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Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (Sep., 1998), pp. 781-812

Published by: [Sage Publications, Inc.](#) on behalf of the [University of Utah](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3088049>

Accessed: 24/09/2012 15:16

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# International Crises and Linkage Politics: The Experiences of the United States, 1953-1994

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This study assesses the effects of U.S. involvement in international crises on the domestic popularity of American presidents for *all* major classes of voters. Using a time series analysis of monthly presidential approval and crisis involvement between 1953 and 1994, and controlling for economic conditions and structural features of presidential popularity, it is apparent that crisis activity does increase the president's popularity, albeit by a very small margin. This result holds for both overall approval levels and within each president's "ruling coalition" of partisans as well as independent voters; opposition party voters generally do not "rally 'round the flag." The small rally effect for crisis activity diminishes, however, when the U.S. president uses force, and when the Soviets are not involved. Furthermore, the rally effect actually seems to depend on the level of presidential response to a crisis; higher levels of response would account for rally effects. Taking the analysis one step further, it is revealed that outcomes of international crises (that is, how the U.S. fared) generally do not affect presidential popularity, even when examined with various lags. The investigation concludes with suggestions for further research on linkage politics.

Among classical and structural realists, domestic politics and foreign policy are regarded as distinct spheres of policymaking. Foreign policy is deemed "high politics," the domain of the central leadership, while domestic policy also concerns the legislature, interest groups, and the general public (Waltz 1979, 1986; Gilpin 1981). States are visualized as hard and impenetrable,

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NOTE: We are grateful to Walter Dean Burnham, Robbie H. Hart, Zeev Maoz, Evan Ringquist, Wayne Steger, and the anonymous referees of the *PRQ* for helpful commentaries, and Scott Jenkins for research assistance.

*Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (September 1998): pp. 781-812

like billiard balls, and what goes on inside does not (and should not) affect how states interact on the international "table." However, studies of domestic politics and foreign policy over the last decade reveal that these spheres are more interwoven than previously assumed.<sup>1</sup>

Intuition suggests that foreign policy is made by political leaders in light of multiple constraints (Putnam 1988; Evans, Jacobson, and Putnam 1993) and evidence confirms that performance in the international arena can affect the political survivability of leaders (Norpoth 1987; Bueno de Mesquita, Siverson, and Woller 1992; Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995). Notwithstanding a long history of anecdotal observations (Wright [1942] 1965: 6), linkage politics and interdependence have been studied in a programmatic manner only in recent years.

Despite increasing interest in interdependence and interpenetration of political systems, relatively little is known about the impact of international conflicts—especially crises—on domestic politics. A wide range of issues has gained prominence over the course of the last decade: diversion of internal conflict to restore popularity of a government at home (Levy 1989) and the associated "rally effect" (Oneal and Bryan 1995); the more general impact of domestic politics on foreign policy (Russett 1990a); specific connections involving the U.S., most notably related to presidential popularity and use of force (Ostrom and Simon 1985); and the democratic peace (Wolfson, James, and Solberg 1998). The present study is not about any one of these subjects exclusively; instead, it aims toward greater understanding of linkage politics by making discoveries with potential relevance to all of the above-noted areas in varying degrees. With such concerns in mind, the objectives of this study are twofold. First, the effects of involvement in international crises on political conditions inside the United States are assessed. The second purpose is to explore prospects for future study of linkage politics through a more clearly specified research design.

This investigation begins by providing a background discussion of the literature on linkage politics, especially recent theoretical developments. The next step is to develop propositions that connect changes at the domestic level to crisis activity and other international factors. Variables are operationalized and monthly data pertaining to the United States from 1953 to 1994 are analyzed. The study culminates in suggestions for further research on linkage politics.

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<sup>1</sup> Examples include Siverson (1995), Brace and Hinckley (1992), Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman (1992), Morgan and Bickers (1992), Shapiro and Page (1988) and James (1987).

### BACKGROUND: THE SECOND IMAGE REVISITED AND REVERSED

Waltz (1959) proposed three “images” that describe the incidence of war. These images represent three possible levels of analysis at which theories could be developed: the individual, state, and system. Scholarly interest increasingly focuses on the second level of analysis, that is, the characteristics of states. Most notable is the intensive effort devoted to assessing the democratic peace proposal (Doyle 1986; Russett 1990a; Maoz and Russett 1993; Morgan and Campbell 1991; Dixon 1993, 1994; Ray 1995; Oneal and Russett 1997; Senese 1997; Gartzke 1998; Wolfson, James, and Solberg 1998). In a more general sense, students of international politics have returned to what is known as “linkage politics”: how domestic politics can affect the foreign policy of a state (Rosenau 1969).

Consider, for example, the so-called “scapegoat” or “diversionary” hypothesis (James 1987, Levy 1989, Morgan and Bickers 1992, Levy and Vakili 1992). In periods of internal political or economic strife, the ruling elites redirect public concern toward a real or imagined external threat. The people then are expected to “rally ‘round the flag” together to protect their nation. The diversionary hypothesis (and its corollary, the rally effect) is extremely appealing as one explanation for why states, nations, or societies fight with each other. However, early studies of the diversionary hypothesis, such as those by Rummel (1963), Tanter (1966), and Wilkenfeld (1968, 1973), produced uniformly negative results for the diversionary hypothesis writ large. Indeed, it has been said of these early investigations that “seldom has so much common sense in theory found so little support in practice” (James 1987: 22). Zinnes (1980), Stohl (1980) and Levy (1989) also draw attention to the large gap between events data and individually confirming historical cases.

Recent studies, however, produce mostly favorable results for the diversionary hypothesis. Ostrom and Job (1986), James and Oneal (1991), Brace and Hinckley (1992), Morgan and Bickers (1992), James and Hristoulas (1994), and DeRouen (1995), among others, report that domestic factors, such as the economy and presidential popularity, affect the likelihood of dispute or crisis involvement by U.S. presidents. For example, a worsening economy and declining approval ratings increase the probability of U.S. entry into an international crisis in a given quarter of the year (the conventional time frame for assessment). Morgan and Bickers (1992) reveal that, when presidential standing among the ruling coalition (as opposed to popularity in general) is used, the results are much more impressive. Miller’s (1995: 779) cross-national analysis of the *targets* of threats, displays and uses of force also lends support to the diversionary model, although the linkage is somewhat complex. Leaders with limited policy resources (defined at some length in terms of the government’s

revenue base) show a significantly negative connection between popularity and responding with force. In other words, leaders who lack “room for maneuver” are more likely to seize upon external conflict as an opportunity for aggressive action, with one probable objective being to restore popularity at home.<sup>2</sup>

Recent studies that repudiate conflict linkage are qualitatively different than those just noted. Lindsay, Sayrs, and Steger (1992) and Steger (1996) focus on events data with regard to the U.S. and U.S.S.R. and find that domestic variables, such as public approval, business expectations, first year in office, and the legacy of war involvement, are weak at best in predicting presidential decisions to act conflictually from 1949 to 1978. The prominence of international factors in these studies, most notably reciprocal behavior with respect to the U.S.S.R., may be attributed to a focus on decisions other than those concerning the use of force (Lindsay, Sayrs, and Steger 1992: 12-13, 15). Meernik and Waterman (1996: 583) also analyze events and eschew the recently conventional focus on time intervals in assessing the diversionary model. The results are very different from those obtained by looking at quarterly time periods—the only significant factor to emerge in explaining use of force (and even then for just a subset of moderately intense crises) is a negative strategic balance. As Meernik and Waterman (1996: 584) point out, the plausible explanation for this result is the difference in units of analysis.

On balance, tentative support now exists for a diversionary theory that consists of a unidirectional causal linkage: from politico-economic factors *inside* the state to dispute involvement *outside* the state. Strong evidence supports the notion that leaders—especially U.S. presidents—face incentives to use force under certain conditions, most notably, a worsening economy and slipping approval levels.

Another linkage-oriented approach focuses on how the international political environment affects politics within states; in other words, the causal effects also are unidirectional but presumed to go from outside the state to inside—a “reversed” second image. As a point of departure, Gourevitch (1978: 882; 1986) draws attention to how the distribution of power in the international political and economic systems affects the “character of domestic regimes.” After an exhaustive literature review and case studies, Gourevitch (1978: 911) concludes that “[t]he international system is not only a consequence of domestic politics and structures but a cause of them. . . . Economic relations

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<sup>2</sup> The analysis of presidential agenda setting by Andrade and Young (1996: 599-600) provides indirect support for the diversionary principle. Presidents with a falling level of support among their electoral base and a lower level of influence with Congress will average a higher number of speeches (on a monthly basis) about foreign policy.

and military pressures constrain an entire range of domestic behaviors, from policy decisions to political forms. International relations and domestic politics are therefore so interrelated that they should be analyzed simultaneously, as wholes.”

International conflict certainly can have dramatic effects on domestic politics. Mueller (1994: 76) uses evidence from the cases of Korea and Vietnam (and even the Gulf War, to a limited degree) to confirm that casualties result in a lower level of support for the president. Cross-national studies by Bueno de Mesquita, Siverson, and Woller (1992) and Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson (1995) produce strong evidence that the outcomes of interstate conflicts affect the survivability of regimes. In particular, defeated initiators and democratic regimes are much more likely to fall after a war than authoritarian regimes and/or victorious targets. Furthermore, evidence suggests that the leaders of democratic states are aware of the political side-effects created by foreign policy actions (Lamare 1991: 8). When compared to other regime types, democratic war initiators experience significantly fewer casualties (Siverson 1995: 484-86). This favorable difference also holds for duration and outcome (Bennett and Stam 1996: 253).

Finally, one study uses a simultaneous equation model to assess an overall network of effects among politics, economics and the use of force in crises (DeRouen 1995). The results are generally consistent with the diversionary model; force is more likely when a crisis is severe (i.e., high Soviet involvement, etc.), the U.S. is not otherwise involved in an ongoing conflagration, and presidential approval is relatively low. The effect of the ever-present misery index on the use of force is revealed to be indirect: It reduces popularity, which (as just noted) has a direct connection to the use of force in a crisis.

In sum, both logic and the weight of recent empirical evidence suggest that neither the structure nor the process of domestic politics is independent of what occurs outside the state. The next section develops propositions about domestic change as a function of involvement in international crises.

#### INTERNATIONAL CRISES AND DOMESTIC POLITICS

The inside-to-outside linkage suggests that leaders pursue diversionary behavior when in trouble at home. The corollary is the rally hypothesis, which reverses this linkage. It commonly is believed that, when a troubled leader pursues international diversionary activities (whether war or otherwise), the domestic public rallies around the country and leader against the outside adversary (Mueller 1970; Ostrom and Simon 1985; Brody and Shapiro 1989; Edwards with Gallup 1990). However, existing studies that focus on diversionary and rally-related behavior are limited in at least two specific ways.

First, agreement on what constitutes a rally event is tentative at best. The natural starting point is Mueller (1970: 209): “a rally point must be associated

with an event which (1) is international and (2) involves the United States and particularly the president directly; and it must be (3) specific, dramatic, and sharply focused.<sup>3</sup> If the concern is with international events in general, however, there still is no standard operationalization of this concept. Studies assessing the rally effect of international events focus on a range of concepts, such as “uses of force” as defined by the Congressional Reference Service (Brace and Hinckley 1992) or others. If the focus is on crises in foreign policy, however, a consensus moves within reach. The definition from the International Crisis Behavior (ICB) Project (introduced at a later point) is becoming the standard after two decades of use. Existing crisis-based findings contradict Mueller’s initially encouraging results, although the mild rally effects obtained by Lian and Oneal (1993) and Oneal and Bryan (1995) depend on coverage of the international event by the *New York Times*. Since some foreign policy crises involving the United States do not make front-page news but nevertheless represent important actions, rally events are at best a subset of those cases.

Second, studies of rally effects are limited by the existing approach toward measurement of executive approval. For example, Ostrom and Job (1986), Morgan and Bickers (1992), and James and Hristoulas (1994), among others, look only at the quarter-year time interval. It would seem that any resulting effect could be produced by confounding factors that occur in those three months. Furthermore, how should the various approval ratings be averaged for this time frame? Thus a shorter time interval is desirable, if only to avoid the averaging problem.

Contrary to the recent pattern of findings, more complete data and a shorter time frame should reveal that involvement in crises, in particular, does not produce significant effects. Public opinion, most notably with regard to presidential approval in the U.S., is much more a function of domestic politics. Costs of involvement in international conflict, however, should tell a different story. Along with material damage, casualties represent costs that the public can understand readily. As the costs resulting from involvement in conflict increase in terms of lives and material, the public is expected to react propor-

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<sup>3</sup> Fleisher and Bond (1988: 750, 754-55, 758), however, show that the notion of “two presidencies” focusing respectively on domestic and foreign issues may be more restricted than commonly believed. For example, greater support in Congress for the president on foreign policy issues emerges only for Republican presidents and, even then, the source is restricted to liberal Democrats. Since the concern in the present study is with support for the president among the voting public, the above-noted result does not directly contradict the standard practice of focusing on international events in evaluating rally effects.

tionately.<sup>4</sup> Reactions to these specific factors could range from perceptions, such as deterioration in executive standing, to behavior, including protests and even violence. From a leader's point of view, higher costs of involvement in international conflict are expected to have an unfavorable and rapid domestic impact. By contrast, benefits, such as economic rents from control over an adversary's territory, are experienced gradually and do not affect short-term public perceptions of a leader's job performance.

To recap, crisis activity is *not* expected to affect domestic politics over the short-term. Long-term effects also are not anticipated, consistent with findings from Edwards with Gallup (1990) and Russett (1990b). Neither the role occupied by a state in a crisis nor a wide variety of the latter's characteristics, ranging from location to the number of participants, should elicit a significant reaction from the domestic polity. Systematic effects on either public opinion or behavior are not anticipated. Only human and material losses resulting from crises and other international conflicts should have the power to stir the public on an aggregate basis. In other words, a rally effect is not expected with respect to crises in general. The difference in effects anticipated for crisis activity in general and human and material losses in particular is useful in bringing out both subtleties in realist thinking and a gap within the diversionary perspective.

National morale is identified by Morgenthau and Thompson (1985: 153-54) as an important element of power: "In the form of public opinion, it provides an intangible factor without whose support no government, democratic or autocratic, is able to pursue its policies with full effectiveness, if it is able to pursue them at all." Morale will be affected in different ways by comparable international events, depending on the state and time in question. In particular, intense wartime suffering can reduce effective resistance or even reach a "breaking point." No sense is given, however, that lesser events will produce indirect effects on foreign policy through shifting public opinion. Thus the realist perspective, if extended into the present context, would expect public opinion to shift only in response to human and material losses, as noted above.

Diversionary theory does not explicitly address the costs of foreign policy actions. Logically, however, if a leader in search of improved domestic political standing pursues that through a foreign venture, it is reasonable to expect punishment if the outcome is unsuccessful. Thus a more complete specification of the

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<sup>4</sup> The functional form of the public's reaction to higher costs of conflict involvement is expected to be consistent with a diminishing marginal effect (Ostrom and Job 1986). Each additional unit of increase in costs will affect public reaction less than the previous unit.



diversionary model might include the expectation of improved domestic standing from external activity *per se*, with a negative outcome producing exactly the opposite effect.

Two basic hypotheses emerge from the preceding discussion. The first proposition is worded to be consistent with an extension of the diversionary model; the null hypothesis, of course, would be in line with the realist outlook:

H<sub>1</sub>: *Crisis involvement per se will affect domestic politics.*

The second hypothesis is consistent with both the realist and diversionary perspectives:

H<sub>2</sub>: *Higher costs of involvement in an international crisis will have an unfavorable impact on domestic politics, assessed in terms of the incumbent leader's point of view.*

An "unfavorable" impact could mean a shift in either *opinion* or *behavior*. To the extent that they are observed at all, effects are anticipated to be greater on the former than the latter. The reason is relative cost to the actors concerned, in this case, citizens in general. Changing an opinion entails no material expense, while taking action requires time and possibly other resources, with no guarantee of success. Furthermore, collective protest activity by one or more groups confronts the free-rider problem, which may even eliminate participation altogether (Olson 1965; Sandler 1994).

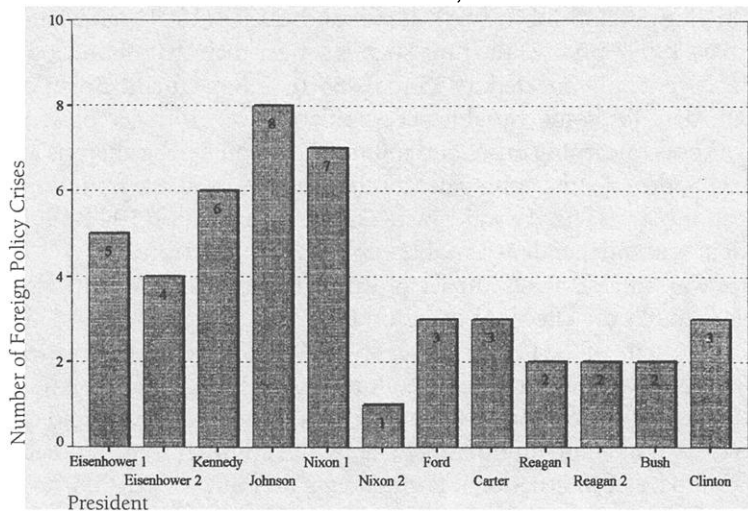
The data analysis that follows is designed for the United States. Given its global reach and overall military stature, underlying conflicts always exist with other system members. Thus the possibility of escalation even to the level of crisis activity is ever-present for the U.S. Furthermore, as a center of political and military power in the international system, the U.S. is particularly relevant. Finally, valid and reliable data are easily available for the U.S. on all of the important indicators.

An eventual cross-national version of this study would have to take into account the much lower average level of autonomy in foreign policy possessed by other states, limitations on data availability and idiosyncratic factors. Most notably, involvement in conflict is more a matter of willingness than opportunity for the U.S., which possesses a unique range of interests and capabilities. Opportunity is of much more relevance for states in general (Most and Starr 1989).

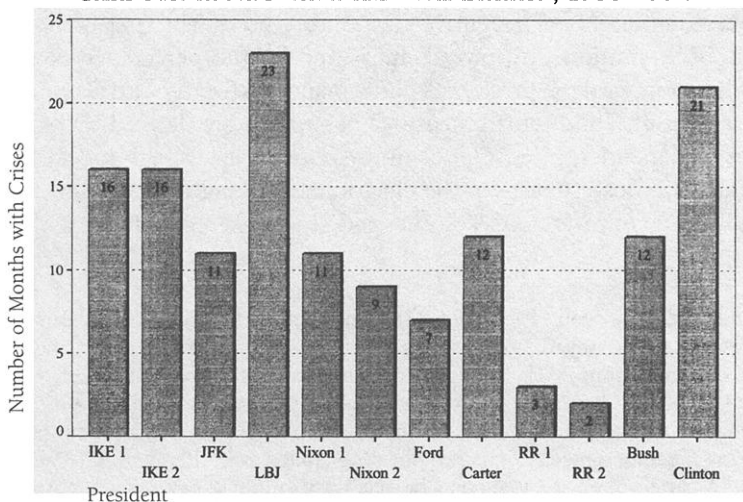
Finally, this investigation focuses on the outside-to-inside linkage—the rally effect once the U.S. is engaged in an international crisis—with two basic goals. The first is to contribute to the literature on the rally hypothesis from the perspective of international relations, using a definition of crisis that is well-established in this field. A second objective is to complement the recent literature on the inside-to-outside (i.e., reversed) linkage (James and Hristoulas

1994; Morgan and Bickers 1992; James and Oneal 1991; Russett 1990b; Ostrom and Job 1986). U.S. administrations face many opportunities for foreign intervention, and this activity varies greatly among each presidency, as revealed by Figures 1 and 2. Evidence for or against domestic effects from crisis activity will contribute to our understanding of these linkage effects.

≡ FIGURE 1  
CRISIS ACTIVITY BY PRESIDENT, 1953-1994



≡ FIGURE 2  
CRISIS-MONTH PER PRESIDENTIAL ADMINISTRATION, 1953-1994



## DATA AND MEASUREMENT

### *Dependent variables*

The unit of analysis is monthly observations, and monthly data on crisis activity, costs of involvement in international conflict, economic conditions, and domestic politics have been gathered for the United States from 1953 through 1994, inclusive. This design and time frame represents two improvements over previous studies: (1) it allows monthly rather than quarterly analysis, as in Ostrom and Job (1986), James and Oneal (1991), and James and Hristoulas (1994); and (2) the time span is longer than that of previous studies, which generally covered 1953 to 1985 (e.g., Oneal and Bryan 1995).<sup>5</sup> Although data for some variables are available over a longer period, most notably those concerning crises and militarized disputes, the analysis requires data on U.S. presidential approval. Monthly data are available from the Gallup organization since 1953 (Edwards with Gallup 1990; Gallup 1991-1995). The dependent and independent variables now will be described.

One way to assess the impact of international events on the domestic polity is through the effects of crises on the level of support accorded to the president. In spite of the formal powers vested in Congress, at a practical level the chief executive is responsible for conducting the foreign affairs of the United States. This is because of both the president's diplomatic powers and the ultimate veto over any and all diplomatic activity. Although some studies of the political impact of international events focus on the Congress (for example, the work of Regens, Gaddie, and Lockerbie (1995) on the electoral consequences for congressional support of declarations of war), the president remains the diplomat-in-chief.

Four components of executive support are used. The first is the overall level of public support, Approval, measured by the percentage of respondents who approve of the president's performance (Edwards with Gallup 1990). The second, third, and fourth measures of support are derived by looking at Partisan, Independent, and Opposition Approval levels, the president's approval among those subsets of the electorate. The polling question used by the Gallup Organization has not changed since 1945 and reads as follows:

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<sup>5</sup> Meernik and Waterman (1996: 574-77) argue against the use of time periods rather than events as the unit of analysis. Their first reason, which focuses on the need to assess current conditions, is largely dealt with through the shift to monthly data. The second objective pertains to the eligibility of only "moderately important" crises as candidates for diversionary activity. However, as Brecher and James (1986) point out, assessing the importance of a crisis can be problematic even after it ends, let alone at its outset. A period of several years may be necessary to fully measure its importance.

“Do you approve or disapprove of the way [president’s name] is handling his job as president?” Gallup also asks respondents to give their party affiliation. Since neither the phrasing of the polling question nor the two-party structure have changed since 1945, this measure of presidential approval is robust over time.

These alternative measures capture each president’s popularity within his ruling coalition (Morgan and Bickers 1992)—meaning those party members who might donate money, advice, or otherwise help in reelection—and among independents and persons of the president’s opposition party. These measures are important for two reasons. First, along the lines of a “cybernetic” model (Ostrom and Job 1986), the case could be made that the president may have an incentive to closely monitor the approval of his natural base of support more than the public-at-large, which includes many who would not reelect the president no matter how strong his performance in office. Evidence exists that retaining the presumably natural coalition is most important to presidential support in the House of Representatives, which is consistent with the idea that partisans should be monitored very closely (Fleisher and Bond 1983: 753). Also, it can be argued that presidents have an incentive to monitor their performance among independent voters as well, if they believe independents somehow represent a segment of “median voters” that can be captured into the ruling coalition (Downs 1957). Thus, by examining all the different components of executive approval, potential differences among levels of support can be isolated and analyzed, offering yet another improvement over other studies that only examine aggregate approval levels.

Second, theoretically interesting questions may arise in comparing reactions of the general public and the president’s partisans, as well as independent voters and members of the opposition party, if differences are observed. Research on presidential popularity among partisans and the public in general as related to congressional voting suggests that such differences will not emerge. Bond and Fleisher (1984: 300-301) and Bond, Fleisher, and Northrup (1988: 59, 61) report that the impact of presidential popularity is marginal for both voters overall and partisans.

These results raise an obvious question: If neither partisan, independent, nor general approval appears to affect presidential success in governing, why study the determinants of popularity at all? At least two reasons come to mind. First, some evidence exists to the contrary. Rivers and Rose (1985: 193) find that the congressional *rate* of approval for items in the president’s program increases at par with the Gallup rating. Second, popularity is very useful in predicting reelection. Lewis-Beck and Rice (1982: 535) find that survey results close to the election, but within a period of “relative political calm” (i.e., June), are best in forecasting the outcome in November. Thus it is reasonable to assume that presidents are concerned about reelection on an ongoing basis.

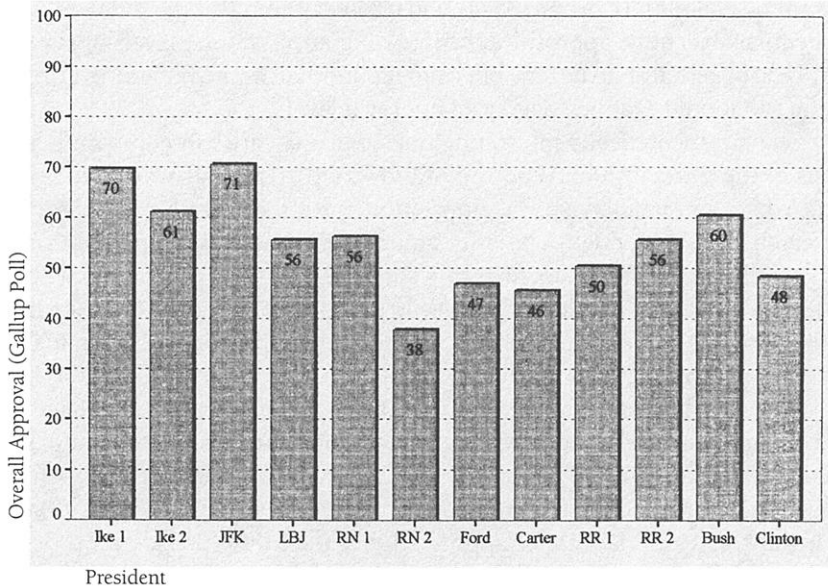
*Independent variables*

Nine independent variables appear in the regression model. Six are relevant directly to testing the hypotheses; the other three control for fluctuations in presidential approval that are common to all administrations.

The first two independent variables represent general controls on presidential approval. The first, *President*, is a dichotomous variable. Its purpose is to control for the idiosyncratic differences among the mean level of popular support for each president. Each U.S. president comes into office with his own personality, agenda, and rapport with the public, and accordingly, has a different “natural” mean level of support, as shown in Figure 3. This difference must be filtered.<sup>6</sup> Brace and Hinckley (1992: 30-31) find that this technique is useful to “separate the effects common to all administrations and the circumstances that vary among administrations” in order to find meaningful statistical effects from the other independent variables in the model.

The second independent variable, *Month*, is included to control for a structural component of presidential approval that is common to all adminis-

≡ FIGURE 3  
MEAN APPROVAL LEVELS OF US PRESIDENTS, 1953-1994



<sup>6</sup> Kernell (1986: 180) points out that media coverage of the White House, along with the proportion of unfavorable stories, increased steadily since the 1950s. These findings provide additional justification for inclusion of *President* in the analysis.

trations. Brace and Hinckley (1992: 23-24) label this as the “cycle of deflating expectation,” or more simply, the “decay of support.” This is an observable decline in general approval over the first thirty months, which picks up after the thirty-second month, until the election in the forty-eighth month of each administration. This common cycle is *not* a monotonic decay of support over the four years of office, because it does pick up during the election year. It is interesting to note that this decay in support, followed by a rise in the final year, also is present in the second administration of those presidents who served two terms during the time period covered by this study (i.e., Eisenhower, Nixon, and Reagan). The dichotomous variable introduced for each month of the presidential administration controls for this structural feature of presidential approval, and readers are urged to refer themselves to Brace and Hinckley (1992) for a complete discussion of this observed phenomenon.<sup>7</sup> Thus, to recap, the first two independent variables appear as controls for the known structural features of presidential approval.

The third control variable for presidential approval is Misery for the “misery index,” a composite measure of the state of the economy. This variable is operationalized as the sum of the unemployment and inflation rates for a given month, weighted by the percentage of the general U.S. public identifying the economy as the worst domestic problem in monthly polls (Ostrom and Job 1986). It is important to control for difficult economic times, which are known to greatly affect domestic support for the president while being unrelated to international events *per se* (James and Oneal 1991; Russett 1990b). Furthermore, this operationalization is superior to simply using one of the three measures alone, since it represents both objective and perceived economic conditions. Theoretically, the public should turn against the president when it *believes* that economic times are bad, regardless of actual conditions.<sup>8</sup>

The next four independent variables, which pertain to the international level, are most central to this study. Crisis is a dichotomous variable that depicts the entry of the United States into a crisis as defined by the ICB Project: *A foreign policy crisis*, that is, “a crisis viewed from the perspective of an individual state leadership, is a situation with three [individually] necessary and [collectively] sufficient conditions deriving from a change in a state’s external

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<sup>7</sup> Because the decay is not monotonic, a “counter variable” method is not used.

<sup>8</sup> The data for this variable have been gathered from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Gallup Organization on a monthly basis from January 1953 to December 1994. The operationalization of the Misery Index is validated by another macroeconomic fact: unemployment and inflation tend to work against each other. Low unemployment carries inflationary tendencies and high unemployment is deflationary, so it is the joint effect that produces the public’s “misery.”

or internal environment. All three are perceptions held by the highest level decision-makers of the actors concerned: a *threat to basic values*, along with the awareness of a *finite time for response* to the external value threat, and a *high probability of involvement in military hostilities*" (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997: 3, emphasis in the original). This class of events is more inclusive than uses of force or interstate wars. Crisis takes a value of one when the U.S. enters into a crisis in a given month and as long as it remains a crisis actor, and zero otherwise. Since the domestic-level variables described earlier control for other possible influences on the president's level of approval, the direct impact of crisis can be assessed.

The other independent variables include Major Response, U.S.S.R. Activity, and Major Region. These three variables are explained in detail by Oneal and Bryan (1995: 392). Each is significant in accounting for the prominence of coverage given by the *New York Times* for a given foreign policy crisis, which in turn affects the magnitude of any rally that might occur. Major Response refers to the president's major response, taking a value from 1 (compliance) to 10 (multiple responses including violent military); and U.S.S.R. Activity is the U.S.S.R.'s (later Russia's) level of involvement in the crisis. Finally, Major Region identifies the location of the crisis as either "major" (Central America, Caribbean, Europe, Middle East, North Africa) or "minor" (Asia, Oceania, South America, Sub-Saharan Africa), from the point of view of the U.S.<sup>9</sup> As expressed by  $H_1$ , and consistent with a structural realist perspective, none of these factors is expected to have a significant impact on either domestic politics in general or presidential approval in particular.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, the costs of involvement in international conflict for the United States are represented by two variables: Casualties experienced, Casualties, and amount of force exerted, Force.

Casualties corresponds to the human cost of the United States' involvement in armed conflict, which results from escalation of a crisis. As opposed to some kind of economic index, this particular measurement is used because material costs are so difficult to assess. Furthermore, the material losses are expected to carry less weight than the *known* costs expressed as the number of casualties (which, consistent with  $H_2$ , are expected to have a negative domes-

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<sup>9</sup> When regressed on each other, the three variables do not produce evidence of multicollinearity, with R-squares ranging from 0.13 to 0.62. See Lewis-Beck (1980) for an explanation of the procedure used to assess multicollinearity.

<sup>10</sup> Appendix A lists the U.S. foreign policy crises from 1953 to 1994, including the name of the case, the month in which it started, and the coding for outcome, severity, major response, Soviet involvement and major/minor region.

tic impact). The variable is based on cumulative battle deaths for the U.S., logarithmically transformed, consistent with a diminishing marginal effect (Ostrom and Job 1986).

The final independent variable, Force, is the level of force used by the U.S. and has a range of four values: (0) no use of force; (1) minor use of force; (2) either one major force component or a strategic nuclear unit is used; and (3) two or three major force components are used, plus at least one strategic nuclear unit (James and Oneal 1991: 316; Blechman and Kaplan 1978: 50-51). The unfavorable impact of Casualties is expected to be greater than that of Force. Casualties experienced by the United States represent a perceived failure of diplomacy, with the president viewed as not performing his duties as Chief of State or principal diplomat in a competent manner by the voters who put him in office (Richards et al. 1993). Use of force, by contrast, may in some instances produce positive results without significant losses, so the expectation of public disapproval remains present but is less strongly held.

#### MODEL SPECIFICATION AND ESTIMATION

With an operational set of variables the model can be specified. Testing encompasses the following form, with the dependent variable assuming the four alternatives discussed earlier:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{APPROVAL}_{it} = & B_0 + B_1 \text{PRESIDENT}_i + B_2 \text{MONTH}_t + B_3 \text{MISERY}_{it} + \\ & B_4 \text{CRISIS}_{it} + B_5 \text{MAJOR REGION}_j + \\ & B_6 \text{MAJOR RESPONSE}_j + B_7 \text{USSR ACTIVITY}_j + \\ & B_8 \text{CASUALTIES}_{it} + B_9 \text{FORCE}_{it} + e_{it} \end{aligned} \quad [1]$$

where:

- APPROVAL<sub>it</sub> = percentage of survey respondents who approve of the way president i is handling his job at time t; models are run for GENERAL, PARTISAN, INDEPENDENT, and OPPOSITION approval levels.
- PRESIDENT<sub>i</sub> = intercept change attributable to president i (Brace and Hinckley 1992);
- MONTH<sub>t</sub> = intercept change attributable to month t;
- MISERY<sub>it</sub> = effect of the economy for president i at time t;
- CRISIS<sub>it</sub> = effect of a crisis for president i at month t;
- MAJOR REGION<sub>j</sub> = Region of Crisis j;
- MAJOR RESPONSE<sub>j</sub> = U.S. Major Response to crisis j;
- U.S.S.R. ACTIVITY<sub>j</sub> = U.S.S.R./Russia's level of involvement in crisis j;
- CASUALTIES<sub>it</sub> = effect of the number of casualties for president i at month t;



$FORCE_{it}$  = effect of the level of force used for president  $i$  at month  $t$ ;  
 $e_{it}$  = error term.

As noted earlier, only casualties and perhaps force are anticipated to affect the domestic polity to any significant degree. In each case, because of the costs involved, the impact should be negative. As levels of war involvement and use of force increase, presidential approval should decline. The fact of a crisis itself, and the severity it represents as an event at the international level, are expected to produce insignificant effects on the domestic polity.

Given the time series data for presidential approval, the models are estimated using the Cochrane-Orcutt autoregression technique. This procedure corrects for the presence of a first-order autocorrelation process (AR-1) that was detected through a Durbin-Watson test and examinations of the ACF and PACFs for the residuals of the four measures of approval levels. The Cochrane-Orcutt technique is useful because it automatically estimates and fits a rho value in the regression model; moreover, interpretation of the estimated coefficient is identical to Ordinary Least Squares (OLS). The final Durbin-Watson  $d$ -statistic and the rho value will be reported for each model.

Finally, the respective dichotomous variables represent categories that are not meant to be measured on a ratio scale, yet are important in assessing differences among groups or categories. These variables do not pose serious methodological problems when a model is correctly specified (Hardy 1993).

### DO INTERNATIONAL CRISES AFFECT DOMESTIC POLITICS?

The results obtained for the four full models are presented in Tables 1 and 2. The full models are broken down into two tables because regression diagnostics (predictably, in hindsight) revealed high multicollinearity among two of the independent variables, Crisis and Major Response ( $r = 0.94$ ). This is logical (and tautological), because the U.S. responds to every foreign policy crisis in which it is an actor. The other independent variables do not pose problems: the U.S. does not always use force in a crisis; crises do not always occur in major regions; nor does the U.S.S.R. become active in all U.S. foreign policy crises, so among these variables collinearity is not high enough to affect the models and varies from 0.51 to 0.69.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Correlations as high as 0.8 are "acceptable." The main effect of multicollinearity is that it tends to produce partial slope coefficients that are not statistically significant, although the model itself is significant (Berry and Feldman 1985: 42). There are "no quick fixes" to the problem (Fox 1991: 13-21). Berry and Feldman (1985) and Fox (1991) suggest that more data should be gathered to increase information in the model, but in our case we have the entire "population" of U.S. foreign policy crises. There simply is no easy way to deal with the problem, and deleting one of the variables from the model (either

TABLE 1

## CRISES, COSTS OF INVOLVEMENT AND PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL: CRISIS VARIABLE

Variables <sup>a</sup>	General Approval <sup>b</sup>	Partisan Approval <sup>b</sup>	Independents <sup>b</sup>	Opposition <sup>b</sup>
Crisis	3.29** (2.37)	5.05*** (3.16)	3.91** (1.99)	3.00 (1.53)
Major Region	-0.59 (-0.61)	-1.24 (-1.13)	-1.47 (-1.10)	-1.40 (-1.03)
U.S.S.R. Activity	-0.33 (-1.28)	-0.43 (-1.49)	-0.62* (-1.77)	-0.28 (-0.79)
Casualties	-0.97* (-1.61)	-0.22 (-0.38)	-1.17* (-1.72)	-0.23 (-0.30)
Force	-1.23*** (-2.51)	-1.84*** (-3.11)	-1.21* (-1.70)	-1.00 (-1.37)
Misery Index	-2.52 *** (-2.83)	-2.78 *** (-3.50)	-4.13 *** (-4.52)	4.69 *** (4.48)
Eisenhower 2	-21.34 *** (-4.09)	-5.85 * (-1.73)	-10.03 *** (-2.70)	-21.35 *** (-4.39)
Kennedy	-22.01 *** (-2.92)	-10.91 *** (-2.71)	-10.86 *** (-2.52)	-27.30 *** (-4.48)
Johnson	-24.60 *** (-2.67)	-24.13 *** (-6.17)	-23.00 *** (-5.51)	-24.78 *** (-4.11)
Nixon 1	-24.35 ** (-2.28)	-10.65 ** (-2.49)	-14.92 *** (-3.23)	-20.76 *** (-3.19)
Nixon 2	49.97 *** (4.11)	-28.52 *** (-5.80)	-40.13 *** (-7.46)	-52.45 *** (-7.13)
Ford	-3.67 (-0.31)	-9.44 * (-1.89)	-6.02 (-1.07)	-4.78 (-0.65)
Carter	-1.70 (-0.14)	-25.51 *** (-5.63)	-18.31 *** (-3.71)	-15.29 ** (-2.26)
Reagan 1	7.14 (0.54)	4.64 (0.91)	-0.41 (-0.07)	-7.06 (-0.96)
Reagan 2	-3.15 (-0.22)	1.56 (0.35)	-7.89 * (-1.64)	-16.26 ** (-2.31)
Bush	-30.00 * (-1.91)	-17.76 *** (-3.27)	-23.75 *** (-4.07)	-32.25 *** (-3.86)
Clinton	-42.49 ** (-2.40)	-39.61 *** (-5.36)	47.69 *** (-5.76)	-49.88 *** (-4.71)
Constant	85.88 (17.14)	100.54 (27.42)	90.19 (22.73)	81.93 (14.65)

outright or in some kind of stepwise procedure) is not advisable, since the tradeoff is model misspecification (Berry and Feldman 1985: 48; Fox 1991: 14-15). However, multicollinearity does not introduce bias of the partial slope estimates themselves, so we can still see the overall tendency in the *direction* of the slope.

Table 1 (continued)

R <sup>2</sup> / (Adj. R <sup>2</sup> )	.34/ (.24)	.39/ (.28)	.39/ (.28)	.37/ (.26)
Durbin-Watson	2.22	2.22	2.15	2.17
Rho	0.96	0.78	0.75	0.84
Residual d.f.	429	374	374	374

<sup>a</sup> Given considerations of space, the dummy variables controlling for the months of the administrations will not be reported. All are significant at  $p < 0.1$  except Months 3-8 and 11-13. In Tables 2, 3, and 5 the presidential dummy variables will not be reported either.

<sup>b</sup> T-ratios in parentheses.

\*\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$ . \*\* Significant at  $p < 0.05$ . \* Significant at  $p < 0.10$ .

The coefficients for the control variables will not be discussed, except to point out that the effect of economic conditions (Misery Index) on presidential approval is significant in each model. For every unit of increase in the Misery Index, presidential approval falls by about 2.65 percent for both general and partisan approval; it is worse for independents and the opposition, where approval declines 3.33 percent for Independents and 4.69 percent for Opposition party voters. To put this in perspective, assume that inflation and unemployment are moderately high (for the U.S.) at 5 and 10 percent, respectively. Then, if just 7 percent of the public responding in surveys agreed that the economy is the greatest problem facing the nation today, that would be sufficient to yield a misery index of about 1. So, once again hypothetically, if 30 percent of the public believe the economy is the most important problem facing the nation, and inflation and unemployment are 5 percent and 10 percent, respectively, then the misery index is 4.5. Thus general public approval for the president should drop by about 11 points ( $4.5 * 2.52$ ). Given the importance of "pocketbook" issues to the American voter, this straightforward connection is not surprising. As stated previously, the theoretically relevant variables used to evaluate a possible rally effect are: Crisis, Major Region (figuring in the separate tables), Major Response, and U.S.S.R. Activity; and the two variables representing the costs of involvement in crisis, Casualties and Force.

In Table 1 the effect of Crisis is positive and significant for the voters in general, the president's partisans, and independents. In other words, the model predicts a slight rally effect for these groups. Interestingly, the rally effect among the president's opposition is not significant, although the coefficient is in the general range. The other variables pertaining to crisis involvement generally do not produce any statistically significant coefficients. Interestingly, Major Region and especially U.S.S.R. Activity produce negative coefficients for all groups, although they are statistically significant only for Independents ( $p <$

0.10). One might have expected the American public to rally during a threat to the security in an area of vital U.S. interest, or against the Soviets. This may indicate a certain conservatism on the part of independent voters; when the U.S.S.R. becomes involved in a crisis, they may become wary of potential escalation, and their support more volatile. However, we do not want to speculate too much on these results, as the coefficients were not highly significant. Thus  $H_1$  is not strongly supported in this model, but potentially interesting effects were uncovered by examining the approval levels of the different electoral sub-groups: the General public, Independents, and especially the president's Partisans did rally, while Opposition voters did behave differently in their response to U.S. involvement in a crisis by not rallying.

The two variables pertaining to costs of involvement tell a slightly different story. The variable Casualties produced two mildly significant coefficients ( $p < 0.10$ ), not surprisingly, for the general public and independents. Thus, this particular operationalization of costs of crisis activity did not produce the anticipated results. However, the coefficient for the variable Force is negative and significant for the general population, partisans, and independents, thus canceling out any potential rally effect of being involved in a "safe" crisis. In other words, with crisis escalation, a possible rally effect dissipates, thus indicating a certain conservatism with regard to use of force. It is interesting that this coefficient is negative for *every group*, and highest for the president's partisans. This result lends mild support to  $H_2$ ; higher potential costs of crisis activity measured by the use of force can have a negative impact on approval, although it is not significant for all classes of voters.

In Table 2, where Major Response is substituted for Crisis, the same results are observed but more strongly: the coefficient is positive and significant for all classes of voters. (Note that if the value of the partial slope coefficient is smaller, it is because the values range from 1-10, so, for example, a presidential Major Response value of 6—non-violent military—the coefficient change is thus 2.4 for the general public, consistent with the change observed for the Crisis variable among the same class of voters.) Again, as in the previous table, use of Force tends to significantly cancel out a potential rally effect of U.S. response.

In sum, one finding here is that when we examine the effect of international conflict activity on changes in domestic politics, what we are measuring probably is the effect of executive actions, and not necessarily the effect of an abstract international event—a crisis—on domestic politics. This is entirely consistent with the findings of Oneal and Bryan (1995), and we can claim some support for  $H-1$ , but contingent to U.S. presidential response in a crisis. Thus, it is not the crisis per se that rallies the public, but executive action.

We reran the models with various monthly lags, and the results were nil; specifically, the coefficients became difficult to interpret. It appears that any

TABLE 2

## CRISES, COSTS OF INVOLVEMENT AND PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL: US RESPONSE VARIABLE

Variables <sup>a</sup>	General Approval <sup>b</sup>	Partisan Approval <sup>b</sup>	Independents <sup>b</sup>	Opposition <sup>b</sup>
U.S. Major Response	0.40** (2.20)	0.71*** (3.43)	0.36* (1.67)	0.62** (2.48)
Major Region	-0.65 (-0.65)	-1.46 (-1.31)	-1.25 (-0.92)	-1.97 (-1.58)
U.S.S.R. Activity	-0.20 (-0.88)	-0.32 (-1.26)	-0.40 (-1.28)	-0.36 (-1.16)
Casualties	-0.95* (-1.64)	-0.11 (-0.19)	-1.21* (-1.66)	0.08 (0.10)
Force	-1.08** (-2.33)	-1.69*** (-3.10)	-0.82 (-1.23)	-1.17* (-1.80)
Misery Index	-2.46 *** (-2.77)	-2.67 *** (-3.38)	-4.06 *** (-4.45)	-4.41 *** (-4.07)
Constant	86.99 (7.63)	101.16 (27.49)	90.53 (22.94)	84.27 (12.62)
R <sup>2</sup> / (Adj. R <sup>2</sup> )	.34/(.24)	.39/(.29)	.39/(.28)	.38/(.27)
Durbin-Watson	2.19	2.22	2.14	2.20
Rho	0.95	0.78	0.74	0.88
Degrees of freedom	429	374	374	374

<sup>a</sup> Given considerations of space, the dummy variables controlling for presidential administrations (Eisenhower through Clinton I) and the dummy variables controlling for months of the administrations are not reported. The former are significant at virtually the same levels as reported in Table 1.

<sup>b</sup> T-ratios in parentheses.

\*\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.01$ . \*\* Significant at  $p < 0.05$ . \* Significant at  $p < 0.10$ .

effect seems short-lived. However, we discovered that when U.S.S.R. Activity was removed from the model, the rally effect almost disappears. Table 3 shows the same four models as Table 1, but without the Soviet Union activity variable. We see that in general, the rally effect diminishes by half and becomes less statistically significant. This may indicate that a rally effect is partially dependent on Soviet/Russian participation as the opponent; the population rallies when the U.S.A. confronts the "Evil Empire." Note that the negative and significant effect of use of Force remains the same for the general public as for the president's partisans; inexplicably, this variable becomes non-significant for the other groups.

To summarize these results, a small rally effect in the 3-to-4 percent range appears when U.S. presidents respond with vigor in an international conflict; however, a potential rally effect is sensitive to the actual use of force. If force is

≡ TABLE 3  
 CRISES, COSTS OF INVOLVEMENT AND PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL III  
 (WITHOUT USSR ACTIVITY)

Variables <sup>a</sup>	General Approval <sup>b</sup>	Partisan Approval <sup>b</sup>	Independents <sup>b</sup>	Opposition <sup>b</sup>
Crisis	1.85 ** (2.08)	2.63 *** (2.63)	0.45 (0.37)	1.12 (0.91)
Force	-1.06 ** (-2.22)	-1.57 *** (-2.73)	-0.82 (-1.19)	-0.78 (-1.12)
Misery Index	-2.41 *** (-2.75)	-2.68 *** (-3.37)	-3.99 *** (4.26)	4.53 *** (4.25)
Constant	87.50 (7.55)	100.35 (27.53)	88.89 (21.55)	82.60 (13.67)
R <sup>2</sup> / (Adj. R <sup>2</sup> )	.33/(.24)	.38/(.28)	.36/(.26)	.37/(.26)
Durbin-Watson	2.18	2.22	2.18	2.21
Rho	0.96	0.78	0.76	0.86
Degrees of freedom	428	375	375	375

<sup>a</sup> Given considerations of space, the dummy variables controlling for presidential administrations (Eisenhower through Clinton I) and the dummy variables controlling for months of the administrations will not be reported. The former are significant at virtually the same levels as reported in Table 1.

<sup>b</sup> T-scores in parentheses.

\*\* Significant at  $p < 0.05$ . \* Significant at  $p < 0.10$ .

used, then any rally effect disappears and the president may even suffer a loss at the polls if the use of force is great enough. Use of a different method and an extended data set confirms earlier findings that rally effects linked to foreign policy activity are small and linked to adversarial superpower involvement. This probably would come as disappointing news to presidents who expect otherwise (Edwards with Gallup 1990; Brace and Hinckley 1992; Oneal and Bryan 1995). Also, in some of the models, interesting differences in approval levels were detected among the four electoral sub-groups. We will not develop theories to explain any of the (slight) differences observed, but this study has shown that different parts of the U.S. electorate respond differently to uses of force, and this should provide a point of departure for developing cross-national versions of this type of investigation, the lesson being that the public is not a unified, unitary actor.

#### FURTHER TESTING: THE IMPACT OF CRISIS OUTCOMES

What happens to presidential approval after a crisis has been resolved? Is the public aware of the foreign policy successes or failures of their president after the dust has settled? As previously mentioned, Lian and Oneal (1993)

and O Neal and Bryan (1995) found that crises covered in the *New York Times*' headlines produce larger rally effects, implying that when the public knows that the president is involving the country in a crisis, it will rally. So what about the net effect of *all* crises, whether covered or not?

To answer this question, another variable, Outcome, which corresponds to the ICB variable called "Substance of Outcome," is included in the analysis. This variable takes on four values that signify the substantive outcome from the crisis actor's perspective: (1) defeat; (2) stalemate; (3) compromise; and (4) victory (Wilkenfeld and Brecher 1988: 19). For the statistical analysis, Outcome is broken down into dummy variables because the original variable is ordinal-level: it cannot be assumed that the categories are linear. Thus, four dummies are created to capture the change in approval level resulting from the four possible outcomes; a fifth category is the residual category representing months with "no crisis outcomes" and is excluded from the model (Hardy 1993: 17-8).

Adding to the potential strength of this test is the fact that the United States tends to "win" the crises in which it gets involved. Table 4 reports that, of the 46 crises included in this study, the U.S. won outright 59 percent of the time, compromised 15 percent and lost only 11 percent, with 15 percent of the crises ending as stalemates. Since the U.S. wins most of the time, a rally effect should be detected if a relatively instrumental interpretation of foreign policy-making is on the mark.

Table 5 reports the results from testing for the impact of outcome on approval. The dichotomous variable is coded appropriately in the month of termination of the crisis. Since the Outcome of a crisis can be rewarded by the public after the crisis-month has ended, we tested models with various lags, up to four months, and found no significant results beyond a lag of one month. Thus, the best model, which uses a one-month lag, is reported here.<sup>12</sup> The

≡ TABLE 4  
OUTCOMES OF CRISES WHEN U.S. IS A CRISIS ACTOR, 1953-1994

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Defeat for USA	5	11%
Stalemate	7	15%
Compromise	7	15%
Victory for USA	27	59%
Total	46	100%

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<sup>12</sup> Wilkenfeld and Brecher (1988) report that the average length of U.S. foreign policy crises tends to be relatively long, so the dependent variable was lagged up to four months. The best model is reported in Table 5.

negative effects from the Misery Index on both general and opposition approval carry over to the following month. Encouragingly, from a validity perspective, the partial slope coefficients are in a logically anticipated direction: negative for “bad” outcomes for *all* groups, and positive for “good” outcomes for *all* groups. Furthermore, notice that the group to “punish” the president hardest for a defeat in a crisis is the Opposition, at nearly -4 points and statistically significant at the  $p < 0.10$  level. The only other Outcome coefficients yielding significant results are for the Compromise variable for the General population, Partisans, and the Opposition. It is not clear why this would be the case, but it is evident that there are no strong effects observed, although the coefficients are in the “correct” direction.

≡ TABLE 5  
EFFECT OF OUTCOME OF CRISIS ON LAGGED PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL

Variables	General Approval <sup>a</sup>	Partisan Approval <sup>a</sup>	Independents <sup>a</sup>	Opposition <sup>a</sup>
Defeat	-1.03 (-0.59)	-1.76 (-1.02)	-3.33 (-1.08)	-3.91* (-1.69)
Stalemate	-0.35 (-0.26)	-0.41 (-0.30)	-0.25 (-0.11)	-0.40 (-0.22)
Compromise	2.90 * (1.83)	3.33 ** (2.11)	3.13 (1.11)	3.77* (1.80)
Victory	0.53 (0.87)	0.72 (0.87)	1.31 (0.89)	0.64 (0.59)
Misery Index	-1.45 ** (-1.94)	0.66 (0.78)	-1.37 (-1.51)	-2.67 ** (-3.58)
Constant	58.86	75.32	58.13	44.71
Durbin-Watson	2.07	2.31	2.27	2.08
Rho	0.89	0.92	0.79	0.82

<sup>a</sup> T-scores in parentheses.

\*\* Significant at  $p < .05$ . \* Significant at  $p < .10$ .

What we demonstrate here is that the U.S. public does, in a general sense, reward presidents for success (the coefficients for Compromise and Victory are positive) and punish them for failure (the other coefficients being negative). However, lack of statistical significance for most coefficients points to a relatively cynical interpretation of presidential foreign policymaking, since the public does not seem very attentive or aware of presidential activity.

On the other hand, closer examination of the data yields a plausible explanation for the paucity of significant results. Some of the coding decisions in the data are standardized and therefore cannot be expected to take full account of historical context. In other words, while an international crisis



may officially last from, say, January 2 to May 19, U.S. activity may have been during the month of February, with an outcome coded for the U.S. in the month of May. Appendix A contains eight such very long crises: Taiwan Straits I, 1954-55; Berlin Deadline, 1958-59; Dominican Intervention, 1965; Pueblo, all of 1968; Yom Kippur, 1973-74; Iran Hostages, 1979-81; the Gulf War, 1990; and the North Korean Nuclear Crisis, 1993-94. The lack of results may reflect the coding scheme. For example, the U.S. Iran Hostage crisis lasted from November 1979 to January 1981, and the substantive U.S. response was the Desert One rescue attempt in April 1980. However, the coding for Outcome is a compromise achieved in January 1981 (i.e., the day the hostages were released on Reagan's inauguration). In this case the coding could be more sensitive to context, although such instances are few in an overall sense.

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Bueno de Mesquita, Jackman, and Siverson (1991: 185), in summing up the results of a collection of studies linking foreign policy to prior domestic politics, also speculate on the future of realism:

... domestic affairs and foreign affairs are intimately interrelated. Domestic affairs appear to be especially relevant in states with institutions that constrain foreign policy choices or that encourage relations between nations sharing communitarian values. Democracy seems especially to provide such constraining institutions and communitarian values and these features encourage attentiveness to both domestic affairs in forming foreign policies and to foreign affairs in shaping some domestic policies. If so, the conventional [structural] realist view must accommodate these important features of democratic politics if it is to remain a viable explanation of international behavior.

Realists, in a more general sense, must confront the expectation of linkage politics, which follows implicitly from the assumption of rationality. If those at the apex of the state are assumed to be rational, then the connection of domestic with international politics needs to be acknowledged and explained. As revealed by this study, in conjunction with others, effects may have different forms and magnitudes in each direction.

Based on accumulated research, it is clear that unidirectional models of linkage politics—whether referring to a diversionary hypothesis (from inside the state to outside) or a second-image reversal (from outside the state to inside)—are incomplete. As Levy (1989) indirectly points out, such models are misspecified. Political forces should be acknowledged as operating, simultaneously and with lagged effect, in both directions. Development of a simultaneous equation model of crisis activity and domestic politics, which would build on the analysis of U.S. uses of force by DeRouen (1995), provides a

suitable focus for further research. A properly identified model would have a chance to reveal fully the interdependent causal relationships between domestic and international politics. Variables with significance in previous studies of linkage politics naturally would be included in such a model, with some new choices based on theoretical considerations related to simultaneous effects.

Endogenous variables should include regime success (the domestic side of the second image) and involvement in interstate conflict (the international side of the second image). Regime success could be defined by the level of partisan popularity of the executive. This means either same-party allegiance when referring to democracies or elite support in the context of authoritarian regimes. The focus would be on how a leader is doing at home as a result of international events. The other endogenous variable, involvement in a militarized interstate dispute, is defined by Gochman and Maoz (1984: 587) as "a set of interactions between or among states involving threats to use military force, displays of military force, or actual uses of military force. To be included, these acts must be explicit, overt, non-accidental, and government sanctioned." This operationalization is chosen because threats, displays, or uses of force entail potentially high costs for the governments involved; it captures the external acts in which states theoretically could engage to divert the public's attention away from domestic troubles.

Two predetermined variables might warrant inclusion in this model. Domestic violence and regime type could be important in assessing the internal conditions for each state that are independent of the direct, short-term control of the incumbent government. Finally, the exogenous variables that should be included in a future elaboration of the model are overall levels of international dispute activity and the Misery Index. Factors such as these stand as evidence that foreign policy can be influenced from both directions (inside and outside the state).

Cross-national assessment of diversionary action and linkage politics is a final point to consider. The case of the U.S. may even have some relevance to non-democratic regimes because of the variable reactions revealed for partisans versus constituents as a whole. This discovery complements the analysis of Argentine behavior during the Falklands/Malvinas case. Levy and Vakili (1992: 135) assess the decision making of the Galtieri government as a bureaucratic-authoritarian (BA) regime facing both internal and external strife. They conclude that "domestic pressures play a significant role in foreign policy issues for BA regimes only when combined with intra-military conflict within the regime, which usually but not necessarily occurs in the later stages of the regime's development." Furthermore, since it lacked viable alternatives, "internal bargaining within the military regime led to the decision for an invasion of the Malvinas as a means of reestablishing the corporate unity of the military around the Malvinas issue and at the same time establishing the regime's

legitimacy within society” (Levy and Vakili 1992: 135-36). These conclusions, which follow from the behavior of a non-democratic regime, suggest that diversionary tactics have cross-national relevance. The meaning of a partisan or support coalition naturally can be expected to vary as a function of the system of government. In sum, the research design adopted in the preceding study of the U.S. offers some ideas about how to attain the objective of a fully specified model of linkage politics for application both at home and abroad.

**APPENDIX A: LIST OF US FOREIGN POLICY CRISES, 1953-1994**

Foreign Policy Crisis	Date <sup>1</sup>	Outcome <sup>2</sup>	SU Inv. <sup>3</sup>	Region <sup>4</sup>	Response <sup>5</sup>
1 Korean War III	5/53	4	2	0	3
2 Dien Bien Phu	3/54	1	2	0	3
3 Guatemala	6/54	4	6	1	4
4 Taiwan Straits I	9/54	2	2	0	4
5 Suez Nationalization	11/56	4	6	1	3
6 Syria/Turkey Confrontation	9/57	4	2	1	3
7 Lebanon-Iraq Upheaval	7/58	4	6	1	6
8 Taiwan Straits II	8/58	4	6	0	3
9 Berlin Deadline	12/58	4	2	1	3
10 Pathet Lao Offensive	3/61	4	2	0	3
11 Bay of Pigs	4/61	1	2	1	1
12 Berlin Wall	8/61	3	7	1	6
13 Vietcong Attack	11/61	4	5	0	6
14 Nam Tha	5/62	4	2	0	6
15 Cuban Missile Crisis	10/62	4	7	1	6
16 Panama Flag	1/64	3	1	1	8
17 Gulf of Tonkin	8/64	2	2	0	7
18 Congo II	11/64	4	6	0	7
19 Pleiku	2/65	2	6	0	7
20 Dominican Intervention	4/65	4	2	1	7
21 Six Day War	6/67	4	2	1	6
22 Pueblo	1/68	1	2	0	6
23 Tet Offensive	3/68	1	6	0	3
24 Vietnam Spring Offensive	3/69	4	1	0	7
25 EC 121 Spyplane	4/69	2	2	1	6
26 Invasion of Cambodia	4/70	2	2	0	7
27 Black September	9/70	4	2	1	6
28 Cienfuegos Submarine Base	9/70	4	6	1	3
29 Vietnamese Ports Mining	5/72	3	2	0	7
30 Christmas Bombing	12/72	3	2	0	7
31 October (Yom Kippur) War	10/73	4	6	1	8
32 Mayaguez Incident	5/75	4	1	0	7
33 War in Angola	9/75	1	6	0	9
34 Poplar Tree (North Korea)	8/76	3	2	0	6
35 Shaba II	5/78	4	6	0	6

36	Afghanistan Invasion	1/80	2	7	0	10
37	U.S. Hostages in Iran	4/80	3	2	1	10
38	Invasion of Grenada	10/83	4	2	1	7
39	Nicaragua MIG-21s	11/84	2	6	1	8
40	Gulf of Syrte II	4/86	4	2	1	7
41	Libyan Jets	12/88	4	2	1	10
42	Invasion of Panama	12/89	4	2	1	7
43	Gulf War	10/90	4	2	1	10
44	North Korean Nuclear Crisis	03/93	3	1	0	4
45	Haiti Military Regime	07/94	4	1	1	4
46	Iraqi Troop Deployment-Kuwait	10/94	4	2	1	6

<sup>1</sup>The date used is the "response date" in the ICB data set; see Brecher and Wilkenfeld, 1997. This is the date where the U.S. took action and responded to an international crisis.

<sup>2</sup> Outcomes: 4 = Victory; 3 = Compromise; 2 = Stalemate; 1 = loss.

<sup>3</sup> U.S.S.R. (Russian) Involvement: 7 = U.S.S.R. crisis actor; 6 = direct military; 5 = semi-military; 4 = covert military; 3 = economic; 2 = political; 1 = no involvement.

<sup>4</sup> Major ("vital") regions (MAJREG) include Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean (Oneal and Bryan 1995).

<sup>5</sup> Major Response (MAJRES) are: 1 = compliance; 2 = no response, 3 = external-verbal, 4 = external-political, 5 = external-economic, 6 = non-violent military, 7 = violent military, 8 = multiple response excluding violent military, 10 = multiple responses including violent military (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997).

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Received: March 6, 1997  
Accepted: March 12, 1998

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