it is perhaps not surprising that such leaders in democracies never used violence as the preeminent technique, their demonstrably more aggressive autocratic counterparts only
did so extremely rarely (6.9% of crises), instead preferring to supplement their use of violence with non-violent methods of crisis management. As a comparison between the first bars of Figures 4.1 and 4.2 reveals, the reason for the significant difference in the crisis behavior of these two categories of leaders lies in the autocratic group’s use of violence as an *important or minor instrument* (not the preeminent instrument) in 55.1% of all crises confronted, contrasted with their democratic counterparts’ almost exclusive reliance upon non-violent methods.

Hypothesis H4 anticipates that there will be no difference in the centrality of violence employed by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies vs. autocracies (due to their presumed insensitivity to the political context). The results are consistent with these expectations (Tau-c = .207, p = .143). However, the directionality of this weak, non-significant relationship suggests that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies *may* feature violence at least slightly more centrally in their crisis responses than their counterparts in autocracies.

Breaking down crises according to the nature of the crisis trigger (non-violent versus violent) yields some interesting insights into the effects of situation on the crisis behavior of various types of leaders. First, it is clear that the severity of the crisis trigger exerts a “main effect” on the aggressiveness of the crisis response, across all categories of leaders: moving from non-violent to violent triggers leads to violence playing a more central role in the crisis response (Tau-c = .368, p = .000).

Figures 4.3 and 4.4 show how various types of leaders in democracies react when confronted with non-violent and violent crisis triggers, respectively. Recall that non-violent triggers include political and economic acts, external changes, and non-violent
Figure 4.3: Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response Within Democracies (Non-Violent Triggers)
Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response Within Democracies (Violent Triggers)

Figure 4.4: Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response Within Democracies (Violent Triggers)
military actions, such as mobilization or the movement of forces. Violent triggers involve either indirect violence (e.g., attacks on an ally or client state) or direct violence against one’s country or military forces. Notice that when faced with non-violent crisis triggers (Figure 4.3), dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies used purely non-violent crisis management techniques 100% of the time (19 of 19 crises). In contrast, the other categories of leaders reacted to these less severe, non-violent triggers with non-violent responses in only 40%, 55.6%, and 60% of crises. (Figure 4.5 illustrates the responses of autocratic leaders to non-violent crisis triggers). Instead, these other categories of leaders responded using violence as an important or preeminent technique in 60% of crises (dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies), 44.4% of crises (dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies), and 20% of crises (dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies).

As shown in Figure 4.4, under relatively severe provocation (indirect or direct violence) dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies still dealt with 60% of crises using exclusively non-violent crisis management mechanisms.² Compare this to non-violence rates of 30%, 23.5%, and 0% for the other categories of leaders under such circumstances—in countering these more provocative triggers, all categories except dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies used violence as an important or preeminent technique in the majority of the crises experienced (100% for dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies, 60% for dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies, and 76.5% for dispositionally pacific

² Even when such leaders used violence, it was always supplemented with non-violent crisis management techniques (violence was never used as the preeminent technique).
constraint respecters in autocracies). Figure 4.6 shows the responses of autocratic leaders to violent crisis triggers. In short, a comparison of Figures 4.3 and 4.5 (all leaders' responses to non-violent crisis triggers) and a comparison of Figures 4.4 and 4.6 (all leaders' responses to violent crisis triggers) clearly demonstrates the unique pacificity of dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies, across different types of situational pressures.

These clear differences between dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies, on the one hand, and all other categories of leaders, on the other, provide strong statistical support for hypotheses H1, H2, and H3 across both levels of trigger severity. Hypothesis H4 receives different degrees of support depending on the nature of the crisis trigger. The hypothesized lack of a significant difference in the centrality of violence employed by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies versus autocracies is supported when the crisis trigger is non-violent (Tau-c = .102, p = .702). There is, however, a significant difference between these groups when the trigger is violent (Tau-c = .320, p = .019), a finding that contradicts H4. These results seem to suggest that while there is no behavioral difference when the crisis trigger is less severe, at higher levels of provocation, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies respond more violently than their counterparts in autocratic systems. This is

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3 When the crisis trigger is violent, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies (Tau-c = .413, p = .008) and in democracies (Tau-c = .891, p = .000) use violence as a more central crisis management technique than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies. When the crisis trigger is non-violent, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies (Tau-c = .388, p = .012) and in democracies (Tau-c = .396, p = .033) also use violence as a more central crisis management technique than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies. Support for Hypothesis H3 is also robust across both levels of trigger severity: dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies used violence as a more central crisis management technique than such leaders in democracies both when the crisis trigger was non-violent (Tau-c = -.361, p = .014) and violent (Tau-c = -.444, p = .008).
Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response Within Autocracies (Non-Violent Triggers)

- No Violence
- Violence Minor
- Violence Important
- Violence Preeminent

Leadership Style

Figure 4.5: Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response Within Autocracies (Non-Violent Triggers)
Figure 4.6: Centrality of Violence to the Crisis Response Within Autocracies (Violent Triggers)
an intriguing, counterintuitive finding, and future research should explore the potential causal mechanisms underlying this apparent relationship.

Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response

Tables 4.4 and 4.5 show the severity of violence used by various types of leaders in democracies and autocracies, respectively, in dealing with foreign policy crises. Figures 4.7 and 4.8 illustrate these patterns graphically.

Clearly, these severity of violence patterns resemble the centrality of violence findings in key respects. This is not unexpected, since (as previously discussed) these dimensions are related. A crisis response entailing “no violence” on the centrality dimension will obviously generate an identical label on the severity dimension. However, once violence is employed, these dimensions may diverge sharply, yielding critical insight into the crisis responses of various types of leaders in democracies and autocracies. For instance, even though dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies and autocracies employ violence as an important or preeminent technique quite frequently (and are consequently statistically indistinguishable on the centrality dimension), it is possible that such leaders in democracies engage in significantly less severe forms of violence (e.g., only minor or serious clashes, while their autocratic counterparts are escalating to full-scale war), or vice versa. Even if these dimensions are found to “hang together” in predictable ways (e.g., if “violence preeminent” generally

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4 One must be cautious, however, not to draw too many conclusions from these results, since there were only 6 crises with violent triggers dealt with by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies. Future research should explore whether this statistically significant relationship is substantively meaningful.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters</th>
<th>Moderates</th>
<th>Dispositionally Aggressive Constraint Challengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Violence</td>
<td>25 (86.2%)</td>
<td>11 (47.8%)</td>
<td>2 (18.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Clashes</td>
<td>1 (3.4%)</td>
<td>3 (13.0%)</td>
<td>2 (18.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Clashes</td>
<td>2 (6.9%)</td>
<td>3 (13.0%)</td>
<td>4 (36.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Scale War</td>
<td>1 (3.4%)</td>
<td>6 (26.1%)</td>
<td>3 (27.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response, within Democracies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters</th>
<th>Moderates</th>
<th>Dispositionally Aggressive Constraint Challengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Violence</td>
<td>11 (37.9%)</td>
<td>23 (46.9%)</td>
<td>12 (40.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor Clashes</td>
<td>7 (24.1%)</td>
<td>7 (14.3%)</td>
<td>3 (10.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious Clashes</td>
<td>7 (24.1%)</td>
<td>10 (20.4%)</td>
<td>7 (23.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Scale War</td>
<td>4 (13.8%)</td>
<td>9 (18.4%)</td>
<td>8 (26.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response, within Autocracies

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Figure 4.7: Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response (Within Democracies)
Figure 4.8: Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response (Within Autocracies)
means “full-scale war”), this in itself constitutes a contribution to our understanding of crisis behavior. In short, the severity of the violence employed in dealing with crises is distinct enough from how central a role violence plays in crisis responses that each of these dependent variables deserves to be the subject of comprehensive analysis and discussion.

Table 4.4 and Figure 4.7 demonstrate the dramatic differences within democracies in the severity of violence employed by different types of leaders. Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies used no violence in 86.2% of all crises confronted, and escalated to full-scale war only once (3.4% of crises). In contrast, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies refrained from using violence in only 18.2% of crises, preferring instead to engage in minor clashes (18.2% of crises), serious clashes (36.4% of crises) and full-scale war (27.3% of crises). These differences in the severity of violence employed are statistically significant (Tau-c = .550, p = .000), providing strong support for Hypothesis H5.

Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies do not merely employ less severe forms of violence than dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies, however. As hypothesized in H6 and H7, this category of leaders also exhibits significantly less violent crisis responses than the other major categories of leaders under investigation (compare bar 1 in Figure 4.7 with bars 1 and 3 in Figure 4.8). Specifically, the crisis responses of dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in

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5 The leader was Gandhi, and the case was the second India/Pakistan crisis over Kashmir, during which India responded to Pakistani armor movements across cease-fire lines by invading West Pakistan on September 5, 1965. Importantly, Gandhi used violence as an important (not preeminent) crisis management technique, supplemented with non-violent methods.
democracies involve significantly less severe forms of violence than the responses of both dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies (\(\tau_c = .479, p = .000\)) and dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies (\(\tau_c = -.472, p = .000\)). Consequently, hypotheses H6 and H7 receive strong support.

Hypothesis H8 anticipates that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies and autocracies will not differ in the severity of violence employed in dealing with crises. This hypothesis also receives strong support (\(\tau_c = .124, p = .387\)). Although dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies avoided violence more often than did their democratic counterparts, both categories of leaders resorted to full-scale war in exactly 27% of all crises, and became involved in serious clashes in another sizable chunk of crises (23.3% for such leaders in autocracies, 36.4% for those in democracies).

Breaking down crises according to the nature of the crisis trigger sheds light on the effects of varying degrees of situational provocation on the severity of violence employed by various categories of leaders. As with the centrality of violence dimension, it is first important to note that the nature of the crisis trigger exerts a main effect on the severity of violence employed, for all categories of leaders: moving from non-violent to violent triggers is associated with an increase in the severity of violence employed in the crisis response (\(\tau_c = .376, p = .000\)). Figures 4.9 and 4.11 show the severity of violence in the crisis response for various types of leaders in democracies and autocracies, respectively, when the trigger is of the non-violent variety. When the crisis trigger is non-violent, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies avoid using any form of violence in 100% of crises; compare this with non-violence rates of
60% (dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies), 40% (dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies) and 55.6% (dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies). Once again, the most dramatic contrast is within democracies, where dispositionally pacific constraint respecters never use violence of any form, and dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers respond to a majority of instances of non-violent provocation with serious clashes (20% of crises) and full scale war (40% of crises).6

When the crisis trigger is violent (see Figures 4.10 and 4.12), dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies respond by engaging in serious clashes or full-scale war only 30% of the time (compared with 66.7% for dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies, 65% for dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies, and 58.8% for dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies). In short, regardless of whether they are faced with non-violent or violent crisis triggers, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies stand out as uniquely pacific, relative to other leaders, in terms of the severity of violence employed.

These compelling substantive distributions and percentages are supported by statistical results, which generally provide solid support for hypotheses H5 through H8 across both levels of trigger severity. For the set of cases involving non-violent crisis triggers, each hypothesis receives strong support: H5 (\Tau-c = .396, p = .033); H6 (\Tau-c = .388, p = .012); H7 (\Tau-c = -.361, p = .014); H8 (\Tau-c = .224, p = .419). When the crisis trigger is violent, however, there is slightly less support for certain hypotheses, as

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6 Once again, caution must be exercised when drawing inferences from these data, since only 5 crises with non-violent triggers were dealt with by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies.
Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response Within Democracies (Non-Violent Triggers)

- No Violence
- Minor Clashes
- Serious Clashes
- Full Scale War

Percent of Foreign Policy Crises

Leadership Style

Figure 4.9: Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response Within Democracies (Non-Violent Triggers)
Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response Within Democracies (Violent Triggers)

![Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response Within Democracies (Violent Triggers)](image)

**Figure 4.10: Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response Within Democracies (Violent Triggers)**

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Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response Within Autocracies (Non-Violent Triggers)

Dispositionally Pacific Constraint Respecters

Moderates

Dispositionally Aggressive Constraint Challengers

Leadership Style

Figure 4.11: Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response Within Autocracies (Non-Violent Triggers)
Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response Within Autocracies (Violent Triggers)

Figure 4.12: Severity of Violence in the Crisis Response Within Autocracies (Violent Triggers)
statistical significance does not quite reach the .05 level in several instances (H5: (Tau-c = .516, p = .018); H6: (Tau-c = .333, p = .054); H7: (Tau-c = -.357, p = .065)). H8, which states that there will be no difference in the severity of violence employed by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies vs. autocracies, still receives solid support when the crisis trigger is violent (Tau-c = .018, p = .909). This slight diminishing in the degree of support for Hypotheses H5, H6, and H7 under conditions of violent provocation suggests that differences in leaders’ crisis responses may be attenuated by strong external compulsion (consistent with Wolfers’ (1962) “fire in the house” analogy).

Table 4.6 provides a summary of the degree of support for hypotheses H1 through H8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HYPOTHESIS</th>
<th>ALL CRISSES</th>
<th>NON-VIOLENT TRIGGERS</th>
<th>VIOLENT TRIGGERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>S/M</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S/M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>M/W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>S</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key: S = Strong Support; M = Moderate Support; W = Weak Support; A = Evidence Runs Against Hypothesis
* Categorizing leaders based upon comparison group of leaders in the same region.

Table 4.6: Summary of Support for Hypotheses H1 through H8*
Ordered Probit Results

In order to test for the presence of a significant interaction effect involving leadership style and regime type while controlling for a number of other important actor- and system-level variables, ordered probit analyses were conducted. Table 4.7 shows the results of these tests for both dependent variables (centrality and severity of violence). Notice that several situational factors are significant predictors of the centrality and severity of violence: gravity of the value threatened, nature of the crisis trigger, and possession of nuclear weapons by the crisis actor. Specifically, more grave threats (e.g., to a state’s existence, to a superpower’s political influence), violent crisis triggers, and the absence of nuclear weapons in the crisis actor’s arsenal lead to violence playing a more central role and taking more severe forms in the state’s crisis response. Also notice that after controlling for the effects of these important variables, the leadership style-regime type interaction term remains statistically significant in both equations.

These results underscore the need for, and promise of, an interactionist approach to understanding the effects of domestic structure. When the interaction term is taken out

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7 It should be noted that the evaluation of product terms using ordinal data (the level of measurement represented by the leadership style and regime type variables) is controversial. As Jaccard, Turrisi, and Wan state, “Strictly speaking, the regression approach with continuous variables assumes interval-level data. However, ordinal data may be analyzed if such data approximate interval-level characteristics. The core of the controversy is how close an approximation is needed for conclusions not to be suspect” (Jaccard, Turrisi, and Wan, 1990, p. 29).

8 Gravity of value threatened is not technically a situational factor, since Brecher and Wilkenfeld identify such threats based on leaders’ perceptions.

9 An alternative method of testing for the presence of interaction effects involves using a hierarchical F test that compares the $R^2$ values of the regression equation with and without the interaction term (see Jaccard, Turrisi, and Wan, pp. 18, 24). This test suggests a reduced level of significance for the interaction term ($p < .10$ for the centrality of violence dependent variable and $p < .25$ for the severity of violence). However, these tests are relying on the “pseudo $R^2$” values derived from the probit analysis, and may therefore be less reliable.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Centrality of Violence</th>
<th>Severity of Violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Style</td>
<td>.162 (.176)</td>
<td>.081 (.175)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regime Type of Crisis Actor</td>
<td>-.620 (.425)</td>
<td>-.553 (.421)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Style x Regime Type Interaction</td>
<td>.881** (.319)</td>
<td>.587* (.304)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravity of Value Threatened</td>
<td>.126* (.060)</td>
<td>.194** (.060)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Crisis Trigger</td>
<td>.857** (.219)</td>
<td>.793** (.216)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of Nuclear Weapons by Crisis Actor</td>
<td>-.627* (.304)</td>
<td>-1.06** (.312)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict Setting</td>
<td>-.119 (.234)</td>
<td>-.021 (.232)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System Polarity</td>
<td>-.349 (.249)</td>
<td>-.460b (.249)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regime Type of Crisis Adversary</td>
<td>.031 (.140)</td>
<td>-.080 (.140)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Discrepancy Between Actor and Adversary</td>
<td>.002 (.009)</td>
<td>.004 (.009)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Main entries are probit regression estimates; entries in parenthesis are standard errors. N = 145
* p < .05
** p < .01

Table 4.7: Effects of Leadership Style, Regime Type, and Control Variables on Centrality and Severity of Violence in Crisis Responses

*p = .054
b p = .065
of the equation—approximating how most research in this area has been done—leadership style is a significant predictor of the centrality and severity of violence employed (most likely due to the “dispositionally aggressive” component), while regime type is not significant for either dependent variable. The statistical significance of the interaction term indicates that the effects of leadership style on the aggressiveness of the crisis response vary as regime type changes. A substantive interpretation of the probit coefficients shows that when regime type = autocracy, the probit coefficient for the effect of leadership style on the centrality of violence is .162. This means that within autocracies, moving from dispositionally pacific constraint respecters (a value of 0) to dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers (a value of 2) leads to an increase in violence centrality of only .324 (on a four-point scale). However, when regime type = democracy, the probit coefficient for the effect of leadership style on the centrality of violence jumps to 1.04. This indicates that within democracies, moving from dispositionally pacific constraint respecters to dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers entails an increase in violence centrality of 2.08 points on the same four-point scale. This two-point difference would move one from “no violence” to “violence important” or from “violence minor” to “violence preeminent.”

Interestingly, looking at this interaction from a different angle reveals a disordinal interaction between leadership style and regime type. When dispositionally pacific constraint respecters are in power, the probit coefficient for the effect of regime type on the centrality of violence is -.62. This indicates that as one moves from autocracies to democracies, the centrality of violence declines by .62. However, when dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers are in power, the probit coefficient changes its sign:
moving from autocracies to democracies leads to an increase in the centrality of violence of 1.14. In short, democracy is pacifying for one category of leaders and leads to greater war-proneness for another. As noted during the contingency table analysis, there is less theoretical justification and fewer cases to support the apparent finding that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies are somewhat more violence-prone than their counterparts in autocracies. But all of the statistical analyses performed strongly suggest, at a minimum, that the pacifying effects of democracy for one group (dispositionally pacific constraint respecters) are clearly absent for a second group (dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers).
CHAPTER 5
KENNEDY CASES

Introduction

Perhaps the most striking finding to emerge from the statistical analysis of foreign policy crises in Chapter 4 is the extraordinary pacificity of dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies. Such leaders never used violence as the preeminent crisis management technique and only rarely featured violence as an important technique, even when faced with violent crisis triggers. This exceptional pacificity distinguished dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies, both statistically and substantively, from all other combinations of leadership style and regime type that were examined.

The critical question now becomes, why? What causal processes are responsible for the extraordinary pacificity of such leaders? This pacificity was in fact anticipated by the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2, for a set of very specific process-related reasons. Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies were expected to perceive themselves to be constrained by the network of potential pacifying constraints characteristic of democratic systems. Only when such leaders held power in democracies, it was thought, would leaders' dispositional pacificity and sensitivity to potential pacifying constraints be coupled with a dense network of such constraints.
But the statistical results have only identified a set of remarkable policy outcomes, not the underlying processes that produced these outcomes. It is now necessary to put the process-related hypotheses derived from Chapter 2’s theoretical framework to the test. This chapter is designed for that purpose.

President John F. Kennedy’s scores on the composite index described in Chapter 3 (comprised of task/interpersonal emphasis, need for power, distrust, and nationalism) identified him as a dispositionally pacific constraint respecter. That is, he scored in the lowest third of all leaders in the North American region on this index of leaders’ willingness to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions. Recall that low need for power, an interpersonal emphasis, low distrust, and low nationalism are the leadership traits associated with the ideal-typical dispositionally pacific constraint respecter. Categorization as such a leader requires low scores on the preponderance of these characteristics, relative to others in one’s region. The fact that President Kennedy held power in the United States (a democracy) places him in that category of leaders whose strikingly pacific behavior remains to be explained.

In order to examine the causal processes responsible for such leaders’ pacific behavior, two cases were chosen that took on “extreme” (but not unexpected) values on the dependent variable. That is, two foreign policy crises (Laos, 1961 and Vietnam, 1961) were selected in which Kennedy responded to violent crisis triggers with purely non-violent crisis management techniques: precisely what would be expected from the ideal-typical “dispositionally pacific constraint respecter” in action. The decision-making processes and perceptions underlying these prototypical policy responses will be the focus of this chapter’s analysis.
Empirical Signposts

The following section identifies the empirical "signposts," or evaluative criteria, that will be used to determine whether specific hypotheses are supported or contradicted by the evidence in the context of the Kennedy cases. Each process-related hypothesis is listed, followed by a specification of the precise empirical evidence that would be required to establish either that the hypothesis in question is supported, or is not supported, by the evidence.

HRI: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will search for information about the views of key domestic actors concerning responses to the crisis situation, unless the leader perceives that these views have already been effectively communicated to him/her.

One can conclude that this hypothesis is supported by the evidence if there is an observable pattern of multiple instances of the leader probing and seeking elaboration of the views of intra- and extra-administration actors (e.g., the Secretary of State, members of Congress, the American public) concerning how the crisis should be defined and dealt with. Such an information search could involve either the direct questioning of the key domestic actors involved or the indirect querying of others concerning "what Congress would accept" or "how the American people feel" concerning the issue. If reliable personal reflections or statements indicate that the leader perceives he already knows the views of these actors, then the lack of an information search does not disconfirm this hypothesis. If, however, there is no evidence that the leader perceives he knows the preferences of key domestic actors and if no information search is conducted, this would
constitute strong evidence against this hypothesis. In the absence of an extensive pattern of searching for other actors’ views, any probing or questioning by the leader indicating that he is seriously soliciting others’ viewpoints or trying to determine what key domestic actors would prefer or accept in terms of policy responses would still provide some (though not conclusive) support for HR1.

Criteria for evaluating Hypotheses HR2 and HR3 will be considered together.

**HR2**: Where the leader discerns clear consensus among domestic political actors in favor of (or against) a particular foreign policy approach or action, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters (a) will perceive themselves to be constrained to act according to this consensus, and (b) will choose the consensus approach.

**HR3**: Where the leader discerns no clear consensus among these actors regarding the appropriate policy approach or action, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters (a) will perceive that this lack of consensus prevents them from making a decisive policy choice that largely favors the preferences of one set of actors over another, and (b) will either seek to identify and implement a compromise among the competing viewpoints that satisfies the minimal aspirations of key domestic actors (deferring action where no such compromise appears viable), or “table” the issue outright, putting off any decision until an acceptable compromise approach clearly emerges.¹

¹ Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters may pursue foreign policy actions that do not conform to the above patterns (e.g., actions that do not represent a consensus or compromise approach) if either a) an extreme threat is perceived to the state’s vital interests, which the leader believes cannot be dealt with using any means other than the chosen response, or b) domestic political actors favor violent responses which the leader wishes to temporarily delay or supplement with non-violent methods.
The first portion of each of these hypotheses (HR2a and HR3a) involves 
perceptions on the part of the leader that his policy options are constrained by the
preferences of key domestic actors. The second component of each hypothesis (HR2b
and HR3b) focuses on the leader's behavior: does the leader act as if his decision-making
were constrained by the policy preferences of others?

One can conclude that HR2a and HR3a are supported if there is evidence, based
on reliable personal reflections or statements, that the leader perceived himself to be
constrained to bring his own policy preferences into conformity with (or at least into
some form of compromise with) those of key domestic actors. That is, that he believed
the support and/or permission of these groups was essential, and that it would be
illegitimate or unwise to proceed with decision-making concerning the crisis response
without taking into account these actors' policy preferences. Direct evidence that the
leader perceived he had no choice but to abide by any perceived consensus policy
approach (HR2a) and that he could not decisively "take sides" in any disagreement
among key domestic actors (HR3a) would constitute strong support for these perceptual
elements.

If there is evidence that the leader knew about or perceived that he understood key
domestic actors' policy preferences and yet chose to pursue policy actions that were
inconsistent with these preferences (contrary either to the consensus view or to the views
of one key domestic faction), this would constitute weak to moderate evidence against
HR2a and HR3a. Conclusions regarding HR2a and HR3a in this context obviously
require an inferential leap from behavior to perceptions about constraint; hence the
judgment that such evidence only implies weak to moderate evidence against these
hypotheses. In contrast, there is strong evidence against HR2a and HR3a if, regardless of whether or not the leader had knowledge of, or believed he understood, the preferences of key domestic actors, it can be demonstrated that the leader believed he was under no obligation to incorporate these preferences into the policymaking process. That is, reliable personal reflections or statements by the leader to the effect that it would be illegitimate or unwise for these actors’ preferences to drive his decision-making, or that he did not need the permission or support of these groups to decide upon and implement the state’s policy responses, would be the key evidence against HR2a and HR3a.

HR2b and HR3b anticipate that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will attempt to bring their policies into conformity with the perceived preferences of key domestic groups. Strong support for these hypotheses would involve a clear connection between the leader’s perceptions of the political landscape (clearly communicated without contextual reasons to suspect the validity of these stated perceptions) and his policy decisions. That is, the leader must make policy decisions in accord with what he perceives to be a consensus or acceptable compromise approach (HR2b and HR3b), and must decide not to make any policy decisions when he perceives that no such consensus or compromise exists (HR3b). If the leader makes policy decisions that are clearly contrary to what he perceives to be the preferences of at least one key set of domestic actors, this constitutes evidence against these hypotheses.

HR4: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will view the other party to the crisis not as having unalterably malevolent intentions and implacable hostility towards the
leader’s state, but as a potential negotiating partner with legitimate interests and concerns that might be accommodated.

One can conclude that HR4 is supported if the evidence indicates the leader views the other party to the crisis as an entity that has legitimate interests or non-hostile intentions, or as an opponent that could be reasoned with, and might alter its goals or intentions through communication and negotiation. There should be clear evidence of the leader speaking about (or thinking about) the crisis adversary in these terms. Behavioral evidence that appears to indicate such perceptions (e.g., attempts to negotiate and pursue diplomacy) could also provide important support for this hypothesis, to the degree that alternative explanations for such behavior can be eliminated.

If the leader is found to be viewing the other party to the crisis in any light other than that described above, HC4 is not supported. The strongest disconfirming evidence would involve the leader viewing the crisis adversary as an entity devoid of good intentions and legitimate interests—an entity that seeks to do the leader’s state grave harm and cannot be placated through negotiation, communication, or enhanced understanding.

HR5: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will view the use of force as a last resort, and b) will therefore seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques.

One can conclude that HR5a is supported if there is evidence that the leader perceives there are both non-violent and violent options available as viable crisis responses, and the leader perceives that it is necessary to exhaust the non-violent options,
and insure that these will not satisfactorily solve the crisis, before undertaking the violent ones. If, on the other hand, the evidence indicates that the leader perceives there are both non-violent and violent options available as viable crisis responses, but perceives that it is not necessary to first exhaust all non-violent methods, and insure that these will not satisfactorily solve the crisis, before proceeding with any violent responses, then HR5a is clearly not supported.

HR5b is supported if the leader is clearly seeking to use all non-violent instruments in the state’s “arsenal” of policy responses before resorting to violent crisis management techniques. The attempt to use these means, rather than policy actions themselves, is the key criterion here (although the attempt will generally translate into some concrete, non-violent policy action).² HR5b is not supported if the evidence indicates the leader does not attempt to use all non-violent instruments at the state’s disposal (e.g., diplomacy, use of IGOs, threats and non-violent military actions) to deal with the crisis before resorting to the use of violent methods.

HR6: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and b) will therefore devote considerable effort to insuring that violent responses are accompanied by non-violent actions.

² Exceptions to this general rule might exist: one could imagine a serious (perhaps back-channel) attempt to negotiate, for instance, which is “nipped in the bud” by the opponent’s rejection or somehow hampered by bureaucratic entanglements and therefore may not show up in an appraisal of the state’s foreign policy responses as an instance of negotiation or diplomacy. For this reason, attempts to use non-violent crisis management methods, rather than the successful implementation of these techniques, is the key standard here.
HR6a is supported if the empirical record demonstrates that the leader believes violent techniques cannot be used in isolation, and must be accompanied by non-violent crisis responses for moral, practical, or other reasons. HC6a is not supported, however, if there is evidence that the leader believes violent crisis management techniques may be used in isolation.

HR6b is supported if the evidence suggests the leader is devoting considerable attention to making sure violent policy responses are accompanied by non-violent actions. “Considerable attention,” or “great effort” is here defined as specific suggestions or instructions to administration officials insisting that non-violent responses be utilized in concert with violent actions. If the leader issues no such instructions and exhibits no concern about the need to find a way to supplement violent responses to the crisis with non-violent methods, HR6b is not supported.

HR7: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will doubt the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis.

HR7 is supported if there is evidence that the leader has doubts about whether military force as the predominant or exclusive instrument will really bring the crisis to a satisfactory resolution. The best evidence in favor of HR7 would involve not simply vague doubts about the efficacy of force, but clear beliefs on the part of the leader that military force is only likely to make the crisis worse or is incapable of solving the crisis (or the conditions underlying it) without considerable use of non-violent instruments. If

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3 Again, the focus here is on attempts and efforts, rather than on ultimate policy outputs, due both to the potential disconnect between policy decisions and implementation, and to the focus on leaders' behavior in this project.

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the record indicates, however, that the leader believes military force alone or as the
predominant instrument will succeed in achieving the state’s goals in the context of the
crisis situation (that is, will resolve the crisis), then HR7 is not supported.

Case #1: Laos, 1961

Historical Context and Overview

In December, 1960, the Soviet Union began to provide equipment and advisers to
the Pathet Lao, the Communist faction within Laos. On March 9, 1961, Pathet Lao
forces, with Vietminh support, launched a major offensive. The Royal Laotian Army
retreated, and the Pathet Lao threatened to overrun the strategic Mekong valley, from
which, American officials believed, South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Thailand could be
endangered. This offensive triggered a foreign policy crisis for the United States.

On March 23 President Kennedy held a televised news conference and warned
that if the USSR and North Vietnam did not cease their support of the Pathet Lao, the
U.S. and its SEATO allies would have to “consider their response.” Kennedy authorized
a number of steps that prepared the way for the possible introduction of U.S. ground
forces: the movement of the 7th Fleet into the South China Sea, placing combat troops on
alert in Okinawa, moving 500 marines with helicopters in Thailand, and stockpiling
supplies and equipment at bases near the Laos border. Simultaneously, Kennedy
supported British proposals for a joint U.S.-USSR appeal for a cease-fire followed by an
international conference on Laos.

On March 27 the SEATO Council met, at the request of the United States, and
issued a statement that SEATO would take appropriate action if peaceful efforts were

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unsuccessful in resolving the crisis. The situation in Laos continued to deteriorate throughout April, as Pathet Lao forces advanced toward the Mekong River, triggering a crisis for Thailand. On 24 April, the Soviet Union agreed to cosponsor the U.K. proposal. A cease-fire between the Laotian government and the Pathet Lao took effect on May 3, and on May 16 the Geneva Conference on Laos began, terminating the crisis for the United States.⁴

Analysis

Information Search

Hypothesis HR1 anticipates that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will search for information about the views of key domestic actors concerning responses to the crisis situation, unless the leader perceives that these views have already been effectively communicated to him/her. The evidence indicates that throughout this crisis, President Kennedy engaged in a remarkably extensive search for information—not only concerning the views of key domestic actors, but also regarding the developing situation in Laos, the consequences of various potential courses of action, and the preferences of important international actors (e.g., FRUS, 1994, pp. 45-47, 78, 142-143, 164). Kennedy met with members of Congress at least twice, and solicited their views on how to deal with developments in Laos (FRUS, 1994, pp. 146-147; Newhouse, p. 26; Kennedy handwritten notes). A March 9, 1961 meeting provides some typical examples of Kennedy’s drive to determine his advisors’ views (with an emphasis on defining areas of

⁴ This crisis overview (including identification of the trigger, primary U.S. response, and resolution of the crisis) is based on the account contained in Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, p 184.
consensus and disagreement): “The President then asked for the last time if there is any disagreement around the table,” (FRUS, 1994, pp. 78-79) and “The President then asked the group if there was any partition of Laos that the people around the conference table felt we could agree upon” (FRUS, 1994, p. 79). Kennedy repeatedly subjected the Joint Chiefs of Staff and other military officials to a barrage of questions that forced them to articulate, elaborate, and sometimes revise their advice (e.g., FRUS, 1994, pp. 77-78). As the crisis was coming to a head (and after Kennedy had already held extensive meetings with White House and Congressional officials), the President flew to New York on April 27 to give a speech to the American Newspaper Publishers Association. Interestingly, even at this late date, Kennedy used the trip to gather opinions from trusted sources including General Douglas MacArthur, Dag Hammarskjold, and Adlai Stevenson (Newhouse, p. 26; Higgins, 1964; Schlesinger, 1965, p. 339). These meetings were part of, as Newhouse notes, “a general effort on Kennedy’s part to get a wide range of opinion” (Newhouse, p. 26). Kennedy perceived that he already understood the American public’s views regarding Laos, so an information search regarding public opinion was unnecessary (Schlesinger, p. 333; Roberts, 1963, p. 30; Higgins, 1964).

Clearly, the sort of information search envisioned in HR1 emerges powerfully in the accounts of Kennedy’s handling of the Laos crisis. However, it is important to note that the motivation behind this information search is not clear. Was Kennedy seeking to map out a range of key actors’ preferences for political purposes (as the hypothesis assumes but does not directly state), or was he merely attempting to approximate “complete information,” by consulting a host of experts, as notions of rational or optimal decision-making processes would encourage? Some of the evidence presented below
suggests that Kennedy did indeed perceive himself to be constrained by the preferences of key domestic actors—which implies that he regarded gathering their views as a vital political exercise. But there is also evidence that Kennedy was very focused on developing a complete picture of the crisis situation and potential alternatives, so as to identify the best possible course of action for U.S. interests. In short, a combination of factors apparently motivated this information search. Therefore, while HR1 is clearly supported, the validity of the logic underlying this hypothesis cannot be firmly established, and these assumptions appear to be in need of partial revision.

**Perceptions of, and Responses to, Domestic Constraints**

Hypothesis HR2 states that where dispositionally pacific constraint respecters perceive clear consensus among domestic political actors in favor of (or against) a particular foreign policy approach or action, such leaders (a) will perceive themselves to be constrained to act according to this consensus, and (b) will choose the consensus approach. In the Laos crisis of 1961, only one goal can be described as achieving the status of "consensus opinion" among domestic political groups: the United States must not lose Laos to Communism.\(^5\) The "domino theory" was strongly believed by administration officials (including Kennedy himself),\(^6\) and Congressional leaders,

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\(^5\) As discussed below, there was much disagreement concerning the means by which this goal should be pursued. But it is important to note that even in the arena of goals, beyond this minimal goal of not losing Laos to Communism, there was much disagreement among domestic actors concerning the type of Laos the U.S. should seek to create and defend. For instance, whether the U.S. should support the neutralized Laos represented by Souvanna (the Kennedy Administration's ultimate approach) or a more "pro-Western" Laos under Phoumi (the Eisenhower Administration's goal) remained a subject of contention.

\(^6\) Evidence for the validity of the Domino Theory was quite compelling in the case of Laos: the Mekong Valley (and Laotian territory in general) was a prized strategic asset which, if captured by the Communists,
especially the Republican opposition, urged a tough stance against Communism in Laos (Hilsman, 1967, p. 134; *N.Y. Herald Tribune*, April 6; AP reports on April 6: pp. 32, 38 (Rep. Halleck), p. 67 (Sen. Dirksen)). Kennedy believed that the American public shared this desire to get tough on Communism (Schlesinger, p. 333; Roberts, p. 30). The President appears to have been quite sensitive to Republican charges of being “soft on Communism,” and confided to close associates that his personal political fortunes could never survive the loss of Laos: “Kennedy told Rostow that Eisenhower could stand the political consequences of Dien Bien Phu and the expulsion of the west from Vietnam in 1954 because the blame fell on the French; “I can’t take a 1954 defeat today.” (Schlesinger, p. 339).

Furthermore, he understood that the previous administration’s policies had committed the U.S. to Laos, and that American prestige, the SEATO Alliance, and the credibility of America’s commitments throughout the world were now on the line. In essence, despite his personal conviction that the U.S. should not have committed itself so deeply in Southeast Asia under the Eisenhower administration, President Kennedy felt constrained to operate within these existing parameters. He confessed as much to Arthur Schlesinger and Walter Lippmann over lunch on March 20, 1961: “[Kennedy] remarked a little dourly that the United States was overcommitted in Southeast Asia but that he had to deal with facts as they were. It was indispensable to prevent “an immediate communist takeover.” We must hold Vientiane in order to have a basis for negotiation. “We cannot and will not accept any visible humiliation over Laos.” (Schlesinger, p. 332).

could serve as an excellent base of operations for infiltration of, and attacks upon, South Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia.

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Kennedy's statements and actions throughout the crisis indicate that he had indeed embraced the consensus policy goal of preventing the immediate Communist takeover of Laos.\(^7\)

This evidence provides support for Hypotheses HR2a and HR2b, subject to some important qualifications. Clearly, Kennedy was directly aware (or perceived) that domestic actors such as the general public, Congress, respected members of the Eisenhower administration, the foreign policy bureaucracies, and his top advisers were generally unified behind the minimal consensus goal of preventing an immediate Communist takeover of Laos. He articulated and pursued policy goals consistent with the consensus view (as HR2b anticipates), and he expressed concern to close associates about the unacceptable domestic political consequences of losing Laos to Communism, which suggests that he felt quite constrained by domestic pressures to adhere closely to this consensus objective (as HR2a anticipates). However, Kennedy also indicated that he understood the international constraints inherent in the Laos situation: that regardless of his personal wishes, U.S. prestige was now committed to keeping Laos non-Communist, and that acquiescence in the loss of Laos would have grave consequences for the SEATO alliance, the credibility of U.S. commitments elsewhere, and the fate of the Free World in general. Thus, it appears Kennedy made this “consensus goal” his own both because he

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\(^7\) For instance, Kennedy further placed U.S. prestige on the line (a “strategically self-imposed constraint”) by holding a press conference on March 23 in which he said “we strongly and unreservedly support the goal of a neutral and independent Laos... If there is to be a peaceful solution, there must be a cessation of the present armed attacks by externally supported communists. If these attacks do not stop, those who support a truly neutral Laos will have to consider their response... No one should doubt our resolution on this point... The security of all southeast Asia will be endangered if Laos loses its neutral independence. Its own safety runs with the safety of us all—in real neutrality observed by all... I know that every American will want his country to honor its obligations to the point that freedom and security of the free world and ourselves may be achieved.”
felt constrained by the perceived preferences of domestic political groups and because he believed the international consequences of losing Laos would be extremely negative. In short, he perceived that the loss of Laos would entail unacceptable domestic and international costs, and consequently sought to avoid this outcome at all costs. There is insufficient evidence to tease apart the relative influence of domestic and international pressures in this case; it is not clear how Kennedy would have responded if these pressures had diverged, rather than converged, in terms of policy goals. Consequently, although Hypotheses HR2a and HR2b are nominally supported, the deeper assumption implicitly underlying these expectations—that constraint respecters will submit to the consensus views of domestic political actors regardless of countervailing international pressures—cannot be tested in this case.

Once one moved beyond this limited area of consensus concerning one key goal (not allowing Laos to fall to Communism) to a consideration of the means by which the U.S. should obtain this objective, views diverged sharply. Congressional leaders of both parties made clear their opposition to the introduction of U.S. ground forces into Laos (both through the media and in personal meetings and correspondence with the President) (Schlesinger, pp. 338-39; Hilsman, p. 134; Newhouse, p. 26; Kennedy handwritten notes). Chester Bowles' memorandum of a key meeting between the President and Congressional leaders on April 27 notes that “while expressing different shades of views, with Mansfield at one end of spectrum and Bridges at other, there was complete unanimity and strong view among all that, even recognizing possible consequences to our position in remainder Southeast Asia, we should not introduce US forces into Laos” (FRUS, 1994, p. 147).
Kennedy also perceived that the public would react quite negatively to the use of American troops in Laos, particularly after the Bay of Pigs failure. As the President told Star writer Marguerite Higgins, “I was ready to commit troops to Laos—a limited commitment to hold certain key points. But how can I go into Laos after the Bay of Pigs? How could I explain intervening militarily in a place thousands of miles away when I wouldn’t intervene in a place 90 miles off our shores? The American people would never understand” (Higgins, 1964). Kennedy repeated this same reasoning to Richard Nixon when Nixon urged a commitment of American air power to Laos. More generally, Kennedy perceived contradictory attitudes among the American public concerning foreign policy: the aforementioned strong desire to “get tough” on Communism, combined with a great reluctance to become involved in military action (Schlesinger, p. 333; Hall, 1971, p. 50; Roberts, p. 30).

Despite vocal opposition from Congress and anticipated opposition from the public, the State Department and several key advisors to the President (Harriman, Rostow, and the Laos Task Force) favored the limited introduction of ground forces into the Mekong Valley, in order to demonstrate U.S. resolve and provide bargaining leverage.
for a political settlement (Schlesinger, pp. 332, 337; Newhouse, p. 28). In a memorandum to President Kennedy reporting on the April 13 meeting of the Laos Task Force, Rostow emphasized the military and political deterioration of the situation in Laos and noted that, “It was the consensus of the meeting that you, Mr. Rusk, and Mr. McNamara should urgently consider a SEATO operation of a Lebanon type; that is, the movement of forces into Laos as envisaged under Plan 5/61” (FRUS, 1994, p. 126).

After the April 17 meeting of the Laos Task Force, Rostow’s memorandum for the president plainly stated: “if we do not wish to enter the [Geneva] conference with Laos split, some outside force may have to move into the river towns in the very near future” (FRUS, 1994, p. 136). On April 26, as Pathet Lao gains prompted an intensified mood of crisis, Acting Secretary of State Bowles sent a memorandum to President Kennedy entitled “Laos—Deteriorating Situation and Need for Critical Decisions.” Bowles states:

The military situation in Laos is becoming intolerable with the fall of Muong Sai and with Communist offensives continuing against key areas. They could result in the capture of Vientiane, Luang Prabang, Paksane, effective bisection of the country and control of the Mekong basin areas. This would seriously threaten Thailand and Vietnam...It would appear that the U.S. has a choice between two difficult and unpleasant alternatives: a. To intervene militarily in Laos...to hold the territory now remaining under Royal Lao Government control. It must be recognized, however, that Peking has stated it will “not remain idle”; or b. To accept a political solution which will lead to a Souvanna government. He has aligned himself with Communist objectives which would turn us out of Laos and in time convert Laos into a Communist puppet...If we choose the first alternative we must make military preparations immediately, take urgent steps to prevent a political sell-out by the RLG, seek the cooperation of our allies, and develop a rationale which would justify our intervention (FRUS, 1994, pp. 140-141).

vital U.S. interests, these intentions would fall under the “caveat” portion of the hypotheses for dispositionally pacific constraint respecters.
Bowles concludes by recommending that the U.S. give the King and Royal Government of Laos assurances of military support, and even attaches a letter for the president’s signature to this effect (FRUS, 1994, p. 142).

Finally, the Defense Department and Joint Chiefs of Staff strongly opposed any such limited intervention, instead insisting that there must be either no intervention at all or massive intervention, involving 60,000-140,000 American troops and perhaps the use of nuclear weapons (Schlesinger, pp. 332, 337-338; Hilsman, pp. 128-130, 133-134; FRUS, 1994, p. 163). Hilsman notes that after the Korean War, the Joint Chiefs clung relentlessly to the conviction that the U.S. should never again fight a limited ground war in Asia: “So often was the view expressed, in fact, that people in Washington began to speak of the “Never Again” Club…The general thrust of [JCS] memoranda seemed to imply that they were demanding an advance commitment from the President that, if they agreed to the use of American force and there were any fighting at all, then there would be no holds barred whatsoever—including the use of nuclear weapons.” (Hilsman, p. 129). After the Bay of Pigs debacle, this reluctance to promise victory absent overwhelming force was multiplied. During the April 27 National Security Council meeting, “…the Joint Chiefs, chastened by the Bay of Pigs, declined to guarantee the success of the military operation, even with the 60,000 men they had recommended a month before…For all their differences, the military left a predominant impression that they did not want ground troops at all unless they could send 140,000 men equipped with tactical nuclear weapons” (Schlesinger, pp. 337-338).

Hypothesis HR3 states that where no consensus emerges among key domestic actors concerning the appropriate policy response, dispositionally pacific constraint
respecters (a) will perceive that this lack of consensus prevents them from making a
decisive policy choice that largely favors the preferences of one set of actors over
another, and (b) will either seek to identify and implement a compromise among the
competing viewpoints that satisfies the minimal aspirations of key domestic actors
(deferring action where no such compromise appears viable), or “table” the issue
outright, putting off any decision until an acceptable compromise approach clearly
emerges. While there is insufficient evidence concerning Kennedy’s perceptions to fully
evaluate HR3a, some of Kennedy’s statements and actions suggest that he indeed
perceived the range of available policy options to be severely circumscribed by the
competing preferences of key domestic actors. Kennedy’s statement that he could not
intervene militarily in Laos because “the American people would never understand” is a
powerful admission of perceived constraints emanating from the preferences (and
anticipated reaction) of the general public. However, if interpreted literally, this
admission suggests that Kennedy weighted domestic opinion more heavily than the views
of key advisers who argued persuasively in favor of limited military intervention. This
would cast doubt upon Hypothesis HR3a, which suggests the leader will perceive that the
competing views of key domestic actors prevent him from making any firm decision that
“chooses sides” among, and consequently alienates, specific domestic factions. On the
other hand, there is some evidence that Kennedy explicitly refused to decide against (or
at least to admit he had decided against) intervention, and took several steps that were the
logical precursors to intervention, such as military planning and the movement of forces

10 This interpretation also suggests a “threshold” basis for evaluation rather than a reliance upon gradations
or degrees: e.g., “if the public will be undeniably opposed, I can’t intervene,” as opposed to a balancing of
public opposition with opposition/support from other domestic groups.
The compromise initiatives discussed in the following paragraph are also consistent with (though do not unequivocally demonstrate) a concern on Kennedy's part that the preferences of no major domestic faction be wholly embraced or rejected. One key alternative explanation that cannot be rejected is that the crisis situation had imbedded within it such contradictory international pressures (principally, the fear of great damage to American interests and prestige if intervention were rejected vs. the fear of major escalation if intervention were pursued) that these international strategic considerations were responsible for the very cautious, "tightrope-walking" policy actions observed.¹¹ In short, there is incomplete and somewhat mixed evidence with regard to Hypothesis HR3a.

The evidence is more clear concerning Hypothesis HR3b (the behavioral component), and strongly supports the expectation that the leader will seek and embrace those compromise policy actions that satisfy the minimal aspirations (or at least do not provoke the ire) of key domestic actors, while deferring any decision in those areas where no viable compromise emerges. President Kennedy, understandably unable to find a final, decisive compromise solution that would be acceptable to key domestic actors, took very small, incremental steps within the narrow parameters defined by opposition on all sides. That is, where very nominal areas of "compromise" could be found (steps which would not commit Kennedy to a clear course of action such as military intervention or a decision against military intervention and therefore could not arouse strong opposition),

¹¹ However, Kennedy's explicit statements concerning the importance of public opinion suggest that these international pressures, if influential, were accompanied to some degree by perceived domestic pressures.
he took such steps. These steps involved a continuation of diplomatic initiatives, military planning for intervention, and force movements short of actual intervention in Laos. For instance, at the National Security Council meeting of March 21, Kennedy ordered "not the movement of troops—not just yet—but the necessary steps preliminary to the movement of troops" (Hilsman, p. 131). These actions included moving the 7th Fleet into the South China Sea, placing combat troops on alert in Okinawa, moving 500 marines with helicopters into Thailand, and stockpiling supplies and equipment at bases near the Laos border. Significantly, "This action represented a compromise between the somewhat contradictory recommendations of Kennedy's military and civilian advisers. By preparing for a possible limited deployment of troops into Laos, the president partially accepted the advice of his civilian appointees. At the same time, by leaving himself one more escalatory signal—the actual movement of troops into Thailand—prior to intervention in Laos he mitigated the more immediate fears of the Joint Chiefs of Staff" (Hall, p. 59).

Despite Kennedy's use of these incremental, "compromise" initiatives to the extent possible, on the central question of whether the U.S. should intervene militarily in Laos, no viable compromise approach emerged. Under such circumstances, the leader is expected to take no policy action, but instead to continue gathering information and

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12 It is worth reiterating in this context the evidence noted above (with regard to HR1), showing that Kennedy displayed an intense interest in reaching consensus and compromise outcomes among his advisors. In a March 9 meeting, "The President then asked for the last time if there is any disagreement around the table," (FRUS, 1994, pp. 78-79) and later, "The President then asked the group if there was any partition of Laos that the people around the conference table felt we could agree upon" (FRUS, 1994, p. 79).

13 Once again, although the behavioral expectations of HR3b are supported, it is important to keep in mind that alternative (or perhaps more accurately, complementary) explanations for this cautious, apparently
seeking elaboration of various actors’ views until a viable compromise approach emerges. Kennedy’s actions appear remarkably consistent with these HR3b expectations. The President repeatedly put off any final decision on military intervention, called for more fact-finding missions, recalled officials from Laos for consultation, consulted with allies, gathered opinions from a range of intra- and extra-governmental sources, and continuously “interrogated” military and civilian advisors, which forced them to clarify (and sometimes revise) their recommendations.

One striking feature of Kennedy’s approach to dealing with this crisis was his willingness to repeatedly put off final decisions, despite urgent calls for decisions from multiple quarters and despite the deteriorating situation on the ground in Laos. In a meeting on February 8, “The President expressed particular concern in regard to the possible stationing of a SEATO force in Thailand. He set forth arguments on both sides of this matter, but preferred that we not proceed with this part of our proposal at present” (FRUS, 1994, p. 49). In a conference with military officials on March 9, “The President directed that we have another opportunity to talk this over before launching—that we would carry on our political efforts—and for the moment, say that we are gravely concerned” (FRUS, 1994, p. 79). Meetings on March 20 and March 21 involved discussions of alternative courses of action, but no final decisions on military involvement were reached. During a meeting on April 26, when the crisis had reached its crescendo, Kennedy “left open…with the people at the meeting, the question whether he would later feel it necessary to order U.S. forces into Laos…[Despite grave concerns

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compromise-seeking approach rooted in the nature of the international crisis rather than in Kennedy’s response to domestic constraints cannot be ruled out.
raised by his advisers about large-scale U.S. intervention, the possibility of a strong
American response [was] the only card left to be played in pressing for a cease-fire, and
accordingly the President explicitly refused to decide against intervention at this time.”
(FRUS, 1994, p. 143). At the close of a meeting with Congressional leaders on April 27,
the “President made clear no decisions had been reached and suggested [the] possibility
[of] another meeting with Congressional leaders on Saturday [April 29]” (FRUS, 1994, p.
147). Finally, during the National Security Council Meeting of May 1, it was “agreed
that no final decisions as to U.S. courses of action with respect to [the Laos] situation
should be taken at this meeting, pending further developments in the cease-fire
negotiations” (FRUS, 1994, p. 164). Instead, the Joint Chiefs of Staff were directed to
prepare a presentation concerning the “military implications of various measures that
might be taken” in Southeast Asia, and President Kennedy noted the importance of
further consultation with Britain, France, and other countries (FRUS, 1994, p. 164). This
reluctance to make a final decision one way or the other concerning U.S. military
intervention in Laos has provoked criticism among several observers. David Hall writes,
“Unfortunately, such a cautious attempt to maintain maximum public support was
capable of degenerating into prolonged ambivalence and indecision, and during certain
stages of the crisis, Kennedy drifted dangerously close to this state of mind. At one point
he said to Schlesinger, “If I decided to do nothing, I could be an exceedingly popular
President.” Hilsman has mildly criticized the president for holding such an attitude
during the crisis” (Hall, pp. 50-51). However, one could argue that such an approach
represents the rational (or at least reasonable) response of a “constraint respecter” to
irreconcilable policy disagreements among key domestic actors.
Acute sensitivity to the preferences of key domestic actors, however, is only part of the decision-making pattern expected to be associated with dispositionally pacific constraint respecters. As a result of their “dispositional pacificity,” such leaders are also expected to view their adversaries in more complex terms and to pursue non-violent solutions to foreign policy crises. Hypotheses HR4-HR7 formalize these expectations.

**Perceptions of the Crisis Adversary**

HR4 anticipates that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will view the other party to the crisis not as having unalterably malevolent intentions and implacable hostility towards the leader’s state, but as a potential negotiating partner with legitimate interests and concerns that might be accommodated. In the context of the Laos crisis, three major findings provide support for HR4. First, Kennedy moved away from the Eisenhower administration’s policy of producing a pro-Western Laos, and instead favored the neutralization of Laos through diplomacy: a goal that implicitly assumed the Communists could be somehow placated or satisfied with something far less than the complete takeover of Laos. If neutralization succeeded, the Communists would become but one of many voices in the Laotian coalition government. Many of Kennedy’s critics denounced such ideas as wishful thinking:

From both the press and Congress...[there was] bitter criticism of the idea of negotiating with the Communists and a flat charge that a coalition government including the Communists, especially a government headed by Souvanna Phouma, would inevitably result in a “Communist takeover.” Joseph Alsop, for example, was particularly scathing. Recalling that the White Queen in *Alice and Wonderland* had taught herself to believe as many as six impossible things before breakfast, he wrote that the leaders of the Western world did not really believe this impossible thing at Geneva, but that they were merely putting a polite face on what
they recognized was defeat. "What the President is engaged in," wrote Keyes Beech in the Saturday Evening Post, "is a tactical retreat under cover of a show of American strength, which may save face but will not save Laos (Hilsman, p. 134).

While Kennedy expressed some skepticism about whether the Communists would accept membership in a coalition government, given their favorable military position (FRUS, 1994, p. 46), he apparently held out some hope that this solution would succeed. Thus, while to critics this approach required believing the impossible, Kennedy viewed the Communists as at least potentially willing to negotiate and settle for the achievement of limited goals.

Second, while the Eisenhower administration and some members of Kennedy’s team believed Souvanna was clearly “in bed with the Communists” and could not be trusted, Kennedy apparently believed this leader was sincerely interested in neutralization and gave him the benefit of the doubt in important ways. The “received wisdom” concerning Souvanna is represented in Bowles’ aforementioned memo to the President, in which the acting Secretary of State insisted that Souvanna “…has aligned himself with Communist objectives which would turn us out of Laos and in time convert Laos into a Communist puppet…” (FRUS, 1994, p. 141). Interestingly, as far back as February 3, 1961, when Kennedy met with Ambassador Winthrop Brown, the President asked detailed questions about the individual personalities of the key players in Laos (Phoumi, Souvanna, Kong Le, Boun Oum), and Brown came away greatly impressed that Kennedy seemed open to new information and fresh perspectives on these men: “Brown noted that Kennedy was concerned with the men as they were, not as he would like them to be”
(Newhouse, p. 6; see also FRUS, 1994, p. 47). After learning of Averell Harriman’s positive impression of Souvanna, Kennedy decided to give the leader another chance: “When Harriman reported to the White House, he delighted Kennedy...with his freedom and vigor of mind in foreign matters, his realism of judgment and his unconcealed contempt for received opinion. The President concluded that Washington ought to take a new look at Souvanna, and the prince was encouraged to add the United States to his world tour” (Schlesinger, p. 336).

Third, Kennedy believed the Soviets were the key to reaching a political settlement, and he concentrated much of his diplomatic efforts on Moscow (Hilsman, p. 133; FRUS, 1994, p. 106). These initiatives indicate that he clearly did not perceive the Communist bloc to be a monolithic entity bent on unlimited expansion and hostility. In his meetings with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko at the White House, Kennedy treated the Soviet Union as an essentially rational actor that could recognize solid arguments and limit its ambitions if this could be shown to be in its national interest. Kennedy emphasized that since miscalculation had led to many wars in the past, it was crucial that the Soviets not underestimate the resolve of the U.S. in securing the neutralization of Laos. In a telegram to Secretary of State Rusk, Kennedy recounted the details of his meeting with Gromyko: “I stressed the importance of an immediate cessation of hostilities, and I reiterated that as a power whose interests and prestige were at stake, we could not remain inactive if the threat of a military take-over continues” (FRUS, 1994, p. 146).

Along these lines, Schlesinger notes: “Soon Brown himself came back for consultation and received the usual rapid-fire Kennedy interrogation. The President asked particularly about the dramatis personae—a sound instinct in a country where organization and ideology mattered little and where so much of past American error had arisen from misjudgments of Souvanna, Phoumi and Kong Le” (Schlesinger, pp. 329-330).
Miscalculation on the Soviet part, rather than brazen defiance of well-understood U.S. intentions and interests, was viewed as the major concern.\(^\text{15}\)

**The Role of Violent vs. Non-Violent Crisis Management Techniques**

HR5 states that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will view the use of force as a last resort, and b) will therefore seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques. Although controversy remains concerning whether Kennedy was really prepared to send American troops into Laos or was instead merely bluffing in his “tough talk” designed to deter further Communist advances,\(^\text{16}\) Kennedy’s zealosity in seeking a non-violent resolution to this crisis is not in doubt. Kennedy emphasized, in one of his first meetings after becoming president (January 25, 1961), that although he was “determined to try by all means to sustain the government [of Laos],” he “regarded the step of committing American troops as the last step to be employed” (FRUS, 1994, p. 43, emphasis added). Some associates suggest that Kennedy would have “pulled the trigger” on intervention if the Communists had forced his hand, but it is clear that Kennedy devoted an extraordinary amount of effort, through diplomatic initiatives and very carefully selected words and deeds, to

\(^{15}\) Kennedy’s statements to colleagues and allies indicate he expected the Soviets to come to the negotiating table once the U.S. and/or SEATO made credible threats to take action (FRUS, 1994, pp. 102, 143; Hilsman, p. 131; Schlesinger, p. 333).

\(^{16}\) Newhouse’s interviews led him across the following intriguing evidence: “Rostow says that although the President did not want to send in troops, he did order troops to go in just before the ceasefire was announced. He says troops were actually loading at Okinawa, and said it was the bravest decision he had seen any man make, coming right after the Bay of Pigs. The Soviets knew this, and thus they called the ceasefire. Rostow was absolutely firm on this point, but no one else I talked with indicated this. (I specifically checked it with Forrestal—the only person I talked with after seeing Rostow—who said no—Kennedy never intended troops to go in. Rostow was in the White House at this time, Forrestal wasn’t)” (Newhouse, p. 29).
insuring that neither the U.S. nor its adversaries would feel pressured to escalate the crisis—that a face-saving way out would remain for both sides. It is precisely these crisis management techniques that won President Kennedy high praise during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the parallels between his handling of these two cases have not gone unnoticed. Schlesinger notes, “this was a first experiment in Kennedy diplomacy under pressure, and it was marked by restraint of manner, toughness of intention and care to leave the adversary a way of escape without loss of face...In retrospect, the Laos crisis of 1961 seems in some ways a dress rehearsal for the Cuban missile crisis of 1962” (Schlesinger, p. 340).

As hypothesized, Kennedy apparently did (as documented above) view the commitment of U.S. military forces to Laos as a last resort (HR5a), and relied heavily upon diplomacy and other non-violent crisis management techniques in a relentless effort to avoid reaching that point of last resort (HR5b). Kennedy’s approach in the early stages of this crisis has been described as a “try and see” strategy: “In an attempt to avoid deeper American involvement and provocation of the Communists, he had taken one small diplomatic step at a time. As each successive step had proved insufficient, Kennedy had reluctantly proceeded with another” (Hall, p. 58).

Significantly, Kennedy began by “lowering the bar” of U.S. objectives in Laos, replacing the Eisenhower administration’s support for a pro-western Laos with a willingness to settle for the neutralization of Laos. In February, the Kennedy administration pushed for a policy of Laotian non-alignment, with Burma, Cambodia, and Malaya serving as members of an international commission that would provide oversight and guarantee Laos’s neutrality. This proposal met with harsh criticism both at home and
abroad: not only did the Soviet Union, China, and North Vietnam (in addition to the three would-be commission members) reject this initiative, but this proposal was viewed in many quarters as a sign of weakness and capitulation. The New York Times described the offer as “amounting to a decision not to be drawn into a Laotian jungle war” which was “based on the reluctance of Britain, France and other United States allies to go along with a hard line and doubts as to the practicability of waging a campaign in land-locked Laos” (quoted in Hall, p. 53). Hall suggests that “such an American posture hardly gave the Communists any incentive to decrease their support for the Pathet Lao and only tended to confirm Chinese allegations that the United States was a “paper tiger.” Perhaps not coincidentally, the neutralist and Pathet Lao forces soon commenced their major offensive…” (Hall, p. 53).

Despite such objections and setbacks, Kennedy continued his diplomatic offensive throughout the crisis. In mid-March, he supported a British proposal to reintroduce the International Control Commission (ICC) in Laos and to hold a new conference in Geneva once a cease-fire had been implemented (FRUS, 1994, pp. 98-99). Kennedy continually consulted with France, Great Britain, and other SEATO allies, not only asking for their advice throughout the entire crisis (FRUS, 1994, pp. 142-143, 164, 171), but also seeking to “paper over” differences and present a united front at the SEATO Council meeting in Bangkok at the end of March (FRUS, 1994, pp. 101-103). Kennedy also sent a personal letter to Indian Prime Minister Nehru, asking him to support a cease-fire in Laos (which Nehru agreed to do), and explaining America’s intentions to fully withdraw from Laos if its neutralization could be achieved. Finally, as Roger Hilsman notes, Kennedy believed that the Soviets were the key, and consequently
focused his [diplomatic] efforts directly on Moscow" (Hilsman, p. 133). Kennedy's treatment of the Soviet Union as a rational actor that would respond to reasoned persuasion and threats short of violence has already been noted. With regard to his meeting with Gromyko at the White House, the President states: "I stressed the importance of an immediate cessation of hostilities, and I reiterated that as a power whose interests and prestige were at stake, we could not remain inactive if the threat of a military take-over continues" (FRUS, 1994, p. 106).

Such threats (which were also featured in Kennedy's press conference on March 23), though representing a significant departure from his earlier, "try and see" tactics,17 did not reflect a heightened desire on Kennedy's part to become involved militarily. Kennedy repeatedly stressed to colleagues and allies the need for some threat of U.S. or SEATO action to bring the Soviets to the negotiating table (FRUS, 1994, pp. 102, 143; Hilsman, p. 131; Schlesinger, p. 333). Even a commitment of troops, if that became necessary, was envisioned as a means to strengthen SEATO's hand at the bargaining table, rather than as a fighting force. As Rostow told Newhouse, "Kennedy did not contemplate "going to war" for Laos. The key decision was whether or not to put troops into the Mekong as a tool to be used in reaching a political settlement" (Newhouse, p. 19). Newhouse's conclusion aptly summarizes the evidence concerning Kennedy's striking focus on exhausting all non-violent methods before contemplating the use of force in the Laos crisis: "In the range of his efforts to obtain a political settlement without the use of troops, in the innumerable small and large moves of persuasion and

17 Hall identifies this shift as the turning point between a "try and see" approach and a "tacit ultimatum" (Hall, p. 58).
negotiation, the conferences, the collection of opinion, the personal letters and talks with other leaders, Kennedy revealed an imagination in the art of diplomacy, an energy and willingness to try every tool available, which deserves attention" (Newhouse, p. 19).

These efforts to try all options short of force before committing U.S. troops were motivated by Kennedy's perpetual concern that the U.S. and its allies avoid steps that might provoke escalatory responses from their adversaries. This included not only provocative deeds, but words which might also be construed as unduly aggressive.

Before his pivotal press conference on Laos, Kennedy revised the statement that had been prepared for him by Charles Bohlen and McGeorge Bundy. Joseph Alsop writes that Kennedy felt this draft was "too crisp and clear, and might therefore sound bellicose. It would suffice for the Kremlin, he believed, to send the ships and troops quietly on their way, and to make a quiet but earnest statement of warning" (Alsop, 1961, p. 26). ¹⁸ Due at least in part to apocalyptic estimates by certain military officials (FRUS, 1994, pp. 146-147; Schlesinger, p. 332), Kennedy repeatedly expressed concern about direct Chinese intervention and perhaps a nuclear war as a consequence of American military intervention in Laos (Higgins, 1964; Nixon, 1964). A typical example of this concern about Communist reactions occurred during a March 9 conference, when "The President asked General Lemnitzer how we can carry this plan out [to help General Phoumi capture the Plaines des Jarres in Laos] without an escalation on the Soviet part" (FRUS, 1994, p. 168).

¹⁸ "In the president's news conferences; in each British-American proposal; in consultations with Khruschev, Gromyko, and Nehru; in meetings with the Red Chinese at Warsaw; and in communications to Hanoi, one point was consistently and repetitiously driven home: the United States seeks only neutralization of Laos. It was this type of diplomatic redundancy which was useful in precluding Communist misinterpretation of and overreaction to Kennedy's increasing military pressure" (Hall, p. 77). Along the same lines, Hilsman notes that "the nature of the troop movements had to be so limited that our willingness to settle for a truly neutral Laos would not be doubted and the military movements wrongly interpreted as a trick designed to retake Laos and expel the Communist forces entirely" (Hilsman, p. 131).
A particularly remarkable outgrowth of this desire to avoid provocative actions was Kennedy's response to existing military plans, which often seemed "all or nothing": on several occasions, he is reported to have tried to add new alternatives and more finely-tuned gradations to the Pentagon plans that crossed his desk (Newhouse, p. 15). Not only was Kennedy concerned about backing the adversary into a corner from which there was no face-saving exit; he also went to extraordinary lengths to insure that a range of U.S. options remained open throughout the crisis. "Prior to the achievement of a cease-fire, Kennedy had prepared the way for negotiation, intervention, or further retreat, and his final choice would presumably have depended upon the manner in which his bluff was called, the Laotian government's response, and the existing global situation" (Hall, p. 79).

According to HR6, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and b) will therefore devote considerable effort to insuring that violent responses are accompanied by non-violent actions. In the context of this crisis, it is clear that President Kennedy believed that violent techniques, if used at all, could certainly not be effective without aggressive political/diplomatic initiatives (consistent with HR6a). The evidence presented in the next few pages (the analysis of HR7) firmly establishes

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19 In one meeting, after a discussion about how the Soviets would respond if the U.S. used C-130 planes to assist General Phoumi's attack to retake the Plaine des Jarres, Kennedy prodded General Lemnitzer, who "agreed (contrary to the opinion held by his representatives on the Laos task force the preceding day) that it would be feasible for the C-130s to lift supplies only as far as Udon in northeast Thailand. Authorization was then given for these planes to fly to Udon" (FRUS, 1994, pp. 48-49).

20 "A "political" solution offered a possible way around this black-and-white choice [between abandoning Laos and fighting to save it] with the additional advantage that it did not close out the other alternatives. If
these beliefs (e.g., FRUS, 1994, pp. 77-78; Newhouse, p. 19). HR6b cannot be directly evaluated in this case, since violent crisis management techniques were not used. However, based on Kennedy’s statements (regarding the inadequacy of military force) and actions (which revealed a heavy reliance on diplomatic maneuvering and nonviolent signaling), it is reasonable to infer that had he utilized violent crisis management techniques, he would not have relied solely (or even predominantly) upon such instruments.

**Perceived Efficacy of Violent Instruments**

Hypothesis HR7 states that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will doubt the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis. The empirical record surrounding the Laos crisis is replete with instances of Kennedy interrogating military officials, questioning their assumptions and estimates, and in many cases forcing these advisors to acknowledge flaws or inconsistencies in their judgments. Some of this skepticism was no doubt a consequence of the Bay of Pigs fiasco, but this same general pattern of questioning the soundness of military plans is also in evidence before the Bay of Pigs incident occurred. For instance, in the aforementioned meeting (held March 9), where Kennedy asked General Lemnitzer how an escalation by the Soviets could be avoided, Lemnitzer “responded that their long line of communications would make it harder for them to escalate in the near future than it would for us if we took this step. The President then said that he recalled a report the Joint Chiefs had given him which

the efforts to achieve a political solution failed, the options of giving up Laos or intervening still remained” (Hilsman, p. 130).

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pointed up that if we went at this on a full scale, they could still put five troops to one of ours into the battle, that the defensive would be much easier than the offensive, and that the Joint Chiefs of Staff should keep this early report of theirs in mind” (FRUS, 1994, p. 77). The limited conventional capacity of the U.S. armed forces during this period also shaped Kennedy’s assessment of his ability to deploy the necessary forces to win in Laos: “The President…knew how weak the conventional strength of the United States was, and, with Cuba in the wings, troubles in Vietnam and the Congo and the ever-present problem of Berlin, he did not wish to tie up armed force indefinitely in Laos” (Schlesinger, p. 332). Furthermore, Pentagon estimates suggested that a limited commitment of forces to Laos would not be sufficient: that anything short of massive intervention by over 100,000 troops equipped with nuclear weapons would run the risk of “another Korean War, of a long, drawn-out, indecisive bloodletting” (Hilsman, p. 129).

Kennedy never believed that military force alone could solve the Laos problem, and he repeatedly asked his advisors (especially military officials) to articulate the political goals that would follow any military victory. At the meeting during which the Plaines Des Jarres (PDJ) plan was discussed, the State Department responded to Kennedy’s query by stating that if the PDJ plan succeeded, and if it triggered “a peace-seeking by the Communist side, we would then hope to continue about where we were in the Geneva Accord. This did not seem to be a very satisfactory reply because, as the President pointed out, as a political objective, it was limited and did leave us open to

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21 In a January 23 meeting on Laos, the new president “remarked on the unsatisfactory military situation, the geographic propinquity of Laos to the Communist bloc and the unsatisfactory internal and international situation. The President stated that he did not see how the United States could solve the problem alone and one or more of the factors he had mentioned would have to be improved. The President wondered specifically how the United States could save Laos” (FRUS, 1994, p. 27).
continued torture in this situation” (FRUS, 1994, p. 77). Later in this meeting, “The President again asked what plans we have after winning” (FRUS, 1994, p. 78). As already noted, Kennedy never contemplated “fighting for Laos,” but instead viewed any use of troops as a tool to facilitate a political settlement (Newhouse, p. 19). As HR7 anticipates, President Kennedy clearly expressed doubts concerning the efficacy of military instruments—not only because they might prove ineffective in the absence of political efforts, but (as described above) because they were viewed as capable of producing disastrous escalatory pressures for both the U.S. and its adversaries.

Additional Observations

One final aspect of the Kennedy crisis management style deserves special attention in the context of the Laos case. There is some evidence that Kennedy may have deliberately misled the American people and Congress during his press conference, by using maps that understated the extent of Communist gains in Laos. Bernard Fall claims that “the three maps shown by President Kennedy at his press conference...which purported to show the progressively worsening situation in Laos, were so grossly inaccurate in their optimism as to be completely meaningless. At a time when most of the Laotian uplands were more or less under Communist control, the map purporting to show the 'present' situation gave the Communists credit for holding only parts of three provinces and one small isolated spot around Kam Khuet” (Fall, 1969, pp. 246-247). Hall concludes that “the inaccuracy was a deliberate attempt to head off public criticism
and not a result of the intelligence community's failure to know the true extent of Communist gains" (Hall, p. 91).\textsuperscript{22}

If true, this alleged attempt to mislead may provide important insight into the crisis management strategies employed by dispositionally pacific constraint respecters. As a dispositionally pacific leader, Kennedy wished to avoid the commitment of American forces to Laos. As a constraint respecter, however, he perceived that his policy options were constrained by the preferences of key domestic actors (particularly Congress and the American people, it appears). As long as the preferences of the public and Congress reinforced his dispositional inclinations (as they did in the Laos crisis), Kennedy could avoid the extreme discomfort of having his perceived duty to his constituents come into conflict with his strongly held beliefs concerning the efficacy of various crisis management techniques. It seems clear that such a leader would be highly motivated to keep these two aspects of his/her leadership style in balance. If Kennedy perceived that an accurate depiction of the scope of Communist gains in Laos would have led to a significantly increased degree of support, among the public and in Congress, for actions he believed would be unacceptably provocative, it is not unreasonable to assume that he would have taken steps to avoid this outcome.

Interestingly, these manipulative actions are more commonly associated with leaders high in need for power, distrust, etc. (that is, the dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers). Furthermore, Hall points out that "Kennedy did not reject out of hand everything now suggested by the military-intelligence community. He merely used

\textsuperscript{22} Hall continues, "This may help explain why Hilsman, then director of the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, has correctly reported the extent of Communist control as of March 23 but incorrectly described this as having been depicted on Kennedy's third map" (p. 91).
what aspects of its advice he could to buttress his own inclination against intervention”
(Hall, p. 71).23 Again, this sounds more like the closed-minded, theory-driven style of
thinking and relating that one expects of constraint challengers. These observations
suggest that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters may be just as willing as other
types of leaders to mislead, to control information, and to process information in a more
“top-down” fashion when the circumstances are conducive to such behavior. And for
such leaders, whose dispositional inclination is to avoid the use of violent crisis
management techniques, these conducive circumstances may involve the perception that
the release of certain information would arouse pressure, among key constituencies, for
aggressive crisis responses. And perhaps the threshold is not even this high: given extant
research on cognitive consistency and motivated biases, it is not a stretch to assume that
such leaders’ strong beliefs in favor of non-violent crisis management techniques are
sufficient to produce tendencies toward inflexibility and “theory-driven” information
processing, such that cognitive complexity is reduced, sensitivity to key actors’
preferences is diminished, and the extensive information search that is typical of such
leaders is attenuated. This suggests that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters may
be much better “equipped” for challenging key domestic actors’ policy preferences
(through a variety of cognitive and motivational mechanisms) than previously thought.24

23 For instance, “on April 28 the president solicited the views of General MacArthur on the crisis. While
the battle-scarred veteran of the Korean War rather predictably opposed the commitment of American
soldiers in Asia, Sorensen reports that ‘the President never forgot this advice.’ By contrast, General
Lemnitzer traveled to Laos in early May and once on the spot cabled Kennedy his support for the task
force’s more limited intervention plan. When Schlesinger saw Kennedy on May 3, the president waved
Lemnitzer’s cables in the air and said, ‘If it hadn’t been for Cuba...I might have taken this advice
seriously’” (Hall, p. 71).

24 “Kennedy had taken extreme care to avoid any behavior which would obligate him to intervene. When
pressed by his advisers at least to introduce troops into Thailand, he instead initiated the preparations

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Consequently, the conditions under which such leaders will remain sensitive to the political context (as opposed to prematurely reaching closure on their preferred crisis responses) is an area that demands further research. These findings also serve as a warning that such leaders' claims of being unable to use aggressive crisis management techniques due to domestic opposition, or due to objective facts about the situation, should be closely scrutinized. For instance, in both the Laos and Vietnam crises, Kennedy openly spoke about the lack of public and Congressional support for military intervention, and the difficult military situation on the ground in these areas, effectively ruling out the troop deployment option. Given Kennedy's documented personal policy preferences, the variety of (conscious and unconscious) explanations for these decisions and justifications is intriguing.

Case #2: Vietnam, 1961

_Historical Context and Overview_

On September 18, 1961, Vietcong forces supported by the North Vietnam regime captured and briefly held Phuoc Vinh—a provincial capital only 55 miles from Saigon. The provincial governor was publicly beheaded, and despite the fact that government troops quickly recaptured the city, the South Vietnam regime was severely demoralized. These events triggered a crisis for the United States (and South Vietnam). On September
29 South Vietnam President Diem requested a bilateral defense treaty with the U.S. On October 11 President Kennedy sent National Security Advisor Walt Rostow and General Maxwell Taylor to Vietnam to assess the political and military feasibility of U.S. intervention. Taylor and Rostow's report, delivered to the President on November 3, recommended, among other actions, increased U.S. aid to South Vietnam and the deployment of a small combat force. On November 15, President Kennedy decided to increase economic and military aid and dispatch advisors to South Vietnam, but American combat forces were not introduced. This decision ended the crisis for the United States.25

Analysis

Information Search

Hypothesis HR1 states that "Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will search for information about the views of key domestic actors concerning responses to the crisis situation, unless the leader perceives that these views have already been effectively communicated to him/her." That is, the initial response of constraint respecting leaders when confronted with an international crisis is expected to involve ascertaining the preferred responses of key domestic actors, whose views will presumably set the parameters on such leaders' policy choices (as specified in Hypotheses HR2 and HR3). As discussed below, President Kennedy perceived that he understood how Congress and the American public felt about the key policy questions concerning

25 This crisis overview (including identification of the trigger, primary U.S. response, and resolution of the crisis) is based on the account contained in Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, pp. 185-186.
Vietnam, making an extensive information search regarding these actors' preferences unnecessary. However, the empirical record provides a substantial amount of evidence suggesting that Kennedy did in fact conduct a sweeping information search concerning other actors' views throughout the Vietnam crisis. In particular, he consistently pummeled intra-administration advisors, bureaucracies, and personal confidants with a host of questions designed to elicit the intricacies of their views and to unearth areas of agreement and disagreement (e.g., FRUS, 1988, pp. 532-534, 576-577). Even after the crisis had dragged on for some time and Kennedy was being pressured to make some final decisions regarding U.S. military intervention, National Security Advisor Bundy began a memo to the President with the words, "So many people have offered their opinions on South Vietnam that more may not be helpful. But the other day at the swimming pool you asked me what I thought and here it is" (FRUS, 1988, p. 605). Similarly, Schlesinger notes that after the Taylor-Rostow report had been issued, "Kennedy, still undecided about next steps, asked Galbraith to stop by in Saigon on his way back to India. Galbraith did so, viewed the scene with dispassionate eye and reported to Washington that the fundamental problem was the total ineffectuality of the Diem regime" (Schlesinger, pp. 547-548).

It should be noted, however, that it is unclear whether this information search was primarily motivated by the desire to determine others' views for political reasons or for substantive, policy-related reasons. Many of the questions Kennedy asked seem very focused on gaining full information and determining the best policy response in a "rational" or objective fashion. Therefore, although HR1 is clearly supported by the

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evidence, the assumptions underlying HR1 (concerning the motivation behind this information search) cannot be tested in this instance.

**Perceptions of, and Responses to, Domestic Constraints**

According to Hypothesis HR2, where the leader perceives that a clear consensus exists among domestic political actors in favor of (or against) a particular foreign policy approach or action, the leader will perceive himself/herself to be constrained to act according to this consensus (HR2a), and the consensus approach will be chosen by the leader (HR2b). As with the Laos case, only one policy approach, at the level of general objectives, could be viewed as receiving virtually unanimous support among key domestic political actors during the Vietnam crisis: the U.S. must not lose South Vietnam to Communism. In a memorandum to the President, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense agreed that “The fall of South Viet-Nam to Communism would lead to the fairly rapid extension of Communist control, or complete accommodation to Communism, in the rest of mainland Southeast Asia and in Indonesia. The strategic implications worldwide, particularly in the Orient, would be extremely serious” (FRUS, 1988, p. 561). Even those officials who did not believe the U.S. should use military force or seek to create an American satellite in South Vietnam (e.g., Galbraith, Harriman, Bowles) presented proposals to the President for alternative approaches involving diplomacy, political maneuvering, and neutralization, which were explicitly designed to prevent the fall of South Vietnam to Communism (FRUS, 1988, pp. 322-325, 474-476, 580-582). As previously noted with respect to Laos, Kennedy also perceived that Congress and the American public desired to “get tough on Communism,”
(though not necessarily through the commitment of American military forces to Southeast Asia) and would react very negatively to any apparent American capitulation to Communist aggression (Schlesinger, p. 333; Roberts, p. 30).

President Kennedy apparently accepted this minimal, consensus policy goal of not losing South Vietnam to Communism. The implications of a Communist victory for U.S. prestige, American commitments throughout the world, and the security of the Free World weighed heavily on his mind as he considered his options both in Laos and in Vietnam. As Schlesinger notes, “...given the truculence of Moscow, the Berlin crisis and the resumption of nuclear testing, the President unquestionably felt that an American retreat in Asia might upset the whole world balance” (Schlesinger, p. 548). When asked if he had “any reason to doubt this so-called ‘domino theory’ that if South Vietnam falls, the rest of Southeast Asia will go behind it” in a televised interview with Huntley and Brinkley on September 9, 1963, Kennedy responded: “No, I believe it. I believe it...China is so large, looms so high just beyond the frontiers, that if South Viet-Nam went, it would not only give an improved geographic position for a guerrilla assault on Malaya, but would also give the impression that the wave of the future in Southeast Asia was China and the Communists. So I believe it.” (Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, 1964, p. 659).

Unfortunately from the perspective of hypothesis testing, Kennedy’s acceptance of this consensus objective appears to be (as in the Laos crisis) a consequence of multiple factors, both international and domestic, whose independent effects cannot be easily disentangled given the available evidence. Clearly, the above statements suggest that the President was very concerned about the international consequences of losing South
Vietnam to Communism. The domino theory was viewed not as academic conjecture but as a frightening description of the reality that would necessarily befall Southeast Asia if the first “domino” (whether it be Laos or South Vietnam) fell to Communism. But Kennedy also perceived unacceptable domestic political costs to be associated with the loss of South Vietnam. As previously noted, “Kennedy told Rostow that Eisenhower could stand the political consequences of Dien Bien Phu and the expulsion of the west from Vietnam in 1954 because the blame fell on the French; ‘I can’t take a 1954 defeat today’” (Schlesinger, p. 339). Consequently, although Hypothesis HR2b receives clear support (Kennedy accepted the minimal consensus goal of not losing South Vietnam to Communism), HR2a (which centers on whether Kennedy perceived he was constrained to embrace this objective because it represented the consensus of key domestic political actors) is only nominally supported. Kennedy did apparently feel constrained to accept this goal because it was so widely held by important political groups at home, but, as with the Laos crisis, international considerations also weighed heavily in his decision-making, and it is impossible to evaluate, given the available evidence, the deeper assumption underlying Hypothesis HR2a: that the President would have followed the domestic consensus approach even in the face of countervailing international pressures (in short, that for this type of leader, domestic political considerations reign supreme).

The basic objective of preventing the fall of South Vietnam to Communism was the beginning and the end of domestic political consensus concerning Vietnam in 1961, however: the question of which specific policy actions should be undertaken to accomplish this goal produced a range of competing, and often contradictory, proposals. The product of the Taylor-Rostow mission to Vietnam was a detailed report that
proposed three main categories of policy actions: 1) a range of political, administrative, and military reforms should be demanded of the Diem government; 2) the U.S. should provide the Government of Vietnam with sharply increased levels of military and economic assistance, including U.S. advisors and equipment; and, most controversially, 3) the U.S. should deploy a force of approximately 8,000 U.S. combat troops to South Vietnam, for the purposes of boosting national morale, demonstrating U.S. resolve, conducting logistical operations, and serving as a reserve force to back up the forces of the Government of Vietnam in case of a heightened military crisis (FRUS, 1988, pp. 479-481). The military committee of the Taylor Mission summarized its recommendations as follows: “...it is the consensus of the military committee that intervention under SEATO or U.S. plans is the best means of saving SVN and indeed, all of Southeast Asia” (FRUS, 1988, p. 503). However, the committee noted that if such intervention were to “prove impossible for non-military reasons,” there were still steps that could be taken, short of direct U.S. military involvement, to substantially improve the combat effectiveness of the RVNAF, such as developing new procedures to insure that the Government of Vietnam made maximum effective use of its current resources (FRUS, 1988, pp. 503-504).

In their personal correspondence and discussions with the President, Taylor and Rostow continued to forcefully make their case for the commitment of a limited number of ground forces to South Vietnam. For instance, in a memorandum to the President dated November 11, 1961, Rostow argued vociferously against “ambiguous deeds,” (such as those he viewed the State Department as proposing), instead urging the deployment of a U.S. military contingent on the grounds that: 1) this would serve as an unambiguous signal to the Communists of American intentions and resolve; 2) it would give the U.S.
bargaining leverage at the negotiating table (the withdrawal of the troops could be offered as an inducement); and 3) it would make the political, administrative, and military demands the U.S. planned to make of Diem seem more reasonable and proportionate (FRUS, 1988, pp. 573-575).

The Secretary of Defense (McNamara) and the Joint Chiefs of Staff generally agreed with the Taylor-Rostow report’s recommendations, but offered a different take on the key issue of the proposed limited commitment of American military forces to Vietnam. Their basic concern was that the U.S. not regard the 8,000-man force as adequate for sending a clear signal to the Communists or for insuring the security of South Vietnam: in short, the U.S. had to be prepared to commit up to 200,000 U.S. troops to Vietnam—if events warranted—in order to insure success in the face of potential North Vietnamese or Chinese intervention (FRUS, 1988, pp. 532-534, 543-544). As with Laos, the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense took the view that if the U.S. was interested in intervening militarily in Vietnam, it had better come fully prepared for all contingencies—half measures could have terrible consequences. As McNamara noted in a memorandum to the President on November 8, “The introduction of a U.S. force of the magnitude of an initial 8,000 men... will not convince the other side (whether the shots are called from Moscow, Peiping, or Hanoi) that we mean business. Moreover, it probably will not tip the scales decisively. We would be almost certain to get increasingly mired down in an inconclusive struggle” (FRUS, 1988, p. 560). McNamara and the Joint Chiefs were blunt about the potential consequences of intervention on any scale, noting that “the struggle may be prolonged and Hanoi and Peiping may intervene overtly,” and that “success will depend on factors many of which are not within our
control—notably the conduct of Diem himself and other leaders in the area. Laos will remain a major problem. The domestic political implications of accepting the objective are also grave…” (FRUS, 1988, p. 560). Nevertheless, McNamara and the Joint Chiefs argued that the chances were “probably sharply against” preventing the fall of South Vietnam to Communism by “any measures short of the introduction of U.S. forces on a substantial scale” (FRUS, 1988, p. 560). Therefore, they concluded that the U.S. should clearly communicate its determination not to allow South Vietnam to fall to Communism, and commit itself to using all necessary means to accomplish this objective. If such a commitment were made, then McNamara and the Joint Chiefs were prepared to “support the recommendations of General Taylor as the first steps toward its fulfillment” (FRUS, 1988, p. 561). But if the U.S. was not prepared to use up to 6 divisions of ground forces in Vietnam, then no American troops should be introduced.

Kennedy’s National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy argued that the U.S. should not send troops immediately (and certainly not for morale purposes alone), but should immediately make the commitment “to send about one division when needed for military action inside South Vietnam” (FRUS, 1988, p. 605). Bundy feared that without such a commitment, U.S. actions in Vietnam would be half-hearted, but noted that “with this decision I believe the odds are almost even that the commitment will not have to be carried out” (FRUS, 1988, p. 605).

While these prominent voices were calling for various degrees of U.S. military intervention, other advisors whom Kennedy respected highly were urging extreme caution concerning the commitment of U.S. forces. John Kenneth Galbraith (Ambassador to India), Averell Harriman (Ambassador at Large) and Chester Bowles
(Under Secretary of State) each advanced proposals for political/diplomatic solutions to the Vietnam crisis, which were designed prevent the fall of South Vietnam to Communism, while avoiding the commitment of U.S. troops. In a paper written for the President, Galbraith warned that the proposed military action in Vietnam “...would entail all the risks of the operation in Korea of ten years ago, without the justification of a surprise attack across the boundary, without the support of the United Nations, and without a population determined to fight for independence” (FRUS, 1988, p. 474).

Instead of attempting to turn South Vietnam into a “limping American satellite,” Galbraith suggested that “our long-run objective in South Vietnam should be the creation of an independent, economically viable and politically neutral state” (FRUS, 1988, p. 474). The appropriate path was not military intervention, but the negotiation of a cease-fire, the creation of a U.N. observer mission to monitor the peace in Vietnam, political reform in South Vietnam, and intensive diplomacy involving India, the Soviet Union, and North Vietnam. In a similar vein (though on a larger scale), Chester Bowles advanced the idea of extending the notion of “a neutral and independent Laos,” to all of Southeast Asia (FRUS, 1988, pp. 322-325; Schlesinger, p. 545). Bowles argued forcefully against U.S. military intervention: “A direct military response to increased Communist pressure has the supreme disadvantage of involving our prestige and power in a remote area under the most adverse circumstances. There is no reason to assume that the Communists would limit their efforts to what we could contain with whatever conventional forces

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26 Bowles suggested this “independent belt in Southeast Asia [including] Laos, Burma, Thailand, South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Malaya...might ultimately be guaranteed by the U.S.S.R., Communist China, India, Japan, and the SEATO powers minus Thailand” (FRUS, 1988, p. 323). Furthermore, “If the communists tried to use neutralism as a screen behind which to take over the whole area, then we would have, Bowles argued, a better chance of rallying international support in defense of neutralism than in defense of western hegemony” (Schlesinger, p. 545).
could be spared from other areas. Therefore, we need an alternative political approach which may save us from having to choose between diplomatic humiliation or a major military operation” (FRUS, 1988, p. 322). Finally, in a memorandum to the President, Ambassador Harriman likewise cited the risks of military intervention and proposed a diplomatic solution centering on direct talks with the U.S.S.R. “through our present relationship at the Geneva Conference on Laos” (FRUS, 1988, p. 580). His judgment of the efficacy of military versus non-military instruments in Vietnam is best summarized by his reaction upon learning of the planned Taylor-Rostow mission in early October: “I trust that in addition to military appraisal, some analysis of political situation can be made…I only want to add my voice to those who believe more recognition must be given to political situation which no amount of military assistance or participation can cure” (FRUS, 1988, pp. 363-364).

While key administration officials and presidential advisors voiced a plethora of views concerning whether and to what extent the U.S. should intervene militarily in Vietnam, President Kennedy perceived that Congress and the American people were not in favor of committing U.S. troops. In a White House meeting on November 11, Kennedy noted, “We have a congressional problem. Sen. Russell & others are opposed…Troops are a last resort. Should be SEATO forces. Will create a tough domestic problem” (FRUS, 1988, pp. 577-578). Kennedy also perceived that despite their desire to “get tough” on Communism, the American people were very reluctant to become involved in any military action (Schlesinger, p. 333; Hall, p. 50; Roberts, p. 30). Minutes from a decisive National Security Council Meeting on November 15 offer valuable insight into Kennedy’s perceptions of Congressional and public views.
concerning U.S. intervention. The President "expressed his strong feeling that...the United States needs even more the support of allies in such an endeavor as Viet Nam [in comparison with Korea, where Communist aggression was more clear-cut] in order to avoid sharp domestic partisan criticism as well as strong objections from other nations of the world...The President compared the obscurity of the issues in Viet Nam to the clarity of the positions in Berlin, the contrast of which could even make leading Democrats wary of proposed activities in the Far East" (FRUS, 1988, p. 608). Later in the meeting, Kennedy returned to a theme that he admitted had constrained his options in Laos: a lack of domestic support and understanding concerning military intervention in Southeast Asia, juxtaposed against inaction against Communism in America's backyard. "The President asked how he could justify the proposed courses of action in Viet Nam while at the same time ignoring Cuba" (FRUS, 1988, p. 610). Toward the end of the meeting, "The President again expressed apprehension on support of the proposed action by the Congress as well as by the American people. He felt that the next two or three weeks should be utilized in making the determination as to whether or not the proposed program for Viet Nam could be supported. His impression was that even the Democratic side of Congress was not fully convinced" (FRUS, 1988, p. 610).

Kennedy's concerns about Congressional support were well founded: in a letter to the President dated November 2, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield insisted the U.S. must "exercise every caution to avoid another Korean-type involvement on the Asian mainland. Such an involvement would appear to me to play completely into the hands of the Soviet Union..." (FRUS, 1988, p. 470). Mansfield envisioned U.S. military intervention as resulting in four possible adverse outcomes: "(1) A fan-fare and then a
retreat. (2) An indecisive and costly conflict along the Korean lines. (3) A major war with China while Russia stands aside. (4) A total world conflict.” (FRUS, 1988, p. 470). Instead of direct military involvement, Mansfield noted that he would “wholeheartedly favor, if necessary and feasible, a substantial increase of American military and economic aid to Viet Nam, but leave the responsibility of carrying the physical burden of meeting communist infiltration, subversion, and attack on the shoulders of the South Vietnamese, whose country it is and whose future is their chief responsibility…” (FRUS, 1988, p. 468).

Hypothesis HR3 states that where no clear consensus emerges among key domestic political actors regarding the appropriate policy approach or action, (a) the leader will perceive that this lack of consensus prevents him/her from making a decisive policy choice that largely favors the preferences of one set of actors over another, and (b) the leader will either seek to identify and implement a compromise among the competing viewpoints that satisfies the minimal aspirations of key domestic actors (deferring action where no such compromise appears viable), or “table” the issue outright, putting off any decision until an acceptable compromise approach clearly emerges. The evidence and analysis presented below suggests that President Kennedy did in fact perceive the need for widespread domestic support (particularly among Congress and the public) before proceeding with any policy concerning South Vietnam, a finding that provides some

27 Mansfield warned, “If American combat units land in Viet Nam, it is conceivable that the Chinese Communists would do the same. With shorter lines of communication and transportation, with much more manpower available, South Viet Nam, on that basis, could become a quicksand for us. Where does an involvement of this kind end even if we can bring it to a successful conclusion? In the environs of Saigon? At the 17º parallel? At Hanoi? At Canton? At Peking? Any involvement on the mainland of Asia would seem to me to weaken our military capability in Berlin and Germany and, again, leave the Russians uncommitted” (FRUS, 1988, p. 467).
support for the perceptual component of hypothesis HR3. The behavioral component of HR3 (HR3b) receives strong support, as Kennedy clearly decided to support those limited policy actions around which some degree of minimal compromise/consensus emerged, while refusing to make any final decision on the most controversial issue: the commitment of U.S. ground forces to South Vietnam.

Despite the strident disagreement among Kennedy's advisors and other domestic actors concerning whether and to what extent U.S. military force should be utilized in South Vietnam, there were certain policy steps that virtually all actors agreed should be taken immediately. For different actors, this package of policy steps was viewed variously as an important non-military supplement to the introduction of U.S. ground forces, or as a well-considered substitute for military action. Regardless of where these steps fit in the context of various actors' ultimate policy preferences, such actions represented an area of minimal consensus/compromise that Kennedy identified and embraced. The first two categories of recommendations produced by the Taylor-Rostow mission (a range of political, administrative, and military reforms should be demanded of the Diem government, and the U.S. should provide the Government of Vietnam with sharply increased levels of military and economic assistance) received widespread support among domestic actors. In a draft memorandum for the President dated November 8, 1961, the Secretaries of State and Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff set forth a list of policy recommendations that included increased economic and military aid to the Government of South Vietnam and encouragement of a range of reforms by the Diem regime (FRUS, 1988, pp. 561-566). Senator Mansfield, while expressing strong opposition to the proposed commitment of U.S. ground forces to Vietnam, noted in his
letter to President Kennedy that he would “wholeheartedly favor, if necessary and feasible, a substantial increase of American military and economic aid to Viet Nam…” (FRUS, 1988, p. 468). Even the military committee of the Taylor mission, as noted above, pointed out that if its preferred approach (American military intervention) proved “impossible for non-military reasons,” there were still certain steps that could be taken, such as developing new procedures to insure that the Government of Vietnam made maximum effective use of its current resources (FRUS, 1988, pp. 503-504). Although it is not clear the extent to which those who sought a truly neutral Vietnam rather than the establishment of an American satellite (e.g., Galbraith, Bowles) would have supported each of these initiatives, fellow “dove” Harriman at least suggested the U.S. “make it clear to Diem that we mean business about internal reform,” and that “additional military aid and increased U.S. participation with SEATO support should be promptly provided as necessary to hold the line” (FRUS, 1988, p. 582).

In short, there was clearly a set of policy actions, short of the commitment of American military forces to Vietnam, that received widespread support among key domestic political actors, and represented these actors’ minimum common aspirations. Consistent with Hypothesis HR3b, it was precisely this limited set of actions that President Kennedy decided to authorize. A draft National Security Action Memorandum of November 13, 1961 records the decisions made by President Kennedy that day. He approved the recommendation that Department of Defense planning proceed concerning

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28 “There was not ‘the slightest practical chance,’ Galbraith said, that the administrative and political reforms now being pressed upon Diem would result in performance. We had no choice but to play out this course for a little while longer, but he could see no long-term solution which did not involve a change of leadership. Diem, a significant man in his day, had passed the point of rehabilitation. ‘While no one can promise a safe transition, we are now married to failure’” (Schlesinger, p. 548).

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the introduction of U.S. forces into Vietnam, authorized planning to proceed concerning additional diplomatic initiatives, and directed the immediate implementation of a number of actions designed to assist the Government of Vietnam: increased military aid in the form of equipment and advisors, increased economic aid targeted towards flood relief and expanded counter-insurgency efforts, the provision of “administrators and advisers for insertion into the Governmental machinery of South Viet-Nam,” and other steps designed to reinvigorate, widen support for, and increase the efficiency of the Diem regime and its military apparatus (FRUS, 1988, pp. 591-594).

Furthermore, as Hypothesis HR3b anticipates, with regard to the exceedingly controversial issue of the commitment of U.S. ground forces to Vietnam, where no viable compromise could be discerned, Kennedy refused to make any final decision. Significantly, as with the highly controversial question of military intervention in Laos, he did not decide explicitly against military intervention in Vietnam, but instead allowed planning to go forward concerning the advanced positioning of troops in the Pacific and the actual deployment of forces to Vietnam (FRUS, 1988, p. 591), while simply refusing to ever make a conclusive decision. As Hilsman notes, “In an interesting example of one type of gambit in the politics of Washington policy-making, the President avoided a direct “no” to the proposal for introducing troops to Vietnam. He merely let the decision slide, at the same time ordering the government to set in motion all the preparatory steps for introducing troops” (Hilsman, pp. 420-424). National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy, in a memo to the President on November 15, expressed frustration over Kennedy’s refusal to take decisive action concerning the deployment of American combat forces: “This conclusion [that the U.S. should make a commitment, in principle,
to commit U.S. forces if and when they are needed] is, I believe, the inner conviction of your Vice President, your Secretaries of State and Defense, and the two heads of your special mission, and that is why I am troubled by your most natural desire to act on other items now, without taking the troop decision. Whatever the reason, this has now become a sort of touchstone of our will” (FRUS, 1988, p. 605). Once again, while President Kennedy has been criticized for this apparent lack of decisiveness, and such behavior might appear puzzling or eccentric when viewed through extant theoretical lenses, the theoretical framework presented herein provides a compelling rationale for why Kennedy, a constraint respecter surrounded by diverse constituencies in heated disagreement, had to exhibit the seemingly peculiar behavior that characterized his approach to both the Laos and Vietnam crises.

The perceptual component of Hypothesis HR3 (HR3a) states that where no clear consensus emerges among key domestic actors concerning the appropriate policy approach or actions, the leader will perceive that this lack of consensus prevents him or her from making a decisive policy choice that largely favors the preferences of one set of actors over another. In other words, under such circumstances the leader is expected to perceive himself/herself to be constrained by the conflicting views of key domestic actors, such that no set of actors’ views may be disregarded and the available range of policy options is restricted to those actions that either represent areas of nominal agreement or are not expected to provoke serious opposition from key actors.

The evidence concerning this hypothesis is mixed. Clearly, President Kennedy’s own words, as reported in key meetings and in discussions with confidants, provide strong evidence that he perceived his policy options to be severely constrained by the
views of Congress and the American public. In a November 11 White House meeting, Kennedy noted, concerning the commitment of U.S. troops to Vietnam, that “We have a congressional prob[lem]. Sen. Russell & others are opposed...[the deployment of troops] will create a tough domestic problem” (FRUS, 1988, pp. 577-578). Minutes from the National Security Council Meeting of November 15 are particularly revealing, in that they show a President Kennedy who is seemingly obsessed with the potential for Congressional and public opposition and the need for support from these key domestic actors. Repeatedly throughout the meeting, Kennedy refocuses the conversation on his apprehensions about Congressional and public support for committing U.S. troops to Vietnam. For instance, the President “expressed his strong feeling that...the United States needs even more the support of allies in such an endeavor as Viet Nam...in order to avoid sharp domestic partisan criticism as well as strong objections from other nations of the world...The President compared the obscurity of the issues in Viet Nam to the clarity of the positions in Berlin, the contrast of which could even make leading Democrats wary of proposed activities in the Far East” (FRUS, 1988, p. 608). Later in the meeting, “The President asked how he could justify the proposed courses of action in Viet Nam while at the same time ignoring Cuba” (FRUS, 1988, p. 610). In the context of his earlier statements with regard to Laos, this statement undoubtedly refers to Kennedy’s deep concern that “the American people would never understand” nor support such actions (Higgins, 1964). Toward the end of the meeting, “The President again expressed apprehension on support of the proposed action by the Congress as well as by the American people. He felt that the next two or three weeks should be utilized in making the determination as to whether or not the proposed program for Viet Nam could be
supported. His impression was that even the Democratic side of Congress was not fully convinced” (FRUS, 1988, p. 610).

These statements suggest that Kennedy viewed a substantial degree of Congressional and public support for his Vietnam policies (especially decisions related to the commitment of U.S. military forces) as an inescapable requirement. The fact that Kennedy spoke in terms of the administration needing allied support to avoid sharp domestic partisan criticism, the need to justify his policy decisions in terms the American people would support, and the need to make the determination as to whether or not the proposed program for Viet Nam could be supported [by Congress and the American people] provides very strong evidence that Kennedy perceived these important extra-administration actors as holding virtual veto power over his major policy decisions with regard to Vietnam.

However, Hypothesis HR3a states that the constraint respecting leader facing a lack of consensus among key domestic actors will perceive himself/herself to be unable to make a decisive policy choice that “chooses sides” among sets of actors. In other words, this hypothesis presumes no implicit weighting of various groups’ importance in Kennedy’s decision calculus, which would allow him to make policy choices based on the paramount views of Congress and the American public, for example, even when these decisions flew in the face of strongly held preferences communicated by other domestic actors (e.g., a number of top officials within the administration). Because Kennedy refused to make any final, formal decision regarding military intervention, it is technically correct to say that he did not “base his decision” predominantly on the preferences of Congress and the public. However, one could make a convincing
argument based on his statements that he implicitly decided against intervention due to anticipated and actual public and Congressional opposition—that, as with the Laos crisis, Congressional and public opposition constituted a "deal-breaker" for the proposed commitment of American military forces. This interpretation would view Kennedy's refusal to formally reject the troop deployment option as merely a tactical maneuver: he made up his mind quietly based on the views of Congress and the American public, then allowed the troop deployment proposal to "wither on the vine," in an effort to avoid generating the countervailing opposition that an explicit rejection of other key domestic actors' preferences would have entailed.

This suggests two conclusions with regard to Hypothesis HR3a. First, although this hypothesis as currently formulated is not decisively contradicted due to the ambiguity of the evidence in this instance, it should perhaps be revised to suggest that for constraint respecters, certain domestic political actors (perhaps those who can affect the leader's continuation or future effectiveness in office, or those with whom decision-making authority is formally shared) reign supreme and these actors' preferences will be given disproportionate attention in decision-making. Future research should certainly examine the validity of this new hypothesis. Secondly, although HR3a does not receive unqualified support in this case, the broader theoretical underpinnings of this hypothesis (which suggest that constraint respecters will perceive themselves to be constrained by the preferences of key domestic political actors—however those are actually weighted or prioritized) appear very solid. One could hardly hope to find more convincing evidence of a leader's perception of being powerfully constrained in his policy choices by key domestic actors than Kennedy's repeated, anguished statements about his inability to
chart a policy course in Vietnam that was not supported by Congress and the American public.

Finally, while Kennedy’s apparent sensitivity to certain domestic actors’ preferences should not be minimized, it is worth noting that other, non-domestic considerations almost certainly played a role in his decisions both not to deploy American forces and not to explicitly rule out this possibility. As discussed below, Kennedy was very concerned about the potential for escalation (particularly through Chinese intervention) and the difficulty of achieving a decisive victory in the near future, should the U.S. start down the road of military intervention. As he (presciently) told Arthur Schlesinger Jr. in early November, 1961, “They say [a force of American troops is] necessary in order to restore confidence and maintain morale. But it will be just like Berlin. The troops will march in; the bands will play; the crowds will cheer; and in four days everyone will have forgotten. Then we will be told we have to send in more troops. It’s like taking a drink. The effect wears off, and you have to take another” (Schlesinger, p. 547).29 However, it was also commonly believed among Kennedy’s advisors that the threat of military intervention must remain on the table, to engender Communist restraint and to provide bargaining leverage. This exact reasoning, in fact, was employed by Kennedy himself during the Laos crisis: “the possibility of a strong American response [was] the only card left to be played in pressing for a cease-fire, and accordingly the President explicitly refused to decide against intervention at this time” (FRUS, 1988, p.

29 Kennedy then added, according to Schlesinger, “The war in Vietnam...could be won only so long as it was their war. If it were ever converted into a white man’s war, we would lose as the French had lost a decade earlier” (Schlesinger, p. 547).
There is no reason to believe that such considerations were not also at least partially responsible for Kennedy's deferment (rather than rejection) of the troop deployment option during the Vietnam crisis. In short, as has been noted numerous times with respect to both the Laos and Vietnam cases, international strategic and domestic political considerations apparently both shaped Kennedy's responses to these crises, and their independent effects are virtually impossible to tease apart given the available evidence. Nevertheless, it is important to reiterate that regardless of the non-domestic influences that played a role in Kennedy's decision-making, the evidence unequivocally demonstrates that Kennedy did perceive himself to be constrained by the policy preferences of Congress and the American public, a finding that lends considerable support to the hypotheses positing the centrality of such perceptions in the decision-making of constraint respecting leaders.

**Perceptions of the Crisis Adversary**

Hypothesis HR4 states that "dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will view the other party to the crisis not as having unalterably malevolent intentions and implacable hostility towards the leader's state, but as a potential negotiating partner with legitimate interests and concerns that might be accommodated." The evidence concerning this hypothesis is mixed. On the one hand, Kennedy appears to have largely accepted the view that the immediate adversaries in the crisis (North Vietnam and the Viet Cong) could only be halted in their expansionistic goals by a strengthening of opposition within the South Vietnamese Government and among the people of South Vietnam (e.g., Hilsman, p. 423). In other words, these adversaries' goals were apparently
not viewed as limited, legitimate, or subject to modification through direct negotiation. On the other hand, Kennedy did not view the Communist powers—the "adversary" construed more broadly—as comprising a monolithic bloc (as did Reagan during the Grenada crisis—discussed in Chapter 6). Kennedy recognized important divisions among the Communist states (e.g., Sino-Soviet disagreements) and favored diplomatic initiatives aimed at the Soviet Union and nonaligned India, in the hopes that these countries (particularly the Soviets) would put pressure on China and North Vietnam to end their intervention in South Vietnam (FRUS, 1988, p. 594). The Soviet Union was viewed as an adversary that was more amenable to discussion and might be convinced that its interests favored the reining in of its fellow Communists. In sum, the evidence appears to be against HR4 with regard to the immediate adversaries, while Kennedy's complex and differentiated view of the larger Communist adversary provides some support for HR4.

The Role of Violent vs. Non-Violent Crisis Management Techniques

HR5 expects that "dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will view the use of force as a last resort, and b) will therefore seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques." The available evidence related to this crisis provides strong support for HR5: not only did Kennedy explicitly describe the use of force as a last resort, he pursued a host of nonviolent crisis management avenues in an elaborate effort to resolve the crisis without the use of violence. In a November 6 meeting to discuss the recommendations of the Taylor Mission (soon after it had completed its assessment), General Taylor reported "the initial
reactions of the President to his recommendations[...]. The President had many questions. He is instinctively against [the] introduction of U.S. forces” (FRUS, 1988, p. 532). During a White House meeting on November 11, Kennedy reiterated his view that “troops are a last resort” (FRUS, 1988, p. 577). Instead, the president authorized the aforementioned political, economic, and non-violent military actions in an effort to broaden support for the Diem regime, increase the South Vietnamese Government’s efficiency and combat effectiveness, and ultimately prevent the fall of South Vietnam to Communism.

In addition to these steps, Kennedy directed the pursuit of multiple diplomatic initiatives, including a private approach to the Soviet Union, and special diplomatic approaches to the United Kingdom (in its role as co-Chairman of the Geneva Conference), India (“both in its role as Chairman of the ICC and as a power having relations with Peiping and Hanoi”), and a number of other countries including Canada, Burma, Indonesia, Cambodia, Ceylon, the UAR, and Yugoslavia (FRUS, 1988, p. 594). As noted above, it was hoped that this flurry of diplomatic activity could, among other things, convince the Soviets to put pressure on the Chinese Communists and the North Vietnamese to cease aggression against the South (FRUS, 1988, p. 594). These “eleventh hour” steps were not the beginning of Kennedy’s political/diplomatic efforts, however. A month before, on the same day he launched the Taylor Mission, Kennedy had directed the State Department to launch a series of diplomatic actions, ranging from lodging a protest to the ICC “on the step-up in North Vietnamese support of Viet Cong activities,” to presenting to the UN a report on Communist violations of the Geneva Accords, and
consultations with our SEATO allies...regarding SEATO actions in support of the deteriorating situation in Vietnam" (FRUS, 1988, p. 344).

Kennedy's clear statement that he regarded the introduction of ground forces as a last resort provides strong support for HR5a. The context provides no reason to doubt that this assessment reflected his true thinking on the matter. Furthermore, his emphasis on solving the crisis through political and diplomatic methods, and (as discussed below) the extreme caution he exercised to avoid putting either side in a position that would require the use of American military force provides direct support for HR5b and indirect support for HR5a.

HR6 states that "dispositionally pacific constraint respecters a) will perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and b) will therefore devote considerable effort to insuring that violent responses are accompanied by non-violent actions. Since violent responses were not used in this crisis, HR6b cannot be evaluated. Insights regarding HR6a, which focuses on Kennedy's perceptions about the proper roles of, and the relationship between, violent and nonviolent instruments, could in theory be ascertained regardless of whether or not violence was used. Although direct evidence on this point is sparse in the context of this crisis, some relevant inferences may be drawn from the analysis of HR7, which investigates Kennedy's views of the efficacy of military force, particularly when used in the absence of nonviolent techniques. The following analysis strongly suggests that had Kennedy decided to use violent techniques in response to the Vietnam crisis, he would have perceived that these techniques could not have been effective without
political/diplomatic initiatives, and he would have insisted upon the heavy supplementing of violent techniques with nonviolent instruments.

**Perceived Efficacy of Violent Instruments**

HR7 anticipates that “dispositionally pacific constraint respecters will doubt the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis.” One striking feature of Kennedy’s approach both to the Laos and the Vietnam crises was his conviction that the roots of the turmoil in Southeast Asia were political, and that military action divorced from a careful consideration of both the underlying political context and the political consequences of the proposed military intervention would be worse than ineffective. Kennedy’s statements after visiting Southeast Asia in 1951 as a member of Congress were echoed in his approach to the region as President a decade later: “Without the support of the native population,” he said, “there is no hope of success in any of the countries of Southeast Asia.” To try to oppose Communist advances “apart from and in defiance of innately nationalistic aims spells foredoomed failure” (Hilsman, p. 423).

Kennedy’s initial estimate of the likely effectiveness of various types of crisis management techniques was therefore strongly conditioned by his preexisting definition of the Laos and Vietnam dilemmas as inherently political in nature. As noted above, Kennedy was “instinctively against” military intervention and viewed such steps as a last resort (FRUS, 1988, pp. 532, 577). Instead, the President authorized a series of policies that placed an emphasis on political and diplomatic solutions. Significantly, these steps included conducting a joint survey with the Government of Vietnam “of conditions in each of the provinces to assess the social, political, intelligence, and military factors
bearing on the prosecution of the counter-insurgency program in order to reach a
common estimate of these factors and a common determination of how to deal with
them” (FRUS, 1988, p. 592). Furthermore, Kennedy authorized initiatives encouraging
the Government of Vietnam to take “prompt and appropriate legislative and
administrative action... [to effect] a decentralization and broadening of the Government
so as to realize the full potential of all non-Communist elements in the country willing to
contribute to the common struggle” (FRUS, 1988, p. 593). The extensive diplomatic
efforts undertaken by Kennedy as part of the effort to forestall any resort to force have
already been noted (FRUS, 1988, pp. 344, 594).

Kennedy’s skepticism about the efficacy of military instruments in Southeast Asia
and his chronic doubts about the confident estimates produced by his military advisors
(particularly after the Bay of Pigs fiasco) appear countless times throughout the empirical
record. One typical instance occurred during a White House meeting on July 28, 1961
(before the Vietnam crisis erupted), in which Kennedy characteristically “interrogated”
his military advisors about their plan to respond to substantial Viet Minh intervention in
Laos with a direct air and naval operation at Haiphong or Hanoi. “Questions from the
President showed that the detailed aspects of this military plan had not been
developed... the President made clear his own deep concern with the need for realism and
accuracy in such military planning. He had observed in earlier military plans with
respect to Laos that optimistic estimates were invariably proven false in the event. He
was not persuaded that the airfields and the existing situation in Southern Laos would
permit any real operation to save that part of the country, and he emphasized the
reluctance of the American people and of many distinguished military leaders to see any
direct involvement of U.S. troops in that part of the world” (FRUS, 1988, pp. 253-254). Later that year, at the height of the Vietnam crisis, Kennedy told the assembled participants at a National Security Council meeting that he could “make a rather strong case against intervening in an area 10,000 miles away against 16,000 guerrillas with a native army of 200,000, where millions have been spent for years with no success” (FRUS, 1988, p. 608). Demonstrating an apparently better grasp of the “messiness” of guerrilla war in Southeast Asia than many of his advisors, Kennedy rejected comparisons between Vietnam and Berlin, suggesting that “the issue was clearly defined in Berlin and opposing forces identified whereas in Viet Nam the issue is vague and action is by guerrillas, sometimes in a phantom-like fashion” (FRUS, 1988, p. 608). At this same meeting, Kennedy went on to express his concerns about the vulnerability of U.S. forces during any assault on the “sources of Viet Cong power including those in North Viet Nam”—he assumed these many of these forces would need to be based on aircraft carriers, an insight that General Lemnitzer confirmed (FRUS, 1988, p. 608). President Kennedy’s concerns about the U.S.’s ability to limit the scope of any deployment have already been discussed: “[After an initial deployment], then we will be told we have to send in more troops. It’s like taking a drink. The effect wears off, and you have to take another” (Schlesinger, p. 547).

Kennedy was not only concerned about the ineffectiveness of violent crisis management techniques, however. Perhaps his greatest fear (which he shared with the opponents of military intervention in his administration and in Congress) was that such instruments would lead to escalation by the Communists and embroil the U.S. in at best an indecisive stalemate, and at worst World War III. In a November 11 White House
meeting, after stating that troops were a last resort and that such a deployment would create difficult domestic problems, Kennedy noted that he “would like to avoid statements like Laos and Berlin” (FRUS, 1988, p. 577)—statements that placed American prestige on the line and constituted “strategically self-imposed constraints.” Later in that meeting, the president refused to “decide now” on point 1 of the recommendations (commitment of U.S. military forces) saying, “will it mean a war with China? Will not go that far as to approve. Approve 2, 3, & 4” (FRUS, 1988, p. 578). Interestingly, when Deputy Special Assistant for National Security Affairs Walt Rostow continued to minimize the risks of military intervention and doubted that China would escalate its involvement in response, President Kennedy forced him to reread Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) 10-4-61, entitled “Probable Communist Reactions to Certain U.S. Actions in South Viet-Nam” (FRUS, 1988, p. 578). In his subsequent discussion of this SNIE, Rostow noted that although he was in substantial agreement with its assessments, he took issue with several statements suggesting that China might contemplate intervention and that the Communists might respond to setbacks in South Vietnam by sending “North Vietnamese regular units into South Viet-Nam, although they would recognize this action would raise the risks of broadening the war” (FRUS, 1988, p. 579). At the November 15 NSC meeting, after listening to an assessment of the size and disposition of the Chinese armed forces, Kennedy again displayed his concern about Chinese intervention, asking “what routes of movement are available for these troops from China to North Viet Nam” (FRUS, 1988, p. 607). In sum, Kennedy’s definition of the Vietnam crisis as an inherently political problem with a political solution, together
with his conclusion that military force would prove not only ineffective but also potentially provocative and quite dangerous, provide strong support for HR7.

As a side note, it is worth pointing out that President Kennedy was even wary of the consequences of the nonviolent military actions and assistance he had authorized, and he insisted that such steps be implemented very carefully, with great attention to political considerations. Highly attuned to “world opinion” and the perceived need to avoid appearing as the aggressor, Kennedy sought to place careful limits on how the increased military assistance to South Vietnam would be implemented: “He cautioned that the technique of U.S. actions should not have the effect of unilaterally violating Geneva accords [which placed limits on the amount of outside assistance that could be offered to the combatants]. He felt that a technique and timing must be devised which will place the onus of breaking the accords on the other side and require them to defend their actions. Even so, he realized that it would take some time to achieve this condition and even more to build up world opinion against Viet Cong. He felt that the Jorden Report [which documented alleged Communist violations of the Geneva accords] might be utilized in this effort” (FRUS, 1988, p. 609).30

**Additional Observations**

In concluding this case study, it should be noted that the analysis of this crisis brought to light some important evidence related to the caveat attached to HR3. The relevant portion of this caveat states that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters may

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30 Interestingly, this episode provides a clear example of a constraint respecter perceiving his options to be limited by international constraints (in marked contrast to President Reagan’s attitude toward international opinion during the Grenada crisis, as discussed in Chapter 6).

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pursue foreign policy actions that do not represent the domestic consensus or compromise approach if domestic political actors favor violent responses that the leader wishes to temporarily delay or supplement with nonviolent methods. In other words, the "dispositionally pacific" aspect of such leaders' leadership style may partially overwhelm their "constraint respecting" attributes, when key domestic actors are calling for violent responses that contradict their deeply held beliefs concerning the efficacy and desirability of various crisis management techniques. There is some evidence that this is what occurred in Kennedy's handling of the Vietnam crisis, although compelling alternative explanations can be identified that cast doubt on this interpretation. As noted above, it appears that Kennedy's decisions in this case were shaped not merely by his sensitivity to Congressional and public preferences, but by his own strongly held beliefs about the root causes of the Vietnam crisis, the likely effectiveness of various responses, and the risks that military intervention entailed. Kennedy's harsh "interrogation" of those advisors and military officials who favored military intervention, and his rather blunt statements to the effect that military intervention was likely to prove either ineffective or provocative (and consequently constituted a "last resort") suggest that he was not so sensitive to these important intra-administration actors' preferences that his own views were subjugated to a perceived need for consensus or compromise.

However, if the theoretical revision contemplated above is correct (that constraint respecters do give disproportionate weight to the preferences of certain domestic actors—e.g., Congress and the public), then Kennedy could still be viewed as behaving in prototypical "constraint respecter" fashion—allowing his policy decisions to be shaped by the domestic actors who really matter, then pursuing these policies despite opposition
from relatively unimportant players. According to this interpretation, Kennedy's own views were not decisive, but served as justifications he could draw upon in "selling" the Congressional/public position within his administration.

Even if the "unequal weighting" hypothesis is rejected, thus requiring constraint respecters to conscientiously incorporate all key domestic actors' views in policy decisions, a second alternative interpretation arises, which suggests that Kennedy was actually doing this. As laid out above, Kennedy's refusal to explicitly reject the troop deployment recommendation that was so vocally advocated by several top officials, combined with his authorization for planning to proceed concerning such intervention, could be viewed as the triumph of "constraint respecting" tendencies over "dispositionally pacific" attributes. If this view is accurate, Kennedy's blunt statements seemingly (but never explicitly) ruling out military intervention are best seen as his ultimately impotent dispositional beliefs merely chafing against his constraint respecting duties.

Although there is insufficient evidence to convincingly demonstrate which of the above three interpretations is correct, the preponderance of the evidence appears to favor the first interpretation (that Kennedy really was choosing crisis management instruments at least partially based upon his dispositional beliefs concerning the effectiveness and wisdom of various types of responses). That is, he does not appear to have solely taken cues from key domestic actors on how to respond, but the convergence between his own instincts and the preferences of those actors whose views he perceived to be most important meant that any "internal battle" between his constraint respecting and dispositionally pacific tendencies would not need to be fought. Perhaps the best
explanation is that perceived constraints emanating from the perceived preferences of Congress and the American public helped to set the general parameters on how he would respond (effectively ruling out a major commitment of American ground forces to Vietnam), but that within this narrowed range of options, Kennedy’s dispositional beliefs and preferences played a key role in determining precisely which responses he chose and how these would be implemented.

Summary of Support for Hypotheses

Table 5.1 summarizes the degree of support for each process-related hypothesis in each of the Kennedy cases.

<table>
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<th>HYPOTHESIS</th>
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<td>HR7</td>
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Key: S = Strong Support; M = Moderate Support; W = Weak Support; A = Evidence is Against Hypothesis; X = Cannot Be Directly Evaluated

Table 5.1: Summary of Support for Hypotheses in Kennedy Cases
CHAPTER 6
REAGAN CASES

Introduction

One of the most important findings to emerge from the statistical analysis of foreign policy crises (Chapter 4) involved dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers' remarkable tendency to rely on violent crisis management techniques. Such leaders in democracies responded to non-violent crisis triggers by employing violence as an important or preeminent technique 60% of the time; when confronting violent triggers, they used violence as an important or preeminent technique in 100% of crises (16.7% important, 83.3% preeminent). Within democracies, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers used violence as a significantly more central crisis management technique, and employed significantly more severe forms of violence, than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters. Furthermore, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies proved to be statistically indistinguishable from their counterparts in autocracies, in terms of the aggressiveness of their crisis responses. (If anything, there is some evidence that such leaders in democracies may be slightly more violence-prone than their autocratic counterparts).

The statistical analysis performed in Chapter 4 merely established the presence of this striking pattern of crisis responses, however. It shed no light on the causal processes
underlying this policy behavior. Why do dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers rely so heavily on violent instruments? The theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2 anticipated this tendency, and envisions a set of specific causal mechanisms at work. In order to test these process-related hypotheses, in-depth case study research examining the perceptions and decision-making processes associated with such leaders during international crises is essential.

Since dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in both democracies and autocracies displayed a remarkable preference for violent instruments that distinguished them from other leaders, case studies examining the crisis decision-making of either category of leader would be illuminating. However, for a number of reasons, a focus on such leaders who hold power in democratic systems is particularly important and practically necessary in the context of this study. First, archival research involving leaders in autocratic states could not be efficiently or thoroughly conducted given both the information restrictions generally associated with such regimes and the time, space, and resource limitations of this study. Second, the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2 strongly suggests that democracies differ systematically from autocracies in terms of the diversity and strength of potential pacifying constraints. While dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers are expected to view as illegitimate and to seek to circumvent whatever potential pacifying constraints they face, such leaders in democracies will likely face a more formidable network of such constraints in any given crisis than will their autocratic counterparts. Therefore, in order to answer the critical process-related questions for this type of leader (that is, in order to determine whether or not such leaders indeed perceive and respond to potential pacifying constraints as
expected), the most fruitful path would involve selecting cases in which these constraints are likely to be evident (within democracies). Furthermore, since Chapter 5’s case studies focused on a dispositionally pacific constraint respecter in a democracy, selecting cases involving a dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger in a democracy for Chapter 6 holds several (though not all) key features of the domestic political context constant across the case studies. The fact that both leaders were Presidents in the American system helps to control for further aspects of the institutional and cultural setting. Although the case studies are designed to test hypotheses within each case rather than to compare behavior across cases, these case selection choices allow for more direct comparisons between the behavior of these two types of leaders than would be possible had they held power in vastly different settings.¹

President Ronald Reagan’s scores on the composite index described in Chapter 3 (comprised of task/interpersonal emphasis, need for power, distrust, and nationalism) identified him as a dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger. That is, he scored in the highest third of all leaders in the North American region on this index of leaders’ willingness to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions. Recall that high need for power, task (as opposed to interpersonal) emphasis, high distrust, and high nationalism are the leadership traits associated with the ideal-typical dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger.

¹ Of course, direct perceptual and behavioral comparisons based on the assumption that Kennedy and Reagan faced similar constraints cannot be established solely as a result of their both holding power in the American system. Specific constraints involving the shape of public opinion, the electoral cycle, the executive/legislative balance of power, and other factors that vary across time within the American system must be considered before conclusive inferences may be drawn regarding these leaders’ different or similar behavior in response to “similar” constraints.
Categorization as such a leader requires high scores on the preponderance of these characteristics, relative to others in one’s region.

In order to examine the causal processes responsible for such leaders’ reliance on relatively violent crisis management techniques, two cases were chosen (Grenada, 1983 and Libya, 1986) in which Reagan used violence as the preeminent crisis management technique. While one could argue that responding to non-violent crisis triggers with violence as the preeminent technique represents the most idealized or prototypical version of dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers’ crisis behavior, two cases with violent triggers were chosen instead. This is because Reagan faced only one non-violent crisis trigger, to which he responded with non-violent techniques, and because the Kennedy cases also involved violent triggers (this consistency controls for an additional key aspect of the crisis situation, which strengthens the case that some comparisons may be made between these two leaders’ crisis behavior).

Regardless of the nature of the crisis trigger, the point remains that employing violence as the preeminent crisis management technique is the prototypical response of the dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger. This behavior is expected given the theoretical profile of such leaders developed in Chapter 2. This behavior is empirically typical for such leaders, and importantly, is clearly not typical for the other categories of leaders, given the statistical results of Chapter 4. Therefore, the case studies in the present chapter will examine the decision-making processes and perceptions underlying these policy responses that make dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers so distinct.
Empirical Signposts

The following section identifies the empirical "signposts," or evaluative criteria, that will be used to determine whether specific hypotheses are supported or contradicted by the evidence in the context of the Reagan cases. Each process-related hypothesis is listed, followed by a specification of the precise empirical evidence that would be required to establish either that the hypothesis in question is supported, or is not supported, by the evidence.

HC1: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will not engage in an extensive search for information concerning the preferences of key domestic actors.

One can conclude that this hypothesis is supported by the evidence if there is no observable pattern of multiple instances of the leader probing and seeking elaboration of the views of either intra- or extra-administration actors (e.g., the Secretary of State, members of Congress, the American public) concerning how the crisis should be defined and dealt with. Such an information search could involve either the direct questioning of the key domestic actors involved or the indirect querying of others concerning "what Congress would accept" or "how the American people feel" concerning the issue. The presence of such a pattern, involving many questions directed to many different officials concerning the views of multiple domestic actors, would constitute strong contradictory evidence against this hypothesis. However, absent this overwhelming pattern, any probing or questioning by the leader indicating that he is seriously soliciting others' viewpoints or trying to determine what key domestic actors would prefer or accept in
terms of policy responses would still cast some (though not conclusive) doubt upon hypothesis HC1.

HC2: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will not perceive themselves to be constrained to pursue policies consistent with the preferences of key domestic actors, and b) will instead decide which policy actions to pursue based on their own conception of state goals and their own beliefs about how best to achieve these goals in the present situation.²

One can conclude that HC2a is weakly to moderately supported if there is evidence that the leader knew about or perceived that he understood key domestic actors’ policy preferences and yet chose to pursue policy actions that were inconsistent with these preferences. Conclusions regarding the validity of HC2a in this context obviously require an inferential leap from behavior to perceptions about constraints; hence the judgment that such evidence only constitutes weak to moderate support for HC2a. In contrast, HC2a is strongly supported if, regardless of whether or not the leader had knowledge of, or believed he understood, the preferences of key domestic actors, there is evidence that the leader believed he was under no obligation to incorporate these preferences into the policymaking process. That is, reliable personal reflections or statements by the leader to the effect that it would be illegitimate or unwise for these actors’ preferences to drive his decision-making, or that he did not need the permission or

² Unless the leader perceives that his/her preferred policies will provoke opposition from key domestic groups to such a degree that the leader’s future effectiveness or continuation in office will be seriously jeopardized by the pursuit of such policies.
support of these groups to decide upon and implement the state's policy responses, would be the key evidence in support of HC2a.

One can conclude that HC2a is *not supported* if there is evidence that the leader perceived himself to be constrained to bring his own policy preferences into conformity with (or at least into some form of compromise with) those of key domestic actors. That is, that he believed the support and/or permission of these groups was essential, and that it would be illegitimate or unwise to proceed with decision-making concerning the crisis response without taking into account these actors' policy preferences.

HC2b is *supported* if the evidence indicates that the leader made the decision about how to respond to the crisis based solely upon his own beliefs about state goals and how best to achieve these in the present situation. There must be no evidence that the leader was thinking about domestic political considerations or was relying on other domestic actors' interpretations of the crisis and how best to respond. If there is evidence that the leader made the decision about how to respond based upon considerations other than or in addition to his own beliefs about state interests/goals and how these would best be served in the situation at hand, then HC2b is *not supported*. That is, in order to conclude that HC2b is not supported, there must be clear evidence that the leader was thinking about domestic political considerations (e.g., what type of response Congress would accept, what the American people would favor) or relying to some degree upon other domestic actors' views about the nature of the crisis and how the state should respond.
HC3: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will rather quickly reach closure on a definition of the crisis situation and a preferred set of policy responses.

The assumption underlying HC3 is that such leaders, by relying on internal beliefs and perceptions, will be able to reach closure on a “problem representation” and a set of preferred responses to the crisis much more quickly than will a leader who is more sensitive to the political context and finds it necessary to gather extensive information concerning other key actors’ views before proceeding with policy choice. However, this hypothesis narrowly refers to the speed with which conclusions are reached, rather than the process by which this occurs. “Rather quickly” will be operationally defined as between several hours (which would provide strong support for the hypothesis) and a few days (which would provide weaker support for the hypothesis). If the leader still is not sure about the nature of the crisis or the most appropriate responses after weeks or months have elapsed, HC3 is clearly not supported. Although HC3 focuses on timing rather than on the decision-making process, if it is found that the leader reached the relevant conclusions within hours or a few days, but did so through a process of extensively canvassing others’ views, it must be concluded that the way in which the hypothesis was supported undermines the assumptions on which HC3 rests.3

HC4: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will view the other party to the crisis as having malevolent intentions and implacable hostility towards the leader’s state.

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3 Nevertheless, it is believed that an extensive search for intra- and extra-administration actors’ views would require several days if not weeks, making quick conclusions very difficult if not impossible. This may be a mistaken assumption, however. The problems associated with operationalizing “rather quickly” suggest that perhaps this hypothesis, instead of laying out absolute chronological baselines, should simply state that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will reach conclusions on problem definition and appropriate responses more quickly than dispositionally pacific constraint respecters.
One can conclude that HC4 is supported if the evidence indicates the leader views the other party to the crisis as an entity that harbors ill-will towards the leader's state and seeks to do grave harm to it. There should be evidence of the leader singling out the opposing state or coalition as an enemy and harshly speaking about (or thinking about) its hostile ambitions, painting the adversary as a serious threat and as a force that cannot be placated through negotiation, communication, or enhanced understanding. The leader must not indicate that he conceives of the other state as having some good intentions or some legitimate reasons/interests behind its actions. If the leader is found to be viewing the other party to the crisis in any light other than that described above, HC4 is not supported. Specifically, any indication that the leader views the opponent as having legitimate interests or non-hostile intentions, or as an entity that could be reasoned with, and might alter its goals or intentions through communication and negotiation, would provide strong evidence against HC4.

HC5: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will a) NOT view the use of force as a last resort, and will therefore b) NOT seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques.4

4 Since the Reagan cases were chosen precisely because they involved the use of violence as the preeminent crisis management technique (the expected policy output for this type of leader), one could question whether an analysis of HC5 and HC6, which deal with types of policy outputs, is useful. However, these hypotheses deal not simply with the nature of the policy output, but with the leader's perceptions and efforts surrounding the selection and implementation of the crisis response. Even when violence is identified as the preeminent crisis management technique based on the Brecher/Wilkenfeld criteria, the leader may have attempted to supplement violence with non-violent methods (but failed) or may have succeeded in employing some non-violent techniques that paled in relative importance to violence. Leaders' perceptions regarding the role of violent vs. non-violent techniques may also vary dramatically despite violence being used as the preeminent technique. Having said this, it is expected that leaders' estimates of the relative appropriateness and efficacy of violent instruments (HC5-HC7) will be correlated with their willingness to use them as important or preeminent techniques. Therefore, the selection strategy employed here does impose some limitations on the generalizations that may be drawn from tests of these
One can conclude that HC5a is supported if there is evidence that the leader perceives there are both non-violent and violent options available as viable crisis responses, and the leader does not perceive that it is necessary to exhaust the non-violent options, and insure that these will not satisfactorily solve the crisis, before undertaking the violent ones. If, on the other hand, the evidence indicates that the leader perceives there are both non-violent and violent options available as viable crisis responses, but perceives that it is necessary to first exhaust all non-violent methods, and insure that these will not satisfactorily solve the crisis, before proceeding with any violent responses, then HC5a is clearly not supported.

HC5b is supported if the evidence indicates the leader does not attempt to use all non-violent instruments at the state’s disposal (e.g., diplomacy, use of IGOs, threats and non-violent military actions) to deal with the crisis before resorting to the use of violent methods. The attempt to use these means, rather than policy actions themselves, is the key criterion here (although the attempt will generally translate into some concrete, non-violent policy action). If, however, the leader is clearly seeking to use all non-violent instruments in the state’s “arsenal” of policy responses before resorting to violent crisis management techniques, then HC5b is not supported.

hypotheses: the ideal approach would be to find cases in which dispositionally pacific constraint respecters used violence as the preeminent technique, and to compare their perceptions and decision-making patterns with those of Reagan (and others classified similarly).

5 Exceptions to this general rule might exist: one could imagine a serious (perhaps back-channel) attempt to negotiate, for instance, which is “nipped in the bud” by the opponent’s rejection or somehow hampered by bureaucratic entanglements and therefore may not show up in an appraisal of the state’s foreign policy responses as an instance of negotiation or diplomacy. For this reason, attempts to use non-violent crisis management methods, rather than the successful implementation of these techniques, is the key standard here.
HC6: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will a) NOT perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and will therefore b) NOT devote great effort to accompanying violent responses with non-violent actions.

HC6a is supported if the empirical record demonstrates that the leader believes violent techniques can be used in isolation, and need not be accompanied by non-violent crisis responses for moral, practical, or other reasons. HC6a is not supported, however, if there is evidence that the leader believes violent crisis management techniques must be accompanied by non-violent methods for any reason.

HC6b is supported if the evidence suggests the leader is not devoting considerable attention to making sure violent policy responses are accompanied by non-violent actions. “Considerable attention,” or “great effort” is here defined as specific suggestions or instructions to administration officials insisting that non-violent responses be utilized in concert with violent actions (again, the focus here is on attempts and efforts, rather than on ultimate policy outputs, due both to the potential disconnect between policy decisions and implementation, and to the focus on leaders’ behavior in this project). If the leader is found to be issuing such instructions or otherwise exhibiting great concern about the need to find a way to supplement violent responses to the crisis in question with non-violent methods, HC6b is not supported.

HC7: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will have confidence in the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis.
HC7 is *supported* if there is evidence that the leader believes military force alone or predominantly will succeed in achieving the state's goals in the context of the crisis situation (that is, will resolve the crisis). In contrast, if the record indicates the leader has doubts about whether military force as the predominant or exclusive instrument will really bring the crisis to a satisfactory resolution, HC7 is *not supported*. The best evidence against HC7 would involve not simply vague doubts about the efficacy of force, but clear beliefs on the part of the leader that military force is only likely to make the crisis worse (perhaps through escalation) or is incapable of solving the crisis (and/or the conditions underlying it) in the long term without considerable use of non-violent instruments.

**Case #1: Grenada, 1983**

*Historical Context and Overview*

The Marxist New Jewel Movement (NJM) came to power in Grenada through a coup in March, 1979. By 1983, Grenada had close ties to many Communist-bloc countries and was, with Cuban assistance, building a large airport capable of handling military aircraft. The Reagan administration viewed Grenada as a potential base for Soviet power projection in the Western Hemisphere and as a threat to U.S. interests in the Caribbean. On October 19, 1983, Grenada's Prime Minister, Maurice Bishop, was executed in the course of a coup, and a more radical Marxist faction took control. One of the first acts of the new rulers was to institute a shoot-on-sight curfew. These events triggered a crisis for the U.S.; the Reagan administration perceived a threat not only to U.S. influence in the Caribbean and Western Hemisphere, but to the approximately 1,000
U.S. citizens on Grenada (most of them university students). An urgent request for U.S. assistance came from the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) in the early hours of Saturday, October 22. On October 23, news came of the bombing of U.S. marine barracks in Lebanon, an attack that claimed the lives of over 200 marines. On Monday, October 24, Reagan made the decision to intervene militarily in Grenada. The invasion occurred on October 25; 1,900 U.S. troops, along with a small force from OECS countries, landed on the island and had accomplished their primary military objectives by October 28. This ended the crisis for the United States.6

Analysis

Information Search

Hypothesis HC1 expects that, as a consequence of such leaders’ relative insensitivity to the political context, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will not engage in an extensive search for information concerning the preferences of key domestic actors as part of their decision-making process. Recall that the pivotal empirical “signpost” here is the presence or absence of an observable pattern of multiple instances of the leader probing and seeking elaboration of the views of key domestic actors concerning how the crisis should be defined and dealt with.

In the case of Reagan’s decision to intervene in Grenada in October, 1983, the available evidence provides strong support for HC1. Unlike President Kennedy, Reagan did not emphasize gathering a wide range of opinions from officials, trusted friends, and

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6 This crisis overview (including identification of the trigger, primary U.S. response, and resolution of the crisis) is based on the account contained in Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, pp. 527-529.
experts. There is a notable absence of such activity in the record regarding the Grenada decision (especially in comparison to the frenetic search for information and advice that characterized the Kennedy cases). Reagan's style of decision-making, as will become clear shortly, was radically different from that employed by Kennedy: from the moment the crisis began, eyewitnesses and other associates agree that Reagan knew, for the most part, how he wanted to respond and did not waste much time soliciting others' views. One of the few direct references to Reagan asking others for their opinions during this crisis involves a meeting in the cabinet room between the president and top military officials on the afternoon of Monday, October 24. Secretary of Defense Weinberger recalls:

The President polled each Chief of Staff and each told him the plan would work; but each said he was concerned about the lack of time to get intelligence, and to rehearse and practice several of the more difficult aspects of the operation. By now it was clear to me from his comments and questions that the President had decided to move into Grenada unless Grenada took some measure to free the American students from danger. Later that afternoon, the President formally advised me that his decision was to proceed with the action and the attempt to rescue our students, and Grenada (Weinberger, 1990, p. 113).

This exchange is notable for two reasons. First, Reagan's questions for the Joint Chiefs of Staff were not directed at resolving any indecision about the central "if" question of intervention, but focused rather narrowly on whether the "how" details of the operation were feasible. But perhaps even more significant is how Reagan dealt with the opinions he had gathered. As will be discussed in more depth momentarily, Reagan received repeated warnings from both the JCS and the Secretary of Defense of the sort noted above, concerning the need for more time to plan, rehearse, and gather intelligence. These were the sort of nagging doubts about military details that Kennedy himself often...
had to wring from his top military officials, and which prompted great hesitance in
Kennedy. But Reagan disregarded these concerns without fanfare, self-doubt, or
additional studies of the situation—saying he understood and accepted the risks—and
ordered the immediate commencement of the invasion.

This observation leads directly into the analysis of Hypothesis HC2.

**Perceptions of, and Responses to, Domestic Constraints**

HC2 states that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will *not*
perceive themselves to be constrained to pursue policies consistent with the preferences
of key domestic actors, and b) will instead decide which policy actions to pursue based
on their own conception of state goals and their own beliefs about how best to achieve
these goals in the present situation.7 That is, such leaders are not expected to let key
domestic actors’ views influence their own interpretation of the crisis at hand, nor their
subsequent generation and selection of options. HC2a emphasizes the leader’s normative
and practical beliefs concerning the proper role of other actors’ preferences in the
decision-making process, while HC2b focuses on whether or not the leader actually
makes the crucial decisions without taking into account others’ views.8

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7 Unless the leader perceives that his/her preferred policies will provoke opposition from key domestic
groups to such a degree that the leader’s future effectiveness or continuation in office will be seriously
jeopardized by the pursuit of such policies.

8 It is expected that leaders’ perceptions regarding constraints (HC2a) and their actual decision-making
behavior vis-à-vis others’ views (HC2b) will be consistent, but these hypotheses are differentiated both
because they represent distinct observable implications that bear on the validity of the underlying
theoretical framework and because there may be instances in which perceptions and behavior in this
domain do not converge.
The following analysis of HC2a and HC2b is divided into three sections. First, evidence will be presented demonstrating that Reagan relied heavily, if not exclusively, on his own perceptions and deeply held anti-Communist beliefs in deciding how to handle the Grenada crisis (consistent with HC2b). Second, an analysis of how Reagan dealt with opposing views from multiple intra- and extra-administration sources will reveal that he ignored and circumvented, but never accommodated or compromised with, this opposition (providing further support for HC2b and circumstantial support for HC2a). Third, an analysis of Reagan’s beliefs concerning the role of key domestic actors such as Congress, the media, and elements of the public will demonstrate his conviction that not only did he have full authority to make policy choices without these actors’ permission, but that allowing such actors to play any role in policy-making in the context of the Grenada crisis would be illegitimate and harmful to U.S. interests (providing direct support for HC2a).

The evidence suggests that in interpreting the crisis in Grenada and in evaluating potential responses, President Reagan relied heavily upon his strongly held convictions concerning the nature, aims, and coordination of international Communism. The Reagan administration had viewed Grenada with unease for quite some time before the crisis erupted in October, 1983. The situation on the Caribbean island seemed to provide unequivocal support for the image of a well-coordinated, monolithic Communist machine intent on undermining American interests, and those of the Free World more generally.9

9 Lou Cannon notes, “[Reagan] was determined to counter Communist influence in the hemisphere, and he possessed what a White house official described to me at the time as “an obsession” about Grenada. As early as February 24, 1982, the president had talked of a “dark future” foreshadowed by “the tightening grip of the totalitarian left in Grenada and Nicaragua.” On April 8, 1982, he had visited Barbados and found Caribbean leaders fearful of Grenadian military intentions. Reagan shared their concern that Grenada could become a Communist beachhead. “That country now bears the Soviet and Cuban
As the capture of documents would later make clear, this image was largely accurate: the Marxist government in Grenada had made treaties with, and received arms, training and support from such countries as Cuba, the Soviet Union, North Korea, and Czechoslovakia. In his defense address on March 23, 1983, President Reagan emphasized the threat he and his advisors viewed Communism in Grenada as posing to U.S. interests and friends in the Western Hemisphere:

On the small island of Grenada, at the southern end of the Caribbean chain, the Cubans, with Soviet financing and backing, are in the process of building a 10,000-foot runway. Grenada doesn’t even have an air force. Whom is it intended for? The Caribbean is a very important passageway for our international commerce and military lines of communication. More than half of all American oil imports pass through the Caribbean. The rapid buildup of Grenada’s military potential is unrelated to any conceivable threat to this island country of 100,000 people and totally at odds with the pattern of other Eastern Caribbean states, most of which are unarmed. The Soviet-Cuban militarization of Grenada, in short, can only be seen as power projection into the region (Reagan, March 23, 1983 Defense Address).

When the situation escalated to crisis proportions with the ouster of Bishop and the installment of an even more radical faction in Grenada (a group which, among other actions, instituted a shoot-on-sight curfew), perceived threat and opportunity appear to have merged in support of a decisive and forceful response, in the minds of Reagan and trademark, which means that it will attempt to spread the virus among its neighbors,” he told the Caribbean leaders” (Cannon, pp. 446-447).

10 These extensive connections are summarized by Meese: “Grenada had close ties with almost all the Soviet bloc and slavishly followed the Moscow line on global affairs. The Marxist government of Grenada voted more than 90 percent of the time with the Soviets at the United Nations, even opposing a UN resolution condemning the USSR’s invasion of Afghanistan. It had military aid agreements with Moscow and Havana, and trade agreements with the Soviets, East Germany, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia. Bishop and other Grenadians were also in regular contact with the Soviet KGB under Yuri Andropov, and with Vietnam and North Korea, in search of training, arms, and indoctrination. Bishop himself had visited Cuba, Moscow, and Eastern Europe” (Meese, p. 215).

11 This was the speech in which Reagan unveiled the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).
like-minded officials. That is, immediate concerns about the safety of U.S. medical
students on the island, and the perceived need to do something to insure their well-
being, were accompanied by the recognition that this was an opportunity to once and for
all remove this persistent thorn in the side of the Free World, safeguarding U.S. interests
in the hemisphere while dealing the Communists a staggering defeat. In his memoirs,
Reagan notes that both of these considerations (the "potential hostages" and the threat of
Communist expansion voiced by Grenada's neighbors in their plea for U.S. involvement)
created circumstances under which "there was only one answer I could give [to the six
Caribbean countries' appeal for military action]" (Reagan, 1990, p. 450). This perception
that there was really no acceptable alternative to U.S. intervention, due to the
Communists' relentless drive for expansion, comes across vividly in Reagan's memoirs:
"The price we had to pay to ensure the freedom of Grenada had been high—nineteen
American lives and more than one hundred men injured. But the price would have been
much higher if the Soviet Union had been allowed to perpetuate this penetration of our
hemisphere. It would have only spread from there" (Reagan, p. 455). Clearly, Reagan's
core beliefs about the nature of Communism and the threat it posed to U.S. interests
through Grenada (both the immediate threat to U.S. students and the more diffuse, but
perhaps more important, threat to U.S. interests and friends in the region) powerfully
shaped how the situation was defined and which response options were viewed as
acceptable. Any response that allowed Grenada to continue functioning as a Soviet and
Communist outpost was excluded by Reagan's definition of the situation, or his "problem

12 The vividness of the Iran hostage crisis in the memories of Reagan and his top advisors made the
possibility that the students might become hostages a central consideration in their decision-making
(Shultz, p. 328; Cannon, p. 446; Weinberger, p. 107).
representation” (Sylvan and Thorson, 1992), which in turn was shaped by his underlying ontology, or world view.13

Significantly, the evidentiary record makes clear that these geostrategic, or interest-based considerations, flowing directly from Reagan’s core beliefs and perceptions, overwhelmingly (if not exclusively) drove the decision to intervene in Grenada, independent of political calculations or concerns about which domestic groups would support various responses (providing strong support for HC2b). Reagan not only did not actively seek out information concerning the views of such actors as Congress, the public, the media, or U.S. allies, but in areas where he had knowledge or at least suspicions concerning such actors’ preferences, he generally acted in ways that were contrary to these perceived preferences (providing additional support for HC2b and circumstantial support for HC2a). These findings are so crucial for understanding the decision-making style of constraint challenging leaders, and in fact reveal decision processes so astoundingly different from those employed by Kennedy in the Vietnam and Laos cases, that the following pages will devote special attention to Reagan’s treatment of actual or anticipated opposition to his policy preferences during the Grenada crisis.

13Reagan’s world view, which regarded international communism as a centrally coordinated, implacably hostile, and multi-tentacled creature, came through vividly in his speech to the nation on October 27, 1983. “Weaving together the disconnected tragedies of KAL 007, Beirut and Grenada into a single message of patriotism and anticommunism, Reagan blamed the ills of the world on the Soviet Union and its surrogates. The Korean airliner had been downed by a Soviet plane. The Soviets had wrecked the possibility of peace in Lebanon by arming Syria. The Marxists on Grenada were in cahoots with Cuba and the advance guard of the Soviet attempt to dominate the world” (Cannon, p. 449). Specifically, Reagan argued forcefully that “The events in Lebanon and Grenada, though oceans apart, are closely related. Not only has Moscow assisted and encouraged the violence in both countries, but it provides direct support through a network of surrogates and terrorists. It is no coincidence that when the thugs tried to wrest control over Grenada, there were thirty Soviet advisers and hundreds of Cuban military and paramilitary forces on the island…” (Reagan, October 27, 1983 televised address).
First, it is worth noting that Reagan faced varying degrees of opposition from within his administration. At 3:35 a.m. on October 22, immediately after the U.S. had received the request from the OECS states for American intervention, a secure conference call took place that included Reagan's top foreign policy advisors. George Shultz recalls:

I urged that we take action. Weinberger said that we didn't know enough to act. Vice President Bush was worried that an all-English-speaking rescue would look bad; he wanted us to try to enlist Venezuelan help. President Reagan gave his views, which were clear and unambiguous. A request to Venezuela would delay our action and might well leak, thereby forgoing the advantage of surprise. Ronald Reagan was ready to go (Shultz, p 329).

According to Shultz, Meese, and other officials who were present at key meetings, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and particularly Secretary of Defense Weinberger expressed repeated concerns between Saturday, October 22 and Monday, October 24 (when the final decision to proceed was made) that more time was needed to plan, collect intelligence, and rehearse the more complex aspects of the operation. Interestingly, the attitude of the Joint Chiefs and of the Secretary of Defense toward military intervention in Grenada paralleled in key respects the positions taken by these same actors during the Kennedy administration's handling of the Vietnam and Laos crises. As noted in the context of the Kennedy cases, the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense were gripped by "never again" fears concerning the consequences of a land war in Asia (Korea)—a war where, it was perceived, the military had been unduly constrained by political considerations that interfered with the pursuit of the mission with full vigor. Twenty years later, top military officials (this time humbled by the Vietnam War and desperate not to repeat its mistakes) were again hesitant to use force without adequate planning, full
political backing, and the authority to use overwhelming force. The creator of the "Weinberger Doctrine," which set strict conditions on how and for what purposes force should be deployed in the post-Vietnam era, was of course Secretary of Defense during the Grenada crisis.\textsuperscript{14} It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that these actors would put up some resistance to Reagan's enthusiasm for swift action in Grenada (for more evidence of Reagan's desire to move very quickly, if necessary sacrificing planning and intelligence for secrecy and surprise, see the analysis of Hypothesis HC3, below).

According to some observers (particularly those who favored quick action), the attitude and actions of the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense in this case constituted "foot-dragging" at a minimum and may have bordered on obstruction.\textsuperscript{15} Shultz notes that the Joint Chiefs, due to their Vietnam experience, were reluctant to intervene militarily in Grenada.\textsuperscript{16} Due to the "bitter taste" Vietnam had left among military professionals, "the result was that the Joint Chiefs of Staff did not just resist mounting an operation; they could take forever to put one together" (Shultz, 1993, p. 343). When the marine replacement force for Lebanon left Norfolk, Virginia, heading

\textsuperscript{14} Consistent with the Weinberger Doctrine's emphasis on a clear exit strategy, Shultz notes that "We also had developed a clearly defined understanding between State and the Joint Chiefs of Staff on an early and staged withdrawal of U.S. forces. That had been essential to gaining the Joint Chiefs' reluctant agreement to the operation in the first place (Shultz, p. 333).

\textsuperscript{15} In the early morning hours of October 22, just after word of the request for military assistance from the OECS had been received, Shultz recalls "I talked to Tony Motley in Washington at 4:30 a.m. and gave my guidance to him and his deputies. We had to move quickly, before this window of opportunity closed. We couldn't let the Pentagon drag out our preparations until it was too late, which I feared they might do" (Shultz, p. 330).

\textsuperscript{16} "They and other officers of that generation had been colonels, commanding brigades and wings and serving in planning and operations in Vietnam and Washington. They had seen, from one perspective or another, the dark side of the Vietnam War: sound tactical and strategic decisions overturned for "political reasons": restrictions on winning; the military, individually and collectively, trashed on the campuses, in the news, and in Congress. All this left a bitter taste for many years, and especially among the military professionals, who spent years rebuilding the pride, prestige, and capabilities of their institutions " (Shultz, p. 343)
south before heading east, it was suggested by some that this force should continue south just in case it was needed in Grenada. Admiral Art Moreau, aide to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, said absolutely not (Shultz, p. 327). In later discussions, Moreau continued to refuse and finally said that the JCS Chairman would not consider changing the route of the marines without a written order from the President, whereupon such an order was drafted. Reagan signed it, and the Joint Chiefs complied (Shultz, p. 327).

On Sunday, October 23, Shultz recalls a meeting he had with Jon Howe, director of the State Department’s political and military affairs bureau. Howe argued that quick action was needed: “Timing is important…and we are losing time. Some reconnaissance flights have been sent out. There are some advance CIA elements under way. But the Pentagon officers are still saying that if we invade, we have to do it right. They are reflecting Cap Weinberger’s mood” (Shultz, p. 331). Shultz records a meeting of the National Security Planning Group with the president later that day, in which Weinberger raised strong opposition to Reagan’s stated preference to proceed with the operation, but the president refused to reconsider:

Cap was continuing to say that there had to be far greater preparation and a much larger force before an operation could begin. I knew this was the counsel of no action at all. A little before four o’clock, I left for a National Security Planning Group (NSPG) meeting with President Reagan on the crises in Beirut and Grenada. Cap resisted on both fronts. He had not yet approved the dispatch of replacements or reinforcements to Beirut, which shocked even General Vessey. On Grenada, Cap again made clear his preference for a delay and reconsideration of the president’s decision to proceed with a rescue operation. The debate was intense. President Reagan held firm (Shultz, p. 331).

Weinberger, who understandably does not refer to himself in such obstructionist terms in his own memoirs, acknowledges that he had serious concerns regarding the
extensive logistics of the operation and that ideally he would have preferred more comprehensive planning, reconnaissance, and rehearsal prior to the invasion. He points out that he presented these concerns to the president, but Reagan was not to be deterred:

...All these considerations [concerning the lack of preparation and intelligence] and the plan itself were ready to be presented to the President, together with the risks involved. General Vessey and I did that, in a secure call to the President in Augusta, Georgia at 2:00 Saturday morning, October 22. We discussed our plans, the fact of the other Caribbean States' request that we intervene, and the shortness of time to gather intelligence. The President was aware of the difficulties, but generally seemed to me to be willing to accept the risks. He urged us to continue developing the detailed plans, and I sensed he had just about decided we should go in (Weinberger, p. 111-112).

In short, when faced with opposition to (or at least serious reluctance regarding) his policy preferences from key actors within his administration, President Reagan tenaciously stuck to his initial inclination to strike quickly despite the risks. In assessing his performance during the crisis, Shultz praises Reagan's decisiveness, particularly the fact that "he held firm against the Pentagon's desire for more time to prepare" (Shultz, p. 344).

Opposition to American intervention in Grenada did not simply come from intra-administration sources, however. Equally important, and perhaps more significant in terms of the variety of risks involved, was anticipated or actual opposition among the American public, Congress, the media, and U.S. allies (particularly Great Britain). How Reagan dealt with each of these sets of key actors is highly suggestive concerning the

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17 Interestingly, it appears that even in the moments preceding the briefing of Congressional leaders on the planned Grenada operation, Weinberger repeated his apprehensions to the President, but Reagan indicated he would not reconsider: "I outlined again the details of the invasion plan, scheduled for the following morning, mentioning some of the risks as well as our hopes. The President was firmly and resolutely determined to proceed" (Weinberger, p. 117).
crisis decision-making processes characteristic of constraint challengers in democratic political systems.

One major concern among several of Reagan's advisors was that the American public would not look favorably upon the further deployment of U.S. forces overseas (and the inevitable casualties that would accompany the Grenada operation) so soon after the staggering casualties suffered by American marines in Beirut. Indeed, the timeline was almost ridiculously compressed: news of the bombing of the marine barracks in Lebanon came early Sunday morning, October 23, and the invasion of Grenada was ordered to proceed on Monday the 24\textsuperscript{th}. The tight coincidence of these events has led to speculation that the Grenada invasion was in fact a diversionary effort to achieve a quick victory that would overshadow the Lebanon debacle. The preponderance of the available evidence, however, suggests that the preliminary decision to intervene very quickly in Grenada was made before the Beirut bombing, and that if anything this terrorist attack served as a strong political argument against going forward with the Grenada operation (e.g., Cannon, 1991, pp. 445-447).\textsuperscript{18}

This reasoning—that there would likely be a public outcry against further deployments and bloodshed on the heels of the Beirut disaster\textsuperscript{19}—was expressed quite

\textsuperscript{18} "If anything, the destruction of the Marines in Lebanon may have caused Reagan to hesitate in giving the final go-ahead on the Grenadian operation. A Time magazine account reported by the usually well-informed Douglas Brew said that Reagan "momentarily... considered abandoning the invasion" after the Beirut bombing out of concern for additional American casualties" (Cannon, p. 447). With respect to the diversionary appearance of the Grenada operation, Cannon later notes, "Fortunately for Reagan, the invasion of Grenada would overshadow the disaster in Beirut throughout the 1984 campaign. This was Reagan's doing. The invasion was not a product of events in Lebanon, but the president and his White House staff were shameless and successful in using the easy victory in Grenada to wipe away the stain of the unnecessary disaster in Beirut" (Cannon, pp. 448-449).

\textsuperscript{19} An interesting side note, which appears to support the classification of Reagan as a dispositionally driven leader (generally closed to new information), relates to Reagan's interpretation of the attack on the U.S. marines in Lebanon. "Reagan, however, would never second-guess himself. He had decided that Lebanon
strongly by several administration officials, most notably by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who had become sensitized to the need for public support by the Vietnam experience. In National Security Council meetings on Sunday, October 23, Reagan and his inner circle "were aware that public revulsion to the killing of the marines would argue against committing our forces in Grenada [and yet] the President gave the go-ahead to the planning and said he would make his final decision on Monday" (Meese, 1992, p. 217). Meese records a highly significant exchange between the president and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at that decisive Monday meeting, where the final plans for the operation were presented to the president:

Again the political factors came into play. In the course of the military briefing, Gen. John Vessey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, gave voice to the NSC's apprehensions when he said, "Mr. President, we think we ought to bring up, even though it is not a military matter, the fact there is a potential public opinion downside to this because of what happened to the marines." He and his colleagues thought too much of their commander-in-chief not to at least raise the question. The President asked one question: "Is there any military reason for not going ahead with the operation?" The chiefs answered no; militarily, the plan was feasible. The President thereupon gave the order to proceed; he signed the official authorization at 6:55 P.M. on Monday evening (Meese, pp. 217-218).

The significance of Reagan's response to this public opinion-related objection, both for the specific hypotheses under investigation and for the broader portrait of the constraint challenging leader this project seeks to construct, cannot be overstated. Reagan was directly confronted (and apparently not for the first time) with the reasonable expectation that in the present circumstances, the Grenada intervention could spark a

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was "vital" to U.S. interests and "vital" it would always remain to him, even after U.S. forces were withdrawn. In an extraordinary triumph of optimism over reality, Reagan convinced himself that the attack on the Marines symbolized the success of U.S. policy in Lebanon" (Cannon, pp. 449-450). Then again, the presence of such "motivated biases," which would serve to justify the tragic loss of life in this case, is arguably a common phenomenon among all leaders faced with such circumstances.

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backlash among the American public against Reagan, his administration, and its assertive anti-Communist policies. President Kennedy's virtual obsession with making sure his actions in Laos and Vietnam would have substantial public backing resulted in delay, indecision, and ultimately deferment of the most difficult choices regarding intervention. Ronald Reagan, however, appeared completely unfazed by the JCS Chairman's warning, and asked one question that revealed precisely where his priorities were focused: on the success of the mission. Stopping the spread of Communism, rescuing U.S. citizens, and eliminating perceived threats to American interests in the Western hemisphere were paramount concerns; public, Congressional, and even allied support (as will become clear momentarily) took an unambiguous back seat to these strategic, interest-based considerations. It is very interesting to note here that Reagan's scores on task vs. interpersonal emphasis are among the very highest of all the leaders who were scored on this characteristic. That is, Reagan's scores indicate an extremely strong tilt in the task-oriented direction (emphasizing getting the task accomplished at all costs, with minimal concern for others' preferences or feelings). Reagan's ability to focus on what he perceived to be the central strategic mission (arguably to a degree that put the politically conscious Joint Chiefs to shame), and to simply ignore the views of key domestic actors is a striking exhibition of the constraint challenging leader in action.

Reagan followed precisely the same pattern in his dealings with Congress, the media, and even stalwart allies such as Great Britain: the success of the mission, as he had defined it, came first—if other key actors didn't agree, that was their problem, and in
any event, to avoid leaks\textsuperscript{20} and prevent the airing of critical views, these actors would not be privy to any important information until the central decisions had been made and the mission was already underway.

The decision to intervene was made without consultation with Congress; in fact, Congress was apparently not even told of the urgent request from the OECS states for U.S. assistance until after it had been accepted and early elements of the operation were in full swing. Even then, only a very select group of Congressional leaders was notified of the Grenada mission, so as to minimize the possibility of leaks to the media. On Monday evening, after signing the formal authorization to proceed, Reagan called the very top leadership of Congress (the Speaker of the House, and the Majority and Minority leaders of the House and Senate)\textsuperscript{21} to the White House. Exhibiting a remarkable concern for secrecy, Reagan directed that these leaders be brought to the upstairs family sitting room by a variety of means (Weinberger, p. 117), and they were forbidden even to tell their wives they were coming to the White House (Reagan, p. 454). The Congressional leaders were briefed on the Grenada operation, and although the Republicans were supportive, the Democratic leaders (especially Tip O’Neill) were apparently concerned about the operation and irritated that they had not been consulted prior to the decision being made. Shultz recalls the reaction of the Speaker: “Mr.

\textsuperscript{20} The reasoning behind Reagan’s heavy emphasis on secrecy is recounted as follows in his memoirs: “We agreed that the operation would have to be mounted under conditions of the strictest secrecy, so that the Grenadian forces and Cubans on Grenada would not have time to bring in reinforcements or to make a run for the American students at St. George’s University Medical School. Cuba was near enough that with forewarning it could send troops to the island in a hurry. If there were any leaks, the result could be war between us and Cuba, which we didn’t want, and the taking of hundreds of Americans as hostage” (Reagan, p. 450).

\textsuperscript{21} Tip O’Neill, Jim Wright, Robert Byrd, Howard Baker, and Bob Michel.
President, I have been informed but not consulted," O'Neill said. With that, he stomped out of the family quarters of the White House" (Shultz, p. 335).

In contrast, President Kennedy held several meetings with large Congressional delegations during the Laos and Vietnam crises, asked for their opinions, took detailed notes as to their attitudes toward intervention (cite Kennedy notes) and assured them at the end of these discussions that no final decisions had yet been made. Then, in crucial national security meetings Kennedy explicitly cited the lack of support within Congress for military intervention as one key factor that prevented him from taking such action.

Reagan’s single-minded focus on the logic of the mission also led him to antagonize the media by refusing to allow correspondents to accompany the invasion force. Meese explains the President’s reasoning: “some of the press corps viewed any such action by the United States as a media event, and were outraged that they weren’t allowed to have reports and camera crews along on the initial landings. From the President’s standpoint, this would have been a distraction and a military hazard, with the added danger that anything known in advance to the press could all too possibly be leaked” (Meese, p. 218).

Meese recalls the multiple perceived constraints (including Congressional opposition) which discouraged military action at this time: “It may seem hard to remember now—after successful actions in Panama and the Persian Gulf—but the negatives arrayed against decisive action in Grenada were almost too numerous to count. Not only did the operation proceed in the very wake of the disaster in Beirut, it flew in the teeth of fashionable opinion about the uses of American military power. From the standpoint of 1970s ideology, Reagan was planning to throw America’s weight around, using our military to stand up for our interests and our allies. This was heresy, and plenty of people were prepared to say so. Given this thinking, the President knew he wouldn’t get much by way of bipartisan backing, though he dutifully briefed the leadership of Congress on what was about to happen. I vividly remember Tip O’Neill listening in silence as the President explained the situation, then saying, “Well, Mr. President, it’s your show.” The implication, all too clearly, was that if the effort misfired, Ronald Reagan would be the one responsible. The President accepted that” (Meese, p. 217).

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It is also instructive to consider Reagan’s response to stiff opposition from Great Britain (arguably Reagan’s most trusted ally), manifest in the person of Margaret Thatcher (a close personal friend and confidant of Reagan’s). If one were to identify a single foreign leader whose views and admonitions Reagan was most likely to heed and respect (particularly given Grenada’s status as a former British colony and current member of the British Commonwealth), Thatcher was that leader. On Monday morning, October 24, Ambassador Oliver Wright informed U.S. leaders that Britain was opposed to any military intervention: “Margaret Thatcher, he said, preferred economic and political pressure” (Shultz, p. 331). That night, as the meeting with Congressional leaders was wrapping up, a cable to the president from Prime Minister Thatcher arrived, expressing to Reagan her “gravest concerns” about military intervention (Weinberger, p. 119). There appears to be some disagreement among those present as to whether Reagan then called Thatcher to inform her of the operation or whether she called him, but regardless of who initiated it, there was by all accounts a rather heated telephone conversation between Reagan and Thatcher at the end of the Congressional briefing. Reagan recalls:

As soon as I heard her voice, I knew she was very angry. She said she had just learned about the impending operation (probably from British officials on Grenada) and asked me in the strongest language to call off the operation. Grenada, she reminded me, was part of the British Commonwealth, and the United States had no business interfering in its affairs. I had intended to call her after the meeting, once the operation was actually under way, but she’d gotten word of it before I had the chance to do so. I told her about the request we’d received from the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and said I had believed we had to act quickly and covertly because I feared any communication could result in a leak and spoil the advantage of surprise. She was very adamant and continued to insist that we cancel our landings on Grenada. I couldn’t tell her that it
had already begun. This troubled me because of our close relationship (Reagan, pp. 454-455).

That “close relationship,” however, did not take precedence over the security of the mission—even after Thatcher knew the landings were imminent, Reagan “couldn’t tell her” the operation had already begun. Meese notes that “The President was deeply disappointed, but he stood firm, telling her that we intended to go ahead” (Meese, p. 217). Weinberger found Reagan’s disappointment palpable as he rejoined his colleagues after the phone conversation: “[Reagan] returned with a rather rueful look on his face, which made it clear that even his persuasive powers had limits, and he had not convinced the Prime Minister” (Weinberger, p. 120).

More generally, the potential international opposition that would arise from the U.S., seemingly unilaterally, intervening in Grenada was recognized by President Reagan, but the alternative (building a broader coalition that would receive more international support) was viewed as too risky. As noted earlier, Reagan rejected Vice President Bush’s suggestion that Venezuela be included, to give the operation a more diverse flavor, on grounds that such efforts would jeopardize the secrecy of the mission.

At 9 a.m. Saturday morning (soon after the OECS request for assistance had been received), a National Security Council meeting was convened in the White House situation room, during which concerns about international perceptions of American imperialism were raised: “When a White House staff member observed that there could be a ‘harsh political reaction’ to a U.S. invasion of a small island nation, Reagan replied,

23 With regard to Reagan’s orientation toward international opinion, Meese concludes, “…the United States under Ronald Reagan stood virtually alone on the question of Grenada. If “world opinion” had won the day, the citizens of Grenada and the Americans there would have been consigned indefinitely to the mercy
I know that. I accept that'" (Cannon, p. 442). Once again, Reagan's priorities come through remarkably clearly in such accounts: multilateralism, though perhaps desirable if it did not interfere with the secrecy, swiftness, and effectiveness of the mission, was a luxury the U.S. could not afford in this instance.

Finally, it is important to highlight some evidence that bears directly on Hypothesis HC2a (Reagan's perceptions concerning normative or practical constraints emanating from key domestic actors). In his memoirs, Reagan is very blunt about the fact that his motivations for maintaining such high levels of secrecy and keeping Congress and even key allies "out of the loop" involved not just the security of the operation, but the perceived need to avoid preemptive public criticism and opposition from Congress, the media, and other domestic and international sources:

Frankly, there was another reason I wanted secrecy [besides the security of the mission]. It was what I call the "post-Vietnam syndrome," the resistance of many in Congress to the use of military force abroad for any reason, because of our nation's experience in Vietnam...I understood what Vietnam had meant for the country, but I believed the United States couldn't remain spooked forever by this experience to the point where it refused to stand up and defend its legitimate national security interests. I suspected that, if we told the leaders of Congress about the operation, even under terms of strictest confidentiality, there would be some who would leak it to the press together with the prediction that Grenada was going to become "another Vietnam." We were already running into this phenomenon in our efforts to halt the spread of Communism in Central America, and some congressmen were raising the issue of "another Vietnam" in Lebanon while fighting to restrict the president's constitutional powers as commander in chief...I knew that if word of the rescue mission leaked out in advance, we'd hear this from some in Congress: "Sure, it's starting small, but once you make that first commitment, Grenada's going to become another Vietnam." Well, that wasn't true. And that's one reason why the rescue operation in Grenada was conducted in total secrecy. We didn't ask anybody, we just did it (Reagan, p. 451).

of the murderous regime of General Austin. That says a great deal about the United Nations. It says even more about the determination of Ronald Reagan" (Meese, p. 219).
Significantly, opposition from Congress and the media regarding Grenada in particular and policies comprising the “Reagan Doctrine” more generally is viewed in Reagan’s mind as an irrational and damaging phenomenon that undermines America’s national interests and therefore must be circumvented, preempted, or silenced, for the good of the nation. Such opposition is not viewed as a legitimate constraint that must be respected or accommodated; instead, it represents a serious obstacle to the clear-headed defense of America’s interests. It is his duty as president to see that such voices do not influence his decision-making. Once again, the logic of the mission and the overriding concern with safeguarding America’s interests, as Reagan perceived them, takes clear precedence over the preferences and views of key domestic actors.

In summary, Reagan’s response to potential and actual opposition from the American people, Congress, the media, and international actors (particularly Great Britain) during the Grenada crisis provides powerful and consistent support for both elements of Hypothesis HC2. The full wording of this hypothesis is worth repeating here: “Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will not perceive themselves to be constrained to pursue policies consistent with the preferences of key domestic actors, and b) will instead decide which policy actions to pursue based on their own conception of state goals and their own beliefs about how best to achieve these goals in the present situation.”

Clearly, in this crisis President Reagan perceived (and treated) Congressional and public opposition not as legitimate constraints on his policymaking authority, but rather
as ill-informed or even dangerous views that could greatly undermine U.S. security if heeded (consistent with HC2a). Reagan’s exclusive focus, throughout the crisis, remained fixed on accomplishing the mission of rescuing U.S. students and ridding the region of a threatening Communist outpost, even if that meant taking some heated criticism from a range of key domestic and international actors. Without exception, the action imperatives shaped by his strongly anti-Communist world view and his perception of the severe threats to U.S. interests posed by Grenada drove his decision-making on strategy, tactics, and timing (consistent with HC2b). Potential and actual domestic political opposition was dealt with through a variety of means: it was either ignored, circumvented, or silenced through secrecy and misdirection. Accommodation or compromise with this opposition was never attempted, nor apparently contemplated, however (providing direct support for HC2b and circumstantial support for HC2a).

**Speed of Closure on Problem Definition and Preferred Responses**

Hypothesis HC3 anticipates that “dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will rather quickly reach closure on a definition of the crisis situation and a preferred set of policy responses.” This is an expected consequence of such leaders’ reliance upon internal values and perceptions in the decision-making process—a reliance that renders time-consuming searches for key domestic actors’ preferences or the exploration of acceptable compromise approaches unnecessary. As noted above, “rather quickly” is operationally defined as between several hours (which would provide strong support for

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24 Unless the leader perceives that his/her preferred policies will provoke opposition from key domestic groups to such a degree that the leader’s future effectiveness or continuation in office will be seriously jeopardized by the pursuit of such policies.
the hypothesis) and a few days (which would provide *weaker support* for the hypothesis).

If the leader still is not sure about the nature of the crisis or the most appropriate responses after weeks or months have elapsed, HC3 is clearly *not supported*.

The empirical record surrounding the Grenada decision provides remarkable support for this hypothesis. Some of the relevant evidence has already been noted above, and will briefly be restated here, along with additional material. When the Grenada crisis began early on Saturday, October 22, with the arrival of the urgent OECS request25 for U.S. assistance, Reagan's decision that an invasion of Grenada was the "only alternative" is described by all those physically present or in close communication with the president as a virtually instantaneous conclusion. National Security Advisor McFarlane and Secretary of State Shultz had been vacationing with Reagan in Augusta, Georgia, and they woke the president after receiving news of the OECS request: "[Shultz and McFarlane] told [Reagan] that anarchy prevailed on the island and that the lives of the 1,000 Americans there could be in jeopardy. Reagan favored an invasion, which he then and afterward described as a rescue of the Americans, most of whom were students at the St. George's School of Medicine. "He was very unequivocal," McFarlane said. "He couldn't wait" (Cannon, p. 441). Shultz, the other immediate eyewitness, concurs that Reagan's response was immediate and definitive. After being briefed on the situation, Shultz recalls:

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25 It should be noted that this request was not the first such communication. Shultz notes that "An oral request had come in from Mrs. Charles on October 17 for help from the United States, and by the following day, on behalf of President Reagan, I asked her for a formal evaluation by the OECS. This served two purposes: first, it attended to her request and showed her that we were responsive and alert, and, second, it set the stage for the United States to act in a manner consistent with our national interests and with international law. With the situation becoming increasingly ominous in Grenada, Mrs. Charles went to the French and the British on October 19, but they declined to help her" (Shultz, p. 326).
President Reagan’s reaction was decisive. What kind of a country would we be, he asked, if we refused to help small but steadfast democratic countries in our neighborhood to defend themselves against the threat of this kind of tyranny and lawlessness? Furthermore, Americans were in serious danger of being killed or taken hostage. We had to respond positively...[Dismissing objections raised by Weinberger and Bush during the subsequent 3:30 a.m. conference call] President Reagan gave his views, which were clear and unambiguous. A request to Venezuela would delay our action and might well leak, thereby forgoing the advantage of surprise. Ronald Reagan was ready to go...So, in the early morning of Saturday, October 22, President Reagan, with McFarlane and me at his side supporting him fully, made the decision to go ahead with a rescue operation, to be launched on Monday night or Tuesday (Shultz, p. 329).

Shortly thereafter, Reagan took several important steps that indicated he was serious about the decision to intervene militarily: at Shultz’s urging, he called JCS Chairman Vessey and told him to double the estimated number of troops that would be required for the operation, and Reagan also ordered the State Department and Defense Department to “move beyond a ‘warning order’ status and prepare for a noncombatant evacuation order, including an invasion plan. This, too, served to keep the Defense Department moving” (Shultz, p. 329).

Weinberger, who was not present in Augusta but spoke with the president during the conference call Saturday morning, notes that Reagan, even at this very early juncture, expressed his willingness to accept the risks of the operation. Weinberger concludes: [Reagan] urged us to continue developing the detailed plans, and I sensed he had just about decided we should go in” (Weinberger, p. 112). At the Sunday morning NSPG meeting, Reagan “reaffirmed his determination to intervene in Grenada” (Weinberger, p. 113).

Although the formal decision to intervene in Grenada was not made until Monday evening, Reagan clearly suggests in his memoirs that the real decision had been made.
that Saturday morning, upon receiving the OECS request: “Under these circumstances [Grenada’s role as a communist outpost and the threat to Americans on the island] there was only one answer I could give to McFarlane and Shultz and those six countries who asked for our help...I asked McFarlane how long the Pentagon thought it would need to prepare a rescue mission on Grenada. He said the Joint Chiefs of Staff believed it could be done in forty-eight hours. I said, “Do it”...After giving my approval to the operation, I went back to sleep” (Reagan, pp. 450-451).

Significantly, Reagan’s willingness to reach conclusions so quickly concerning the appropriate U.S. response to the Grenada crisis—secluded as he was at the Eisenhower Cottage in Augusta, Georgia at 3:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning—provides additional evidence that he did not perceive any need to canvass Congressional or public opinion before acting. The eyewitness accounts of this decision leave one with the distinct impression that here was a leader who believed he knew what had to be done to protect America’s interests and had full confidence in his ability to act as Commander-in-Chief, unconstrained (either practically or legally) by Congressional, public, or intra-administration opposition. Any remaining doubt about Reagan’s perceptions on this point are dispelled by his own description of his thought processes on the morning in question. Directly after his recollection of being briefed on the Grenada situation and knowing that intervention was the only option, Reagan launches into the aforementioned discussion of the need for the operation to proceed in absolute secrecy so as to avoid leaks and preemptive criticism from Congress or the media, concluding with the statement “we didn’t ask anybody, we just did it” (Reagan, pp. 450-451). As the preceding analysis of Hypothesis HC2a reveals, the evidence is more than circumstantial
on this issue: rather than merely acting without gathering or accommodating the opinions of Congress, the public, and other key domestic actors (which would have been sufficient evidence to draw certain inferences about Reagan’s thinking), Reagan leaves nothing to the analyst’s imagination by explicitly highlighting his strong belief that it was necessary to keep such actors “out of the loop”.

The “dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger” leadership style is comprised of both an orientation toward constraints (the “constraint challenger” aspect) and a set of attitudes and tendencies involving perceived threats and the use of force (the “dispositionally aggressive” component). As demonstrated above, the Grenada case provides strong evidence in support of the hypotheses involving the “constraint challenging” aspects of such leaders’ style (HC1 through HC3). Hypotheses HC4 through HC7 specify perceptual and behavioral expectations flowing from the “dispositionally aggressive” orientation, and it is to an empirical evaluation of these propositions that this chapter will now turn.

**Perceptions of the Crisis Adversary**

Hypothesis HC4 states that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will view the other party to the crisis as having malevolent intentions and implacable hostility towards the leader’s state. It is important to note that the “other party to the crisis” was defined by Reagan in this case not merely as the Marxist government in Grenada, but as international Communism more broadly, represented by the Soviets, Cubans, and others intertwined with the Grenadian government. To a significant degree, the Grenadian Marxists were viewed as merely a conduit for Communist expansion and increased
Soviet/Cuban influence in the Western hemisphere, and were therefore not seen as the real adversary the U.S. ultimately confronted in this crisis. Evidence concerning Reagan's beliefs about the nature and aims of Communism in general and the character and objectives of the Soviets, Cubans, and Grenadian Marxists in particular has been previously alluded to. An excerpt from Reagan's memoirs aptly sums up his views on the fundamental nature and aims of Communism:

In the early 1980s, Soviet Communism was not just another competing economic system run by people who happened to disagree with us about the merits of capitalism and free enterprise: It was a predatory system of absolute, authoritarian rule that had an insatiable appetite for expansion; it was determined to impose tyranny wherever it went, rob people of fundamental human rights, destroy democratic governments, subvert churches and labor unions, turn the courts and the press into instruments of dictatorship, forbid free elections, imprison and execute critics without charge or trial, and reward the few at the top of the monolith with the spoils of corruption and dictatorial rule. In short, it was against everything Americans have stood for for more than two hundred years (Reagan, p. 471).

As noted previously, these beliefs were quite evident both before and during the Grenada crisis, as Reagan and like-minded advisors viewed Grenada as a rising Communist outpost, which under Soviet and Cuban tutelage sought to spread the virus of international Communism throughout the Western hemisphere (e.g., Shultz, p. 324; Weinberger, pp. 105-107; Reagan, March 23, 1983 Defense Address). The "insatiable appetite for expansion" associated with Communism was applied directly to the Grenada case by Reagan: "...if the Soviet Union had been allowed to perpetuate this penetration of our hemisphere...It would have only spread from there" (Reagan, p. 455). The

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26 Reagan makes this point even more vividly as he introduces the events surrounding the Iran-Contra scandal in his memoirs: "If the Soviet Union and its allies were allowed to continue subverting democracy with terrorism and fomenting so-called "wars of national liberation" in Central America, it wouldn't stop there: It would spread into the continent of South America and north to Mexico. Then, as I was told that
military buildup in Grenada and the construction of the 10,000-foot runway were looked upon with great suspicion: there was no doubt in the minds of Reagan and other top administration officials that the intentions behind these acts were hostile, offensive, and directed against the vital interests of the United States and the Free World (e.g., Reagan, March 23, 1983 Defense Address). There could be no negotiations or compromise with such an enemy, whose primary goal was the complete destruction of your way of life. No credence was given to the notion that the Communists in Grenada might have had legitimate interests they sought to defend, or less than evil intentions behind their actions (there was absolutely no attempt to give the other side the “benefit of the doubt” or to discern legitimate goals or positive attributes within the adversary—the sort of perceptions and responses one would expect from a “dispositionally pacific” leader who is quite trusting of others and sees the world in a less Hobbesian light). These perceptions, so strongly held and so deeply grounded in core convictions concerning the character of one’s adversary, represent precisely the types of attributions of hostility and malevolent intent that Hypothesis HC4 anticipates will dominate crisis decision-making for this type of leader.

The Role of Violent vs. Non-Violent Crisis Management Techniques

Hypothesis HC5 states that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will a) NOT view the use of force as a last resort, and will therefore b) NOT seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management

Lenin once said: “Once we have Latin America, we won’t have to take the United States, the last bastion of capitalism, because it will fall into our outstretched hands like overripe fruit” (Reagan, p. 474).
techniques. Given the available evidence, HC5a cannot be directly tested in the Grenada case. This is because any evaluation of the validity of HC5a requires the leader to perceive that there are both violent and non-violent options available (it is the leader’s beliefs concerning where violent responses appropriately fit in the context of this response repertoire that are the subject of this hypothesis). Instead, there is convincing evidence that Reagan perceived U.S. interests during the Grenada crisis could only be safeguarded through the use of violent responses. Reagan’s repeated insistence that he believed there was really no other choice under the circumstances (if this is to be believed—and the preceding evidence concerning Reagan’s world view and definition of the Grenada crisis suggests that it should be) indicates that he did not perceive there to be a range of potentially acceptable options, which included non-violent methods he could try first, then discard if they proved ineffective.

However, the very inability to test HC5a, as rigorously postulated, may yield suggestive insights concerning the theoretical assumptions underlying HC5a. Non-violent crisis management options were excluded from Reagan’s “response set” because of Reagan’s beliefs about the nature and goals of Communism. These beliefs convinced him that negotiation, accommodation, or any sort of compromise with such an enemy would prove ineffective and ultimately damaging to American interests, and that it was necessary to move quickly to counter the apparent momentum of Communism in Grenada before the dam ruptured and the Caribbean became a Communist pond. Consequently, although Reagan did not generate a range of viable responses from which he chose violence as his “first resort,” it seems accurate to describe violent responses as the first and only resort Reagan could have chosen due to the way in which his
fundamental beliefs constrained his generation of options. This conclusion would be consistent with the theoretical notion—from which HC5a is ultimately drawn—that such leaders will not perceive the use of force as a fundamentally distasteful option that should generally be avoided, but will instead perceive it as a highly effective and even necessary instrument.

The evidence concerning HC5b (the behavioral component) is more straightforward. HC5b anticipates that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will not seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques. Such non-violent crisis management options include diplomacy, the use of international organizations such as the United Nations, and non-violent military movements and threats. At this point it is important to highlight the difference between how "options" are treated in Hypotheses HC5a and HC5b. HC5a focuses on how Reagan viewed the use of force in the context of those options he had generated as viable alternatives, while HC5b emphasizes the policy responses Reagan chose as a subset of those actions the U.S. government was capable of taking. Hence, non-violent responses such as diplomacy are included in this case in the latter but not the former pool of options. This is important because even though Reagan did not view non-violent options as viable, he certainly understood that the U.S. was capable of trying diplomacy, coalition-building, and other non-violent methods (indeed, several key actors within and outside of the administration were urging that there be either a delay or an

27 The reason why this hypothesis could not be directly tested, of course, is that Reagan did not generate a range of options beyond the use of force.
abandonment of the invasion plan in favor of non-violent initiatives, and Reagan was careful to prevent such preferences from becoming policy). It is quite conceivable that a leader might not regard military force as a last resort in a given crisis, and might view non-violent policy action X as being doomed to failure, yet still choose option X so as to satisfy certain domestic constituencies. This is why the perceptual and behavioral components of Hypothesis HC5 are examined separately, in an effort to fully establish the extent to which dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers, as categorized by the trait analysis, think and behave in ways consistent with theoretical expectations.

Support for HC5b (the behavioral component) hinges upon whether or not the leader clearly attempts to use all non-violent instruments at the state's disposal (e.g., diplomacy, use of IGOs, threats and non-violent military actions) to deal with the crisis before resorting to the use of violent methods. Clearly, as Hypothesis HC5b expects, Reagan did not make an effort to try all (or any) of the non-violent instruments that the U.S. government could have employed, before initiating the military operation. Negotiation or bargaining with the adversary was never considered: one cannot appease insatiable aggressors. No attempts were made to use the United Nations or other international organizations to facilitate the release of the U.S. students or to ease Caribbean security concerns. No efforts to use troop movements, threats or ultimata to coerce the adversary without actually using force were undertaken. Diplomatic efforts designed to get more countries (including allies such as Great Britain) behind the U.S. prior to the invasion were rejected on the grounds that such communications would leak

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These actors included Great Britain (Thatcher), Vice President Bush, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary of Defense Weinberger, and (Reagan perceived) elements of Congress, the media, and the public.
and jeopardize the security of the operation. Significantly, while President Kennedy used a delicate balance of non-violent techniques (ranging from bilateral diplomacy to the use of international organizations to non-violent military actions) in an effort to avoid escalating to the use of force in Laos and Vietnam, Reagan consciously and explicitly avoided the non-violent options before him in order to insure the success of the military course he had chosen.

Hypothesis HC6 states that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will a) NOT perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and will therefore b) NOT devote great effort to accompanying violent responses with non-violent actions. This hypothesis focuses on issues that are similar to those explored in HC5. But while HC5 emphasizes perceptions and actions concerning when violence should be employed (only as a last resort vs. whenever it is viewed as useful or appropriate), HC6 draws our attention to whether, once violent techniques are used, these responses are supplemented with non-violent instruments. Recall that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters are expected to vigorously supplement any violent responses with non-violent conflict management techniques. In contrast, dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers are expected to perceive such mixing of methods as unnecessary and are not expected to expend much effort insuring that their violent responses are “softened” by diplomacy and other non-violent instruments.

Consistent with HC6a, the evidence indicates that Reagan perceived no special need to supplement the U.S. military response to the Grenada crisis with non-violent measures such as diplomacy; indeed, such efforts were perceived as dangerous since they
had the potential to compromise the security of the mission or otherwise make the situation worse (e.g., by turning the U.S. citizens in Grenada into hostages). A pure military response, undiluted and unencumbered by non-violent instruments, was viewed by Reagan as the best way to deal with this crisis.

To evaluate HC6b (the behavioral component), one must determine whether or not the leader is devoting considerable attention to making sure violent policy responses are accompanied by non-violent actions. “Considerable attention,” or “great effort” is here defined as specific suggestions or instructions to administration officials insisting that non-violent responses be utilized in concert with violent actions. Clearly, as documented above, Reagan’s perceptions (HC6a) were consistent with his actions in this regard (providing support for HC6b). He not only did not expend great effort insuring that violent responses were accompanied by non-violent instruments; he actually devoted considerable attention to insuring that the non-violent responses suggested by others were avoided.

The only evidence that could be viewed as contrary to this general conclusion involves Reagan’s actions after the military operation had already been launched: Eugenia Charles, Prime Minister of Dominica and Chairman of the OECS, was invited to the White House for consultations and a press conference the morning the invasion became public, during which she explained why she had urgently requested U.S. intervention and expressed her gratitude to President Reagan for coming to the defense of the Eastern Caribbean states. This event could be seen as an attempt at “public diplomacy”: the administration sought to convey the image that the U.S. had not acted unilaterally or on an uninvited basis, but was merely responding to an OECS request for
Perceived Efficacy of Violent Instruments

Hypothesis HC7 states that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will have confidence in the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis. “Solving the crisis,” in this instance was defined by Reagan in terms of eliminating the threat to U.S. interests posed by the Marxist regime on Grenada. As noted during the analysis of HC5a, the way in which Reagan defined the crisis situation logically excluded non-violent options from the set of responses he viewed as viable. The evaluation of HC6 demonstrated that Reagan perceived the undiluted use of military force as the most effective instrument for dealing with the crisis, and that he viewed attempts to “water down” military action with non-violent techniques as likely to threaten the success of the mission. This evidence provides strong support for HC7.

Case #2: Libya, 1986

Historical Context and Overview

Beginning in 1981, the Reagan administration had had several confrontations with Muammar Qaddafi’s Libya involving the Gulf of Syrte: a body of Mediterranean water stretching over 100 miles from Libya’s coast, which Qaddafi claimed (contrary to international law) as part of Libya’s territorial waters. Reagan repeatedly ordered U.S. naval exercises that would cross beyond Qaddafi’s “line of death,” in order to challenge
these claims, and these exercises were met with Libyan military resistance in 1981 and 1986. The U.S. decisively repulsed Libyan missile attacks on its forces on March 24-25, 1986. On March 28, Qaddafi issued a call for Arabs everywhere to attack anything American, "be it an interest, goods, ships, plane, or person."

On April 5, a bomb exploded at a discotheque in West Berlin that was popular with U.S. soldiers; one American soldier and a Turkish woman were killed, and over 100 people were injured. This event triggered all three conditions of a foreign policy crisis for the United States. Although Libya denied involvement, U.S. intelligence received compelling evidence that Qaddafi was behind this attack. On April 9, President Reagan approved a proposal for air strikes against Libya; this operation was executed on April 15. Major targets included Qaddafi's military and intelligence headquarters in Tripoli and two key Libyan airfields. Libya reported 100 civilian casualties, including one of Qaddafi's adopted children. The successful airstrikes substantially reduced stress for the U.S., terminating the foreign policy crisis.29

Analysis

Information Search

Hypothesis HC1 states that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will not engage in an extensive search for information concerning the preferences of key domestic actors. The available evidence provides no indication that President Reagan made an effort to gather the views of such actors as Congress and the American public during this crisis. Congress was not consulted, but merely informed of the decision to
bomb Libya after it had been made, and the views of the American public do not appear to have been sought, or considered particularly relevant, by Reagan. The President did consult with intra-administration officials and advisors, but the bulk of this discussion revolved around tactical issues of targeting and timing, rather than the strategic question of which crisis management techniques should be utilized. Importantly, there is no evidence of the sort of information search that accompanied President Kennedy's handling of the Vietnam and Laos crises (e.g., a pattern of extensive probing, over many weeks, of the views of a host of intra- and extra-governmental actors and advisors, with an emphasis on the central issues of which crisis responses would prove most acceptable and effective).

Having said this, it should be noted that (unlike the Kennedy cases) there was apparently very little intra-administration opposition to an air strike against Libya after the disco bombing of April 5 (e.g., Shultz, p. 684). The lack of evidence regarding a Presidential search for others' views could be, to some degree, a function of the relative unanimity that characterized Reagan's national security team at this time. In other words, there was no need for Reagan to spend time probing for areas of agreement or compromise—even if he was so inclined—because these were unambiguous. However, the fact that Reagan did not devote discernable attention to determining the views of Congress (where he did not anticipate unanimity) and the American public demonstrates that key domestic actors were not comprehensively surveyed with the objective of constructing a map of the distribution of preferences comprising the political landscape.

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29 This crisis overview (including identification of the trigger, primary U.S. response, and resolution of the crisis) is based on the account contained in Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997, pp.475-477.

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It must also be recognized that, as will become clear momentarily, these actions against Libya were largely preplanned (as early as January, Reagan and his top advisors had determined that any terrorist attacks that could be linked to Libya would be met with military retaliation). Since some of the key decisions were apparently made on a contingent basis (e.g., if Libya does x, we will respond with y) before this crisis broke out, it is very difficult to determine based on Reagan's decision-making in the context of this specific crisis whether Reagan's earlier decision to use force under certain circumstances was based purely on his own estimates or was shaped by others' views in the pre-crisis period. Nevertheless, a less intensive, and therefore less conclusive, examination of the pre-crisis period suggests that these initial decisions did not involve extensive consultation with Congress or consideration of non-governmental actors' views. In sum, HC1 is certainly supported within the context of this specific crisis (which was triggered by the April 5 disco bombing)—no evidence of an extensive information search emerged. However, the qualification should be added that the pre-crisis phase was not under intensive scrutiny in this study, and the possibility remains that some type of information search may have occurred in this earlier stage.

**Perceptions of, and Responses to, Domestic Constraints**

Hypothesis HC2 anticipates that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will not perceive themselves to be constrained to pursue policies consistent with the preferences of key domestic actors, and b) will instead decide which policy actions to pursue based on their own conception of state goals and their own beliefs about how best
to achieve these goals in the present situation. The empirical record surrounding the Libya crisis provides much evidence that Reagan decided how to respond based on a combination of deeply held beliefs and situation-specific perceptions regarding: the nature of the adversary, the types of policy instruments that would prove effective in dealing with the perceived terrorist threat to U.S. interests, and the lack of options imposed by the “repeat offender” status of Qaddafi. In contrast, there is no evidence that Reagan based his policy decisions, even in part, on the preferences of other domestic actors, or that he perceived himself to be constrained by the preferences of key actors such as Congress and the public.

Long before the Libya crisis occurred, Reagan and his advisors had apparently decided how the U.S. would respond if Qaddafi or any other suspected sponsor of terrorism could ever be linked to a specific terrorist act. Weinberger recalls, “We had had many internal discussions within the NSPG [National Security Planning Group of the NSC] and with the President as to the course we would follow if we could ever identify a terrorist or a group of terrorists who had carried out an attack on us or on one of our allies” (Weinberger, p. 188). While some in the State Department favored an “unfocused” response, such as bombing a Syrian or Iranian city if a terrorist act was believed to have originated there, Weinberger contends that “...the President and I, had agreed that we would make a “focused” response whenever we identified and located a

30 Unless the leader perceives that his/her preferred policies will provoke opposition from key domestic groups to such a degree that the leader’s future effectiveness or continuation in office will be seriously jeopardized by the pursuit of such policies.

31 With regard to the alternative (an “unfocused” response), Weinberger notes, “I always argued against that simple “revenge” approach, as did the President. He very much opposed anything that could hurt or kill innocent people” (Weinberger, p. 188).
terrorist; that is, a response appropriate to the terrorist action, and a response that had as its aim the discouragement of any country or any person using terrorism from ever doing it again" (Weinberger, p. 188). In fact, as early as December, 1985, the administration had begun military contingency planning regarding possible Libyan targets after some early information suggested Libya was responsible for terrorist attacks at the Rome and Vienna airports (Weinberger, p. 188).

In January, 1986, President Reagan issued an executive order breaking off relations with Libya and withdrawing American businesses and citizens from the country. At the same time, he clearly decided that any future acts of terrorism by Qaddafi would be answered with military force:

On January 7, I wrote in my diary: "After quite a session, I finally came down on the side of an executive order bringing Americans and American business home from Libya and canceling relations—trade, etc., with them. At the same time we beef up the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea. If Mr. Qaddafi decides not to push another terrorist act, okay, we've been successful with our implied threat. If on the other hand he takes this for weakness and does loose another one, we will have targets in mind and instantly respond with a h—l of a punch. At tonight's press conference, I announce the executive order" (Reagan, p. 515).

In short, there is strong evidence that decision-making regarding the appropriate response to the disco bombing on April 5 did not begin de novo after that incident: the major outlines of the approach (a "focused" military response, designed to punish and to deter future attacks) were in place before this specific crisis ever arose. Once intelligence information led to the conclusion that Qaddafi was responsible, Meese notes, "the President never hesitated. He gave the order for a swift and sure response. He directed Cap Weinberger and the Joint Chiefs to come up with a very specific and highly focused
plan to punish Qaddafi’s terrorism. The essence of the plan was to go after military, support, and training assets directly linked to Libya’s terrorist activities, while avoiding collateral injury to civilians” (Meese, p. 302). The fact that Reagan “never hesitated” before ordering this (largely pre-arranged) military response suggests that he did not feel compelled to canvass Congressional or public opinion on the issue (HC2a) or to conduct any sort of detailed search regarding other actors’ preferences (HC1).32

Reagan’s own description of his thought processes is consistent with the expectation (HC2b) that his decision-making would be driven by the requirements of the “mission,” and interest-based, rather than politically related, criteria.

Now that the American oil workers were out of Libya, I knew we had to do something about the crackpot in Tripoli. “He’s not only a barbarian, he’s flaky,” I said at the time. I felt we had no alternative but a military response: As a matter of self-defense, any nation victimized by terrorism has an inherent right to respond with force to deter new acts of terror. I felt we must show Qaddafi that there was a price he would have to pay for that kind of behavior, that we wouldn’t let him get away with it. So I asked the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a plan: What can we do that would send the right signal to Qaddafi without harming innocent people? (Reagan, p. 518).

Even Reagan’s emphasis on avoiding “collateral damage” does not appear to be a consequence of political calculation (e.g., fear of public, Congressional, or international revulsion at the killing of innocent civilians). After an NSC meeting on April 7, during which maps, photographs, and a range of targets were reviewed, Reagan wrote in his diary, “I’m holding out for military targets to avoid civilian casualties because we believe a large part of Libya would like to get rid of the colonel” (Reagan, p. 518). In other

32 The qualification of the conclusions regarding hypothesis HC1 (based on the fact that the pre-crisis phase was not under in-depth investigation in this study and that some sort of information search may have occurred during this stage) also applies here.
words, Reagan's determination (affirmed by all those present) to avoid civilian casualties apparently resulted from a combination of personal ethical considerations and the belief that the long-range goal of removing Qaddafi would be undermined by harming those who potentially shared this objective. This complex of motives does not appear to include political ones. It must be noted, however, that this is an area in which leaders are unlikely to advertise in their memoirs that they "would have liked to have hit the enemy harder, with little concern for civilians, but for political reasons I couldn't." So one must be especially wary of taking such statements at face value. However, Reagan's stated reasoning appears to be consistent with his behavior (including his willingness, in the Grenada crisis, to ignore domestic and international opinion when it conflicted with his own understanding of how American interests would best be promoted and defended).

Further evidence regarding HC2 may be gleaned from an examination of how Reagan dealt with anticipated and actual opposition from key domestic and international sources during the Libya crisis. Unlike the Grenada case, Reagan faced very little opposition to his policy preferences from within his administration. Recalling a key White House meeting on Monday, April 7, Shultz notes that the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Defense Secretary Weinberger's deputy, Will Taft, "had now dropped the Pentagon's usual insistence that no American military action could be taken until we had confirmed

33 Another (somewhat conspiratorial) explanation for this multiple attestation to Reagan's collateral damage sensitivity could be constructed as follows: based on heavy criticism leveled against the administration after this raid (focused around reports that roughly 100 civilians, including Qaddafi's adopted daughter, had been killed) Reagan and his advisors did their best to rewrite history and show that their primary focus throughout planning and executing this operation was on avoiding civilian casualties. However, the evidence indicates that strict precautions were in fact taken to avoid collateral damage (e.g., targets near civilian areas were excluded, pilots were instructed that in the event of even minor equipment malfunctions they were to abort their missions rather than risk having their bombs go off course). The best explanation appears to be that Reagan and his advisors chose to emphasize these precautions to such a degree in their
that public opinion fully supported it before the fact. Cap [Weinberger] was on an
extended trip to Asia, but I heard that he was on board this time” (Shultz, pp. 683-684).
In fact, the press began speculating that U.S. action was imminent, since “they had picked
up on the fact that State and Defense were no longer split on retaliation” (Shultz, p. 684).

Reagan did anticipate opposition from many in Congress and in the media,
however. In the days leading up to the final decision to strike Libya, Congress
was kept out of the loop. Shultz recalls: “While I was abroad, John Whitehead
and Mike Armacost had urged that Congress be kept informed, but their counsel
had been ignored and neither was invited to the decision meeting. Complaints
were now flowing in from Congress, and the State Department was told to take on
the job of damage control” (Shultz, p. 681). As with the Grenada invasion,
Congress was not told of the details of the Libya mission until early elements of
the operation were underway, due to concerns about leaks (Shultz, p. 685;
Weinberger, p. 193). Interestingly, Shultz notes that Congress was being given
less information than allied governments in an effort to head off potential
opposition:

We were now briefing Congress in general terms. I worried. We had
briefed allied heads of government in detail but not Congress; we were
afraid of leaks. Many members of Congress seemed constantly to oppose
any use of any attribute of American power—and a leak about this
operation would have forced us to postpone or cancel it. And there were
War Powers Act problems. Dante Fascell, who was tough-minded and
action oriented, still seemed to feel that the president should get a

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memoirs because they believed they had taken unjustified criticism in the aftermath of the attack (e.g.,
Meese, p. 203; Weinberger, pp. 196-197).

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34 Weinberger notes that despite numerous rumors and published reports indicating the U.S. was preparing
to strike Libya in some way, “it still would be possible and highly desirable to achieve tactical surprise; and
that we were able to do” (Weinberger, p. 190).
resolution of authority from Congress before doing anything (Shultz, p. 685).

These general briefings did not amount to “consultation,” however: Reagan and his advisors made the key decisions regarding how and when to respond, then simply informed Congress, three hours before the attack, of “what was about to happen” (Reagan, p. 519). In his account of the Congressional reaction, Weinberger suggests that even this minimal level of consultation may have been unwise:

“There was some grumbling, and there were many questions about the operational details of the attack. In the interest of telling the full story, we even advised our audience of the time the attack would go in. The possible lack of wisdom of our being so candid was demonstrated when a senior member of Congress emerged from the briefing to tell reporters that he could not say anything, but they should turn on their television sets about 6 P.M.” (Weinberger, p. 193).

Some members of Congress, particularly Democrats, expressed serious concern about this lack of consultation. The Reagan administration argued that self-defense against terrorism did not fall under the consultations requirements of the War Powers Resolution (CQ Almanac, 1986, p. 392). Dante Fascell, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said that by claiming to act in self-defense against terrorism, Reagan was creating “a new way of going to war which totally bypasses the Constitution” (CQ Almanac, p. 392).

Reagan’s perceptions of the media and their motives are particularly noteworthy in the context of the Libya crisis. Reagan recalls:

This was one of the times, incidentally—while we were trying to come up with targets that would let us make our point but not hurt innocent people—when I really lost my patience with the press. Through the inevitable leak, several reporters picked up a scent that we might be planning an operation against Qaddafi in response to the disco bombing. In some cases, they got fairly accurate information, and some of their...
reports virtually announced to Qaddafi that the United States was planning to attack him. We tried to talk them out of revealing these state secrets—as far as I was concerned, maintaining secrecy in a war against terrorism is as crucial as it was during World War II, when the press accepted restrictions on its reporting to safeguard important operations and American lives—but they would have none of it. Every time they got a leak, they ran with it, even though it meant risking human lives” (Reagan, pp. 518-519).

Clearly, Reagan viewed members of the media as extremely irresponsible in this case: at a minimum, they were unwitting accomplices in harming America’s interests by telegraphing its punches, and to the degree that they recognized they were risking American lives and jeopardizing the operation but consciously subordinated these concerns to journalistic self-interest, they were clearly abettors of the enemy. To be fair to Reagan, viewing media reporting that announces one’s intentions to the adversary as harmful to state interests is different from viewing opposition to one’s policy preferences as treasonous and un-American. Nevertheless, Reagan’s tenacious emphasis on secrecy and the security of the mission to the exclusion of all other considerations is part of a general pattern that clearly emerged in the Grenada case and is also evident in his attitudes towards Congress and the media during the Libya crisis.

The U.S. also faced international opposition to the planned action against Libya. Importantly, with the exception of Great Britain, a number of key European allies were opposed: “The president “should put his gun back in his holster” was the sentiment being registered [by European leaders]. German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher was on his way to Washington reportedly to tell us that there was insufficient evidence to justify an attack against Libya” (Shultz, p. 685). France35 and Italy refused to allow U.S.
planes taking off from Britain to enter their air space on the way to Libya—an action that added “about a thousand miles to the distance covered by [U.S.] planes, which had to be refueled four times in flight (at night and under radio silence)” (Meese, p. 203).

Significantly, despite this widespread opposition, consultation with key allies was limited to the U.S. announcing its intentions and asking for help in conducting the military operations. For instance, Reagan’s April 10 diary entry makes clear that he did not ask Margaret Thatcher for advice, but simply informed her of his plans “in generalities” after they were fairly well established: “Another session with Admiral [Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman William J.] Crowe on potential Libyan targets. I think it will be Monday night. I’ve sent a long passage to Prime Minister Thatcher explaining in generalities what we’re up to. She has replied with a long message pledging support but expressing concern about possible civilian casualties. That’s our concern also” (Reagan, p. 518).

To summarize, the behavioral evidence regarding Reagan’s handling of the Libya crisis strongly suggests that he did not perceive his policy options to be constrained by the preferences of key domestic (or international) actors. He made no attempt to determine Congressional preferences or to incorporate them into the policymaking process, and only informed Congress after the decisions had been made. As in the Grenada crisis, Reagan emphasized extremely tight secrecy, even though this meant keeping Congress and key societal actors (e.g., the media, the public) “out of the loop” and thereby eliminating the possibility of serious debate, discussion, or consultation with

“Don’t inflict a mere pinprick,” he said, advising that we inflict heavy damage—but not to use French air space. By the time we received that guidance, our plans were long since complete. It would not be a pinprick” (Weinberger, p. 192).
these actors. Although public approval of the Libya bombing after the fact is noted by
Reagan, there is no evidence that assessments of the public’s likely reaction played a
role in deciding how to respond to the crisis. The Reagan administration did not
seriously consult with key allies, but instead announced U.S. intentions and asked for
their support in carrying out the military operations. Although there is no “smoking gun”
in this case providing perceptual evidence that Reagan believed he was under no
obligation to incorporate key domestic actors’ views into the policymaking process (e.g.,
Reagan’s clear views that opposition during the Grenada crisis was misguided,
dangerous, and should not be given any role), the behavioral evidence—particularly
concerning the blanket of secrecy that made any role for such actors impossible—is
compelling. Therefore, HC2a, which states that dispositionally aggressive constraint
challengers will not perceive themselves to be constrained to pursue policies consistent
with the preferences of key domestic actors, is supported.

There is more direct perceptual evidence with regard to HC2b, which anticipates
that such leaders will decide which policy actions to pursue based on their own
conception of state goals and their own beliefs about how best to achieve these goals in
the present situation. Reagan’s own accounts of his decision-making process
(highlighted above) and the observations of close associates regarding the central factors
driving his choices make it clear that interest-based, rather than political, considerations
dominated policy choice for Reagan during this crisis. The decision to unleash the (to

36 “During the first twenty-four hours, the White House received 126,000 phone calls—15,000 couldn’t get
through—in response to the attack, and in the following twenty-four hours, there were 160,000 calls and
16,000 couldn’t get through. They were more than seventy percent favorable” (Reagan, p. 520).
some degree, preplanned) military retaliation against Qaddafi, as well as the tactical targeting decisions, were driven by Reagan’s belief that Qaddafi’s behavior represented a serious threat to U.S. interests and that a focused military response was the appropriate instrument both to punish the perpetrator and to deter future acts of terror. This evidence provides strong support for HC2b. As with the Grenada case, it should be noted that Reagan’s remarkable capacity to insulate his decision-making from political considerations and to focus single-mindedly on the mission, as he had defined it, provides virtually an ideal-typical portrait of the task-oriented constraint challenger in action.37

**Speed of Closure on Problem Definition and Preferred Responses**

Hypothesis HC3 is relatively easy to evaluate in this case. This hypothesis states that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will rather quickly reach closure on a definition of the crisis situation and a preferred set of policy responses. The evidence is very clear that once compelling intelligence

37 Some additional evidence regarding Reagan’s orientation toward intra- and extra-administration political opposition—unrelated to the Libya crisis—emerges in the same section of Reagan’s chronologically organized memoirs in which the Libya crisis is discussed. In discussing decisions he made during January, 1986 involving what would become known as “Iran Contra,” Reagan notes both that he took sides among his strongly divided advisors (something Kennedy did not do in the Vietnam and Laos crises) and that he was willing to weather a political firestorm if the initiative became public, since the perceived opportunities vis-à-vis U.S. interests were the dominant consideration: “In early January, I was assured against that Ghorbanifar and company had good connections in Iran. Warts and all, they were our best hope for getting the hostages out, so I decided to proceed with the initiative despite a deep division within the cabinet and staff: Ed Meese, Bill Casey, and especially John Poindexter—who became the principal manager of the initiative after McFarlane retired—argued for going ahead; Cap Weinberger and George Shultz remained very much opposed, with Shultz especially strong in his opposition. They argued forcefully that I was wrong, but I just put my foot down. I did not think of the operation (and never have) as an “arms-for-hostage” deal, because it wasn’t. Cap and George had both had experience in prior administrations. I couldn’t ignore their warning that if word about the initiative leaked out, it would be misinterpreted—but I just felt that the opportunities involved justified taking the chance. I didn’t expect the plan to fail, but if it did, I was prepared to take the heat” (Reagan, pp. 516-517).
information\textsuperscript{38} had linked Qaddafi to the disco bombing, Reagan concluded virtually instantaneously that this was an undeniable case of a "mad dog" needing to be punished and deterred, and that a "focused military response" would be the appropriate policy action for achieving this purpose. According to Meese, "The President never hesitated. He gave the order for a swift and sure response. He directed Cap Weinberger and the Joint Chiefs to come up with a very specific and highly focused plan to punish Qaddafi's terrorism. The essence of the plan was to go after military, support, and training assets directly linked to Libya's terrorist activities, while avoiding collateral injury to civilians" (Meese, p. 302). Shultz recalls that soon after he learned of the disco bombing and the incriminating intelligence data, "I called NSC adviser John Poindexter. 'The president will want to do something—Tuesday or Wednesday night,' he said" (Shultz, p. 683). Weinberger recalls that his deputy, Will Taft, who had met with the Joint Chiefs and the President in the Oval Office while Weinberger was returning home from Asia, "reported that the President was anxious to do the attack as soon as all was ready..." (Weinberger, p. 190).

The quickness with which Reagan diagnosed the problem and settled on a solution is foreshadowed in his diary entry of January 7: "If...[Qaddafi] takes this for weakness and does loose another one, we will have targets in mind and instantly respond with a h—l of a punch" (Reagan, p. 515). This is precisely what Reagan did. There was no need to waste time considering a range of options

\textsuperscript{38} According to Shultz, "Intelligence reports made the connection to Libya unmistakable. We were 'reading their mail': we had intercepted a Libyan communication from East Berlin saying that their operation had been carried out successfully 'without leaving clues'" (Shultz, p. 683).

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because, as Reagan notes in his memoirs, “I felt we had no alternative but a military response” (Reagan, p. 518). Although numerous sources suggest his decision was instantaneous, it is clear that by April 7, at the latest (two days after the disco bombing) Reagan’s mind was made up to proceed with a military strike. At the NSC meeting that day, discussion involved tactical matters and presupposed that, in the parlance of Brecher and Wilkenfeld, violence would be used as the preeminent crisis management technique: “We reviewed maps and photographs of Libya and weighed various options, including strikes at locations in Tripoli that might have resulted in civilian deaths. ‘I’m holding out for military targets to avoid civilian casualties because we believe a large part of Libya would like to get rid of the colonel,’ I wrote in my diary that night” (Reagan, p. 518).

The logic behind HC3 is that constraint challengers will be able to relatively quickly reach closure on a definition of the problem and a set of preferred policy responses because their reliance on internal guidance renders any lengthy search for, or assimilation of, the views of other domestic actors unnecessary. The empirical record surrounding the Libya case (including evidence related to HC2) provides strong support both for the “letter” of HC3 as formally stated and the deeper “spirit” of HC3 (the underlying logic).

**Perceptions of the Crisis Adversary**

Hypothesis HC4 states that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will view the other party to the crisis as having malevolent intentions and implacable hostility
towards the leader's state. In the Libya case, Reagan viewed the crisis adversary in very personal terms: although Reagan recognized that Qaddafi had henchmen and a military-intelligence infrastructure that allowed him to support terrorist acts, he perceived Muammar Qaddafi himself, rather than the government or state of Libya, as the principal opponent and the major problem in the region. Indeed, between his inauguration in 1981 and the time this crisis broke out in 1986, Reagan and Qaddafi had locked horns on several occasions, and many analysts characterized their relationship, played out in terms of U.S.-Libyan confrontations, as one of tremendous personal animosity.

In general, the evidence indicates that Reagan viewed the Libyan leader very much as Hypothesis HC4 anticipates. Reagan perceived that Qaddafi harbored enormous, unadulterated hatred towards the United States, and sought to do grave harm to America and its interests. This image excluded the possibility that Qaddafi might have legitimate grievances or limited ambitions that could be subject to compromise or a negotiated settlement. Reagan and his advisors viewed Qaddafi as an irrational leader who could not be reasoned with, and would only understand raw military force. After the disco bombing, Reagan recalls, “...I knew we had to do something about the crackpot in Tripoli. ‘He’s not only a barbarian, he’s flaky,’ I said at the time. I felt we had no alternative but a military response’” (Reagan, p. 518).

Interestingly, however, Reagan apparently believed that Qaddafi was rational enough to be potentially deterred from future terror attacks by forceful U.S. retaliation, and he thought in terms of “sending signals” through military action that would be interpreted correctly by Qaddafi: “As a matter of self-defense, any nation victimized by terrorism has an inherent right to respond with force to deter new acts of terror. I felt we
must show Qaddafi that there was a price he would have to pay for that kind of behavior, that we wouldn’t let him get away with it. So I asked the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a plan: What can we do that would send the right signal to Qaddafi without harming innocent people?” (Reagan, p. 518). In discussing the targeting of Qaddafi’s military headquarters, Reagan notes, “the attack was not intended to kill Qaddafi; that would have violated our prohibition against assassination. The objective was to let him know that we weren’t going to accept his terrorism anymore, and that if he did it again he could expect to hear from us again” (Reagan, p. 519). Despite attributing a mix of insane and rational attributes to Qaddafi, Reagan clearly believed in the context of the Libya crisis that Qaddafi had very malevolent intentions toward the U.S. and could not be reasoned with or accommodated through non-violent means (consistent with HC4).

The only piece of evidence that could be viewed as counter to this general conclusion involves Reagan’s earlier, pre-crisis dealings with Qaddafi, during which he used non-violent military measures in an effort to change the Libyan leader’s behavior. After signing the executive order in January, 1986 that broke off relations with Libya and removed Americans and American businesses from the country, Reagan wrote in his diary: “At the same time we beef up the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea. If Mr. Qaddafi decides not to push another terrorist act, okay, we’ve been successful with our implied threat. If on the other hand he takes this for weakness and does loose another one, we will have targets in mind and instantly respond with a h—l of a punch.” (Reagan, p. 515). Although this episode involves the use of a non-violent influence attempt, it does not indicate that Reagan believed he could compromise or negotiate with Qaddafi to
change his behavior: the influence attempt involved a unilateral threat of force, not a
discussion of goals or of mutually beneficial arrangements.

Since most American observers would describe Qaddafi's behavior and
statements during this period as clearly outrageous, one could reasonably respond to the
above assessment of Reagan's views with the question, "so what?" That is, didn't
virtually all Americans view Qaddafi in these terms at this time, and could one really
expect a dispositionally pacific constraint respecter to perceive him differently? This is
an important question. It may be that dispositionally pacific leaders (those lower in
distrust and nationalism) would see some ambiguity or complexity in Qaddafi's motives,
or would concede that he had some legitimate grievances. For instance, even post-
September 11, some Americans view a figure as widely condemned as Osama bin Laden
as a person with legitimate grievances regarding America's strong support for Israel,
"neo-imperialism" in Saudi Arabia, support for sanctions against Iraq, etc. Though they
may condemn his methods, they concede that he might "have a point." However, to the
degree that Qaddafi was an extreme case in terms of his provocative statements and
behavior, which led to a virtual consensus among Americans that Qaddafi was motivated
by implacably hostile intentions and was not amenable to compromise, this casts doubt
on the diagnosticity or relevance of support for HC4 in the Libya case for support for this
hypothesis more generally.

The Role of Violent vs. Non-Violent Crisis Management Techniques

Hypotheses HC5 and HC6 both focus on the roles of, and the relationship
between, violent and non-violent crisis management instruments in Reagan's perceptions

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HC5 anticipates that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will NOT view the use of force as a last resort, and b) therefore will NOT seek to exhaust all options short of the use of force before employing violent crisis management techniques. As in the Grenada case, the evidence suggests that during the Libya crisis Reagan did not generate a range of violent and non-violent response options that he considered to be a legitimate set of possibilities from which to choose. Instead, he explicitly excluded non-violent responses as nonviable: “I felt we had no alternative but a military response” (Reagan, p. 518). So HC5a cannot be directly evaluated in the context of the Libya case. Specifically, this component of HC5 cannot be tested because Reagan did not think in terms of “last resort” vs. “first, second, third resort”; he did not perceive that there were other legitimate options to try.

Having said this, the fact that Reagan generated only violent response options, believing that only violent responses would succeed, suggests he viewed the use of military force as a useful and legitimate option that was not necessarily to be avoided or viewed as distasteful. This provides some evidence in support of the assumptions underlying HC5a, although the hypothesis itself cannot be evaluated. In other words, the concept of “last resort” suggests that one is interested in doing everything possible to avoid resorting to the option in question, and a person who generally views the use of force as a last resort is unlikely to generate only military options.

HC5b does receive strong support, however. Recall (from the analysis of the Grenada case) that even if no non-violent response options are generated, it is assumed the leader understands his state has diplomatic, economic, and other non-violent instruments that could be used (e.g., for solely political reasons), regardless of his
confidence in their efficacy. Though aware of this, Reagan clearly did not attempt to use non-violent instruments in the Libya crisis that began on April 5, 1986, before employing violent crisis management techniques.

Hypothesis HC6 states that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers a) will NOT perceive that it is necessary to supplement violent crisis management techniques with non-violent mechanisms, and b) will therefore NOT devote great effort to accompanying violent responses with non-violent actions. Reagan's behavior and statements in the context of the Libya case make it clear that, as hypothesized, he did not perceive that violent crisis management techniques had to be accompanied by non-violent techniques. In fact, as in the Grenada crisis, he viewed the undiluted use of force as the appropriate and necessary means for accomplishing the mission (defined in this crisis as punishing and deterring Qaddafi) (e.g., Reagan, pp. 518-519). "Watered down" responses that could leave ambiguity as to America's resolve in the face of terrorism or muddle the message Reagan wished to deliver to Qaddafi were viewed as anathema.

It is significant that during Reagan's early 1986 non-violent influence attempt ("beefing up" the sixth fleet in the Mediterranean), he speculated that America's non-violent actions, including diplomatic and economic sanctions and the implied threat of force, might be equated with impotence by Qaddafi: "If on the other hand he takes this for weakness and does loose another one, we will have targets in mind and instantly respond with a h—l of a punch" (Reagan, p. 515). When the disco bombing occurred and was linked to Qaddafi, Reagan clearly concluded that America's non-violent influence tactics had failed and only violent options remained on the table (Reagan, pp. 518-519). In short, Reagan not only did not perceive that it was necessary to supplement violent
responses with non-violent actions (consistent with HC6a); he believed it was necessary to exclude non-violent techniques in order to effectively punish and deter Qaddafi.39 HC6b, the behavioral component of this hypothesis, is also clearly supported in the Libya crisis: there is no evidence that Reagan made any effort to supplement the violent policy response with non-violent techniques, and every indication based on the above statements that he would have strongly opposed any such suggestion.

**Perceived Efficacy of Violent Instruments**

Hypothesis HC7 expects that dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers will have confidence in the efficacy of military force as an instrument for solving the crisis. “Solving the crisis,” in the Libya case, was defined by Reagan in terms of sending a clear message to Qaddafi that there would be a heavy price to pay for supporting terrorist attacks (Reagan, p. 518). Consistent with HC7, Reagan clearly believed that military force was both necessary and sufficient for accomplishing this objective. The above analysis of HC6 leaves little doubt in this regard. After the disco bombing, Reagan’s first instinct was to ask not the State Department, but the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a plan that would “send the right signal to Qaddafi” (Reagan, p. 518).

Additional insight into Reagan’s view of the relative efficacy of violent and non-violent techniques may be gleaned from his use of non-violent methods in early 1986. Significantly, he apparently did not view the diplomatic and economic sanctions slapped on Libya in January 1986 as instruments that could influence Qaddafi’s future behavior:

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39 The fact that Reagan had decided, in advance, to respond with purely violent instruments—a “focused military response”—if a terrorist attack could ever be linked to a specific state sponsor, strongly suggests that he did not believe in general that non-violent instruments should always accompany violent ones.

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they were merely a punishment. On the day he signed the executive order imposing the sanctions, Reagan discussed these measures in his diary, but the instrument he identified as potentially useful in discouraging future terrorism was not diplomatic or economic, but (non-violent) military: “At the same time we beef up the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea. If Mr. Qaddafi decides not to push another terrorist act, okay, we’ve been successful with our implied threat” (Reagan, p. 515). While he viewed economic and diplomatic actions toward Libya as rather impotent, he also expressed doubts regarding the efficacy of the non-violent military action he had chosen. Reagan speculates that Qaddafi could very well equate these non-violent steps with weakness: “If on the other hand he takes this for weakness and does loose another one, we will have targets in mind and instantly respond with a h—l of a punch” (Reagan, p. 515). In short, during the entire Libya-1986 episode (including the pre-crisis phase), the only policy instruments in which Reagan placed any real confidence were violent ones.

Summary of Support for Hypotheses

Table 6.1 summarizes the degree of support for each process-related hypothesis in each of the Reagan cases.
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Key: S = Strong Support; M = Moderate Support; W = Weak Support; A = Evidence is Against Hypothesis; X = Cannot Be Directly Evaluated

Table 6.1: Summary of Support for Hypotheses in Reagan Cases
Chapter 1 began by drawing attention to an important puzzle for scholars of international relations. That puzzle, briefly stated, is that while an impressive collection of compelling theoretical arguments suggests democracies should be monadically pacific (e.g., Kant, 1795; Wright, 1942; Rummel, 1997), empirical evidence indicates they are only pacific in their relations with fellow democracies (Chan, 1984; Maoz and Abdolali, 1989; Russett, 1993). Why aren't democracies monadically pacific? The common answer to this question, provided by theorists of the “dyadic peace,” is that the pacifying constraints characteristic of democratic systems lose their pacifying power when a democracy confronts a non-democratic adversary (e.g., Russett, 1993, pp. 30-40). Yet the logic by which this occurs is not convincing to many theorists, and the search for a satisfying explanation continues unabated.

This festering puzzle is the result of theorists having accepted a questionable assumption that has bound them into a theoretical straightjacket: the belief that all leaders will respond similarly, if not identically, to domestic political constraints (e.g., Morgan and Campbell, 1991, pp. 190-193; Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman, 1992; Russett, pp. 30-40). This assumption requires the analyst to treat all democracies alike in terms of the purported impact of pacifying constraints, leading to empirical strategies and results...
that do not differentiate between democracies led by different types of leaders. Research on political leadership and decision-making, however, challenges this basic assumption by strongly suggesting that leaders differ systematically in how they perceive and respond to constraints in their environments.

This project draws on research from political science, psychology, and management science to produce a theoretical framework that suggests a striking conclusion: the pacifying constraints present in democratic systems are alive and well regardless of the adversary's regime type, and will produce extraordinarily pacific foreign policy behavior for those leaders who perceive and internalize these constraints. The results in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 indicate that this novel conclusion is indeed valid. By focusing on regime type alone, extant studies have shown that democracies are not monadically peaceful—but they have obscured the deeper reality that democracies are monadically peaceful when “constraint respecters” are in power.

Consequently, the puzzle surrounding the disconnect between compelling theoretical arguments for a monadic democratic peace and equally compelling empirical evidence against this notion may be resolved as follows. Theoretical arguments regarding the monadic pacifying power of democratic constraints are valid when leaders who internalize these constraints are in power, but fail to accurately describe policymaking when democracies are led by “constraint challengers.” This contingent theoretical argument is now consistent with the empirical evidence (specifically, with evidence drawn from the domain of foreign policy crises).

The following section lists and briefly discusses 7 major conclusions that have emerged from the empirical analysis conducted here.
Conclusion 1: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies are extraordinarily pacific in their crisis responses.

As hypothesized, the combination of potential pacifying democratic constraints and dispositionally pacific constraint respecters is associated with strikingly pacific foreign policy behavior. These democratic leaders, who combine a dispositional aversion to violence with an acute sensitivity to the domestic political context, feature violence significantly less centrally in their crisis responses (H1, H2, H3) and employ significantly less severe forms of violence (H5, H6, H7) than do all other combinations of leadership style and regime type. These findings remain statistically significant across both levels of trigger severity (non-violent and violent crisis triggers).

When faced with non-violent crisis triggers, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies used purely non-violent crisis management techniques 100% of the time (19 of 19 crises). In contrast, the other categories of leaders reacted to these less severe, non-violent triggers with non-violent responses in only 40%, 55.6%, and 60% of crises.1 When confronting violent crisis triggers, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies still dealt with 60% of crises using exclusively non-violent crisis management mechanisms. Compare this to non-violence rates of 30%, 23.5%, and 0% for the other categories of leaders under such circumstances. Even when dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies used violence, it was always

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1 Instead, these other categories of leaders responded using violence as an important or preeminent technique in 60% of crises (dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies), 44.4% of crises (dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in autocracies), and 20% of crises (dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies).
supplemented with non-violent crisis management techniques: violence was never used as the preeminent technique.

**Conclusion 2: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies exhibit a distinctive, moderated aggressiveness in their crisis behavior, with a preference for mixed methods (violent plus non-violent techniques).**

Similar to their democratic counterparts, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies used violence as the preeminent crisis management technique only extremely rarely (2 of 29 crises, or 6.9%). However, such leaders used violence significantly more centrally (H3) and in significantly more severe forms (H7) than their counterparts in democracies. In other words, they exhibited a much greater tendency than their democratic counterparts to employ violence, but they almost always supplemented these violent responses with non-violent techniques, such as negotiation.

**Conclusion 3: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in both democracies and autocracies exhibit a preference for highly aggressive crisis responses.**

As hypothesized, those leaders who combine a dispositional affinity for violent action with insensitivity to the domestic political context exhibit a tendency to employ rather violent crisis management techniques regardless of whether they hold power in democracies or autocracies. That is, there is no statistically discernable difference in the centrality and the severity of the violence employed by such leaders in democracies versus autocracies (H4, H8). As expected, such leaders in democracies (H1, H5) and in autocracies (H2, H6) employed violence as a significantly more central and severe crisis.
management technique than did dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies.

Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies used violence as an important or preeminent crisis management technique in 81.8% of all crises examined, and such leaders in autocracies did so in 53.4% of crises. Interestingly, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies also used violence as an important or preeminent technique in 51.7% of crises, but in only 6.9% of such cases was violence the preeminent technique (it constituted the preeminent method for dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in 36.7% (autocracies) and 54.5% (democracies) of crises). This tendency to rely on violent responses was particularly pronounced when dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers confronted violent crisis triggers. In response to violent triggers, such leaders in democracies used violence as an important or preeminent technique in 100% of crises (16.7% important, 83.3% preeminent), while their counterparts in autocracies did so in 60% of crises (15% important, 45% preeminent). By comparison, dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in autocracies responded to violent triggers with violence as an important or preeminent technique in 76.5% of crises (64.7% important, 11.8% preeminent), while their democratic counterparts did so in 30% of crises (30% important, 0% preeminent).

Conclusion 4: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies perceive that their policy options are severely constrained by a host of intra- and extra-governmental domestic actors, whose views must be respected and accommodated.
During the Laos and Vietnam crises, President Kennedy clearly perceived that his policy options were constrained by the preferences of key domestic actors such as Congress and the American public (HR2a and HR3a). He viewed these actors as legitimate players whose views could not be disregarded in the policymaking process. In key meetings and in conversations with close friends and advisors, Kennedy repeatedly cited opposition from Congress and the public as a critical factor that prevented him from committing U.S. combat forces to Laos and Vietnam. Where he could discern areas of consensus among key domestic actors (e.g., the goal of not losing Vietnam or Laos to Communism), Kennedy pursued policies consistent with the consensus approach (HR2b). Where consensus could not be found but a compromise emerged that satisfied the minimal aspirations of key domestic actors (e.g., increasing military and economic aid to South Vietnam), Kennedy embraced these compromise policies (HR3b). Where no consensus emerged and no compromise was possible (e.g., on the highly controversial issues of introducing U.S. combat forces into Laos and Vietnam), Kennedy simply put off a decision, and ultimately refused to make a final decision one way or the other (although he implicitly decided against U.S. intervention) (HR3b).

**Conclusion 5:** Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies perceive opposition to their preferred policies from domestic actors not as a legitimate constraint, but as a misguided, ill-informed, harmful, and even treasonous phenomenon that cannot be allowed to play a role in policy formation.

During the Grenada and Libya crises, President Reagan decided how to respond based on his underlying beliefs and situation-specific perceptions regarding: the nature of
the adversary, the types of threats and opportunities vis-à-vis U.S. interests inherent in the crisis situation, and the types of instruments best suited to promoting or defending U.S. interests in the context of the crisis (HC2b). Reagan did not conduct an information search to determine the views of key domestic actors (HC1), and when he became aware of potential or actual opposition to his preferred policies, he did not view such opposition as a legitimate constraint on his policy options (HC2a). Instead, opposition from key societal sources such as Congress, the American public, and the media was viewed as ill-informed, harmful to state interests, and in many instances, driven by malevolent motives. Reagan perceived that this irrational and harmful opposition represented a serious obstacle to the clear-headed defense of America’s interests, and that it therefore had to be circumvented, preempted, or silenced, for the good of the nation. It was his duty, as President, to see that such voices did not influence his decision-making. Accommodation with this opposition was never attempted, nor apparently contemplated, by Reagan.

For Reagan, the logic of the mission and his overriding concern with safeguarding America’s interests, as he understood them, took clear precedence over the preferences of key domestic actors. When potential public revulsion at intervention in Grenada so soon after the loss of American marines in Lebanon was raised by the Joint Chiefs in a key White House meeting, President Reagan asked one question: “Is there any military reason for not going ahead with the operation?” Upon being assured the plan was feasible, President Reagan authorized the invasion.

Reagan’s exclusive focus on the success of the mission, as he had defined it, led to a remarkable concern for secrecy: consulting with, and sometimes even notifying,
actors such as Congress, U.S. allies, and the media were seen as luxuries that could not be afforded when leaks would jeopardize the security of the mission. Reagan therefore roused the ire of Congress and key allies by not consulting with them, but instead either informing them of impending operations or explaining U.S. actions after the fact. In his memoirs, Reagan is very blunt about the fact that his motivations for maintaining such high levels of secrecy and keeping Congress and even key allies “out of the loop” involved not just the security of the operation, but the perceived need to avoid preemptive public criticism and opposition from Congress, the media, and other domestic and international sources. In short, Reagan did not simply ignore opposition emerging from key domestic actors—he actively sought to suppress its coalescence and expression.

Conclusion 6: Dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies consider violent crisis responses to be a last resort and have little faith in the efficacy of violent instruments for achieving political goals.

During the Laos and Vietnam crises, President Kennedy viewed the introduction of American military forces as the “last step to be employed,” and he explicitly used the phrase “last resort” in discussing this option with his national security team (HR5a). Instead, Kennedy relied heavily on diplomacy and other non-violent crisis management techniques in a relentless effort to avoid reaching that point of last resort (HR5b). He worked creatively to avoid backing the adversary into a corner from which there was no face-saving exit, and he also went to extraordinary lengths to insure that a range of U.S. options remained open throughout the crisis. In short, he took great care to insure that
neither side was placed in a situation where escalation was the only attractive option and where U.S. military involvement was the only remedy.

Kennedy believed strongly that the roots of the turmoil in Southeast Asia were political, and that military action divorced from a careful consideration of both the underlying political context and the political consequences of the proposed military intervention would be worse than ineffective. He viewed any proposed use of troops not as the beginning of a military campaign to capture territory or to defeat adversaries, but as a tool to facilitate a political settlement. The empirical record surrounding these crises (particularly Laos) is replete with instances of Kennedy skeptically interrogating military officials, questioning their assumptions and estimates, and in many cases forcing these advisors to acknowledge flaws or inconsistencies in their optimistic judgments of the effectiveness of military action. Kennedy sought to avoid violent instruments both because he had grave doubts about their efficacy in dealing with the underlying political roots of these crises (HR7) and because he feared they would provoke further escalation, which might lead to heavy American losses, if not World War III.

Conclusion 7: Dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies do not view violent crisis responses as a last resort, and have great confidence in the efficacy of violent instruments for achieving political goals.

In the context of the Grenada and Libya crises, it is clear that President Reagan viewed the use of military force as the first and only resort to be employed in dealing with the Communist regime in Grenada and the terrorism-sponsoring regime in Libya (HC5a). Reagan’s core beliefs about the nature of the adversary in each case powerfully
constrained the set of options he viewed as acceptable. These beliefs convinced him that negotiation, accommodation, or any sort of compromise with such an enemy (Communism or terrorism) would prove ineffective and ultimately damaging to American interests. In both crises, Reagan repeatedly stated that he had "no alternative" other than the use of force—that there was no other language Qaddafi would understand, and no other instrument that would stop Communist aggression in the Western Hemisphere. In each case, Reagan concluded that pure military force—undiluted by diplomatic or political instruments—was ideally suited to safeguarding America's interests, and he expressed great confidence that military force was both necessary and sufficient for ultimately resolving each crisis (HC7).

Clearly, as Hypothesis HC5b expects, Reagan did not make an effort to try all (or any) of the non-violent instruments that the U.S. could have employed, before initiating military action. In the Grenada crisis, for instance, Reagan rejected potential diplomatic efforts designed to get more countries (including allies such as Great Britain) behind the U.S. prior to the invasion, on the grounds that such communications would leak and jeopardize the security of the operation. Significantly, while President Kennedy used a delicate balance of non-violent techniques (ranging from bilateral diplomacy to the use of international organizations to non-violent military actions) in a desperate effort to avoid escalating to the use of force in Laos and Vietnam, Reagan consciously and explicitly avoided the non-violent options before him in order to insure the success of the military course he had chosen.
Theoretical Implications

The above conclusions have some important implications for the way scholars of international relations conceptualize and measure domestic political constraints and their policy effects. The most obvious, and most theoretically significant, implication is this: the widespread (though often unstated) assumption that domestic structural characteristics directly shape states' foreign policy behavior, independent of variation in decision-makers' perceptions and leadership styles (e.g., Morgan and Campbell, 1991; Russett, 1993) represents a serious oversimplification.

Conclusions 1, 2, and 3 above, which draw attention to the systematically different crisis management techniques employed by different types of leaders in democracies and autocracies, constitute an important collection of findings that has been obscured by conventional theory and research focusing on the policy consequences of either regime type or leadership style in isolation. The process-related results (particularly conclusions 4 and 5 above) likewise provide compelling evidence that domestic constraints are not simply perceived and internalized in an uncomplicated fashion by all leaders.

Although both Kennedy and Reagan faced anticipated or actual opposition to the use of violent instruments ("potential pacifying constraints") from intra-administration sources, Congress, and the American public during the cases examined, one cannot automatically conclude that these domestic constraints were identical, or even roughly comparable, in an objective sense. Numerous factors, including Presidential approval ratings, period within the election cycle, and the balance of seats in Congress between Democrats and Republicans, can modify the objective character of these constraints. Yet
to the degree that one seeks to establish that different perceptions and behavior during crisis situations are a consequence of leadership style as opposed to situational factors, one must demonstrate that the domestic and international constraints facing different leaders were in fact objectively similar on important dimensions.

Arguments for the comparability, across the four crises examined, of key situational features relating to the nature of the crisis trigger, the military balance vis-à-vis the crisis adversary, and the general domestic context have already been advanced in Chapter 3. Important features of the specific domestic political constraints facing Kennedy and Reagan during these crises also appear to be comparable (although it is difficult to weigh the precise importance of different factors in creating an objective indicator). Some of the identifiable differences indicate that Reagan may have been more "objectively constrained" (particularly in the Grenada crisis) than Kennedy—which would, of course, give added significance to, rather than undermine, the findings involving Reagan's constraint-challenging behavior and Kennedy's constraint-respecting actions.

Both of the Kennedy crises occurred in 1961, soon after he had been inaugurated; this period represents the most "unconstrained" period within the election cycle. The Grenada crisis occurred roughly one year before the 1984 Presidential election (indicating a higher level of objective constraint), although the Libya crisis occurred after Reagan had been reelected for his second, and necessarily final, term (indicating less constraint). The margins of victory in previous elections indicate a higher level of objective constraint for Kennedy (the 1960 election was extremely close; Reagan won in 1980 and in 1984 by decisive margins). Kennedy enjoyed a solid Democratic majority in
both houses of Congress; Reagan faced Democratic control of the House during both crises, but enjoyed Republican control of the Senate. One could argue that the Bay of Pigs debacle imposed important constraints on Kennedy in early 1961, although the Beirut disaster in the midst of the Grenada crisis could be viewed as having similar—if not more powerful—effects in terms of discouraging the use of force (see the analysis of these points in Chapters 5 and 6). Aside from these important “modifying” factors (which endow public and Congressional preferences with greater or lesser objective salience), there existed what analysts and contemporaries have characterized as significant “objective” levels of intra-administration, public, and Congressional opposition to the use of force in these cases (with the possible exception of the Libya crisis). In sum, it appears that while the Libya case may have involved a lesser degree of objective pacifying constraints than the other cases, there is no clear evidence suggesting that Reagan (in the Grenada case, at least) was significantly less constrained by objective domestic factors than Kennedy was during the Laos and Vietnam crises.²

Therefore, although a more complete measure of objective constraints would allow inferences to be drawn with greater confidence, the comparisons cited above suggest that two American Presidents did indeed perceive and respond in very different ways to similar sorts of “potential pacifying constraints.” This is a persuasive argument for the importance of explicitly including leadership style as a moderating variable in our models of how domestic constraints shape states’ foreign policy behavior.

² A more complete measure of objective domestic constraints would also include such factors as: Presidential approval ratings, the success of the President’s legislative agenda in Congress, and whether or not the President had received recent public criticism from powerful allies within his administration or his own party in Congress.
The statistical and case study findings supporting conclusions 1-5 clearly suggest that most domestic constraints are appropriately conceived of as potential constraints, which cannot directly influence policy behavior but must be activated by leaders’ perceptions of, and responses to, them. Even in democratic systems, direct constraints are often more apparent than real; the policy impact of myriad potential constraints depends on the degree to which they are internalized by key decision-makers. Given this conception of constraints, leaders’ decision-making styles, beliefs, and perceptions will play a crucial role in determining whether potential or latent constraints will have an important impact on policy or will remain largely irrelevant in any particular instance. Models that seek to specify the links between domestic structure and foreign policy behavior will suffer in terms of explanatory power to the degree that they continue to neglect the “missing link” of decision-makers’ perceptions.

In order to situate this crucial observation within the broader context of the evolution of international relations theory, it is worth returning to a theme emphasized in chapters 1 and 2: the increasing acceptance, within mainstream international relations theory, of the insights of the “cognitive revolution” (e.g., George, 1979; Herrmann, 1988). How potential constraints will be interpreted by a given leader in a particular situation cannot be directly deduced from the nature of the constraints themselves, just as leaders’ perceptions of threat cannot be deduced solely from the distribution of power in the international system. And yet this is precisely what existing theoretical treatments of domestic constraints and their policy impact have attempted to do. In order to determine how these potential constraints will be viewed and incorporated into the policymaking process, one must know something about the decision-makers themselves. Just as
theories emphasizing international system structure have been made more determinate by integrating agency-based insights (e.g., Walt, 1987), so too will theories focusing on the effects of domestic structure profit by taking decision-makers and their perceptions seriously.

This general conclusion may be applied to all theories dealing with the policy impact of domestic constraints. However, the results that have emerged from this study have some special implications for the most well-known subset of this work: theory and research related to the "democratic peace."

It should be noted up front that these findings do not directly challenge dyadic notions of the democratic peace (e.g., Chan, 1984; Russett, 1993) since none of the case studies and very few of the cases in the statistical analysis involved democracies confronting democratic adversaries. It is conceivable that when democracies confront other democracies, all leaders perceive themselves to be severely constrained by domestic constraints, and behave as if they were indeed constrained—this is in fact what democratic peace theorists argue (Russett, pp. 30-40). In other words, under such circumstances, the potential constraints present in democratic systems might become more like direct constraints. But the processes uncovered in the case studies do cast some doubt on this notion. The ease with which Reagan was able to cast aside the potential and actual public and Congressional opposition that he believed undermined U.S. interests certainly makes one wonder to what extent such leaders would be constrained by such actors when confronting another democracy. The processes by which dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers seek to overcome domestic impediments to aggressive foreign policy behavior are based on psychological and political dynamics.
that would not appear to be easily ameliorated by the notion of shared norms or common institutional constraints, particularly when such leaders perceive that vital national interests are at stake. At a minimum, such findings point to the critical need for further research on the decision-making processes underlying the democratic peace phenomenon, and caution against relying too heavily on untested assumptions regarding leaders’ responses to domestic constraints.

The striking findings regarding dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers’ perceptions of, and responses to, domestic constraints (conclusions 3 and 5) suggest that “near misses” (democracies very nearly coming to blows) or exceptions to the dyadic peace (democracies fighting each other) may occur when such leaders are in power. It is worth reiterating that a statistical analysis (discussed in Chapter 4) involving 59 heads of state indicates a weak correlation between regime type and leaders’ scores on the composite index of willingness to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions ($r = -.209, p = .098$). That is, it appears that constraint challengers are somewhat more prevalent in autocracies, while constraint respecters are more common in democracies. This is consistent with some research suggesting that democracies and autocracies systematically select and reward different types of leaders (e.g., Hermann and Kegley, 1995)—an alternative explanation for the dyadic democratic peace focusing less on domestic structure and more on leadership style.

\footnote{Or when widespread pressure for war among key domestic actors pushes constraint respecters toward aggressive policies. This is the explanation often given for the reluctant President McKinley’s involvement in the Spanish-American War.}
The findings emerging from this study have mixed implications for proponents of the "monadic" democratic peace (e.g., Benoit, 1996; Rummel, 1997). On the one hand, the output- and process-related findings revealing the aggressiveness and relative political insensitivity of dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers in democracies should discourage those who seek to impute monadic pacifying qualities to democratic systems in an undifferentiated way. On the other hand, such theorists should be encouraged by the results indicating that potential pacifying constraints in democracies, when coupled with leaders who are particularly sensitive to them (dispositionally pacific constraint respecters) do appear to exert a pacifying influence on democracies' foreign policy behavior toward all states. Indeed, since the vast majority of the foreign policy crises faced by democracies in this study involved non-democratic adversaries, it could be argued that this differentiated or qualified notion of the monadic democratic peace faced a difficult test. The fact that dispositionally pacific constraint respecters in democracies responded so pacifically to non-democratic adversaries—those least likely to receive non-violent treatment from democracies according to extant research—provides strong empirical support for this qualified monadic hypothesis.

As noted above, although this study's findings are most directly relevant to work on the democratic peace, these findings have implications for all theories that seek to describe decision-makers' responses to domestic constraints. One such body of theory, which focuses on the dynamics of "two-level games," will be briefly considered in this section in order to illustrate this broader applicability.

Putnam (1988) conceives of two-level games as situations in which leaders are constrained both at the domestic and the international level by the extent to which key
actors view certain outcomes as acceptable. In discussing the role of the chief negotiator, Putnam acknowledges that leaders are not simply agents of their domestic constituencies, and often have their own preferences concerning outcomes. Aside from enhancing one's standing and shifting the balance of power toward preferred policies in the Level II (domestic) game, the chief negotiator may pursue his or her own understanding of the national interest in the international context (Putnam, 1988, p. 457). But Putnam's framework leaves us with few guidelines for determining when leaders are likely to perceive themselves to be powerfully constrained in their policy options by the preferences of key domestic and international actors, and when they will more rigidly pursue their own conceptions of the national interest.

The degree to which leaders allow their policies to be shaped by the preferences of domestic constituencies and key international actors will depend, in large part, on their orientations toward constraints. Constraint challengers will view the preferences of domestic constituencies and other states' representatives as obstacles to be overcome in the pursuit of their own preferences. Woodrow Wilson's extraordinary rigidity in pursuing his own version of the Versailles Treaty is a striking example of such behavior. Constraint respecters, on the other hand, are likely to perceive themselves to be severely constrained by the preferences of key domestic and international actors, and will tend not even to consider manipulating the "win sets" presented by these dual sets of constraints. Instead, they will seek to build consensus, coordinate interests, and avoid conflict during

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4 Since the notion of two-level games, in its present form, focuses not on the aggressiveness of the policy output but the integration and coordination of a range of actors' preferences, the facet of leadership style most central in determining how a given leader will play such games is not dispositional aggressiveness, but one's sensitivity to the political context.
negotiations. In short, leaders' orientations toward constraints should have important implications for how they engage in multilevel negotiations, or two-level games.

While the findings and theoretical implications summarized here represent a challenge to most existing treatments of domestic constraints and their policy impact, it must be emphasized that these findings and implications also provide support for the work of those few scholars who have challenged the conventional wisdom. Hermann and Kegley's (1995) theoretical contention that different types of leaders will vary systematically in how they perceive and respond to the domestic constraints characteristic of autocratic and democratic systems receives strong empirical support from this study. Likewise, Hagan's (1994) work suggesting that foreign policy behavior is the product of the interaction between domestic constraints and leaders' strategies for dealing with those constraints is consistent with the empirical evidence reported here.

Future Research

This study has provided some preliminary answers to certain questions, and it has raised a host of new questions. In order to confirm the findings reported here and to address the new questions that have emerged, much more research is required. This section identifies essential avenues for future research.

First, future research must address a key shortcoming of the "large-n" analysis undertaken in this study. This project developed a theoretical rationale for why potential pacifying constraints are more common in democracies than in non-democracies, and on this basis developed and tested expectations about how different types of leaders would respond to crises in democratic and non-democratic systems. While the contention that
potential pacifying constraints tend to be more prevalent in democracies appears sound, this generalization clearly does not preclude the existence of relatively constraining non-democratic systems or relatively unconstraining democratic environments. In other words, while the “mean” prevalence of potential pacifying constraints is almost certainly higher in democracies than in non-democracies, a given democracy could have a less extensive network of such constraints than a particular non-democracy. Therefore, if one is interested in differentiating among cases according to the prevalence of potential pacifying constraints, the approach of simply grouping countries into democracies and autocracies (while a useful “first cut”) will likely result in some cases being misclassified.

A better approach would involve assessing the specific potential and direct pacifying constraints that characterize a given political context, then categorizing that political context based on this assessment, independent of regime type. To the degree that this approach corrects existing errors in classification, it would presumably lead to stronger statistical results than those reported in Chapter 4 (which likely contain some categorization errors that are weakening the observed relationships). While it would be possible to use this refined classification system in the context of a large-n study, this could become rather tedious. As the case study research presented in Chapters 5 and 6 reveals, case studies are ideal for determining precisely which types of constraints existed in a particular situation and how a specific leader perceived and responded to those constraints. Case studies also allow the researcher to move beyond a relatively superficial and static definition of constraints based on observable attributes of a state’s domestic structure, and toward a richer understanding of the complex structure of constraints that accompanied a particular decision-making context at a given point in
time. Future comparative case studies will be most fruitful if they employ very detailed and comprehensive measures of objective domestic constraints; this will allow the researcher to convincingly demonstrate divergent (or similar) perceptions and responses to domestic constraints that are objectively comparable in key respects.

Liberation from reliance upon the simple comparison between democracies and autocracies would also allow anocracies, or transitional systems, to be included in future analyses. What types of potential and direct constraints are present in transitional systems, and to what degree are they perceived to be constraining by different types of leaders? Such research has the potential to shed valuable light on the dynamics underlying recent findings that states undergoing transitions to democracy are especially war-prone (Mansfield and Snyder, 1995).5

Future studies should examine precisely which types of constraints are viewed as more or less constraining by different types of leaders. For instance, the case study results reported in Chapter 5 provide some evidence that President Kennedy weighted the views of Congress and the public more heavily than those of other, intra-administration actors. Similarly, do constraint challengers find certain types of constraints more or less difficult to overcome, or do they treat all domestic constraints with equal contempt? Leaders’ varying responsiveness to normative, as opposed to institutional, constraints should also be explored in future studies.

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5 It is interesting to note that Boris Yeltsin scored among the very highest of all leaders on the composite index of willingness to challenge pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions. Research on how he perceived and responded to the constraints operative in the transitional post-Soviet Russian system could be particularly fruitful. Yeltsin’s perceptions and decisions regarding the war in Chechnya, in particular, could shed light on the dynamics underlying the Mansfield and Snyder findings (though this was not technically an inter-state conflict).
Future research must probe the limits, or scope conditions, surrounding constraint challengers' willingness to challenge constraints and constraint respecters' willingness to abide by them. In other words, what sorts of domestic political or external conditions would lead a constraint challenger to bow to opposition or a constraint respecter to challenge constraints? For instance, constraint challengers are expected to "cave in" to political opposition when it threatens their continuation in office, and constraint respecters are expected to circumvent or ignore domestic opposition when they believe vital state interests cannot be preserved by following domestic actors' preferences. But precisely where these thresholds lie (e.g., what levels or types of opposition will make constraint challengers "cave," and what types of perceived threats and opportunities will lead constraint respecters to challenge constraints) is an empirical question.\(^6\)

Along these same lines, it is important to recognize that the violent/non-violent crisis trigger variable included in this study is but one expression of the external situational forces that doubtless play important roles in shaping crisis responses. Future studies should investigate, in greater depth, the ways in which the perceptions and responses of different types of leaders, in different domestic environments, converge or diverge when they are confronted with a range of international pressures. Developing theories that incorporate variables from the individual, state, and system level into a single framework, and empirically testing such models, is at the same time difficult, incredibly complex, and necessary. Integrating variables from multiple levels of analysis,

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\(^6\) Laboratory research examining the interaction between specific leadership traits and specific (simulated) domestic and international situations in a highly controlled environment could be very useful for exploring such thresholds and scope conditions. Such research would provide stronger internal validity than could be achieved under "real world" conditions, but would sacrifice external validity. Nevertheless, results from such experiments could be used to guide the selection and examination of historical cases, which could provide some corroboration of these findings.
and specifying the complex, contingent interactions among these variables have been cited as crucial steps as scholars of foreign policy and international relations move into the next generation of theory-building and empirical research (e.g., Neack, Hey, and Haney, 1995; Hudson and Vore, 1995). Obviously, one must walk before one can run, and studies integrating variables from two levels of analysis (such as this project) can make important contributions. But models that take into account important causal factors at all levels should be (in the author’s opinion) the ultimate objective.

Another important limitation of the present study is the fact that cases exhibiting values on the dependent variable that were surprising or contrary to the output-related hypotheses were not examined in the case studies. Such cases could not be readily selected for study because they were few in number and involved states where adequate source material would be difficult to obtain (e.g., Iraq). Future research must find ways of surmounting these obstacles. One set of cases that is ripe for exploration involves President Clinton’s use of force in Kosovo, Bosnia, and Iraq. These cases were not included in the Brecher and Wilkenfeld crisis data set (which only runs to 1994). President Clinton’s scores on the composite index of willingness to challenge potential pacifying constraints in the pursuit of aggressive foreign policy actions are the lowest of all leaders scored on the relevant characteristics. In other words, his scores suggest he is the prototypical “dispositionally pacific constraint respecter” (more so than Kennedy). Therefore, the fact that violent techniques apparently constituted an important (if not preeminent) crisis management technique for Clinton in some of these cases is puzzling,

7 Interestingly in terms of face validity, this characterization of Clinton as a leader extremely sensitive to others’ views and willing to bend with the political winds is consistent with anecdotal accounts of Clinton’s leadership style (the well-known “slick Willie” stereotype).
and deserves great attention. (Recall that no dispositionally pacific constraint respecter in a democracy used violence as the preeminent crisis management technique in the set of foreign policy crises analyzed in Chapter 4). To the degree that adequate source material is available so soon after the events in question to assess hypotheses HR1-HR7, fascinating insight could be gained into the types of perceptions and political situations that would push this type of leader, in a democratic system, toward the use of violent responses.

The framework developed here is also limited in that it treats crisis decision-making in perhaps overly static terms. That is, a given crisis trigger is viewed as provoking a foreign policy crisis, then key decision-makers in the state in question must decide how to respond. How a particular crisis fits within an ongoing series of strategic interactions between states is not taken into account. For instance, did a specific leader’s state somehow provoke the adversary to take the steps that became identified as the “crisis trigger?” Defining each crisis as a discrete “snapshot,” or segment of time, serves a useful analytic purpose, but the limitations of this approach must be dealt with by future research that takes the issue of context very seriously. In a similar vein, while the framework developed here may be useful for explaining and predicting patterns of foreign policy decision-making within a particular state, it does not provide guidance on how interstate interactions between states led by particular types of leaders will likely unfold. For example, what patterns of strategic interaction should we expect when a democracy led by a dispositionally aggressive constraint challenger confronts an
autocracy led by a dispositionally pacific constraint respecter?8 Future work must
develop and test such expectations.

Finally, certain critical limitations arising from the way crises were selected for
inclusion in the data set must be noted. As discussed in Chapter 3, Brecher and
Wilkenfeld (1998) define a crisis in terms of three key perceptions by the top decision­
makers in a state: a threat to basic values, finite response time, and a high probability of
involvement in military hostilities. The advantage of this approach is that it controls for
leaders’ perceptions to some degree, achieving a greater degree of psychological
continuity among cases. The problem is that leaders essentially self-select themselves
into the crisis data set by having these perceptions, which are by no means assumed to be
randomly distributed, or equally likely to emerge, across all types of leaders. In
particular, the theory and research discussed in Chapter 2 leads to the conclusion that
dispositionally pacific leaders (low distrust and nationalism) are considerably less likely
than their dispositionally aggressive counterparts (high distrust and nationalism) to
perceive that a threat to basic values exists, and that military hostilities are a probable
outcome of a particular dispute. In other words, leaders have selected themselves into the
data set according to the way they handled the pivotal pre-crisis or problem
representation phase of decision-making (a phase that is eliminated from analysis due to
the truncation of the crisis situation to include only that period after decision-makers have

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8 Expectations associated with all such combinations may not be logically deducible from extant theory.
concluded a crisis exists). Future research should therefore investigate which types of leaders are more or less likely to perceive that crises have emerged.

A related issue, outside the scope of the “crisis response phase” emphasis chosen here, involves which types of leaders, in which types of domestic contexts, tend to provoke crises for other states (and precisely which types of actions these crisis triggers involve—e.g., violent as opposed to verbal or political provocations). Based on the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2, and the empirical results reported in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, it would appear to be a reasonable assertion that the majority of the crises in the Brecher/Wilkenfeld data set (especially those with violent crisis triggers) were in fact provoked by dispositionally aggressive constraint challengers. Empirical evaluation of such hypotheses could yield important insights into the causal dynamics driving the “crisis generation” phase of interstate interactions.

Normative and Policy-Related Implications

Before concluding, it is worth pointing out the normative and policy-related implications of this research. Understanding the perceptual and behavioral leanings of constraint challengers and constraint respecters allows one to identify the strengths and potential vulnerabilities of particular leaders, in specific types of domestic and international environments. For instance, constraint respecters in democracies will likely be extremely conscientious about abiding by formal checks on their authority, very

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9 The case studies in Chapters 5 and 6 do examine the problem representation phase, but only among 4 crises (necessarily selected, in this study, from the Brecher/Wilkenfeld pool of cases) in which leaders had come to similar conclusions regarding the threat and stakes inherent in the situation.
sensitive to the voice of the public and the views of other elected actors, and unwilling to take foreign policy risks without the substantial expectation of widespread domestic support: attributes that are often lauded in democratic theory. However, these qualities may also lead to decision-making paralysis and excessive caution, which have the real potential to harm a state’s interests (Kennedy’s handling of certain crises has been described as drifting toward such paralysis).

One of the strengths of constraint challengers, on the other hand, is their ability to exercise bold, decisive leadership, stubbornly persisting in policies they view as vital, regardless of criticism and attempts to blunt or reverse these policies. In certain situations such leadership is necessary to safeguard a state’s (or an alliance’s) interests, and it is the vision and tenacity of this “crusading” style that has been associated with great leaders throughout history. However, constraint challengers may be tempted to circumvent domestic constraints that have been put in place for good reasons (e.g., those designed to insure executive accountability in democratic systems—Reagan’s battles with Congress over aid to the Contras and various covert initiatives have been criticized as essentially attempts to bypass such constraints). And the same tendency to stubbornly persist despite criticism and setbacks which can lead to tremendous accomplishments in some cases has the potential to lead to unparalleled disasters in others.

Knowing these strengths and potential pitfalls is important not only for citizens but for the leaders themselves, their advisors, and other domestic actors. Mechanisms of strengthening leaders’ adherence to democratic constraints, and, on the other hand, of

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10 It must be emphasized that the research design was not explicitly created for the purpose of discerning policy implications; these implications are therefore necessarily more speculative than those discussed above.
freeing leaders from obsessive reliance upon achieving consensus or minimizing risks before acting, could be devised. And understanding how other countries' leaders are likely to behave in a crisis is obviously a critical component of crisis (and pre-crisis) decision-making. Having an appreciation of which constellation of domestic actors (if any) is likely to constrain a foreign leader's decision-making is an invaluable contribution to the formulation of policy initiatives or responses. Therefore, for theoretical, normative, and practical reasons, it is critical that increased attention is devoted to theory and research on the interaction between leadership style and domestic constraints.

Conclusion

This project was motivated by the recognition that existing theoretical models and research programs largely sought to link domestic structure to states' foreign policy behavior without reference to the decision-makers who must ultimately do the perceiving and the deciding. The empirical results of this study indicate that the "simplifying" assumption that all leaders will respond similarly to specific types of domestic constraints is in fact a serious oversimplification that necessarily neglects a substantial body of evidence from various fields and thereby sacrifices explanatory power precisely where it hoped to gain it. The inescapable lesson of this study is that the insights of the "cognitive revolution"—which have already yielded tremendous theoretical and empirical dividends for scholars whose work centers on the effects of system structure—will likewise enhance explanatory and predictive power for those who seek to describe the operation and policy consequences of domestic structural constraints.
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