

**“I’M THE DECIDER”: UNDERSTANDING FOREIGN POLICY DECISIONS IN
AMERICA**

A Thesis

by

SAMUEL STEWART SNIDEMAN

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

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2009

Major Subject: Political Science

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Nehemia Geva
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ABSTRACT

“I’m the Decider”: Understanding Foreign Policy Decisions in America. (May 2009)

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Scholars have long been interested in how presidents make decisions in foreign policy. Often, the theories about foreign policy decision making focus on the choice to use or not use one particular foreign policy tool. Many studies often ignore or underplay the importance of domestic politics to foreign policy decisions. In this thesis, I ask how do American presidents choose which foreign policy tool to use in a given situation? I propose a domestic politics-based explanation, relying on presidential ideology, performance of the domestic economy, divided government, and the electoral clock. I use a simultaneous equations framework to model the choice between using “sticks” (i.e. military force and economic sanctions) and “carrots” (economic aid and military aid).

The results provide qualified support for the domestic politics theory. Domestic politics matters for some types of foreign policy decisions but not for others. Presidential ideology and domestic economic performance condition presidential decisions to use force. Election timing is also important; presidents choose to use less politically costly foreign policy tools late in their term. The results also demonstrate that there is a connection between the decision to use military force and to use economic sanctions.

DEDICATION

To the two most important women in my life: my wife and my mother.

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I would like to thank my committee chair, Dr. Geva, and my committee members, Dr. Koch and Dr. Reinhardt, for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research. The project would not have been possible absent their assistance. I should also acknowledge the continued mentorship of Dr. James M. Scott (Oklahoma State University) and Dr. Michael Chambers (Indiana State University).

Thanks also go to my friends and colleagues and the department faculty and staff for making my time at Texas A&M University a great experience. I want to thank Guy Whitten, James R. Rogers, and Lou Ellen Herr for all they have done to help me through this stage of my academic life. I would also like to acknowledge the role of Kim Q. Hill in helping me become a better writer and for helping me understand how to build theory. In addition, Matt Warhol, Ben Tkach, Peyton Wofford, and Abe Paley provided me with many thoughts and insights into how to approach and carry out this project during working lunches over the previous two years.

Finally, I wish to thank my friends and family for all of their support during this process. Many of my non-academic friends have been a great force for helping me get this project done, offering encouragement during my many periods of doubt. My mom and dad and my mother- and father-in-law showed tremendous understanding in allowing me to come to Texas A&M University for these two years, and I thoroughly appreciate their support. My wife also deserves all of the praise I can offer for being willing to allow me to continue my studies and for the love she has given me.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg was a great opponent of the domestic policies of the Roosevelt administration and was, for most of his Senate career, an isolationist. Upon assuming the chairmanship of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Vandenberg abandoned isolationism in favor of a more internationalist view of foreign policy, working closely with the Truman administration on foreign affairs while remaining a critic of Truman's domestic policies (Tompkins 1971). The idea that politics stops at the water's edge comes from Vandenberg, and has often been repeated by politicians to show that America speaks with one voice to the rest of the world.

As pleasant as Senator Vandenberg's sentiments are, we do know that politics has a large effect on an American president's decisions in foreign policy (Putnam 1988; Wang 1996; Howell and Pevehouse 2005). Scholars have examined how domestic politics effects a president's decision to use force (Meernik 2001), to sanction (Drury 2000), or to give foreign aid (Meernik and Poe 1996). However, most research on presidential foreign policy making examines the use of foreign policy tools in isolation from a president's other potential choices in foreign policy; that is, most research presents the foreign policy choice as "X/not X" rather than as a choice between "X, Y, and Z." As a consequence, much of the work on American foreign policy has not presented a particularly realistic picture of a president's decision making process. Presidents can use carrots (foreign aid, increased trade), sticks (military force, economic sanctions), or both.

This thesis follows the style of *The American Political Science Review*.

The field of foreign policy analysis needs to gain a better understanding of the domestic and foreign policy trade-offs that exist for presidents when they decide which foreign policy tool to use. That is, presidents face different risks and rewards depending on their choice of foreign policy. My research will focus on this issue. I am interested in the following question: how do American presidents choose their foreign policies among the range of alternatives available to them? Certainly, there are many potential answers to this question. Here, I focus on one particular answer: domestic politics.

Below, I develop a framework for understanding how domestic considerations inform and constrain an American president when he must choose from a range of potential foreign policies. Specifically, my theory relies on the role played by the American Congress and the role played by the domestic economy in limiting what a president can do in the international arena. I argue that divided government, the electoral clock, and a bad economy may force presidents to make choices that for them are sub-optimal from an ideological or partisan perspective.

In the pages that follow, I discuss the previous work on foreign policy decision making. Following this discussion, I turn to my own theory and develop seven testable hypotheses. I then present my research design. I conduct a number of tests of the hypotheses, which show qualified support for some of the theoretical expectations. I conclude with some summary comments on the implications of this research for scholars and policy makers.

2. PREVIOUS WORK

Scholars studying foreign policy attempt to explain leader decision making in a variety of ways. However, these disparate theories can be usefully categorized as belonging to one of two types: isolated and encompassing. Most scholars present theories that are of the isolated variety. These theories focus on the choice and use of a foreign policy tool in isolation from the other options available to a leader. The choice facing American presidents is often portrayed in the literature as a choice, for example, between using military force versus not using military force, rather than using force versus using economic sanctions versus giving aid. Additionally, these theories typically are applicable to only a limited set of circumstances. Far less often, scholars develop theories that are of the encompassing variety; these theories attempt to be more general and to understand more fully the decision making process of leaders. Each of these categories is discussed in greater detail below.

2.1. Isolated Theories of Foreign Policy

While most of the theories of international relations represent scholarly attempts to explain what drives leaders to action, many of these theories are of the isolated variety, which is to say that they focus on only the decision to use one tool in isolation from the other tools available to leaders. Most empirical studies of foreign policy making are based on theories which are limited in scope and, thus, limited in their ability to tell us much about the big picture of foreign policy. A number of examples will better illustrate what is meant by this.

Scholars studying war and peace offer many theories focusing on domestic politics to explain why leaders choose to use force against other states. Diversionary theory, as elaborated by Levy (1988) and James and ONeal (1991), is a way of explaining the effect of declines in either presidential approval or economic performance on presidential uses of force. In this theory, presidents would use force against other states to achieve domestic political gains (e.g. increased popularity among the electorate or to detract attention away from a poor economy). There is much debate over the extent to which presidents benefit from using force in diversionary ways. Some studies have found support for the diversionary hypothesis (Ostrom and Job 1986; Morgan and Bickers 1992; DeRouen 2000), while others have found little evidence of diversionary behavior (Meernik 1994; Gowa 1998; Meernik 2001).

Scholars propose other theories of war centered on domestic politics. For example, Stoll (1984) finds that there are fewer visible uses of force by presidents during presidential election years. In line with these findings, Gaubatz (1991) argues that war is a matter of electoral timing: when democracies fight wars, these wars are more likely to happen early in an election cycle. In his study of US dispute behavior, Clark (2000) finds that when the president and the Congress have similar policy preferences, the US engages in more militarized disputes. He also finds the corollary: disputes are less likely and are shorter under periods of divided government. And Wang's (1996) study of presidential responses to foreign policy crises finds that US responses will be more severe when there are high levels of economic misery and when there is unified government.

Military force is not the only tool which has been the subject of isolated theorizing by political scientists. Studies of another punitive tool at the disposal of presidents, economic sanctions, are likewise narrow in their focus. Indeed, the decision by presidents to sanction is an understudied one. Works by Drezner (1997; 1998) and Drury (2000; 2001) represent the bulk of the scholarly attempts to explain why leaders decide to initiate sanctions against other states. Drezner's (1998) work models the decision to sanction as, in part, a function of the sender's expectations of future conflict with the target. Drury's (2000; 2001) theory relies on both relations with the target country and US domestic factors, though in Drury's estimation the domestic factors are of less importance than are the target country relations. Thus, for Drury, the decision to sanction is an attempt at coercive diplomacy, not a reaction by presidents to domestic political considerations.

Leaders use sanctions for a host of reasons. An executive may use economic sanctions to send a message to international actors (Schwebach 2000) or to alter existing norms or legal precedents (Barber 1979; Fisk 2000). But leaders may also use economic sanctions for domestic political purposes, beyond those listed above. Some scholars, for example, argue that domestic political and economic conditions can facilitate or hinder the use of economic sanctions by political executives (Lindsay 1986; Simon 1996; Smith 1996). For example, Lindsay (1986) argues that presidents can use economic sanctions as a way of increasing their popularity at home; the one example of this in the American context was when Jimmy Carter employed economic sanctions against Iran in 1979 and was rewarded with a twenty-nine point increase in his job approval (167).

Non-punitive tools, the “carrots” in foreign policy, are also the focus of the same troublesome way of theorizing that military force and economic sanctions have been subject to. Scholars in political science and economics attempt to understand how leaders decide to give foreign economic aid. Alesina and Dollar (2000) argue that aid allocation decisions are driven as much by political and strategic calculations as they are by anything else. Fleck and Kilby (2006) examine the role played by domestic politics in American decisions to give aid, finding that the partisan composition of Congress and the White House influences which of the four aid allocation criteria (development, strategic importance, commercial importance, democratization) are most important at the time an aid decision is made. Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2007) theorize that leaders give aid in deals to extract policy concessions from targets.

The main shortcoming of these theories is that they do not adequately describe the decision process faced by presidents. Most scholars study foreign policy using a variety of piecemeal approaches. In each case, the decision to act (whether the action is the use of force, the initiation of sanctions, or the allocation of aid) is isolated from all of the other potential choices available to presidents. Presidents do not make decisions in a vacuum; they make decisions in the presence of a multitude of options and with numerous voices (both domestic and international) attempting to influence the ultimate decision.

2.2. Encompassing Theories of Foreign Policy

These theories have broader applicability to foreign policy than do the isolated theories. They are not theories about a specific foreign policy tool, but are more about

how leaders decide which tool to use. Two prominent examples should better illustrate this point.

The first example is that of poliheuristic theory. Mintz (2004) provides an excellent overview of this approach. In his words,

Poliheuristic (PH) choice theory postulates a two-stage decision process in which the menu of choices is narrowed initially by a noncompensatory analysis that eliminates options by the use of one or more heuristics (cognitive shortcuts). Remaining alternatives are then evaluated in an attempt to minimize risks and maximize benefits (3).

This description seems to show that PH theory is widely applicable to the various tools used by leaders in foreign policy. While it may have the potential to be a more general theory of foreign policy decision making, it has principally been used by scholars in the realm of security studies (Mintz 1993; Mintz and Geva 1993; DeRouen 2003).

A second encompassing theory is that of Morgan and Palmer (1997). Building upon Most and Starr (1984), Morgan and Palmer develop a theory of foreign policy substitutability. The argument, as Morgan and Palmer note, is that states have “multiple ways for dealing with any particular stimulus from the outside environment” (2000, 11). To explain how leaders choose from among these alternatives, Morgan and Palmer propose what they call the two-good theory of foreign policy. This theory is based on the assumption that states pursue two goals: security (the maintenance of the status quo) and proaction (changes to the status quo). The ability of states to achieve these goals is largely determined by the international environment and the power of the state under

examination (Morgan and Palmer 1997, 241). What influence substitutability in the Morgan and Palmer model? The authors propose three things: (1) a change in the efficiency of the policy for attaining the two goods (security and proaction), (2) a change in the state's resources available for foreign policy, and/or (3) a change in the relative salience of security versus proaction (Morgan and Palmer 2000, 29-30). The two-good theory has been shown to have applicability in a number of different areas of foreign policy, including dispute resolution and initiation (Morgan and Palmer 1997), foreign aid allocation (Palmer, Wohlander, and Morgan 2002), and alliance behavior (Morgan and Palmer 2003). While these studies still focus on the decision to use only one foreign policy tool, they demonstrate the generality of the theory of substitution proposed by Morgan and Palmer.

Despite their advantages over isolated theories of foreign policy, the encompassing theories also have limitations. None of the approaches fully takes into account the role of domestic politics as a constraint on the ability of leaders to make decisions in foreign policy. Even those theories that do consider the role of domestic politics (e.g. PH theory) are often underspecified.

Some of the theories posit a sequential process of choice; in PH theory, for example, the decision is a two-step process. This is limiting, as the choices made by leaders from a range of options may not be made in a sequential fashion. Additionally, despite the seeming applicability across a range of foreign policy choices, the theories discussed here seem to still focus too heavily on the realm of national security.

Finally, with the exception of Morgan and Palmer (2000), these approaches do not explicitly deal with the trade-offs that exist among policy alternatives. Few works deal with the issue of how leaders choose between two or more different sub-sets of policies (e.g. economic sanctions, military sanctions, and withholding aid) where trade-offs exist between the effectiveness of the tools and the political costs of the tools' employment.

What is needed, then, is a theory of foreign policy that (1) captures the importance of domestic political factors and (2) provides a more comprehensive approach to understanding how leaders choose from among the range of foreign policy options available to them. In the next section, I provide what I believe is a theory that serves both of these ends.

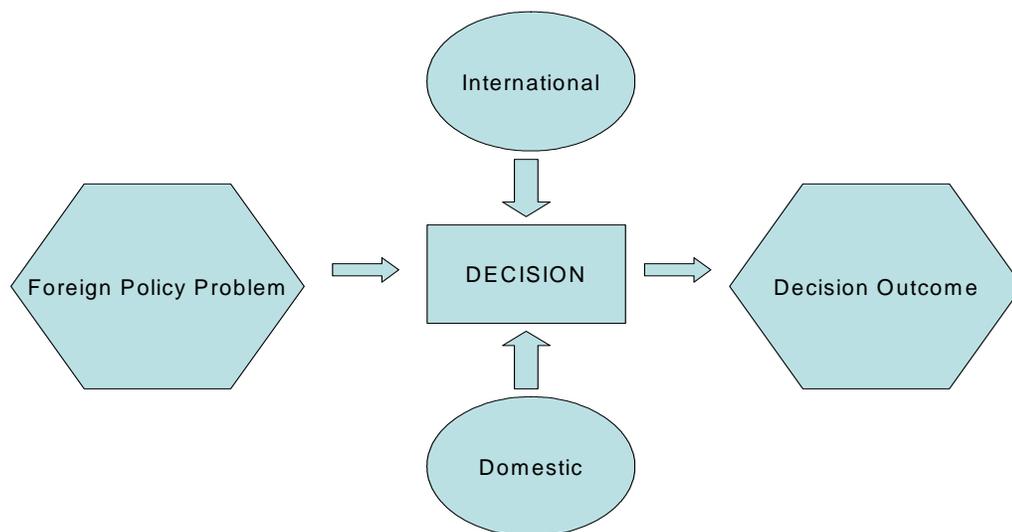
3. THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

I am interested in understanding why executives do what they do. More specifically, the question I hope to provide an answer to is how do American presidents choose their foreign policies? The American president faces a multitude of competing interests whenever he makes a policy decision. When a president is considering some domestic policy decision, he must consider not only his own political and ideological preferences, but also the preferences of interest groups (Edwards and Wayne 1990, 12), the policy positions of the median legislator or the veto pivot in Congress (Krehbiel 1998; Cameron 2000), and the president's constituents (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002; Canes-Wrone and Shotts 2004). To paraphrase Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, and Morrow (2003), presidents must satisfy their domestic winning coalition when making policy decisions.

This is a highly idealized account of the decision making process with respect to domestic policy issues. But how would the process work in the foreign policy sphere? Figure 1 provides an outline of the decision process facing American presidents with respect to foreign policy decisions. For the most part, presidents face a process that is similar in many respects to the one they face when making decisions on domestic policy. The president still faces competing sets of pressures and influence. He still has to deal with domestic interest groups, the legislature, and the like. He also has to deal with pressures from the international community, especially if the foreign policy problem calls for a military response. And when facing a problem from a foreign state, a president must account for certain characteristics of that state: whether or not it is an

ally, what actions by the target created the need for a response, the importance of the target as a trading partner, and the target's relative power and capabilities. In effect, an American president must consider both the utility he gains from using a given foreign policy tool and the threat posed by the target state. These pressures exert independent influence on the president, who must ultimately make his decision. Scholars have examined the role of the international environment (Gourevitch 1978; Waltz 1979; Ostrom and Job 1986; Mearsheimer 2001). My theory concerns the other set of influences that work on presidents: domestic political factors.

Figure 1: An Idealized View of the Decision Process



It is easy to think that presidents face costs with all foreign policy decisions, from the minor (e.g. giving economic aid to St. Vincent and the Grenadines) to the major (e.g. invading Afghanistan and Iraq). For some scholars, these costs are conceptualized as being of the material variety (Fearon 1995; Goldstein 2004). Regardless of the foreign policy tool, the material costs will usually be high in absolute terms: armies are not cheap to equip and train, a \$50 million aid package is not cheap to give, and severe economic sanctions can hurt domestic business interests.

Material costs, however, are not the only costs leaders must consider. In all polities, and especially in democratic ones, leaders face political costs (Bueno de Mesquita, et al 2003). It is useful to disaggregate political costs into two distinct varieties: electoral costs and legislative costs. The electoral cost story is a familiar one: politicians in the United States must stand for periodic re-election, and thus must supply voters with sufficiently compelling reasons to retain incumbent leaders. For Bueno de Mesquita, et al (2003), the office holder must supply a specified winning coalition with a suitable share of private goods in order to continue to govern.

Legislative costs are just as important when leaders are crafting foreign policy. In the US, a natural divide exists between the president and the Congress, owing to the fact that the Framers established a system of separate powers in government. Even where the White House and the Capitol are controlled by members of the same party, there is rarely perfect congruence in the preferences of the two institutions. This tension is potential exacerbated by the fact that the power of the president in domestic politics is often the power of persuasion (Neustadt 1960). Thus for the president to accomplish his

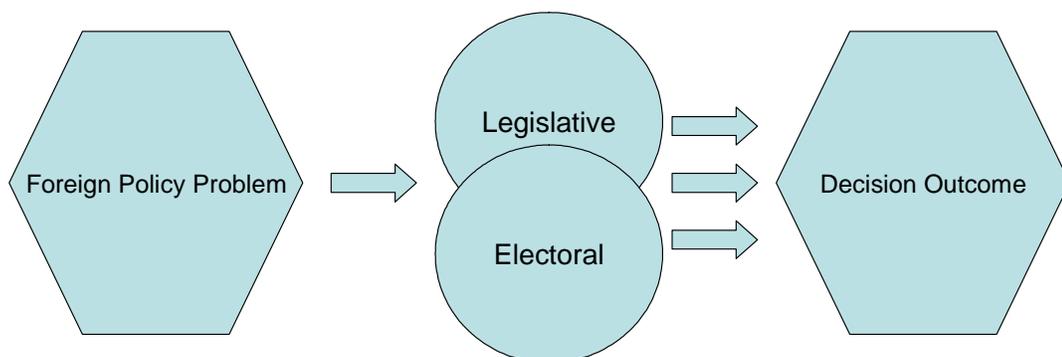
political agenda he needs to account for how any policy will play out domestically, as an unpopular policy choice could lead to Congress's refusal to work with the president on the rest of his agenda. When there are cases of divided government, the potential costs for choosing an unpopular or politically imprudent course of action in foreign policy are even higher. Congress is even more likely to take action against other items on the president's foreign policy agenda (or, even worse, on his domestic policy agenda). Congress, after all, not only controls budgets but also has influence over a wide array of domestic policy concerns. And recent work has shown that Congress is able, from time to time, to alter the ability of presidents to engage in aggressive foreign policy (Clark 2000; Howell and Pevehouse 2005; Johnson 2006).

Taken together, I expect the decision a president makes in the realm of foreign policy to be conditioned by both the anticipated electoral costs facing the president as well as the anticipated legislative costs he may face in choosing a policy he prefers but that the Congress does not. Thus, I expect that for US presidents a number of competing factors will shape their decisions with respect to which tool to employ in a given situation. Figure 2 outlines this process. In the figure, the president faces a generic foreign policy problem (e.g. a poor human rights situation in a foreign country). The president is then faced with a much larger concern: how best to resolve this problem. Presidents, as has been noted, have many tools available to them. Each choice carries with it certain political costs, both electoral and legislative.¹ These political costs exert

¹ It should be noted that each choice has a varying probability of success and a variable utility for presidents. I, however, am only interested in the role of political costs, and am less concerned with the question of how the probability of success of the policy conditions a president's choice of foreign policy. Future research can better account for this factor.

independent influences on the president's choice. But note the overlapping nature of the electoral and legislative costs. This is because the electoral costs also influence members of Congress, as public opinion can be turned on Congress by the president (and vice-versa). Thus, the political costs work together on a president, who ultimately makes a choice about which tools to use.

Figure 2: Presidents and Political Costs



When are the trade-offs likely to manifest themselves? That is, when should we expect legislative concerns to trump electoral concerns, and vice-versa? Depending on the point at which the decision is made, a number of factors can shape the president's

decision. At the beginning of a term, for example, the president should have a “honeymoon period” during which the legislative branch will be more accommodating of his preferred policies (see, for example, McCarty 1997). His position in office is also secure, with his next election four years away. At the beginning of his term, then, presidential choices should be driven primarily by the president’s ideological preferences and what he may perceive to be his mandate.

When the honeymoon is over, and the president’s popularity among the public recedes, legislative concerns may surface as the most relevant domestic consideration for a president facing a foreign policy choice. The Congress possesses a number of formal and informal means of limiting the power of the president in both the domestic and foreign policy arenas (Fisher 1998). Even under situations of unified government, the Congress may use these powers to constrain a president’s foreign policy. Under situations of divided government, these powers become more important and may be used with greater frequency. In these circumstances, the Congress may force the president to choose between his preferred foreign policies and his preferred domestic policies.

As elections near, presidents will need the support of the mass public in order to retain office. Thus, presidents will be constrained in their responses to foreign policy problems by what the public wants. We should expect presidents to choose less costly or less controversial policies late in their terms, as these policy choices may jeopardize the electoral prospects of the incumbent office holder. While it is possible that presidents may choose to use diversionary force near an election in an effort to bolster their

electoral prospects, research by Gaubatz (1991) suggests that presidents will elect to be more cautious (and thus less conflict-prone) near an election.

Again, I argue that both legislative and electoral factors will influence the decisions of presidents when they face foreign policy problems. First, I expect that legislative factors will play an important role. For example, presidents facing a divided government at home will have a harder time pursuing aggressive foreign policies. Not only that, it may also be more difficult for presidents to achieve any significant involvement in foreign affairs that does not arise from a crisis situation. Both large-scale (e.g. nation-building efforts) and small-scale (e.g. increasing the foreign aid budget) projects may be difficult to pursue during situations of divided government.

At the same time, a president must keep his other eye on the public. Sobel (2001) argues that public opinion constrains American foreign policy. Scholars also note that presidents have other electoral considerations to which they must pay attention, most notably the electoral clock and satisfying constituent needs (Gaubatz 1991; Koch 2009). From this general theoretical framework, I offer a number of hypotheses about the trade-offs faced by presidents between various tools of foreign policy and when to employ them.

As noted above, because presidents must satisfy domestic coalitions to remain in office, the ideology of the president is likely to influence what type of policy they choose. Research shows that political position (in terms of placement on the left-right ideological spectrum) constrains leaders' foreign policies in democracies (Palmer, London, and Regan 2004). Left-oriented presidents (i.e. Democrats) are more likely to

choose tools that do not rely on military action, while presidents who are right-oriented (i.e. Republicans) are more likely to use military force as a policy option. Since presidents have different views on the use of force, we would also expect presidents to have different views on foreign aid. This leads to the first two hypotheses:

H₁: Republican presidents are more likely to choose to use military force, while Democratic presidents are more likely to choose to use economic sanctions.

H₂: Democratic presidents are more likely to give higher levels of economic aid, while Republican presidents are more likely to give higher levels of military aid.

Also noted above were the constraints that divided government place upon presidents in the realm of foreign policy. Republican presidents, given their ideology, should be more willing to use force to resolve international problems than would Democratic members of Congress. Should a Republican choose to use military force while he finds himself in a situation of divided government (where Democrats control one or both chambers of Congress), his ability to achieve domestic policy success could be threatened. A similar set of constraints should work for Democratic presidents facing a Republican Congress; Democratic presidents may feel that they have to be more hawkish in foreign policy than their ideology would otherwise dictate. These constraints lead to the third and fourth hypotheses:

H₃: Republican presidents facing situations of divided government will be less likely to choose to use military force than they would under situations of unified government.

H₄: Democratic presidents facing situations of divided government will be more likely to choose to use military force than they would under situations unified government.

The electoral clock also shapes a president's choice of foreign policy. In the United States, where the electoral cycle is fixed, presidents must be careful in how they choose to operate. A president's choice to employ force against another country, for example, can be politically disastrous for a president if the use of force proves unsuccessful or unpopular. This damage can be even greater if the use of force is conducted near the end of the electoral cycle, which explains Gaubatz's (1991) finding that the US engages in fewer uses of military force late in the election cycle. This leads to hypothesis five:

H₅: A president's use of force is more likely to occur early in a president's term, while sanctions are more likely to occur later during a president's term.

Another key element of the domestic political picture is economic performance. When the economy is bad, fewer people will want their tax dollars to be spent on war or foreign aid. However, the indicators of poor economic performance can have different effects on a president's decision. Research suggests that when the domestic economy is bad, US presidents are more likely to use force in world politics (Fordham 1998b). The

parties, however, respond differently to different indicators of poor economic performance because they have distinctive preferences regarding macroeconomic policy (Boix 1998). Republican presidents are more likely to engage in diversionary uses of force when unemployment is high, because Republican presidents are more reluctant to use inflationary macroeconomic policies to resolve unemployment issues. Conversely, Democrats are more likely than Republicans to use force when inflation is high (Fordham 1998c). Other work has shown that differing economic interests can interact with political party to shape foreign policy preferences, even when security issues are salient (Fordham 1998a). I focus on the role of unemployment and inflation in hypotheses six and seven:

H₆: When inflation is high, Republican presidents will be less involved in foreign affairs.

H₇: When unemployment is high, Democratic presidents will be less involved in foreign affairs.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

I analyze these hypotheses using a sample of American foreign policy decisions over a period of twenty years (1981-2000). I omit from the analyses countries that are members of the Organization for the Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), as these states are against which the US is unlikely to employ sanctions or military force. The hypotheses are tested on of the remaining countries during that time period.

To test these hypotheses, I employ two statistical techniques. First, to test the hypothesized relationships individually, I use cross-sectional time-series regression (xtreg in STATA) or probit, depending on the nature of the dependent variable. I do this for each of the foreign policy tools (foreign economic aid, foreign military aid, economic sanctions, and military intervention) under study. To test for the existence of trade-offs, I use a simultaneous equations framework (Schendel and Patton 1978; DeRouen 1995). For the aid variables, I use seemingly unrelated regression. For the sanctions and force variables, I use a maximum likelihood technique known as bivariate probit analysis. The hypotheses were tested using STATA (v. 9.2).

While the theory above relates to decisions made by American presidents from a range of possible choices, the hypotheses which I derive consider choices from within two sub-sets of policy choices: sticks (economic sanctions and military force) and carrots (military aid and economic aid). I structure my hypothesis tests in this way primarily for practical reasons: the simultaneous equations frameworks are difficult to use when there are four dependent variables under study.²

² In future research, I plan to conduct analyses that include all four DVs in a single econometric model.

4.1 Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in this study are three foreign policy tools commonly used by American presidents: foreign aid, economic sanctions, and military force. *Foreign aid* is operationalized in two ways: as economic aid and as military aid. The two aid variables are continuous measures of US aid to a target country. The variables are measured in millions of constant US dollars with a 2005 base. The data for these variables were collected from the US Agency for International Development (USAID)'s online Greenbook.

My measure of *military force* comes from Fordham and Sarver (2001). They coded all US uses of force, from the major (Persian Gulf War) to the minor (shows of US ships of the Haitian coast in 1889) between 1870 and 1995. Using this data, I created a dichotomous dependent variable, where I coded "1" if the US engaged in a use of force against the target country in a given year and "0" otherwise. Because the data ends in 1995, I updated Fordham and Sarver's data through 2000 using Maoz's (2005) Dyadic Militarized Interstate Dispute dataset.

Data for the *economic sanctions* variables comes from Morgan, Krustev, and Bapat's (2007) Threat and Imposition of Sanctions (TIES) dataset. This dataset includes information on both the threat by the US to use economic sanctions against a target and the actual employment of sanctions against said target. Here, the use of sanctions is measured as a dichotomous variable. I created the variable following the standard dichotomous coding ("1" if the US used sanctions against the target in a given year and "0" if the US did not use sanctions). I use the TIES data rather than the sanctions data of

Hufbauer, Schott, and Elliott (1990) because the TIES data focuses on both “high profile” and “low profile” cases of economic sanctions and because it has a more comprehensive set of cases (Morgan, Bapat, and Krustev 2009, 99).

4.2 Independent & Control Variables

A number of independent and control variables are included in the models. First, I incorporate a number of domestic-level variables, which help me to understand the role that domestic political considerations play in shaping the executive’s decision calculus. First, a *divided government* measure was created. It is a dichotomous variable, employing the standard coding for variables of this type (“1” if divided government exists during a given year, “0” otherwise). If the White House and at least one chamber of the Congress are controlled by different parties, I consider there to be a situation of divided government.

I also use a measure of *presidential ideology*. I use the partisanship of the president as a proxy for his ideology. I created a dichotomous variable, coding “1” for Republican presidents and coding “0” for Democratic ones.

To measure economic performance, I employ two variables. The first is *US inflation*. The World Bank’s World Development Indicators has a measure of inflation for all countries as an annual percentage. The second variable is *US unemployment*. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics maintains both monthly and annual data on unemployment from the 1940s through the present. The measure used here is the annual unemployment rate of the civilian non-institutional population. Because some of the hypotheses suggest an interactive effect between ideology and these domestic economic

factors, I created interaction terms for ideology and inflation an ideology and unemployment.

In addition, I control for a number of international-level factors that may influence a president's foreign policy decision. One of these variables is from the Correlates of War dataset, generated by the EUGene data management program (Bennett and Stam 2000, v. 3.203). I control for the *national capabilities* of the target using the COW national capabilities index (Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972; Singer 1987). The composite index of national capabilities (CINC) is a weighted average of a state's share of the international system's total and urban populations, energy consumption, iron and steel production, and military personnel and expenditures. Presidents should not be expected to use military force against relatively powerful states.

In addition, I control for the number of years of *peaceful relations* between states using the *cwpceyrs* variable in the Maoz MID's data (Maoz 2005), where the data was generated using the EUGene program. *Cwpceyrs* is a measure of the number of years since the end of the last militarized dispute between the US and the target state. One should expect that a history of peaceful relations between the US and any given state in the international system will lead to a continuance of peaceful relations (i.e. absence of armed conflict, sanctions episodes, and a continuance of foreign aid) in the future, at least in general terms.

We should also expect restraint on the part of presidents when the target is a valued trading partner or if the state is strategically important. Data on *trade dependence* comes from Gleditsch (2002). Gleditsch coded bilateral trade flows for all country dyads

between 1948 and 2000 measured in millions of current-year US dollars. I use his data on US bilateral trade flows in order to create a measure of trade dependence on the US. This was done by adding all of the exports from the target to the US with imports from the US to the target and dividing that figure by the target state's total trade. The result is a ratio of how dependent is the target on the US as a trading partner.

The *strategic importance* variable is a lagged value of the military aid measure described above. In the use of force and sanctions models, military aid is a proxy for importance, as the US would not give military aid to those states which the US did not consider to be important strategically.

Finally, I control for several of the target's domestic-level characteristics: regime type, political stability, the target's record on human rights, and target gross domestic product (GDP). I control for *democracy* because of the numerous empirical findings related to the democratic peace; regime type, for whatever reason, seems to constrain leaders in their use of force and seems to spur close economic ties (Oneal, Oneal, Maoz, and Russett 1996; Oneal and Russett 1999; Oneal, Russett, and Berbaum 2003). Data for the democracy measure come from the Polity IV dataset (Jagers and Gurr 1995).

The measure of *political stability* I use comes from the Major Episodes of Political Violence (MEPV) dataset (Marshall 2006). This dataset contains a measure of all societal episodes of political violence, including ethnic violence, ethnic war, civil violence, and civil war. The civtot variable in the data represents a total summed magnitude of all societal political violence in a target country. We should expect that presidents would have an interest in intervening (through the use of sticks like sanctions

or force, or through the use of carrots like giving aid for policy concessions as in Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2007) in cases of political instability.

Related to this is a country's record on *human rights*. Data for the human rights measure come from Cingranelli and Richards (2009) human rights dataset. The dataset contains an additive measure of a target government's respect for the physical integrity of its citizens. This measure is constructed on the basis of summing the values of the Cingranelli and Richards indicators of a government's willingness to torture, use extrajudicial killings, to imprison political opponents, and to cause its citizens to "disappear." The values of the physical integrity measure range from zero (which indicates no government respect for the rights of its citizens) to eight (which indicates total government respect for the rights of its citizens). Again, where a target state exhibits a poor record concerning human rights, the US may feel more international and domestic pressure to intervene in some way, even though the intervention could fall short of the use of actual military force.

In addition to the other target country control variables, I include a control for the target's *GDP*. Data for this variable come from Gleditsch's (2002) Expanded Trade and GDP data. The figures on GDP are real figures in constant US dollars with a 1996 base. I control for the wealth of the target because rich states should need less aid (both of the economic and the military varieties), and this condition can influence presidential decisions to increase or decrease aid levels, or even the initial decision to give aid.

Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics for each of these variables.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable Name	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Military Force	2001	.0164918	.1273887	0	1
Economic Sanctions	2001	.0949525	.2932226	0	1
Military Aid	2001	65.92164	318.7408	0	3180.8
Economic Aid	2001	87.21804	246.7875	0	3134.7
Unemployment	2001	6.230185	1.517633	4	9.7
Inflation	2001	3.661169	1.758731	2	10
Ideology	2001	.5432284	.4982523	0	1
Divided Govt.	2001	.8890555	.3141419	0	1
Political Stability	2001	.9730135	1.987781	0	10
Human Rights	2001	4.495752	2.247689	0	8
Trade	2001	.1523773	.156691	0	.8141539
Democracy	2001	.7411294	7.097954	-10	10
GDP per capita	2001	4504.231	4343.279	424.28	26904.5
Power	2001	.0036809	.0083009	.000033	.068335
Peace Years	2001	37.25587	33.00998	0	184

5. ANALYSIS

To begin, I tested the hypotheses about foreign policy decisions independent of one another; that is, I followed the conventional method of hypothesis testing with regard to how American political leaders choose their foreign policies. Then, in order to test for the existence of trade-offs, I conducted the hypothesis tests using simultaneous equation approaches. The results are discussed below.

5.1 The Independent Tests

Table 2 lists the results of the probit analysis where the decision to use military force is the dependent variable. When one examines Table 2, several things stand out. First, few of the domestic political forces influence presidential decisions with respect to the use of force. In terms of the domestic political factors under study here, only the president's ideology seemed to exert any influence on his decision to use force. This finding, however, was not in the expected direction; Bill Clinton, the lone Democrat in the model, was more likely to use force than were his Republican counterparts, Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush. However, the ideology-unemployment interaction term approached the .10 level of statistical significance, which would suggest that under instances of high unemployment Republican presidents would use force with greater frequency than their Democratic counterparts facing similar economic conditions. Neither of the economic measures proved significant, nor did they prove significant when interacted with the president's ideology. Thus, we see little support thus far for hypotheses one, two, five, six, and seven.

In terms of other findings, the model presents very intuitive results. For example, it demonstrates limited support for the democratic peace hypothesis. When the target is democratic, the US is less likely to use force against the target, even when OECD states are omitted from the model. In addition, the model shows that the US uses force less against wealthy states, state with which it has a peaceful history, and states that are respectful of human rights.

Table 2: To Fight or Not to Fight?

Variable Name	Coefficient	SE
Unemployment	-.1706683	.2722076
Inflation	-.0212717	.3935438
Divided Govt.	-.5022018	.5400159
Ideology	-2.567958*	1.433007
Ideology*Unemployment	-.1706683	.2722076
Ideology*Inflation	-.0212717	.3935438
Electoral Cycle	.0250383	.1216038
Human Rights	-.3694926***	.0601424
Political Stability	-.0427086	.0394868
Democracy	-.035879**	.017574
Power	10.61165	7.369429
GDP per capita	.0000794***	.000028
Trade	.3142507	.6769649
Peace Years	-.0055564*	.0030753
Military Aid (t-1)	.0000124	.0002124
CONSTANT	-.0775058	1.790768

N = 1802
Log-likelihood = -126.6407
* = p < .10
** = p < .05
*** = p < .01

Note: Dependent variable is use of force by the United States.

Table 3 lists the probit results of the economic sanctions model. Again, the results are interesting. In terms of the independent variables of interest, presidential

ideology, divided government, and the US inflation rate are not statistically significant. The lone domestic indicator to reach one of the conventional levels of statistical significance is the US unemployment rate, and the results suggest that Democratic presidents are more likely to choose to employ economic sanctions when the US rate of unemployment is high. The interaction of presidential ideology and unemployment was likewise significant, which shows that Republican presidents facing high domestic unemployment use sanctions less than do their Democratic counterparts under similar domestic economic conditions. This suggests limited support for hypothesis one, that Democrats use economic sanctions more often than do Republican presidents.

Table 3: The Choice to Sanction

Variable Name	Coefficient	SE
Unemployment	.3456775**	.1443679
Inflation	-.2348431	.2194898
Divided Govt.	.039744	.2501045
Ideology	.4391697	.7116848
Ideology*Unemployment	-.3079592**	.1532921
Ideology*Inflation	.3054155	.2355048
Electoral Cycle	-.0879411	.0630713
Human Rights	-.1986662***	.027215
Political Stability	-.0775078***	.0264008
Democracy	-.0136445*	.0083695
Power	24.63125***	4.371973
GDP per capita	.0000342**	.0000153
Trade	1.712066***	.3185324
Peace Years	-.0033683**	.0015346
Military Aid (t-1)	-.0001263	.0001368
CONSTANT	-1.841351**	.8455058
N = 1802		
Log-likelihood = -462.39937		
* = p < .10		
** = p < .05		
*** = p < .01		

Note: Dependent variable is the use of economic sanctions by the United States.

The other results in Table 3 are similar to those from Table 2: the target's respect for human rights, the target's level of democracy, and the target's wealth remain significant and exert a negative influence on a president's decision to use sanctions. Peaceful relations between the US and the target likewise keep the president from initiating economically punitive measures against the target. The US-target trade relationship is also significant and positive, suggesting that presidents employ sanctions against those who are dependent on the US for trade. This makes sense, as sanctions are likely to be most effective when used against states which are dependent upon the US. According to the model, US presidents use sanctions more often against powerful states.

What about the foreign policy "carrots?" Table 4 presents the regression results of the economic aid model. Domestic political factors appear to shape aid allocation decisions: when the economy is bad (specifically, when there is high unemployment), Democratic presidents give less aid. By contrast, Republican presidents give higher levels of economic aid than do their Democratic counterparts during periods of high unemployment, as indicated by the ideology-unemployment interaction term. The election cycle also seems to influence aid decisions in an unexpected way: more aid is given early in the election cycle. Finally, it should be noted that the lagged measure of economic aid is a very good predictor of current aid levels.

Target characteristics matter less for economic aid allocation decisions. Only two of these variables reached any of the conventional levels of significance: peaceful relations and target wealth. The model indicates that the US gives more to wealthy countries (though the magnitude of the effect appears quite small) and gives less to states

with which it has a peaceful history (though here, too, the magnitude of the effect is quite small).

Table 4: Giving Economic Aid

Variable Name	Coefficient	SE
Unemployment	-13.90704**	6.950805
Inflation	-5.76446	10.21088
Divided Govt.	-27.52857**	13.37322
Ideology	-86.75329***	35.81275
Ideology*Unemployment	16.48553**	7.37906
Ideology*Inflation	4.17218	10.87166
Electoral Cycle	5.45633*	2.932543
Human Rights	-.7547888	1.369266
Political Stability	1.736977	1.413528
Democracy	.4743741	.4005533
Power	203.2315	173.2834
GDP per capita	.0013641*	.0007294
Trade	11.66969	17.02605
Peace Years	-.1155644*	.0800429
Economic Aid (t-1)	.8959623***	.00921
CONSTANT	99.5919**	43.43554
N = 1838		
Overall R ² = 0.856		
* = p < .10		
** = p < .05		
*** = p < .01		

Note: Dependent variable is the level of economic aid given to the target country at time t.

Results for the military aid model are presented in Table 5. Domestic politics were much less important in presidential decisions related to military aid allocation. The only domestic political variables to reach any of the conventional levels of statistical significance were presidential ideology and the ideology-unemployment interaction terms. Republicans facing situations of high unemployment give more military aid, which is consistent with the prediction from hypothesis six. The only other statistically

significant predictor of military aid allocation decisions was, not unexpectedly, the lagged measure of military aid. None of the target characteristics seem to be important for military aid allocation decisions.

Table 5: Giving Military Aid

Variable Name	Coefficient	SE
Unemployment	-2.08247	4.047962
Inflation	1.952136	5.95211
Divided Govt.	-2.905796	7.770536
Ideology	-47.22204**	20.86014
Ideology*Unemployment	6.490922*	4.298943
Ideology*Inflation	.8309152	6.336803
Electoral Cycle	-1.233778	1.711452
Human Rights	-.8984922	.8066418
Political Stability	-.6275113	.8308618
Democracy	.019595	.2375201
Power	36.4039	174.3235
GDP per capita	.0005841	.0004585
Trade	2.048736	9.993224
Peace Years	-.0500851	.0461963
Military Aid (t-1)	1.003327***	.0044229
CONSTANT	14.98875	25.28672
N = 1784		
Overall R ² = 0.970		
* = p < .10		
** = p < .05		
*** = p < .01		

Note: Dependent variable is the level of military aid given to the target country at time t.

5.2 The Comprehensive Tests

Testing these processes individually has been the standard practice for scholars engaged in foreign policy analysis. But I argue that the decision to use force or to use sanctions are related to one another, and the decision to employ a given foreign policy tool at the expense of employing a different, competing tool is a simultaneous decision

and one that should be modeled as such. Consequently, the results of the next two models represent a first effort to demonstrate the simultaneous nature of the foreign policy decision.

Table 6 displays the results of the bivariate probit analysis, where the dependent variables were the decision to use economic sanctions and the decision to use military force. The first thing to note about Table 6 is the correlation statistic (log-likelihood ratio test of equation independence) for the bivariate probit, which clearly demonstrates that the processes are related.

In terms of substantive results, the results are similar in meaning as those for the individual tests of the use of economic sanctions and military force. But in the bivariate probit model, one is able to directly compare the coefficients across the equations. So, for example, one can see that high unemployment for Democratic presidents makes the deployment of economic sanctions more likely but makes the use of military force less likely. The inverse is true for Republican presidents; military force is more likely under periods of high unemployment, though the finding is not statistically significant. The domestic politics variables perform reasonably well in the economic sanctions model, but perform much less well in the use of force model.

By contrast, the international and target-specific variables perform quite well in both models, a finding which is discussed in greater detail later. In the sanctions model, virtually all of the international variables are significant and in the expected direction. In the force model, one can see that human rights, democracy level of the target, wealth, and peaceful history are significant.

Table 6: Bivariate Probit Results of the Decision to Use Force or Sanctions

Variable Name	Coefficient	SE
Sanctions		
Unemployment	.3407782**	.1432929
Inflation	-.2372915	.218437
Divided Govt.	.0244923	.250156
Ideology	.3959016	.7111151
Ideology*Unemployment	-.3031373**	.1523547
Ideology*Inflation	.3099786	.2346079
Electoral Cycle	-.0905307	.0634317
Human Rights	-.1993459***	.0272879
Political Stability	-.0785778***	.0262913
Democracy	-.0137297*	.0083941
Power	24.42255***	4.316097
GDP per capita	.0000327**	.0000155
Trade	1.723914***	.3187897
Peace Years	-.0032201**	.0015204
Military Aid (t-1)	-.0001232	.0001377
CONSTANT	-1.787391**	.8455543
Force		
Unemployment	-.1598788	.2653156
Inflation	.0063511	.3844362
Divided Govt.	-.4546181	.5353749
Ideology	-2.252112*	1.415744
Ideology*Unemployment	.353291	.2793945
Ideology*Inflation	.0588247	.4128652
Electoral Cycle	.041069	.121009
Human Rights	-.3416313***	.0582769
Political Stability	-.0516102	.0394838
Democracy	-.0292388*	.0169434
Power	11.25277*	7.087925
GDP per capita	.0000685**	.0000299
Trade	.5131863	.6606506
Peace Years	-.0050342*	.0027666
Military Aid (t-1)	-.0000272	.0002205
CONSTANT	-.3186156	1.771473
N =1802	Log-likelihood test of equation independence: $\chi^2 = 21.2576$, prob. > $\chi^2 = 0.00$	
* = p < .10 ** = p < .05 *** = p < .01		

Note: Dependent variables are the decision to use economic sanctions and military force.

Table 7 presents results from the seemingly unrelated regression analysis of the choice between giving military aid and giving economic aid. As with the bivariate probit results, the first thing to consider is how related are these processes? The correlation statistic demonstrates that they are connected, though considerably less connected than in the case of economic sanctions and military force. It can also be inferred from the goodness of fit statistic (R^2) that the models do a reasonably good job at explaining the variance in the equations.

The results of the model demonstrate the relative importance of domestic political considerations to decisions even as technical as foreign aid allocation. Here again, one can directly compare the coefficients across the models. Consider, for example, the role of domestic economic performance in determining aid levels. Republican presidents facing high levels of unemployment give more aid (both military and economic) than do Democratic presidents facing a similar set of economic conditions. Indeed, many of the domestic political considerations seem to be quite relevant to presidential decisions concerning aid allocation. The electoral clock, not statistically significant in models of economic sanctions or the use of military force, is important for presidents when determining how much aid to allocate to a target country.

With respect to the international and target-specific variables, the results in Table 7 suggest that the factors controlled for in the model matter more for economic aid decisions than for military aid decisions. GDP, political stability, and level of democracy all reach conventional levels of statistical significance in the economic aid model, but not in the military aid model.

Table 7: Seemingly Unrelated Regression Results for Foreign Aid

Variable Name	Coefficient	SE
Economic Aid		
Unemployment	-22.47288***	8.911679
Inflation	22.39445*	13.10371
Divided Govt.	-27.38553*	17.10701
Ideology	-41.21163	45.92407
Ideology*Unemployment	24.91413***	9.464219
Ideology*Inflation	-23.94848*	13.95061
Electoral Cycle	8.378093**	3.767799
Human Rights	.6950568	1.77584
Political Stability	5.160219***	1.829161
Democracy	2.024563***	.5229058
Power	5536.928***	383.777
GDP per capita	-.0051129***	.0010094
Trade	84.32815***	22.00031
Peace Years	-.4637034***	.1017021
Military Aid (t-1)	.687537***	.0097372
CONSTANT	98.35148*	55.66929
Military Aid		
Unemployment	-2.08247	4.029768
Inflation	1.952136	5.925359
Divided Govt.	-2.905796	7.735612
Ideology	-47.22204**	20.76639
Ideology*Unemployment	6.490922*	4.279622
Ideology*Inflation	.8309152	6.308323
Electoral Cycle	-1.233778	1.70376
Human Rights	-.8984922	.8030164
Political Stability	-.6275113	.8271276
Democracy	.019595	.2364526
Power	36.4039	173.54
GDP per capita	.0005841	.0004564
Trade	2.048736	9.94831
Peace Years	-.0500851	.0459886
Military Aid (t-1)	1.003327***	.0044031
CONSTANT	14.98875	25.17307
N = 1784		
Correlation of Equations: 0.237		
* = p < .10		
** = p < .05		
*** = p < .01		

Note: Dependent variables are the levels of economic and military aid given to target country at time t.

5.3 Discussion

What do the tests say about the theory and hypotheses discussed above? The empirical analyses show some limited support for only two of the hypotheses previously articulated. Republican presidents are more involved in foreign policy during periods of high domestic unemployment, when they can best divert the attention of the domestic public away from the poor economic conditions. The bad economy, as measured by high unemployment, allows Republican presidents the chance to engage in something at which they are credible: fighting wars, sanctioning other states, or giving aid. Democrats, by contrast, become more involved when there is high inflation, but only with respect to giving higher levels of economic aid.

In general, though, the hypotheses were not well supported. What, then, can we make of the hypotheses that were not supported? Divided government, the central variable of interest in hypotheses three and four, was not important in most of the models (the lone exception was the economic aid model). This can be explained, in part I think, by the limited occurrences of unified government in the sample; one party rule occurred only during the first two years of Bill Clinton's first term. As more data on certain independent and control variables become available, a clearer pattern of Congressional constraining of the president may emerge.

The results did not show that Republican presidents were always more likely than Democratic presidents to use force, merely that they were willing to use force under a limited set of conditions. This finding provides only limited support for hypothesis one. When we consider the time period under study (1981-2000), a possible explanation

for this becomes clear. Reagan and Bush held the presidency during the Cold War, when American presidents were naturally more reluctant to pursue military options. By contrast, Clinton was president at the beginning of the post-Cold War period, and has ambitious nation-building plans and envisioned an enlargement of the democratic community. With a greater number of administrations in future studies, we may see more instances of Republican aggression and Democratic pacifism.

Hypotheses six and seven, concerning how the domestic economy may shape presidential responses to international events, received limited support. It should be noted, though, that Republican presidents will almost always be more involved in international affairs than will Democratic ones; Democrats receive few domestic political benefits from focusing on foreign affairs. The results do demonstrate that in some cases politicians become less involved in foreign affairs in response to domestic economic considerations; Republican presidents give less economic aid during periods of high inflation and Democrats give less economic aid during periods of high unemployment.

While hypothesis five (presidents use force early in their administrations) was not supported by the data, the election cycle did manifest its importance in the decision to use sanctions late in a president's term. This would seem to conform to the idea that presidents choose foreign policy options late in their terms because these options carry lower electoral costs (Gaubatz 1991; 1999).

One final thought concerning these results merits some discussion. What the results show is that domestic politics may not always be the most salient consideration

for presidents facing situations that call for military force. Clearly, the results show that the international and target-specific factors contribute much more to the decisions presidents make in national security than do domestic politics. This result is not surprising, given the realist project in international relations and the multitude of empirical results confirming the existence of a democratic peace.

6. CONCLUSIONS

What value has this project added to our understanding of the process of foreign policy making in America? I argue that the value is added on both theoretical and modeling grounds. Certainly, one thing to be taken away from these results is that domestic politics matters for some types of foreign policy choices but not for others. This is one place where the theory discussed above adds some value to the present understanding of the foreign policy making process. Thus, theories such as realism that would totally ignore or otherwise downplay the role of domestic politics in shaping leader decisions are missing a key element.

In addition, the results of the comprehensive tests show a connection between the decision to use military force and the decision to use economic sanctions for American presidents. American presidents face a choice between doing something (using sanctions, using force) and doing nothing. After making that decision, presidents face a simultaneous decision as to which tool of foreign policy to employ from a very wide range of related options (indeed, a much wider range than was tested for here).

Testing these decisions in isolation of one another has been the standard practice for those studying the foreign policy decision process. Given data constraints and the research interests of individual scholars, the decision to study the choice/employment of one foreign policy tool in isolation from other choices can sometimes be understood as a pragmatic one. When this is the case, we should not expect scholars to engage in simultaneous examinations of the foreign policy process. However, the results of the comprehensive tests show that in some cases foreign policy choices are linked in

significant ways, and thus scholars should aim to model the decision process as a choice between options, and not merely as the decision to use only one tool. The consequence of continuing to model the choices as isolated is that the results will be biased and thus less reliable.

The empirical results have substantive implications for American leaders. For the Congress, the results show that members of Congress have not done enough to constrain the executive in foreign affairs during periods of divided government, playing only a relatively marginal role in constraining the executive in his aid allocation decisions. Congress has many tools at its disposal to accomplish this, including passing legislation that is contrary to the president's stated policy preference, using the threat of defeating the president's favored policy, using procedural legislation to change the process of foreign policy making, and by framing the debates about foreign policy issues (Lindsay and Ripley 1993). With a little more effort and more coordination by the opposition party in Congress, its members can reduce the institutional advantages of the president and exert a more powerful influence in foreign affairs.

The results show that the president is constrained by certain domestic factors beyond his control. Certainly, the president receives a great share of the electoral credit or blame for the performance of the domestic economy, and not always deservedly so (Fair 1978). The results show that diversionary uses of forces may continue for presidents facing tough economic times, but presidents should take the counsel of political scientists and realize that any gains in popularity coming from diversionary uses of military force are short-lived (Bowen 1989).

Additionally, presidents should always remember that they possess many options for dealing with foreign policy problems. Certainly, economic sanctions and military force are prominent among these options. So, too, are economic and military aid packages. Presidents should carefully consider what sacrifices and trade-offs will be made by selecting one policy over another. Presidents should also be mindful of what they are asking American citizens and members of the target country to give up in order to achieve the American president's foreign policy goals.

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