Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

It should seem obvious that the more united and organized one's enemies, the worse one's own lot. This book makes the counterintuitive assertion that this need not always be the case. Poor coordination, internal mistrust, and intramural rivalry in enemy alliances can be dangerous for one's own side because such internal divisions make engaging in successful coercive diplomacy with those enemies more difficult. During all-out war—pure competitions of brute force—internal divisions and lack of coordination within the enemy camp are clearly to one's advantage. But such wars are the exception, not the rule, in international security politics. More commonplace is coercive diplomacy—the use of threats and assurances in combination to influence the behavior of real or potential adversaries. In such instances it is often more difficult to achieve one's goals at acceptably low costs and to limit the duration and scope of existing conflicts when an adversarial alliance is ill formed, in flux, or internally divided than when it is well organized and hierarchically structured.

This book focuses on the alliance dynamics of Cold War East Asia from 1949–69 and concludes with a chapter on post–Cold War East Asia. The argument of the book is that disunity, lack of coordination, and intra-alliance rivalry increased both the chance that regional conflicts would occur and the likelihood that existing conflicts would persist and escalate. In their formative years, both the U.S.-led alliance system and the Asian communist alliance sent dangerously confusing signals regarding the cohesion, resolve, and intent of their respective blocs. Those signals undercut coercive diplomacy in Asia and created conditions for both crisis and war. From 1958 to 1969 a different phenomenon destabilized relations across the Cold War divide: the ideological rivalry between the Soviet Union and the PRC ("the Sino-Soviet split") actually harmed U.S. national security interests in Indochina and beyond by catalyzing the two competing communist giants to increase support for revolutionaries in the developing world and to scuttle peace talks to end existing conflicts. This condition changed only in 1969, when Moscow and Beijing turned their guns directly on each other.

The book also provides a brief study of the legacies of U.S. Cold War alliances for contemporary Sino-American relations. Although China and the United States today are very far from being enemies as they were in the 1950s and 1960s, they do engage in mutual coercive diplomacy over issues like relations across

the Taiwan Strait. Certain potentially destabilizing dynamics related to the early formation of the U.S. alliance system in Asia have reemerged, albeit in a more manageable form, as Washington and its regional partners have adjusted to the changes in the global and regional security structure following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

WHY ENEMY DISUNITY AND RIVALRY IS DANGEROUS

This book addresses two forms of dangerous dynamics among enemy alliances: poor coordination and, in the case of revisionist alliances, the catalyzing effect of ideology and the pursuit of prestige on aggression toward enemies.

The first set of theoretical arguments in the book focuses on how weakly formed and poorly organized alliances send signals that can undercut the key components of successful coercive diplomacy: the use of clear and credible threats and assurances in combination to dissuade target countries from undesirable behavior. The problems of coordination and weak signaling explained here can apply to any alliance, whether or not the participants have revisionist goals.

A second set of theoretical arguments is specifically relevant to the study of alliances that were formed with transnational revisionist goals in mind. When such an alliance is first forming and when it is fraught with internal rivalries for leadership, the shared revisionist ideology of the alliance members creates dynamics that make the alliance as a whole aggressive and hard to contain through the use of coercive diplomacy—much more so than either status quo alliances or revisionist alliances that are more firmly established and enjoy clear leadership in a hierarchical structure. In the alliance's formative phase, individual candidates for membership may take unusually aggressive acts toward international enemies to demonstrate that they are bona fide internationalists, not simply nationalists who happen to share domestic political preferences with their potential allies. When there is competition for leadership within such an alliance between two or more members, that competition will often take the form of outbidding rivals by demonstrating support for revolution or revisionism in third areas, thus catalyzing the overall movement's aggression toward the outside world and making containment through coercive diplomacy more costly and more difficult for status quo enemies.

It is important here to make a distinction between coercive diplomacy and the brute force fighting of total wars, in which the central aim is the annihilation of one's enemies, such as World War II and the war against the Al Qaeda network. Such wars are very important but also are, fortunately, quite rare. More commonly, actual or potential enemies are involved in coercive diplomacy (either deterrence to prevent a change in the status quo, or compellence to cause such a change). This is true in peacetime and during limited wars, which constitute

the great majority of armed conflicts and during which opposing sides bargain over the terms of peace through a combination of physical force and diplomatic negotiation. In brute force wars or total wars for survival, disunity among one's adversaries is a clear benefit because it renders the enemy alliance physically weaker. But in the world of coercive diplomacy, threats and assurances must be balanced through a process of clear and credible signaling, and enforceable bargains must be struck short of total defeat or victory for either side. Without credible threats, coercion is obviously ineffective. But what is less well understood is that coercion is also unlikely to be effective without simultaneously transmitted credible assurances that the threat is fully conditional upon the target's behavior and that the target's key security interests will not be harmed if it complies with the demands of those leveling the threats. Without receiving both threats and assurances in concert, the target of a coercive threat has little incentive to comply with the demands being made.[1] Since there is often a tension between these two central aspects of coercive diplomacy, blending threats and assurances effectively is not an easy task in coercive bargaining. Even in the simplest bilateral or "dyadic" relationships, such an effective blend is hard to achieve; but coercive bargaining among adversarial alliances is much more complex still, and the divisions and political jockeying within one or both of the opposing alliances can make such bargaining very difficult indeed. Enemy disunity has two potentially negative implications for one's own security: wars will be more likely to happen because diplomatic solutions to differences short of war will be more difficult to achieve; and limited wars are more likely to endure and even escalate because of the added complexity of intra-war coercive diplomacy.[2]

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[1] For the original theoretical work that specifies the need for both credibility of threat and credibility of reassurance, see Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966). Also see James Davis, *Threats and Promises: The Pursuit of International Influence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000). For more recent related work in the rational choice tradition on the importance of two factors—transparency (complete information) and enforceable commitments—in preventing conflict, see James Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (summer 1995): 379–414; Erik Gartzke, "War Is in the Error Term," *International Organization* 53, no. 3 (summer 1999): 567–87; and Robert Powell, "Bargaining Theory and International Conflict," *Annual Review of Political Science* 5 (June 2002): 1–30. In a sense, the alliance politics discussed in this book make alliances both less transparent and less capable of making clear, credible, and enforceable commitments to enemies. Jonathan Kirshner offers an approach that is critical of the recent rational choice arguments that emphasize transparency and credibility of commitment, instead emphasizing the danger of miscalculation in the highly complex world of international security politics, even if actors were somehow to enjoy perfect information and enforceable commitments. In Kirshner's thesis, the alliance politics discussed here would simply add greatly to the complexity of international relations and would, therefore, increase the likelihood of dangerous miscalculations by members of an alliance or their enemies, regardless of the robustness of available information. See Jonathan D. Kirshner, "Rational Explanation for War?" *Security Studies* 10, no. 1 (autumn 2000): 143–50.

[2] Glenn H. Snyder, "Deterrence and Defense," pp. 25–44 in Robert J. Art and Kenneth N. Waltz, eds., *The Use of Force: Military Power and International Politics*, 3rd ed. (New York: University Press of America, 1988). Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 2–3.

Alliance Cohesion, Clarity, and Coercive Diplomacy

The first problem discussed in this book is how a lack of coordination and clarity of commitment in alliances renders groups as a whole less transparent to enemies and, therefore, makes it harder for opposing alliances to engage each other in effective, mutual coercive diplomacy. Such divisions and uncertainties, common in the formative stages of an alliance or after major changes in the international system, can create in enemy capitals dangerous misperceptions regarding the capabilities, resolve, or intentions of the alliance, with negative implications for crisis management. Such misperceptions can lead to overestimations or underestimations of the challenge posed by the enemy alliance. The problem is only exacerbated if, as was the case in the early Cold War in East Asia, two opposing alliances (or alignments) are both in a formative stage and, therefore, suffer from poorly coordinated policies and send confusing signals to each other about power and purpose.

When coordination is poor, the most determined and aggressive actors within an alliance are most capable of dragging their partners into conflicts. Poor coordination also increases the likelihood that the alliance will send unclear and misleading signals to adversaries. The inherent complexity of alliances and alignments can be exacerbated by poor coordination among the allies, thus making it particularly difficult for an alliance and its adversary to find an effective balance between credible threats and credible assurances. Especially when poorly organized, alliances can send messages that undercut either credible threats or credible assurances, thus making stable coercive diplomacy with enemies (short of war) harder to maintain than it would be if the alliances were better coordinated and exhibited clearer leadership. What is worse still, in cases where an alliance seems currently weak but potentially strong and aggressive in the future, both credible threats and credible assurances can be undercut simultaneously, significantly increasing both the likelihood of new conflicts and the escalation of existing conflicts.

Poor coordination tends to be prevalent in the formative stages of alliances, when security alliances and alignments are often still informal, mutual suspicions among security partners about each other's near-term and long-term goals and reliability are strongest, and burden-sharing arrangements within alliances have not been clearly delineated. Coordination problems can also arise when the alliance's original mission has disappeared and the alliance must adjust to fundamentally new conditions.

Revisionist Alliance Dynamics and Coercive Diplomacy

The second form of internal alliance dynamics studied in this book is mutual mistrust and intramural competition for leadership in revisionist alliances. Al-

liances with revisionist, internationalist goals can be even more aggressive and harder to pacify through coercive diplomacy when they are poorly formed or rife with internal rivalries than they would be if they were under one actor's clear leadership. There are at least three reasons that this is the case.

First, actors in an alliance, even a revisionist one, often have differing interests. Some will have greater incentives to pursue revisionism and spread revolution violently than other actual or potential partners in the movement. Even if a status quo state and its allies can successfully deter the strongest, leading member of the revisionist alliance through threats and assurances (and this is not always the case), in the absence of a clearly established hierarchy and close coordination within the revisionist alliance, it will be difficult to deter all members of the revisionist alliance simultaneously. Some of the revisionist allies might feel insufficiently threatened and others insufficiently reassured to keep the peace with real or potential adversaries outside the camp. Not only will different revisionist actors interpret enemy threats and assurances differently, but they will often have quite different preference orderings based either on their particular national interests or geographic locations or on their desire to secure or improve their reputations as internationalist actors within the revisionist alliance. For example, revolutionary political movements involved in civil wars in divided countries will have a greater stake in unification of their nations under their rule than will their foreign ideological allies. Among those foreign allies, states geographically adjacent to the sites where local revolutionaries operate might be much more aggressive in support of those local revolutionaries than would geographically more distant states. So, when alliances exhibit internal disunity, the most aggressive actors may be more difficult for their partners to restrain, and aggressive actors may find it easier to drag their more conservative partners into conflicts.

Second, in the formative phases of the alliance, the leaders of a revisionist state will often feel the need to prove to their prospective foreign revisionist allies that they are full-fledged members of the internationalist movement, not merely parochial leaders of "national liberation" efforts. New members of the revisionist alliance might do this by taking aggressive actions toward shared enemies and in support of foreign allies. This revolutionary activity may surpass in intensity the expectations of a state merely acting in its own national interest and may exceed the level of risk considered prudent by other members of the alliance.

Third, once the alliance is formed, member states' concerns about their revolutionary prestige and the competition for leadership of the international movement can catalyze the alliance's revolutionary activity, rendering the alliance as a whole even more aggressive and harder to constrain peacefully through coercive diplomacy than would be a more hierarchically ordered alliance. Competition will often take the form of one or more states attempting to appear the most resolute

in confronting shared enemies and the most active in supporting other revision-ists in the international system.[3] Internal rivalries within alliances tend to form and become dangerous when the ideology binding an alliance together is trans-national and revisionist in nature. Their ideologies—e.g., Marxism-Leninism, pan-Arabism, and militant Islamic fundamentalism—make such alliances prone to intramural competition for leadership. For states attempting to contain revisionist alliances through coercive diplomacy, such rivalries pose real prob-lems. The intramural competition within the revisionist alliance revolves around which ally can prove itself most revolutionary and most resolute in overthrow-ing the status quo via belligerence toward common enemies. The competition among revisionist actors to appear the most uncompromising toward the en-emy will lead to a ratcheting up of revolutionary fervor within the international movement, as more radical members of the movement catalyze the generally more moderate members of the movement into more aggressive activity than we would otherwise expect.

All of these factors can lead to a situation in which tails wag dogs and compe-titions to induce fervor undercut proposals for compromise raised by the most cautious and moderate capitals within the alliance. For enemies of the revision-ist alliance, these problems will persist until the intramural competition esca-lates into total alliance breakdown and, perhaps even military conflict among the former allies.

There are some reasons to expect that, all things being equal, the strongest and most influential actor in any international revisionist movement will be more willing to moderate its behavior and therefore will be easier than its weaker and ambitious allies for non-allied states to engage in coercive diplomacy. First, such established leaders might simply have more to lose from the escalation of conflict with the enemy than less-established local revolutionary allies, some of whom might perceive themselves locked into struggles to the death with local foes and unable to compromise at least until they win their local battles. Even if the leading state is still highly unsatisfied with the status quo, it might still have a more globally oriented, longer-term, and therefore more cautious strategy than its less-secure, less-experienced, and more locally focused allies. Finally, other states within the international movement that have stronger incentives to improve their prestige and rankings within the movement might also be much more supportive of the most radical local revolutionaries than would the more established leaders in the movement, who should be more satisfied with their position within the movement's existing hierarchy.

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[3] The ratcheting effect in international revisionist alliances is similar to the competitive bid-ding for nationalist credentials in immature democracies, as analyzed in Jack Snyder's path-breaking work on democratization and war. Jack Snyder, *From Voting to Violence: Democratization and Na-tionalist Conflict* (New York: Norton, 2000), 68–69.

When challenged by upstart rivals in their own movements, leading states in revisionist alliances might have to jettison their caution as they have to worry not only about their reputation for resolve with the enemy alliance, but also their prestige within their own revolutionary movement. They may, therefore, be dragged more deeply into conflicts by their more activist allies than we would otherwise expect. In this sense, from the perspective of achieving peace through coercive diplomacy, all things being equal, rivalries and differences within revisionist movements make them worse than a monolith.

It is, of course, possible that the most powerful leader of the movement could be even more aggressive than its weaker allies. Under such circumstances, of course, coercive diplomacy as a tool to contain such an alliance might be very difficult, if not impossible, for the status quo alliance, regardless of the cohesion of the revisionist alliance. Weaker but more conservative allies of a strong but highly radical leading actor would likely find it hard to restrain their more powerful ally. Large-scale war might simply naturally ensue between the two camps, and we would then leave the world of coercive diplomacy and enter the world of simple brute force, in which splits in the revisionist camp are more clearly to the advantage of the camp's adversaries.

The very nature of some revisionist movements may render moot the problems of coercive diplomacy analyzed in this book. In some senses, the struggle against the Al Qaeda network might be seen as one against a revisionist alliance. But the approach here does not apply to the fight against Al Qaeda because that struggle is arguably much more one of brute force than of coercive diplomacy. Coercive diplomacy is a form of bargaining, even when it occurs among bitter enemies, as it did during the Cold War. A prerequisite of such a bargaining environment is there being at least some potential common ground between the interests of the enemy camps to allow for negotiation. So, despite severe tensions and persistent security competition, each Cold War superpower learned to live with the existence of the other as long as its own survival was guaranteed. This acceptance of an unhappy but tolerable status quo allowed for mutual nuclear coercion, commonly described as "Mutually Assured Destruction," a condition that arguably deterred not only nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union, but also large-scale, direct conventional engagements.[4] It is difficult to imagine Al Qaeda and its many enemies—moderate states in the Islamic world, the United States, Europe, and Israel—finding enough common ground to settle into such a pattern of coercive diplomatic bargaining. Instead, the struggle seems zero-sum, without a readily imaginable bargaining space. Al Qaeda will be satisfied with nothing less than overthrowing its enemies, and its enemies

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[4] For a classic work analyzing this concept, see Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution: Statecraft and the Prospect of Armageddon* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).

are primarily interested not simply in containing the Al Qaeda network, but weakening it, keeping it off balance and less capable of leveling devastating attacks, and then, ultimately, destroying it.

THE BOOK'S CLAIMS AND THE EXISTING THEORETICAL LITERATURE

The book offers two sets of theoretical approaches toward alliances and coercive diplomacy. Each builds upon, revises, or melds existing theories in the literature.

Alliance Cohesion and Coercive Diplomacy

The first theoretical strand in this exploration of alliance cohesion and coercive diplomacy integrates theoretical concepts about dilemmas of alliance maintenance with arguments about clarity of signaling in deterrence theory. Much of the literature to date has emphasized how alliances are fraught with rather paradoxical ailments: fears of abandonment in time of need balanced against fears of entrapment in conflicts unnecessarily provoked by one's own allies.[5] But these arguments about alliance maintenance have only rarely been tied into theories about how alliances interact with outsiders in relationships involving coercive diplomacy. One notable exception, on which I attempt to build here both theoretically and empirically, is Glenn H. Snyder's path-breaking concept of "the composite security dilemma." In a book that is largely about internal alliance dynamics, Snyder also argues more briefly that individual allies need to manage simultaneously both their relations with allies and their coercive diplomacy with enemies at the same time (hence the adjective "composite").[6] Changes designed to shore up alliance cohesion or redistribute burden-sharing within an alliance can have unintended deleterious effects on the alliance's coercive diplomacy toward outsiders.

[5] For the original formulation, see Glenn H. Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36 (July 1984): 461–95. This theme is developed further in Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).

[6] Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 192–98, 330–55. Snyder's book does not focus primarily on this issue. Some of my arguments about alliance divisions and coercive diplomacy will be very much in the spirit of those sections of his work, but will focus on alliance politics in a very different international context. Snyder focuses on cases of international multipolarity before the Cold War, not the Cold War or post–Cold War periods. Moreover, he focuses on formal alliances in the book while I will also discuss less formal alignments. Another related contribution to the field is Timothy Crawford's excellent book on what he calls "pivotal deterrence" which addresses how third parties attempt to deter both sides in a conflict, often through an ambiguous mix of threats and assurances that keep either party from taking the first step toward disaster. Timothy W. Crawford, *Pivotal Deterrence: Third-Party Statecraft and the Pursuit of Peace* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2003).

Other works explore how free-riding or buck-passing within alliances can encourage piecemeal aggression by adversaries or how allies can sometimes drag each other into war as if they were tethered in a "chain gang" in a way that makes escalation of conflicts harder to avoid.[7] The relationship between alliances and coercive diplomacy has also been addressed in the literature on Cold War nuclear deterrence. That literature notes that, because of the underlying condition of mutually assured destruction during much of the Cold War, it was easier for each superpower to deter an attack by the other against its homeland than to deter aggression against its allies (this was labeled the problem of "extended deterrence").[8]

Little work has been done to date, however, on the relationship between internal alliance dynamics and the coercive diplomacy of alliances toward adversaries. There is a related hole in the literature on coercive diplomacy itself. Deterrence theories have generally focused on simpler dyadic relationships, eschewing the complexity caused by groups of allies facing off in crisis or limited war.[9] How members of alliances and less-formal security alignments deal with the internal problems of abandonment and entrapment affects the ability of the alliance or alignment to coerce common enemies effectively. Excessive fears of abandonment can lead to tighter and more aggressive postures that may unintentionally signal hostility toward adversaries and may, thereby, undercut

[7] On the problems of buck-passing and chain-ganging in multipolar alliances, see Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979); Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984); and Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," *International Organization* 44 (1990): 137–68.

[8] On the problem of "extended deterrence," or deterrence umbrellas extended to alliances in worlds of mutually assured destruction, see Robert Jervis, *The Illogic of American Nuclear Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), 29–34. The notion of an extended deterrence problem flows from what Glenn Snyder labeled the "stability-instability paradox." The threat of mutually assured nuclear destruction against each other's homelands among the two superpowers opened up the possibility of conflicts involving third parties or at lower levels of violence. See Glenn H. Snyder, "The Balance of Power and the Balance of Terror," pp. 184–201 in Paul Seabury, ed., *The Balance of Power* (San Francisco: Chandler, 1965).

[9] A review of Schelling's *Arms and Influence* revealed only two references to alliances in the index. Alliance politics, especially the external effects of internal alliance dynamics, also receive relatively sparse coverage in Jervis's classic *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967). The same is true for Stephen Van Evera's much-noted *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999). I raise this not to criticize these excellent books, but to point out that this topic has not yet received the attention it likely deserves in the existing literature. The literature emphasizing the destabilizing nature of multipolarity in international politics, however, employs the complexity of alliance politics among multiple great powers as a transmission belt between the independent variable—system polarity— and the dependent variable—system-wide stability or instability. See, for example, Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*.

reassurances. This dynamic may provoke adversaries into thinking in terms of closing windows of opportunity or opening windows of vulnerability if they wait until the alliance is fully solidified. Fears of abandonment can also lead more conservative members of an alliance to reduce restraints on aggressive allies, thereby allowing them to more readily drag the alliance as a whole into war with enemies. On the other side of the coin, excessive fears about entrapment and excessive conditionality on commitments among allies can make the alliance appear to real or potential enemies to be insufficiently committed to defense of certain interests, thereby rendering less credible threats of military response to provocations and probes by the enemy.[10]

All things being equal, alliance leaders like the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War would have liked their weaker allies to shoulder a good bit of the alliance burden. On the other hand, they would have liked the allies to respect and follow the alliance leader's general line on policies toward adversaries and neutrals. One major problem is that to the degree any ally contributes to its own defense and to the operations of the alliance as a whole, it will likely also want a degree of political voice in the alliance or, perhaps, even a degree of political independence from the alliance. An ally's increased independence reduces the ability of its partners to restrain it and thereby increases the risk of entrapment for those partners if the maverick ally behaves in belligerent ways. At the same time, increased independence of one's ally increases the risk of abandonment, if the maverick ally seeks a separate peace or conciliation with certain members of an enemy alliance.[11]

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[10] Using somewhat different terms, Glenn Snyder makes similar arguments about his multipolar alliances in a conventional world. See *Alliance Politics*, especially chapters 1, 6, and 9. On the dangers that tightening of alliances play in exacerbating existing tensions and increasing the likelihood of war, see John Vasquez, *The War Puzzle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 166.

[11] In *Alliance Politics*, Glenn Snyder tends to emphasize the danger of entrapment flowing from one ally's lack of restraint over another. See, for example, page 321. Snyder's point is well taken, but there is no reason why the increased independence of one's ally might not also lead to fears of abandonment as well, particularly if the national interests of allies or the preferred strategies of allies do not fully overlap. A more independent ally, more capable of defending itself, might seek to make accommodations with select members of an enemy coalition against the wishes of its own alliance leader or may decide that it is able to go it alone, choosing neutrality between the camps, rather than alliance. The dilemma of burden-sharing versus political cohesion sets up a strategic bargaining situation whereby there can be trade-offs between what an ally agrees to contribute to an alliance and how much it is willing to toe the alliance leader's line in its external relations. The details of such bargaining have implications for the credibility of both threats and reassurances. Domestic politics, particularly in democracies, can play an important role in such bargaining. The political science literature on alliances sometimes states too starkly the domestic trade-offs between "arms and alliances" in any country's national security portfolio, but it is certainly true that domestic political concerns affect choices about the proper mix in national grand strategy. For an excellent book on the domestic politics of grand strategy in the Cold War, see Aaron Friedberg's *In the Shadow of the Garrison State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). For the argument that there is a trade-off between arms and alliances, see James D. Morrow, "Arms versus Allies: Trade-offs in the

Most of the important alliance dynamics pose true dilemmas, with factors pulling in opposite directions. Depending on the political context, any single adjustment in an alliance can undercut either deterrent threats or assurances. Keeping smaller allies weak and dependent does more than increase the burden of the alliance on the alliance leader. This strategy can undercut deterrence for the alliance as a whole if it makes the alliance overall seem weak or irresolute, particularly in the regions in which the weaker allies reside. But efforts to get allies to do more can also trigger unintended negative reactions among allies and adversaries alike. A more robust military posture by a local ally as part of burden-sharing can send provocative signals to regional adversaries about the long-term dangers posed by the ally in question and the alliance as a whole. Such signals might undercut allied coercive diplomacy if an adversary's perception of an increase in the ally's power over time undercuts that alliance's efforts at reassurance. At other times, the dilemma might cut in the other direction. If the leader appears increasingly reliant on the newly mobilized allies, this apparent need for military help can actually undercut deterrence by making the leader seem too weak or irresolute to get involved directly in a local conflict. To the degree that it looks like the leader needs its weaker allies to fight, its own ability to mobilize effectively for war might appear to be reduced, thus undercutting deterrence for the overall alliance.

As we can see from the foregoing discussion, alliances are always complex management challenges for actors engaging in coercive diplomacy (and alliances almost always are so engaged). They can send unintended signals that lead others to exaggerate their aggressiveness or underestimate their resolve or power in dangerous ways. The argument here is that such dangerous signals are most likely to be sent in periods of change or uncertainty in which alliances are not yet fully and clearly formed or in which the continued leadership capabilities of the most powerful ally are somehow called into question.

The Special Problems for Coercive Diplomacy Posed by Revisionist Alliances

A second theoretical line in this book melds two existing theoretical approaches about alliances to create a new explanation about the behavior of coalitions that are revisionist and ideologically driven. In the current literature, ideology is treated as an independent variable in two ways: ideology is either a factor that contributes to cohesion or breakdown of security alliances or a factor that makes

Search for Security," *International Organization* 47, no. 2 (spring 1993): 207–33; for my reservations with this approach, see Thomas J. Christensen, "Perceptions and Alliances in Europe, 1865–1940," *International Organization* 51, no. 1 (winter 1997): 65–97.

alliances relatively aggressive or defensive toward outsiders, depending on the nature of the shared ideology of the allies.

Scholars from various theoretical perspectives have argued that ideological factors may serve either as glue or wedges within alliances, thus making the alliance stronger or weaker overall than a realpolitik analysis would otherwise expect. In other words, ideological factors can help us understand how easily alliances will form and, if they do, whether they will hold together or not. Even realists, who generally downplay the importance of ideology, often accept its importance in weakening or strengthening alliances.[12] In his important realist work, *Origins of Alliances*, Stephen Walt has noted that certain ideologies, such as communism, encourage intra-alliance disputes more readily than do others, such as liberal democracy. Walt argues that this is the case because some ideologies are hierarchical and the competition for leadership in the group increases intra-alliance strife. Communist states during the Cold War, for example, had an incentive to compete within the international ideological hierarchy, while alliances of liberal democracies tend not to have such internal rivalries as their political philosophy lends itself neither to hierarchy nor rivalry.[13] Walt is interested primarily in how internal divisions or cohesion affect the overall power of an alliance. He does not explore how the process of forming a hierarchical ideological alliance or the internal competition for leadership within such an alliance might affect the allies' security policies toward opponents.

In an innovative two-level argument, Randall Schweller addresses why alliances with revisionist ideology are more aggressive than other types of security partnerships. He argues that, even in cases of intense mutual distrust, if a group of allies all have revisionist political aims, weaker revisionist allies may "bandwagon for profit" with stronger aggressive states. Schweller points out that although they have autonomy of action, weaker revisionist states, such as fascist Italy in World War II, will cooperate early and actively with stronger ones, such as Hitler's Germany, so as to share in the spoils of overturning the international status quo. He contends that, because they more readily avoid the problem of

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[12] For a realist account, see, for example, Hans J. Morgenthau, "Alliances in Theory and Practice," in Arnold Wolfers, ed., *Alliance Policy in the Cold War* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959). Others treat ideology as an important prerequisite for alliance cohesion. See, for example, George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1968), ch. 2; and Paul Nitze, "Coalition Policy and the Concept of World Order," in Arnold Wolfers, ed., *Alliance Policy and the Cold War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969).

[13] Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), 35–37; for a similar argument, see Ole Holsti, P. Terrence Hopmann, and John D. Sullivan, *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances: Comparative Studies* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1973), 15–16, 30.

buck-passing, which sometimes renders status quo alliances too lethargic to counter threats effectively, revisionist alliances are tighter and more aggressive than the defensive, status quo–oriented alliances commonly discussed in the international relations literature.[14]

Schweller's excellent article explains why some revisionist actors bandwagon with stronger neighbors rather than balance against them, but it does not address the catalyzing effects of intramural rivalry for leadership within revisionist, ideologically driven alliances. In this book I adopt a different approach that connects Walt's concerns about intramural competition with Schweller's concerns about the aggressiveness of revisionist alliances. In my discussions of intramural competition, I take the revisionist and revolutionary nature of the ideology as given. I then treat the relative cohesion of the movement at any given time as an independent variable. The relative degree of aggressiveness toward outsiders and the related difficulty of containment of the movement by means of coercive diplomacy is the dependent variable. As one would expect, movements will be easier to contain after they have fully devolved into direct confrontation and, in some severe cases, even into shooting wars among their members. But I argue that under conditions short of that open intramural conflict, internal fragmentations and lack of clear leadership render revisionist alliances more difficult and more costly for status quo alliances to contain through coercive diplomacy (the combined use of credible threats and credible assurances regarding the conditionality of those threats). In a counterintuitive sense, then, containment of revisionist coalitions through coercive diplomacy will be easier for opponents when the revisionist alliance's membership and leadership are more clear and less contested, and its internal cohesion is high, than when membership has not been fully established or when rival revolutionaries are vying for power within a competitive alliance.

"Veto Players" and "Catalytic Players": Revisionist Alliances and Coercive Diplomacy

There is a rich literature on how alliances can create instability in international politics either by encouraging excessive reactions to relatively minor systemic disturbances (such as the problems in the Balkans in 1914) or dangerously lethargic reactions to more pressing security threats (such as Hitler's rampage in Eastern Europe in 1938–39). But there is also important theoretical work that emphasizes the stabilizing role of alliances as restraints on the most aggres-

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[14] Randall L. Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): 72–107.

sive actors in the system. Alliances can serve as a "drunk tank" for the most belligerent members.[15] In fact, as Patricia Weitsman argues, actual or potential adversaries can build trust, transparency, and stability in their relations by forming alliances with each other. Such "tethering" can reduce security dilemmas between them.[16]

This literature on alliances as restraining factors ties in well to the work in comparative politics on the conservative and stable nature of pluralistic systems of domestic governance. In a fascinating book, George Tsebelis formalizes some age-old wisdom about the stabilizing role of diffusion of power and interest groups in well-institutionalized settings. The greater the number of veto players in any political system and the greater difference among them in terms of ideology and interests, the less likely there will be significant changes in the fundamental policies or constitution of polities.[17]

Tsebelis and authors who have built upon his work make clear one important point: stability should not be equated with "good." Increasing the number of veto players can make it much more difficult to reach new international and domestic agreements that increase economic cooperation abroad or reduce the chance for civil conflict at home, especially in ethnically divided states.[18] In existing international conflicts, what is a factor for stability within well-functioning democracies can be a hindrance to international conflict resolution, especially since in those situations war is the status quo and "policy stability" means the continuation of war. In other words, ending war often requires novelty and innovation

[15] On the potentially moderating influence of alliances on their more belligerent members, who can be placed in a "drunk tank" by more moderate allies, see Paul W. Schroeder, "Alliances, 1814–1945: Weapons of Power and Tools of Management," pp. 227–62 in Klaus Knorr, ed., *Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1976); Stephen Van Evera, "Primed for Peace: Europe after the Cold War," *International Security* 15, no. 3 (winter 1990/1991): 7–57, esp. 39; Jeremy Pressman, *Warring Friends: Alliance Restraint in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008); and Christopher Gelpi, "Alliances as Instruments of Intra-Allied Control," pp. 107–39 in Helga Haftendorn, Robert O. Keohane, and Celeste A. Wallender, eds., *Imperfect Unions: Security Institutions over Time and Space* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[16] For the concept of "tethering" in alliance politics, see Patricia A. Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances: Proponents of Peace, Weapons of War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

[17] George Tsebelis, *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

[18] For interesting applications of Tsebelis's insights, see Edward Mansfield, Helen Milner, and Jon C. Pevehouse, "Vetoing Cooperation: The Impact of Veto Players on International Trade Agreements," *British Journal of Political Science* 36, no. 4 (December 2006): 403–32; and Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, "Divided and Conquered: Why States and Self-Determination Groups Fail in Bargaining over Autonomy," Ph.D. diss., University of California, San Diego, 2007; for a related argument about why and how splinter groups within insurgencies can undercut the negotiating efforts of more moderate leaders, see Andrew Kydd and Barbra F. Walter, "Sabotaging the Peace: The Politics of Extremist Violence," *International Organization* 56, no. 2 (spring 2002): 263–96.

that might be vetoed by members of an alliance already involved in conflict. The problem of disorganization and diffusion is compounded in peace negotiations if one member of an alliance can effectively veto any proposed peace agreement. Holding such veto power, however, might require the ally being able to fight without the political or material support of others. Most small powers, however, would be unable to take on a strong enemy alliance without some external support, so in such an instance they would need to convince a sufficient number of their less-aggressive allies to provide sufficient support for continued belligerence even in the face of the high costs of war.

The good news is that a larger number of veto players could serve also to make wars harder to start, since the move from peace to war is often a controversial and costly change from the preexisting status quo. Alliances with avowedly revisionist ideologies, however, pose a particularly knotty problem not found in other alliances. First, the "normal" baseline behavior of a member of an internationalist revisionist alliance is to support violence against the allegedly illegitimate status quo. So, in revolutionary alliances, restraint, not aggression, is what needs to be justified at home and abroad. Put another way, in an intellectual and spiritual sense normal, or "status quo," behavior in a revisionist international alliance is to actively spread an ideology and overturn the international political or geographic status quo. Moreover, revisionism is often a conspiratorial and dangerous business and members of an alliance must prove their mettle before being trusted as full-fledged members of the movement. For the purpose of gaining such status, freshman members of the movement might make sacrifices and take risks that might exceed immediate parochial national self-interests or even the overall interests of the alliance as a whole.

Finally, and from a theoretical point of view, most interestingly, competition for leadership within a divided international revisionist alliance can push the entire movement in a more aggressive direction than one would expect, even from a revisionist alliance with more cohesion. The literature to date on veto players seems to assume that all parties to a potential deal enter into the negotiations with interests that are set in advance of their interaction. They will then accept a new status quo only if the agreement in question already overlaps with their predetermined interests, or if some kind of material or political side payment can be made by other players to get them on board. In my opinion, while generally useful, this approach misses some key aspects of what is explored in this book. One problem is that in many cases, revolutionary goals are neither material in nature nor clearly divisible (thus calling into question the utility of the economist's concept of "side payments" so often used by political scientists).[19] More important

19 See, for example, Cunningham, "Divided and Conquered," especially pages 26–39. As with so much of the rational choice literature in international relations, which often mimics the economics

still, the potentially competitive nature of revolutionary alliances of revisionists is missed by a model that assumes fixed bargaining preferences between a set of revisionist actors and outside parties. In such a competition each member ("player") in the revisionist alliance may value something outside the details of the negotiation in question, namely the creation, preservation, or bolstering of the member's reputation as a loyal and pure supporter of revolution against the status quo. One goal may be to prove that one is a more vigorous supporter of revisionism than other members of the alliance, who initially might not be as aggressive in supporting violence and might be more willing to compromise with the enemy camp. Concerned for their own positions within the alliance, the initially more moderate "players" might be catalyzed by the process of such a competition and thereby become more aggressive toward the enemy camp than they were initially.

Competition for leadership among belligerent revisionists may be aimed at winning over political support for one's own party or nation from third-nation revolutionary leaders or from subnational actors or forces within one's own population who might favor aggressive revisionism or, at least, oppose accommodation. In other words, the existence of multiple relatively powerful and relatively autonomous players in a revolutionary alliance setting may allow individual actors to be "catalytic players" rather than "veto players." While veto players prevent change, catalytic players cause it because their pursuit of revolutionary policies can place more accommodating or moderate members of the alliance in an uncomfortable position that, if maintained, might cost them in the intramural competition for the hearts and minds of salient foreign and domestic audiences. This international ratcheting process is quite similar to what Jack Snyder explores in his analysis of belligerent forms of nationalism in weakly institutionalized young democracies. In those cases, it is not always the initial interest of subnational actors in international conflict that produces obstreperous policy postures and increases the likelihood of war, but the competitive process of winning the hearts, minds, and votes of an ideologically mobilized public through nationalistic posturing that creates a foreign policy resultant of external belligerence.[20]

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literature, Cunningham implicitly assumes both fixed preferences and the possibility of side payments, often in the form of material compensation, for changed positions of the actors in question (in her case governments and autonomy movements within states). It is this author's opinion that the notion of divisible goods and the possibility of side payments to prevent security conflict is a major limiting factor in rational actor approaches to war and peace in the field. For the best explication of this position, see Kirshner, "A Rational Theory of War?"

[20] *From Voting to Violence*, esp. pp. 68–69; and Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, "Democratization and the Danger of War," *International Security* 20, no. 1 (summer 1995): 5–38.

OUTLINE FOR THE BOOK

In the chapters that follow I use a historical review of alliances and coercive diplomacy in East Asia to demonstrate how poor coordination and unclear signals by both communist and anticommunist coalitions negatively affected stability in this region during the early Cold War in the Korean War and the 1954–55 Taiwan Strait crisis. I will discuss how the communist alliance was the easiest and cheapest for anticommunist allies to contain in Indochina after the communist alliance had solidified and Beijing and Moscow were so closely coordinating their policy (in the period 1954–57). When the Sino-Soviet relationship started to break down and the rivalry for leadership in the international communist movement evolved in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the communist alliance became much more dangerous from an American perspective. As we will see, that discord and rivalry catalyzed Beijing's and, eventually, Moscow's support of Third World revolutionaries in Vietnam, Laos, and even faraway Cuba. For the post–Cold War world I will discuss how uncertainties about the durability, structure, and purpose of the U.S. defense posture in East Asia following the collapse of the Soviet Union affected Beijing security analysts' views of the future prospects for conflict across the Taiwan Strait, and how these uncertainties also affected competition among the great powers in the region more generally.

In the cases explored here, I argue that the period in which the communists in East Asia were easiest to contain was from 1954 to 1957, when Mao Zedong had already proven quite handily that he was no Tito and that he was very much a member of the international communist movement—at a time when Soviet leadership within that movement was widely accepted, and Sino-Soviet relations were still quite warm. The process of getting to that point was fraught with dangers for the anticommunist alliance in both Korea and Vietnam. Moreover, when the intra-alliance cohesion broke down in the late 1950s, the East Asian communist movement became very hard to contain through coercive diplomacy. The ensuing internal competition between the Soviets and the Chinese communists catalyzed the communist alliance's aggressive actions in ways that were detrimental to the security interests of the anticommunist alliance. For this reason, the communist alliance system was even more difficult to counter than Schweller's more generic pack of revisionists, whom he compares to a pack of "jackals" trying to maximize their individual share of a kill. Not only did the communist bloc comprise a group of revisionists, but this was a group of revisionists with an international ideology that was hierarchical and competitive in nature. Mao supported East Asian revolutionaries not only to improve his own nation's international security position, but also because it assisted his personal prestige and his party's revolutionary reputation in the international communist movement. The Soviets in turn were more supportive of their far-flung al-

lies than they otherwise would have preferred to be, in part because Moscow thought it needed to compete with Beijing for leadership in the international movement. Intra-alliance competition within the communist bloc fed rather than starved the expansionism of the movement, at least until 1969, when the intramural competition led to overt fighting among the former allies. It was only then that the United States could truly enjoy the benefits of the Sino-Soviet split.

Chapters 2 and 3: Quasi-Alliances and Real Threats

Chapters 2 and 3 address how lack of coordination in both communist and anti-communist camps in their formative stages led to dangerous misperceptions on both sides of the Cold War divide, particularly in Korea. These problems helped create the conditions for the North Korean invasion of South Korea and helped set the stage for escalation of the Korean War in autumn 1950. The process of alliance formation among Asian communists arguably also allowed Ho Chi Minh to acquire more support for his revolutionary efforts in Vietnam in the early 1950s than he would likely have received if the Soviets had been managing the Southeast Asia portfolio more actively from Moscow.

In 1950 Washington had defense relationships with the Republic of Korea (South Korea) and the Republic of China (Taiwan), offering weapons, aid, and military training, but the United States eschewed direct military commitments to either government. Truman administration officials feared entrapment by the United States' smaller security partners in wars with secondary enemies in areas of limited U.S. power. This concern was one factor preventing the administration from offering more military assistance and a tighter defense commitment to either Chiang Kai-shek (in Taiwan) or Syngman Rhee (in South Korea). After failing to intervene directly on the Chinese mainland to save the Kuomintang (KMT) regime there, on January 5, 1950, President Harry S. Truman publicly rejected U.S. intervention to save the KMT regime in Taiwan. One week later, Secretary of State Dean Acheson excluded both Taiwan and South Korea from the U.S. "defense perimeter" in his oft-criticized speech at the National Press Club.

Given the budgetary and political constraints affecting strategy in Washington, the Truman administration's lack of global clarity regarding defense against communism was understandable. But it is also fair to say that the lack of clear commitments to the KMT and South Korea, noted by enemies and friends alike, helped encourage enemy aggression and undercut deterrence in the region in the months leading up to the Korean War. However reckless and aggressive it was for the communists to act on that belief, it was not entirely unreasonable for leaders in Pyongyang, Beijing, and Moscow to conclude that Washington would likely take no direct action to intervene in a conflict on the Korean peninsula or reinsert itself in the Chinese Civil War. Moreover, given the weak U.S. de-

ployments in the region and the challenges that Washington faced in rebuilding Japan, it was not unreasonable for Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, and Kim Il-sung to conclude that the United States and its regional partners would have real difficulties even if they were to decide to resist resolutely North Korea's invasion of the South. Stalin and, to a lesser degree, Mao were swayed by Kim Il-sung's hopeful analysis that U.S. efforts would prove to be too little or too late, especially if North Korea were able to launch a massive surprise attack. The realization that the United States would and could intervene quickly and decisively in both Korea and the Taiwan Strait and do so largely on its own shocked Kim Il-sung's allies in both Moscow and Beijing.

The lack of a clear U.S. security commitment toward Korea and the KMT proved costly for the United States, but the alternative strategy toward Japan—a relatively clear commitment—was also not cost-free. The United States was much more resolute and transparent about its defense commitments toward Japan and its desire for more active Japanese burden-sharing in the nascent Cold War. The United States did not yet have a formal alliance with Japan when the Korean War broke out, as it continued to occupy the defeated World War II enemy until 1951, but Japan was included explicitly in Acheson's "defense perimeter." Moreover, in the famous "reverse course" of 1948, Washington demonstrated that it had every intention of making Japan a powerful ally.

Such clarity and resolve, however, created problems of its own. The Soviets and the communists in East Asia did not doubt the U.S. commitment to Japan, even as they underestimated the U.S. commitment to South Korea and Taiwan. Quite to the contrary, they seemed very concerned about long-term trends in U.S.-Japan relations, expecting Japan to play a major role in the anti-communist struggle in the region. As I will discuss, if anything, the communist capitals grossly exaggerated the military importance of the U.S.-Japan alliance to the United States and, more specifically, the willingness and ability of Japan to project military power to the Asian mainland once again. The prospects of future Japanese troop deployments abroad were seen as very high in communist capitals, an odd notion to analysts today looking back on the period. This is why the Sino-Soviet Treaty of February 1950 itself specified Japan and its allies as the target of the treaty. The Soviets were beholden to assist China in instances of "aggression on the part of Japan or any other state that may collaborate with Japan in acts of aggression."[21]

The still-incubating U.S.-Japan security relationship was viewed by the Chinese communists in particular not only as dangerous and provocative over the longer term, but also as a symbol of U.S. regional weakness and global

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[21] For the full document, see Odd Arne Westad, *Decisive Encounters*: *The Chinese Civil War: 1946-1950* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 314–15.

overstretch in the near term. Perceptions about current conditions and future trends in this alliance therefore simultaneously undercut both legs of successful coercive diplomacy toward the communist states: the credibility of deterrent threats coming from Washington in the near term if military action were taken by the communists to revise the status quo, and the assurances about the long-term security of the DPRK, PRC, and USSR if those states did not adopt belligerent policies in the present. Arguably, Mao and the Chinese communist elite misread the signals coming from the nascent U.S.-led alliance in two separate but equally important ways: exaggerating Japan's postwar assertiveness and the tightness of the U.S.-Japan alliance, while underestimating the ability and willingness of the United States to fight alone in the near term without significant Japanese provision of forces, which Japan did not yet have at the ready. Such logic created both closing "windows of opportunity" and opening "windows of vulnerability" for the East Asian communists and encouraged them to strike hard early and by surprise. If the Korean Civil War was allowed to drag on into the future, then the United States and its anticommunist partners would be more capable of countering communist forces than they were in the early Cold War period.

For its part, the formative process of the communist alliance also promoted dangerous dynamics that increased the chance for war, the likelihood that war would escalate once it started, and the difficulty that the two opposing alliances would experience in reaching an armistice once escalation had occurred. In the months leading to the Korean War, the weakest communist actor in Northeast Asia, Pyongyang, was able to convince its stronger allies—Moscow and Beijing—to support aggression against South Korea. After several failed attempts dating back to spring 1949, in early 1950 Kim was apparently able to persuade Stalin to offer support in principle for the invasion, but only if Kim could also gain approval from Mao as well. Kim approached Mao for approval of the invasion later in the spring with Stalin's conditional approval in hand. Mao found himself in a bind. Like Stalin, Mao underestimated the likelihood of a large-scale direct and immediate U.S. military response, but was apparently even more worried than Stalin and Kim that the United States might initially dispatch Japanese forces into Korea (and then, eventually, U.S. forces), thus blunting the North's invasion and extending the war, perhaps to China. On the other hand, Mao was trying to prove to a skeptical Stalin and other communists around the world that he was a real member of the communist internationalist club, and a leader of East Asian communism in particular: that is to say, not another Tito. Mao did not want to appear weak on internationalism and thereby take the blame for squelching the completion of a neighboring country's revolution. After all, Mao needed Stalin's aid in creating the forces necessary to "liberate" Taiwan and more generally, to build a socialist economy and modern military. Although it

took him over a year to do so, in 1949–50 Kim was able to utilize Beijing's and Moscow's perceptions of the threat from the United States and Japan, as well as their concerns and mistrust in the Sino-Soviet relationship, to achieve a final go-ahead from his two most powerful allies.

Once the war began, alliance politics and the lack of alliance coordination in both the communist and anticommunist camps contributed to the escalation of the Korean War in October and November 1950. As demonstrated in chapter 3, alliance politics contributed to at least two major failures of coercive diplomacy in 1950: the communist alliance's failure to deter U.S. crossing of the 38th parallel in October 1950 and U.S. failure to deter the Chinese from entering the Korean War in force, thus precluding the prospect of defeat for North Korean forces and the near-term unification of the peninsula. Mutual mistrust and lack of cohesive planning in the communist camp meant that the alliance sent signals of weakness to the United States and its UN partners in the critical weeks immediately following Gen. Douglas MacArthur's successful Inchon landing, on September 15, 1950. It was in those weeks that the communists might have been able to deter U.S. forces from crossing the 38th parallel, thus reducing the likelihood that war in Korea would escalate into an extended Sino-American conflict. Instead, the delayed response of the poorly coordinated communist alliance suggested to U.S. intelligence officers and strategists that massive Chinese intervention in the war was unlikely despite a major buildup of Chinese forces that they observed in Manchuria. The American strategic perception was that the alliance was well organized and acting in a concerted fashion. Therefore, China's failure to send large number of troops across the Yalu border to assist in North Korean defense just after Inchon, when it would have done the most good militarily and politically, suggested to American analysts that China's forces in Manchuria were placed there to defend the Chinese border, not to fight deep inside Korea.

What was good for the United States in the short run in terms of war-fighting—that being a weaker communist response to Inchon—was not good in terms of coercive diplomacy and, arguably, was not in the longer-term interest of the United States. Available historical evidence suggests that an earlier, more robust, and more carefully coordinated international effort by the communists in Korea could have deterred the United States from crossing the parallel and could have prevented the disastrous escalation of Fall 1950. The communists did attempt to deter U.S. troops from crossing the 38th parallel after MacArthur's fantastically successful Inchon landing, which cut the North Korean forces in half, isolated and then destroyed many North Korean troops south of the 38th parallel, and rendered the remaining North Korean forces north of the parallel vulnerable to quick annihilation. If the communists had been more successful in their late-September and early-October efforts at coercive diplomacy, the war might have ended in 1950 at the 38th parallel instead of in 1953.

As for the U.S. failure of deterrence in this escalatory process, alliance politics in the U.S.-led camp played a big role here as well. The communist camp as a whole was alarmed when Washington reversed publicly stated prewar policies and sent U.S. forces to defend South Korea and dispatched naval forces to the waters near Taiwan to prevent conflict across the Taiwan Strait. From the communists' perspective, this latter move reinserted the United States in the Chinese Civil War. Moreover, after the Korean War broke out, the United States only increased its efforts to get Japan to build its own military power and to reach a bilateral peace treaty with the United States. After communist efforts to deter U.S. crossing of the 38th parallel had failed, Washington's efforts to deter Soviet and Chinese entrance into the Korean War failed in part for reasons related to U.S. policies toward its own allies and security partners in the region. U.S. alliance policies in the first few months of the Korean War had a powerful impact on strategic thinking in Moscow and Beijing about the long-term implications of the military defeat of the North Korean communist regime and the unification of the Korean peninsula under a government friendly to the United States. This prospect helped create the logic of a closing window of opportunity or an opening window of vulnerability in Moscow and Beijing. Such thinking was prevalent in exchanges between Stalin and Mao in October 1950 and was used by a relatively aggressive Mao to convince his worried comrades on the Politburo in Beijing that war with U.S. forces in Korea was necessary even though the young PRC would appear to lack the wherewithal to take on the forces of the world's leading power.

In the period 1950–54, there is also a clear connection between the lack of tight coordination and leadership from the top in the communist alliance and the overall aggressiveness of the international communist movement in Southeast Asia. Mao's decision to supply significant assistance to the Vietnamese communists perhaps displays best how a relatively loosely knit alliance behaved more aggressively than a more tightly united and hierarchical alliance likely would have under the same circumstances. The USSR played a highly influential role in Korea as the power accepting Japanese surrender north of the 38th parallel in 1945, but in July 1949 Stalin tasked the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to assist in Asian rural revolution more generally. Stalin did so for reasons that had more to do with his desire not to be bothered with such revolutions than it did with his desire to see Mao play an active leadership role in the region.

Beijing took up Stalin's assigned task to lead Asian revolution with a gusto that surprised and sometimes concerned Stalin. The PRC did much more for the Vietnamese communists than we could have expected from the Soviets, who were not only indifferent about distant Southeast Asia on national security grounds, but were also concerned that active support for anti-French forces there would run against Soviet grand strategy in Europe. The Chinese Communists, on the other hand, had real national security stakes in Southeast Asia,

few national security concerns in Western Europe, and a desire to use support of Maoist revolution elsewhere as a way of demonstrating Mao's loyalty to and importance in the international communist movement. An alliance still in its formative phases, therefore, arguably behaved more aggressively in Vietnam than a more mature, Soviet-guided alliance would have if given the same set of challenges and opportunities in Indochina.

Of course, Mao's active support for militant revolution in Korea and Vietnam in 1950 grew in large part out of his heartfelt ideological convictions; but Mao's desire to solidify his own party's position within the international communist movement also played an important role in his decision to support fellow Asian communists. This is particularly true when one considers the question of timing. Mao's support for Korean and Vietnamese communist distracted China from economic rebuilding at home and national unification missions in Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang. The Vietnamese were able to garner external support from China despite the distractions in Korea and the continuing relative indifference of the Soviet Union toward peasant rebels in distant Southeast Asia. In this sense again, the communist alliance was, from the perspective of the United States, worse than a monolith.

Chapter 4: The Counterintuitive Benefits of Communist Cohesion and the Dangers of U.S. Alliance Formation in the Mid-1950s

Chapter 4 discusses the mixed record of the mid-1950s. In this period, a relatively well-coordinated and organized communist alliance allowed for more moderation and clearer signaling during the negotiations that ended fighting in the Korean War (at Panmunjom in 1953) and the conflict in Indochina (at Geneva in 1954). A relatively unified allied position on Southeast Asia in Beijing and Moscow served as a restraint on the most aggressive members of the alliance, the local communists involved in civil wars: Kim Il-sung and Ho Chi Minh.

In the case of the Korean War, after the devastating UN counteroffensive of early 1951, Kim Il-sung stood alone among the communists in wanting to escalate the war further to achieve unification of the peninsula. His stronger allies—China and the Soviet Union—refused to adopt such a strategy and settled for limited war and extended negotiations. Once this reality was clear, Kim was the strongest advocate for compromising at the negotiating table to reach a final armistice, but if he had had his druthers and could have once again manipulated a less cohesive alliance in the way he did in 1950, he would have pushed for more, not less, revolutionary violence than his allies preferred. Alliance cohesion among the Soviets and Chinese, however, prevented a replay of early 1950.

The same is true for Indochina in 1954. Although Ho Chi Minh wanted to continue the fight against the French in the First Indochina War by spreading revolution to South Vietnam in the near term, as he would again in the 1960s, in

1954 the Soviets and Chinese provided a united front and restrained Ho, citing the danger of escalation to Vietnam's own revolution and to the international revolutionary movement. Ho's stronger allies were generally satisfied with the Vietnamese communists' achievement to date and feared the costs of escalation, and therefore prevented Ho from pushing his own agenda too hard at their expense. The Vietnamese communists could not implement their preferred and more radical approach unless at least one of their larger allies was willing to lend material and political support for the effort.

But there were also destabilizing aspects of alliance politics in this period. The growing pains of the U.S.-led alliance in Southeast Asia helped spark a major crisis between China and the United States over Taiwan in 1954–55 and a follow-on crisis in 1958. The process by which Washington drew and redrew lines, leaving certain areas ambiguously included in the U.S. defense perimeter, helped undercut deterrence and contributed to tension and conflict in the Taiwan Strait.

Chapters 5 and 6: How Intramural Rivalry Made the Communist Movement Worse Than a Monolith

Chapters 5 and 6 address how Sino-Soviet rivalry catalyzed communist aggression in East Asia and beyond. I argue that the intensifying disillusionment and competition between the Soviets and the Chinese from 1958 to 1969 actually rendered the containment of communism through coercive diplomacy more difficult for the United States, particularly in Indochina, than it would have been if the Soviets had obtained and maintained a firmer grip on Asian communist internationalism during this period. Until Sino-Soviet rivalry reached the point of open Sino-Soviet conflict in 1969, the competition was detrimental, not beneficial, to U.S. security interests. The Soviets and Chinese competed in supporting communist revolution in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, and the big winners of this competition were Third World revolutionary movements, including those led by Ho Chi Minh and by Fidel Castro. The big losers, at least before 1969, were arguably the United States and its allies.

In the early 1960s Ho Chi Minh received a very large amount of material support from the Chinese communists at a time when the Soviets were still relatively aloof toward the revolutionary civil war of their Vietnamese brethren. Chinese support helped give Ho the wherewithal and confidence to pursue his conflict against the U.S.-backed government in Vietnam and, ultimately, against U.S. forces in the region. The Soviets would become more involved in the conflict over time, providing a great deal of support to the Vietnamese communists once the war escalated in late 1964 and early 1965. But it was fairly clear that a major incentive for this Soviet support was a jealous competition with the Chi-

nese communists for the hearts and minds of the Vietnamese communists and other parties around the world, who had been fed a steady diet of criticism about Soviet weakness and accommodation by their proud and more aggressively revolutionary Chinese comrades. Still, despite this additional material support in the mid-1960s, the Soviets feared escalation of the war in Southeast Asia, an area of the world that was still considered peripheral to the core interests of the Soviets in the global struggle with the West. So, the Soviets' preference as early as 1965 was to help broker a peace settlement between the United States and the Vietnamese communists. But the prospect of such an international negotiation process was destroyed before 1968 in part by Chinese pressure on the Vietnamese to reject Soviet advice, combined with Chinese accusations in Hanoi and around the world that the Soviets were revisionists who were colluding with the United States at the expense of local revolutionaries like the Vietnamese.

In 1968–69 intramural rivalry between Beijing and Moscow escalated into direct conflict. Under these conditions, the United States and its anti-Soviet allies were the eventual beneficiaries in the form of Sino-American rapprochement and Chinese acceptance of the U.S.-Japan alliance and an ongoing defense relationship between the United States and Taiwan. This process took time, however, and the major stumbling blocks in the period 1969–72 remained U.S. alliance policies toward Taiwan and Japan.

Chapter 7: Chinese Concern about Taiwan, Japan, and the United States and Sino-American Diplomacy in the 1970s and in the Post–Cold War World

As discussed briefly in chapter 7, the move from rapprochement to normalization of diplomatic relations would take longer still. Continuing differences over Taiwan, together with domestic politics in both countries, delayed the creation of formal U.S.-PRC relations until January 1979. Sino-American rapprochement led to specific acts of cooperation in intelligence and in the Soviet war in Afghanistan, but perhaps more important, the militarization of the Sino-Soviet border would provide a huge drain on Soviet military resources, a drain that almost certainly contributed to the eventual demise of the Soviet Union. From the particular perspective of this book, the period from 1973 to the demise of the Soviet Union in 1991 was relatively uneventful and therefore will receive minimal coverage. Moreover, the period has been covered quite ably elsewhere.[22]

[22] For excellent coverage of this period, see Harry Harding, *A Fragile Relationship: The United States and China since 1972* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1992); Robert S. Ross, *Negotiating Cooperation, The United States and China, 1969–1989* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995); James Mann, *About Face: A History of America's Curious Relationship with China, from Nixon to Clinton* (New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1998); and Alan Romberg, *Rein In at the Brink of the Precipice* (Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, 2003).

As that literature reveals, China largely sided with the United States against the Soviet Union. The U.S. alliance system, with the partial exception of Washington's defense relationship with Taiwan, was relatively fixed.

The bulk of chapter 7 will instead explore how in the post–Cold War era, U.S. alignment with Taiwan and alliance with Japan again have figured prominently among issues affecting U.S.-China security relations. The recent context is entirely different from that of the 1950s. While they are far from being allies, the United States and China are not enemies either, but rather major economic partners who have also cooperated to some degree in addressing an increasing range of international problems. But there are still security tensions between the two sides over issues such as relations across the Taiwan Strait, and both nations practice coercive diplomacy toward the other, sometimes tacitly, sometimes less so. Especially in the 1990s, Beijing experts exhibited uncertainty and misperceptions regarding the future form and function of U.S. defense relationships after the collapse of the common Soviet enemy. Chapter 7 will discuss how the legacies of these Cold War alliance relationships—particularly the U.S.-Taiwan relationship and the U.S.-Japan security treaty—have affected U.S.-PRC relations since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Despite this notable and welcome improvement in U.S.-PRC relations, some of the ways in which security relationships between Washington, Taipei, and Tokyo have affected Washington's post–Cold War relations with Beijing were reminiscent of the problems witnessed in the early Cold War and in the early 1970s. In particular, the end of the Cold War created questions and concerns for Beijing about U.S. Cold War alliances and security relationships that mimicked in many respects the problems of alliances in U.S. coercive diplomacy toward China in those earlier periods. The chapter will address why it has sometimes been challenging under these new circumstances for the United States to balance credible threats and credible assurances toward China while, at the same time, addressing problems of alliance burden sharing and military modernization in the region. At times these dynamics have produced real tensions in U.S.-China relations and in the relationship between mainland China and Taiwan, but fortunately not only have the problems been manageable, but they have in fact also been managed well in the past twenty years.

Chapter 8: Review of the Lessons Learned and Potential Applications Elsewhere

The concluding chapter will review the historical and theoretical lessons of the earlier chapters and conclude with a brief discussion of other cases of alliance disunity and conflict escalation to which the theoretical approaches offered here might apply. As a further illustration of how the process of alliance formation

can undercut coercive diplomacy by leaving both current threats and future as-surances less than fully credible, I will discuss how Washington's public sug-gestions that the United States would support Georgia's future membership in NATO exacerbated security tensions between Georgia and Russia and increased the likelihood of conflict over South Ossetia and Abkhazia in 2008. The fact that the United States was not allied with Georgia but seemed to be heading in that direction created incentives for Russia to jump through closing windows of opportunity to maximize its influence there through the use of force. Georgia's own behavior, emboldened in part by the prospect of U.S. support, only further increased the chance for conflict.

To illustrate further the second and arguably more novel theoretical ap-proach of the book, I will focus briefly on two cases in which intramural rivalry in a revisionist alliance exacerbated tensions with the alliance's enemy and made reaching a negotiated peace more difficult. I will explore the internal bickering in the pan-Arab movement and its implications for belligerence toward Israel leading up to the 1967 war; and divisions among the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank and the challenges those divisions pose for a negotiated settle-ment between Israel and a new Palestinian state. As it is told by scholars of the Middle East, the story in the 1960s of intra-Arab rivalries among Syria, Egypt, Lebanon and the newly formed Palestinian Liberation Organization and its implications for anti-Israeli irredentism and belligerence is rather reminiscent of the Sino-Soviet competition for prestige among Third World revolutionary parties in the 1960s. More recently, to the degree that Israel faces a divided, ir-redentist Palestinian polity today, that movement itself may prove "worse than a monolith" in negotiations both because it cannot send credible signals and because competition for legitimacy among a population sympathetic to argu-ments for irredentism against Israel might lead to more anti-Israeli violence and more opposition to the compromises necessary for peace deals than we would otherwise expect.

These additional cases will not be covered in the same detail as the U.S.-PRC cases. Moreover, they will not be offered as an exhaustive list, but rather as heu-ristic examples of the broader applicability of the theoretical concepts presented in this book.