

Exploitative Friendships: Manipulating Asymmetric Alliances

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is the first systematic analysis of variation in alliance behavior in the context of asymmetric international security alliances. When weak states ally with stronger states – i.e. states with significantly greater military capabilities – what explains differences in the junior party’s approach to the alliance relationship? Why do some junior allies show their strong willingness to coordinate their military policy with their senior partner, whereas others distance themselves from their senior partner? Why do some grow more dependent on their senior partner for security, while others pursue their own deterrent to reduce their dependence? Their military dependence is not necessarily determined by structural factors, as states generally have some room for maneuver to decide on the level of resources they extract for national security from their overall economic and technological capacity.

This variation in alliance behavior deserves scholarly attention, because these differences affect their senior partner’s alliance management costs, including the chance of alliance entrapment – i.e. getting dragged into an unwanted war due to a junior ally’s problematic behavior. When a senior partner has vested interests in the asymmetric alliances that advance its own interests, its junior partners, as parties to the alliance contracts, also have the power to “manipulate” their senior partner with a variety of strategies to maximize what are often noninstitutionalized benefits from their security relationships.

To explain the variation in the junior partner’s approach, the dissertation proposes a Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, a new paradigm for understanding four types of junior partner alliance behavior and strategy. In essence, their differences are based upon differences relating to the two most contentious and yet core issues of alliance management – the junior ally’s degree of dependence for security and its level of coordination with the senior partner. As junior allies choose one of the two opposing approaches to each of these two core issues, there are four different, mutually exclusive strategies: [*More Dependent, Reluctant Coordination*], [*More Dependent, Proactive Coordination*], [*Less Dependent, Proactive Coordination*], and [*Less Dependent, Reluctant Coordination*], which I call *Cheap-riding*, *Rescue-compelling*, *Favor-currying*, and *Autonomy-seeking*, respectively.

The Theory posits that the following three factors determine a junior partner’s choice of alliance strategy: (1) perceived senior partner commitments to fighting the adversary by force; (2) the junior partner’s “revisionist” goal – i.e. a goal of changing the local distribution of power and goods by force; and (3) the local balance of power. Particularly problematic from a senior partner’s perspective is the *Rescue-compelling* strategy, which is driven by weak or weakened security commitments a junior ally perceives when it faces a local balance of power shifting in favor of its adversary. A junior ally utilizing this strategy can make a crisis escalation more likely and cause serious consequences including a costly war.

By explaining the sources of the variation in alliance strategy and identifying risks associated with security partnerships with some types of junior allies, the dissertation helps better anticipate the costs of offering new security commitments to other states as well as those of withdrawing, or threatening to withdraw, existing commitments.

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	8
LIST OF TABLES	12
LIST OF FIGURES	13
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	14
1. THE QUESTION	14
2. THE ARGUMENT IN BRIEF – THEORY OF ASYMMETRIC ALLIANCE STRATEGY –	17
3. CONTRIBUTIONS	28
4. PLAN OF THE DISSERTATION	29
CHAPTER II. THEORY OF ASYMMETRIC ALLIANCE STRATEGY	33
1. THE EXISTING LITERATURE	34
2. DEFINITION OF “ASYMMETRIC ALLIANCE” AND THE UNIVERSE OF CASES	42
3. TYPOLOGY OF JUNIOR PARTNER ALLIANCE STRATEGIES	44
4. ASSUMPTIONS	59
5. DETERMINANTS OF JUNIOR PARTNER ALLIANCE STRATEGIES	62
6. CAUSAL PATHWAYS	69
7. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS AND RESEARCH DESIGN	80
CHAPTER III: THE FRANCE-POLAND ALLIANCE (1921-1939)	94
1. INTRODUCTION	94
2. BACKGROUND	99
3. POLAND’S <i>CHEAP-RIDING</i> STRATEGY	109
4. POLAND’S <i>AUTONOMY-SEEKING</i> STRATEGY	117
5. POLAND’S <i>RESCUE-COMPELLING</i> STRATEGY	120
6. POLAND BACK TO ITS <i>AUTONOMY-SEEKING</i> STRATEGY	124
7. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS AND CONCLUSION	133
CHAPTER IV: THE U.S.S.R.-IRAN ALLIANCE (1921-1941)	138

1. INTRODUCTION	138
2. BACKGROUND	141
3. IRAN'S <i>AUTONOMY-SEEKING</i> STRATEGY	150
4. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS AND CONCLUSION	163
<u>CHAPTER V: THE U.S.S.R.-PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA ALLIANCE (1950-1960)</u>	<u>167</u>
1. INTRODUCTION	167
2. BACKGROUND	171
3. CHINA'S <i>FAVOR-CURRYING</i> STRATEGY	184
4. CHINA'S <i>AUTONOMY-SEEKING</i> STRATEGY	192
5. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS AND CONCLUSION	207
<u>CHAPTER VI: THE U.S.-JAPAN ALLIANCE (1951-1990)</u>	<u>214</u>
1. INTRODUCTION	214
2. BACKGROUND	218
3. JAPAN'S <i>CHEAP-RIDING</i> STRATEGY	223
4. JAPAN'S <i>AUTONOMY-SEEKING</i> STRATEGY (FROM THE LATE 1960S THROUGH THE LATE 1980S)	238
5. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS AND CONCLUSION	247
<u>CHAPTER VII: THE FRANCE-ISRAEL ALLIANCE (1956-67)</u>	<u>250</u>
1. INTRODUCTION	250
2. BACKGROUND	255
3. ISRAEL'S <i>FAVOR-CURRYING</i> STRATEGY	269
4. ISRAEL'S <i>AUTONOMY-SEEKING</i> STRATEGY	276
5. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS AND CONCLUSION	286
<u>CHAPTER VIII: THE U.S.-REPUBLIC OF CHINA ALLIANCE (1953-1979)</u>	<u>290</u>
1. INTRODUCTION	290
2. BACKGROUND	294
3. THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA'S <i>RESCUE-COMPELLING</i> STRATEGY	309
4. THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA'S <i>FAVOR-CURRYING</i> STRATEGY	317
5. THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA'S <i>AUTONOMY-SEEKING</i> STRATEGY	326
6. ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS AND CONCLUSION	337
<u>CHAPTER IX: CONCLUSION</u>	<u>342</u>
1. SUMMARY OF THE EMPIRICAL CASES	342
2. THE RESULTS – COMPARISON WITH THE TWO ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS	349
3. EXTERNAL VALIDITY	354
4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS	355
5. CONCLUSION	358

APPENDIX **361**

BIBLIOGRAPHY **364**

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List of Tables

Table 1. Four Different Alliance Strategies.....	22
Table 2. The Four Different Types of Alliance Behavior.....	49
Table 3. Summary of the Four Strategies	58
Table 4. Cross-case Comparison of the Three Competing Explanations	351
Table 5. The universe of cases.....	361
Table 6. The Distribution of the Different Strategies by Senior Partner State	362

List of Figures

Figure 1. Causal Pathways to Each Strategy	24
Figure 2. Causal Pathways to the Four Different Strategies.....	71
Figure 3: Japan's Military Expenditures as % of GDP	233
Figure 4. The Empirical Distribution of the Different Alliance Strategies.....	356
Figure 5. The Empirical Distribution of the Different Alliance Strategies Among Cases excluding U.S. Allies in the Western Hemisphere	356

Chapter I: Introduction

1. The Question

This dissertation is the first systematic analysis of alliance behavior in the context of asymmetric alliances. I ask, when weak states ally with stronger states – i.e. states with significantly greater material capabilities – what explains differences in the junior party’s approach to the alliance relationship? How does that party choose its degree of dependence for security and its level of policy coordination with its senior partner? At first glance, it seems obvious that different allies behave differently simply because they are different states, with different kinds of relationship with their senior partner, or facing different levels of security challenges. But what if differences persist even after controlling for the same senior security partner, the same period of time, and similarly challenging security environment? For example, when the United States, under President Trump, threatens to curtail security commitments unless financial compensations for U.S. troops are forthcoming, its allies behave differently although they continue to face similarly challenging security environment.

To illustrate the motive force of this dissertation in the context of present policy, I can point to four examples of response to U.S. policy moves under Trump, each relevant to the analysis and theoretical framework I develop in the dissertation. The first, Italy, continued its defiance of the United States despite its dependence on Washington for national security. Hosting about 11,500 U.S. military forces at Vicenza, Livorno, Aviano, Sigonella, Gaeta, and Naples, Rome currently spends 1.3 % of its GDP on the defense of the nation, and had been decreasing its defense expenditures until 2015, when Moscow announced that the Russian army would add over 40 intercontinental nuclear missiles on its western border. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, the head of a populist coalition formed by the anti-establishment Five Star Movement and the Far-right League party, endorsed an ostensibly pro-Russian foreign policy depicting Moscow as a strategic partner and calling for an end to Russian sanctions over Crimea. His deputy, Matteo Salvini of the League party, is developing close personal and business ties with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Certainly, the President of the United States also speaks warmly of Putin at times, but he does not encourage U.S. allies to develop close ties with Russia. This Italian behavior can be summarized as a combination of increasing dependence on and limited coordination with its senior alliance partner.

Second, the Republic of China (ROC) increased its military dependence on Washington, as it decreased its defense expenditures as percentage of GDP over more than 25 years, starting from 5.0% in 1993 to 1.7% in 2019. The ROC military seems to embrace a “fantasy”: once the Taiwan Strait is in battle, the U.S. military must provide military assistance from Guam to Taiwan; therefore, Taiwan itself does not need much in the way of defense capabilities. Certainly, President Tsai Ing-wen slightly increased Taiwan’s military spending in 2019-2020, but most of the increase goes to the purchase of F-16s and other high-end high-cost fighters rather than to less expensive

weapons systems, such as anti-aircraft and anti-ship missiles, that are crucial for the defense of its main island. Meanwhile, President Tsai has been further strengthening strategic ties to the United States through a purchase of massive amounts of weapons valued at some \$10 billion in total, including dozens of Lockheed Martin F-16V fighter jets. This Taiwanese behavior can be summarized as a mix of high dependence on and proactive alignment with its senior partner.

In another example, Saudi Arabia has continued its diligent military buildup and close policy alignment with Washington. With its third largest military budget in the world after the United States and China, Saudi Arabia boasts a large fleet of F-15s and Tornado fighter jets, Apache helicopters and other advanced aircraft, which should enable it to defeat ISIS on its own. In close alignment with Washington, Riyadh has been actively fighting against ISIS on the side of the U.S. forces, and purchased arms nearly exclusively from the U.S. defense industry: between 2014 and 2018, the Saudi kingdom accounted for 22% of all U.S. defense exports. Riyadh's purpose is to perpetuate America's military presence in the Middle East and use Washington as a card in regional power politics against Iran. This Saudi behavior can be summarized as a combination of low dependence on and active coordination with its senior alliance partner.

Finally, there is the example of Turkey, the second largest standing military after the United States in NATO. Ankara continues to grow its military capabilities while dismissing policy coordination with its American partner. It purchased a Russian surface-to-air missile system, the S-400, in July 2019, ignoring U.S. concerns over inadvertent technology transfers to Moscow within Turkey's arsenal, which was supposed to house the F-35 stealth fighter jet at the time. Turkey had closed all American bases on its soil during the 1970s, except the Incirlik Air Base and the Izmir Air Base that were part of a NATO agreement, in order to avoid being seen as a

country giving in to American demands. This Turkish behavior can be summarized as a combination of low dependence and limited coordination with its senior partner.

These four examples reflect four different models of junior partner alliance behavior vis-à-vis the senior partner. This variation deserves scholarly attention, because these differences affect the senior partner's alliance management costs, including the chance of getting dragged into an unwanted war due to junior allies' problematic behavior. By explaining what causes this variation and identifying risks associated with security partnerships with some types of allies, the dissertation helps better anticipate the long-term costs of offering new security commitments to other states.

2. The Argument in Brief – Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy –

The existing IR literature on security alliances does not adequately explain variation in the junior ally's approach to their senior partner for several reasons. For one, most of the alliance scholars take alliance institutions as the unit of analysis, paying limited attention to state-level activities intended to pursue noninstitutionalized gains from their alliance relationship. Second, major theories of security alliances have been based on great powers' approach to alliances with their peers, a notable example of which is Great Britain's policy of "balance of power." While mainstream IR scholars write about asymmetric alliances, they assume that great powers, thanks to their superior material capabilities, are able to rein in junior allies easily. Thucydides' famous

maxim from the Melian Dialogue, “the strong do what they can, the weak suffer what they must,” is often cited to justify their assumption regarding junior allies’ limited autonomy.¹

The literature outside the realist school certainly acknowledges some exceptions to the “limited autonomy” assumption. Robert O. Keohane’s *Foreign Policy* article, “The Big Influence of Small Allies,” describes several ways junior allies exert disproportionate influence on America’s foreign policy decision-making.² Historians also have documented stories of junior allies’ canny dealing with a superpower during the Cold War.³

However, this binary view of junior allies in the existing literature – i.e. most junior allies with limited autonomy versus some, relatively capable ones that are difficult to manage – is inadequate, because empirically, most junior allies exercise considerable autonomy and exhibit more diverse behavior. Their capabilities, or the lack thereof, do not predict the extent to which they are receptive to their senior partner’s demands. Refuting this dichotomy, this dissertation proposes a new paradigm for understanding what I will argue are the four fundamental types of alliance behavior and their origin, based on the author’s years-long data collection from many different alliances that extend over four different regions of the world and across historical periods.

¹ Note that Thucydides did not introduce the idea of inevitability for compliance by the weak. A more accurate translation is: “The powerful exact what they can, and the weak comply.” In addition, applying Thucydides’ maxim to alliance relationships can be problematic, since the Melian dialogue was a conversation between a great power, Athens, and a neutral state, Melos, not between alliance partners.

² Robert O. Keohane, “The Big Influence of Small Allies,” *Foreign Policy*, no. 2 (1971): 161–82.

³ Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, “Alliance Strategy: U.S. - Small Allies Relationships,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 3, no. 2 (September 1, 1980): 202–16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402398008437046>. Other, albeit not theoretical, studies on the influence of small allies include: Robert L. Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968).; Michael I. Handel, *Weak States in the International System* (London, England ; Totowa, N.J.: F. Cass, 1981).; Christopher Darnton, “Asymmetry and Agenda-Setting in US-Latin American Relations: Rethinking the Origins of the Alliance for Progress,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 14, no. 4 (2012): 55–92.

In essence, the differences in alliance behavior are based upon differences relating to the two most contentious and yet core issues of alliance management – the junior ally’s degrees of dependence for security and coordination with the senior partner.

Dependence Posture

It is fair to assume that junior partners in asymmetric alliances are dependent on their senior partner to some degree. If states had been perfectly capable of defending themselves alone, they would not have formed an alliance in the first place, given transactional costs of any alliance relationship (e.g. negotiating or revising a treaty, consulting policies, developing a joint operational plan, etc.). After an alliance is formed, a junior ally’s approach to its own military buildup can vary. Some allies consciously and constantly improve their defense capabilities in order to reduce their dependence on their senior partner for security. This is called the *Less Dependent* approach in the Dependence Posture.

Other states may deliberately grow more dependent on their senior partner, either because they wish to divert resources to other policy priorities or because they calculate that being vulnerable to their adversary might compel their senior partner into offering emergency help. This is what I call the *More Dependent* approach in the Dependence Posture. There are, thus, the two opposing approaches with regard to a junior ally’s defense capability buildup – *More Dependent* vs. *Less Dependent*.

Coordination Posture

Junior allies can also vary with regard to the degree to which they wish to coordinate and collaborate with their senior partner. Some allies demonstrate their willingness to cooperate with their senior partner by sending troops to assist with the latter's military operations elsewhere or by proactively adjusting their policies over a range of measures to be taken against their common adversaries. This is called the *Proactive* approach in the Coordination Posture.

Other junior allies are rather reluctant to coordinate with their senior partner for various reasons – including transaction costs and domestic politics (i.e. the domestic political cost of appearing to give in to the senior partner). This is called the *Reluctant* approach in the Coordination Posture. Thus, there are two opposing approaches to coordination with their senior partner, either *Proactive* or *Reluctant*.

There should not be systematic correlation between the Dependence and the Coordination Postures. Being dependent should not systematically create the need for proactive alliance coordination, since no senior partner would exit its alliance solely because its dependent junior ally is not always coordinating in a way that would advance the senior partner's interests. I assume that a senior partner enters into the security partnership when its expected benefits outweigh the costs of alliance management, which includes costs of assisting dependent junior partners. The expected benefits for the senior partner include basing rights, access to export markets for its defense industry, and stability in the relevant region, some of which can materialize immediately after the alliance is established. Without such expected benefits more certain than future behavior of junior allies, a senior partner would not have offered an alliance in the first place. As long as the expected dividends of the security relationship stay intact, it is difficult for a senior partner to

credibly threaten to exit the alliance on the ground that its junior partner is dependent or not coordinating enough.

As long as such expected benefits continue to accrue to the senior partner, ironically the effect of power asymmetry on the intra-alliance bargaining power of each partner is no longer as great as if they were not security partners. Once a particular give-and-take relationship is realized by the alliance contract, the senior partner has vested interests in the continuation of this relationship. The junior allies know that the benefits the senior partner reaps from the relationship are important enough that their insufficient levels of defense capabilities or contributions will not constitute a compelling reason for ending the relationship. The senior partner therefore cannot expect its junior allies to constantly make additional concessions just because they are materially weaker or dependent on it for security.

Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy and Policy Implications

As junior allies choose one of the two approaches in each of the two postures – Dependence and Coordination – there should be four different, mutually exclusive types of behavior: (*More Dependent, Reluctant*), (*More Dependent, Proactive*), (*Less Dependent, Proactive*), and (*Less Dependent, Reluctant*), which I call *Cheap-riding*, *Rescue-compelling*, *Favor-currying*, and *Autonomy-seeking*, respectively (see **Table 1** below). These are the different types of junior partner alliance behavior briefly introduced in the examples at the beginning of this chapter. These different types can also be conceived as four different *strategies*, because junior allies likely have certain goals when choosing a particular combination of the two postures, rather than haphazardly taking one approach in one posture independently from its approach in the other posture.

Table 1. Four Different Alliance Strategies

		Coordination Posture (e.g. troop contributions, policy alignment efforts)	
		Reluctant	Proactive
Dependence Posture (e.g. efforts to improve capabilities)	More Dependent	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Cheap-riding</u></p> <p>Ensures national security at minimal expense by deliberately keeping defense capabilities small and by avoiding troop contributions or policy alignments</p> <p>(e.g. Japan–U.S. (1951-70); Poland–France (1921-25))</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Rescue-compelling</u></p> <p>Envisions gaining renewed security commitments by deliberately keeping its defense capabilities insufficient and demonstrating its willingness to coordinate with the senior partner; desperate to do whatever it takes to attract the senior partner’s attention, a junior ally using this strategy tends to exhibit risky behavior toward its adversary.</p> <p>(e.g. ROC–U.S. (1953-62))</p>
	Less Dependent	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Autonomy-seeking</u></p> <p>Increases its intra-alliance bargaining position by demonstrating its ability to build an independent deterrent and distancing itself from its senior partner</p> <p>(e.g. Poland–France (1926-39); China – USSR (1955-60); Israel–France (1958-67); Turkey–U.S. (1962-))</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Favor-courying</u></p> <p>Submits obsequiously to its senior partner through proactive alliance coordination and exemplary defense buildup efforts, hoping to compel as yet unpromised military assistance as <i>quid pro quo</i> for being a “good” junior partner</p> <p>(e.g. China–USSR (1950-55); Saudi Arabia–U.S.; Cuba–USSR)</p>

The dissertation proposes a Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy to explain variation in junior partners’ alliance strategies. When a state uses a *Cheap-riding* strategy, it primarily aims to ensure national security with “cheap” costs, by deliberately keeping its military capabilities small and insufficient (*More Dependent*) and by not proactively taking actions to coordinate with the senior partner (*Reluctant*). The *Rescue-compelling* strategy is aimed at compelling a senior partner to offer renewed security commitments and additional military assistance by deliberately

keeping its military capabilities small and insufficient (*More Dependent*), while being very much willing to consult, and coordinate with, the senior partner (*Proactive*). A junior ally employing this strategy is often ready to do whatever it takes to attract the senior partner's attention, sometimes even including exhibiting risky escalatory behavior toward its adversaries.

The *Favor-carrying* strategy is designed to ingratiate a senior partner with an exemplary defense buildup (*Less Dependent*), which often involves a massive purchase of weapons from the senior partner's defense industry, and with regular policy coordination and troop contributions (*Proactive*). This strategy's ultimate goal is to get yet unpromised military assistance from the senior partner as *quid pro quo* for being a "good" junior ally. Finally, junior partners employing the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy are focused on developing sufficient capabilities to set up an independent deterrent against its adversary (*Less Dependent*) and are hesitant to contribute troops or adjust policies to be aligned with their senior partner (*Reluctant*). They do so with an intent to strengthen its intra-alliance bargaining position vis-à-vis the senior partner that is still keen on maintaining the alliance relationship.

Raw Security Threats Are Not the Primary Determinant of Their Strategies

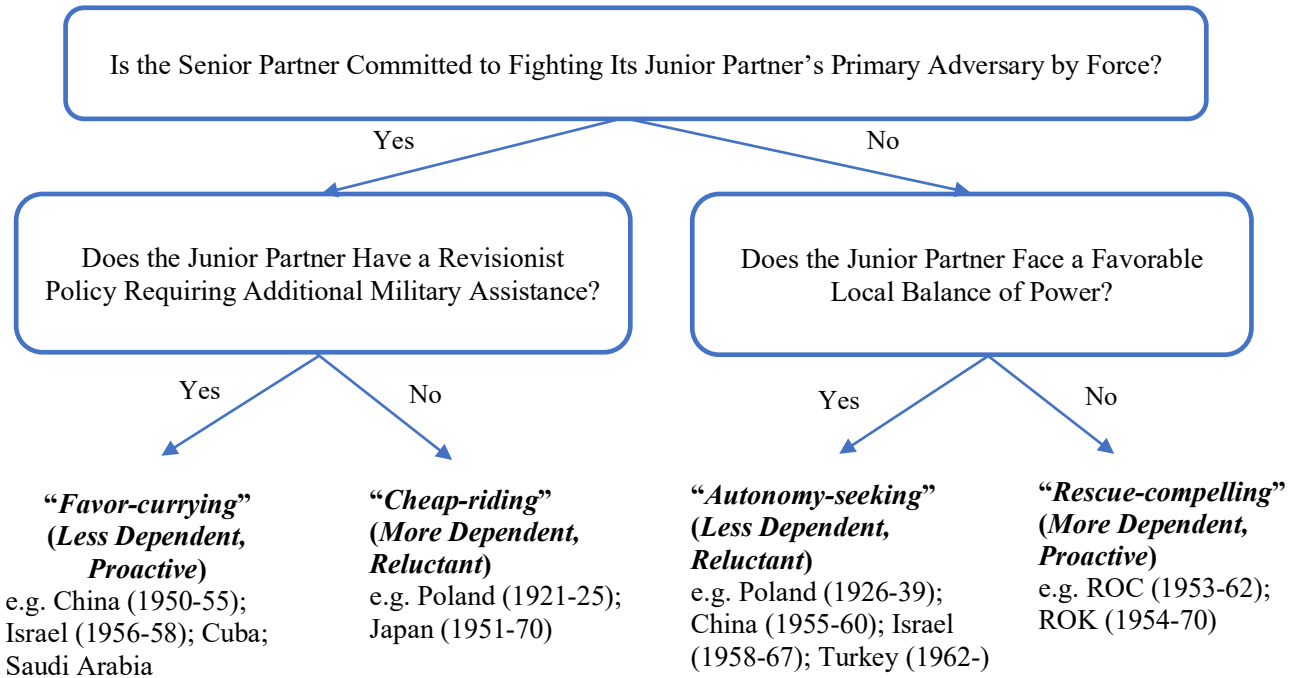
The Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy posits that the following three factors determine junior partner alliance strategies (see **Figure 1**):

(1) perceived senior partner commitments – whether or not the junior partner perceives that its senior partner is committed to fighting its primary adversary by force;

(2) the junior partner's "revisionist" goal – whether the junior ally has a policy goal of changing the local distribution of power and goods by force;

(3) the local balance of power – whether the junior partner is facing an adversary with growing power.

Figure 1. Causal Pathways to Each Strategy



The differences in behavior and strategy are *not* primarily caused by the level of security threats junior allies face or by the degree of power asymmetry between the security partners. Security threats are filtered through the lenses of security commitments they receive from their senior partner. Strong security commitments are like a concave lens that makes security threats look smaller, whereas weak and ambiguous commitments are like a convex lens that makes the threats look larger. The real question for the junior partner is which type of lens it believes it has – i.e. whether its senior partner is committed to fighting its primary adversary by force. Given the capability differences between the partners, whether or not its “big” friend will be fighting on its

side can be a game changer in potential war operations. The degree of power asymmetry between the partners is not a primary determinant of alliance strategy either, provided that the alliance partners do not resort to the use of brute force to resolve their intra-alliance quarrels and that the senior partner continues to benefit from the alliance contract as originally expected.

When a junior partner perceives strong commitments from its senior partner but has no revisionist policy, it likely adopts a *Cheap-riding* strategy to ensure national security with small budgets. But if a junior partner perceives strong commitments and harbors “revisionist” aims that likely require the senior partner’s operational military assistance in the near future, it needs to take actions to ensure such assistance is forthcoming. For the senior partner, if defending a junior ally under unprovoked attack is one thing, participating in war operations for the junior ally’s revisionist goals is quite another. No senior partner, even if they are strongly committed to defending an ally, offers a blank-check commitment to full-scale military interventions for the sake of revisionist goals their junior allies embrace. Even though the senior partner itself has the same revisionist goal, it still desires to maintain control over when to fight by what means and for how long. Faced with uncertainty as to whether the senior partner offers operational assistance, a junior partner that has “revisionist” policy goals is likely to behave well as a junior ally in order to please its senior partner and thereby increase the chance of getting help as a *quid pro quo*. It is thus likely to utilize a *Favor-currying* strategy.

If a junior partner perceives that its senior partner is not committed to fighting its adversary by force, however, it must do something to either prepare for potential abandonment or somehow get stronger security commitments. To prepare for potential abandonment, the junior partner may beef up its defense buildup to pursue an independent deterrent and reduce its dependence. The key factor that determines whether it can reduce its dependence is the local balance of power.

If the local power balance is favorable – i.e. either stable or shifting in its own favor – it should not be difficult to build an independent deterrent – i.e. achieving technical capabilities sufficient to make the cost of a potential attack by an adversary too expensive. Thus, a junior ally facing a favorable local balance of power is likely to adopt an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, focusing on a defense buildup necessary to acquire an independent deterrent. If a junior partner faces an unfavorable power balance – i.e. shifting in favor of the adversary – on the other hand, a defense buildup may be futile in the face of an adversary with rapidly growing power. But it needs to do something to ensure its own survival. Desperate to attract the senior partner’s attention, it grows more dependent, while increasing its alliance coordination efforts – a *Rescue-compelling* strategy. A junior ally employing a *Rescue-compelling* strategy can resort to whatever additional measures it takes to attract and keep the senior partner’s attention, including exhibiting risky escalatory behavior toward its adversary, because its proactive coordination posture alone is often insufficient to make the senior partner declare unequivocal security commitments.

Threats of “Abandonment” As a Disciplinary Tool Can Be Risky

Alliance managers often worry that strong security commitments might increase the risks of alliance entrapment, because securing junior allies courts moral hazard by emboldening them to drive recklessly or take risks they would not otherwise accept. The dissertation warns, however, that weak commitments under certain conditions can also raise the chance of alliance entrapment. In an attempt to change or discipline a junior partner’s behavior, policymakers in the United States and other great powers sometimes consider using threats of “abandonment” – i.e. threatening to abrogate their alliance contracts or withdraw troops unless junior allies positively respond to their demands. Such threats can be risky as they increase the chance of alliance entrapment, unless the

senior partner is ready to terminate the alliance contract immediately. Threats of “abandonment” create a perception of weak security commitments, which, in turn, prompts the junior ally to behave in two different ways, both of which can destabilize their local security environment.

When threats of abandonment are issued against a junior ally facing a favorable local balance of power – i.e. either stable or shifting in its favor – it is likely to adopt an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. It attempts to build an independent deterrent against its adversary in order to reduce its dependence for security, a preparation for the future moment when it will be completely abandoned by the senior partner. To build an independent deterrent, the junior ally is acquiring a new set of capabilities that would raise the expected costs of military attacks to a level unacceptable to the adversary. The prospect of an independent deterrent under construction can give the adversary an incentive to take an action before it is too late, and the weakened commitments as a result of the threats of abandonment would create a formidable window of opportunity for the adversary to execute a military operation to “neutralize” the nascent independent deterrent.

Threats of abandonment as a disciplinary tool can be even riskier if issued against an ally facing an unfavorable local balance of power – i.e. shifting in favor of the adversary. Given the adversary’s rapidly growing power, it would be difficult to build capabilities for an independent deterrent quickly. On the other hand, its alliance coordination efforts alone could hardly flip the senior partner’s baseline security commitments, which depend on more strategic factors including the junior partner’s location, technological skills, and economic markets. Desperate to compel the senior partner into offering further assistance or stronger commitments, the junior ally facing an unfavorable balance of power is likely to employ a risky *Rescue-compelling* strategy – deliberately growing more dependent on the senior partner and further exacerbating instability in its region.

The Vast Majority of Junior Allies Are Not As Cooperative As One Might Expect Given Their Dependence and Subordinate Status

Of 133 asymmetric alliances formed over the last hundred years after 1918, the vast majority of junior partners are *Cheap-riders*, which constitute 87 cases (nearly 65%), while 36 cases (just about one quarter of the total) involve *Autonomy-seeking* allies. Interestingly, *Favor-courying*, the junior partner's approach often predicted based on the "limited autonomy" assumption in the extant literature is found only in 17 cases (see **Appendix** for the full distribution of cases). This distribution seems to indicate that the majority of junior partners exercise considerable autonomy and can cheap-ride or choose not to coordinate with the senior partner much more often than is generally assumed by the existing IR literature. Only 4 cases involve an ally that utilized the *Rescue-compelling* strategy – Poland (1933), Republic of China (1953-62, 1995-), Republic of Korea (1954-70), and Angola (1976-91). However rare, though, the *Rescue-compelling* remains an option for a weak, vulnerable ally, and policymakers should be aware of conditions under which junior allies are likely to consider this strategy.

3. Contributions

The dissertation helps policymakers understand what drives a junior partner to choose a particular approach and its potential consequences, because some approaches make the senior partner's alliance management costlier or riskier. Under certain conditions, the *Rescue-compelling* strategy and the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy increase the risk of alliance entrapment exponentially. The *Autonomy-seeking* strategy also gradually chips away at the senior partner's influence over

the junior partner and make nuclear proliferation more likely. Understanding junior partners' approach, the sources of their approach, and the risks associated with them will help to inform current policy discussions over whether and how the United States should keep or shed its Cold War-inherited global security commitments.⁴ It will also better inform decisions over whether to expand the existing alliance organizations such as NATO to welcome new members.⁵

On these alliance issues, scholars and policy makers are split between two opposing camps, “deep engagement” vs. “restraint.” Supporters of “restraint” argue that U.S. alliance commitments might drag the United States into an unnecessary and costly war.⁶ Supporters of “deep engagement,” on the other hand, argue that there is little clear-cut evidence of entrapment by small allies, and that “patrons can ward against moral hazard” and control risks.⁷ By explaining how junior allies react to strong or weakened commitments by their senior partner, the dissertation helps adjudicate between the two competing perspectives and offer an evidence-based opinion: a U.S. alliance decision should be considered case-by-case by taking into account risks associated with the approach the junior partner in question might take in response to shifting U.S. security commitments.

4. Plan of The Dissertation

⁴ After WWII, America offered security commitments to nearly 60 states worldwide.

⁵ For the most recent policy debate on the topic, see the March/April 2020 issue of *Foreign Affairs*.

⁶ For more on arguments for restraint, see Barry R. Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy*, 1 edition (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2015).

⁷ For more on arguments on deep engagement, see Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, “Don’t Come Home, America,” *International Security* 37, no. 3 (Winter 2012): 7–51.

This dissertation consists of nine chapters. The next chapter (Chapter II) will first show a gap in the existing literature on alliance behavior and strategy, and then offer a typology of the four different alliance strategies. It will also define the universe of cases for this theory, make its assumptions clear, lay out three independent variables and their definitions, and clarify causal pathways connecting the independent variables to the different strategies, before discussing alternative explanations and research design.

To demonstrate empirical support for the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, I test it against two major alternative explanations for different alliance behavior – security threats facing a junior ally, and ideological similarities between the alliance partners. From Chapter III through Chapter VIII, I present six empirical cases, in each of which I examine within-case temporal variations to see whether the explanatory variables of this theory better explain observed changes in alliance strategy compared to changes in security threats or in ideological similarities.

In Chapter III, I examine the France-Poland alliance (1921-1939), with which Poland meant to address security threats both from the Soviet Union and Germany. Warsaw shifted from *Cheap-riding* to *Autonomy-seeking* in the latter half of the 1920s, and briefly employed a *Rescue-compelling* strategy in 1933 with risky escalatory behavior toward Germany, before switching back to its *Autonomy-seeking* strategy.

Chapter IV will take a close look at an anti-imperialist alliance between the Soviet Union and Iran (1921-1941). With assistance from Moscow, Tehran attempted to eliminate British influence in the country, without ever trusting the Soviets as willing to fight the British. Iran's Reza Shah consistently employed an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy throughout the period until both Britain and the Soviet Union occupied Iran in 1941.

Chapter V will dive into the Sino-Soviet alliance (1950-1960), another USSR-led alliance, in which Mao Zedong's attitude toward the Soviets dramatically changed in the late 1950s. A consensus view is that Mao's ideological radicalization and his policy of self-reliance led Beijing to distance itself from Moscow. But it can also be viewed as a shift from a *Favor-currying* strategy to an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy due to a loss of confidence in Soviet security commitments.

Chapter VI offers an analysis of the U.S.-Japan alliance (1951-1990), which aimed to fend off Soviet aggressions in the Far East. Tokyo consistently adopted a *Cheap-riding* strategy until the late 1960s, when it switched to an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, with increased defense spending, additional security responsibilities for the region, and its pursuit of advanced nuclear technologies.

Chapter VII analyzes an informal alliance between France and Israel (1956-67), which came into being in the lead-up to a fall 1956 Suez Campaign by Israel, France and Britain against Nasser in Egypt. Israel skillfully manipulated the French defense establishment with a *Favor-currying* strategy for the first two years, and then shifted toward an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy after Charles de Gaulle came to power and worked toward better relations with Arab countries.

Chapter VIII, the final empirical case, presents the U.S.-Republic of China alliance (1953-79), with which the Republic of China meant not only to deter the People's Republic of China but also to achieve its goal of returning back to the mainland. Taipei's strategy varied dramatically, ranging from a *Rescue-compelling* (1950s) to *Favor-currying* (1960s) to *Autonomy-seeking* (1970s).

The final chapter provides a brief overview of the six empirical cases and summarizes how well the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy explains temporal variation in alliance strategy

compared to the two alternative explanations. It concludes with the Theory's external validity and policy implications.

Chapter II. Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy

This chapter outlines the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy – a theory that explains variation in the junior partner’s choice about the levels of dependence and coordination with the senior partner. The existing literature largely assumes that the junior partner has limited autonomy and has to follow the senior partner’s instructions on both dimensions. Moreover, the literature posits that unless junior partners are willing to meet their senior partner’s demands, they are vulnerable to abandonment threats by their senior partner. Empirical evidence suggests, however, that junior partners exercise considerable autonomy. Specifically, it shows that they make their own decisions both on their defense spending as well as alignment. Some states are obsessed with acquiring sophisticated indigenous capabilities such as nuclear weapons and missiles, while others are content with their dependence and sometimes grow more dependent on their senior partner. Some make large troop contributions to stay closely aligned, whereas others do not, or even pursue rapprochement with their senior partner’s primary adversary.

This chapter first demonstrates a gap in the existing literature with regard to what causes differences in the junior partner behavior. Second, it will define “asymmetric alliances” to specify scope conditions and the universe of cases. The third section will present a typology of four different alliance strategies – the dependent variable of this study – and offer their empirical

examples. The fourth section will discuss assumptions, while the fifth section will explain three determinants of the junior partner alliance strategies. The sixth section will clarify causal pathways to each strategy. The last, seventh section will discuss alternative explanations, research design and case selection strategies.

1. The Existing Literature

The literature on international security alliances pays limited attention to how alliance partners with different levels of military capabilities behave toward one another after their alliance is formed. This is partly because most studies on alliances are less focused on intra-alliance politics than on the causes of alliance formation, the designs of security contracts, or on the effects of alliances on the adversary behavior.⁸ But perhaps a more important reason is that the mainstream IR scholars, realists, tend to discount junior allies' weight in the alliance collective decision-

⁸ For studies on the causes of alliance formation, see, among others, Stephen M Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).; Douglas M. Gibler, "The Costs of Reneging: Reputation and Alliance Formation," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52, no. 3 (2008): 426–54, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002707310003>.; Mark J.C. Crescenzi et al., "Reliability, Reputation, and Alliance Formation," *International Studies Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2012): 259–274, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2011.00711.x>. For research on the designs of security contracts, see Brett Ashley Leeds et al., "Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions, 1815-1944," *International Interactions* 28, no. 3 (July 2002): 237–60, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050620190047599>.; Brett Ashley Leeds and Sezi Anac, "Alliance Institutionalization and Alliance Performance," *International Interactions* 31, no. 3 (July 2005): 183–202, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050620500294135>.; Tongfi Kim, "Why Alliances Entangle But Seldom Entrap States," *Security Studies* 20, no. 3 (July 2011): 350–77. ; Michaela Mattes, "Reputation, Symmetry, and Alliance Design," *International Organization* 66, no. 4 (October 2012): 679–707, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S002081831200029X>. For studies on the effect of alliances on the likelihood of international conflicts, see Patricia A. Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances: Proponents of Peace, Weapons of War*, 1 edition (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2003).; David H. Bearce, Kristen M. Flanagan, and Katharine M. Floros, "Alliances, Internal Information, and Military Conflict among Member-States," *International Organization* 60, no. 3 (2006): 595–625. ; Brett Ashley Leeds and Michaela Mattes, "Alliance Politics during the Cold War: Aberration, New World Order, or Continuation of History?," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 24, no. 3 (July 1, 2007): 183–99, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07388940701473054>. ; Thomas J. Christensen, *Worse Than a Monolith: Alliance Politics and Problems of Coercive Diplomacy in Asia* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2011).; Jesse C. Johnson and Brett Ashley Leeds, "Defense Pacts: A Prescription for Peace?," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 7, no. 1 (2011): 45–65. ; Brett V. Benson, *Constructing International Security: Alliances, Deterrence, and Moral Hazard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

making. They see security alliances as a way for states to aggregate capabilities to address common security threats. From this standpoint, those with less capabilities should not matter, and a great power, due to its greater material capabilities, should be able to impose its preferences on a weaker ally. Machiavelli offers this line of argument when he famously warned that weak nations should not join alliances with stronger ones unless they are absolutely necessary.⁹ Hans Morgenthau agreed with Machiavelli on this issue, arguing that “the distribution of benefits is thus likely to reflect the distribution of power within an alliance, as is the determination of policies.”¹⁰ Kenneth Waltz also highlights the importance of relative military capabilities as the central determinant of intra-alliance power politics. Waltz suggests that the rigidity of alignment in a bipolar world during the Cold War gave superpowers flexibility; although concessions to allies were sometimes made, each superpower controlled so much of its respective alliance’s capabilities that it could act unilaterally without fearing a shortfall of resources, argues Waltz.¹¹

Along these lines, realist studies of the American empire during its unipolar moment assume that the United States would be unconstrained in its capacity to impose itself upon its weaker partners, establish bases abroad, and project power from its various military installations around the world.¹² Great powers’ threats to abandon allies should leave weaker partners with

⁹ See Niccolò Machiavelli and David Wootton, *The Prince* (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 1995).

¹⁰ Hans Joachim Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 4th edition (Knopf, 1967), 205. However, he adds a caveat that “this correlation between benefits, policies, and power is by no means inevitable. A weak nation may well possess an asset which is of such great value for its strong ally as to be irreplaceable. Here the unique benefit the former is able to grant or withhold may give it within the alliance a status completely out of keeping with the actual distribution of material power.” As examples of alliances where a weak nation has a disproportionate influence, Morgenthau mentions the relationship between Germany and Austria-Hungary before World War I, the U.S.-Pakistan relations, and those between Great Britain and Iraq with regard to oil. Also see Hans Joachim Morgenthau, “Alliances in Theory and Practice,” in *Alliance Policy in the Cold War*, ed. Arnold Wolfers (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959), 190.

¹¹ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 170.

¹² See, for example, Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*, First Edition edition (New York: Holt Paperbacks, 2004).; Chalmers Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic*, 1st edition (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2005).; Chalmers Johnson, *Nemesis: The Last Days of the American Republic*, Reprint edition (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2008).

little option but to accept even extraordinary demands such as giving up their nuclear weapons programs.¹³ Scholars who study intra-alliance political dynamics have focused on the alliance decisions of great powers without giving sufficient agency to the weaker party in the alliances.¹⁴

Security Threat

There are some exceptions, however. Some realists disagree with the notion that relative military capabilities are the sole determinant of alliance behavior. An extrapolation of Stephen Walt's balance of threat theory suggests that alliance partners should be less willing to cooperate, or stay in the alliance, when security threats disappear.¹⁵ A state's alliance behavior is not always

¹³ See Gene Gerzhoy, "Alliance Coercion and Nuclear Restraint: How the United States Thwarted West Germany's Nuclear Ambitions," *International Security* 39, no. 4 (April 2015): 91–129, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00198.

¹⁴ For studies on intra-alliance political dynamics with a focus on great power strategies, see Thomas J. Christensen and Jack Snyder, "Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks: Predicting Alliance Patterns in Multipolarity," *International Organization* 44, no. 2 (Spring 1990): 137–68.; Brett Ashley Leeds, "Alliance Reliability in Times of War: Explaining State Decisions to Violate Treaties," *International Organization* 57, no. 4 (2003): 801–27.; Timothy W. Crawford, "Preventing Enemy Coalitions: How Wedge Strategies Shape Power Politics," *International Security* 35, no. 4 (2011): 155–89, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00036.; Michael Beckley, "The Myth of Entangling Alliances: Reassessing the Security Risks of U.S. Defense Pacts," *International Security* 39, no. 4 (April 2015): 7–48, https://doi.org/10.1162/ISEC_a_00197.; Yasuhiro Izumikawa, "Binding Strategies in Alliance Politics: The Soviet-Japanese-US Diplomatic Tug of War in the Mid-1950s," *International Studies Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (March 1, 2018): 108–20. For accounts on small allies' influence, see Robert O. Keohane, "The Big Influence of Small Allies," *Foreign Policy*, no. 2 (1971): 161–82. Building on Keohane's work, Bar-Siman-Tov discusses six different factors that affect the influence relationships between the U.S. and its small allies. These six factors are: superpower rivalry in a bipolar world; the American decision-makers' perceptions of the ideological-political conflict with the Soviet Union as a 'zero-sum' game; smaller allies' weakness turned into bargaining advantages; disagreements among different political groups in the United States; decreasing credibility of American commitments; and the 'paradox of unrealized power' à la David Baldwin. The 'paradox of unrealized power' results from the mistaken belief that power resources useful in one policy-contingency framework will be equally useful in a different one. In reality a country may be weak in one situation but strong in another, so the possession of superior military power is not enough to exercise effective influence. In particular, in an age where the political constraints determine the effectiveness of military power as means of influence, other bases of international influence in some contexts seem more effective. See Yaacov Bar-Siman-Tov, "Alliance Strategy: U.S. - Small Allies Relationships.," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 3, no. 2 (September 1, 1980): 202–16, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402398008437046>. Other studies on the influence of small allies include: Robert L. Rothstein, *Alliances and Small Powers* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968).; Michael I. Handel, *Weak States in the International System* (London, England; Totowa, N.J: F. Cass, 1981).; Christopher Darnton, "Asymmetry and Agenda-Setting in US-Latin American Relations: Rethinking the Origins of the Alliance for Progress," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 14, no. 4 (2012): 55–92.

¹⁵ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 32.

correlated with the relative size of its military arsenal but with the level of security threats it faces or the amount of interests it has at stake, according to Walt.

Glenn Snyder seems to agree that the relative capabilities are not all that matter, while he explains a state's bargaining power rather than its behavior. Snyder argues that the intra-alliance bargaining power is a function of the value of the alliance for a state – which is, in turn, measured by three factors: a state's dependence on the alliance, its commitment to the alliance, and its comparative interests in the object of alliance bargaining.¹⁶ In general, a state's bargaining power will be greater the lower its dependence, the looser its commitment, and the greater its interests at stake. As comprehensive as it may be in enumerating relevant factors, this argument is not falsifiable since it is difficult to assign the amount of value or stakes a state places *ex ante*. In addition, it has limited predictive purchase for bargaining outcomes because Snyder's three independent variables are highly correlated with one another.

Glenn Snyder is also famous for his argument on alliance security dilemma, which was based on pre-1914 great power-only alliances. Snyder hypothesizes that alliance partners are facing two kinds of fear often inversely proportional to each other: the fear of abandonment – i.e. the partner might abrogate its commitment – and the fear of entrapment – i.e. one might get dragged into an unnecessary or undesirable war due to prior commitments. Often reducing one of these fears incurs the cost of heightening the other, argues Snyder. The risk of abandonment may be eased by increasing one's support or tightening one's ties to the ally, but this increased support heightens the risk of entrapment in the ally's quarrels with its opponent.¹⁷ Conversely, reducing

¹⁶ Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 166.

¹⁷ However, Snyder fails to provide clear-cut evidence for leaders' fear of entrapment in any of the European cases in his book. In fact, tightening one's ties to the ally could also help gain more influence over the ally's decision-making to keep its reckless behavior in check and prevent entrapment.

the risk of entrapment by dissociating oneself from the ally may provoke it to abandon the alliance and seek an alternative.¹⁸ Applying this argument to asymmetric alliances is problematic, however, because it makes the implicit assumption that the two security partners' capabilities are comparable enough that one's approach – engaging more or less – certainly impacts the other's war fighting – an assumption that often does not hold in asymmetric alliances.

To address this problem, James Morrow focuses on asymmetric alliance and suggests that alliance partners' behavior, particularly in policy alignment to one another, depends on the security needs of a state. Applying a microeconomic model, Morrow argues that a nation's autonomy and security are generally constrained to move in opposite directions and that this constraint operates similarly to a budget line in consumer decision-making. Just as consumers choose a mix of different goods and services to maximize their utility under budget constraints, nations examine the benefits and costs of possible alliances to determine the attractiveness of different types of alliances and choose the one that offers the best mix of security and autonomy levels – i.e. the one maximizing their utility.¹⁹ Under the assumption that all nations have convex preferences in autonomy and security (i.e., possessing a moderate level of both is preferable to possessing a great deal of one and not much of the other), Morrow shows that minor powers having low levels of security and high levels of autonomy try to form alliances that would increase their security at the cost of some autonomy ("security autonomy tradeoff"). He also argues that "asymmetric alliances tend to produce a greater utility 'surplus' than symmetric alliances because both allies move

¹⁸ Glenn H. Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics." *World Politics* 36, no. 4 (July 1984): 461–95.

¹⁹ James D. Morrow, "Alliances and Asymmetry: An Alternative to the Capability Aggregation Model of Alliances," *American Journal of Political Science*, 1991, 904–933. Note that Morrow defines asymmetric alliances as those from which the parties receive different benefits – i.e. security and autonomy – while acknowledging that asymmetries in capabilities are generally found in asymmetric alliances. Also see James D. Morrow, "The Strategic Setting of Choices: Signaling, Commitment, and Negotiation in International Relations," in *Strategic Choice and International Relations*, ed. David A. Lake and Robert Powell (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1999), 77–114.

toward a more even mixture of autonomy and security.”²⁰ While Morrow’s concept of “security autonomy tradeoff” applies under some conditions, it does not explain why major powers, which should already have so much autonomy, still generally desire to gain even more autonomy potentially at the expense of their security due to increased entrapment risks.

Ideological Similarity

For scholars in the constructivist tradition, ideology and identity are the major determinants of state behavior, and alliance behavior is just a subset. They do not focus on intra-alliance behavior – i.e. state behavior after entering into an alliance – because alliances have only symbolic meanings as they are just an *outcome* of intersubjective social identities and norms that *already* shape each member’s behavior. Although the distribution of power may affect states’ calculations in international politics, the way it does depends on their social identities that inform relations among states. For example, U.S. military power has a different significance for Canada than for Cuba, despite their similar “structural” positions vis-à-vis the United States.²¹ Consequently, mutual social ties and membership in a common security community shape the terms of relations between alliance partners, and therefore social norms, once “internalized,” generally help a junior partner constrain its stronger partner.²² From this standpoint, Karl Deutsch explicitly hypothesized that the “tighter an alliance becomes, or the more a political community is knit, the more

²⁰ Morrow, “Alliances and Asymmetry,” 918.

²¹ Alexander Wendt argues that anarchy and the distribution of power are insufficient to tell us which actors are friends or foes. See Alexander Wendt, “Anarchy Is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics,” *International Organization* 46, no. 2 (1992): 391–425. Also see Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

²² See, for example, Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett, *Security Communities* (Cambridge University Press, 1998). Also see John Gerard Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism Matters: The Theory and Praxis of an Institutional Form* (New York: Columbia Univ Pr, 1993).

constraints it imposes on each of its members in their right to decide upon peace or war in the light of their own national consideration.”²³

In a similar vein, Mark Haas argues that alliance partners sharing the same ideology behave less opportunistically toward each other and that “alliances among states dedicated to similar ideological objectives are likely to long outlive the power-political threat” as was the case for Austria, Prussia, and Russia after the Napoleonic Wars and the NATO alliance after the Cold War.²⁴ However, constructivists have yet to explain both why sharing the same ideology sometimes has divisive effects on alliance partners such as the Soviet Union and China.²⁵ In addition, they should also grapple with why states embracing different cultural identities are still able to maintain a long-lasting alliance relationship, as is the case for U.S.-Saudi Arabia and U.S.-Japan relations.

Gap in the Existing Literature

There exists a great gap in the literature with regard to the weaker party’s *ex post* approach to the alliance – i.e. how, after entering into the alliance, the weaker party manages its relationship with its more powerful partner. The literature focuses on the formation of alliances and various institutional setups, and overlooks how the security relationships may evolve *after* alliances are

²³ Karl W. Deutsch, *Arms Control and Atlantic Alliance: Europe Faces Coming Policy Decisions*, First Edition, Ex-Library edition (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 1967), 77. Thomas Risse-Kappen tested this proposition by examining the influence of European and Canadian allies on U.S. security decisions during the Korean war, the 1958-1963 nuclear test ban treaties and the 1962 Cuban missile crisis. He finds that the liberal notions such as normative factors are more persuasive than realist calculations in explaining alliance cooperation outcomes. See Thomas Risse-Kappen, *Cooperation Among Democracies: The European Influence on U.S. Foreign Policy* (Princeton University Press, 1997).

²⁴ Mark L. Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789–1989* (Ithaca, N.Y.; Bristol: Cornell University Press, 2007), 29.

²⁵ To answer this question, Thomas Christensen’s work suggests that revolutionary ideologies such as Marx and Lenin’s may have divisive effects on alliance partners. See Christensen, *Worse Than a Monolith*.

formed. This is an important topic given that in asymmetric alliances, which constitute the majority of post-WWII contemporary alliances, junior alliance partners are often unable to “institutionalize” clear-cut security commitments from their senior partners, as a recent empirical work on alliance designs shows.²⁶ While the alliance, as an institution, might benefit junior allies by restraining powerful actors to some extent, as institutionalists such as John Ikenberry claim, the real issue from the weaker party’s standpoint is that no one enforces even the contract with less clear-cut commitments when the stronger party reneges.²⁷ Just being a party to an alliance therefore does not guarantee security for any junior partners, and this explains their need for an *ex poste* strategy to gain more – noninstitutionalized – military assistance. Conversely, when their alliance institutionalizes too much in favor of the powerful partners, junior partners also need a different *ex poste* strategy to reduce constraints and regain autonomy. Clearly, an analysis of the post-contract alliance strategies of junior partners is what the current literature misses. What alliance strategies junior partners employ, and what motivates or conditions their various strategies, is new in the IR field.

²⁶ Michaela Mattes, “Reputation, Symmetry, and Alliance Design,” *International Organization*, no. 4 (2012): 679.

²⁷ According to G. John Ikenberry, “institutional binding” restrains powerful actors, and “security alliances are the most important and potentially far-reaching form of binding,” since alliances create binding treaties that allow states to keep a hand in the security policy of their partners. See G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order After Major Wars* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 41. In a similar vein, the historian Paul Schroeder argues, “frequently the desire to exercise such control over an ally’s policy was the main reason that one power, or both, entered into the alliance.” Schroeder, Paul W., “Alliances, 1815-1945 : Weapons of Power and Tools of Management,” in *Historical Dimensions of National Security Problems*, ed. Klaus Knorr, National Security Studies Series (Lawrence: Published for the National Security Education Program by the University Press of Kansas, 1976), 230. For other arguments by institutionalists, see Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, With a New preface by the author edition (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2005).; Lisa L. Martin, “Self-Binding,” *Harvard Magazine*, September 1, 2004, <http://harvardmagazine.com/2004/09/self-binding.html>.; David A. Lake, *Entangling Relations* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1999), chap. 2.; David A. Lake, “Anarchy, Hierarchy, and the Variety of International Relations,” *International Organization* 50, no. 1 (1996): 1–33.; David A. Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations*, Cornell Studies in Political Economy (Ithaca, N.Y. : Cornell University Press, 2009., 2009).

Before I present the variation in junior partners' alliance strategy and explain their causes, I will first offer a definition of "asymmetric alliances" to clarify the scope conditions and the universe of cases.

2. Definition of "Asymmetric Alliance" and the Universe of Cases

I define "asymmetric alliance" as a bilateral security arrangement between one great power and another state of lesser military might that involves mutual or unilateral commitments to defend their partner state by using their military force. States can be categorized into three groups, based on their power projection capabilities: great powers, regional major powers, and small powers. I define "great power" as a state that has capabilities to project power onto multiple continents with the possession of properties and assets such as overseas territories/bases, submarines, bombers, aircraft carriers, and long-range ballistic missiles. Based on this definition, only four states, the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France, qualified as great powers during the Cold War. "Regional powers" do not have such global-scale power projection capabilities, but are able to challenge, disrupt, or resist great powers' attempts to dominate their region. Examples of the regional major powers based on this definition include West Germany (FRG), China, Japan, India, Egypt, Israel, and Saudi Arabia during the second half of the 20th century. "Small powers" are too weak to credibly challenge great powers' attempts to dominate their region. The "asymmetric alliances" as I define it include alliances between a great power and a regional major power as well

as those between a great power and a small power, and I leave those between a regional major power and a small power for future research.²⁸

Asymmetric alliances that do not have written security treaties underpinning their relationships – the so-called informal alliances – are still included in this study if they have public statements by state leaders expressing their commitments to defend their partner state by using their military force. On the other hand, bilateral security arrangements that only include arms sales, status of forces agreements, or basing contracts are excluded from this study. As a consequence, many of the entente treaties are excluded because they typically promise no military aids.²⁹

Multilateral alliances such as NATO, Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), the Rio Pact, and the Baghdad Pact are included and they are counted as if they are a group of bilateral formal alliances between the member with the largest military capabilities and another member that does not qualify as a “great power” defined above. For example, all NATO members except the U.K. and France between 1949 and 1990 are included as U.S. allies.

On the other hand, this study limits its scope to the last one hundred years due to data constraints, and only includes those asymmetric alliances established after the end of the First World War. But this still covers the vast majority of modern asymmetric alliances. Before 1918, there existed a limited number of independent sovereign states outside Europe, and most of modern international security alliances formed before WWI are among European powers with comparable military capabilities. The prevalence of security alliances solely among great powers fell

²⁸ Alliances between a regional major power and a small power are also asymmetric in terms of military capabilities but they are not the subject of this study. For the purpose of this study is to provide the current great power policymakers with a framework to assess their alliance management costs more realistically.

²⁹ To understand the content of each formal alliance, I relied on Douglas M. (Morrow) Gibler, *International Military Alliances 1648-2008*, 1 edition (Washington, D.C: CQ Press, 2008). The updated dataset can be accessed at <http://www.correlatesofwar.org/COW2%20Data/Alliances/alliance.htm>.

dramatically after 1945 even though the number of great powers in the system did not decline commensurately, while that of asymmetric alliances was on the rise in the second half of the 20th century.³⁰

With these scope conditions specified above, the universe of cases include 133 formal and informal asymmetric alliances (see the **Appendix** for the list of all cases). These asymmetric alliances may appear to be all unique and distinct, reflecting the peculiar history and culture of their respective member states. However, a closer look into each case reveals patterns of common behavior in the weaker party of the alliance. In other words, each alliance's origin is unique, but state behavior after the alliance formation is not. I found four common types of junior partner behavior across the universe of cases, reflecting different alliance strategies.

3. Typology of Junior partner Alliance Strategies

While junior allies may appear to be different at first glance due to their unique history, their strategic culture, and individual leaders in each state, I show that at their essence, their differences in alliance behavior are based upon differences with regard to two core issues of alliance management – the degrees of dependence and coordination. In intra-alliance politics, these

³⁰ From 1815 to 1913, 41% of the alliances included *only* great powers, while after 1945, only 2% of the alliances are solely among great powers. Part of this post-WWII trend with an increasing number of asymmetric alliances certainly reflects ideological struggles during the Cold War, in which both of the two superpowers recruited small states to be their allies in order to compete for their sphere of influence around the world. But this trend of increase in asymmetric alliances survived the end of the Cold War, as many of the former USSR republics formed individual alliances with Russia which continue to be in effect to date.

are the two most contentious issues between the partners, particularly those with different levels of capabilities.

Dependence Posture

Junior partners' behavior varies on the spectrum of whether or not they try to reduce their dependence on their senior partner over time – the Dependence Posture. It is fair to assume that when their alliance is established, junior partners in asymmetric alliances are dependent on their senior partner to some degree. If states had been perfectly capable of defending themselves alone, they would not have formed an alliance in the first place, given transactional costs of any alliance relationship – e.g. negotiating or revising a treaty, consulting policies, developing a joint operational plan, etc. After their alliance was formed, some junior allies consciously improve their defense capabilities over time in order to reduce their dependence on their partner for security. Under anarchic conditions in the international system with no one enforcing the alliance contract, these junior allies would want more and more military capabilities, since alliance commitments by the senior partner may not ultimately be reliable. This approach is called the *Less Dependent* approach in the Dependence Posture.

Other junior allies, on the other hand, deliberately grow more dependent on their senior partner by making defense expenditures stagnate or by changing their force structure in a way that would put their national security at risk. Some junior allies that host their senior partner's troops and military installations, might believe the foreign troops can substitute for their own defense efforts at least temporarily. Alternatively, local leaders in unstable regions of the world may find it futile to augment defense capabilities, if such efforts only exacerbate the local security dilemma or couldn't keep up with their adversary's efforts anyways. As a result, they may deliberately stay vulnerable and grow more dependent, assuming that their material weakness is actually what

attracts the senior partner's attention to their national security issues. This is what I call the *More Dependent* approach in the Dependence Posture.

Thus, there are two opposing approaches in the Dependence Posture. Some choose to grow more dependent and rely on their senior partner's protection, while others try to build their capabilities and reduce their dependence – a choice about their Dependence Posture – *More Dependent vs. Less Dependent*.

Coordination Posture

The differences among junior allies also appear on the spectrum of whether or to what extent they wish to appear to be proactively coordinating with their senior partner on their policies toward the common adversary – the Coordination Posture. Some states are more cooperative toward their senior partner, sending troops to assist with the senior partner's military operations elsewhere, even when their own interests are not necessarily at stake.³¹ Such states are typically consulting their senior ally more often over a range of measures to be taken against their common adversaries.³² This is what I call the *Proactive* approach in the Coordination Posture.

Other junior allies do the opposite: they seek to reduce their level of coordination with the senior partner. Some junior allies may calculate that, in a game of brinkmanship, non-cooperation as their original bargaining position could actually gain them leverage over their senior partner, to the extent that the latter still needs the alliance relationship for its own interests. Junior partners

³¹ During the Vietnam War, for example, none of the NATO allies helped U.S. forces in Indochina operationally, while the Republic of Korea did send as many as 300,000 troops in total to Vietnam, making the ROK Army the second largest after the U.S. Army in Vietnam.

³² A good example is the People's Republic of China in the early days of its alliance with the Soviet Union, as Beijing had very frequent policy consultations with Moscow over Korea, Vietnam, Tibet, and other issues.

may refuse to send troops to a region where their senior partner conducts a military intervention operation, as did most of the NATO allies as well as Japan during the Vietnam War in the 1960s. They may pursue rapprochement with the senior partner's adversary without alliance consultation, as Japan did in the 1950s and as the Republic of China did in the 1970s vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. This is what I call the *Reluctant* approach in the Coordination Posture.

Ideally, a junior ally's approach in the Coordination Posture should be measured both by the level of alliance contributions as well as the frequency of diplomatic contacts the junior partner is seeking, such as meeting requests. The Coordination Posture is not about how close the junior partner's policy goals are to the senior partner's. Rather, the posture is about the junior partner's appearance – either proactive or reluctant – in a context where alliance coordination is expected. In reality, it is hard to measure the junior ally's willingness to consult with the senior partner, since most of contacts between the alliance partners are behind the veil of secrecy. As a result, the amount of troop contributions and the degree of policy cooperation are used as proxies for measuring the Coordination Posture.

Troop contributions are the junior partner's commitment to participate in military operations in an armed conflict where the senior partner's interests are primarily at stake. The degree of policy cooperation reflects how frequently the junior partner aligns itself with the senior partner's foreign and military policies. A state's Coordination Posture is deemed *Reluctant* when it refuses to positively respond to the senior partner's request for troop deployment or policy consultation, when such actions are expected. It is deemed *Proactive* when it responds to the senior partner's request positively or contributes troops.

There should not be systematic correlation between the Dependence and the Coordination Postures across the universe of cases. For example, being dependent should not systematically

create proactive coordination with the senior partner or vice versa, since no senior partner would exit its alliance solely because its junior ally is not constantly coordinating in a way that would advance the senior partner's interests. I assume that a junior partner's dependence was already factored into the decision by the senior partner to form an alliance. A senior partner must have entered into the security partnership because benefits it expected to reap from the alliance outweighed the costs of alliance management, which include the junior partner's current and future dependence. Such benefits include basing rights, access to export markets for its defense industry, and stability in the relevant region, some of which can materialize immediately after the alliance was established. Without such expected benefits more certain than future behavior of junior allies, a senior partner would not have created an alliance. As long as these expected dividends stay intact, it is not easy for the senior partner to credibly threaten alliance abandonment on the ground that its junior partner is dependent or not coordinating enough.

As long as such expected benefits continue to accrue to the senior partner, ironically the effect of power asymmetry on their bargaining power is no longer as great as if they were not security partners. Once a particular give-and-take relationship is realized by the alliance contract, then the senior partner has vested interests in the continuation of this relationship. This means that the weaker allies, too, now have leverage: they know that the benefits the senior partner reaps from the relationship are so much more important that the insufficient levels of defense capabilities, contributions or concessions will not constitute a compelling reason for ending the relationship. The senior partner therefore cannot expect its weaker allies to constantly make additional concessions just because they are materially weaker or dependent for security.

Four Types of Behavior and Strategy

As junior allies choose one of the two approaches in each of the two different postures – Dependence and Coordination – there should be four different, mutually exclusive types of behavior: (*More Dependent, Reluctant*), (*More Dependent, Proactive*), (*Less Dependent, Proactive*), and (*Less Dependent, Reluctant*), which I call *Cheap-riding*, *Rescue-compelling*, *Favor-currying*, and *Autonomy-seeking*, respectively (see **Table 2**).

Table 2. The Four Different Types of Alliance Behavior

		Coordination Posture (troop contributions, policy alignment)	
		Reluctant	Proactive
Dependence Posture	More Dependent	Cheap-riding	Rescue-compelling
	Less Dependent	Autonomy-seeking	Favor-currying

These different types can also be conceived as four different alliance strategies, I argue, because those allies likely have certain ideas and goals when choosing a particular combination of the two postures, rather than haphazardly acting in one posture independently from its choice about the other posture. In what follows, each of the four types with their respective strategy will be described, starting from the top-left quadrant of the **Table 2**, clockwise.

Cheap-riding. The *Cheap-riding* strategy primarily aims to ensure national security with “cheap” costs, albeit not free, by deliberately remaining incapable of defending itself on its own (*More Dependent*) and by not proactively taking actions to coordinate with the senior partner (*Reluctant*). I define “cheap-riding” as the refusal to pay the cost of its own defense, let alone that of sharing alliance responsibilities such as coordination, even though a state is financially and technologically capable of doing so. Observable implications of this strategy include small defense budgets as percentage of GDP (generally, less than 2 % for states in peacetime, i.e. facing no existential security threats) and the lack of coordination such as troop contributions (refusal to contribute troops even though it is expected to do so) and policy alignment. In a state with the *Cheap-riding* strategy, its dependence posture tends to grow “*More Dependent*” over time, as the state is not planning budget growth in a way that would allow it to acquire sufficient capabilities to defend itself on its own in case of territorial aggression by its primary adversary. By staying incapable of defending itself, the junior partner hopes that its senior partner would be compelled to come to its aid with a full-scale military intervention in emergency. Its coordination posture is “reluctant,” as the junior partner is not proactively contributing troops or aligning itself with the senior partner’s foreign and military policies toward the common adversary.

The strategy works when the senior partner has vested interests unrelated to the junior partner’s military capabilities or contributions. In other words, the senior partner’s baseline

security commitments are determined by the strategic value of a junior partner measured by factors such as its economic market and geographic location offering strategic access.

A quintessential illustration of junior partners employing this strategy is post-war Japan during the Cold War, as it willfully remained dependent on American security provision and refused to contribute to U.S.-led military operations beyond providing an “unsinkable aircraft carrier.”³³ It skillfully exploited the Japanese people’s anti-militarism and exaggerated legal (or constitutional) constraints as a convenient justification for not contributing. It was not until 1976 that Japan finally started to fulfill even limited defense responsibilities for its own territory. It did not contribute troops to either the Korean War or the Vietnam War, while it exhibited interests in pursuing an independent foreign policy: it normalized relations with the Soviet Union in 1956 and attempted to do the same with the People’s Republic of China subsequently. Even the word “alliance” was openly rejected as a description of U.S.-Japan relations in the 1980s by Prime Minister Suzuki Zenkō, who fired his foreign minister, Itō Masayoshi, for using the term.³⁴

Some members of NATO are also good examples of *Cheap-riding* allies who contribute little to American military operations and pursue independent foreign policies while knowingly staying dependent on Washington for their own security. In 2003, Spain opposed the Iraq war in 2003 while spending only 1.42% of GDP for its military. Italy is another example as introduced in the previous chapter.

³³ Prime Minister Nakasone was quoted as saying that Japan should become “an unsinkable aircraft carrier” to defend against penetration by the Soviet Backfire bomber. See the Washington Post, 20 March 1983.

³⁴ See Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia*, Cornell Studies in Security Affairs (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 44. Japanese leaders, except Yoshida Shigeru, never publicly called their security relationship with the United States an alliance until after the cold war ended.

Rescue-compelling. The *Rescue-compelling* strategy is aimed at compelling a senior partner into renewing and enhancing security commitments, by deliberately growing *More Dependent* on the Dependence dimension while being *Proactive* on the Coordination one. A junior ally employing this strategy is ready to do whatever it takes to attract the senior partner's attention, even by exhibiting risky escalatory behavior toward its adversaries. A state may take extraordinary risks to create a situation where disastrous consequences such as a large number of casualties would be very likely unless the senior partner came to rescue in time. Observable implications include insufficient or even shrinking defense budgets, proactive coordination including troop contributions, and occasional escalatory behavior toward its adversary.

Chiang Kai-shek's Republic of China (ROC) in the 1950s exemplifies this *Rescue-compelling* behavior. While frequently consulting and coordinating with American military officials, who were ambiguous about their alliance relationship with the ROC, the Taiwanese deliberately put their national security at risk by steadily deploying more of their best troops to offshore islands such as Quemoy and Matsu. By 1956, the offshore island garrisons totaled about 100,000 men and were armed with more than one third of the major items of military equipment available to the Nationalist ground forces.³⁵ Moving such a large number of troops to the offshore islands near the continent not only undermined ROC's ability to defend its main island, Formosa, but also significantly increased the chance of provoking Chinese shelling, which could escalate. During the 1958 offshore islands crisis, the United States had to assist Chiang to avoid a disaster.

The Republic of Korea (ROK) also employed a *Rescue-compelling* strategy in the period of 1954-1970. The ROK spent meagerly on the military during the decade following the Korean

³⁵ Kenneth W. Condit, "History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Vol. VI The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1955-1956" (Washington, DC: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1998), 208, https://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/History/Policy/Policy_V006.pdf.

War. From 1953 to 1965, its annual average defense budget was less than \$150 million and its defense spending as percentage of GDP decreased from an annual average of 7 percent in the 1950s to 4 percent in the 1960s.³⁶ Meanwhile, Seoul between 1953 and 1974 conducted more than 200 raids or military incursions into North Korea, sending 7,700 agents, of which 5,300 did not return to the South.³⁷ It also sent as many as 300,000 troops in total to Vietnam over a 12-year period, which made the ROK the second largest army fighting in Vietnam, and 5,000 of them died.

President Agostinho Neto of Angola also used the *Rescue-compelling* strategy. He assisted the Front for the National Liberation of the Congo (FNLC)'s March 1977 invasion of Shaba, Zaire, launched from eastern Angola. Neto hoped that a war with Zaire might provoke interventions by great powers, especially by Angola's senior partner, the Soviet Union. The FNLC had asked Cuba for assistance in vain, and turned to the Soviet Union, which did not provide much direct assistance, but Zaire reportedly claimed that East Germany supplied arms to rebels backed by Angola.³⁸

Favor-currying. The *Favor-currying* strategy is designed to ingratiate oneself with one's senior partner through exemplary defense buildup (*Less Dependent* in the Dependence Posture) and proactive coordination with policy alignment and troop contributions (*Proactive* in the Coordination Posture). This strategy's ultimate goal is to get additional military assistance from the senior partner as *quid pro quo* for being a "good" junior ally. Observable implications of this

³⁶ Chung-in Moon and Sangkeun Lee, "Military Spending and the Arms Race on the Korean Peninsula," *Asian Perspective* 33, no. 4 (2009): 73, <https://doi.org/10.1353/apr.2009.0003>.

³⁷ See "Minutes of Washington Special Actions Group Meeting, Washington, August 25, 1976, 10:30am," Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1969-1976, Volume E-12, Documents on East and Southeast Asia, 1973-1976.

³⁸ Piero Gleijeses, "Truth or Credibility: Castro, Carter, and the Invasions of Shaba," *International History Review* 18, no. 1 (1996): 73-74, 93-100.; D. Robert Worley, *Aligning Ends, Ways, and Means* (Washington, D.C.: lulu.com, 2012), 125-26. Also see The Washington Post, 11 May 1978; 10 April 1977.

strategy include large military budgets as percentage of GDP, generous troop contributions, frequent policy consultation, and a purchase of large quantities of weapons from the senior partner. From the perspective of a senior partner uninformed of their true intent, junior allies employing this strategy may appear to be the ideal type of allies – being perfectly capable of defending itself and therefore not dependent on the senior partner for security, while eager to coordinate, follow instructions, and stay tightly aligned with the senior partner.

Fidel Castro’s “courtship” of the Soviet Union in the 1960s is a textbook example of *Favor-currying* behavior. He was employing the same strategy to favor an alliance with Moscow, starting in 1959. While the January 1959 revolution that overthrew Cuba’s dictator Fulgencio Batista attracted scant attention in Moscow, Castro’s ostensibly ingratiating approaches to Moscow with his radical anti-American rhetoric, successfully incentivized Khrushchev to offer abundant economic and security assistance.³⁹ In July 1960, even before Castro declared himself a Marxist-Leninist, Khrushchev offered security commitments to Cuba in a public speech delivered in Moscow.⁴⁰ In 1962, at the behest of Moscow, Castro launched revolutionary wars in the Third World with large military expenditures to propagate socialist ideas. In exchange, he received from Moscow weapons, advisors, and even Soviet troops.

Saudi Arabia, an informal ally of the United States since the 1940s, is another exemplary case of states employing the *Favor-currying* strategy. For decades, the Saudi military has been fighting alongside American troops in the Middle East. When Washington needed operational

³⁹ The assistance was not offered because Cuba was a socialist nation. Castro declared himself a Marxist-Leninist in as late as December 1961.

⁴⁰ Khrushchev mentioned, “Figuratively speaking, in case of need Soviet artillerymen can support the Cuban people with their rocket fire if the aggressive forces in the Pentagon dare to launch an intervention against Cuba. And let them not forget in the Pentagon that, as the latest tests have shown, we have rockets capable of landing directly in a pre-calculated square at a distance of 13,000 km.” See Nikita Khrushchev’s address before the All-Russian Teachers’ Congress in Moscow on July 9, 1960. The quote translation is from Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1958-1960, CUBA, Volume VI, No. 549.

assistance from allies, Saudi Arabia offered it abundantly. During the 1991 Gulf War, for example, Riyadh provided 118,000 troops along with 550 tanks and 180 airplanes, by far the biggest troops after the United States. Until the Obama administration's nuclear deal with Iran, it reliably sided with Washington on issues regarding Israel and Iran. It also spends tens of billions of dollars each year buying weapons from U.S. defense firms, and it accounted for 22% of all U.S. defense exports between 2014 and 2018. On the other hand, Saudi Arabia is not dependent on U.S. military assistance for its own security: with the third largest military budget in the world, Saudi Arabia boasts a large fleet of F-15s and Tornado fighter jets, Apache helicopters and other advanced aircraft, which should enable its military to defeat ISIS on its own. The purpose of its favoring with Washington is to perpetuate America's military presence in the Middle East and use it as a card in the regional power politics against Iran.

Autonomy-seeking. Junior partners employing the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy are not proactive with respect to coordination with their senior partner (*Reluctant* in the Coordination Posture), while they aim to develop sufficient capabilities to set up an independent deterrent against its primary adversary (*Less Dependent* in the Dependence Posture). The primary goal of this strategy is not to get out of the alliance relationship. They still intend to take advantage of security protection by their senior partner for as long as they can do so. The *Autonomy-seeking* strategy is designed to increase its bargaining power vis-à-vis the senior partner that is keen on maintaining the alliance relationship. By demonstrating its ability to build an independent deterrent and therefore become less dependent if necessary, the junior partner exploits the senior partner's fear of losing the alliance partner. Observable implications of this strategy include large military

expenditures, consistent efforts to acquire advanced military technologies, a lack of coordination efforts such as troop contributions and policy alignment.

The Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) employed this strategy while still being protected under the U.S. nuclear umbrella.⁴¹ With its military expenditures at levels of 4 to 5% of GDP annually in the ten years after it joined the NATO, the FRG developed an enormously capable Bundeswehr for its own self-defense. While Bonn was generally reluctant in coordinating with Washington on major alliance issues – staying out of U.S. military operations in Korea and Vietnam, for example – it sought advanced military technologies voraciously via a third party. The FRG’s first chancellor, Konrad Adenauer, declared in 1956 that by joining EURATOM – the European Atomic Energy Community – Germany could one day acquire nuclear weapons in the normal way – i.e. through domestic production.⁴² In the aftermath of the Soviet launch of a Sputnik I satellite in 1957, Adenauer joined French and Italian leaders in November 1957 to discuss joint production of nuclear weapons – a trilateral talk that culminated in an agreement signed in April 1958. While joint production of nuclear weapons with France was cancelled by President Charles de Gaulle, Adenauer continued to reiterate his hope of a nuclear deterrent under West German national control. In a meeting with President Kennedy in November 1961, Adenauer falsely denied seeking nuclear weapons production, but reaffirmed his opposition to nuclear renunciation.⁴³ In the spring of 1962, when Kennedy communicated to Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko his willingness to concede German nuclear rights, Adenauer decided to once again establish closer

⁴¹ Trachtenberg, Marc. “The French Factor in US Foreign Policy during the Nixon-Pompidou Period, 1969–1974.” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 13, no. 1 (2011): 4–59.

⁴² Schwarz, Hans-Peter. Konrad Adenauer: A German Politician and Statesman in a Period of War, Revolution, and Re- construction, Vol. 2: The Statesman, 1952–1967. Providence: Berghahn, 1997, 239-240.

⁴³ Trachtenberg, Marc. *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement 1945-1963*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1999, 340. Also see Kennedy-Adenauer meetings, November 21–22, 1961, *FRUS, 1961–1963*, Vol. 14, 616–618.

relations with France, and this led to an Élysée Treaty of friendship in January 1963 pledging defense cooperation between Bonn and Paris.⁴⁴ Ultimately, the FRG's *Autonomy-seeking* strategy worked well as it received renewed pledges of continued American protection with a deployment of six divisions in Europe as well as a commitment to nuclear consultation through German participation in the MLF.

Summary of the Four Strategies

Table 3. summarizes the four alliance strategies including their respective observable implications and major examples. While state leaders may not consciously choose one strategy to pursue, analysts should be able to identify their choice, based on their patterns of behavior both in terms of the alliance coordination posture and the dependence posture. However, one important caveat to this statement is that it may not be easy to distinguish, *ex ante*, between the *Rescue-compelling* and *Favor-currying* allies in peacetime. If an ally with small defense budgets and limited defense capabilities pledges to increase its military spending while being very proactive in coordinating with or contributing to their senior partner through weapons purchases, it can be hard to determine whether it is playing a *Rescue-compelling* or *Favor-currying* strategy. This uncertainty may pose major alliance management challenges for a senior partner.

⁴⁴ Discussion on the FRG's nuclear ambition is partly informed by Gene Gerzhoy, "Alliance Coercion and Nuclear Restraint: How the United States Thwarted West Germany's Nuclear Ambitions." *International Security* 39, no. 4 (April 2015): 91–129. Note that the unsuccessful attempt to acquire German indigenous nuclear weapons wasn't due to U.S. threats of abandonment: President Kennedy financially supported Adenauer's political opponent, Financial Minister Ludwig Erhard, to mobilize the chancellor's anti-Gaullist critics in the CDU in order to make it difficult for the Élysée Treaty to be ratified.

Table 3. Summary of the Four Strategies

		Coordination Posture (troop contributions, policy alignment)	
		Reluctant	Proactive
Dependence Posture	More Dependent	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Cheap-riding</u></p> <p>Ensures national security at minimal expense by deliberately remaining incapable of defending itself on its own and by avoiding troop contributions or policy alignments when possible; Observable Implications: small defense budgets, limited coordination (e.g. Japan–U.S. (1951-70); Italy-U.S. (1949-); Poland–France (1921-25))</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Rescue-compelling</u></p> <p>Envisions gaining renewed security commitments by doing whatever it takes to attract the senior partner’s attention, even including risky escalatory behavior toward its primary adversary, while remaining dependent; Observable Implications: small defense budgets; proactive coordination; risky behavior designed to seek attention (e.g. ROC–U.S. (1953-62))</p>
	Less Dependent	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Autonomy-seeking</u></p> <p>Increases its intra-alliance bargaining position by demonstrating its ability to build an independent deterrent and distancing itself from its senior partner; Observable Implications: large defense budgets; limited coordination; insistence on indigenous weapons (e.g. Iran-USSR (1921-41); Poland–France (1926-39); China –USSR (1955-60); Israel–France (1958-67); Turkey–U.S. (1962-))</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Favor-currying</u></p> <p>Submits obsequiously to its senior partner through proactive alliance coordination and exemplary defense buildup efforts, hoping to compel as yet unpromised military assistance as <i>quid pro quo</i> for being a “good” partner; Observable Implications: large defense budgets, proactive coordination; a purchase of weapons from the partner (e.g. China–USSR (1950-55); Saudi Arabia–U.S. (1951-); Cuba–USSR (1959-90))</p>

Certainly, there are not many states that have actually acted on the *Rescue-compelling* strategy by resorting to risky escalation tactics. Of 133 asymmetric alliances formed over the last hundred years after 1918, only 4 cases involve an ally that did – Poland (1933), Republic of China (1953-62, 1995-), Republic of Korea (1954-70), and Angola (1976-91). However rare, though, the *Rescue-compelling* remains an option for a weak, vulnerable ally. Because it can be confused with the *Favor-currying* from an external observer’s standpoint, U.S. policymakers should be aware of

conditions under which junior allies are likely to consider this strategy – which will be discussed in the section V.

On the other hand, the vast majority of junior partners are *Cheap-riders*, which constitute 87 cases (nearly 65%), while 36 cases (just about one quarter of the total) involve *Autonomy-seeking* allies. Interestingly, *Favor-currying*, the junior partner’s approach often predicted based on an extrapolation of the extant literature such as James Morrow’s “security autonomy tradeoff,”⁴⁵ is found only in 17 cases (see **Appendix** for the full distribution of cases). This distribution seems to indicate that the majority of junior partners do exercise considerable autonomy and can cheap-ride or choose not to coordinate with the senior partner much more often than is generally assumed by the existing IR literature. The following section will discuss and clarify why that is the case, before turning to the factors causing the different alliance strategies.

4. Assumptions

The Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy assumes that generosity is not a motive when great powers establish an asymmetric alliance that ensures the national security of another state. It assumes that great powers offer security commitments to other states in order to advance their own interests including, but not limited to, maintaining or expanding their sphere of influence, improving their power position and power projection capabilities, and expanding export markets for their defense industry. After the end of First World War, colonization went out of favor as a

⁴⁵ Morrow, “Alliances and Asymmetry.”

serious tool to exert control over resources located on the foreign territories. Not coincidentally, the first 20 years of the 20th century were the moment when nationalism gained momentum in regions outside the so-called “white colonies.” For instance, British India and Balkan conflicts erupted several years before World War I. Anti-British social uprisings in India became very intense after the colonial government failed to satisfy local demands with the Government of India Act 1919. Britain granted formal independence to Egypt in 1922.

Some argue that conquering and maintaining an empire through colonial controls produces few economic gains because the conqueror inevitably will have to devote considerable resources to suppress nationalist uprisings; and the defeated populace will, in turn, actively seek to reduce the economic surplus available to the invader.⁴⁶ In addition, conquering another territory by force may be costly, if the terrain is defense-dominant.⁴⁷

As an alternative to their previous colonial control, asymmetric alliances may be preferred as a tool with which to exert some level of control over other states – by exploiting the partner’s material weaknesses to gain leverage. This should not be a surprise. Paul Schroeder, James Morrow and Patricia Weitsman explicitly discuss alliances as not just power-aggregating mechanisms but also tools for exerting influence and controlling other states.⁴⁸ It is well known that U.S. foreign policy practitioners saw Soviet allies in the Third World as an extension of Soviet

⁴⁶ Richard Rosecrance, *Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World* (New York: Basic Books, 1987), 34. Also see Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, Reprint edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 142. John Mueller, *Retreat from Doomsday: The Obsolescence of Major War* (Basic Books, 1989).

⁴⁷ Robert Jervis, “Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma,” *World Politics* 30, no. 2 (1978): 167–214, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2009958>. Also see Stephen Van Evera, “Primed for Peace: Europe after the Cold War,” *International Security* 15, no. 3 (1990): 7–57, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2538906>. Certainly perfect ISR capabilities might tempt a state to launch preemptive counterforce attacks, but that level of sophistication both in terms of technologies and operational/organizational skills is difficult to attain.

⁴⁸ Schroeder, Paul W., “Alliances, 1815-1945 : Weapons of Power and Tools of Management,” 230. Also see Morrow, “Alliances and Asymmetry”; Weitsman, *Dangerous Alliances*.

power, and sought to resist the expansion of the Soviet sphere of influence everywhere. Evidence also abounds for Washington leveraging its security commitments in order to impose itself upon its weaker partner for various political and military gains such as establishing overseas bases and forcing allies to partially give up their sovereignty.⁴⁹ From this perspective, a senior U.S. Army officer argues that U.S. post-WWII bilateral security alliances were all asymmetric *by design*.⁵⁰

A corollary of this particular view of asymmetric alliances as a tool for advancing various great power interests is that, without expected benefits, whether they are economic or political, a senior partner would not have entered into an alliance in the first place. A senior partner certainly may have decided to commit to maintaining stability in a remote region of the world without explicitly seeking any collateral or return in exchange for security commitments. But even in such cases, it is very likely that, at the onset of the alliance relationship, stability itself was deemed beneficial to the senior partner's own political, economic, or commercial interests. After the alliance enters into effect, and as long as such expected benefits continue to accrue to the senior partner, ironically the power dynamics between the partners changes: the effect of power asymmetry on their respective bargaining power is no longer as great as if they were not security partners. Once a particular give-and-take relationship is realized by the alliance contract, then the senior partner has vested interests in the continuation of this relationship. This means that the weaker allies, too, now have leverage by being a party to the alliance contract. The senior partner

⁴⁹ See, for example, Victor D. Cha, *Powerplay: The Origins of the American Alliance System in Asia* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2016).; Ikenberry, *After Victory*.; G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order*, First Edition edition (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2011).; Gerzhoy, "Alliance Coercion and Nuclear Restraint.;" Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).; Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, "Don't Come Home, America," *International Security* 37, no. 3 (Winter 2012): 7–51.; Alexander Cooley, *Base Politics: Democratic Change and the U.S. Military Overseas* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

⁵⁰ Interview with a Japan-based senior U.S. military officer, 12 January 2017.

therefore cannot expect its weaker allies to make additional concessions just because they are materially weaker or dependent for security.

Peter Liberman shows how the Soviet Union was trying to maintain political control inexpensively – without brute force – by continuously coercing allied regimes in Eastern Europe, but Liberman confirmed that such control was possible only through ruthless methods.⁵¹ Extensive analyses of U.S. primary sources also show that the United States during the Cold War was not very successful in leveraging its overseas security commitments to convince allies to change their economic policies to its benefit.⁵² Rarely is a junior ally's dependence for security an effective leverage for its senior partner to continue to extract concessions, because the weaker ally's dependence was given when the alliance was formed.

With these assumptions, the next section will discuss three major factors that cause the different alliance strategies, which junior allies employ to maximize gains from the security partnership.

5. Determinants of Junior Partner Alliance Strategies

⁵¹ Peter Liberman, *Does Conquest Pay? The Exploitation of Occupied Industrial Societies* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), chap. 7.

⁵² Francis J. Gavin, *Gold, Dollars, and Power: The Politics of International Monetary Relations, 1958-1971*, New edition edition (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 6, 12, 30–31, 113, 162, 165–66. Also see Hubert Zimmermann, *Money and Security: Troops, Monetary Policy, and West Germany's Relations with the United States and Britain, 1950-1971*, 1st edition (Washington, D.C. : Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 103, 107, 140, 227.;

The Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy identifies three determinants of the junior partner alliance strategies:

- (1) perceived senior partner commitments – whether or not a junior partner perceives that its senior partner is committed to fighting its primary adversary by force;
- (2) the junior partner’s revisionist goal – whether the junior ally has a policy goal of changing the distribution of power and goods by force;
- (3) the local balance of power – whether the junior partner is up against an adversary with growing military power.

Perceived Senior Partner Commitments

The variable of perceived senior partner commitments refers to *whether or not a senior partner is committed, in its junior partner’s eyes, to fighting the junior partner’s primary adversary by force*. This binary variable is perceptual – it is the junior partner’s evaluation of the levels of security commitments by the senior partner. The evaluation is partly based on written texts of their security treaty. However, it is very unlikely that junior allies gauge the level of security commitments they receive solely based on their security treaty, because there is no effective enforcement mechanism for their alliance contract. In addition, most of the alliance texts do not offer broad, unqualified blanket commitments of support but do provide members with escape clauses or wiggle room regarding the conditions under which they must provide assistance.⁵³ But this does not mean that most of the alliances offer only weak commitments. The

⁵³ Brett Ashley Leeds, “Do Alliances Deter Aggression? The Influence of Military Alliances on the Initiation of Militarized Interstate Disputes,” *American Journal of Political Science* 47, no. 3 (2003): 427–39, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3186107>.; Leeds et al., “Alliance Treaty Obligations and Provisions, 1815-1944.”; Kim, “Why Alliances Entangle But Seldom Entrap States.”; Benson, *Constructing International Security*.

variable of perceived security commitments increases and decreases over time due to a junior partner's interpretation of the senior partner's various actions.

Through diplomatic talks, a senior partner may deliberately announce a change in the strengths of its commitments to an ally in order to achieve different goals. It may strengthen commitments to deter an adversary more effectively or just to express its interests in the relevant region. It may weaken commitments to discipline an ally or to respond to isolationist demands from its domestic constituents. But these can be just a cheap talk, in which it can be difficult to separate real signals from noise.

A senior partner's military and diplomatic measures against its junior partner's primary adversary can alter the latter's evaluation of security commitments. Specifically, junior allies are evaluating whether their senior partner maintains necessary capabilities and posture to fight their primary adversary – i.e. whether the senior partner is, instead, facing legal, military or diplomatic requirements precluding a fighting option. Perceived senior partner commitments should be strong when a junior partner faces an adversary against which its senior partner's military is preparing war operations. Conversely, perceived senior partner commitments should be weak when a senior partner cultivates closer diplomatic ties to its junior ally's primary adversary or appears to be hesitant to go to war. The perceived commitments can also become weak when a senior partner cuts a deal with its own adversary, which continues to pose a threat only to a junior ally. For the better part of the Cold War period, U.S. allies in Europe including Britain, France, and West Germany did not believe that Washington would risk a major war with the Soviet Union to protect them against Moscow's military provocations. They did not perceive strong commitments from a president in Washington, who might compromise their interests by reaching a deal with the Soviet

Union, given the choice between reneging on alliance obligations or running the risk of nuclear retaliation against the U.S. homeland.⁵⁴

The perceived security commitment may also become weaker if a senior partner withdraws its troops and military assets from its junior partner's territory. In many alliance cases, providing local security is not the only reason their senior partner's troops and assets are stationed on the junior partners' soil. Access to local ports and bases that are strategically located helps reinforce the senior partner's power projection capabilities. As long as their senior partner is benefiting from that strategic access, perceived security commitments should stay strong, because they assume that the senior partner should have self-interests in providing local security.

Once security commitments are perceived to get weakened, a junior ally may need to build more of defense capabilities to reduce its dependence on the senior partner; it may also need to seek out an alternative security guarantor, resulting in reducing its coordination with the current senior partner. Thus, this variable affects both the Dependence and Coordination Postures.

Junior Partner Revisionist Policy

The second determinant of alliance strategy is whether a junior partner has a revisionist policy goal – a goal of changing the distribution of power and goods by the use of force. This variable is binary, measuring whether a junior partner has a revisionist as opposed to status-quo policies. The definition of revisionist policy here is broader in scope compared to that by system theorists such as Robert Gilpin, who describes revisionism as seeking “to change the international

⁵⁴ For these European allies' views about the reliability of U.S. commitments, see Avery Goldstein, *Deterrence and Security in the 21st Century: China, Britain, France, and the Enduring Legacy of the Nuclear Revolution* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2000), 149.

system through territorial, political, and economic expansion.”⁵⁵ By “international system,” Gilpin means the distribution of power, the hierarchy of prestige, and rights and rules that govern or at least influence the interactions among states.”⁵⁶

Instead, I define revisionist policy according to Arnold Wolfers. Revisionist policies do not necessarily challenge or attempt to upset the current international order, hierarchy or governing rules, but do aim to change the current, primarily local, distribution of power and goods by force. States with revisionist policies seek, by the use of force, values not already enjoyed, including more power as an end in itself or expanding control over other peoples’ possession.⁵⁷ By contrast, status-quo policies “either desire to preserve the established order or those that, while actually desiring change, have renounced the use of force as a method for bringing it about.”⁵⁸

For a policy to be revisionist, it needs to be backed by the state’s readiness to use force to achieve the planned change. The state’s military needs to be prepared with an operational plan and training programs tailored for the policy. A communist state’s policy merely supporting the idea that there will be a future world revolution to upset the market economy does not qualify to be revisionist, if the state’s armed forces are not being trained for operations to bring about a world revolution.

Revisionist policy may include what a state considers a defensive policy. Whether a state calls it its national defense policy or its policy of conquest is not a good criterion to distinguish between status-quo and revisionist policies. The quest for security can become so ambitious as to

⁵⁵ Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics*, 10.

⁵⁶ Gilpin, 27–34.

⁵⁷ Wolfers, 91-92.

⁵⁸ Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration; Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1962., 1962), 125.

transform itself into a goal of unlimited self-expansion, as exemplified by Japan's territorial aggression in the 1930s.

The existence of revisionist policy may affect a junior ally's alliance behavior for the following reasons. A revisionist policy requires military activities for which the state most likely expects its senior partner to render assistance. However, rarely do great powers offer broad blanket commitments to render support in the future, due to their general aversion to inadvertently getting involved in low-stake local conflicts. Even if a senior partner also has its own revisionist policy toward the same adversary, it may still prefer to withhold unqualified blank-check commitments of support in order to maintain control over when to initiate armed conflicts and by what means as well as how long they will fight. Navigating with this uncertainty about the prospect of support by the senior partner, a state harboring a revisionist policy most likely has to build sufficient military capabilities on its own and also act proactively to consult and coordinate with the senior partner in order to solicit additional support. Thus, its approach both in the Dependence and Coordination Postures should be different from that taken by a fellow ally perceiving the same level of security commitments but having no revisionist policy.

Potential correlation between the two variables discussed above is not a serious concern, although one could argue that perceived strong commitments might encourage a revisionist policy in a junior ally. Systematic correlation between the two variables is unlikely, because its senior partner, in dealing with a partner with a revisionist policy, is likely to have an incentive to make an ambiguous promise or narrow the scope of commitments in order to protect its own latitude and control with regard to when and how to render military support. For example, the ROC, a U.S. ally with a revisionist goal of returning to the mainland in the 1950s and the early 1960s, did not receive

strong U.S. security commitments, and U.S. leaders carefully avoided endorsing Taipei's ambition to go back to the mainland by force.⁵⁹

The Local Balance of Power Facing the Junior Partner

The third determinant is whether the local balance of power is shifting in favor of the junior partner or of the adversary. The shift in the local balance of power is measured based on the comparison of the junior ally and its adversary in terms of their military capabilities, the pace of their military buildup, and their power position in the international community such as their diplomatic recognition, membership of international organizations and access to regional markets.

The local balance of power becomes a serious matter for a junior ally when it perceives weak security commitments by the senior partner. Security threats in the eyes of a junior ally are filtered through a perception of security commitments it receives. When robust commitments are offered, the junior partner should not need to worry too much about the adversary's capabilities relative to its own, as the senior partner's reliable assistance at least partially shields it from the threat.⁶⁰ But if it perceives security commitments by their senior partner to be unreliable, the local balance of power must enter the equation. To prepare for the possibility that the senior partner fails to support, the junior partner may beef up its defense buildup to reduce its dependence.

⁵⁹ To not endorse the ROC's revisionist goal, the United States imposed the following conditions that narrowed the scope of its security pledge: (1) the treaty would have no bearing on ultimate legal title to the ROC; (2) the United States would intervene only in the case of the ROC's self-defense; and (3) the treaty would not automatically apply to new territories without consent of the Senate.

⁶⁰ The sheer level of security threats is more relevant to whether a given state enters an alliance relationship in the first place. The security environment is likely to affect whether a state enters an alliance relationship, but the severity of the security environment is not linearly proportional to the likelihood of alliance formation. Not surprisingly, if a state faces existential security threats, unfortunately it is unlikely to find a senior partner willing to unequivocally offer security commitments. On the other hand, if a state is in a stable environment with no security threats, then it should have more policy options: it can choose "internal balancing" to ensure security on its own without alliances.

Alternatively, it may change its approach to coordination with the senior partner, in order to improve the chance of getting military assistance in case of emergency. Thus, the variable affects both the Dependence and Coordination Postures.

When the local balance of power is shifting in its own favor, a junior partner is more likely to be able to acquire, over time, sufficient capabilities to build a deterrent against its adversary. Its adversary might launch an attack to achieve its security goal, only if the expected cost of war is deemed low. A successful deterrent is thus a collection of capabilities that would make the expected costs of military attack unacceptably high for the adversary, even if the senior partner fails to come to aid.

The amount of capabilities sufficient to build a deterrent depends on the adversary's capabilities, and the deterrent need not be nuclear. Before the nuclear age, junior allies aimed to set up a conventional deterrent by expediting its conventional military buildup with indigenous technologies and by seeking third-party assistance. Even after the advent of nuclear weapons, some junior allies, like Turkey, build a conventional deterrent with third-party assistance, which may be sufficient depending on their primary adversary's capabilities.⁶¹

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The following section will discuss how combinations of these three variables determine a choice of alliance strategy.

6. Causal Pathways

⁶¹ Turkey began receiving a Russian surface-to-air missile system called the S-400 in July 2019, defying strenuous American objections and the threat of sanctions. See The New York Times, 12 July 2019.

I assume that the most fundamental determinant of alliance strategy is the variable of perceived senior partner commitments – whether a junior partner perceives that its senior partner is committed to fighting the primary adversary by force. In all asymmetric alliances in which the senior partner promises to defend its junior ally by armed forces, the junior partner should be most interested in whether the “big friend” stays committed to be on its side. And this should be true, whether the junior ally has a revisionist policy or not, given the military power the big partner has at its disposal. The extent to which the junior ally has to worry about the adversary’s capabilities also depends on how strongly the senior partner is committed to defending it. This is why I begin with the variable of perceived security commitments, and I consider this with one other variable at a time (see **Figure 2.** for the causal pathways I discuss below).

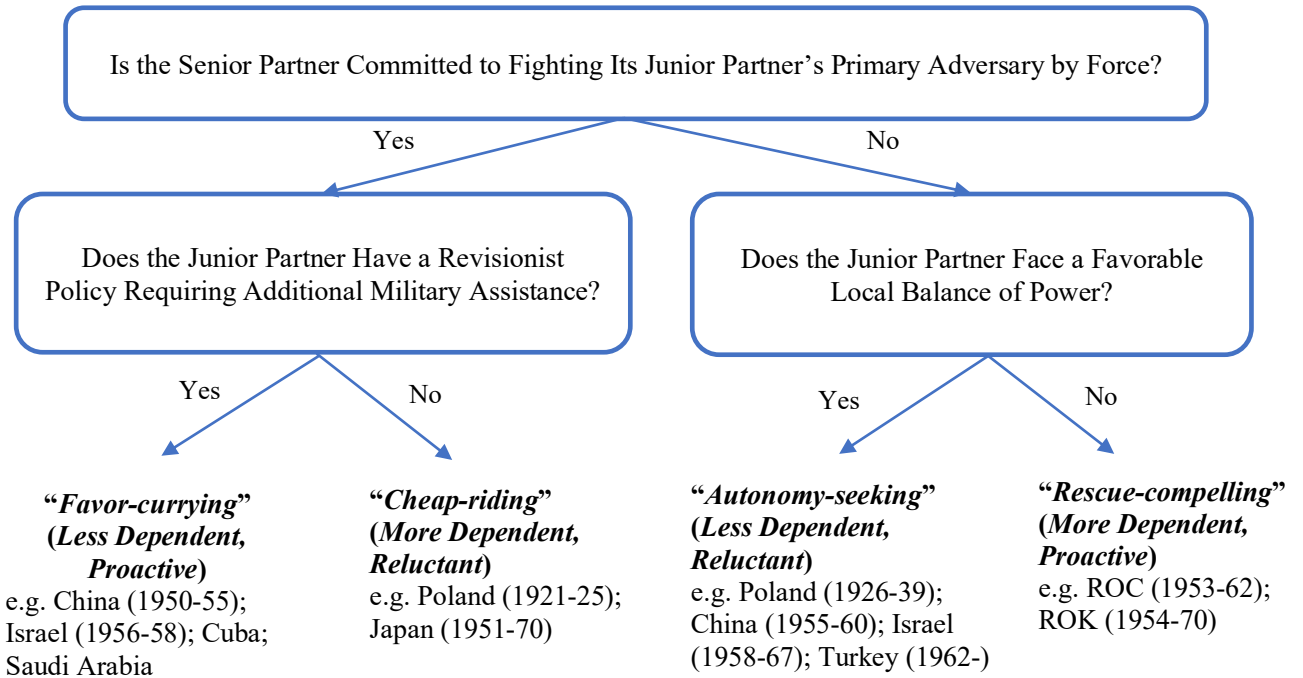
The set of two variables we consider first is a perception of strong security commitments along with the absence of a revisionist policy in a junior partner. When a rational junior partner perceives strong commitments by the senior partner, but does not have a revisionist policy that needs the senior partner’s military assistance in a foreseeable future, it likely adopts a *Cheap-riding* strategy to ensure national security with minimal costs.

Cheap-riding

The *Cheap-riding* strategy primarily aims to ensure national security with “cheap” costs, by deliberately remaining incapable of defending itself on its own (*More Dependent*) and by not proactively taking actions to coordinate with the senior partner (*Reluctant*). The junior partner perceiving strong commitments by the senior partner and having no revisionist policy has already

gotten what it wanted out of the alliance, and therefore has no strong incentive to do more for its own defense or for alliance coordination.

Figure 2. Causal Pathways to the Four Different Strategies



With the assumption that no great power enters into an asymmetric alliance with the sole benevolent, altruistic purpose of defending another state, strong commitments reflect the fact that the senior partner, too, is reaping benefits from the alliance relationship and has a fear of losing them. Such benefits typically include strategic access on their allies' territories – access to secure locations for military infrastructures that would fulfil operational needs – i.e. store weapons or get them repaired and refueled. Unlike previous imperial powers that possessed colonies, today's great powers often face the challenge of finding and expanding strategic access without the use of force.

Cheap-riding junior allies know that these benefits are so much more important from their senior partner's perspective that by no means do their insufficient levels of defense capabilities cause an end to the alliance relationship. Rather, if the senior partner desires to perpetuate its strategic access, their junior allies' insufficient capabilities can even be welcome as helping justify its military presence on their territories. Thus, they tend to be *More Dependent* in the Dependence Posture.

The senior partner's strong commitments that reflect its strategic access can be a reason for the junior ally to desire less coordination with the senior partner (*Reluctant* in the Coordination Posture). The senior partner's military activities for purposes other than the provision of local security could potentially invite armed attacks from its various opponents. The junior ally hosting such military activities may be blackmailed into keeping the visiting forces from conducting operations. From the junior ally's perspective, such visiting forces can become what I call a "tripwire reversed,"⁶² which would *automatically* entangle the host country in a conflict, regardless of their alliance obligations.⁶³ A fear of potential automatic entanglement may cause in junior allies a tendency of coordinating less with the senior partner and instead improving relations

⁶² Thomas Schelling famously argued in 1966 that US troops stationed in Europe served as a "tripwire" conveying costly signals of American resolve to the Soviets. The argument was explicitly made in Congress that these troops were there not to defend against a superior Soviet army but to leave the Soviets in no doubt that the United States would be automatically involved in the event of any attack on Europe. See Thomas C. Schelling, *Arms and Influence: With a New Preface and Afterword*, Revised edition (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 47.

⁶³ I use the term "entangle" here to distinguish it from "entrap," the latter of which strictly means requiring a partner to participate in a war because of its alliance commitment even though none of its own security interests are at stake. Entrapment happens when a state, due to its broad and unambiguous alliance commitment similar to the 1939 German-Italy Pact of Steel, inadvertently gets dragged into a war where its own interests are not at stake. By contrast, entanglement happens when a state gets embroiled in a war due to physical connections through the presence of troops and facilities, regardless of alliance commitments. For more discussions on the differences between entrapment and entanglement, see Kim, "Why Alliances Entangle But Seldom Entrap States."

with the senior partner's various adversaries.⁶⁴ Hence, the *Cheap-riding* strategy with *More Dependent* in the Dependence Posture and *Reluctant* in the Coordination Posture.

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However, if a junior ally perceives strong commitments but harbors “revisionist” goals for which it needs additional military assistance from the senior partner, it may take a different, more proactive approach.

Favor-currying

If a junior ally perceives strong commitments but harbors “revisionist” goals, it most likely adopts a *Favor-currying* strategy. The strategy is designed to ingratiate oneself with a senior partner through exemplary defense buildup (*Less Dependent* in the Dependence Posture) and proactive coordination with policy alignment and troop contributions (*Proactive* in the Coordination Posture). The junior ally utilizing this strategy hopes to compel as yet unpromised military assistance as *quid pro quo* for being a “good” junior partner.

⁶⁴ Incentives to reduce the risk of automatic entanglement through neutral or independent foreign policy may be particularly strong when the junior partner is a non-nuclear state in an alliance relationship with a nuclear-armed senior partner. Nuclear weapons stocked or deployed locally make the costs of getting entangled in the senior partner's war prohibitively expensive, and a number of U.S. allies have refused to host U.S. nuclear weapons for that reason. For example, during the cold war an extensive global chain of nuclear installations and bases spanned hundreds of sites in dozens of overseas host countries, while several base hosts are known to have demanded that the United States not introduce nuclear weapons onto its bases within their territories. In 1958 France insisted that nuclear weapons be removed from its territory. After Japan's adoption of its three nonnuclear principles in the late 1960s – i.e. not possess, not produce, or not introduce nuclear weapons – Tokyo demanded that all nuclear deployments be subject to its prior approval, with its public promise that the government would always reject anyone's introduction of nuclear weapons into the Japanese territory under any circumstances. The 1986 Constitution of the Philippines banned the deployment of nuclear weapons. Panama, Iceland, and Spain all formally requested that the United States not station nuclear weapons on their territory. In 1987, the New Zealand parliament passed a law banning the transit of vessels carrying nuclear weapons. The introduction of nuclear weapons was a very thorny issue between the United States and its major allies during the cold war particularly because official U.S. nuclear policy has been to “neither confirm nor deny” the presence and location of its nuclear weapons.

For their revisionist goals, junior partners rarely get full endorsements or unwavering and unqualified promise of operational support from their senior partner, given the latter's desire to keep control over its allies and its general averseness to inadvertent entrapment in an armed conflict. Yet, the junior partner's perception of strong commitments should make it believe that there is a fair chance of getting the senior partner's additional assistance, if it behaves well.

To be a "good" partner, it needs to be capable with constant defense buildup – which entails a *Less Dependent* approach in the Dependence Posture. It also needs to make contributions to the advancement of the senior partner's various interests. It may send troops to assist the senior partner's military operations; it may fight the senior partner's opponents as a local agent; it may purchase a massive quantity of weapons from the senior partner's defense industry; and it may coordinate foreign policies to make sure it will stay aligned – all of which means it needs to be *Proactive* in the Coordination Posture. Hence, the *Favor-currying* strategy with a *Less Dependent* approach in the Dependence Posture and by being *Proactive* in the Coordination Posture.

The *Favor-currying* strategy is unlikely to be chosen when a junior partner does not perceive strong commitments, because such *Favor-currying* contributions to a senior partner not offering strong commitments would be difficult to sustain and justify in the domestic political context.

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If a junior partner perceives that its senior partner is not committed to fighting its primary adversary, however, it must do something to either prepare for potential abandonment or turn around the situation to somehow get stronger commitments. To prepare for potential abandonment, the junior partner may beef up its defense buildup to reduce its dependence. To get stronger commitments from the senior partner, the junior ally may change its approach to coordination with

the senior partner. The key factor that determines which way to go is the local balance of power, the third variable.

Autonomy-seeking

If a junior ally perceiving weak commitments faces a favorable local balance of power – i.e. either stable or shifting in its own favor – it should have confidence that it will acquire capabilities over time to build an independent indigenous deterrent against the adversary. It is thus likely to adopt an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, focusing on a defense buildup that would make the expected costs of military attacks unacceptable to the adversary – which entails the *Less Dependent* approach in the Dependence Posture. To develop an independent deterrent can be costly, however, leaving limited financial and human resources available for diligent coordination efforts – i.e. to send troops abroad; to fight the senior partner’s opponents; to coordinate and adjust foreign policies to stay aligned. Even if resource scarcity is not a concern, weak commitments by the senior partner likely cause distrust between the partners, making it difficult to justify proactive coordination efforts vis-à-vis the junior partner’s domestic constituents. Thus, it tends to adopt a *Reluctant* approach in the Coordination Posture. A quick defense buildup may require third-party assistance from another great power, and this could further reinforce the *Reluctant* approach to coordination with the senior partner. Hence, the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy with a *Less Dependent* approach in the Dependence Posture and a *Reluctant* approach in the Coordination Posture.

In the process of building its independent deterrent, junior allies still intend to take advantage of partial security protection by their senior partner for as long as they can do so. Meanwhile, by demonstrating its ability to set up an independent deterrent, the junior ally may even be able to increase its intra-alliance bargaining position to the point that it faces a lower

chance of abandonment. The strategy works well when, despite weak commitments, a senior partner is still interested in the alliance relationship in order to maintain its control over the junior partner's capabilities and resources.

It can be dangerous, however, if a senior partner is just bluffing with threats to abrogate a security contract in order to discipline a recalcitrant *Autonomy-seeking* ally. The senior partner's threats of abandonment would make the *Autonomy-seeking* partner temporarily vulnerable to the adversary, which might launch an attack to neutralize a nascent independent deterrent. This is what I call "the *composite alliance security dilemma*," which the senior partner faces when it plays both the alliance and adversary games simultaneously. What a senior partner typically thinks of as the best way to manage a recalcitrant partner – by threats of abandonment – is incompatible with its best strategy in deterring the adversary.⁶⁵ The senior partner's bluff with threats of abandonment can be detrimental to its ability to deter the adversary, as a fissiparous alliance can be seen as a window of opportunities for the adversary to make provocations before it is too late. By distancing itself from the junior partner with threats of abandonment, the senior partner faces a heightened risk of entrapment – which is the *opposite* of Glenn Snyder's alliance security dilemma hypothesis because, rather than getting closer to the partner, distancing oneself from the junior partner by threats of abandonment increases the risk of entrapment.⁶⁶

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⁶⁵ This argument is built upon Glenn H. Snyder's concept of "composite security dilemma." Snyder argues that the dilemma is not just whether to support or restrain the ally, but whether to support the ally or to collaborate with the noninvolved state on the opposite side in restraining both protagonists. See Glenn H. Snyder, "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics," *World Politics* 36, no. 04 (July 1984): 461–95, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2010183>.

⁶⁶ Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 329–30.

On the other hand, if a junior partner faces an unfavorable local balance of power vis-à-vis an adversary with much larger and growing military capabilities, its defense buildup efforts may be futile. It is then likely to be left with the *Rescue-compelling* strategy.

Rescue-compelling

The *Rescue-compelling* strategy is aimed at compelling a senior partner into offering renewed security commitments and additional military assistance, by growing *More Dependent* in the Dependence Posture while being *Proactive* in the Coordination Posture. When a junior ally perceives weak commitments and faces an unfavorable local military balance – i.e. the balance is shifting in the adversary’s favor – it is typically desperate to do whatever it takes to get renewed commitments. To attract the senior partner’s attention, it may offer as much contributions as possible to the advancement of the senior partner’s various interests. It may send troops to fight on behalf of the senior partner; it may purchase weapons from the senior partner’s defense industry; and it may coordinate foreign policies – all of which means it needs to be *Proactive* in the Coordination Posture.

However, ingratiating coordination efforts are not effective enough to make the senior partner upgrade security commitments, because the commitments very often depend on more fundamental strategic factors including the junior partner’s location, technological skills, and economic values such as its market size.

Meanwhile, for a junior ally facing the local balance of power shifting in favor of the adversary, the prospect of building capabilities for an independent deterrent is unrealistic as the adversary’s military power grows rapidly. Desperate to get the senior partner’s attention, the junior ally may take radical measures – to grow *More Dependent* on the senior partner, instead, and then

heighten local tensions through escalatory behavior toward the adversary. Seeing its ally being dependent and threatened by the adversary's growing military power, the senior partner might feel compelled to help, lest disastrous consequences such as a large number of casualties resulting from a failure to honor commitments taint its own international reputation and damage other alliance relationships.

An optimal condition for a *Rescue-compelling* ally is when its senior partner believes in the so-called domino theory (or a.k.a. the “interdependence of commitments theory”) – one failure to honor a commitment would trigger a chain of other allies’ disbelief in their respective alliance relationships.⁶⁷ Once used, however, this strategy may not work as well a second time, since great powers wary of inadvertent entrapment may either end the alliance relationship or significantly tighten its control to not allow for escalatory behavior to happen again.

This strategy is even riskier than *Autonomy-seeking*, and is thus likely to be considered viable only if an independent deterrent is deemed as an unrealistic option. In other words, it is the last resort.

Summary of the Causal Pathways

How those three determinants cause the different alliance strategies is summarized as follows. The most fundamental determinant of these strategies is whether the junior partner perceives that its senior partner is committed to fighting its primary adversary by force. The

⁶⁷ Two crucial conditions need to be met for the domino theory to hold, however: the presence of the stronger party's competitor and its belief that one failure to assume its commitment can discredit all of its defense commitments once and for all in the eyes of both partners and enemies. See Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 55–60.; Alexander L. George and Richard Smoke, *Deterrence in American Foreign Policy: Theory and Practice* (Columbia University Press, 1974), 553.; Bar-Siman-Tov, “Alliance Strategy,” September 1, 1980, 204.; Franklin B. Weinstein, “The Concept of a Commitment in International Relations,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 13, no. 1 (1969): 39–56.

evaluation of security commitments leads to the different strategies through two more variables: 1) whether a junior partner harbors a revisionist policy requiring military assistance from the senior partner; and 2) the local balance of power – i.e. a junior partner’s technical capabilities relative to its primary adversary.

When a junior partner perceives strong commitments from its senior partner but has no revisionist policy, it likely adopts a *Cheap-riding* strategy to ensure national security with small budgets. But if a junior partner perceives strong commitments and harbors “revisionist” aims that likely require the senior partner’s operational military assistance in the near future, it needs to take actions to ensure such assistance. It is thus likely to utilize a *Favor-currying* strategy to induce the senior partner to offer such help.

If a junior partner perceives that its senior partner is not committed to fighting its primary adversary, however, it must do something to either prepare for potential abandonment or turn around the situation to somehow get stronger commitments. To prepare for potential abandonment, the junior partner may beef up its defense buildup to reduce its dependence. To get stronger commitments from the senior partner, the junior ally may change its approach to coordination with the senior partner. The key factor that determines which way to go is the local balance of power.

If the local power balance is favorable – i.e. either stable or shifting in its own favor – it should not be difficult to achieve technical capabilities sufficient to make the cost of a potential attack by an adversary too expensive. Thus, a junior ally facing a favorable local balance of power is likely to adopt an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, focusing on a defense buildup necessary to acquire an independent deterrent. If a junior partner faces an unfavorable power balance – i.e. shifting in favor of the adversary – on the other hand, it is then likely to be left with a *Rescue-compelling* strategy. A defense buildup may be futile in the face of the adversary with growing military power,

while beefing up its ingratiating alliance contributions such as policy alignment may not be effective enough to make the senior partner upgrade its baseline security commitments. As a result, a junior partner desperate to attract the senior partner's attention may grow even more dependent and heighten local tensions so that the senior partner would worry. It may even resort to risky escalatory conduct toward its adversary in a desperate attempt to compel its senior partner into declare support.

Both the *Autonomy-seeking* and the *Rescue-compelling* strategies are risky, because they create a window of opportunity for adversary provocations that makes oneself vulnerable at least temporarily. Privileged allies enjoying strong commitments from their senior partner therefore would not employ these two strategies.

7. Alternative Explanations and Research Design

This section will first discuss alternative explanations for the dependent variable of the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. Although there is no existing theory of alliance strategy per se, an extrapolation of the existing arguments and theories offer some explanations for different approaches junior allies might take, both in terms of the level of dependence and coordination. As was discussed in the literature review above, two major families of IR theories offer predictions: security threats (interests at stake); and similarities of identity and ideology, each of which will be discussed in the following.

Alternative Explanation (1): Security Threat

An extrapolation of balance of threat (BoT) theory, the most dominant neorealist theory of alliance formation, suggests that the greater security threats a state faces, the more likely it is to augment its defense capabilities and to increase its alignment efforts to better coordinate with its partner.⁶⁸ Conversely, when the security threats disappear, a state should be less willing to build its arsenal and cooperate with its security partner.

To be fair, the original balance of threat theory is meant to explain alliance formation as a *temporary* measure to address the rise of security threats – through external balancing – when a defense buildup – internal balancing – does not offer a quick-enough solution to meet the growing danger. However, the theory still assumes that alliance partners continue their efforts of military buildup autonomously but rely on external balancing – i.e. alliances with other states – when their own capabilities are insufficient to balance the threats they face. Thus, it is fair to say that an extrapolation of the BoT theory implies that alliance partners are more likely to improve both their own capabilities and their coordination under growing security threats – and this is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy which involves continued defense buildup and close coordination. When security threats are diminishing, on the other hand, alliance partners may have less incentive to continue coordinating with their partner but junior allies still do keep building their own military arsenal given their weaker position – and this is an equivalent of the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, which involves continued defense buildup and a decline in coordination efforts. In fact, The BoT theory does not assume that states might ever deliberately stay incapable of defending themselves.

⁶⁸ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 32.

By contrast, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts that as far as the weaker party's behavior is concerned, its perception of senior partner security commitments is more important as a determinant than a sheer level of security threats it faces. Security threats in terms of capability differences between a state and its adversary should become a real factor only if the security commitments are perceived to be weak and unreliable. In addition, alliance partners vary not just on the dimension of coordination they pursue with one another but also on the degree of dependence they find acceptable for themselves. For example, under growing security threats, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy expects a junior ally receiving strong commitments from its senior partner to have no reason to increase either the levels of defense budgets or of coordination with the partner. To the extent that a senior partner offers security commitments not purely out of generosity but for its own strategic purposes such as maintaining stability in regions important to itself, a junior ally's growing dependence for security can be an effective tool to incentivize the senior partner to offer more help.

James Morrow's theory of alliance formation – the “Security-Autonomy Tradeoff” – does not offer better predictions for junior partner behavior, despite its focus on asymmetric alliances. Certainly, it better explains why great powers are ever interested in forming an alliance with small powers. However, its extrapolation for *ex-post* junior partner behavior – i.e. their behavior after an alliance was formed – is not any different from that of balance of threat theory. Under the assumption that all nations have convex preferences in autonomy and security, Morrow argues that minor powers with low levels of security and high levels of autonomy desire an alliance that would increase their security at the cost of some autonomy they are ready to lose through policy concessions.⁶⁹ Assuming that their *ex-post* alliance relationship rests on their iterated decisions to

⁶⁹ Morrow, “Alliances and Asymmetry.”

stay in or exit the alliance, junior partners are more likely to offer concessions (a loss of autonomy) when the benefits of continued security are greater than the cost of continued alignment in terms of policy concessions. Conversely, junior partners are more likely to refuse alignment when the value of continued security is deemed less than the cost of concessions. In this framework, its alignment behavior is predicted to be inversely proportional to their security deficit – i.e. the amount of additional security they need. In short, it offers the same predictions as balance of threat theory's: junior partners are more likely to improve both their own capabilities and their coordination under growing security threats – and this is an equivalent of the *Favor-carrying* strategy; when security threats are diminishing, junior partners are more likely to have less incentive to continue coordinating with their partner but still do keep building their own military arsenal given their weaker position – and this is an equivalent of the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy.

Alternative Explanation (2): Ideological Similarity

Constructivism predicts junior partner behavior to be determined primarily by similarities of identity and ideology with those of their senior partner, rather than by security threats or security commitments they perceive. Mark Haas argues, for example, that there exists a strong relationship between the ideological distance dividing states' leaders and their foreign policy choices such as cooperation (alignment) or confrontation, since their ideological distances determine an understanding of threats they pose to one another's interests. The greater the ideological differences dividing decision makers across states, the higher the perceived level of threats; the

greater the ideological similarities uniting leaders, the lower the perceived threat.⁷⁰ And the higher the perceived level of threats, the less alignment and cooperation between their states; conversely, the lower the perceived threat, the more alignment and cooperation.

The causal logic linking the degree of ideological differences dividing states' leaders to perceptions of threat and consequent foreign policy choices such as cooperation or confrontation consists of three different causal mechanisms: the "Demonstrations Effects" mechanism (the process by which the success or failure in one state of particular institutional structures, belief systems, or political actions ... will affect how these phenomena are understood in other polities⁷¹); the "Conflict Probability" mechanism (the process by which decision makers are classifying their counterparts in different states into in-group and out-group members, a distinction between those who share their legitimating principles and those who do not⁷²); and the "Communications" mechanism (the greater the ideological differences among actors, the greater the impediments to effective communication among them⁷³).

Thomas Christensen, while not a constructivist, also argues that ideological distances affect alliance behavior, albeit through a different mechanism: in revisionist ideological alliances, competition for leadership among revisionist belligerents can push the entire alliance movement in a more aggressive direction, and this competitive process tends to create a foreign policy of external belligerence particularly by newer members, who seek political support from their more experienced comrades.⁷⁴ "Concerned for their own positions within the alliance, the initially more

⁷⁰ Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789–1989*, 4. Also see Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 183–84.

⁷¹ Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789–1989*, 6.

⁷² Haas, 10.

⁷³ Haas, 12. Also see Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics: New Edition*, New edition (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2017), chaps. 4 & 5.

⁷⁴ Christensen, *Worse Than a Monolith*, 15–16.

moderate “players” might be catalyzed by the process of such competition and thereby become more aggressive toward the enemy camp than they were initially.” Once the more senior member of the alliance moves toward moderation, this creates dissonance and friction between the moderate and more radical members, which, in turn, lead to less alignment.

Haas and Christensen discuss different mechanisms by which ideologies affect alliance behavior. But their implications for junior partner behavior are similar: one should expect to see more policy coordination between partners, when decision makers of a junior partner state have allegiance to the same ideological beliefs as those of its senior partner; conversely, less policy coordination is expected when the partners do not share the same ideological principles. On the other hand, neither of the two arguments on ideologies predicts variation on the level of dependence a junior partner might choose for itself in an asymmetric alliance. But both seem to assume that there is no deliberate change in their efforts to build defense capabilities before and after they form an alliance – i.e. junior allies do not attempt to deliberately let their defense capabilities stagnate or decline. Their predictions are: either pursuing more policy coordination while continuing their defense buildup when their ideologies are similar – which is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy; or making less coordination efforts while continuing their defense buildup when their ideologies are distant from each other – which is an equivalent of the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. The latter case with different ideologies does not cause the *Cheap-riding* strategy, because when their ideologies are distant from one another’s, they are less likely to pursue closer policy coordination or cooperation, which means they need to improve capabilities to defend themselves because their partners are not reliable.

Research Design and Case Selection

To test the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy against these alternative explanations, I primarily take a qualitative approach with several alliance cases. In each of the case studies, I look at within-case temporal variation to examine how well the Theory's causal mechanisms explain the changes in alliance strategies compared to the competing explanations.

To select cases with which to test the Theory, I draw upon Harry Eckstein's crucial-case study approach to choose "least-likely" cases for the outcome the Theory is meant to explain – junior partners' different alliance strategies. According to Eckstein, least-likely cases are ones that, on all dimensions except the dimension of interest to the theory to be tested, are predicted not to achieve the theory's prediction and yet does so.⁷⁵ In other words, the least likely cases are those in which the explanatory variables in the competing explanations – such as security threats and ideological similarities in this case – should *most likely* produce their predicted outcomes, not the ones postulated by the theory to be tested. My strategy is to provide a series of testing grounds most conducive to the two competing explanations and to show that my theory still performs better in explaining variation on alliance strategy and behavior.

What are the most likely cases for the alternative explanations? Regarding the "security threats" explanation, its most-likely cases are the ones where a junior partner faces severe threats from an adversary possessing much larger military capabilities and that the level of the security threats – or capability differences with the adversary – varies over time. With these criteria, the alliance between the United States and the FRG (West Germany) is not ideal, for example, given

⁷⁵ Harry Eckstein, "Case Study and Theory in Political Science," in *Strategies of Inquiry*, ed. Fred I. Greenstein and Nelson W. Polsby, vol. 7, Handbook of Political Science (Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1975), 118–19.

the junior ally's preexisting formidable military skills. The U.S.-Republic of Korea alliance is a better case to select, because of Seoul's weakness vis-à-vis North Korea backed by the Soviet Union with a formal alliance after 1961. With regard to the "ideological similarities" explanation, its most-likely cases are the ones in which alliance partners are either sharing the exact same ideologies and identity or embracing as different ideologies and identity as possible. In reality, it is not easy to find many cases where alliance partners had opposing ideologies, as many cases in the last 100 years are among the states that share the same ideology, partly reflecting the ideological nature of the Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union. Ideal cases are the ones where the degree to which alliance partners share the same ideologies and identities changes over time.

In addition to the requirement of "least-likelihood," cases should be selected in a way that would allow us to see how well the Theory's purported causal mechanisms are working to produce differences as well as how far the Theory is generalizable across time and across different regions of the world. As such, a collection of selected cases should maximize variation in the values of the independent variables of the Theory as well as variation in time, region, adversary state, and senior partner state, in order to eliminate potential confounding factors such as cultural and linguistic peculiarity.

Last, but not least, alliance cases whose origins lie in a colonial relationship with the senior partner – for instance, the alliances between France and some African states such as Chad, Congo, and Gabon – should not be chosen for case studies. In such junior partner states, their leadership positions are often dominated by people that represent the interests of their senior partner and therefore do not act on the best interests of their own country and their local people. Due to their limited sovereignty, such cases with colonial legacies do not lend themselves to the existing IR

theories including the two alternative explanations above, which assume state autonomy and independence.

Using these criteria, I select six asymmetric alliance cases led by three different great powers over the last hundred years – two cases with the United States, two cases with the Soviet Union and two cases with France. The two cases with each great power state have been chosen so that they include junior partners facing different adversaries with superior military capabilities. The two US-led alliances are the U.S.-Japan alliance (1951-90) and the U.S.-ROC alliance (1954-); Japan faced security threats primarily from the Soviet Union, while the ROC's primary adversary was the People's Republic of China (PRC); these two U.S.-led alliances are solidified with an anti-communist ideology. The two Soviet-led alliances are the Soviet-Iran alliance (1921-91) and the Soviet-PRC alliance (1950-60); Iran felt threatened by Britain, its former colonizer, and British-instigated local insurgents in its northern regions (Moscow promised to protect Iran from British imperialism); the PRC was threatened by the United States; both of the Soviet-led alliances were driven by anti-imperialist ideologies. The two French alliances are the French-Poland alliance (1921-1939) and the French-Israel alliance (1955-67); Poland faced security threats both from the Soviet Union and Germany, whereas Israel's primary adversary was all Arab countries led by Egypt and Syria; both of the two French-led alliances were anti-communist in theory, although the French attitude toward the Soviet Union was ambiguous from time to time. Three cases involve junior allies in Asia (Japan, the PRC, and the ROC), while two others are in the Middle East (Iran and Israel), one in Europe (Poland).

Measurements of Variables

Each of the variables of the Theory is measured with the following rules to ensure consistency throughout the empirical cases.

(1) The Dependent Variable – junior partner alliance strategy

The dependent variable takes four different values – *Cheap-riding*, *Rescue-compelling*, *Favor-currying*, and *Autonomy-seeking* – which are four different combinations of the two postures – their Dependence and Coordination Postures. The Dependence Posture is either *More Dependent* or *Less Dependent*, whereas the Coordination Posture is either *Proactive* or *Reluctant*. A combination of {*More Dependent*, *Reluctant*} is deemed to be a *Cheap-riding* strategy; that of {*More Dependent*, *Proactive*} is regarded as a *Rescue-compelling* strategy; the {*Less Dependent*, *Proactive*} combination constitutes a *Favor-currying* strategy; and the {*Less Dependent*, *Reluctant*} set is considered a *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. Therefore, the measurement of the dependent variable comes down to the measurements of each of the two postures.

Dependence Posture

A junior partner's Dependence Posture is deemed "*More Dependent*":

- (i) either if, despite security threats it still faces, it deliberately allows its defense budgets to decline as percentage of GDP or stagnate below the level of 2% of GDP in peacetime;
- (ii) or if, despite security threats it still faces, it intentionally designs a force structure such that its defense capabilities remain insufficient to repel an attack.

It is deemed "*Less Dependent*":

- (i) either if it steadily increases its defense budgets as percentage of GDP or keeps above the level of 2% of GDP in peacetime;

(ii) or if it initiated a nuclear weapons or other advanced military technology program designed to build an independent deterrent against an adversary.

Coordination Posture

A junior ally's approach in the Contribution Posture is measured either based on the amount of troop contributions or the degree of policy coordination. A junior partner's Coordination Posture is *Proactive*:

(i) when it deploys troops to join military operations (excluding trainings or simulations) planned and executed by the senior partner;

(ii) or when it consults with the senior partner and modifies, if necessary, its foreign and military policies toward the adversaries in order to be in alignment with the senior partner with regard to how to deal with their common or respective adversaries;

(iii) or when it purchases weapons equipment exclusively from the senior partner's defense industry.

A junior partner's Coordination Posture is deemed *Reluctant*:

(i) when it refuses to positively respond to the senior partner's request for troop contributions;

(ii) or when it refuses to consult the senior partner over its foreign and military policies toward the adversaries or to modify its policies incongruent with the senior partner's with regard to how to deal with their common or respective adversaries;

(iii) or when it deliberately diversifies the sources of weapons procurement to be more independent from the senior partner.

(2) The Independent Variables

Changes in the values of the independent variables are measured based on the following rules to ensure consistency.

Perception of Senior Partner Security Commitments

The variable of perceived senior partner security commitments measures a junior partner's understanding of senior partner security commitments. As a binary variable, it takes two values – either strong or weak. Strong commitments are explicit and broad with no to limited qualifications for conditions under which the senior partner must offer assistance. Weak commitments are implicit and narrowly scoped with many qualifications that limit conditions under which the senior partner must come to rescue. However, weak commitments in word can be perceived to be strong if they are accompanied either by the senior partner's war preparations toward the common adversaries or by its troops stationing on the junior ally's territory. It is possible that the same expression in written texts for security commitments by the same senior partner is perceived differently by different junior partners due to the latter's different security needs.

I use speech evidence for a junior ally's perceptions of security commitments whenever possible. If speech evidence is not available, I rely on a senior partner's particular actions or speech – e.g. troops withdrawal or war preparations – that can clearly be observed by the junior partner.

Junior Partner Revisionist Policy

The variable of the junior partner's revisionist policy is measured based on whether a junior ally has a policy that seeks to change, by the use of force or by threats thereof, the current, primarily local, distribution of power and goods in order to acquire various resources over which other states

currently have their administrative control. By contrast, policies that are not revisionist are the ones that either desire to preserve the current distribution of power and goods or those that, while actually desiring change in the distribution, have renounced the use of force or threats thereof as a method for bringing it about.⁷⁶

For a policy to qualify as revisionist, the state's military personnel, or militias working for the military, needs to be prepared, through operational plans and trainings, to implement the change the policy aims to achieve.

Local Balance of Power

The variable of the local balance of power is measured based on the comparison between a junior ally and its adversary in terms of their current military capabilities, the pace of their military buildup, and their power position in the international community. The power position means a state's diplomatic status including diplomatic recognition, membership of international organizations (e.g. a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council), and access to regional non-military unions and economic markets (e.g. a membership of the European Union; a membership of the ASEAN).

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In the next six empirical chapters, I will present six different alliance cases to examine how well the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy explains within-case temporal variation in the

⁷⁶ Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration; Essays on International Politics*, 125.

junior partner's alliance strategies compared to the above-mentioned two competing explanations.

The first one is Poland's alliance with France in the 1920s and the 1930s.

Chapter III: The France-Poland Alliance (1921-1939)

1. Introduction

The Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy can explain the choice of alliance strategy by Poland very well. It was an asymmetrical alliance between a great power, France, and a small power, Poland, which faced significant security threats from neighboring states in the 1920s and the 1930s. In 1918, when Poland was reborn after 124 years of cession by Russia, Germany, and Austria, its international standing was particularly precarious. Racial minorities accounted for more than 30 percent of Poland's population, and its borders were contested by virtually all its neighbors despite the settlement through the Paris Peace Conference and the treaty of Riga.⁷⁷

By its geographical location, Poland was destined to play a dual role – as an eastern check on Germany and as a *cordon sanitaire* against a Communist expansion to the west. Poland's geopolitical precariousness was worsened by its domestic instability problems. After the First World War, Poland found itself struggling due to political instability, having a series of 13

⁷⁷ Czechoslovakia and Lithuania disputed some of the territorial boundaries granted to Poland in the Treaty of Versailles, leaving their political disposition at odds with the Polish government. In January 1919, Czechoslovakia sent troops into the lowland gap in the Carpathian Mountain range near Cieszyn near the Czech–Polish border. Fighting erupted and the discord continued until the international Council of Ambassadors awarded the region to Czechoslovakia in July 1920. See Kenneth K. Koskodan, *No Greater Ally: The Untold Story of Poland's Forces in World War II*, 1 edition (Osprey Publishing, 2011), chap. 1, fn.2.

governments in just eight years from 1918 through 1926. This, combined with economic difficulties, left Poland only a fraction of the industrial and economic resources its European neighbors were spending on their military.

Under such circumstances Poland sought an alliance with a great power to seek external protection while building a viable state both politically and economically. And an alliance with France was the only realistic option: the French army came out of World War I by far the strongest military force in Europe, and the French Air Force was also of a high order.⁷⁸ In addition, Poland had shared interests with France. Like Poland, France also had a strong distrust of Germany after WWI.

Poland originally perceived strong French commitments to defending its eastern ally. With the exception of the Quai d'Orsay, the French ministry of foreign affairs, and some of the top military officials like Marshal Foch, all other French leaders strongly supported an alliance with Poland, including, among others, President Millerand, the minister of war, Louis Barthou, the chief of the general staff, General Edmond Buat, and the new premier and foreign minister, Aristide Briand.⁷⁹

Given the priority placed on its economic recovery, Poland did not have a revisionist foreign policy to get its eastern border issues settled by force. Rather, it was focusing on its survival through French military and economic assistance. Foreign Minister Konstanty Skirmunt approached the Little Entente (i.e. Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia) to gain support

⁷⁸ John Keegan, *Atlas of the Second World War* (Ann Arbor: HarperCollins, 1999), 38 and 43.

⁷⁹ Léon Noël, *L'Agression Allemande Contre La Pologne* (Paris : Flammarion, 1946), 100. Also see Piotr Stefan Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925: French-Czechoslovak-Polish Relations from the Paris Peace Conference to Locarno* (New York, NY: ACLS Humanities E-Book, 2008), 215.

against revisionism.⁸⁰ With his initiative, the Polish representatives discussed immutability of frontiers at conferences in Bucharest and Belgrade.⁸¹

Consistent with the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, Poland, perceiving strong French security commitments and harboring no revisionist foreign policy, originally adopted a *Cheap-riding* strategy with small military spending and limited alliance contributions. Poland shifted from *Cheap-riding* to *Autonomy-seeking* in the latter half of the 1920s, however. The Treaties of Locarno in 1925 required additional political procedures through the League of Nations, making it difficult for France to take military actions in case of German aggression based on its 1921 alliance treaty with Poland. In addition, the Locarno system implicitly encouraged German expansion to the east by leaving Germany's eastern borders unsettled. Only by preparing an offensive operation across the Rhineland, would France have been able to credibly commit to protecting Poland. And yet, Paris took a series of purely defensive measures – the construction of the Maginot Line that began in 1927, and by 1930, French troops had withdrawn from the Rhineland.

As predicted by the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, Poland's behavior soon thereafter shifted to *Autonomy-seeking*, by building an indigenous defense industry and embracing an independent foreign policy. It sought security assistance from Britain and concluded a nonaggression pact with Germany in January 1934 without consulting France. Polish Commander-in-chief Piłsudski hoped the French-Polish alliance to be as close to a union of equals as possible, and believed that the nonaggression pact with Berlin would enhance the value of the Polish

⁸⁰ Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 259.

⁸¹ H. P. Dodge to Secretary of State, March 18, 1922, 550e.1/152, National Archives of the United States.

connection in the French eyes.⁸² From 1933 to 1939 almost half of the national budget – some 6,500 billion zlotys – was spent on national defense.⁸³

I test the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy against two powerful alternative explanations: the security threat explanation and a hypothesis of ideological solidarity. The security threat explanation postulates that the greater security threats a state faces, the more likely it is to increase its defense capabilities and stay closely aligned with its alliance partner– and this is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy which involves continued defense buildup and close coordination.⁸⁴ When security threats are diminishing, on the other hand, the prediction is that the state is more likely to be reluctant to coordinate with the partner but still be willing to keep building its own military arsenal given its weaker position vis-à-vis the partner – and this is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, which involves a continued defense buildup and a decline in coordination efforts. As we shall see below, it does not predict Poland’s behavior toward France very well. While the threat level from Germany was not changing much in the 1920s, Poland’s behavior shifted. When German threats were on the rise in the early 1930s, Poland should have stayed closely aligned with France with proactive troop contributions and policy alignment. Instead, Warsaw pursued an independent deterrent, sought assistance from Britain, and concluded a non-aggression pact with Germany without consulting Paris.

The hypothesis of ideological solidarity predicts, on the other hand, that the more similar the leaders’ ideologies are, the more likely they are to cooperate with faster defense buildups and

⁸² Piotr Stefan Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936: French-Czechoslovak-Polish Relations from Locarno to the Remilitarization of the Rhineland* (ACLS Humanities E-Book, 2008), 451.

⁸³ Jan Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: From Versailles to Yalta* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014), 245.

⁸⁴ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 32.

tighter alignment – which is an equivalent of the *Favor-carrying* strategy.⁸⁵ Conversely, when their ideologies are distant from one another's, they are less likely to pursue closer policy coordination but they still need to improve capabilities to defend themselves because their ideologically-distant partners are not reliable – which is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. This ideological solidarity hypothesis does not perform any better than the security threat explanation in predicting Polish behavior vis-à-vis France particularly in the 1930s. Both Poland and France were republics sharing their anti-communist ideologies throughout the period of their alliance. And yet, Poland's dependence posture as well as alliance coordination vary during that period – a fluctuation that the ideological solidarity hypothesis cannot explain.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into six sections. The second, following section will provide the background of this alliance, clarifying values this case takes on the independent variables and predicting the dependent variable – alliance strategy – of the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. The third section examines the degree of empirical support for the *Cheap-riding* strategy – predicted by the Theory when the junior partner perceived strong security commitments by the senior partner while not pursuing a revisionist foreign policy goal. The fourth section presents empirical evidence for the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy – the predicted strategy when the senior partner's security commitments became weak in the eyes of the junior partner, while the latter either has technical capabilities for building an independent deterrent or enjoys third-party assistance. The fifth section discusses Poland's *Rescue-compelling* strategy during the first six months of the year 1933, in which Warsaw exhibited very belligerent and escalatory behavior toward Germany. The sixth section will explain how and why Poland went back to its *Autonomy-seeking* strategy in the latter half of the year 1933 and will present evidence for it. And the final

⁸⁵ Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 183–84.

seventh section will conclude by comparing the performances of the Theory with those of the two above-mentioned alternative explanations.

2. Background

(1) The formation of the alliance

France and Poland formalized their alliance in February 1921 during a state visit to Paris by Chief of State, Józef Piłsudski, his foreign minister, Prince Eustachy Sapieha, and Minister of War, General Kazimierz Sosnkowski.⁸⁶ The French side was represented by President Alexandre Millerand, Foreign Minister Aristide Briand, and War Minister Louis Barthou. Their meeting in Paris culminated in the Political Agreement between France and Poland signed on February 19, 1921, in which the two states agreed that the two Governments “shall take concerted measures for the defense of their territory and the protection of their legitimate interests” if “either or both of them should be attacked without giving provocation (Article 3).”⁸⁷ With the following qualifying words, “notwithstanding the sincerely peaceful views and intentions of the Contracting States,” Article 3 was meant to restrict French obligations by leaving out the Upper Silesian situation so that France would not support any adventurous Polish policy in the east. As French Foreign Minister Aristide Briand put it in his meeting with an American envoy in Paris, France had “no intention to support Poland in any act of the latter’s aggression against the Bolsheviks.”⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 211–37.

⁸⁷ See Ministère des Affaires Étrangères de France, *Le Livre Jaune Français, Documents Diplomatiques, 1938–1939* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1939), 419. Also see Gibler, *International Military Alliances 1648-2008*, 233.

⁸⁸ Wallace to Secretary of State, February 7, 1921, Department of State, 760c.61/451, cited in Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 217.

The two states also agreed to “consult each other before concluding new agreements which will affect their policy in Central and Eastern Europe” (Article 4) and “consult each other on all questions of foreign policy which concern both States, so far as those questions affect the settlement of international relations in the spirit of the Treaties and in accordance with the Covenant of the League of Nations.”⁸⁹ The two parties also pledged to develop economic relations under special agreements and commercial treaties (Article 2).⁹⁰

Concurrently, the two governments signed a secret military convention, which would be invoked in case of German aggression⁹¹ against one of the two states or a war between Poland and the Soviet Union.⁹² It stipulated: 1) France shall provide Poland with materials and technical assistance, but not French combatants to join Polish troops; 2) France shall ensure the security of lines of communication between France and Poland, including sea-lane communications; 3) Poland shall maintain nine brigades of Cavalry, a minimum of 30 infantry divisions, in addition to reservists of the same sizes; 4) France shall provide financial aid of four hundred million francs for Poland to purchase weapons.⁹³ According to Piotr Wandycz, who consulted Polish archives, the secret military convention consisted of eight articles and a special annex.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ Gibler, *International Military Alliances 1648-2008*, 233.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ This included all aggressions from any territory under the jurisdiction of the German government.

⁹² “Traites, Conventions Et Accords Politiques Et Militaires Existant Ou Projets Entre La France, La Pologne Et Les Etats De La Petite Entente,” le 24 mai 1929, File GR 7N 2520, Service historique de la Défense.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ A text of the secret military accord was reconstructed from a report dated January 18, 1928, written by Mr. Jackowski, the director of the political department of the Polish foreign ministry, for then Foreign Minister August Zaleski. See Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 394–95. The same text for the secret military accord can also be found in “Francja-Polska,” A 11/3, Documents from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Political Department, General Sikorski Historical Institute. Article 1 provided for mutual aid in case of German aggression. Article 2 stipulated that, in case of a Russian-Polish war, France shall keep Germany in check to help Poland in defense against the Soviets. Article 3 defined French aid, which included keeping lines of communication open to send material and technical assistance, while acknowledging that France would not be obliged to send troops to fight on behalf of Poland. Article 4 provided for the size of the Polish military as an army of thirty infantry divisions, nine brigades of cavalry, and other services modeled on the French army. Article 5 and a special annex provided for

While France did not promise to send troops to Poland, the French obligation of keeping lines of communication open and secure could entail French military interventions in Danzig and Pomerania if German paramilitary organizations attempted to seize these areas. And this was a contingency scenario that the Polish viewed as quite likely at the time.⁹⁵ On the other hand, Poland originally requested a bigger loan of nine hundred million francs, but Paris agreed to four hundred million only.⁹⁶ This arms loan would be provided under the condition that Poland would purchase weapons exclusively from France.⁹⁷

France's motive for this alliance had more to do with its economic benefits rather than regional security. After WWI, the French economy went through a period of depression, experiencing deteriorating balance of payment problems. In addition, French businessmen and investors suffered heavy financial losses due to inflation in Poland, lobbying the French government to demand compensations from the Polish treasury. Potential economic gains from this alliance were deemed important especially by the French foreign ministry (Quai d'Orsay), which inserted legal provisions making both the alliance treaty and the secret military convention contingent on the signing of economic agreements.⁹⁸ This is an example of how the Quai d'Orsay, pressured by French capitalists, exploited political relations with weaker states for economic gains.⁹⁹

French assistance in developing Polish arms industries, with French obligations to make a loan of four hundred million francs for arming the Polish forces.

⁹⁵ According to Wandycz's interview with General Sosnkowski and his written response dated November 15, 1958. See Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 219.

⁹⁶ A report dated February 24, 1921 by an American military attaché in Warsaw, Department of State, 751.60c/3, National Archives. Also see Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 219.

⁹⁷ Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 217–18.

⁹⁸ Article 5 of the Political Agreement between France and Poland, signed on February 19, 1921.

⁹⁹ Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 372.

The commercial accords between the two countries obliged Poland to grant France the most-favored-nation clause, in addition to special tariff reductions ranging from 25 to 30 percent on more than 100 French items including manufactured and luxury products. France, on the other hand, did not accord the most-favored-nation clause to Poland, while it offered its minimum tariffs on fifty Polish products – mainly raw materials and agricultural products – and tariff reductions of 25 to 30 percent on 49 Polish articles.¹⁰⁰ This limited economic offer from Paris reflected French protectionism and its general reluctance to grant the most-favored-nation clause to any state. As such, France did not offer Poland sufficiently large markets to help the Polish economy recover and grow – a lack of openness on the part of France that would later drive the bulk of the foreign trade of Poland toward German markets.¹⁰¹

Nevertheless, the alliance had a political and military importance from the French perspective as well. After the First World War and the Treaty of Versailles, France's main security concern was Germany. The U.S. abandonment of the League of Nations and withdrawal from European affairs added to French fears. Also exacerbating French concerns was Britain's policy of opposing anti-German solutions or even, at times, supporting Germany as a counterbalance to France on continental Europe. Paris considered Moscow a danger rather than a partner after Tsarist Russia, a traditional ally of France, had disappeared. It was thus France's isolation in facing German threats that made Paris seek to improve its international standing by establishing a system of alliance with Poland and the countries of the Little Entente.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ H. B. Smith, the U.S. trade commissioner to the Department of Commerce, July 25, 1921, 651.60c.31/19, National Archives. Also see Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 220-21.

¹⁰¹ David E. Kaiser, *Economic Diplomacy and the Origins of the Second World War: Germany, Britain, France, and Eastern Europe, 1930-1939*, First Printing edition (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1981), 324.

¹⁰² Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: From Versailles to Yalta*, 80.

Keenly aware of their need for security partners in the east, French President Alexandre Millerand, Foreign Minister Aristide Briand as well as War Minister Louis Barthou enthusiastically supported the alliance with Poland, while the military establishment, headed by Marshall Foch, feared and opposed it. For the French military leadership, Poland was too vulnerable, as it was in dispute both with its northern and southern neighbors; its western and eastern borders were indefensible; and its national minorities were bound to weaken the state from within.¹⁰³ The French feared that Poland might involve France in an unwanted conflict, and for this reason, no operational plans were made for a joint military action in the event of war until 1939.¹⁰⁴

For French leaders, the alliance was primarily meant to preserve the status quo by separating the Soviet Union from Germany, rather than protecting Poland from any threats. The Rapallo treaty, concluded by Germany and Russia in April 1922, made Paris more uneasy about the extent of its commitments to Poland. When Marshall Foch visited Warsaw in 1922, he therefore attempted to limit French obligations to German aggression and exclude Russia from the alliance provisions, but to no avail as his proposal for a review was met with strong Polish resistance.¹⁰⁵

(2) The victory of the Cartel des Gauches undermining French security commitments

As time passed and with militant communism on the decline in the early 1920s, the French grew more optimistic about a possible détente with Moscow and, as a result, less interested in the role of Poland as a barrier against Russia. This optimism regarding communism was confirmed by

¹⁰³ Noël, *L'Agression Allemande Contre La Pologne*, 100–102. Also see Karski, 107.

¹⁰⁴ It was not until 1939 that any serious collaboration between the French and the Polish general staffs came to pass. See Karski, 108.

¹⁰⁵ Noël, *L'Agression Allemande Contre La Pologne*, 101. Also see Karski, 108.

the May 1924 general elections, which replaced the Poincaré administration and the National Bloc with the Cartel des Gauches. The new French government led by Prime Minister Edouard Herriot highly valued the benefit of bringing the Russians into European politics and, soon afterward, on October 28, 1924, formally recognized the Soviet government.¹⁰⁶ Georgy Chicherin, Soviet Foreign Minister, declared that Poland could count on French support only “so long as there is no close understanding between France and Russia.” He promised in Berlin, however, that the Soviets would not collaborate with France if Germany would not collaborate with England.”¹⁰⁷ The Poles obviously considered the new course of French foreign policy a dangerous setback, as they were trying to keep Russia out of European politics.

(3) A second setback damaging French security commitments

In less than a year, Franco-Polish relations underwent another setback, which led the Poles to question French commitments to fighting Poland’s two adversaries. Multinational conferences were held in Locarno in early October 1925 and resulted in the signing of a series of treaties known as the Locarno pacts, which exacerbated Poland’s concerns about French security commitments. The essential element in the Locarno system was the treaty of mutual guarantee concluded among Germany, France, and Belgium and “guaranteed” by Great Britain and Italy. The signatories recognized the Franco-Belgian-German boundaries as permanent and inviolable, committed themselves not to wage war against each other, and agreed to submit all disputes to arbitration or conciliation. In case of aggression the victim was to be assisted by guarantees contained in the

¹⁰⁶ Karski, 108.

¹⁰⁷ Edgat Vincent D’Abernon, *Lord D’Abernon’s Diary Vol. III*, 45.

covenant of the League of Nations' Articles 15, 16, 17, and also by automatic and immediate aid from Great Britain and Italy.¹⁰⁸

The Locarno pacts made the Poles feel even less safe. Before Locarno, France could give immediate assistance to Poland with its troops in the Rhineland. After Locarno, France could help Poland only if the latter invoked Article 16 of the Covenant – for which no bilateral alliance was needed. France agreed to intervene in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 7, if the Council of the League failed to reach a conclusion about whether an aggression took place. But any other action on the part of France would invoke the mechanism of the security pact, which made Britain the guarantor of Germany against France. The Piłsudski regime in Poland severely criticized France's decisions at Locarno, and Piłsudski himself noted that “every decent Pole spits when he hears the word [Locarno].”¹⁰⁹ From 1925 on, Polish government officials became very suspicious of the Quai d'Orsay and accused France of abandoning its commitments in order to gain German cooperation with France. In short, the Locarno pacts symbolized France's willingness to sacrifice Polish vital interests.¹¹⁰

To reconcile French alliance obligations toward Poland with its new responsibilities under Locarno, the two countries signed a Franco-Polish guarantee treaty in London on December 1, 1926. It provided that in case of unprovoked German aggression against either party, the League of Nations' covenant was to be applied with compulsory arbitration by its Council; but if the Council failed to make a unanimous decision, the two countries were obliged to come to each

¹⁰⁸ Article 1, 2, and 3 of the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy, October 16, 1925. See https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/locarno_001.asp.

¹⁰⁹ Joseph Beck, *Dernier rapport. Politique polonaise 1926-1939* (Editions de la Baconnière, 1951), 268.

¹¹⁰ Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: From Versailles to Yalta*, 112.

other's aid.¹¹¹ The guarantee treaty failed to reassure Poland, however. Even with this guarantee treaty, the French-Polish alliance could help only if France were determined to help Warsaw at the *casus foederis* by proactively starting an offensive action across the Rhineland. However, the Locarno system limited its freedom of action significantly by requiring compulsory arbitration process through the League of Nations, and created ambiguities with regard to French alliance obligations in case of a German attack on Poland. France could no longer declare war on Germany immediately, as required by the alliance, as the Locarno system would require Paris to let the entire question determined by the complicated procedural law of the League of Nation.¹¹² Furthermore, the Locarno system gave the French a false sense of security, which led the French government to abandon its offensive strategy: in 1927, the construction of the Maginot Line – a purely defensive measure – began, behind which the French felt secure.¹¹³ In 1928, a special legislation required French military forces to have a defensive character. The general staff subsequently adopted a purely defensive strategy.¹¹⁴

(4) No Polish revisionist foreign policy

Poland in the 1920s and the early 1930s did not have a foreign policy to resolve territorial disputes through the use of force, and it did rely on diplomacy to negotiate with neighboring countries, with Germany in particular. Three factors can explain Warsaw's peaceful approach. First, Poland was on the defensive with regard to its borders, while other states, especially

¹¹¹ For the treaty's text, see Ministère des Affaires étrangères de France, *Le Livre Jaune 1939*, 420-21. Also see Karski, 110-11.

¹¹² Georges Etienne Bonnet, *De Munich à la Guerre: Défense de la Paix* (Plon, 1967), 102. Also see Noël, *L'Aggression Allemande Contre La Pologne*, 101-2.

¹¹³ Emmanuel de Peretti de la Rocca, "Briand et Poincaré (Souvenirs)," *Revue de Paris*, 4 (1936), 769.

¹¹⁴ See General Maxime Weygand's testimony in L'Assemblée Nationale, *Les événements survenus en France de 1933 à 1945*, vol. IV, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale 1947-51, 1674. Also see Karski, 114.

Germany, were demanding a revision of the current borders with Poland. Berlin was demanding that the Corridor in eastern Pomerania, together with Danzig and Upper Silesia, be incorporated into Germany, while the Poles be offered a free port in Danzig as well as a guaranteed access to all economic facilities in Stettin and Königsberg.¹¹⁵ Poland, by contrast, engaged in an anti-revisionist diplomatic campaign. Foreign Minister Konstanty Skirmunt approached the Little Entente (i.e. Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia) to gain support against revisionism.¹¹⁶ With his initiative, the Polish representatives discussed immutability of frontiers at conferences in Bucharest and Belgrade in 1922.¹¹⁷

Second, Germany in the 1920s had a declared goal of modifying borders with Poland peacefully, so the latter had no strong reason to resort to the use of force for its defense. Gustav Stresemann, Germany's foreign minister, made it clear in his letter of March 19, 1925, that his government had no intention of recognizing its eastern boundary as permanent and would change it "peacefully."¹¹⁸ In December 1927 Stresemann declared again that since "the removal of the Corridor by war was impossible," peaceful means of achieving Germany's unalterable goal would have to be found.¹¹⁹ The Poles saw little virtue in Germany's arguments for border revisions, but they didn't have the power to override Berlin's diplomatic campaign to this end, especially because Stresemann's peaceful approach was supported by Britain, from which Poland needed financial aids.

¹¹⁵ Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: From Versailles to Yalta*, 85–90.

¹¹⁶ Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 259.

¹¹⁷ H. P. Dodge to Secretary of State, March 18, 1922, 550e.1/152, National Archives.

¹¹⁸ Gustav Stresemann, *Vermächtnis*, 3 vols, (Berlin: Ullstein Verlag), 1932-33, 68, cited in Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: From Versailles to Yalta*, 89.

¹¹⁹ Eric Sutton, ed., *Gustav Stresemann, his Diaries, Letters and Papers*, London: Macmillan Co., 1935-37, Vol 2, 266, 503.

Third, Poland's domestic turmoil made it imperative to accept Germany's policy of peaceful revisionism. From November 1918 to May 1926, fourteen cabinets fell.¹²⁰ The governments depended on the parliamentary majority, which had to be built on ever-changing coalitions of fissiparous parties due to their conflicting ideologies and different ethnic makeup.¹²¹ Even after Piłsudski seized power through a military coup in May 1926, he sought to smooth over the situation surrounding areas such as Danzig, the Polish Corridor and the frontier of upper Silesia. Concerned about Russian domination over multiple peoples of different ethnic backgrounds, Piłsudski viewed with sympathy the struggle for independence of the Balts, the Byelorussians, the Ukrainians, and the Caucasus nations. Piłsudski also nurtured plans for bringing a free Poland, Lithuania, Byelorussia, and the Ukraine into some form of interstate cooperation – such as federation, confederation, or alliance – for these states to be strong enough to withstand both German and Russian expansion.¹²²

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The Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts that a junior partner harboring no revisionist foreign policy should adopt a *Cheap-riding* strategy as long as it perceives its senior partner's strong commitments to fighting its main adversary. But the junior partner should start adopting an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy once it perceives its senior partner's commitments to be weakened while it has sufficient technical capabilities or third-party assistance to build an independent deterrent. As will be discussed in the following section, Poland's behavior in the period of 1921-1925 was consistent with the *Cheap-riding* strategy – ensuring national security at

¹²⁰ Joseph Rothschild, *Piłsudski's Coup D'état* (Columbia University Press, 1966), 3–24.

¹²¹ Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: From Versailles to Yalta*, 92.

¹²² Karski, 50.

minimal expense by deliberately remaining incapable of defending itself on its own and by avoiding troop contributions or policy alignments.

3. Poland's Cheap-riding Strategy

Evidence suggests that Poland was employing a *Cheap-riding* strategy in the first five years of its alliance with France: it was keeping its defense spending and arsenal small while having a tendency of pursuing independent foreign policy or contributing little to French military operations.

(1) Poland's small military spending and troop size

Poland downsized its armed forces to 230,000 from its wartime size of 800,000 immediately after the Polish-Soviet War (1919-1921). Postwar economic difficulties, partly due to the depreciation of the Polish currency, left Poland only a fraction of the industrial, economic and personnel resources its European neighbors were spending on their military.¹²³ Plagued by its limited budgets, its forces were heterogenous, undertrained, and ill-equipped. In the immediate aftermath of the war, the Polish army was a patchwork of heterogenous soldiers with different nationalities.¹²⁴ It is estimated that the tsarist Russian army mobilized between 40,000 and 50,000 officers in the period of 1914-17, of which about 25,000 joined the independent Polish army in 1918.¹²⁵ In addition, up to 1,750 officers, Polish and non-Polish, arrived in Poland in 1919-20 from

¹²³ Koskodan, *No Greater Ally*, location 240.

¹²⁴ Rothschild, *Pilsudski's Coup D'etat*, 25–28.

¹²⁵ Marian Romeyko, *Przed I po maju* (Before and after May), Warsaw, 1976, Vol. I, 93, cited in Walter M Drzewieniecki, "The Polish Army On The Eve Of World War II," *The Polish Review* 26, no. 3 (1981): 55.

France, where they had served with the French army. Composed as such, the Polish army in 1918 had no uniform training, common language, or military doctrine.¹²⁶ According to the Polish General Staff's 1923 plan, the Polish army was to consist in peacetime of thirty infantry divisions, eleven cavalry brigades, ten tank battalions, ten air-force regiments, with a total strength of 17,000 officers, 30,000 NCOs (non-commissioned officers), and about 230,000 men. The army strength was to be doubled in wartime to sixty infantry divisions and about 1,500,000 officers and men. The army development plan was to be completed by 1935, but it never was.¹²⁷

Polish military leadership was slower than most nations to adopt an aggressive policy toward the development of armored equipment and tactics. The Polish Army lagged behind other European armies on mechanization due to the country's economic difficulties as well as to the stubborn conservative traditionalism of the cavalry, which was still viewed as a vital mobile force in the vast reaches of the Ukraine and Eastern Poland. Under the assumption that the Soviet Union was Poland's principal adversary, Piłsudski directed all rearmament efforts toward preparing the defense of the eastern frontier with the employment of the cavalry. Polish field regulations of the 1920s did not seriously consider cavalry-tank configurations as the Red Army had fewer tanks than the Polish Army. However, the Poles were blind to the fact that newer Soviet tanks were more heavily armored than their Polish tanks and were largely invulnerable to heavy machinegun fire. The Poles meant to deal with enemy tanks by their new P-type armor piercing machinegun ammunition, which could only penetrate 9mm of armor at 250 meters. This erroneous assumption about Soviet tank capabilities led the Polish leadership to spend the vast sum of the Polish military budget for the upkeep of troops rather than for the development of modern and armored equipment.

¹²⁶ Drzewieniecki, 55.

¹²⁷ Józef Zajac, "Nasze przygotowania do wojny" (Our War Preparations), *Kultura*, No. 1-2, 1961, 161-2, cited in Drzewieniecki, 56.

(2) Independent foreign policy

Despite the lack of preparedness for modern warfare, Poland refused to be seen as subordinate to France. A Polish diplomat stationed in Germany, Rozwadowski, in a private conversation with Konrad Adenauer, then Oberbürgermeister (mayor) of Cologne, expressed the fear that ambiguous French commitments to Poland might encourage Germany to get closer to Russia and seek “compensation” in eastern Europe for its losses in the Ruhr. Rozwadowski stated that Poland should seek a more independent policy than in the past and did not want to “appear simply as a satellite [Anhängsel] of France.”¹²⁸ This was driven largely by Foreign Minister Aleksander Skrzyński’s belief that Poland could afford more room for maneuver in its diplomacy by coming closer to Britain, which at that time showed interests in better relations with Poland. Skrzyński in his talk with Maciej Rataj, the speaker of the Sejm, bluntly mentioned that he would “discount the friendship with France in London, and make Paris pay well for it.”¹²⁹

Poland resisted French pressures to buy aircraft and military equipment exclusively from the French market or factories employing French workers. In his meeting with Polish General Zymierski, General Dupont, Chief of the French military mission in Poland, complained about Warsaw ignoring the French request and signing contracts with Germany and Britain.¹³⁰ Poland also ignored French concerns to open a new civil aviation line between Warsaw and Berlin using Junker aircraft.¹³¹ The Poles did not address French concerns with regard to the fact the Aéro-

¹²⁸ Adenauer to Cuno, February 14 and March 31, 1923, Auswärtiges Amt Archives (German Foreign Office), Containers 1329 and 1425, National Archives of the United States.

¹²⁹ Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies: 1919-1925*, 272.

¹³⁰ “Rapport N° 92 Fabrications,” de Général Dupont, Chef de la Mission Militaire Française en Pologne au Ministre de la Guerre, Etat-Major de l’Armée, le 30 Janvier 1925, File GR 7N 2994, Service historique de la Défense.

¹³¹ “Rapport N° 96 Nouvelle Ligne aériennes polonaises avec avions Junkers,” de Général Dupont, Chef de la Mission Militaire Française en Pologne au ministre de la Guerre, Etat-Major de l’Armée, le 31 mars 1925, File GR &N 2994, Service historique de la Défense.

Lloyd, a Polish airline company, had close business relationships with the German Junkers, Co. The Polish minister of military affairs prevaricated when confronted by General Dupont, Chief of the French military mission in Poland, about Warsaw's purchase of aircraft manufactured at a German factory called Fokker in the Netherlands from Junkers.¹³²

Military leaders from the two countries had significant disagreements over operational and organizational requirements in case of potential German aggression. In early May 1923, France dispatched Marshal Foch to Warsaw to discuss military coordination between the French and Polish armies, but the military talks between Foch, Piłsudski and the general staffs fell apart. The main disagreement was about what it would take to conduct a successful war against Germany. Piłsudski believed that it would be successful only if there were a coordinated Polish-French offensive as a defensive war would be difficult for Poland, given its lengthy borders and the two strategic German advance positions in East Prussia and Silesia.

Another significant disagreement arose over threat assessment. The French and the Poles did not see security threats from Germany and Russia the same way. Clearly, Paris feared Berlin more than it feared Moscow, while Warsaw's primary adversary was not Berlin. Consequently, any French approaches to Russia raised Polish suspicions and fears. The French often attempted to secure Russian assistance to strengthen the eastern flank against Germany, while the Poles tended to counter this policy by a flirtation with Hungary.¹³³

The differences in threat assessment led to another major disagreement over the organization of the Polish army. While Marshal Foch tried to make the Poles adopt the French way

¹³² "Rapport N° 91" de Général Dupont, Chef de la Mission Militaire Française en Pologne au ministre de la Guerre, Etat-Major de l'Armée, le 19 Janvier 1925, File GR &N 2994, Service historique de la Défense.

¹³³ See M. de Chappedelaine on August 26, 1919, *Débats, 1919*, Session Ordinaire, 3611, cited in Wandaycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies* 223. Poland also refused to smooth over differences between itself and Czecho-Slovakia, despite French efforts to mediate the two countries.

of organization as best suited against Germany, Piłsudski refused, stressing the need for large mobile units that would be essential in case of a Polish-Russian war.¹³⁴

In outlining his foreign policy in a congratulatory note to Herriot, the new Polish foreign minister, Alexander Skrzyński, pushed for further cooperation with England as well as coordination of all democratic states for peace and international security with an emphasis on the League of Nations.¹³⁵ Skrzyński also made efforts to strengthen bilateral relations with Paris, establishing a Franco-Polish consortium to construct a new port in Gdynia on the Baltic coast of Poland.¹³⁶ The French-Polish collaboration on the founding of a Polish port was of strategic importance: it not only freed Poland on its dependence on Danzig¹³⁷ but also tethered French interests and facilitated strategic maritime communications in the Baltic Sea. Paris also tried to allay Polish concerns, elevating the legations of both countries to embassy rank.

Changing security environment for Poland

Poland saw radical changes in its security environment in the period of 1924-25. France's Poincaré administration proved ineffective with its policy of the occupation of the Ruhr. He began the go-it-alone policy in the Ruhr without ensuring its financial basis, letting his policy become dependent on Anglo-Saxon financing. Since neither Britain nor the United States supported

¹³⁴ Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies*, 279.

¹³⁵ Aleksander Skrzyński, *Poland and Peace / by Count Alexander Skrzyński*, First Edition (London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1923).

¹³⁶ An agreement was signed on June 4, 1924, to construct a modern port in Gdynia with a Franco-Polish consortium composed of Schneider & Co., Société Anonyme Horsent, Société de Construction des Battignoles, and Polski Bank Przemysłowy. See Casimir Smogorzewski, *Poland's Access to the Sea*, First Edition (London, G. Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1934), 337.

¹³⁷ Danzig was a semi-autonomous city-state that existed between 1920 and 1939, consisting of the Baltic Sea port of Danzig and nearly 200 neighboring towns. The city-state was created in 1920 in accordance with the terms of Article 100 of the Treaty of Versailles and was primarily inhabited by Germans. But Poland was given certain rights such as free access to the port and the railways in the city, until Germany invaded Poland and abolished the Free City in 1939.

Poincaré's occupation of the Ruhr, and thus none of them was willing to rescue France from its economic plight with the depreciation of franc in 1924.¹³⁸ In May 1924, French general elections swept from power the Poincaré administration and the National Bloc that had ruled France since the Paris Peace Conference. The electoral victory of the Cartel des Gauches marked an important turn in French diplomacy, as it would soon renounce French isolation and unilateral action while emphasizing the "internationalization of the problem of security and reparations."¹³⁹ This made Warsaw fear a French-German rapprochement as well as the new French government's attitude toward Russia.

Added to the Polish fear were political developments in Germany in the mid-1920s, which would lead to its rearmament. The Poles predicted in March 1925 that the German army would expand to 18 divisions very soon and eventually, by the end of 1927, to 70 infantry divisions and 22 light infantry divisions of unknown composition.¹⁴⁰ In July 1925, Poland attempted to keep France from any pro-British diplomatic demarches to dilute or "expand the Franco-polish military convention," as Warsaw was worried that Britain had a tendency of replacing Franco-polish bilateral security arrangements by a multilateral framework based on the League of Nations that would cover additional security issues that other European countries such as Italy faced.¹⁴¹

The creation of the Locarno System in October 1925 was another significant blow to the Poles. French hands were now tied by Article 2 of the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, however.

¹³⁸ Pierre Renouvin, *Histoire Des Relations Internationales, Tome 7e. Les Crises Du XXe Siècle. 1. De 1914 à 1929.* (Librairie Hachette, 1957), 253–55. Also see Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 290–91.

¹³⁹ See Aristide Briand's statement on May 11, 1924, Georges Suarez, *Briand : Sa Vie, Son Oeuvre, Avec Son Journal et de Nombreux Documents Inédits. Tome VI: L'Artisan de La Paix. 2. 1923-1932*, vol. VI (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1952).

¹⁴⁰ Rapport No. 97 sur Inquiétude en Pologne, du Général Dupont, Chef de la Mission Militaire Française en Pologne au Ministre de la Guerre, État-Major de l'Armée, le 31 mars 1925, File GR 7N 2994, Service historique de la Défense.

¹⁴¹ Une lettre due General Sikorski à French Ministre de la Guerre, le 5 juillet 1925, file GR 7N 2994, Service historique de la Défense.

Before the Locarno Treaties came into effect, France could give immediate assistance to Poland with offensive operations by mobilizing its troops in the Rhineland. With the Locarno Treaties in effect, France could help Poland only if the latter invoked Article 16 of the Covenant – which required no bilateral alliance. France agreed to intervene in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 7, if the Council of the League failed to reach a conclusion about whether an aggression took place. But since the term “aggression” was not clearly defined by the League, any other action on the part of France, including the one required by the French-Polish alliance, would be taken as an aggression and therefore invoke the mechanism of the security pact, which made Britain the guarantor of Germany against France.¹⁴² Furthermore, the Locarno treaty weakened the French-Polish alliance as a military device, as it substantially reduced the influence of the general staffs on French-Polish relations as the problem of German disarmament was elevated from the military to the political level.¹⁴³

Certainly, the Locarno Treaties were meant “to make it easier for Poland to accept the political and juridical discrimination between the eastern and western borders of Germany which resulted from the Locarno agreements.”¹⁴⁴ The major success of Locarno was the creation of a mechanism preventing the possibility of German-Russian alliance, with which France and its eastern allies could not cope without British support. In this sense, Locarno made everyone a little more secure. However, by detaching Berlin from Moscow, the Treaties of Locarno had the effect of implicitly encouraging German expansionism in the east. The French ambassador in London,

¹⁴² See Part E : Conclusion in “Note: au sujet de l’éventualité d’un conflit armé germano-polonais,” 9 Octobre 1930, File GR 7N 2520, Service Historique de la Défense.

¹⁴³ Sikorski to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, November 19, 1925, A 11/1, Documents from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Political Department, General Sikorski Historical Institute (London).

¹⁴⁴ Noël, *L’Agression allemande*, 102.

Saint Aulaire, pointed out that “the accords of Locarno undermined France diplomatically by destroying our (bilateral) alliances.”¹⁴⁵

A further consequence of the Locarno Treaties was the evacuation of allied troops from the Rhineland five years ahead of schedule, which made the Poles worry. For the occupation of the Rhineland was seen by the Poles “as a guarantee assured by the Versailles Peace Treaty,” and as an important element of the security assessment when Poland entered into alliance with France.¹⁴⁶

Poland’s response to the changing security environment

Such systemic changes did not immediately lead to a shift in Polish alliance strategy. From late 1926, Warsaw first sought to delay the withdrawal of troops from the Rhineland, and then attempted diplomatic arrangements as a compensation for the evacuation of the Rhineland. In August 1929, the Poles requested that France: 1) implement a previously agreed plan for military aviation co-development; 2) stock artilleries on the Polish territory in peacetime (the same request made in June 1928); 3) offer financial aids of 1 billion francs for acquisition of French weapons as well as of half billion francs for indigenous defense industry; 4) open negotiations with Germany to conclude a mutual assistant treaty involving Germany, France and Poland (a.k.a. an Eastern

¹⁴⁵ Comte De Saint-Aulaire and August Felix Charles De Beauvoir, *La Mythologie De La Paix* (Paris, Editions Promethee, 1930), 158. Also see Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925*, 367.

¹⁴⁶ Note par l’Ambassade de Pologne, attachment to a cable titled "Accord polono-hongrois pour le transit du matériel de guerre," du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères au Ministre de la Guerre, le 22 juillet 1929, File 106 CPCOM 28, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

Locarno¹⁴⁷); 5) take an initiative to obtain a special guarantee from Germany regarding the border between Warsaw and Berlin, while France was reluctant to pursue such a path.¹⁴⁸

The Quai D'Orsay, however, perceived great difficulties responding to any of the Polish requests. Collaboration in the field of aviation would be complicated; establishing stocks of artillery and munitions in Poland would raise financial and constitutional problems. In, a tripartite pact for the Eastern Locarno could be contemplated only if the French-Polish military convention were modified; or worse, the Germans might demand the abrogation of the Franco-Polish alliance as a precondition for such a pact.¹⁴⁹

4. Poland's *Autonomy-seeking* Strategy

In the face of anemic French responses to the Polish request for additional security measures, the Poles shifted from its *Cheap-riding* strategy to an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy through its military expansion as well as the pursuit of independent foreign policy.

¹⁴⁷ This is a proposal to use the so-called model D of the Collective Treaty of Mutual Assistance, by which the signatories commit themselves to renounce war, submit their differences to procedures for pacific settlement, and lend each other assistance immediately after the Council of the League had found that an act of aggression had occurred. See Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936*, 141.

¹⁴⁸ "La Pologne et l'éventualité de l'évacuation de la Rhénanie," N° 694, du Président du Conseil Ministre des Affaires Etrangères au Chargé d'Affaires de France en Pologne, le 6 août 1929, File 106 CPCOM 28, Archives Diplomatiques Français. Also see "La Pologne et l'occupation de la Rhénanie," du Chargé d'Affaires de France en Pologne au Président du Conseil Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, le 10 août 1929, File 106 CPCOM 28, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

¹⁴⁹ "N° 694, La Pologne et l'éventualité de l'évacuation de la Rhénanie," du Président du Conseil Ministre des Affaires Etrangères au Chargé d'Affaires de France en Pologne, le 6 août 1929, File 106 CPCOM 28, Archives Diplomatiques Français. Also see Zaleski telegram, 27 July 1929, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University, Ambassador Paryz, Box 2, cited in Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936*, 145.

(1) Development of indigenous capabilities

The first sign for the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy was a decision to improve its military capabilities. In his speech at the military commission of the Polish Diet in December 1926, Piłsudski argued that nobody guaranteed the security of Poland, which was left alone, and emphasized the need for a stronger army.¹⁵⁰ Piłsudski also pointed out that the Polish government had reduced special reserves for rearmament for years, shortening the period of military service for men, and he pushed for significant funds made available for military expansion.¹⁵¹ The Diet then voted for 10% increase in the cost of governmental personnel, a special credit of 10 million Zlotys to the Ministry of War earmarked for the logistics of mass mobilization as it planned on providing the youth with military training.¹⁵²

In addition to the troop size and military budgets, Poland also attempted to increase indigenous defense production capabilities. In August 1927, Poland was constructing a factory for synthetic nitrogen products in Tarnow, Galicia, about 150km from the German-Polish border, relying on German material as well as technical assistance.¹⁵³ It would manufacture agricultural fertilizer in peacetime, while it could be quickly converted to a modern explosive factory in wartime. French intelligence documents show that the French military should worry whether the new factory could contribute to Poland's increased dependence on Germany.¹⁵⁴ In the latter half of the 1920s, Poland also developed a new automobile industry with a view to becoming more

¹⁵⁰ Marshal Piłsudski's speech at the commission of the army of the Polish Diet, "Extrait de la Polska Zbrojna," le 16 Décembre 1926, File GR 7N 2994, Service Historique de la Défense.

¹⁵¹ Ibid.

¹⁵² "Rapport N° 163," de General Charpy, Chef de la Mission Militaire Française en Pologne au Ministre de la Guerre, Etat-Major de l'Armée, le 20 Décembre 1926, File GR 7N 2994, Service Historique de la Défense. "Rapport N° 164," de General Charpy, Chef de la Mission Militaire Française en Pologne au Ministre de la Guerre, Etat-Major de l'Armée, le 31 Décembre 1926, File GR 7N 2994, Service historique de la Défense.

¹⁵³ "Copie d'une lettre adressée à notre Chargé d'Affaires à Varsovie A/S de l'Usine de Tarnow et la défense nationale polonaise," le 25 Aout 1927, File 106 CPCOM 28, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

independent from foreign countries and sent a research mission to various European countries. In December 1928, such a research mission was sent to three leading auto makers in Europe, Itala, Renault, and Skoda.¹⁵⁵ France, soon thereafter, attempted, in vain, to have its national company, Renault, become the primary collaborator for this project in Poland, but a few months later the Polish administration chose an Italian firm, FIAT, which offered financial aids of 2 million dollars in addition to technical assistance.¹⁵⁶

(2) Poland in search of an independent foreign policy

Poland also distanced itself from France to either seek assistance from other great powers or pursue an independent foreign policy. Seeking to ascertain to what extent Warsaw could count on British support against revisionism, Foreign Minister Zaleski went to London on December 10-11, 1931.¹⁵⁷ Zaleski had told the French that his London trip would be an attempt to alleviate Franco-British difficulties stemming from France's general support of Poland.

Poland was strongly opposed to French-German rapprochement, and for this reason a disarmament conference that opened in Geneva in February 1932 further deepened the rift between Paris and Warsaw. Developments in Germany – secret army modernization (Umbau), liquidation of the Prussian government, violent anti-Versailles outbursts, and Nazi victories – were viewed with alarm in Warsaw and elsewhere. On November 3, 1932, August Zaleski, whom Piłsudski considered too pro-French and too favorably disposed toward the League of Nations, was replaced

¹⁵⁵ “Constructions automobiles en Pologne,” Note du Ministre de la Guerre au Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, le 6 février 1929, File 106 CPCOM 28, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

¹⁵⁶ “Création en Pologne d’une industrie nationale automobile,” Note du Ministre des Affaires Etrangères au Ministre de la Guerre, le 4 avril 1929, File 106 CPCOM 28, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

¹⁵⁷ Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936*, 219.

by Colonel Jozef Beck, the marshal's confidante and disciple.¹⁵⁸ After several months of complex disarmament negotiations, Germany withdrew from the conference, and to bring it back to the negotiation table, France, along with Britain, Italy and the United States, agreed in December 1932 with a compromise resolution of Equality of Rights. Piłsudski, however, vigorously opposed any compromise with Germany, and did not conceal his profound misgivings about French foreign policy. Piłsudski thus told Laroche bluntly that “to allow [Germany] to have arms means a lost game.”¹⁵⁹

In the first half of 1933, however, Poland briefly exhibited a sign of a *Rescue-compelling* strategy with its belligerent troop deployment to Danzig, which heightened tensions between Poland and Germany. Hitler's rapid rise to power, along with his call for rearmament, quickly shifted the local military balance. As will be discussed in the next section, France's continued inability to offer credible security commitments and the shifting local military balance combined to cause Poland's *Rescue-compelling* strategy.

5. Poland's *Rescue-compelling* Strategy

On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler became the chancellor of Germany, and his slogans of scrapping the “Versailles Diktat,” rebuilding Germany's military power, and territorial revisionism, became Germany's official policy. On February 12, 1933, the London Sunday

¹⁵⁸ Samuel John Gurney Hoare Templewood, *Nine Troubled Years*, London: Collins, 1954, 346-47. Also see Karski, 116.

¹⁵⁹ Jules A. Laroche, *La Pologne de Piłsudski: Souvenir d'une Ambassade 1926-1935*, Paris: Flammarion, 1953, 111-113, 118, 135, and 145.

Express quoted Hitler as arguing that the Polish Corridor was a “hideous injustice” and would have to be returned to Germany.”¹⁶⁰ Soon thereafter, Danzig’s authorities decided to deny Poland’s special rights guaranteed by the Warsaw-Danzig agreement of 1923, and replaced its special harbor police with its armed forces.¹⁶¹

The general elections of March 5, 1933, gave the Nazis 43.9 percent of the votes and 288 out of 647 seats in the Reichstag, which meant that with the support of the Nationalists with 52 seats, the Nazis could control the majority. Just two days after the German elections of March 4, Piłsudski sent military reinforcements to the Polish garrison at Westerplatte in Danzig. He also mobilized the border division and ordered a great military parade to be held in Vilna on April 21. Ordering the military reinforcement of the garrison at Westerplatte is a violation of Poland’s obligations toward the League of Nations, and it was believed that Piłsudski sent troops to Danzig to deliberately heighten tensions in order to create an occasion for the Western powers to take a firm stand against Nazi Germany.¹⁶² French ambassador in Berlin, André François-Poncet, thought that Piłsudski was launching a trial balloon to test French and British reactions by creating an opportunity for the Western powers to move against Berlin.¹⁶³ Around the same time, opinions published by Piłsudski’s close political allies called for aggressive responses to Germany, while Piłsudski had prepared a draft of a decree entitled “In case of war with Germany,” which had already been countersigned by the president of the republic and was held in his personal safe.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ The London Sunday Express, 12 February 1933, cited in Karski, 147.

¹⁶¹ Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: From Versailles to Yalta*, 115.

¹⁶² Waclaw Jedrzejewicz, “The Polish Plan for a ‘Preventive War’ Against Germany in 1933,” *The Polish Review*, vol. 11, no. 1, 62-91. Jedrzejewicz shows that a senior member of Piłsudski’s political group, Ignacy Matuszewski, wrote in a semi-official journal called *Gazeta Polska* that “for the Western territories Poland can and will speak only with the voice of her cannons.”

¹⁶³ François-Poncet André and Jean-Paul Bled, *Souvenirs d’une Ambassade à Berlin Septembre 1931-Octobre 1938* (Paris: PERRIN, 2016), 165. Also see Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936*, 271.

¹⁶⁴ The draft decree was found upon his death, May 12, 1935, according to Pobóg-Malinowski, *Najnowsza Historia Polityczna Polski*, vol. 2, 740, cited in Karski, 115.

Piłsudski's sending military reinforcements to Danzig caused consternation, embarrassment, and condemnation in France and Britain, and the League of Nations' high commissioner in Danzig, Helmer Rosting, referred the matter to the League's Council. Under strong British and French pressure, the Council ordered an immediate withdrawal of Polish forces to restore the status quo.¹⁶⁵

Piłsudski also considered launching a preventive war, "carefully weighing the pros and cons of such a war," and consulted French leaders more often than before since his coup d'état of 1926.¹⁶⁶ He proposed the idea of preventive war to Paris multiple times through multiple channels.¹⁶⁷ In March 1933 he sent his confidants to brief the French government about Germany's rearmament and Polish preparations for revenge, which the Poles would be ready to do provided that France rendered military assistance.¹⁶⁸ French Ambassador to Poland, Jules Laroche, reported that while the Poles might not seek an opportunity to actually use force, many people in Poland believed that if war with Germany was inevitable, it was better to "make it now than later."¹⁶⁹

Piłsudski saw a German military decree of 22 February 1933 as a clear violation of the disarmament clauses, and considered using Article 213 of the Versailles Treaty, which provided investigation of disarmament breaches, as a justification for coercive action against Germany.¹⁷⁰ In April 1933 a Polish ambassador to France presented a new memorandum in Paris proposing a

¹⁶⁵ Karski, 148.

¹⁶⁶ Beck, *Dernier rapport. Politique polonaise 1926-1939*, 66.

¹⁶⁷ He sent to Paris, Jerzy Potocki, a former aide and soon-to-be Ambassador to Italy, and Colonel Bolesław Wieniawa-Długoszowski. See Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936*, 271–72.

¹⁶⁸ Potemkin, *Istoriia Diplomatii*, vol. 3, 471–73, cited in Karski, 117.

¹⁶⁹ Note by Ambassadeur Jules Laroche, *Document Diplomatique Français 1932-1935*, Tome III, 172-73, 707.

¹⁷⁰ Harold Butler, *The Lost Peace A Personal Impression* (Sagwan Press, 1941), 83.

meeting on the subject of a “preventive war,” but Prime Minister Daladier once again rejected the Polish initiative.¹⁷¹

While the French were generally reluctant to take military actions against Hitler, the Polish plan of preventive military actions was discussed by members of “very serious political circles” in Paris including current and former prime ministers Édouard Daladier and Joseph Paul-Boncour.¹⁷² Technically speaking, it was not out of question. In 1932, General Paul Armengaud had argued that the French air force could conduct offensive operations to come to the aid of its eastern allies (confronting the bulk of German forces), with bombers based in Czechoslovakia and fighters in Poland along with heavy bombers sent from home bases in France.¹⁷³ However, Paul-Boncour told Tytus Komarnicki, then the Polish representative to the League of Nations, that the Polish proposals for preventive military actions had been discussed in a secret meeting of the French parliamentary committee but were rejected almost unanimously.¹⁷⁴ In fact, the weak radical-left centrist cabinet of Daladier was pressured to make deep cuts in military spending in early 1933.

Meanwhile, the possibility of a preventive military operation launched by the Poles was taken quite seriously in Berlin. The then German minister in Warsaw, Hans von Moltke, on the other hand, reported to Berlin that while no war preparations were made, the Polish government

¹⁷¹ Vladimir Petrovich Potemkin, *Istoriia Diplomatii*, vol. 3, Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Izdatelstvo Politicheskoy Literatury, 1945, 471–73, cited in Karski, 117.

¹⁷² Mühlstein’s private letter to Beck, 17 April 1933, *Diariusz I teki Jana Szembeka*, I, 12-13, cited in Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936*, 272.

¹⁷³ Paul F. Armengaud, *Batailles politiques et militaires sur l’Europe: témoignages 1931-1940*, Paris, 1948, 18, 25-26.

¹⁷⁴ Tytus Komarnicki, “Pilsudski a polityka wielkich mocarstw zachodnich (Pilsudski and the Policy of the Western Powers),” *Niepodleglosc* 4, 1952, 90, cited in Karski, 129.

either wanted to pressure the new German regime into a public renunciation of the territorial claims or aimed at producing pretexts for a military action.¹⁷⁵

6. Poland Back to Its *Autonomy-seeking* Strategy

It did not take long for the Poles to return to their *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, because they soon concluded that the French would not positively respond to the idea of “preventive war” against Germany. The Poles came to this conclusion after France joined negotiations over the so-called Four-Power Pact led by Mussolini in the spring of 1933. The Four-Power Pact with Italy, France, Britain and Germany was to essentially set up a Rome-London axis to keep both France and Germany back from going to war, while recognizing Germany’s equal rights for armaments as a reward.¹⁷⁶ By creating another international body above the League of Nations, the pact appeared to reduce the influence of the lesser powers in the League, at least from the Polish perspective. In other words, the Four-Power Pact was to control the fate of small countries and reward the Nazi Germany for its good behavior in the west at the expense of eastern Europe.

In early June, 1933, Poland began to distance itself from France on its foreign policy again. On June 3, 1933, a few days before the four great powers initialed the Pact, Foreign Minister Józef Beck publicly declared that the Polish government would not cooperate with the four powers and

¹⁷⁵ Auswärtiges Amt, *Documents on German Foreign Policy 1918-1945.: Series C (1933-1937) The Third Reich: First Phase.*, vol. v.1: Jan-Oct 1933 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Gov. Print. Office, 1957), 325, 328–33, 343. Also see Karski, 116.

¹⁷⁶ Konrad Hugo Jarausch, *The Four Power Pact, 1933* (State Historical Society, University of Wisconsin, 1966), 34–39.

would not recognize, nor be bound by any decisions of the four signatories concerning the Polish Republic. He pointed out that the signing of the Pact might result in a crisis within the League of Nations, implying the possibility of Poland's withdrawal from that organization.¹⁷⁷ Despite Poland's opposition, the Four-Power Pact was signed by all parties on July 15, 1933, but was never ratified, primarily because Hitler withdrew from the disarmament conference and the League of Nations in October 1933.

Soon thereafter, Poland launched its diplomatic demarche toward a non-aggression pact with Germany, while keeping the French in the dark. The Poles knew that the French defensive strategy was likely to expose Poland to the brunt of a German attack, and the détente with Berlin thus would reduce the risk of Poland becoming the first and isolated victim of German aggression. This required a delicate Polish diplomatic maneuver to not antagonize Berlin but still not lose its French ally. On November 5, 1933, Piłsudski instructed Lipski, his ambassador to Berlin, to tell Hitler that Piłsudski had not been impressed by the international uproar that followed the German chancellor's rise to power. Poland's security rested both on diplomatic and security relations with great powers and the League of Nations. Since the German departure from the League deprived Poland of the second pillar of its security, Ambassador Lipski was instructed to ask the chancellor how Berlin could "compensate" Poland.¹⁷⁸

On November 15, 1933, Hitler received Lipski and denied any aggressive intent against Poland or France, arguing that war ought to be excluded as a means of settling differences. When Lipski suggested they should issue an official joint communiqué embodying this statement, Hitler agreed. However, the communiqué could be seen as violating Polish obligations under the

¹⁷⁷ Józef Beck, *Dernier rapport. Politique polonaise 1926-1939* (Editions de la Baconnière, 1951), 42.

¹⁷⁸ Tytus Komarnicki, ed., *Diariusz I teki Jana Szembeka* (Diary and Portfolio of Jan Szembek), Vol. I (London, 1964), 84-85, cited in Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936*, 308.

Covenant as well as the Franco-Polish convention of 1925.¹⁷⁹ To preempt such criticisms, the following day, Foreign Minister Beck instructed Polish diplomats to explain the communiqué as “filling the gap created by Germany’s departure from the League of Nations with direct talks,” and deny any plan for further negotiations.¹⁸⁰ Throughout his negotiations with Berlin, which would culminated in a German-Polish non-aggression pact two months later, Beck kept French ambassador François-Poncet in Warsaw uninformed, and acquired a reputation of disliking France.¹⁸¹ The Quai d’Orsay found the Polish move very annoying, not only because Paris had not been consulted, but also because the initiative diverged from Paris’ general policy.

In the aftermath of the German-Polish nonaggression pact signed in January 1934, the Poles were elated over their greater freedom of diplomatic maneuver. Former heads of the Polish foreign ministry such as Morawski and Zaleski welcomed the German-Polish declaration as a very important tactical gain. European diplomats in both Moscow and Berlin all thought that the declaration won Warsaw national prestige and a new status as an almost great power. Paris, on the other hand, saw it as a blow not only to its foreign policy but also to its prestige. The announcement came as a surprise, while the Quai d’Orsay tried hard to conceal its vexation. Paul-Boncour tried to save face through a public statement that “France had been kept very fully and very amicably informed of the talks which resulted in a solution that I regard as happy for Poland and for peace.”¹⁸² But French ambassador to Berlin François-Poncet took Lipski’s silence during the

¹⁷⁹ Note, 17 November 1933, *Documents Diplomatiques Français 1932-1935*, Tome V: 41, Ministère des Affaires Étrangères Commission de publication des documents relatifs aux origines de la guerre, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

¹⁸⁰ See Tytus Komarnicki, ed., *Diariusz I teki Jana Szembeka* (Diary and Portfolio of Jan Szembek), Vol. I (London, 1964), 85-87; Beck’s statement of November 16, 1933, in Józef Beck, *Przemówienia, deklaracje, wywiady* (Warszawa, 1939), 84, cited in Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936*, 309.

¹⁸¹ Jules A. Laroche, *La Pologne de Pilsudski: Souvenir d’une Ambassade 1926-1935* (Paris: Flammarion), 1953, 137, 142, 148-50; Noël, *L’Aggression allemande contre la Pologne*, 73, 104, 509; François-Poncet, *Souvenirs d’une ambassade à Berlin*, Paris: Flammarion, 1946, 164-66.

¹⁸² *Documents Diplomatiques Français 1932-1935* (op. cit.), Tome V: 642-43, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

negotiations as a personal insult, and excluded him from friendly gatherings of allied diplomats. For him, a German-Polish nonaggression pact would be acceptable only if concluded under the auspices of the League and “particularly with the agreement and participation of France.”¹⁸³

On the other hand, Poland was dismissive of France’s major foreign policy toward Germany in 1934, the pursuit of the Eastern Locarno system. The Quai d’Orsay launched a diplomatic offensive to help provide an eastern extension of the Locarno Treaties, involving the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, the Baltic states, and Germany in a system of collective mutual-assistance. In case of aggression by one signatory against another, all were to come to the assistance of the victim. France in this system would become a “guarantor” of the entire system, and, in exchange, the Soviet Union would join the western Locarno as its “third” guarantor. The entire system was to be incorporated into the League of Nations’ mechanism by inviting Russia and re-incorporating Germany into the League.

Poland knew that it had a crucial part to play for the project because of its geography, but adopted dilatory tactics vis-à-vis the French. Although not rejecting the French offer entirely, the Poles registered reservations serious enough to preclude their participation in the pact. Poland refused to assume any obligations toward Lithuania, which had no diplomatic relations with Poland, or toward Czechoslovakia, which Warsaw considered too pro-Soviet.¹⁸⁴ But the biggest reason for Poland’s opposition was its distrust of Moscow. While France saw the Soviet Union as a natural ally, Piłsudski considered it a source of greater danger than Germany. Constructing a relationship of mutual assistance with Moscow would be imprudent in the Poles’ view, and Piłsudski preferred a solid equilibrium between Germany and Russia through nonaggression pacts.

¹⁸³ François-Poncet, *Souvenirs d’Une Ambassade à Berlin*, Paris: Flammarion, 1946, 164.

¹⁸⁴ For the text of the Polish diplomatic note to Paris, see Beck, *Dernier Rapport*, 335-38.

A collective security system like the Eastern Locarno could open the door to the Red Army breaching Polish territorial integrity in order to assist Lithuania or Czechoslovakia.¹⁸⁵ Given that Poland's participation was crucial, Polish reluctance threatened to paralyze what had been viewed as a major political breakthrough in Paris. French foreign minister Louis Barthou thus officially requested the British government to use their influence over Warsaw to save the pact.

Meanwhile, the French were hoping that increasing security threats from Germany would automatically reinforce their alliance relations with the Poles. On March 16, 1935, Hitler announced Germany's new conscription for the creation of an army of 600,000 troops, which constituted a clear violation of part 5 of the Treaty of Versailles. Britain protested, but did not cancel previously scheduled summit talks with Berlin. Not surprisingly, Sir John Simon and Anthony Eden's talks to Hitler on March 25-26, 1935, revealed that the German chancellor would not compromise on the size of the army. The French did not propose any particular measures for closer military cooperation with the Poles but tried to regain Polish confidence by keeping the Poles informed of any major French diplomatic activities that might affect Poland, including, in particular, negotiations with the USSR over a mutual assistance treaty. In late March 1935, for example, French Foreign Minister Laval informed Beck that Paris would not upgrade French-Russian relations without giving the Polish foreign minister an opportunity to reexamine the situation. After the final text of a French-Russian treaty was drafted, Polish Ambassador to France, Chłapowski, was shown the document and told on April 30, 1935, that nothing would change in

¹⁸⁵ Lipski's report in *Archiwum Akt Nowych, Zespoly Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych* (New Records' Archives, Folders of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland), File 3623, 170-73, cited in Karski, 181.

the French-Polish alliance: if Russia attacked Poland, the French would still be obligated to assist Poland based on the French-Polish alliance treaty of 1921.¹⁸⁶

Nevertheless, Poland was *Autonomy-seeking* with its independent foreign policy. Five days after the ratification of the Franco-Soviet treaty of mutual assistance, Hitler issued orders for the reoccupation of the Rhineland on March 7, 1936. It was a violation of Articles 42 and 43 of the Versailles Treaties, putting a French determination to defend the status-quo on the Rhineland to a severe test. Within 24 hours, however, it became clear that France would not engage in any military move against Germany. On March 8, the French cabinet met and agreed not to treat the remilitarization of the Rhineland as a “flagrant violation” of Locarno.¹⁸⁷ This led Foreign Minister Beck to issue a statement, which the French leaders saw as extremely defiant, as it indicated Poland’s intent of going alone with Germany through bilateral agreements. Beck suggested to the effect that Berlin’s recent move for the remilitarization of the Rhineland primarily affected the Locarno system, while German-Polish relations were regulated by bilateral agreements between the two countries.¹⁸⁸ The next day French Ambassador Noël understandably protested to the Polish foreign minister.¹⁸⁹ In response, Beck declared that “in case of attack against France, under the conditions that constituted a *casus foederis* in the Franco-Polish agreements, Poland would honor its commitments and fulfill its obligations.”¹⁹⁰ On the other hand, by stressing “an attack against France,” this statement implied that the Rhineland remilitarization per se did not invoke the

¹⁸⁶ De Ambassadeur Jules Laroche au Premier Ministre Pierre Laval, 11 April 1935, Papiers d'Agents Léon Noël 200, Archives Diplomatiques Français; De Laroche à Laval, 1 May 1935, File Pologne 333, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

¹⁸⁷ Joseph Paul-Boncour, *Entre Deux Guerres: Souvenirs Sur la Troisième République*, vol. 3 (Plon, 1945), 32–34.

¹⁸⁸ See *Document Diplomatique Français, 1936-1939*, Tome I: 528, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

¹⁸⁹ De Léon Noël to Pierre-Étienne Flandin, le 13 March 1936, Papiers d'Agents Léon Noël 200, Archives Diplomatiques Français.

¹⁹⁰ De Alfred Chłapowski (Polish Ambassador to France) to Pierre-Étienne Flandin, 9 March 1936, Ambassador Paryż, box 8, Hoover Institute Archives.

alliance and that Poland refused to be drawn into sanctions against Germany in the defense of Locarno.¹⁹¹

The French were still unable to make its alliance credible to the Polish eyes, as they were inadvertently sending mixed messages to their allies. On the one hand, they claimed that France would be ready to take military measures if necessary and that the French high command was in full control of the situation. General Gamelin told his Polish counterpart, Łowczowski, that the French army was transformed into a force capable of offensive operations.¹⁹² On the other hand, as France kept taking defensive measures such as the construction of the Maginot Line, its military dependence on Britain grew significantly in the post-Locarno decade, while London continuously refused to underwrite French eastern commitments. This British attitude, along with French defensive measures, changed the meaning of French commitments to Poland. It was generally assumed that Britain would defend France in the event of a German attack, but would not necessarily do so if France declared war on Germany as a result of its obligations to its eastern allies. In fact, Britain considered the Rhine River as their security frontier, but would go no further, which Paris was informed of on several occasions.¹⁹³

Another major factor that created the alliance's malaise was an internal contradiction within the French diplomatic and military apparatus. French diplomats had their aspirations to take an international leadership role over almost any political and economic issues in Europe.¹⁹⁴ However, they didn't have sufficient resources and policy measures to back up their initiatives. For one, the French army adopted an explicitly defensive posture, which theoretically ruled out

¹⁹¹ See 10 March 1936 conversation and telegram in Tytus Komarnicki, ed., *Diariusz I teki Jana Szembeka* (Diary and Portfolio of Jan Szembek), Vol. II, 122-13, 403.

¹⁹² See *Document Diplomatique Français, 1936-1939*, Tome I: 506.

¹⁹³ George Bonnet, *Le Quai d'Orsay sous trois républiques, 1870-1961* (Paris: Arthème Fayard, 1961), 132.

¹⁹⁴ Général Gauché, *Le 2e Bureau au Travail 1935-1940* (Paris, 1953), 233.

military actions abroad, but its general claimed it was capable of offensive operations. The French army hoped for more alliance collaboration and offered, on several occasions, several modes of assistance it could render, short of an offense, to its allies in the east.¹⁹⁵ Yet, coordinated planning, not to mention a joint command in wartime, never went beyond theoretical memoranda with any of its allies. Worse, the French military never gave information on its mobilization plans.

Changes the Poles made in terms of their armaments and command structure were subject to a French military attaché's approval.¹⁹⁶ But Polish requests for armaments and motorization were often met with French procrastination due to internal disagreements among the Quai d'Orsay, the French war ministry, and the French ministries of finance and commerce, particularly because the Quai d'Orsay did not wish to see the position of Poland enhanced vis-à-vis France's. French ambassador to Poland, Léon Noël, also feared that Beck might be capable of almost anything, even letting the German pass the Polish territory to attack Russia.¹⁹⁷

Furthermore, there wasn't a sustained and consistent effort to strengthen the military capabilities of the allies, especially for Poland, through systematic and large-scale material aid.¹⁹⁸ According to General d'Arbonneau, there were no French capital investments in Polish armament industries except "credit efforts, which, while useful to Poland, profited the French industry."¹⁹⁹ The Quai d'Orsay did not even allow the general staff, despite the latter's requests, to ask the allied armies what their military needs would be in case of war.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵ For example, the French Air force reached a cooperation agreement with Czechoslovakia in this regard.

¹⁹⁶ see French military attaché D'Arbonneau's reports, le 2, le 24, Octobre, le 13 Novembre and le 11, le 19, le 24 Decembre 1935, Pologne 12, Service Historique de la Défense. Also see D'Arbonneau's exchange of letters with General Colson, le 21 Octobre and le 6 November 1935, Pologne 12 Service Historique de la Défense.

¹⁹⁷ D'Arbonneau's report on Rydz-Śmigły dated le 13 February 1936, Pologne 13, Service Historique de la Défense.

¹⁹⁸ Wandycz, *The Twilight of the French Eastern Alliances, 1926-1936*, 453.

¹⁹⁹ D'Arbonneau report, le 3 Février 1936, Pologne 13, Service Historique de la Défense.

²⁰⁰ See Georges-Henri Soutou, "L'Alliance franco-polonaise 1925-1933 ou comment s'en débarasser?," *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique*, 1981, 312.

From 1935 on, the Poles, thus, did not count on the French any more. During the September 1938 crisis, in which Germany moved their troops along the Czech border and called for annexing the Sudetenland, the Poles took both diplomatic and military measures to ensure security against Germany without relying on France.²⁰¹ As diplomatic measures, Warsaw regained Teschen by annexing the Zaolzie area together with Cesky Tesin, while consolidating the border between Poland and Hungary. As for military measures, Warsaw reinforced its Border Protection Corps in the area of Silesia by transferring several units from the eastern borders; it also moved to the area of Silesia one armored brigade, one brigade of cavalry, four to five infantry divisions and air force troops.²⁰²

Poland did not acquire as much military capabilities before WWII as one would expect for a country employing an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. In the ten years after Piłsudski's 1926 coup d'état, the Polish Army size remained between 260,000 and 290,600 standing effective in peacetime (excluding reserves), along with a Frontier Surveillance Corps (Korpus Ochrony Pogranicza) of 26,000 to 28,000, a State Police Force of approximately 28,000 to 30,000, and a Frontier Guard of 5,500 troops.²⁰³ Note, however, a limited change in numbers does not mean that the Poles were free-riding on the French. On the eve of Germany's rearmament under Hitler in the early 1930s, Poland already possessed the world's fourth largest army. From 1926 to 1939 between 30% and 35% of the government budget – some 6,500 billion zlotys – was spent on national defense.²⁰⁴

²⁰¹ “La Tension de Septembre 1938” le 14 mars 1939, File GR 7N 2522, Service Historique de la Défense.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ J. H. Retinger, *All About Poland: Facts, Figures, Documents*, 1st Edition. edition (Minerva Publishing, 1941), 200–211. Also see Rothschild, *Pilsudski's Coup D'etat*, 190.

²⁰⁴ Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: From Versailles to Yalta*, 183.

The major weakness of the Polish military in 1939 had to do with its lagged modernization, which can be attributed to a few different factors. First, its non-aggression pact with Germany made the Poles believe that the Soviet Union was its principal enemy and that all defense efforts should therefore be directed towards preparing the defense of the eastern frontier. But the creation of the Frontier Surveillance Corps in the mid-1920s to defend the eastern borders was very costly, and this made it practically impossible to secure enough military equipment for the sixty infantry divisions if war broke out. Under Piłsudski's reforms, the budgetary allotment for the upkeep of troops under arms was so high that relatively little was left for new equipment and modernization. Second, Poland's efforts toward military modernization was hampered by its severe economic problems. Poland's economic crisis in the period of 1929 – 1935 drove the majority of Polish mines, steel mills and factories to go bankrupt to be taken over by foreign capitals. In 1937, foreign capitals owned more than 50% of the Polish heavy industries and captured a significant portion of Polish national income. With a better assessment of real security threats and a better-shaped economic infrastructure, Poland certainly could have spent more resources on mechanization and modernization so that it would match German capabilities in case of war.

7. Alternative Explanations and Conclusion

In the French-Polish alliance, Poland shifted from *Cheap-riding* to *Autonomy-seeking* in the latter half of the 1920s, with a brief 6-month period in which it showed a sign of a *Rescue-compelling* strategy in 1933. These shifts in Polish alliance strategy were caused by the Poles' understandings of French security commitments and a changing local military balance. The Poles

originally perceived their French partners' commitments to be strong, given French political leaders' enthusiasm about this alliance. In addition, their priority was placed on their economic recovery, rather than on resolving their eastern border issues by force, as the WWI and the Russo-Polish war devastated its industrial infrastructure. Strong security commitments by the French and the lack of revisionism for the Poles combined to cause Poland's *Cheap-riding* strategy and allow Poland to rely on its French partner to provide security. Warsaw cut the size of its army in half while it did not cooperate with the French army in the latter's military operations such as the occupation of the Ruhr.

However, the Treaties of Locarno in 1925, along with a defensive posture France adopted subsequently, rendered French military commitments ambiguous for Poland. The Locarno system required all signatories to exhaust a political process through the League of Nations, before the French could take any military action to come to rescue for Poland. In addition, the Locarno Treaties implicitly encouraged German expansion to the east by leaving Germany's eastern borders unsettled. Under such circumstances, only by preparing an offensive operation across the Rhineland, would France have been able to credibly demonstrate its commitments to protecting Poland. And yet, Paris was unable to do so because it took purely defensive measures – the construction of the Maginot Line that began in 1927, and by 1930, French troops had withdrawn from the Rhineland completely.

As predicted by the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, weakened security commitments by the senior partner made Polish behavior shift to *Autonomy-seeking* in the latter half of the 1920s. It started building an indigenous defense industry and conducting independent diplomacy, which sought security assistance from Britain and pursued a non-aggression pact with Germany without consulting France. In the first six months of the year 1933, however, Poland

briefly tried a *Rescue-compelling* strategy by deliberately heightening tensions between itself and Germany. This is also consistent with the Theory, because Hitler's rise to power, his pledge for rapid rearmament, and his anti-Polish rhetoric, all contributed to shifting the local military balance in favor of Germany. With its *Rescue-compelling* strategy, Poland attempted to create an urgent situation that would prompt the French to act. But Paris was reluctant to resolve the German problems militarily. So was London. Polish leaders soon realized that their French counterparts wouldn't be interested in a preventive war against Germany, and Poland quickly switched back to its *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, which caused the Poles to sign a non-aggression pact with Germany in January 1934 without consulting the French at all.

Whether or not Poland chose the right time to pursue an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy is a whole different question, however. Poland's *Autonomy-seeking* strategy was not very successful in the end in developing indigenous defense capabilities, partly because the economic crisis of 1929-1935 had devastating effects on the Polish economy. The vast majority of the major Polish firms went bankrupt and were acquired by foreign investors in the early 1930s, and this made it practically impossible for Poland to re-build its heavy industry – a critically important vehicle for the economy and for the manufacturing of military equipment. Meanwhile, Hitler's willingness to sign a non-aggression pact with Poland gave a false sense of security, making the Poles believe at least temporarily that the major security threat lay along their eastern border with the Soviet Union. Poland, as a result, focused their limited military budgets on developing border surveillance capabilities against the Soviet forces. Certainly, the Poles were keenly aware that their military equipment needed mechanization and modernization, but they assumed they could afford a longer time horizon before having to fight mechanized forces in the future.

The security threat explanation has a problem accounting for Poland's behavior in the 1920s and the early 1930s. The level of security threats from the Soviet Union, measured by its military capabilities, remained the same throughout the period of the 1920s. So was the threat from Germany, whose revisionism was subsiding. Yet, Poland's strategy shifted from *Cheap-riding* to *Autonomy-seeking* in the mid-1920s, as was clear from Poland's development of an independent deterrent and its pursuit of an independent foreign policy. What changed at the time was not security threats per se but the Poles' understanding of how French defense policy and international arrangements would affect the meaning of French security commitments. Without much change in the level of security threats in the late 1920s, Warsaw began building an independent deterrent and seeking assistance from Britain. Besides, Poland's brief *Rescue-compelling* behavior in the first six months of the year 1933 is also puzzling according to the security threat explanation, which cannot predict a junior ally's act of deliberately making its troops vulnerable to adversary attacks.

On the other hand, the security threat explanation fares better in the period of 1934 - 1939. With the 1934 nonaggression pact with Berlin that presumably made threat levels decline in their perception, one could argue that the Poles became less inclined to stay tightly aligned with the French. The Poles certainly felt threatened by the Soviet Union, but to a lesser extent because the Soviet forces also lagged behind in their modernization of military equipment.

The ideological solidarity hypothesis does not perform very well either in explaining Polish behavior in this case. The Polish government and people were vehemently anti-communist, partly because they vividly remembered the Russo-Polish war of 1919-20. They saw in Communist activities an invasion of an alien ideology and a cover for imperialistic Russian expansion. Both Poland and France were republics sharing their anti-communist ideologies throughout the period

of their alliance. And yet, Poland's dependence posture as well as alliance coordination varied during the periods of the 1920s as well as in the 1930s – a fluctuation that the ideological solidarity hypothesis cannot explain. One might argue that Polish behavior shifted from *Cheap-riding* to *Autonomy-seeking* after the May 1924 French general elections that brought the Cartel des Gauches to power in Paris. Certainly, the Cartel des Gauche highly valued the benefit of bringing the Russians into the European politics, but the French Communist Party did not participate in the left-wing coalition led by Édouard Herriot. It is therefore hard to equate the Cartel des Gauches with those supporting communist ideologies. And more importantly, the Cartel des Gauches broke up in 1926, to be replaced by a new government led by the center-right Raymond Poincaré, which makes it difficult to explain Poland's continued *Autonomy-seeking* strategy until the early 1930s by ideological differences.

In sum, these two alternative explanations can explain Polish behavior vis-à-vis France only partially. Throughout the period of their alliance with France between 1921 and 1939, changes in Polish alliance behavior were primarily caused by the Poles' understandings of both French security commitments and a changing local military balance.

Chapter IV: The U.S.S.R.-Iran Alliance (1921-1941)

1. Introduction

The Soviet-Iranian alliance in the inter-war period is also consistent with the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. It was an asymmetrical alliance between a great power, the Soviet Union (USSR, hereafter), and a regional major power, Iran. For centuries prior to the beginning of this alliance with the USSR, Iran had been struggling to lessen foreign influence over its domestic political affairs. Iranian leaders thus saw the alliance with the Soviets as a tool to secure its political independence from other great powers. In 1921, the Soviet Union and Iran concluded a Treaty of Friendship, in which the Soviet government repudiated previous agreements signed with Iran by Tsarist Russia and forgave all Russian loans (Article 8). Most importantly, the Soviet authorities agreed to withdraw troops and return all original Persian territory back to Iran (Article 12). On the other hand, its Articles 6 and 7 permitted military interventions should either country host forces or be unable to resist forces seeking to interfere with the other. As such, the Soviet Union was given the right to intervene in Iran if the latter's territory was threatened by a third power that might plan to carry out attacks on the Soviet Union. Article 6 read: "If a third Party should attempt to carry out a policy of usurpation by means of armed intervention in Persia, or if such Power should desire to use Persian territory as a base of operation against Russia, or a Foreign Power

should threaten the frontiers of Federal Russia or those of its Allies, and if the Persian Government should not be able to put a stop to such menace after having been once called upon to do so by Russia, Russia shall have the right to advance her troops into the Persian interior for the purpose of carrying out the military operations necessary for its defense.”²⁰⁵ Article 13 of the treaty also stipulated that the Persian government would “not place under the possession, authority, or use of any third Government, or the subjects of any third Government, the concessions and properties transferred to Persia according to this treaty.”²⁰⁶

While the treaty was concluded in the context of protecting Iranian sovereignty against great power interference, Article 6 of this treaty makes this bilateral Soviet-Iranian relationship qualify as an alliance case in the universe of this study. Unlike Tsarist Russia, which often conspired with Britain to maintain its political and economic control over Persia, Soviet foreign policy was far more hostile toward the British and committed to using any means available to defend Persia against Britain.²⁰⁷ Both Iran and the USSR signed the treaty with a view to eliminating British influence from Persia. For this reason, the treaty’s Article 6 signaled the Soviet willingness to intervene to defend Iran’s sovereignty whenever the latter was threatened by the British.

Despite this treaty, Iran never had great faith in the Soviet commitment to defend Iran against adversaries or security threats, because it suspected that the Soviets offer to protect Iranian interests against British influence was motivated by the USSR’s own imperialist ambition. As predicted by the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, Iran’s perception of weak Soviet commitments led Iranian leaders to employ an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, and Tehran consistently

²⁰⁵ Gibler, *International Military Alliances 1648-2008*, 235.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Miron Rezun, *Soviet Union and Iran*, 1 edition (Alphen aan den Rijn: Genève: Springer, 1981), 19.

did so throughout the period of 1921-1939, by trying to reduce its military as well as financial dependence on Moscow. Iran flirted with two different partners and played one off against the other. One is obviously the Soviet Union, and the other is Great Britain.

I test the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy against two powerful alternative explanations: security threats and ideological solidarity. The security threat explanation predicts that the greater security threats a state faces, the more likely it is to work seriously on its defense buildup and stay closely aligned with its alliance partner— and this is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy which involves continued defense buildup and close coordination.²⁰⁸ Conversely, the lower the security threats it faces, the more likely it is to be reluctant to coordinate with the partner though it should still be willing to keep building its own military arsenal given its weaker position vis-à-vis the partner – and this is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, which involves continued defense buildup and a decline in coordination efforts. One could argue that this security threat explanation performs well in predicting Iran’s behavior vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, as the choice of the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy could be the result of limited security threats facing Tehran. Reza Shah’s regime was threatened by British-instigated local insurgents and uprisings in the northern regions of Iran, but it was not until 1941 that the Shah took the possibility of the British army’s invasion seriously.

The hypothesis of ideological solidarity predicts, on the other hand, that the more similar the leaders’ ideologies are, the more likely they are to cooperate by building their military capabilities to help one another and by staying tightly aligned – which is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy.²⁰⁹ Conversely, the more distant their ideologies are, the less likely they

²⁰⁸ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 32.

²⁰⁹ Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 183–84.

are to actively pursue policy coordination but still to improve capabilities to defend themselves because their ideologically-distant partners are not reliable – which is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. This hypothesis appears to explain Iran’s behavior vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Although both Iran and the USSR shared their strong distaste for Britain’s imperialism, Reza Shah did not share communist ideologies with Moscow. A strong communist bond between the two states could have led to closer alignment rather than *Autonomy-seeking* by Tehran.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into three sections. The second, following section will provide the background of the Soviet-Iranian alliance, clarifying values that this case takes on the independent variables and predicting its values on the dependent variable of the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. The third section examines the degree of empirical support for the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy – predicted by the Theory when the senior partner’s security commitments are perceived to be weak in the eyes of the junior partner. The fifth, final section will conclude by comparing the performance of the theory with the two above-mentioned alternative explanations.

2. Background

In signing a Treaty of Friendship with the USSR in 1921, Iranian leaders saw the alliance with the Soviets as a mechanism by which it would ensure its political independence from another great power, namely Great Britain. While Iran remained neutral during World War I, its strategic location made it extremely vulnerable to foreign occupation or usurpation. In early 1915, the Ottomans sent troops into Azerbaijan and Western Iran and forced a Russian withdrawal from Azerbaijan, but Russian forces subsequently re-entered northern Iran from across the Caspian,

driving all the way to Qom. By 1917 both British and Russian forces achieved control over most of Iranian territory. The Shah continued to rule a nominally independent nation, having little economic or political control over its territory. As a result, Iran was coerced into signing the Anglo-Persian Treaty of August 1919, which made the country a British protectorate and guaranteed British access to Iranian oil fields including those in five northern provinces formerly under the Tsarist Russian sphere of influence.

The 1919 Anglo-Iranian alliance fell apart in less than two years. As post-war economic depression caused the loss of twenty percent of its population in Iran due to disease and violence, Reza-Khan, the head of a Russian-led Cossack brigade, led 2,500 Cossacks from Qazvin to Tehran and ousted the Qajar Dynasty with a coup d'état. The newly established Vossough-ed-Dowleh's government abrogated the Anglo-Iranian Agreement of 1919 due to the Majlis' failure to ratify it. This led the British to announce the withdrawal of the British missions in December 1920, although the British still tried to maintain its influence through the imposition of a military dictatorship.

Just five days before the conclusion of the Soviet-Iranian Treaty of Friendship in February 1921, a bloodless coup d'état engineered by Seyyid Zia ed-Din – editor of a British-subsidized newspaper RAAD, who was considered British protégé – led to the establishment of Seyyid Zia ed-Din's government, in which Reza Khan was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Army.²¹⁰ Only three months later, Reza Khan engineered a cabinet crisis, overthrew Seyyid Zia ed-Din's government, and let the Qajar dynasty's Ahmed Shah rule the country.

As Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Reza Khan focused all his energies on the reorganization of his army to taper foreign influence. His army at the time was heavily dependent

²¹⁰ John Lawrence Caldwell, U.S. Minister in Tehran, telegram (891.00/1181), February 22, 1921; Caldwell, Quarterly Report 11, April 5, 1921 (891.00/1196). Also see Mohammad Gholi Majd, *Great Britain and Reza Shah: The Plunder of Iran, 1921-1941*, Reprint edition (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011), 63–67.

on foreign officers. Its gendarmerie was Swedish-officered; the British created the South Persia Rifles in the south, a formation completely dependent on Britain both financially and organizationally. The Cossack Brigade, and later the Cossack Division, were both Russian-officered and commanded by Colonel Starosseleky. There were a few purely Iranian units. Reza Khan gradually eliminate foreign advisors from the heterogeneous military formations in order to unify all these forces into a closely knit, centrally controlled army.

In 1923, Reza Khan became Prime Minister and overthrew the last remnants of the Qajar dynasty to proclaim himself Shah-in-Shah of Iran and establish a new Pahlavi dynasty. Reza Shah was resolved to put an end to whatever foreign influence that threatened the sovereignty of Iran.²¹¹ By the beginning of 1922, Iran's central government and its army had become free of any British influence, largely due to the withdrawal of the British missions in the fall of 1921.

Eliminating British influence was not an easy task. Despite the withdrawal of British troops, Reza Shah repeatedly had to suppress domestic uprisings reportedly instigated by the British government. Prince Salar-ed-Dowleh Qajar, brother of the late Mohammed Ali Shah and a claimant to the throne of Iran, had infiltrated Iranian Kurdistan with a band of followers from Iraq, where he had obtained the assistance of the British authorities. Salar-ed-Dowleh then joined forces with the Kurdish chieftain, Simtqu, a.k.a. Sardar Rashid of Ravanshar, who was notorious for his revolts against the Iranian government in the past. Reza Shah protested to the British chargé d'affaires against the British government's involvement in the revolt in Kurdistan.²¹² British propaganda to instigate anti-Soviet activities in Iran further intensified when Soviet-British relations had reached a new ebb in the aftermath of the 1925 Locarno treaties and, particularly, as

²¹¹ Reza refused to introduce Western alphabet for fear that it could facilitate the circulation of Communist literature.

²¹² Donald N. Wilber, *Reza Shah Pahlavi: The Resurrection and Reconstruction of Iran 1878-1944*, Hicksvill: Exposition Press, 119.

a result of Soviet involvement in the British Trade Union movement and the British General Strike of May 1926.²¹³ The British financial position in Iran was considerably stronger than the Soviets, since the Shah was dependent on the British for the 16% royalty payments accruing to the Persian treasury from the Anglo-Persian Oil Company Concession, where the British government purchased 51% of the company share in 1914.²¹⁴ The open financial assistance by Britain also took the form of giving the Shah loans from the Imperial Bank of Persia – a British-owned institution.

Soviet Commitments

From the Soviet perspective, the Treaty of Friendship was meant to eliminate British influence from Persia, and Moscow cultivated closer relations with Teheran and exploited any nationalist movements in Persia to achieve that end. In Soviet eyes, Reza Shah's regime represented a national liberation movement of anti-imperialist and semibourgeois character. As such, the regime needed to be supported by the Soviets, especially when it happened to clash with British interests. For this reason, the Soviets either overtly supported Iran or at least sided with Teheran in such Iranian-British controversies as those over Semnan oil or the Bahrein Islands. Moscow hoped to see Iranian nationalism express itself only against the West and never against Moscow.²¹⁵

With a growing sense of dissatisfaction with Britain within the Soviet leadership in the aftermath of Locarno agreements in 1925, Soviet Foreign Minister Chicherin instructed the Soviet Ambassador to Iran, Yurenev, to strengthen Soviet positions vis-à-vis Iran and approach Reza

²¹³ Rezun, 84.

²¹⁴ The payment by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company amounted to £931,000 in 1921 as part of the Armitage-Smith Agreement of December 1920. For details on the Armitage-Smith Agreement of December 1920, see Majd, *Great Britain and Reza Shah: The Plunder of Iran, 1921-1941*, chaps. 9 & 10.

²¹⁵ George Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948; A Study in Big-Power Rivalry* (Cornell University Press, 1949), 90–91.

Shah with a request for negotiating a series of political and economic treaty agreements. On February 20, 1926, a long-awaited convention was agreed upon for the regulation and common use of waterways on the Soviet Persian frontier.²¹⁶

In response to Soviet requests for furthering their bilateral relations with Iran, Reza Shah appointed Abdolhossein Teymourdash as Minister of the Court in charge of Persia's foreign affairs in early June 1926 and sent him to Moscow soon thereafter to discuss all issues still outstanding between Iran and the Soviet Union. The British, clearly angered by the pro-Soviet orientation of the Persian Court, constantly exerted pressures on Iranian tribes to take up arms against the Iranian government.²¹⁷

On October 1, 1927, Iran and the Soviet Union concluded a series of treaties and agreements, the most important of which was the Treaty of Non-aggression and Neutrality. Teymourdash was instrumental in bringing about the successful conclusion of these treaties and agreements. Not only did the parties agree to observe a strict neutrality in case one of them was involved in a war with a third party, but they also concurred to take no part in political alliances or agreements directed against the other contracting party.²¹⁸ What was significant from the Soviet standpoint was that the treaty prohibited Persia from joining any anti-Soviet political alliance. Other major agreements included the one to address a trade balance issue between the two countries and the one that pertained to the fisheries on the Caspian Sea, and a Customs Convention.

²¹⁶ Shapiro, Leonard, *Soviet Treaty Series: A Collection of Bilateral Treaties Agreements and Conventions Concluded Between the Soviet Union and Foreign Powers*, Volume 1, 314-316. Also see Rezun, 77.

²¹⁷ Rezun, 86.

²¹⁸ Shapiro, Leonard, *Soviet Treaty Series: A Collection of Bilateral Treaties Agreements and Conventions Concluded Between the Soviet Union and Foreign Powers*, Volume 1, Protocol No. 2, 341. Also see Rezun, 115.

These treaties and agreements of 1927 essentially normalized political relations with the USSR, enabling Reza Shah and Teymourtash to launch an offensive against Britain.²¹⁹ The British protested soon after the British learned about these agreements.²²⁰ In particular, the Soviet-Persian Neutrality Pact was a significant blow to the British foreign policy to the Middle East, and was, at least from Britain's standpoint, in conflict with Persia's obligations under the League of Nations.²²¹ In addition, the British and Iranian governments clashed over the legal jurisdiction issue of the Bahrein Islands, and the Iranian government referred the whole matter to the League of Nations in 1927.²²² This legal affair was orchestrated by the Soviets behind the scene: the Soviet ambassador to Teheran Davtyan repeatedly urged Teymourtash to insist on the return of the islands to Persia, suggesting that Bahrein, if not under Iran's jurisdiction, could become a major naval base of the British fleet in the Persian Gulf in case of an armed collision between Persia and Britain.²²³ Despite Davtyan's attempt to hold it back, however, the Iranian government acceded to the British request for air transit over Persian territory to be granted to Britain's commercial airlines, Imperial Airways in 1928.

In March 1930, the Soviets made another attempt to distance Iran from the British with a secret protocol – to extend the Treaty of Guarantee and Neutrality of October 1927 to provide a tighter security between the two nations, serving the same purpose as the Soviet-Turkish protocol of 17 December 1929.²²⁴ According to the most recent Soviet analysis of this diplomatic demarche,

²¹⁹ Rezun, 128.

²²⁰ The Daily Telegraph, 3 October 1927.

²²¹ See a report from Sr. R. Clive to Sir Austen Chamberlain, November 7, 1927, Foreign Office Papers of the Eastern Department (Persia), File 371, E4738/2073/34, British Public Record Office.

²²² See the Iranian official note to all members of the League and the British reply in *League of Nations Official Journal*, 9th Year (1928), 440-441.

²²³ Georges Agabekov, *Ogpu : The Russian Secret Terror*, 1st Edition (Brentano's, 1931), 158.

²²⁴ Agaev, emyon L'vovitch, *Iran: Vneshnaia Politika I Problemy Nezavisimosti* (Moskva: Institut Vostokovedenia, 1971), 213, cited in Rezun, 179.

the protocol, if signed, was to contain a clause stipulating that the parties to the agreement “would not enter into negotiations with other states with a view to concluding political agreements with such states, without first notifying the other contracting party.”²²⁵ The states against which the protocol was to be directed were the neighboring powers possessing either “land” or “riparian” frontiers with Iran, so the protocol could only be aimed against Britain. Thus, the protocol was meant to be a pledge to the Soviet Union that Iran would consult with Moscow before it decided to conclude political agreements with Britain.²²⁶

Despite the USSR’s repeated attempts to tighten the alliance with Iran, Soviet influence in Iran did not rise accordingly to replace that of the British.²²⁷ The popularity of the Soviets within the Iranian conservative circles was precarious, particularly among the propertied strata, the military and the Western-educated civil bureaucracy, in comparison with the contacts this milieu had with the British, who some of the Iranian elite circles saw as a more useful patron. Part of the limited Soviet influence can be explained by the fact that the USSR could not be relied upon in addressing major security threats Iran was facing in the northern regions, as will be discussed below.

Major security threats to the regime from the northern provinces of Iran

The northern provinces of Iran were where Reza Shah saw security threats to his country and to his regime. Rebellions erupted in the wake of Reza Shah’s coronation in April 1926 in volatile regions mainly inhabited by nomadic tribes such as Azerbaijan, Khorassan, Kurdistan and Luristan. Many of the subsequent social disturbances in the provincial regions of Iran were

²²⁵ Agaev, 213.

²²⁶ Agaev, 213.

²²⁷ Rezun, 170.

presumably instigated by the British. At the same time, Reza Shah did not see the Soviets committed to addressing these security concerns, as he grew suspicious over time of the Soviet Union possibly sowing social instability or distrust of the Shah regime as a way to spread communism in these northern provinces.²²⁸

The most troublesome of the difficulties for the regime came from tribal dissidence. In Kurdistan, a region situated to the south-west of Azerbaijan, for example, widescale tribal uprisings aided and abetted by the British, had swept over the entire region. Prince Salar-ed-Dowleh Qajar, brother of the late Mohammed Ali Shah and a claimant to the throne of Iran, had infiltrated Iranian Kurdistan with a band of followers from Iraq, where he had obtained the assistance of the British authorities. Salar-ed-Dowleh then joined forces with the Kurdish chieftain, Simtqu (a.k.a. Sardar Rashid of Ravanshar), a man notorious for his revolts against the central government of Iran in the past.²²⁹ The rebels attacked a government cavalry squadron and successfully surrounded the town of Sanandaj on three sides, cutting the town's road and mail communications with neighboring towns, Saqqez and Kermanshah. Reza Shah's forces, using the superior fire-power of machine guns, were generally able to overpower the rebels in a series of operations.²³⁰ Facing the rebels surrounding the town of Sanandaj, Reza Shah ordered all motor transport requisitioned in the capital to help launch a massive military campaign against the belligerent tribes. Reza Shah deployed two Guards regiments, the Naderi Infantry and the Pahlavi Regiment, to besiege the Kurdish strongholds at Saqqez, Baneh and Sar Dasht. The area was thus

²²⁸ Rezun, 150.

²²⁹ Wilber, *op. cit.*, 120.

²³⁰ Agabekov, *Ogpu*, 94.

quickly relieved within two days, leaving Simtqu to rejoin his kinsmen on the Iraqi side of the border.²³¹

Reza Shah was concerned about the spread of communism by the Soviets in the northern areas that were underdeveloped and poor. He thus set out to acquire those northern regions such as Mazandera, Gilan and Khorassan, in order to protect the Iranians in those regions from pernicious communist ideas. In his native province of Mazanderan, in particular, Reza intimidated the feudal khan of Kushki-i-sera into surrendering all the title-deeds to his property, which was locally known as the boluk of Kia Kella, consisted of a total of 33 villages.²³²

When a junior partner does not perceive its senior partner to be committed to fighting security threats it faces by the use of force, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts that the junior partner should employ an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy as long as it faces a favorable balance of power vis-à-vis the source of threats, as this will facilitate its acquisition of sufficient technical capabilities to build an independent deterrent against the threats. In the Iranians' perception, Britain's influence in the region was subsiding, and its own power was growing with increasing technical capabilities to defend itself against British-backed local nomadic tribes. Thus, Iran's alliance behavior vis-à-vis the USSR should be *Autonomy-seeking*, refusing policy alignment with its senior partner and pursuing an increase in indigenous defense capabilities, as will be discussed in the following section.

²³¹ Rezun, *Soviet Union and Iran*, 81–82.

²³² See a report of Sir. R. Clive in Teheran, No. 445, September 1929, Foreign Office Papers of the Eastern Department (Persia), File 371, E4425/4425/34, British Public Record Office.

3. Iran's *Autonomy-seeking* Strategy

(1) Iran's Indigenous Defense Capabilities

As typically seen in an *Autonomy-seeking* junior partner, Iran was lessening its military dependence on the USSR by increasing its indigenous capabilities, as described below, and strengthening its relations with a third-party state.

(i) Ground forces

As soon as he became war minister in 1921, Reza Shah's primary focus was to centralize various Iranian armed forces and eliminate foreign officers. At the beginning of 1920, Iran's armed forces had twenty-five thousand men in total. In early December 1921, Reza Khan issued Army Order Number One, which combined two forces, the Cossack Division and the Gendarmerie, put the Gendarmerie headquarters under the command of a Cossack officer, and dismissed the few remaining Swedish officers from the organization.

The Cossack Division, commanded by fifty-six anti-Communist White Russians, had numbered 3,500 men and represented roughly a third of the armed forces as of 1920, and grew to 300 Iranian officers and 7,000 men by late 1921. The Gendarmerie, which made up another third of the Iranian armed forces, grew rapidly during the two years after the war to fill the void created by the Russian collapse in the north. By late 1921, the Gendarmerie had incorporated Iran's regular military units to become Iran's largest armed service with more than 700 officers and cadets and

nearly 9,300 men organized into fourteen regiments and independent battalions.²³³ The final third was comprised of the South Persia Rifles were disbanded by the British, who were unwilling to have them merged into the new army created by Reza Shah.

Between 1922 and 1926, Reza Shah continued to consolidate his grip over the Iranian armed forces. The new army, which combined the Cossack Division and the Gendarmerie, was organized into five divisions with plans to grow to forty thousand men. By late 1922, the new army's rolls had carried nearly two thousand officers and twenty-eight thousand soldiers, and it grew to thirty-three thousand men by 1926.²³⁴ By 1930, the army had eighty thousand men and could also count on the cooperation of the twelve thousand men belonging to a reestablished Gendarmerie service called the Aminiyah. Iran's army continued to grow, passing 105,000 men in 1937 and reaching 126,400 men in addition to 9,750 gendarmerie personnel by mid-1941. The army was organized into 18 divisions and possessed 448 artillery guns (including 1901 Schneider models), and 76 anti-aircraft guns. The army had one mechanized brigade consisting of three mechanized regiments with 100 tanks, 24 armored cars, and 50 armored trucks.

Despite significant improvements on its personnel, the army didn't buy many new weapons in the 1920s and the early 1930s due to the lack of adequate funds, and as a result it lacked any significant mechanized forces. In 1933, when Reza renegotiated the oil concession with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, more money became available for the army and its mechanization.²³⁵ In 1938 the U.S. ambassador in Tehran reported that Iran's armed forces consisted of one hundred

²³³ Steven R. Ward, *Immortal: A Military History of Iran and Its Armed Forces*, First Edition, First Printing edition (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2009), 131.

²³⁴ Ward, 132.

²³⁵ In 1920, the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company purchased Khoshtaria's concession for the sum of 200,000 pounds sterling. As a result, a branch of the Anglo-Iranian, the North Persian Oil Company, was created. Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948; A Study in Big-Power Rivalry*, 81.

Czechoslovakian light and medium tanks plus the four Rolls Royce armored cars, twelve Marmon-Herrington armored cars and twenty-eight German armored trucks. Primarily focused on addressing internal security for long, none of its army divisions in the north held any modern artillery, while only eight anti-aircraft guns were distributed among them. Meanwhile, Iran's armored vehicles were consolidated into one mechanized brigade with three mechanized regiments in Tehran. The mobility of other army units rested on 50 Belgian and 16 Harley-Davidson motorcycles, 300 trucks, and 150 other vehicles and tractors.²³⁶

Between 1921 and 1941, at least 60 percent of the entire government expenditure was devoted to the military. In addition, at least 60 percent of the oil revenues had supposedly been spent to complete the purchase of armaments and munitions of the army.²³⁷

(ii) Airpower

Iran also started to strengthen its air capabilities in the early 1920s by seeking third-party assistance to build an indigenous air force. In early 1923, Iran sought technical assistance from the United States and a few European countries with organizing a small air force.²³⁸ By mid-1924, sixteen French, Russian, and German biplanes had been delivered to Iran, although it was plagued by recurrent mechanical issues. In 1930, Iran had at most twenty planes in flying condition, while by the end of 1934, it had 145 serviceable airplanes on hand or on order, most of which were British de Havilland and Hawker biplanes with a few other German, and American aircraft.²³⁹ Between 1934 and 1939 – the year in which British deliveries of airplanes to Iran ceased because

²³⁶ Ward, *Immortal*, 142.

²³⁷ Louis G. Dreyfus, U.S. Minister in Tehran, telegram 891.415/26, March 3, 1941. Also see Majd, 290.

²³⁸ Hossein Alai, Iranian Ambassador, to Allen W. Dulles, Chief of the Division of Near Eastern Affairs, 891.248/1, January 15, 1923. Also see Majd, 296.

²³⁹ William H. Hornibrook, U.S. Minister in Tehran, telegram 229, 891.248/58, October 2, 1934.

of the outbreak of war with Germany – Iran purchased 32 de Havillands, 54 Hawker Hinds, and 11 Hawker Audaxes, raising the total number of Iranian warplanes to 245.²⁴⁰

On the other hand, Reza Shah also attempted to build an aircraft industry infrastructure and increase Iran's inventory, so he ordered an aircraft production factory to be built and managed by the British. It was constructed near Doshan Tappeh outside Tehran, and the first planes produced in Iran, five Tiger Moths, were rolled out in early 1938. Three years later, American Minister Dreyfus reported that the Iranian air force's order of battle had a total of 245 aircraft, nearly all of which were British biplanes (fighters, light bombers, or trainers).²⁴¹

(iii) Naval Power

Reza Shah also had an ambitious goal of building a powerful navy to reduce the Gulf Arabs' reliance on the Royal Navy and thereby substitute Iranian for British influence around the region. To supplant British influence, Iran's strategy was to rely on Germany and Italy when they started to build a navy from scratch in the early 1920s. As Minister of War, Reza Khan made his first major naval acquisition in 1924, purchasing a small German battleship Pehlevi, a reconditioned 1917 German minesweeper, according to a U.S. State Department memorandum.²⁴² Since Iran lacked trained naval personnel at this time, it promoted a German deckhand to captain and gave him an Iranian crew. In 1926, Iran sent the first party of naval cadets to Italy for training. In 1927, Iran ordered from Italy what was believed to be new ships, two 950-ton sloops and four 350-ton gunboats, which turned out to be reconditioned ships – misrepresentation that Iran lacked the technical expertise to discover. These sloops and gunboats joined four smaller vessels to form

²⁴⁰ Dreyfus, U.S. Minister in Tehran, telegram 102, 891.415/27, July 21, 1941.

²⁴¹ Dreyfus, U.S. Minister in Tehran, telegram 102, 891.415/27, July 21, 1941. Also see Ward, 143.

²⁴² U.S. Department of State, memorandum 891.30/11, March 5, 1935. Also see Majd, 295.

Iran's southern navy.²⁴³ In 1928, a national Persian navy was created under the command of Captain del Prato, an Italian line officer, according to Augustin W. Ferrin, American consul in Tehran. Between 1928 and 1930, a total of about \$600,000 was appropriated to build and expand the navy.²⁴⁴ In August 1934, the Persian government contracted with an Italian defense firm Cantieri Navali Riuniti of Palermo for the construction of three 28-ton patrol boats to be delivered by early 1935.²⁴⁵

In 1941, the Persian Gulf navy consisted of two sloops (950 tons each) and four patrol vessels (331 tons each), while the Caspian navy consisted of four vedette boats (28 tons each), and the Royal yacht Shahsavar.²⁴⁶

(iv) Conscription

In addition to purchasing weapons from Western countries, Reza Shah also expanded the personnel size of his armed forces and improved their quality, as they lacked manpower and professionalism. Upon Reza's proposal, a conscription bill was passed in 1924, calling for two years of compulsory military service for all men reaching the age of twenty-one. After two years of active duty, the conscripts were to remain in reserve status for twenty-three years with progressively declining obligations for service.

The lack of professionalism was another serious deficiency of the Iranian military. To reform military education, Reza combined the existing officer schools into a single military college

²⁴³ Ward, *Immortal*, 144.

²⁴⁴ Augustin W. Ferrin, U.S. Consul in Tehran, telegram 39, 891.30/5, February 20, 1929; Augustin W. Ferrin, U.S. Consul in Tehran, telegram 56, 891.30/5, April 13, 1929.

²⁴⁵ Rossi, Italian chargé d'affaires in Washington, to Cordell Hull, Department of State, 891.34/32, August 8 & 20, 1934.

²⁴⁶ Dreyfus, U.S. Minister in Tehran, telegram 102, 891.415/27, July 21, 1941. Also see Majd, 295-96.

for officer basic training, and also established a military education program that included primary and intermediate schools for boys. A military academy that commissioned young men as second lieutenants upon graduation was the final step in the program. Despite his distrust of foreign influence, Reza sent many junior and midlevel officers abroad, mostly to the French military schools of Saumur, St. Cyr, and École Supérieure de Guerre for professional training.²⁴⁷

(2) Limited Policy Alignment with the USSR

Over issues related to Iran's relations with Moscow's major great power competitors such as Britain and Germany, Tehran refused to actively support Moscow's foreign policy. As discussed earlier, Tehran resisted Moscow's demand for a secret protocol with the Soviets which would have imposed obligations not to enter into negotiations with third parties without notice.

Reza Shah did not respond to Soviet concerns with regard to Britain's commercial harassment. The Soviets were worried starting in 1926 that Iranian merchants in the north who had been dealing with them proclaimed a trade and financial boycott of the Soviet state-owned trading organizations. The Soviets knew that the British press was constantly encouraging the boycotters to look for alternative markets for their produce rather than becoming entirely dependent on the USSR. As Reza Shah neglected this issue for a while, the continued boycotting of Soviet export goods in the northern provinces of Iran resulted in the dispatch of official notes of protest from Moscow to the authorities in Teheran. However, it was not until mid-March 1927 that Tehran sent a small delegation led by Foreign Minister Ansari to have talks over such Soviet concerns. The significant delay of negotiations led the Soviets to lose confidence in Iran's ability to come terms

²⁴⁷ Ward, *Immortal*, 147.

with the British, who saw the Soviet leadership redoubling OGPU – a soviet organization for investigating and combating counterrevolutionary activities – efforts in Iran.

Reza Shah was skeptical about Soviet intentions more generally. Evidence suggests that Teymourdash seemed to be held back by his subordinate, the Anglophilic Foreign Minister Mohammed Ali Forugi. The foreign minister met with Loganovsky, the chargé d'affaires at the Soviet embassy in Teheran on May 28th, 1930 and told him that he personally considered relations between Teheran and Moscow to be so good that it was unnecessary to supplement them by “specific addenda of a technical nature.”²⁴⁸ Tehran decided to resist the secret protocol with Moscow, as Reza Shah was determined not to fall under Russian tutelage. The Shah decisively quelled social disturbances that broke out in Iran’s provinces adjoining the Soviet Union such as Khorasan and Azerbaijan, where Soviet agents were believed to be implicated.

Likewise, Iran refused to offer the Soviets a favor over the bilateral issues most important to Moscow. On February 27, 1931, Iran’s congress, the Majlis, officially passed what was called Teymourdash’s Monopoly Law, which inflicted major economic blows on Soviet interests, even though it did not necessarily target Moscow. He attempted to mitigate the impact on Iran of the world-wide economic depression at the time, applying the foreign trade monopoly against all countries, including all European states. To that end, the law aimed to balance monetary values on specific items of import and export in order to protect newly created industries from foreign competition.

To let great powers balance out one another with a view to reducing British and Soviet influence, Iran consciously attempted to strengthen its relations with the United States and later

²⁴⁸ Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki, Vol. 13, 310, cited in Rezun, 180.

Germany.²⁴⁹ To that end, American, and later German, advisors such as Dr. Arthur C. Millspaugh were invited to reorganize Iran's finance systems and set up a national bank of Iran.²⁵⁰ However, disagreements between Reza Shah and Millspaugh over the size and budget of the armed forces led to the former to ask the latter to leave the country. As a result, the United States retreated from an active role in Iranian economic development, driving Reza Shah much closer to Germany.²⁵¹

In as early as 1926, Teymourtash had begun to turn his attention to Germany. He went to Berlin to cancel an outdated German-Persian Treaty of 1873 and concluded an agreement with a number of German firms on the construction of a Trans-Iranian Railroad, which was to run from Bandar Abbas on the Persian Gulf to Bandar Shah on the Caspian. In addition, Teymourtash also signed a contract with a German airline, Junkers-Gesellschaft, to which he gave a monopoly over Iran's passenger and air freight service.²⁵² Teymourtash also recruited German financial experts such as Dr. Kurt Lindenblatt to take charge of Iran's nascent banking system and of the country's first National bank, the Melli-i-Iran, created on May 5, 1927. On a number of occasions in 1930, the British Minister, Sir R. Clive, repeatedly requested the Iranians not to obstruct the flow of pounds sterling into the country.²⁵³ But Teymourtash ignored British concerns and entrusted the German-controlled national bank with the printing and distribution of currency in Iran at the same time that the foreign trade monopoly law came into effect.²⁵⁴ The Iranian arms industry also owed its development to German technical assistance. Before the second world war broke out, the

²⁴⁹ Ward, *Immortal*, 134.

²⁵⁰ In this endeavor, Reza carefully avoided hiring British advisors. When British firms, such as Richard Constain Company, were hired in a project of constructing the Transiranian Railroad, they were treated like any other nation that could contribute technically to the construction along with American, German, Italian firms. See Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948; A Study in Big-Power Rivalry*, 74.

²⁵¹ Ward, *Immortal*, 134.

²⁵² Rezun, 99.

²⁵³ Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, London, 1925-1941, vol. 244, 1939, 1308.

²⁵⁴ Rezun, 215.

Germans helped establish a machine-gun factory in Teheran and an airplane factory in Shahbas, which was producing a squadron of smaller fighter planes every two months.²⁵⁵ Siemens Company enjoyed its dominant position on the Iranian market of electrical motors, and Ernst Leitz of Vetzlar – the renowned manufacturer of Leica cameras – almost monopolized trade with Iran in microscopes and other equipment with hospital and industrial laboratories.

As a result of Reza Shah's economic demarche toward Germany, the Germans penetrated Iranian markets extremely well by the mid-1930s. German goods, tourists, and engineers continued to pour into Iran in even greater numbers in the latter half of the 1930s. From 1936 to 1937, 778 Germans arrived in Iran under various pretexts, mostly as "tourists." During the same period, only 446 Germans left the country permanently. From 1937 to 1938, 819 Germans came to Iran, many of whom remained in Iran as "tourists," and by August 1941, the number of Germans in Iran reached two thousand.²⁵⁶ Fully aware of the local people's sensitivity to economic exploitation by foreigners, the Nazis stressed that Iran should get rid of foreign technicians and acquire advanced equipment under the guidance of German experts, who they claimed had no imperialistic intentions unlike other Western or Russian powers.

The strongest evidence for Iran's refusal of policy alignment with the Soviet Union was its decision to remain neutral when WWII broke out in 1939. Iran observed neutrality faithfully. This facilitated Germany's attempt to establish a fifth column in Iran. In October 1940, two German secret service men, Roman Gamotta and Franz Mayr, arrived in Iran to work for the transport firm, Nouvelle Iran Express. They were followed by another agent, Major Julius Berthold Schulze, who arrived in Tabriz as consular secretary in April 1941.

²⁵⁵ Orient Nachrichten, No. 16/17, September 1, 1938, cited in Lenczowski, 155.

²⁵⁶ Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran, 1918-1948; A Study in Big-Power Rivalry*, 161.

By that time the Germans had gained de facto control over railways, airlines, and a number of other industries in Iran. This became a major problem when Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941, as Britain needed to send war supplies to Russia in transit through Iran. The presence of a large German fifth column in Iran might have prevented any such logistic plan from succeeding. On July 19 and August 16, 1941, the Soviet and British diplomatic missions in Teheran presented to the Iranian government memoranda demanding the expulsion of a large number of Germans. The Iranian government insisted, however, that its record of impartiality toward the belligerents was of the strictest character and that to expel the Germans would be tantamount to the violation of neutrality. In conversations with foreign diplomatic representatives, the Iranian officials asserted that all the Germans were closely watched and that no danger from the Germans existed.

On August 25, 1941, the ultimatum was issued by London and Moscow, expressing disappointment that Iran had not complied with Allied requests as well as regret that the Allies were now compelled to take a unilateral action. At dawn the same day, Soviet and British forces invaded Iran. The Soviets used Article 6 of the Soviet-Iranian treaty of friendship to justify its invasion. Iranian opposition to this invasion was negligible, as its military resistance crumbled soon with many military officers deserting their units, except for an engagement in Khuzistan, where the Iranians under General Shahbakhti managed to inflict fifty-five casualties on the British. The lack of preparedness of the army to deter Soviet threats is evident from the limited strength of the divisions assigned to the northern frontier, a 2,000-kilometer border Iran shared with its northern neighbor. None of those northern frontier divisions (eastern Azerbaijan, western Azerbaijan, Ardebil, Gilan, Gorgan, Khorassan) possessed any armored vehicles, and their artillery

was all horse-drawn. Only two divisions in those border areas had four anti-aircraft guns each, which means Iran's northern borders were for all practical purposes undefended.

As such, the Allied military occupation of Iran was completed within a few days. On August 28, a newly appointed Premier, Mohammed Ali Furuqi announced that orders were given to the army to cease resistance.²⁵⁷ Britain and Russia immediately presented parallel diplomatic notes, which issued the following demands: Iran must order its forces to retreat from certain regions in the west and south of the country; Iran must hand all German citizens to British and Soviet forces within one week; Iran must promise not to admit any more Germans for the duration of war; Iran must facilitate the transport of Allied war materials by road, rail, and air; Iran must agree to refrain from any hostile acts against Britain and Russia.

(3) Failing *Autonomy-seeking* Strategy

If Iran's *Autonomy-seeking* strategy aimed to eliminate foreign influence and ensure its sovereignty by pitting great powers against one another, it failed to achieve that objective in August 1941, when the Soviet Union and Britain invaded Iran. Two factors explain this failure—Reza Shah's personal greed and insufficient third-party support.

First, Reza Shah was diverting Iran's army funds to his personal foreign bank accounts. He did not allocate as much funds as he could to weapons procurement, as he did not anticipate the occupation of his country by his alliance partner. Of the £18,412,000 (\$92,060,000) allocated from 1928 to 1941 for the purchase of arms in Europe and America, only £4.5 million (\$22.5 million)

²⁵⁷ Journal de Tehran, 29 August 1941, cited in Lenczowski, 169.

was actually spent for that purpose. The unused balance of this sum at the end of Reza Shah's reign was only £101,000 (\$508,000). Had the total of £18,412,000 all been spent on armaments Iran could have potentially purchased 1,300 advanced American fighter-bombers, or over 3,500 tanks, or 18,000 trucks, or any appropriate combination thereof. In 1941, Iran only possessed 245 warplanes, 100 tanks, and at most 500 trucks and tractors.²⁵⁸ The remaining £14 million (\$70 million) was diverted to Reza Shah's personal bank accounts in Switzerland, the U.K., and the United States.²⁵⁹

Second, Reza Shah did not fully establish an alternative security relationship for reliable third-party assistance before dismissing Teymourtash as a liaison to Moscow. Britain could have been a third-party security provider, but Teymourtash deliberately took multiple measures that soured bilateral relations between Iran and Britain. First of all, Teymourtash became the first Iranian statesman in 1928 to demand unequivocally that the British acknowledge the Persian government's ownership of its oil.²⁶⁰ He attempted to exploit British anxiety over the political implications of Soviet penetration into Iran, which he calculated would make the British submit to Iranian pressure or make them meet the Iranians at least half way in negotiations over the Anglo-Iranian oil crisis.

Teymourtash's new monopoly law worsened Iran's relationship with Britain. One aspect of the new monopoly law that particularly enraged the British was its Paragraph No. 4, which stipulated that foreign imports were to be subject to approval by the Iranian authorities and were to correspond to a given quota of Iranian exports. His relationship with the British further

²⁵⁸ Majd, 285-303.

²⁵⁹ For details on how Reza Shah was diverting Iran's Army Funds and oil revenues to his personal foreign bank accounts, see Majd, *Great Britain and Reza Shah: The Plunder of Iran, 1921-1941*, chap. 7.

²⁶⁰ Rezun, *Soviet Union and Iran*, 229.

deteriorated after Teymourtash offered a special trade agreement with Moscow on terms favorable to the USSR to mitigate the effect of the law on the Soviets.²⁶¹ Western powers – Britain, the United States, Germany, France and Italy – all protested against Teymourtash’s special treatment of Moscow, and the British demanded that Iran give them the same privileged treatment that had been offered to the Soviets.²⁶² Teymourtash refused to consider the Anglo-American demands, however, arguing that these Western states were unable to offer Iran the same trade guarantees as the Soviet centralized agencies could.²⁶³ Furthermore, Teymourtash tightened Iranian control over the British-owned Imperial Bank of Persia, which alone had the right to fix the international exchange rate of the Persian Kran.²⁶⁴

Wary of Teymourtash’s growing power over the nation’s foreign policy, the Shah created paramilitary political police under General Ayrom to watch over Teymourtash and Communist subversion in 1931. While Foreign Minister Farugi was generally recognized as a useful bridge between the Iranian government and the British, Teymourtash’s ostensible anti-British attitude was alarming to Reza Shah.²⁶⁵ Between the spring of 1931 and December 1932, a multitude of

²⁶¹ This was Teymourtash’s concession to Soviet demands. As a countermeasure to Iran’s new monopoly law, the Soviet Union issued an order closing the Soviet-Iranian border to trade and commercial traffics, and this stifled local Iranian merchants near the northern border. To get the border reopened, Teymourtash had to offer a special trade agreement with Moscow on terms favorable to the USSR, and this reduced the effects of the monopoly law to nil so far as Soviet-Iranian commercial relations were concerned. The new trade agreement between Teheran and Moscow, signed on October 27, 1931, re-established the principle of net balance in their mutual trade and introduced a most-favored-nation-clause for Moscow. In addition, it also allowed the Soviet agents in Iran to carry out all trade and commercial transactions in Persia. On the other hand, that special concession to the Soviets turned out to be a significant blow to a number of Iranian merchants, since the Soviet agents permitted themselves a freedom of action in private transactions to keep a margin in Soviet exports to Iran that had not been included in the net balance principle of the 1931 agreement. The Iranian government’s inability to halt unfair Soviet economic expansion caused the ruin of many Iranian merchants, who pointed their fingers on Teymourtash as the architect of new Soviet-Iranian trade agreements. For a full text of the agreement and the related exchange of notes between Iran and the Soviet Union, see Shapiro, Leonard, *Soviet Treaty Series: A Collection of Bilateral Treaties Agreements and Conventions Concluded Between the Soviet Union and Foreign Powers*, Volume 1, 37-45. Also see Rezun, 219-25

²⁶² Charles C. Hart, U.S. Minister in Tehran, telegram 936, 661.9131/77, November 16, 1931. Also see Rezun 222.

²⁶³ Charles C. Hart, U.S. Minister in Tehran, memorandum 661.9931/106, April 14, 1932.

²⁶⁴ The London Times, 5 July 1931 and 8 April 1931.

²⁶⁵ Rezun, 188.

events led Reza Shah to dismiss Teymourtash as the Court Minister, which resulted in a rapid decline in the Soviet influence over the Iranian government.

4. Alternative Explanations and Conclusion

The Soviet Union and Iran had shared interests in curbing British political and economic penetration into Iran. Tehran exploited its alliance relationship with Moscow to achieve this objective, and was successful doing so to some extent with a series of treaties and agreements concluded with Moscow in 1927. On the other hand, Soviet ability to assist with the goal of eliminating British influence from Iran had significant limitations. Although those treaties helped the Soviet leadership strengthen its diplomatic position in Iran relative to the British, its popularity in the Iranian conservative circles was precarious, particularly among the propertied strata, the military and the Western-educated civil bureaucracy, in comparison with the contacts they had with the British. As a result, leaders in close relations with Moscow tended to be seen with suspicion. Teymourtash, the minister in charge of diplomatic relations with the Soviets, was no exception. Even Reza Shah, who appointed Teymourtash to that position, became suspicious of Teymourtash's concessions to the Soviets and dismissed him in the early 1930s.

Ultimately, Iran's conscious efforts to pit multiple great powers against one another in Iranian markets backfired, leaving no single great power willing to defend Iran's sovereignty. Iran's strategy to let Soviet interests crowd out British influence was met by London's counterstrategy to make the Iranians, including the Shah, more financially dependent. Not trusting the Soviets either, Reza Shah in the late 1920s successfully attracted German foreign investments

for infrastructure development projects, but soon after the WWII erupted, Iran's collaboration with Nazi Germany became untenable given the British money in Iran and in the region. Britain was quick to launch a vigorous anti-Shah propaganda campaign with radio broadcasts from New Delhi, which stressed the tyrannical rule of the Shah, his injustices and exploitation of the people.

On September 16, 1941, Reza abdicated in favor of his son, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi. Immediately after the accession of the new Shah, Iran became divided into three zones: the southern and central parts of the country under the British occupation; Teheran and Meshed under the Iranian administration except civil and military airports in and around Teheran; and the provinces of Azerbaijan, Mazanderan, Gilan, Astarabad, and Khorasan under the Soviet control. On January 29, 1942, the Tripartite Treaty of Alliance between the Soviet Union, Britain, and Iran was concluded in order to formalize those arrangements. Britain and Russia committed to defend Iran from aggression by Germany or any other power, and also pledged to "respect the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Iran." In addition, the two great powers promised to withdraw their forces "from Iranian Territory no later than six months after all hostilities between the Allied Powers and Germany and her associates have been suspended."

In explaining Iranian behavior vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, the security threat explanation performs well since one could argue that Iran's choice of the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy could be the result of limited security threats facing Tehran. The level of security threats, the argument goes, was never high enough for Iran to seek assistance from its alliance partner, hence the lack of alignment with the Soviet Union. After Reza Shah's coronation in April 1926, his regime soon found itself fighting tribal uprisings by the Kurds and the Lurs in mid-1926 followed by new disturbances flaring up in the south – which was a primordial stronghold of the British – engulfing

whole regions in the provinces of Kermanshah and Fars in early 1927.²⁶⁶ Reza Shah's regime was threatened by British-instigated local insurgents and uprisings in the northern regions of Iran, but it was not until 1941 that it was directly threatened by the British army's invasion. The most troublesome of security threats to the regime came from tribal dissidence in volatile regions such as Azerbaijan, Khorassan, Kurdistan and Luristan. But Reza Shah's forces, thanks to their superior firepower, were generally able to suppress the rebels without relying on Soviet forces. After all, Reza Shah was myopic enough to dismiss the possibility of British invasion, and this lack of foresight cost him his own rule. If Reza Shah was aware of the need for defending against a British invasion, however, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy would have explained Iranian behavior much better than the security threat explanation, because even with the awareness of British aggression, Reza Shah, given his suspicion of the Soviets, would still have pursued an alternative alliance partner in Berlin and ramped up its defense buildup, rather than getting closer to Moscow.

The hypothesis of ideological solidarity, at first glance, may also appear to do well in explaining Iranian behavior vis-à-vis Moscow. While Tehran and Moscow were united in their anti-British sentiments, Reza Shah did not share communist ideologies. One could certainly argue that this insufficient shared ideology made alignment harder, hence Iran's *Autonomy-seeking* strategy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. But it is unlikely that ideological differences regarding communism led Tehran to keep Moscow at arm's length, because Reza Shah did not behave differently with Germany, with which he shared both his anti-imperialist and anti-communist ideologies. Both Adolf Hitler and Reza Shah were known for their anti-communist ideology and anti-British sentiments, but Reza Shah declined to accept Hitler's invitation to visit Germany in

²⁶⁶ Rezun, *Soviet Union and Iran*, 95.

1937 – a rare diplomatic opportunity that could have evolved into a real alliance relationship. Reza Shah declined it due to “an imposing amount of work to be done in Tehran.”²⁶⁷

Reza Shah’s motive behind this alliance was to fight imperialism by pitting great powers against one another. He was suspicious of all great powers, assuming that they were not committed to fighting on Iran’s behalf but that they pretended to be committed to doing so in order to gain preferential economic and political benefits from the alliance. Tehran was receiving American businesses as economic partners, but Reza Shah was not interested in developing an alternative security partnership with Washington, despite ideological similarities.

²⁶⁷ See the Daily Telegraph, 29 November 1938. Also see Malak, Hassan Khan Yazdi, *Arzesh Massae-I Iran Dar Jang* (Iran’s contribution to the war), Teheran, 1945, 39, cited in Rezun, 319.

Chapter V: The U.S.S.R.-People's Republic of China Alliance (1950-1960)

1. Introduction

The case of the Sino-Soviet alliance (1950-60) fits the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy relatively well. It was an asymmetrical alliance between a great power, the Soviet Union (USSR, hereafter), and a regional major power, the People's Republic of China (PRC, hereafter). The PRC had "revisionist" policy goals – i.e. those to change the current *de jure* or *de facto* international distribution of power and goods by force²⁶⁸ – as it intended to use force to achieve its unification and other political goals, although this is not to say that the PRC was revisionist in the same way as Germany in the 1930s upset the existing international system.

Soviet security commitments to China were rather strong in the early days of the alliance, although available speech evidence is quite limited regarding how Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders evaluated Soviet commitments. The Soviets promised and offered abundant material, technical and financial assistance for the Chinese military's modernization. Moscow provided

²⁶⁸ By revisionist, I do not mean upsetting the current international system all together. The second section of this chapter has more discussions about why China should be coded as having revisionist goals. My definition of "revisionist goals" is similar to the way Arnold Wolfers defined "revisionist powers," which "are bent on changing the (local) status quo by force if necessary." See Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration; Essays on International Politics*, 125.

enough weapons equipment to arm more than half of the PLA's infantry divisions. Stalin showed his support for Mao's plan to invade Taiwan, and provided air cover to protect Chinese troops during the Korean War. After Stalin's death in 1953, however, China's perception of the Soviet security guarantee shifted. Khrushchev adopted the principles of peaceful coexistence, emphasizing the prevention of major war, while Mao believed that great powers could absorb a nuclear attack. The differences both in their views of nuclear war and their strategic approaches to U.S. threats led Chinese leaders to believe that the Soviets were no longer committed to fighting U.S. forces in support of the PRC's mission.

As the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts when the junior partner perceives strong security commitments by the senior partner while harboring a revisionist mission, Mao in the early 1950s exhibited *Favor-carrying* behavior – that is, submitting to a senior alliance partner through proactive policy alignment and troop contributions, in order to compel additional military assistance as a *quid pro quo* for being a “good” junior partner. Beijing was closely coordinating with Moscow on a range of foreign policy issues such as Korea and Indochina (although as a party to a broader ideological alliance, it might not have an option to not coordinate). After Soviet security commitments became weaker, however, Chinese leaders gradually moved toward an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy – a strategy designed to increase a state's intra-alliance bargaining position by demonstrating its ability to build an independent deterrent and distancing itself from the senior partner. Consistent with this prediction, Mao, starting in 1957, refused to show allegiance to the Soviet leadership both privately and publicly. Certainly, the most widely accepted explanation for the Sino-Soviet split as well as Beijing's attitude toward Moscow in the late 1950s consists of Mao's policy of self-reliance (*Zili Gengsheng*) and his ideological radicalization. I

argue, however, that a shift in perceived Soviet security commitments is at least a partial contributing factor in the eyes of some Chinese military leaders.

I test the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy against two powerful alternative explanations: the security threat explanation and a hypothesis of ideological solidarity. The security threat explanation predicts that the greater security threats a state faces, the more likely it is to work toward a serious defense buildup and stay aligned with its alliance partner— and this is an equivalent of the *Favor-carrying* strategy which involves continued defense buildup and close coordination.²⁶⁹ Conversely, the lower the security threats a state faces, the more likely it is to be reluctant to coordinate with the partner but still be willing to keep building its own military arsenal given its weaker position vis-à-vis the partner – and this is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, which involves continued defense buildup and a decline in coordination efforts. As we shall see below, the security threat explanation does not predict Chinese behavior very well. After its renewed realization of growing U.S. power in the region with a series of U.S. alliances in East Asia in the mid-1950s, the PRC should have stayed tightly aligned with its senior partner according to the security threat explanation. But the Chinese did the opposite as they realized that the Soviets now viewed U.S. threats differently. They started distancing themselves from Soviet leaders by rejecting Soviet proposals for intelligence and naval cooperation, criticizing Soviet disarmament efforts, and adopting a new strategic guideline different from Moscow’s in 1956.

The hypothesis of ideological solidarity predicts, on the other hand, that the more similar the leaders’ ideologies are, the more likely they are to pursue closer policy coordination while continuing their defense buildup to improve capabilities to help one another – which is an

²⁶⁹ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 32.

equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy.²⁷⁰ Conversely, the more distant their ideologies are, the more likely they are to not actively pursue policy coordination but still improve capabilities to defend themselves because their ideologically-distant partners are not reliable – which is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. In particular, as Thomas Christensen argues, ideological multilateral alliances bonded with revolutionary ideologies may give a junior member a reason to behave more aggressively toward the enemy, out of concern over its own position within the alliance.²⁷¹ This hypothesis performs better than the security threat explanation in predicting the PRC’s behavior vis-à-vis the Soviet Union for a better part of the 1950s, but is unable to explain fluctuations in Chinese foreign policy alignment after Mao Zedong’s ideological radicalization that started in late 1957.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into four sections. The second, following section will provide the background of the Sino-Soviet alliance, clarifying values this case takes on the independent variables, and predicting its values on the dependent variable, of the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. The third section examines the degree of empirical support for the *Favor-currying* strategy – predicted by the Theory when the PRC perceived strong security commitments from the USSR and embraced a revisionist policy goal. The fourth section presents empirical evidence for the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy – the predicted strategy when the senior partner’s security commitments became weak in Chinese eyes. The fifth, final section will conclude by comparing the performance of the theory with the two above-mentioned alternative explanations.

²⁷⁰ Haas, *The Ideological Origins of Great Power Politics, 1789–1989*, chap. 1. Also see Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 183–84.

²⁷¹ Christensen, *Worse Than a Monolith*, 15–16.

2. Background

(1) The Formation of the Alliance

In forming an alliance with Moscow, Beijing's major purpose was to secure Soviet military and financial assistance with China's still unfinished civil war and its post-war economic recovery, rather than defending itself from existential security threats. Requests for weaponry were sent to Moscow long before the PRC's independence of October 1949. In as early as the summer of 1948, the USSR began to provide military assistance to Chinese communist forces battling the nationalist Guomindang (GMD, hereafter), distributing weapons of captured Kwantung Army troops to the communist forces. This contributed to a shift in power in the winter of 1948-49, as the Chinese Communist forces achieved their control over half of mainland China. After seizing Nanjing in April 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP, hereafter) quickly undertook major steps toward forming an alliance with the Soviet Union. The CCP's vice-chairman, Liu Shaoqi, secretly visited Moscow in July 1949 to have a serious and comprehensive negotiation over the future Sino-Soviet alliance relationship.

When signing a security treaty in 1950, which designated Japan and the United States as security threats to be addressed collectively, Mao primarily intended it to provide his country with Soviet military assistance.²⁷² In particular, Mao hoped that Soviet assistance would offer a strategic

²⁷² Article 1 of the treaty stipulated that: "In the event of one of the contracting parties being attacked by Japan or any other state allied with it and thus being involved in a state of war, the other contracting party shall immediately render military and other assistance by all means at its disposal." See Central Intelligence Agency, 'Relations between the Chinese Communist Regime and the USSR: Their Present Character and Probable Future Courses,' National Intelligence Estimate 58, September 10, 1952, Appendix 1, http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0001086032.pdf.

deterrent against potential U.S. military interventions at three fronts: GMD-held Taiwan, divided Korea, and Vietnam, all of which Mao saw as “conduits for a potential American attack.”²⁷³

Meanwhile, Stalin sought an alliance with the PRC for two reasons. First, he tried to get the Chinese to help duplicate their experience of armed struggle for power throughout Asia.²⁷⁴ In Stalin’s eyes, the rise of communist movements in China in the 1920s and the 1930s presented great opportunities for energetic, offensive blows in favor of socialism.²⁷⁵ In forming an alliance with the PRC, Stalin was thus passing the buck of supporting Asian revolutionaries to Mao.²⁷⁶

Second, the USSR sought to keep geostrategic privileges that had been granted by a few 1945 agreements with the GMD, such as usage rights of the China Far East Railway, the South Manchuria Railway, and access to ice-free ports at Lushun (Port Arthur) and Dalian.²⁷⁷ Ice-free ports in Lushun and Dalian were particularly important for the Soviet Navy, as two existing Soviet naval bases in the Pacific – Petropavlovsk and Vladivostok – were virtually useless in war. For example, Petropavlovsk on the Kamchatki Peninsula had to rely upon supplies by surface ships, a link easily interrupted by an adversary, while Vladivostok was locked in the Sea of Japan, with its

²⁷³ Lorenz M. Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split: Cold War in the Communist World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 19, 32–33.

²⁷⁴ Sergei N. Goncharov, John Wilson Lewis, and Litai Xue, *Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, and the Korean War* (Stanford University Press, 1993), 72.

²⁷⁵ There are multiple communist parties in China at the time, one with as many as 10,000 members, but except the Communist Party of China they all failed without support from the Soviet Union.

²⁷⁶ See Qiang Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975*, New edition (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 22.

²⁷⁷ These are privileges Czarist Russia had lost in Northeast China after the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. Chiang Kai-shek offered all of them for a period of 30 years, after the USSR launched the invasion of Manchuria, a massive military operation in August 1945 mobilizing 1.5 million soldiers against one million Japanese Kwantung Army troops. As a result, the Changchun Railroad was jointly owned and operated by the GMD and the USSR, with the Changchun Railway Bureau Director seconded from Moscow. Dalian was declared a free port, with a port manager also seconded from Moscow. Lushun was designated as a Chinese-Soviet joint-use naval base, with the chairman of the naval base commission seconded from Moscow, and the most important civilian administrative personnel in Lushun were subject to appointment and removal by the Soviet military authorities. See Odd Arne Westad, ed., *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963*, First Edition (Washington, D.C.: Stanford, Calif: Stanford Univ Press, 1998), 144. Also see Shen Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War*, 44.; Zhihua Shen and Yafeng Xia, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Partnership, 1945-1959: A New History* (S.I.: Lexington Books, 2017), 12–13.

three straits, La Pérouse, Tsugaru, and Tsushima, all “controlled” by the U.S. fleet.²⁷⁸ For Moscow, mainland China was the only potential ally with a long coastline in the Pacific, with its China Far East Railway and the South Manchuria Railway allowing for arterial communications connecting Siberia to Lushun and Dalian. In negotiating a security treaty from December 1949 through February 1950, Mao decided allow Moscow to keep privileges in Manchuria and Xinjiang for a limited period of time, either until the conclusion of a Peace Treaty with Japan, or no later than the end of 1952.²⁷⁹

(2) Chinese Perceptions of Soviet Security Commitments

The PRC originally assessed that the Soviets were strongly committed to defending China and upholding this alliance relationship. In his meeting with Liu in Moscow on June 27, 1949, Stalin committed the Soviet Union to providing naval assistance, including experts and minesweepers to help clear mines in waters off Shanghai, as well as to salvage sunken naval and

²⁷⁸ See Pleshakov, Constantine. “Nikita Khrushchev and Sino-Soviet Relations.” In *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963*, edited by Odd Arne Westad, First Edition. Washington, D.C.: Stanford, Calif: Stanford Univ Press, 1998, 235.

²⁷⁹ “Record of Talks between I.V. Stalin and Chairman of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China Mao Zedong,” January 22, 1950, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Archive of the President, Russian Federation (APRF), f. 45, op.1, d.329, ll. 29-38. Secret protocols and agreements were concluded in February 1950 concerning the Chinese Changchun Railroad, Lushun, and Dalian. In a protocol signed on February 14, 1950, the two parties agreed: that the USSR shall transfer to the government of the PRC, without charge, all its rights to joint administration of the Chinese Changchun Railway together with all property belonging to the railway (Article 1); the transfer shall be in effect immediately after the conclusion of a Peace Treaty with Japan, or no later than the end of 1952 (Article 1); that Soviet troops shall be withdrawn from the jointly used naval base of Port Arthur (Lushun) and that the installations in this area shall be transferred to the Government of the People's Republic of China immediately after the conclusion of a peace treaty with Japan, or no later than the end of 1952 (Article 2). In the summer of 1952, China decided to extend the Soviet lease of these privileges beyond 1952, and re-negotiated with the Soviets in 1954 when Nikita Khrushchev visited China to have Soviet forces withdrawn from Lushun by May 1955. See Agreement between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the People's Republic of China concerning the Chinese Changchun Railway, Port Arthur and Dairen, Signed on February 14, 1950, Document 13, Appendix, Dieter Heinzig, *The Soviet Union and Communist China 1945-1950: The Arduous Road to the Alliance: The Arduous Road to the Alliance* (Routledge, 2015), 353 and 415. Also see “Minutes of Conversation between I.V. Stalin and Zhou Enlai,” August 20, 1952, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, APRF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 329, ll. 54-72.

commercial vessels.²⁸⁰ In order to help the PLA counter Nationalist air attacks, Stalin also offered to send Soviet air assets to provide defense around Lushun and Dalian.²⁸¹ For instance, Stalin promised that, “as far as your request about the strengthening of defense of Qingdao is concerned, we can send our squadron to the port of Qingdao” after the creation of all-China government.²⁸² Responding to the CCP’s request to “establish air links between Moscow and Beijing,” Stalin said, “we are already prepared now to undertake the organization of this air route.”²⁸³ “We can help you build an assembly-repairs plane factory, we can give you fighter planes of the latest makes, Czechoslovak if you want, Russian if you want, so that you prepare your aviation cadres with them,” added Stalin.

Shortly after the CCP delegation returned to China, the Soviet Union sped up assistance to the Chinese Communists. In September, the Soviet Council of Ministers decided to provide Communist China with 334 planes and artillery pieces, including 360 anti-aircraft guns, all valued at US\$26.5 million. The Soviet Union later provided another US\$31.5 million worth of arms and technical equipment, and steel rails and fixed equipment worth US\$6.3 million.²⁸⁴ Massive

²⁸⁰ “Memorandum of Conversation between Stalin and CCP Delegation,” June 27, 1949, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, APRF: F. 45, Op. 1, D. 329, Ll. 1-7. Reprinted in Andrei Ledovskii, Raisa Mirovitskaia and Vladimir Miasnikov, *Sovetsko-Kitaiskie Otnosheniia*, Vol. 5, Book 2, 1946-February 1950 (Moscow: Pamiatniki Istoricheskoi Mysli, 2005), 148-151. Stalin also said, “We are also prepared to provide you with aid to demine waters near Shanghai, both in terms of specialists, of whom we have many, and in terms of minesweepers. We could, for instance, sell several minesweepers to the government of Manchuria, train Chinese sailors in Dairen, Port Arthur or Vladivostok in the business of demining, and the Manchurian government, Cde. Stalin said laughing, can “sell” them to the Chinese government.”

²⁸¹ Lu Liping, “Fu Su canyu tanpan yuanjian kongjun de huiyi” (Reminiscences of Traveling to the Soviet Union for Air Force Assistance Talks), *Junshi shilin* (Military Histories), 1994, no. 1, 25, cited in Zhihua, Shen. *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War* (Cold War History) (Kindle Locations 5226-5228). Taylor and Francis. Kindle Edition.

²⁸² “Memorandum of Conversation between Stalin and CCP Delegation,” June 27, 1949, Op. Cit.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁴ Arkhiv prezidenta Rossiskoi Federatsii (Russian Presidential Archive), fond 07, opis 23a, papka 236, delo 18, listy 32–3, 126, cited in Shen Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War: Trilateral Communist Relations in the 1950s*, 1 edition (Milton Park, Abingdon ; New York: Routledge, 2012). (Kindle Locations 5231-5234). Also see B. Kulik, “Kitaiskaia narodnaia respublika v period stanovleniia, 1949–1952” (The People’s Republic of China in the Founding Period, 1949–1952), *Problemy dal’nego vostoka*, 1994, no. 6, 75.

transfers of Soviet weaponry came with Soviet training sergeants, who helped the Chinese army master the new weaponry.

When it came to the Taiwan issue, however, Stalin originally did not positively respond to Chinese requests for military assistance. In mid-July 1949, Mao and other Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leaders had discussed creating an air fighter group to provide air cover for a planned summer 1950 Taiwan Strait crossing, for which Soviet assistance was urgently needed.²⁸⁵ They planned to send 1,000 pilots and 300 military engineers to the USSR for aviation training and purchase 100 to 200 aircraft from Moscow. On July 25, 1949, Mao sent an instruction to Liu Shaoqi, arguing the necessity and urgency of occupying Taiwan:

“In Shanghai, from the onset of the blockade, we have been increasingly in difficulties. But to break the blockade it is necessary to seize Formosa, which is impossible to do without an air force. We would like you [Liu] to exchange opinions with Comrade Stalin on whether the USSR can help us with that, that is, train 1,000 pilots and 300 airfield technicians for us in Moscow within six to twelve months. Also, whether the USSR can sell us 100 to 200 fighters and 40 to 80 bombers to be used in the Formosa operation. As regards the creation of the navy, we would also like to ask the USSR for assistance.”²⁸⁶

Mao also proposed that the Soviets help liberate Taiwan. Mao instructed Liu to ask Stalin:

²⁸⁵ Letter from Mao to Zhou, July 10, 1949, cited in Jin Chongji ed., *Mao Zedong zhuan (1893-1949) (Biography of Mao Zedong (1893-1949))*, Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1996, 924. Also see Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War*, 2012, 85.

²⁸⁶ Telegram from Mao to Liu, 25 July, 1949 in Andrei Ledovsky, “The Moscow Visit of a Delegation of the Communist Party of China in June to August 1949, Part 2,” *Far Eastern Affairs* 108, no. No.5 (1996): 91. Also see Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War*, 2012, 11.

“should we use Soviet aid (that is, apart from the help in pilot training and aircraft sale we have requested so far, we may also have to ask the USSR to send over Soviet air force and naval specialists, as well as pilots to take part in military operations) in capturing Formosa, will it not harm relations between America and the USSR?”²⁸⁷

In his meeting with Liu Shaoqi, however, Stalin excluded any possibility that Soviet air and naval forces would participate in a PLA-initiated attack on Taiwan. Stalin told Liu that the Truman administration contained some “lunatics” and that the Soviets had to be cautious.²⁸⁸ Liu was left with the impression that Stalin would spare no effort to avoid a military showdown with the United States.²⁸⁹

In mid-December 1949, Mao traveled to Moscow himself to negotiate with the Soviet leader in person. Once again, Mao raised the Taiwan issue to elicit Soviet military assistance, but this time he preempted Stalin’s concerns about direct confrontations with the U.S. by suggesting that Moscow “could send volunteer pilots or secret military detachments to speed up the conquest of Formosa.”²⁹⁰ This time, Stalin’s response became slightly more positive but remained cautious, as he mentioned, “Assistance has not been ruled out, though one ought to consider the form of such assistance. What is most important here is not to give Americans a pretext to intervene. With

²⁸⁷ Telegram from Mao to Liu, 25 July, 1949. Opt. Cit.

²⁸⁸ Sergei Goncharov, “Stalin tong Mao Zedong de duihua” [The conversation between Stalin and Mao Zedong], *Guoshi yanjiu cankao iliao*, no. 1 (1993), 75.

²⁸⁹ Niu Jun, “The Origin of the Sino-Soviet Alliance,” in *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963*, ed. Odd Arne Westad, First Edition (Washington, D.C.: Stanford, Calif: Stanford Univ Press, 1998), 70-71.

²⁹⁰ “Record of Conversation between I.V. Stalin and Chairman of the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China Mao Zedong on 16 December 1949,” December 16, 1949, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Archive of the President, Russian Federation (APRF), fond (f.) 45, opis (op.) 1, delo (d.) 329, listy (ll.) 9-17. Translated by Danny Rozas <http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111240>.

regard to headquarters staff and instructors, we can give them to you anytime. The rest we will have to think about.”²⁹¹

As treaty negotiations progressed, however, Stalin changed his course in an attempt to thwart the normalization of Beijing-Washington ties, and even encouraged the PRC’s plan to seize Taiwan.²⁹² A Soviet press Pravda firmly supported the PRC’s legitimate right to seize not only Taiwan but Hainan as well, and Moscow began to help Mao upgrade his air force.²⁹³ As early as January 4, 1950, a Soviet Krasnyi Flot (Red Fleet) came out in support of the PRC’s plan to liberate Taiwan and quoted a Soviet Central Committee message that this task had to be accomplished during 1950.²⁹⁴ In February and March 1950, Moscow stationed one air division near Shanghai and other units near Xuzhou in northern Jiangsu Province, and during the March 18 Nationalist air raids, Soviet fighters shot down several nationalist aircraft.²⁹⁵

Soviets security commitments in general contexts also appeared to be rather strong during negotiations over their draft security treaty, as the Soviets agreed to strengthen the expression of Soviet security guarantee in response to Chinese requests. Moscow originally formulated their security guarantee for China as ‘in the event of an invasion of one of the signatory countries by a third country, the other signatory country shall render assistance.’ The Chinese pointed out that such assistance might well be too limited, and Zhou Enlai suggested they insert ‘with all means at

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, *Uncertain Partners*, 99–100.

²⁹³ Viktorov, Ia, “International Review,” Pravda, 8 January 1950.

²⁹⁴ Harrison E. Salisbury, “Soviet Backs Mao on Formosa Claim,” the New York Times, 5 January 1950.

²⁹⁵ See Deng Lifeng, *Xin Zhongguo Junshi Huodong Jishi (1949-1959)* [The True Records of New China’s Military Affairs (1949-59)], Beijing, 1989, 82; Nie Rongzhen, *Nie Rongzhen Huiyilu* [Memoirs of Nie Rongzhen], Vol. 3, Beijing, 1986, 733; O. B. Borisov and B. T. Koloskov, *Sovetsko-Kitaiskie Otnosheniia, 1945-1980* [Soviet-Chinese Relations, 1945-1980], 3rd enlarged edition, Moscow, 1980, 53.

its disposal,' which amounted to an implicit nuclear guarantee.²⁹⁶ After long and heated debates,²⁹⁷ the Soviets accepted Zhou Enlai's proposed revision.²⁹⁸

While the treaty restricted the scope of Soviet assistance to "the event of one of the contracting parties (...) involved in a state of war (Article 1)," Stalin upgraded this to broader military engagements with the U.S. soon after the security treaty entered into effect. At the moment when the North Korean Army was retreating from the very south to the far north of the country, Stalin said to Premier Zhou Enlai the following: "Since any kind of US attack against China's territory would trigger the mutual assistance provision of the Soviet-Chinese alliance treaty and draw the U.S. into a global conflict with the USSR, for which the Americans are not ready, the United States is unlikely to risk a war with China on the Chinese mainland."²⁹⁹ Stalin's words "any kind of US attack against China's territory" showed a commitment one level above what was required by Article 1 of the treaty.³⁰⁰

Moscow's peacetime military aid was also an indication of Moscow's commitments to the defense of China. Soviet advisors dispatched to China helped consolidate the new regime and develop organizational and technological skills for the Chinese government and military.³⁰¹ Soviet

²⁹⁶ Chen Jian, "The Sino-Soviet Alliance and China's Entry into the Korean War," Working Paper No. 1, Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, June 1992, 21.

²⁹⁷ Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, *Uncertain Partners*, 117-18. Goncharov, Lewis and Xue argue that the Soviets' hesitation to include the "all means" clause is evidence that both sides saw this as placing Soviet nuclear weapons on the table for China's defense.

²⁹⁸ Wu Xiuquan, *Eight Years in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (January 1950-October 1958) - Memoirs of a Diplomat* (Beijing 1985), 13, cited in Viktor M. Gobarev, "Soviet Policy toward China: Developing Nuclear Weapons 1949-1969," *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 12, no. 4 (1999): 8. Also see Central Intelligence Agency, 'Relations between the Chinese Communist Regime and the USSR: Their Present Character and Probable Future Courses,' National Intelligence Estimate 58, September 10, 1952, Appendix 1, http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0001086032.pdf.

²⁹⁹ Alexandre Y Mansourov, 'Stalin, Mao, Kim and China's Decision to Enter the Korean War, September 16- October 15 1950: New Evidence from the Russian Archives,' *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 6-7 (Winter 1995-96), 102.

³⁰⁰ However, whether Chinese leaders viewed it this way needs to be verified.

³⁰¹ The statistics regarding the educational level of the Chinese cadres are illuminating: among 1.5 million CCP members in Northern China Region (Huabei), 1.3 million were illiterate or semi-illiterate, and among the cadres above

assistance helped lay the foundation for the PLA's modernization, particularly with regard to the creation of a Chinese air force and navy.³⁰² By offering its consent for China to devote half of the \$300 million Soviet financial assistance to the purchase of Soviet equipment for the Chinese navy, Moscow was giving tangible support for the invasion of Taiwan.³⁰³ The PLA also greatly benefitted from Soviet organizational assistance. As the PLA was composed of units that had been established at different times and in different regions of the country, it had no standard table of equipment and organization used across all units. Different units had different command and control systems, discipline standards, force structures and combat principles, mostly according to their own regions' tradition and habits. At the end of the civil war, PLA infantry units used rifles with more than a dozen different calibers.³⁰⁴ In late 1949, the CCP's Central Military Commission (CMC) decided to unify these army institutions by means of centralized regulations, primarily based on the Soviet model. Specifically, it introduced compulsory military service, military ranks and a salary system, all based on the Soviet model.³⁰⁵

To provide technical assistance, a total of 6,695 Soviet army personnel of all ranks came to China before their withdrawal in 1960; more than half of them arrived in the first three years of the alliance.³⁰⁶ In 1951 the PLA bought Soviet arms that equipped 60 army divisions, 12 air force divisions and 36 naval vessels. By the end of the Korean War in 1953 the almost entire PLA had

the district level (qu), almost half were illiterate or only had very little education. Among 1,280,000 Chinese officers above the rank of platoon leader, those with college education accounted only for 2.14 percent. See Shen and Xia, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Partnership, 1945-1959*, 114-115.

³⁰² Odd Arne Westad, *Decisive Encounters: The Chinese Civil War, 1946-1950* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2003), 265-70. Also see Christensen, *Worse Than a Monolith*, 43.

³⁰³ Xiao Jingguang, *Xiao Jingguang Huiyilu* [Memoirs of Xiao Jingguang], Vol. 2, Beijing, 1987, 29; Zhou Jun, "A Study on the Reasons why the PLA Aborted Its Plan to Attack Taiwan Soon After the Founding of the New China," *Zhonggong Dangshi Yanjiu*, No. 1, 1991, 70.

³⁰⁴ M. Taylor Fravel, *Active Defense: China's Military Strategy since 1949* (Princeton University Press, 2019), 70.

³⁰⁵ You Ji, "The Soviet Model and the Breakdown of the Military Alliance," in *China Learns from the Soviet Union, 1949-Present*, ed. Thomas P. Bernstein and Hua-Yu Li (Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), 132-33.

³⁰⁶ Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 36.

been armed either with weapons shared by the Soviet Union or with domestically produced copies of Soviet military equipment, and this enabled the PLA to upgrade equipment for all of its 106 army divisions, a dozen air force armies and nine naval sub-fleets.³⁰⁷ And 56 of the 106 army divisions were equipped according to the Soviet Army's organizational standard.³⁰⁸

(3) China's Revisionist Policy

Regarding the second independent variable of the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, revisionist foreign policy, China in the 1950s should be coded as "revisionist" – i.e. having a policy to change the current *de jure* or *de facto* international distribution of power and goods by force. China had a doctrine of proactively using force, or issuing threats of the use of force, to seize the initiative to pursue political objectives, and this was reflected in its military practice and combat operations.³⁰⁹ Some explains it with the concept of strategic culture. Alastair Iain Johnston's analysis of the Seven Military Classics of ancient China shows consistent emphasis on offensive action mediated by flexibility.³¹⁰ Central to these classical writings is the notion that, to pursue political objectives, the regime must be prepared militarily to seize the initiative and act

³⁰⁷ The shared Soviet equipment included 800,000 guns, 11,000 artillery pieces, 5,000 tanks and armored vehicles, and 5,000 aircraft. See Ji, "The Soviet Model and the Breakdown of the Military Alliance," 132.

³⁰⁸ As for the 56 divisions outfitted completely according to the Soviet Army's organizational table, every division (14,963 men) had three infantry regiments, an artillery regiment, a tank and self-propelled cannon regiment, an independent anti-aircraft artillery battalion and an independent 57 mm anti-tank battalion. Each of the 12 battalions of the artillery regiments was equipped with a 122 mm howitzer, a 76.2 mm field gun, and a 120 mm mortar; the tank and self-propelled cannon regiment received 24 T-34 tanks and 16 76 mm self-propelled artillery pieces; the independent anti-aircraft artillery regiment equipment consisted of 12 37 mm artillery pieces; and the independent anti-tank battalion equipment consisted of 12 57 mm anti-tank guns. Each division had 13,938 infantry weapons, 303 guns, 261 cars, 84 special vehicles, 517 horse wagons and 1,136 horses. These numbers are based on Shen Zhihua's interview with Wang Yazhi, an adviser in the War Bureau of the Central Military Commission and a secretary to Peng Dehuai. See Zhihua, Shen. *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War* (Cold War History) (Kindle Locations 4389-4395).

³⁰⁹ Allen S. Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan," *International Security* 26, no. 2 (October 2001): 103–31.

³¹⁰ Alastair Iain Johnston, *Cultural Realism: Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy in Chinese History* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).

offensively and preferably through preemptive attack. During the Chinese civil war of 1927-37 and 1946-49, Mao's maxims echoed this theme.³¹¹

Admittedly, using force proactively does not mean that China was always offensively oriented, and Beijing's national strategy tended to emphasize its defense rather than its offense in facing more powerful adversaries. Leading experts in Chinese military strategy, such as Paul Godwin and Taylor Fravel, identify China's "core doctrinal principle" as "active defense," defined by Mao as "offensive defense, or defense through decisive engagements."³¹² In his December 1936 lecture, Mao argued that when faced with a numerically and technologically superior enemy, the PLA should use the strategy of active defense, which he contrasted with "passive defense" or "purely defensive defense."³¹³ Offensive actions at the campaign and tactical levels could be used to seize the initiative from an otherwise passive position in order to achieve the objective of strategic defense and ultimately the transition to a counteroffensive.³¹⁴

As defensive as its goal may be, the doctrine emphasized that the regime must be prepared to use force and act offensively in order to achieve their political objectives. Acting offensively was particularly important because, in the 1950s, the PLA was still consolidating the CCP's control of the territory it claimed to govern. From 1949 to 1952, for example, the PLA was conducting "bandit suppression" campaigns against remnant Nationalist troops and local warlords in addition

³¹¹ Alastair Iain Johnston, "Cultural Realism and Strategy in Maoist China," in *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, ed. Peter J. Katzenstein (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1996), 216–70.

³¹² Paul H.D.B. Godwin, "Change and Continuity in Chinese Military Doctrine: 1949–1999," Conference on PLA Warfighting, 1949–1999, Center for Naval Analysis, Alexandria, Virginia, June 3–4, 1999, cited in Whiting, "China's Use of Force, 1950–96, and Taiwan," 106. The citation is from Mao Tse-tung (Mao Zedong), "Strategy in China's Revolutionary War," December 1936, in *Selected Writings of Mao Tse-tung* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press, 1972), 105.

³¹³ Mao Zedong, "Problems of Strategy in China's Revolutionary War," in Mao Tse-tung, *Selected Military Writings of Mao Tse-Tung* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1972).

³¹⁴ Fravel, *Active Defense*, 62.

to mounting a campaign to seize and incorporate Tibet in 1951. By fighting with resistant forces, China was implementing a “revisionist” policy as this was a fight over the distribution of power or over who had legitimate control over “China.” Since the bulk of the Nationalist force led by Chiang Kai-shek retreated to Taiwan in late 1949, defeating the Nationalists became a major military challenge in the years to come.³¹⁵

However, China’s use of force was not limited to the goal of consolidating the control of the territory it claimed to govern. Rather, there are many examples of China’s using its troops to achieve political goals. Starting in early 1949, Mao considered sending troops to Ho Chi Minh’s Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) to help in the fight against the French-supported counterrevolution.³¹⁶ China’s decision to participate in the Korean War could hardly be justified by national security reasons alone, as will be discussed later in this chapter. Beijing also decided to mobilize troops in 1954 to “destroy the chance of the United States concluding a security treaty with Taiwan.”³¹⁷ Accordingly, the Chinese Central Military Commission in Beijing instructed the Fujian PLA in August 1954 to bombard the Nationalist forces on the Jinmen islands, in an attempt to thwart a U.S.-Taiwanese move to form a security alliance. In the summer of 1958, Mao seized on a U.N. resolution calling for American and British troops to withdraw from Lebanon and Jordan, in order to demand that U.S. troops withdraw from Taiwan and that Kuomintang troops

³¹⁵ The PLA attempted but failed to seize Jinmen, an island only a mile off the coast of Fujian province, in 1949. For details on this campaign, see He Di, “The Last Campaign to Unify China: The CCP’s Unrealized Plan to Liberate Taiwan, 1949–1950,” in Mark A. Ryan, David M. Finkelstein and Michael A. McDevitt, eds., *Chinese Warfighting: The PLA Experience Since 1949* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2003), 73–90.

³¹⁶ Westad, *Brothers in Arms*, 169.

³¹⁷ PLA archives from the PLA Academy of Military Science, cited in Baijia Zhang and Qingguo Jia, “Steering Wheel, Shock Absorber, and Probe in Confrontation: Sino-American Ambassadorial Talks As Seen from the Chinese Perspective,” in *Re-Examining the Cold War: U.S.–China Diplomacy, 1954–1973*, ed. Robert S. Ross (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002).

withdraw from Jinmen and Matsu.³¹⁸ Mao said, “we will strike if you don’t retreat. If Taiwan is too far to strike, we can strike Jinmen and Matsu. This will surely shock the world, not only the American people and the Asian people, but also the European people. The Arab world will be happy, and the majority of the people in Asia and Africa will sympathize with us.”³¹⁹ Additionally, Mao was also believed to exploit heightened tensions across the Taiwan Strait to mobilize the populace for his radical Great Leap Forward and test the degree of American support for Chiang Kai-shek’s forces on the offshore islands.³²⁰

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Evidence presented above suggests that the USSR’s commitments were rather strong, with its military presence in mainland China, along with its encouragement for the PRC plan to invade Taiwan, extremely generous military aids to the PRC, and Stalin’s words that “any kind of US attack against China’s territory” would trigger the mutual assistance provision of the alliance. However, Stalin had not spelled out what assistance he would be willing to offer in case China decided to attack Taiwan. Given the uncertainty regarding future operational assistance despite the former’s strong commitments, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts that the PRC should behave like a *Favor-currying* partner. Beijing should proactively pursue policy alignment with a view to ensuring support for the execution of its revisionist goal. Indeed, Mao adopted a course of action that demonstrated his strong allegiance to Stalin and his willingness to meet Soviet

³¹⁸ Gong Li, “Tension Across the Taiwan Strait in the 1950s, Chinese Strategy and Tactics,” in *Re-Examining the Cold War: U.S.–China Diplomacy, 1954–1973*, ed. Robert S. Ross (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2002), 159.

³¹⁹ Wu Lengxi, *Yi Mao Zhuxi – Wo Qinzi Jingli de Ruogan Zhongda Lishi Shijian Pian-duan* (Recollections of Chairman Mao – Several important events of history from my own experience) (Beijing: Zinhua Chubanshe, 1995), 74, cited in Li, 159.

³²⁰ Thomas J. Christensen, *Useful Adversaries* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1996), 194–95.

expectations on the most important alliance issues at the time, as will be discussed in the next section.

3. China's *Favor-carrying* Strategy

Soon after the security treaty with Moscow was concluded in 1950, Mao decided to enter into the Korean War, despite strong reservations voiced by some of Politburo members. The majority of the Politburo believed that priority ought to be given to economic issues such as fiscal deficits and high unemployment rates and that the PLA's outdated arsenal would be no match for the U.S. army.³²¹ But Mao was determined to support North Korea's plan to invade the south from May 1950 onwards. And the reason for his support is consistent with the *Favor-carrying* strategy, because Mao wanted to act vis-à-vis Stalin in a way that would not jeopardize his chance of getting military assistance from Stalin in case of Taiwan invasion. However, the timing of his intervention in Korea was hardly suited to his preferences.

Indeed, Mao would rather have preferred to achieve Chinese unification before helping the Koreans unify. For a few months after his January 1950 trip to Moscow for treaty negotiations, Mao was intensely focused on his own invasion plans. As he became aware of heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula, Mao set in motion plans for an assault on the Zhoushan Islands off Zhejiang Province as a prelude to a landing on Quemoy.³²² The PLA by the end of March 1950 had begun assembling its invasion forces along the coast from Shandong to Fujian provinces. After

³²¹ Goncharov et al, 177-181.

³²² Mao was aware of Kim's preparations for military action because he had dispatched ethnic Korean troops and weaponry to the Korean Peninsula in January and communicated with Stalin on the issue in February, but he was not informed about the details of the Korean plans or the timing of the invasion. See Hao Yufan and Zhai Zhihai, "China's Decision to Enter the Korean War: History Revisited," Chinese Quarterly, No. 121 (March 1990), 100.

Quemoy, Taiwan would be next.³²³ Mao had to worry that if the war on the Korean Peninsula came down to an open war with the United States, all hope of conquering Taiwan would vanish indefinitely.³²⁴

But Stalin was operating on a different timeline. In his meetings with Kim Il Sung in Moscow from March 30 to April 25, 1950, Stalin, in a sudden reversal of his formerly cautious position on Korea, approved Kim's plan to invade South Korea but told Mao a few weeks later that "a qualification was made (...) that the question should be decided finally by the Chinese and Korean comrades together, and in case of disagreement by the Chinese comrades the decision on the question should be postponed."³²⁵

Stalin urged Kim to consult Mao and ask him for all the help. Why he did so is still subject to debate today. Some argue that Stalin sought to make Mao responsible for the outcome in case of Kim's catastrophic failure, while allowing Moscow to stay on the fence; he may also have wanted to test Mao's fidelity and drawing a line between Beijing and the West.³²⁶ Others suggest that Stalin's suspicions about Mao's potential Titoism helped Kim eventually succeed in getting Stalin to consent to the invasion plan, because had Stalin continued to turn down North Korea, the

³²³ Jianguo Yilai Mao Zedong Wengao Diyi Ce (1949.9-105-.12) [Mao Zedong's manuscripts After the Founding of the Republic, Vol. I: September 1949-December 1950], (Beijing, 1987), 256-259, 271, 282. Also see Goncharov et al, 148.

³²⁴ Wang Ming, "Polveka KPK I Predatel Mao Zedona" [Half a Century of the CCP and the Traitor Mao Zedong], (Moscow, 1975), 206-7. Also see Choudhury, Golam W, "Reflections on the Korean War (1950-1953): The Factors Behind Chinese Intervention," Korea and World Affairs, Vol. 14, Issue. 2 (Summer 1990), 271-2.

³²⁵ "Ciphared Telegram No. 8600, Vyshinsky to Mao Zedong," May 14, 1950, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive. A copy was subsequently found in RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 334, ll.0055. <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/115976>.

³²⁶ Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, 106, 143-145. According to Goncharov et al, Stalin, especially after Dean Acheson's speech on January 12, 1950, was quite concerned that the United States would settle its account with Beijing by abandoning Taiwan and thereby undercut the Sino-Soviet alliance.

Chinese could start supporting Kim without the sanction of Moscow, just like Tito had supported the Albanians and the Greek guerrillas, ignoring Moscow's objections.³²⁷

A leading Chinese expert of Soviet diplomatic history, Shen Zhihua argues, on the other hand, that Stalin's May 1950 approval of a Korean invasion conditional on Mao's consent perfectly fits Stalin's strategy. The Soviet leader tried to avoid direct and costly U.S.-USSR military conflict but still protect Soviet political and economic interests in the Far East, by distracting it from Taiwan and thereby preserving China's dependence on the Soviets for assistance with China's unification.³²⁸ Had China been able to forcefully incorporate Taiwan before Korean unification, China would then be likely to go its own way, refusing to play the role of the Soviets' subordinate ally and potentially even becoming a threat to Soviet interests, according to Shen.

Why did Mao decide to intervene in the Korean War? Mainland Chinese historians' general consensus is that while Stalin gave Mao a final say over Kim's war plan, Mao had very little room for maneuver in this situation to voice objections to the *fait accompli* – Stalin's approval – presented by the Koreans.³²⁹ But Mao's latitude was a little greater than they generally recognize, because Stalin clearly stated that “in case of disagreement by the Chinese comrades the decision on the question should be postponed until a new discussion.”³³⁰ Stalin gave Mao an opportunity to reconsider and reject Kim's invasion plan, and Mao was not under duress when he made his decision to support Kim.³³¹ Shen Zhihua even goes as far as to say that, on the contrary, Mao was

³²⁷ Vladislav Zubok and Constantine Pleshakov, *Inside the Kremlin's Cold War: From Stalin to Krushchev*, Revised edition (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997), 63. Christensen, *Worse Than a Monolith*, 56.

³²⁸ Shen Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War*, 2012, 120–32. Also see Christensen, *Worth Than A Monolith*, 57.

³²⁹ Shen Zhihua calls the Soviet position a “*fait accompli*” (jicheng xiansh) in *Mao Zedong, Si Dalin yu Chao Zhan*, 208, cited in Christensen, *Worth Than A Monolith*, 59. Also see Xu, *Mao Zedong yu KangMei YuanChao Zhanzheng*, 45-46; Song, *Kang Mei Yuanchao Zai Huishou*, 43; Weathersby, “Should We Fear This?” 13.

³³⁰ “Ciphared Telegram No. 8600, Vyshinsky to Mao Zedong,” May 14, 1950, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive. A copy was subsequently found in RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 334, ll.0055.

³³¹ “Ciphared Telegram, Roshchin to Cde. Filippov [Stalin],” May 13, 1950, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, Russian Presidential Archives. Also see Zhihua Shen and Yafeng Xia, *A Misunderstood Friendship:*

quite eager to send Chinese troops to Korea and was waiting for Stalin's greenlight to the Chinese entry to the war, which finally came on October 1, 1950.³³² Shen and Xia also show that, through participating in the Korea War, Mao was eager to assume a leadership role in the Asian revolution.³³³ Mao should thus deserve a larger share of responsibility for the decision than the mainland Chinese historians generally acknowledge.

His decision to send troops was partly driven by his need for further military assistance from Moscow for his plan to unify Taiwan. The task of taking Taiwan by force would require an extensive amount of external military assistance, particularly with naval and air power to fight across the Taiwan Strait. For military assistance with such challenging operations, Moscow was the only place to turn to at that time. Indeed, prior to his decision on sending troops to Korea, Mao acknowledged this link to Taiwan in a conversation with his colleagues: "if we do not intervene in the Korean War, the Soviet Union will not intervene either (...) once China faces a disaster."³³⁴ Besides, both Stalin and Mao knew that there was an implicit linkage between Kim's and Mao's war plans. Fully aware that both Mao and Kim counted on Soviet assistance for their respective war plans, Stalin could be reasonably sure of Mao's assent this time because the Chinese leader would calculate the potential implications of not supporting Kim's revolutionary war for his own chance of securing Soviet help in China's future operations against Taiwan.³³⁵ In other words, his opposition to Kim's plan, once Stalin approved it, might easily backfire when Mao requested

Mao Zedong, Kim Il-Sung, and Sino-North Korean Relations, 1949-1976 (Columbia University Press, 2018), 33. Also see Christensen, 59-61.

³³² Arkhiv Prezidenta Rossiiskoi Federatsii, f. 45, op.1, d.347, 41-45, 46-49, cited in Zhihua Shen, "China and the Dispatch of the Soviet Air Force: The Formation of the Chinese-Soviet-Korean Alliance in the Early Stage of the Korean War," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no. 2 (April 1, 2010): 222, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01402391003590291>.

³³³ Shen and Xia, *A Misunderstood Friendship*, 33.

³³⁴ Information provided by an anonymous Chinese specialist on the Korean Peninsula, cited in Goncharov et al, 182.

³³⁵ Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, 149.

Stalin's support in the future. Thus, Mao needed to be positive. For example, Mao could not express his fears of American intervention in Korea without admitting to Stalin the likelihood of the same U.S. involvement in Taiwan, thereby inadvertently discouraging Soviet support.³³⁶

Mao also had to calculate whether Soviet nuclear weapons would be sufficient to deter the United States from using nuclear weapons against Chinese troops sent to Korea, but he apparently did not broach the subject with Stalin. After intense and prolonged discussion with the Chinese Politburo, Mao concluded that Soviet possession of nuclear weapons would be enough to discourage Americans from using theirs. Mao perceived the Soviet nuclear umbrella to be somewhat credible, because Stalin, in Mao's judgment, could not ignore the danger of the U.S. defeating both North Korea and China and then advancing to the very borders of the Soviet Union. In his view, the U.S. government could not be certain that Stalin would not resort to the use of nuclear weapons to retaliate.³³⁷

In short, Mao's desire to improve, or at least not undermine, his chance of receiving Soviet military assistance in his Taiwan operations, along with U.S. nuclear threats, heavily affected Mao's decision to positively respond to Stalin's expectation for backing Kim's plan.

Stalin eventually provided abundant assistance during the Korean War. Beginning in mid-November 1950, Soviet air defense forces swarmed into China. Between November and December 1950, eleven Soviet air divisions arrived in China, including six MiG-9 divisions, two MiG-15

³³⁶ Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, 146. Strengthening this point further is the fact that Stalin had been endorsing Chinese military actions that were consistent with Soviet interests but would not provoke a hostile U.S. response. For example, he was forthcoming in sanctioning the Communist seizure of Tibet because the Indian government, which opposed the PLA's seizure of Tibet, was deemed to be reactionary and the likelihood of a direct American involvement there seemed remote. See Ershov, T., "Imperialistic Intrigues in Tibet," *Novoe Vremia*, No. 49, 1949, 8-12, cited in Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, 79.

³³⁷ Central Committee, Chinese Communist Party, *Guanyu Shishi Xuanchuau de Zhishi*. [Instructions Concerning Propaganda on Current Events] (26 Oct. 1950), cited in Gobarev, 11.

divisions, an La-9 division, and an Il-10 attack division, and a Tu-2 bomber division.³³⁸ The Soviets also sent eleven antiaircraft artillery regiments (1,186 AAA pieces and 648 AA machine guns) and several searchlight and radar battalions to four cities in Northeast, North, and East China. By the end of December 1950, a Soviet air umbrella was in place, which allowed Mao to proceed in the knowledge that the “rear area,” China’s homeland, would be protected.³³⁹ Besides the air defense of China, Moscow also provided training to Chinese pilots by sending more than 900 Soviet air force officers and 711 Soviet naval officers based upon an earlier bilateral agreement.³⁴⁰

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Outside the Korean Peninsula, the PRC in the early 1950s also exhibited its *Favor-carrying* behavior by proactive policy alignment efforts. Among others, Beijing contributed to mediating between Ho Chi Minh’s Viet Minh and the Soviet Union. Stalin expected Mao to take care of national democratic revolutions in colonial and semi-colonial countries in Asia, so he could assume his responsibility for Europe. To meet Stalin’s expectations this way is currying favor because Mao could otherwise have focused on the unification of China back home. Stalin made that expectation very clear during his meeting with Liu Shaoqi in July 1949.³⁴¹ When he invited Ho to Kremlin in February 1950, he also told Ho that assisting the Viet Minh was primarily a Chinese business.³⁴² According to Vietnamese historians Pham Xanh and Do Quang Hung, Stalin’s suspicion of Ho Chi Minh’s revolutionary credentials greatly reduced his interest in

³³⁸ Xiaoming Zhang, *Red Wings over the Yalu: China, the Soviet Union, and the Air War in Korea* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2002), 85. Also see Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, 199-200.

³³⁹ Goncharov Lewis, and Xue, 200.

³⁴⁰ All of the Soviet air force units were grouped under the 67th Aviation Corps, led by Col. Gen. Stephan A. Krasovskiy, commander of Soviet air force units in the Far East.

³⁴¹ « Si da lin tanhua 斯大林谈话 [Stalin’s remarks], July 27, 1949, CCCPC Archives Bureau, cited in Niu Jun, *The Cold War and the Origins of Foreign Relations of People’s Republic of China, The Cold War and the Origins of Foreign Relations of People’s Republic of China* (Brill, 2018), 84, <https://brill.com/view/title/26649>., 84. Also see Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975*, 22.

³⁴² Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975*, 17.

Indochina.³⁴³ This does not mean Stalin's total disinterests in Indochina, however. Stalin at times criticized Ho's emphasis on national liberation and independence rather than proletarian social revolution and remained distrustful of his objectives for Vietnam, so he needed Mao to assist with a rapprochement between Stalin and Ho in 1950.³⁴⁴ In addition, Moscow had to stay low-profile in Indochina due to its treaty of friendship with France, patron of a government fighting the armies of Ho Chi Minh.³⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Moscow wanted to see the Vietnamese achieve a settlement at the Geneva conference in 1954, and to that end the PRC was instrumental in ending the First Indochina War by convincing the victorious North Vietnamese to accept the temporary division of the country, which could not but disappoint Hanoi.³⁴⁶

The Chinese tried to meet Soviet expectations for keeping Vietnam in alignment with Moscow. This is not to say that Mao was simply helping Ho on Moscow's behalf, however. Admittedly, Mao had his own strategic calculus in getting Chinese forces deeply involved in Vietnam.³⁴⁷ For one, he believed that assisting revolutions in Asia would help consolidate and legitimize his own regime in China.³⁴⁸ And perhaps more importantly, he tried to eliminate remnants of Chiang Kai-shek's units that had fled to northern Vietnam and mountains in the Guangxi province, which harassed the Communist authorities in Guangxi during the Korean

³⁴³ See Mark Bradley, "An Improbable Opportunity: America and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam's 1947 Initiative," in Werner and Huynh, ed., *The Vietnam War*, 19.

³⁴⁴ Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975*, 12.

³⁴⁵ Goncharov, Lewis, and Xue, 107.

³⁴⁶ Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 35. Also see Lorenz M. Lüthi, "Ilya V. Gaiduk's Confronting Vietnam: Soviet Policy toward the Indochina Conflict, 1945-1963 (Book Review)," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, no. 4 (October 12, 2006): 164-65.; Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975*, 49-64.

³⁴⁷ From April to September 1950, China sent to the Viet Minh large quantities of military and nonmilitary supplies, including 14,000 rifles and pistols, 1,700 machine guns and recoilless rifles, 150 mortars, 60 artilleries, and 300 bazookas, as well as munitions, medicine, communications materials, cloths, and 2,800 tons of food. See The Editorial Team on the History of the CMAG, ed. Zhongguo junshi guwenthuan yuanyue kangfa douzheng shishi [Historical Facts about the Role of the Chinese Military Advisory Group in the Struggle of Aiding Vietnam and Resisting France], (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1990), 44.

³⁴⁸ Zhai, *China and the Vietnam Wars, 1950-1975*, 20.

War.³⁴⁹ But the Chinese military assistance for Vietnam set aside, Chinese leaders' diplomatic mediation efforts in the early 1950s were consistent with a *Favor-carrying* strategy, as they were proactively pursuing close policy coordination with their Soviet counterparts. Zhou Enlai, for example, was actively seeking Soviet approval for every important decision about military campaigns in Vietnam. During his visit to Moscow to seek Soviet economic aid in August and September 1952, for example, Zhou Enlai mentioned a Northwest campaign the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) was planning for the fall and gained Stalin's approval.³⁵⁰

Beijing at this time was frequently seeking Moscow's advice on various key foreign policy issues. Upon Mao's request, Zhou Enlai, during his same visit to Moscow in August-September 1952, asked Stalin what position China should take regarding a proposition to discuss the Korean question at the UN General Assembly, and Zhou also consulted Stalin whether "it would be advisable for China to conclude such pacts [non-aggression pacts] with India and Burma."³⁵¹ Beijing would generally defer to Moscow in international fora, supporting all of Soviet foreign policies and advertising Moscow's aid to developing countries.³⁵² Prior to the Geneva Conference of April-July 1954, which the USSR had called for in September 1953, Zhou told the Soviet leaders that China hoped to maintain close contacts with the USSR in its preparation for the conference; by "close contacts" the Chinese meant exchange of views, intelligence sharing, and policy coordination.³⁵³ After completing his first visit to Moscow in 1954, Zhou returned to Beijing to report to the Chinese leadership, while only several days later Zhou went to Moscow again to hold

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ See Zhai, 37.

³⁵¹ "Hand delivered note, Zhou Enlai to Stalin, conveying telegram From Mao Zedong to Zhou Enlai," September 16, 1952, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, APRF, f. 45, op. 1, d. 343, ll. 94-96; AVP RF, f. 059a, op. 5a, d. 5, p. 11, ll. 96-98; and RGASPI, f. 558, op. 11, d. 343, ll. 0094- 0096.

³⁵² Jeremy Friedman, *Shadow Cold War: The Sino-Soviet Competition for the Third World* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 27.

³⁵³ Qiang Zhai, 45, 52.

further talks with Soviet officials regarding conference talking points and the selection of members of the Soviet and Chinese delegations in Geneva.³⁵⁴ After the Geneva Conference, moreover, the PRC promptly announced that it adhered to five principles of peaceful coexistence, with which it would later disagree.³⁵⁵

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In the mid-1950s, however, it gradually became clear that the two alliance partners had different views of war and different approaches to relations with the West. After Stalin's death in March 1953, Nikita Khrushchev's strategic view slowly shifted to embrace the principles of peaceful coexistence, repudiating, as a result, the "law of the inevitability of war" enunciated by Lenin and Stalin. In an authoritative Soviet journal *Military Thought* in April 1955, Khrushchev proclaimed that "today there are mighty social and political forces possessing formidable means to prevent the imperialists from unleashing war, and if they actually try to start it, we give a smashing rebuff to the aggressors and frustrate their adventurist plans."³⁵⁶ Khrushchev believed that preventing a nuclear war required the capability of inflicting "the same damage on our enemy as he can inflict on us."³⁵⁷ How this shift in the Soviet strategic view affected China's alliance strategy will be discussed in the next section.

4. China's *Autonomy-seeking* Strategy

³⁵⁴ Qiang Zhai, 52.

³⁵⁵ Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War*, 2012, 209. Also see Shen and Xia, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Partnership, 1945-1959*, 2017, 209.

³⁵⁶ Quoted in David Holloway, *The Soviet Union and the Arms Race* (Yale University Press, 1983), 32.

³⁵⁷ John W. Lewis and Litai Xue, *China Builds the Bomb*, 1 edition (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1991), 67.

In the mid-1950s, Beijing increasingly worried that Khrushchev's view of war would render the USSR more cautious and shyer about military assistance for national liberation struggles against the United States.³⁵⁸ During treaty negotiations and in the early phases of the Korean War, as discussed earlier, Stalin promised a deterrent against American attacks on the Chinese territory. Now that Khrushchev came to power in Moscow, Mao's optimism about the extended deterrence gradually disappeared. Coincidentally, U.S. power in the region was rapidly growing. Washington had announced the doctrine of "massive retaliation" in 1954, and had established a network of alliances in East Asia, the most significant of which was, of course, the U.S.-Taiwan mutual defense pact.³⁵⁹ After the United States and Taiwan signed an Agreement on Mutual Military Understanding in September 1953, U.S. delivery of fighter aircraft to Taiwan had substantially increased, including F-84 and F-86 jets.³⁶⁰ From May 1954 on, U.S. and Taiwanese officials publicly discussed a defense treaty, which came into force in March 1955. Understandably, Mao feared that such alliances, and increased deployments of U.S. forces near China, might legalize and cement Taiwan's political separation from mainland China forever.³⁶¹

Against the backdrop of growing U.S. power, Khrushchev, nevertheless, appeared to be acting in ways that undermined Soviet security commitments in Chinese eyes. First, Khrushchev, consciously or inadvertently, appeared tentative when it came to the issue of extended deterrence. Khrushchev certainly offered a general extension of the Soviet nuclear umbrella to all socialist countries including China when he said in a meeting with Mao on October 3, 1954: "Our [socialist]

³⁵⁸ Lewis and Xue, 67–68.

³⁵⁹ See Peng Dehuai *Quan Zhuan* [*The Complete Biography of Peng Dehuai*] (Beijing: China Encyclopedia Press, 2009) Vol. 3, 1072. Also see Cunningham, Fiona, "Paper Tiger, Paper Ally?: The Sino-Soviet Treaty and China's Nuclear Weapons Program," paper presented at the APSA annual conference in 2016, 21.

³⁶⁰ M. Taylor Fravel, *Strong Borders, Secure Nation: Cooperation and Conflict in China's Territorial Disputes* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 235–36.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*

family has a protective nuclear umbrella and that is sufficient [for their security].” However, he added, “there is no need for everyone to go and make [nuclear weapons].”³⁶² This was unsatisfying to Mao partly because Khrushchev’s reassurance of extended deterrence only came as a response to Mao’s expressing his desire to acquire indigenous nuclear weapons.³⁶³ While the Soviet leader offered to supply a small-scale nuclear reactor and train Chinese personnel, he recommended that China focus on economic development, and emphasized how expensive a nuclear program might be.³⁶⁴ In addition, and perhaps more importantly, Khrushchev hinted that his nuclear guarantee would not cover the Taiwan Straits. At the end of his first trip to the PRC in the midst of the Taiwan Crisis from September 29 to October 12, 1954, Khrushchev made no commitments to rescue the Chinese force in case Americans intervened in the Taiwan Strait.³⁶⁵ Khrushchev later wrote in his memoir that he “agreed to send military experts, artillery, machine guns, and other weapons in order to strengthen China and thus strengthen the socialist camp,” but he made no reference to sending troops to rescue China specifically.³⁶⁶

Second, though related to the first, Soviet strategic thought increasingly emphasized preemptive action and first strikes, causing irreconcilable differences between Beijing and Moscow in their strategic approach as well as views of the ultimate consequences of a nuclear war.

³⁶² Shi Zhe, *Zai Lishi Juren de Shenbian: Shi Zhe Huiyilu* [Together with Historical Giants: Memoirs of Shi Zhe] (Beijing: Central Press of Historical Documents, 1991), 572. See Xu, *Xu Yan’s Selected Lectures*, 254; Shen and Xia, *Mao and the Sino–Soviet Partnership, 1945–1959*, 2017, 208.

³⁶³ Note that this was not the first time the Chinese requested Soviet nuclear assistance. Having accompanied Khrushchev to China in September–October 1954, his aide, Nikolai Bukharin, turned down a request from Nie Rongzhen for Soviet assistance to develop a Chinese nuclear weapon.

³⁶⁴ Dmitrii Shepilov, Khrushchev’s former aide, recounted this story in his memoir. See Dmitrii Shepilov, *the Kremlin’s Scholar: A Memoir of Soviet Politics under Stalin and Khrushchev*, translated by Anthony Austin and edited by Stephen Bittner, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 381–82; also see Ronald Timerbaev, “How the Soviet Union Helped China Develop the A-Bomb,” *Yaderny Kontrol* [Nuclear Control], no. 8 (Summer–Fall 1998); Zhihua Shen and Yafeng Xia, *Mao and the Sino–Soviet Partnership, 1945–1959: A New History* (S.l.: Lexington Books, 2017), 208.

³⁶⁵ Text of a Joint Declaration by Mao and Khrushchev in People’s China, No. 21 (Nov. 1, 1954), supplement, 5. Also see Lewis and Xue, *China Builds the Bomb*, 26; Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 35.

³⁶⁶ Nikita Khrushchev, *Khrushchev Remembers: The Last Testament* (Little Brown and Company, 1974), 246.

Khrushchev seriously questioned the fate of civilization following devastating nuclear attacks. But according to Khrushchev's account, Mao argued that "war is war. The years will pass, and we'll get to work producing more babies than ever before."³⁶⁷ After his trip to Beijing in the fall of 1954, he concluded that conflict with China was inevitable, because he was bewildered by Mao's belief that an imperialist United States and their nuclear weapons were "a paper tiger."³⁶⁸

The differences in their views of war emerged most clearly when Peng Duhuai, Chinese Defense Minister, met with his Soviet counterpart Georgy Zhukov in Moscow in May 1955. Zhukov told Peng that a nuclear attack would be decisive and that, in modern war, victory and defeat would be determined in only a few minutes.³⁶⁹ With first-strike advantages created by nuclear weapons, Zhukov believed that no country would be able to recover once attacked, and therefore opposed China's approach, which was "active defense" based on the principle of "gaining control by striking afterwards" (*houfa zhiren*).³⁷⁰ Peng strongly disagreed, arguing that great powers like the Soviet Union and China could withstand a nuclear attack and retaliate afterwards. Besides, with no nuclear weapons currently at its disposal, China would not be able to launch preemptive strikes anyways. In particular, Peng noted the Soviet tendency to emphasize achieving victory through advanced technology and equipment, whereas China would have to find ways to use inferior equipment to defeat superior adversaries like the United States. According to Wang Yazhi, Peng's aide, the conversation with Zhukov had a profound impact on Peng's

³⁶⁷ Khrushchev, 255.

³⁶⁸ Khrushchev, Nikita. *Khrushchev Remembers*, Boston, 1970, 465-470.

³⁶⁹ See Wang Yan, ed., *Peng Dehuai zhuan* [Peng Duhuai's Biography], Beijing: Dangdai Zhongguo chubanshe, 1993, 535-536; Yin Qiming and Cheng Yaguang, *Diyi ren guofang buzhang* [First Minister of Defense], Duangzhou: Guangdong jiaoyu chubanshe, 1997, 43-44.

³⁷⁰ Liu Xiao, *Chu shi Sulian ba nian* [Eight Years as Ambassador to the Soviet Union] (Beijing: Zhonggong dangshi ziliao chubanshe, 1986), 13, cited in Fravel, *Active Defense*, 98.

subsequent thinking about Chinese strategy.³⁷¹ These differences over the implications of nuclear weapons would later become one of the major causes of the Sino-Soviet split.³⁷²

Third, that Soviet leaders were insensitive enough to ostensibly demonstrate their most advanced weapons but refuse to sell current models, made their tendency to rely on advanced technology even more damaging to the credibility of its security commitments to China. Defense Minister Peng Dehuai realized that the weapons used by the Soviets in a series of 1954 exercises were newer and better than those being sold to China. In fact, the Soviets were selling surplus and outdated weapons to China to modernize their own force.³⁷³ When Peng Dehuai visited Moscow in May 1955, Khrushchev offered to show Peng a Soviet ballistic missile submarine, stating that the Soviets “didn’t keep secrets from their Chinese comrades,” but he later retracted this offer. According to Peng’s biography, Peng was “extremely resentful” which “strengthened his conviction to develop [China’s] independent capacity to produce weapons.”³⁷⁴

With these three factors reinforcing one another to undermine mutual trust between the two states, the Chinese, in the latter half of the 1950s, gradually shifted from *Favor-currying* to *Autonomy-seeking*, a change that manifested primarily in the following two forms of behavioral shifts – (1) acceleration of efforts toward an independent deterrent against the United States, and (2) a virtual end to its policy alignment with Moscow.

³⁷¹ Wang Yazhi, *Peng Dehuai junshi canmou de huiyi, 1950 niandai ZhongSu junshi guanxi jianzheng* [The Recollection of Peng Dehuai’s Military Staff Officer: Witnessing Sino-Soviet Military Relations in the 1950s]. Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe, 2009, 130-131, cited in Fravel, 98.

³⁷² The editorial departments of Renmin Ribao (People’s Daily) and Hongqi (Red Flag), “Two Different Lines on the Question of War and Peace – Comment on the Open Letter of the Central Committee of the CPSU –,” November 19, 1963.

³⁷³ When Peng visited Moscow in September 1952, for example, the Soviets suggested that China purchase the T-4 bomber, which was based on the B-29 design, even though B-29s had been shot down in Korea by Soviet Mig-15s. The Soviets had already begun to manufacture the jet-propelled Tu-16 bomber, but they refused to sell this model. Yin Qiming and Cheng Yaguang, *Diyi ren guofang buzhang*, 82-87.

³⁷⁴ *Peng Dehuai Quan Zhuan* [The Complete Biography of Peng Dehuai] (Beijing: China Encyclopedia Press, 2009) Vol. 3, 1080.

(1) China's quest of an independent deterrent

China expedited steps toward indigenous nuclear weapons in the latter half of the 1950s. Certainly, Beijing had already been conducting an exploratory investigation about nuclear weapons earlier. In March 1952, when they felt threatened by U.S. nuclear weapons during the Korean War, Chinese leaders agreed that China would eventually need nuclear weapons to counter U.S. nuclear threats.³⁷⁵ But this agreement didn't lead to a nuclear program immediately, at least for two years. In 1952, Zhou Enlai instructed two of his aides, Lei Yingfu and Wei Ming, to visit a Chinese scientist Zhu Kezhen, in order to better understand "the technological prerequisites for the trial production of atomic bombs and other sophisticated weapons."³⁷⁶ Zhu Kezhen, with his expertise, emphasized financial, technical, and resource challenges for such an endeavor.³⁷⁷ Two months later, Zhou Enlai met with members of the Chinese Military Commission including Zhu De, Nie Rongzhen, Peng Dehuai, and Su Yu, and decided more research was needed to determine how to develop it and when to begin.³⁷⁸ After this meeting, senior Chinese leaders began to approach the Soviet Union for aid, and sent a delegation from the Chinese Academy of Science to Moscow in March 1953.³⁷⁹ But no particular follow-up was taken after the trip.

³⁷⁵ Fravel, *Active Defense*, 237.

³⁷⁶ This is based on Lei Yingfu's recollection, reproduced in Qian Sanqiang's official chronology, along with an article by the Chinese historian of science Fan Hongye. See Ge Nengquan, ed., *Qian Sanqiang nianpu*, 95; Fan Hongye, "Yuanzidan de gushi: Ying cong 1952 nian qi" [The Story of the Atomic Bomb: It Should Start in 1952], *Zhonghua dushu bao*, December 15, 2004. Also see Fravel, *Active Defense*, 331.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁸ Ge Nengquan, ed., *Qian Sanqiang nianpu* [A Chronicle of Qian Sanqiang's Life], Jinan: Shandong youyi chubanshe, 2002, 94. Also see Guo Yingui, "Zhou Enlai yu Zhongguo de hewuqi [Zhou Enlai and China's Nuclear Weapons]," in Li Qi, ed., *Zai Zhou Enlai shenbian de rizi: Xihuating gongzuo renyuan de huiyi* [Days At Zhou Enlai's Side: Recollections of the Staff Members of West Flower Hall], Beijing: Zhongyang wenxian chubanshe, 1998, 273; Fravel, *Active Defense*, 248.

³⁷⁹ Zhang Zuowen, "Zhou Enlai yu daodan hewuqi [Zhou Enlai and Missile Nuclear Weapons]," in Li Qi, ed., *Zai Zhou Enlai shenbian de rizi: Xihuating gongzuo renyuan de huiyi* [Days at Zhou Enlai's Side: recollections of the Staff Members of West Flower Hall], Beijing: Zhongyand wenxian chubansh, 1998, 658, cited in Fravel, *Active Defense*, 249.

Serious efforts began a year later.³⁸⁰ In February 1954, Zhou Enlai established an office in the Ministry of Geology responsible for developing China's uranium resources.³⁸¹ The Ministry launched surveys of uranium samples from Shanmuchong in Guangxi in June 1954, and suggested China would have a sufficient indigenous supply to support a nuclear weapons program.³⁸² In September 1954, Peng Duhuai visited Moscow with other senior Chinese leaders and also requested Soviet nuclear assistance to build a cyclotron and experimental reactor.³⁸³ In October 1954, Mao told Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru that "China now does not have an atomic bomb... we are beginning to study [it]."³⁸⁴ The CCP officially made its decision to initiate a nuclear weapons program in January 1955.³⁸⁵ Within a few months, the program quickly acquired content and direction. On April 27, 1955, Beijing agreed with Moscow that the Soviets construct a heavy water reactor and a particle accelerator. On July 4th, 1955, the Politburo appointed three high-level officials to be responsible for supervision of this nuclear program: Vice-premier Chen Yun, a former acting chief of the General Staff Nie Rongzhen, and a former army political commissar Bo Yibo. A year later, the two countries signed three more bilateral agreements on nuclear assistance: an August 17, 1956 agreement to assist the Chinese nuclear industry; a December 19, 1956 contract to assist with uranium mining; and a Sino-Soviet New Defense Technical Accord in October 1957, in which the USSR agreed to supply a prototype atomic bomb,

³⁸⁰ During the 1930s, a few Chinese geologists such as Zhang Dingzhao and Zhang Gengsheng found traces of uranium in the Guangxi Province. In 1943 two other scientists discovered the first real uranium ores in Zhongshan County, Guangxi. See Lewis and Xue, *China Builds the Bomb*, 1991, 75.

³⁸¹ Zhang Zuowen, "Zhou Enlai yu daodan hewuqi," 658.

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Ge Nengquan, ed., *Qian Sanqiang nianpu*, 112; Wang Yan, ed., *Peng Dehuai nianpu*, 577. Peng would repeat his request during his next visit to Moscow in May 1955.

³⁸⁴ *Mao Zedong, Mao Zedong wenji* [Mao Zedong's Collected Works], Vol. 6 (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1996), 367.

³⁸⁵ While this decision did not explicitly refer to the building of nuclear weapons per se, it was effectively a decision to acquire indigenous nuclear bombs.

missiles as well as related technical data with no restrictions on how the technology would be used.³⁸⁶

There are a few arguments about what prompted Beijing to acquire indigenous nuclear capabilities when it did. First, Chinese historians such as Shen Zihua and Xia Yafeng emphasize China's preference for "self-reliance" (*Zili Gengsheng*) as a driver of its nuclear acquisition, arguing that China would never have fully relied on Soviet guarantees to meet U.S. threats. According to Shen and Xia, Mao during his first visit to Moscow in early 1950 was already determined to develop independent Chinese nuclear capabilities someday.³⁸⁷ But a major weakness in this argument is that Mao Zedong justified China's pursuit of nuclear weapons by reference to U.S nuclear threats.³⁸⁸ In addition, this "self-reliance" principle doesn't sit well with the fact that Mao did decide to at least temporarily rely on the Soviet nuclear umbrella during his treaty negotiations with Stalin in 1950. He assumed that the alliance with Moscow would deter the United States from using their nuclear weapons during the Korean War, as discussed earlier. "*Zili Gengsheng*" certainly was Chinese thinking that explains why they needed their own nuclear weapons someday, but it does not help explain why China initiated its nuclear program when it did.

Second, John Lewis and Xue Litai, in their landmark 1988 book on China's nuclear weapons program, emphasize the role of two incidents, the 1954-55 Taiwan Straits Crisis – in

³⁸⁶ Lewis and Xue, *China Builds the Bomb*, 1991, 62–63. Accordingly, the USSR allowed Chinese students to study its latest guided missile technology in early 1957.

³⁸⁷ Shen and Xia, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Partnership, 1945–1959*, 2017, 207–8. Along the same lines, official histories and biographies of key nuclear figures emphasize that the nuclear program was an example of "self-reliance" (*zili gengsheng*). See, for example, Lu Qiming and Fan Ruiruo, *Zhang Aiping Yu Liangdan Yixing [Zhang Aiping and the Two Bombs and Satellite]* (Beijing: PLA Press, 2011), 20-21.

³⁸⁸ Shuguang Zhang, "Between 'Paper' and 'Real Tigers': Mao's View of Nuclear Weapons," in John Lewis Gaddis et al, *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy Since 1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999): 194-215.

which China was threatened by U.S. forces – and the discovery of uranium ores in Guangxi, as drivers of Chinese nuclear weapons.³⁸⁹ But the 1954-55 Taiwan Crisis was, to a large extent, a crisis of China’s own making, as its attack on offshore islands, Kinmen and Matsu, is generally interpreted as an attempt to test or prevent U.S. security commitments to Taiwan.³⁹⁰ It is also difficult to regard the discovery of natural uranium as an exogenous shock that would accelerate Beijing’s nuclear endeavor. The Chinese did not conduct such a large-scale survey earlier, even though a couple of Chinese scientists had discovered the first real uranium ores in Guangxi in 1943.³⁹¹

I argue that the timing and pace of China’s nuclear research that sped up in the latter half of the 1950s can be explained partly by a loss of Chinese confidence in Soviet military assistance in case of war against the United States.³⁹² If Soviet extended deterrence had been deemed credible enough, Beijing would not have needed its own nuclear arsenal at least for the moment when the country was still recovering from its devastating civil war. When Peng Dehuai visited Moscow in May 1955, however, Peng could not get a Soviet answer as to the pressing question for China of how the Soviets and the Chinese would cooperate in war, and this convinced him that China needed

³⁸⁹ Lewis and Xue, *China Builds the Bomb*, 1991, 38.

³⁹⁰ Christensen, *Useful Adversaries*, 194–95.

³⁹¹ John Wilson Lewis and Litai Xue, *China Builds the Bomb*, ISIS Studies in International Policy (Stanford, Calif. : Stanford University Press, c1988., 1988), 75.

³⁹² Nie Rongzhen, one of the key figures in China’s nuclear weapons program, observed that “when the Chinese people have this weapon, [the United States’] nuclear blackmail toward the people of the world will be completely destroyed.” See Nie Rongzhen, *Nie Rongzhen junshi wenxuan* [Nie Rongzhen’s Selected Works on Military Affairs] (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1992), 498. In the same vein, Mao also argued, in his famous 1956 speech “On the Ten Great Relationships,” that “we want to have not only more planes and heavy artillery, but also the atomic bomb. In today’s world, if we don’t want to be bullied, then we cannot do without this thing.” (quote from Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong wenji* [Mao Zedong’s Collected Works], vol. 7 (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 1999), 27) During a Chinese Military Committee meeting in 1958, furthermore, Mao linked nuclear weapons with the ability to stand up to stronger states, noting that “[we] also want that atomic bomb. I hear that with such a big thing, if you don’t have it, then others will say that you don’t count. Fine, we should build a few.” (quote from Mao Zedong, *Mao Zedong wenji* [Mao Zedong’s Collected Works], vol. 6 (Beijing: Xinhua chubanshe, 1999), 374)

its own nuclear weapons.³⁹³ Peng, at the time, was leading internal discussions that later culminated in the adoption in 1956 of the PRC's first ever official military strategy, or strategic guideline. The 1956 strategy rejected the Soviet approach of relying on first strikes and preemption, while presuming that China would build a force that could wage modern, mechanized war against the United States, without Soviet operational assistance.³⁹⁴

Not surprisingly, the Soviets disapproved China's 1956 military strategy. Why, then, did Khrushchev, who had previously encouraged Mao to focus on economic development in 1954, decide to share advanced nuclear technologies with China? In fact, his nuclear assistance had more to do with his self-interests than with his generosity. First of all, further advances in the Soviet nuclear program depended on the supply of uranium ores from China, and precisely to get those ores, the Soviets, in the winter of 1955-56, pledged to provide China with "full-scale assistance."³⁹⁵ Additionally, the Soviets may have intended, as some argue, to control the scope and pace of China's nuclear program. Nie Rongzhen attributed what he saw as the unreliable nature of Soviet technological assistance to the Soviet desire to maintain a gap between China and the Soviet Union in state-of-the-art weaponry, deliberately providing China with obsolete technology and keeping it in a state of dependence.³⁹⁶ In a similar vein, Xu Yan argues that Soviet experts recommended for China to build a nuclear testing site in Gansu that would have been able to handle only 3-4 kiloton tests rather than thermonuclear tests.³⁹⁷ Sun Xiangli also notes that Soviet experts

³⁹³ See "The Greatest Gospel for World Peace: On Stalin's Statement on Nuclear Weapons," *Xinhua yuebao*, No. 4/6, October 25, 1951, 1, 271-272, cited in Guang Zhang Shu, "Between 'Paper' and 'Real Tigers': Mao's View of Nuclear Weapons," in *Cold War Statesmen Confront the Bomb: Nuclear Diplomacy Since 1945*, ed. John Lewis Gaddis et al. (Oxford University Press, 1999), 197.

³⁹⁴ For details on the 1956 military strategy, see Fravel, *Active Defense*, chap. 3.

³⁹⁵ Lewis and Xue, 61.

³⁹⁶ Nie Li, *High Mountains, Long River*, 200.

³⁹⁷ See Xu, *Xu Yan's Selected Lectures*, 258. Thermonuclear tests produce yields over a megaton, which is needed for nuclear weapons of an intercontinental range.

constructed an enrichment facility with limited capacity and withheld key enrichment and reprocessing technologies.³⁹⁸

It is also likely that the Soviet nuclear assistance had other political purposes, as Khrushchev dismissed the Soviet military's objections to cooperation with the Chinese.³⁹⁹ Scholars generally agree that much of the Soviet nuclear assistance was meant to be a political reward for Beijing's support for Khrushchev after uprisings in Poland and Hungary weakened his position within the broader socialist bloc. China did not fail to capitalize on this situation. Nie suggested that China should seize this opportunity [Khrushchev's weakened position] to negotiate Soviet assistance with China's nuclear and missile programs.⁴⁰⁰

(2) Decline in Policy Alignment with Moscow

A second major form of behavioral shifts toward *Autonomy-seeking* is a virtual end to policy coordination efforts vis-à-vis Moscow after 1957. Beijing's foreign policy publicly diverged from the USSR's, particularly regarding the Yugoslav revisionism in the late 1950s, which Beijing saw as a fundamental threat to the socialist camp, whereas Moscow considered it "becoming increasingly acceptable."⁴⁰¹ After the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez Crisis in 1956, Tito had been reaching out to influential leaders in Africa and Asia, including Nasser and Nehru, in order to encourage the creation of a third force capable of standing up to either

³⁹⁸ See Sun, "Zhongguo He Zhanlue Yanjiu," 24, cited in Cunningham, 35. Also see Liu and Liu, "Analysis of Soviet Technology Transfer in the Development of China's Nuclear Weapons," *Comparative Technology Transfer and Society*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (April 2009):101.

³⁹⁹ Xu, *Xu Yan's Selected Lectures*, p. 256-7. Specifically, Khrushchev provided China with P-2 missiles, its earliest missile and various nuclear energy facilities; he also sent Soviet experts to assist China with uranium mining and enrichment in Hunan, Jiangxi and Inner Mongolia, and constructed the Jiuquan missile testing base and Xinjiang nuclear testing site.

⁴⁰⁰ Xu, *Xu Yan's Selected Lectures*, 256. Also see Nie Li, *High Mountains, Long River*, 185.

⁴⁰¹ Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict*, 336, cited in Friedman, 40.

superpower in the interests of nonalignment. Beijing worried that Yugoslavia was trying to harm India's relations with the USSR and the PRC in order to get India to join a nonalignment movement.

In the late 1950s, Beijing was no longer shy about disagreeing with Moscow. Beijing certainly supported Moscow's forceful suppression of social uprisings in Hungary in 1956, but this should not count as proactive policy alignment by China. In fact, it is possible, as some argue, that Mao played an important role in Khrushchev's decision for military interventions in Hungary, as Liu Shaoqi, acting on Mao's direction, had pressured Khrushchev to send in troops to put down the revolt by force.⁴⁰² In the wake of the Moscow conference of 1957, the Chinese leadership expressed dissatisfaction with the Soviet new policy – the doctrine of peaceful coexistence – by delivering a secret memorandum to the Soviets.⁴⁰³ With regard to disarmament Khrushchev was pursuing with the Americans, Beijing was publicly arguing that the point of advocating disarmament was not to actually achieve it but rather to paint the Western imperialists in a negative light – a public remark that undermined the Soviet strategy of cooperation vis-à-vis the West.⁴⁰⁴ When Khrushchev arrived in the United States in September 1959 and agreed with Eisenhower that “the question of general disarmament is the most important one facing the world today,” the Chinese attacked his visit as a form of appeasement.⁴⁰⁵

Furthermore, China rejected a series of Soviet proposals for naval cooperation all together in April 1958. The USSR proposed to jointly build a long-wave radio transmission center and its

⁴⁰² John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History*, First Edition (New York: Penguin Press HC, The, 2005), 109. In this incident in Eastern Europe, the Soviet leader came to align with Mao, unlike the Korean War, where Mao decided to support Stalin and Kim since the Soviet leader already gave greenlight to North Korea's invasion plan before Mao did.

⁴⁰³ Lüthi, 77.

⁴⁰⁴ Friedman, *Shadow Cold War*, 39–40.

⁴⁰⁵ Friedman, 42.

receiving station on the Chinese territory for Soviet submarines in the Pacific and Indian oceans. This was followed by a second proposal, which was to construct a joint Sino-Soviet submarine fleet, with China donating the ports and the Soviet Union the vessels. Third, Moscow also simultaneously proposed to cooperate on antiaircraft defense as well. To discuss these major naval cooperation issues with Beijing, Khrushchev visited China in July 1958 for a second time. But Mao asserted that China could build its own long-range radio station if it was given Soviet equipment and technology and that he would rather own a fleet if the Soviets were willing to cede command over the warships to Chinese captains.⁴⁰⁶ Mao rejected these proposals all together despite the fact that the proposal of a joint nuclear submarine fleet was a positive response to an earlier Chinese request for Soviet assistance with building submarines capable of launching nuclear weapons.⁴⁰⁷ And interestingly enough, Mao did so just before he orchestrated another Taiwan crisis by shelling the Jinmen Island on August 23, 1958.⁴⁰⁸ The timing of Mao's rejection is an indication that Beijing no longer counted on Soviet military assistance in case U.S. troops intervened to rescue Taiwanese forces in 1958.

Mao also dismissed a Soviet request for what would have been crucial intelligence cooperation in September 1958, which enraged Khrushchev. When the Taiwanese air force launched several U.S.-designed Sidewinder air-to-air missiles over Wenzhou in Zhejiang Province, one of them failed to explode and landed on the Chinese territory; this immediately piqued Soviet interests, leading Moscow to request access to the missile, although the Chinese did not respond to the Soviet request for a while and then argued that it could not be given to the

⁴⁰⁶ Constantine Pleshakov, "Nikita Khrushchev and Sino-Soviet Relations," in *Brothers in Arms: The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945-1963*, ed. Odd Arne Westad, First Edition (Washington, D.C.: Stanford, Calif: Stanford Univ Press, 1998), 235-36.

⁴⁰⁷ Nie Li, *High Mountains, Long River*, 319.

⁴⁰⁸ Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 74.

Soviets since the Chinese were studying it; several months later, when the Chinese delivered the Sidewinder to the USSR, it had been improperly re-assembled and the sensing element for the infrared homing system – a crucial piece of technology – was missing.⁴⁰⁹ According to Zhihua Shen, Khrushchev was so angry at the Chinese that in retaliation he quietly decided to renege on the October 1957 promise to deliver a nuclear bomb teaching model to the Chinese by the promised June 1959 deadline.⁴¹⁰

Outside the military realm, Sino-Soviet disputes also intensified with ideological battles with regard to which party, the CCP or the CPSU, represented orthodox Marxism and should lead the international Communist movement. After the 21st Party Congress in February 1959, Soviet propaganda stressed the importance of peaceful coexistence and peaceful transition to socialism. By contrast, Chinese propaganda continued to stress the inevitability of war, the likely transition to socialism via armed struggle, and the impossibility of peaceful coexistence with imperialist states.⁴¹¹ By 1960, Sino-Soviet disputes over foreign policies as well as ideology had become known to the public on occasions such as a June 1960 meeting in Beijing of the board of directors of the World Federation of Trade Unions – an association of the state-sponsored unions in the socialist camp – and a June 1960 Third Romanian Party Congress in Bucharest attended by all communist parties from around the world.

Eventually, the Soviets did not fulfill key parts of the 1957 agreement of nuclear and missile assistance, as the alliance began to unravel the following year. In March 1958, the Soviets started delaying the transfer of those sensitive technologies to the Chinese including delivery of

⁴⁰⁹ Christensen, *Worse Than a Monolith*, 156.

⁴¹⁰ Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War*, 2012, 224.

⁴¹¹ Danhui Li and Yafeng Xia, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Split, 1959–1973: A New History* (Lanham ; Boulder ; New York ; London: Lexington Books, 2018), 1.

the nuclear weapon prototype and designs.⁴¹² On June 20, 1959 the Soviets formally abrogated the above-mentioned three agreements on military-technological cooperation.⁴¹³ On July 18, 1960, without prior warning, Moscow informed Beijing of the immediate withdrawal of all of the approximately fourteen hundred Soviet advisors.⁴¹⁴ The departure of civilian specialists was completed on August 24, 1960, the evacuation of their military counterparts, a week later.

A July 18 letter from Moscow announcing the withdrawal of Soviet experts listed many different reasons: Moscow's long-standing desire to have Soviet specialists return home; Chinese criticism of their work; blatant Chinese disregard for Soviet technical advice; and CCP propaganda against the CPSU.⁴¹⁵ Mao's rejection of the Soviet proposals for a joint submarine fleet and of their cooperation on anti-aircraft defense also influenced the halt to the Soviet nuclear aid as well. But most importantly, Khrushchev no longer needed to buy in political support from Beijing with his nuclear aids.⁴¹⁶ Back in 1955, Khrushchev had offered nuclear assistance because he needed political support from the PRC for him to consolidate his leadership within the USSR and the broader socialist bloc. But once Khrushchev's domestic and international position was on a firmer footing, those political conditions that favored Chinese bargaining position had disappeared by 1958.

Khrushchev's decision to withdraw all Soviet specialists was spontaneous and controversial within the USSR, however. The Soviet foreign ministry warned that a similar

⁴¹² Lewis and Xue, *China Builds the Bomb*, 61. According to Xu, Two of Zhou Enlai's military secretaries suggested that "Soviet termination and withdrawal of assistance of its experts left behind a number of 'half-made' facilities and delayed China's nuclear test by about two years. See Xu, 258.

⁴¹³ Chen, *Mao's China and the Cold War*, 80-1.

⁴¹⁴ Chen Jian, ed., "A Crucial Step toward the Breakdown of the Sino-Soviet Alliance," *CWIHP Bulletin* 8-9, 249-50, cited in Lüthi, 174.

⁴¹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁶ Zhihua, *Mao, Stalin and the Korean War*, 2012, 206, 231.

decision in 1948 had not managed to subdue the Yugoslavs.⁴¹⁷ Indeed, the sudden Soviet announcement of withdrawal was somewhat welcomed by Mao as an opportunity to deflect blame for the economic collapse caused by the so-called Socialist High Tide (a.k.a. Little Leap Forward) – i.e. hasty collectivization movements Mao had promoted in China’s countryside for a few years to beef up agricultural production.⁴¹⁸ For the Soviets, the withdrawal was a self-defeating blunder because it only prompted Beijing’s decision to expedite its nuclear weapons program without Soviet assistance. Despite a great amount of resources that the Soviets had committed to the Chinese for ten years, Moscow suddenly lost its institutional leverage over Beijing.⁴¹⁹

5. Alternative Explanations and Conclusion

In explaining China’s behavior vis-à-vis the Soviet Union in the 1950s, the security threat explanation showed mixed results. It very well predicts China’s *Favor-currying* strategy in the early 1950s, but not its *Autonomy-seeking* strategy in the latter half of the 1950s. According to the security threat explanation, Beijing should increase its military capabilities and also stay tightly aligned with Moscow, when it perceives U.S. military presence to be rapidly growing in East Asia in the first half of the 1950s. Certainly consistent with this balancing logic, China did devote

⁴¹⁷ Lüthi, 176.

⁴¹⁸ Prior to Mao’s Socialist High Tide movement, the Soviet economic development model China inherited through the Soviet-drafted First Chinese Five Year Plan (FYP) had caused a structural crisis in China: unlike the USSR, which had abundant reserves of arable land, Chinese agriculture was operating at its natural limits and unable to be sufficiently developed to sustain China’s industrial sector, which the Soviet loans were fueling, and produce adequate additional quantities for debt settlement. As a result, its rural development lagged behind, which threatened the implementation of the First FYP. For details on the impact of Chinese First FYP on economic problems, see Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 41–45.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid.

considerable efforts to its military modernization with Soviet assistance. In terms of the coordination posture, Mao was certainly proactive in alignment with Stalin, sending troops to the Korean Peninsula in response to Stalin's expectations and closely consulting the Soviets on a range of foreign policy issues including Indochina and India.

China's quest in the latter half of the 1950s for an independent nuclear deterrent and its rejection of policy alignment sits uncomfortably with the security threat explanation. In the mid-1950s, U.S. security threats were still on the rise with a series of bilateral security alliances including the U.S.-Republic of China alliance that entered into effect in 1955. And yet, Beijing in the latter half of the 1950s ceased to pursue policy alignment. It adopted a new strategic guideline incompatible with Moscow's in 1956, and publicly criticized Soviet foreign policy including Albania and disarmament issues starting in 1957. This downward trend continued even at a time when it certainly faced imminent security threats by U.S.-Taiwanese forces in August 1958. At that time, Beijing also ignored three Soviet naval cooperation proposals in 1958 and dismissed a Soviet request for intelligence cooperation over a Sidewinder missile flying from the Republic of China in the same period.

The hypothesis of ideological solidarity, at first glance, seems to perform better than the security threat explanation, as the Chinese supported the principles of peaceful coexistence at the 1954 Geneva conference while it rejected the same principles after Mao's ideological radicalization that started in 1955. There was certainly covariance between the intensity of ideological disputes and the decrease in foreign policy alignment between the two countries. However, this does not necessarily validate the ideological solidarity hypothesis in this case, because their foreign policies and ideologies are the flip sides of the same coin. In other words, the independent variable – ideological distance – in the hypothesis is, in fact, not independent. In

analyzing a case of ideological alliances like this one, the hypothesis of ideological solidarity can only produce a circular argument in explaining policy alignment.

By contrast, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy explains China's dependence and coordination postures better than these two alternative explanations. Once Mao knew that Stalin supported Kim Il-sung's plan to invade the south, he also decided to assist Kim and sent Chinese troops to Korea in 1950, because he also needed military support from Stalin for his own invasion plan. In addition to the Korea issue, Beijing was proactively aligning itself with Moscow on a range of other foreign policy issues including Vietnam, access to ice-free ports in China, and non-aggression pacts with other Asian countries. In the late 1950s, however, Chinese leaders ceased to show their allegiance to their Soviet counterparts. And this coincided with the time when the Chinese learned about Khrushchev's weak security commitments that would dim the prospect of Soviet operational assistance in a future war with the United States. Beijing started *Autonomy-seeking* by expediting its nuclear weapons program to build an independent deterrent. In 1956, Beijing adopted the PRC's first-ever military strategy, rejecting the Soviet approach that heavily relied on first strikes and preemptive attacks. In 1957, Beijing began to publicly criticize Moscow's foreign policy and engage in acrimonious ideological disputes over proper socialism.

The ideological distance hypothesis certainly seems to explain deteriorating relations between the two alliance partners to some extent, but it does not square with continued fluctuations in Beijing's policy alignment behavior toward Moscow even after Mao's ideological radicalization in the late 1950s. Rather, it appears that the degree of policy alignment covaried with changing perceptions of Soviet commitments to fighting U.S. forces. When an American U-2 spy plane was brought down over Soviet territory on May 1, 1960, Khrushchev accused the United States of invading Soviet airspace and warned that his country could respond with its missile command.

U.S.-Soviet relations quickly deteriorated thereafter so much so that President Eisenhower refused to meet with Khrushchev during the Soviet leader's visit to Washington in September and October 1960. The PRC could have declared its victory over Moscow, asserting that these recent developments invalidated Khrushchev's prior appeasement approach toward the United States. Instead, Chinese officials, from early August 1960 onwards, underlined the importance of peaceful coexistence – evidence of policy alignment by Beijing. On August 1, for example, Zhou Enlai stated that China was willing to coexist peacefully with all other countries – a sign of Beijing moving closer toward the Soviet views, not the other way around.⁴²⁰ The Chinese view on the inevitability of war also softened. On 25 August, 1960, Zhou told American writer, Edgar Snow, that “we would try to prevent the war if we could.”⁴²¹ A final declaration of the November 1960 Moscow Conference of World Communist and Workers' Parties, to which the CCP agreed, departed from the Marxist-Leninist theory that war was inevitable. The declaration also reflected Khrushchev's ideological framework of the “spirit of socialist internationalism.”⁴²² During the same conference in Moscow, China exercised self-restraint over the Soviet-Albanian disputes, which resulted from Khrushchev's rapprochement with Yugoslavia in the latter half of the 1950s.⁴²³ During the Berlin crisis of 1961, furthermore, Beijing supported the Soviet and the Warsaw Pact position in signing a peace treaty with East Germany.⁴²⁴ To be clear, these are examples of China's policy alignment, not those of its shifting ideology, because Mao's

⁴²⁰ Li and Xia, *Mao and the Sino-Soviet Split, 1959–1973*, 26.

⁴²¹ *Zhou Enlai nianpu*, vol. 2, 343, cited in Li and Xia, 26.

⁴²² Li and Xia, 28–29. The “spirit of socialist internationalism” refers to the idea that the interests of the socialist bloc corresponded with the interests of all peoples, and that the interests of the socialist block took precedence over national interests, and inter-party relationships over state-to-state relationships.

⁴²³ Li and Xia, 30, 46–47.

⁴²⁴ *Zhou Enlai nianpu*, vol. 2, 431, cited in Li and Xia, 30.

ideological radicalization still continued to make previous ideological disputes resurface again soon.

To be fair, China softened its anti-Soviet rhetoric also because of the domestic upheaval of the Great Leap Forward (1958-62), which sparked a devastating famine in China.⁴²⁵ Between 1959 and 1961, drought, poor weather, and Mao's hasty introduction of collectivization led to the Great Chinese Famine, causing millions of deaths. Mao may have felt compelled to temporarily suspend ideological disputes because he needed Soviet economic aid. However, if this was true, Beijing would have continued its flexible approach much longer. Unfortunately, this Sino-Soviet détente did not last long before open strife flared up again at the 22nd Congress of the CPSU in October 1961. Before knowing the Chinese economy was improving the following year, Zhou Enlai, the head of the Chinese delegation at the 22nd Congress, left Moscow in protest in the middle of the conference, after Khrushchev publicly criticized the Party of Labor of Albania. Soon thereafter, the Chinese launched a propaganda campaign to condemn the 22nd Congress.⁴²⁶ In December 1961, when the USSR severed diplomatic relations with Albania, China continued to provide Albania with political, economic, and military aid.⁴²⁷ In short, there are only weak correlations between China's economic problems and its policy alignment with Moscow.

Some, such as Thomas Christensen, argue that ideological alliances bonded with revolutionary ideologies, such as the Sino-Soviet case, would lead a junior partner to distance itself from the senior partner for a different reason. Christensen offers the argument that in revisionist ideological alliances, competition for leadership among revisionist belligerents can push the entire alliance movement in a more aggressive direction; this ratcheting-up process tends to create a

⁴²⁵ Lüthi, *The Sino-Soviet Split*, 174–80.

⁴²⁶ Li and Xia, 50-51.

⁴²⁷ Li and Xia, 51.

foreign policy of external belligerence by newer members, as members of the ideological alliance seek political support from their comrades.⁴²⁸ “Concerned for their own positions within the alliance, the initially more moderate “players” might be catalyzed by the process of such competition and thereby might become more aggressive toward the enemy camp than they were initially.” In particular, freshman members of an ideological movement, for the purpose of gaining trust from full-fledged senior members, might make sacrifices and take risks that exceed national self-interests, argues Christensen.

This dynamic, certainly to some extent, seems to explain why Mao assisted Kim in the Korean War at a time when he preferred to achieve Chinese unification first. It may also partially explain why Beijing, in an attempt to gain support from other socialist states, estranged from Moscow through spiteful ideological criticisms even though Beijing still needed Soviet technical assistance. However, this quest for peer approval through a revolutionary foreign policy did not happen when China needed international socialist recognition most – the 1954 Geneva Conference, which is the PRC’s first ever large-scale international conference. Mao recommended moderation and concession with regard to Communist insurgencies in Indochina. Partly to be in alignment with Khrushchev, Mao convinced Ho Chi Minh to accept a divided peace in Vietnam at the 1954 Geneva Conference. One of the primary instructions that the CCP leadership gave the Chinese delegation in Geneva was to alleviate world tensions and reach agreements so as to set a precedent for solving international problems through great-power consultations.⁴²⁹

In sum, post-Stalin Soviet Union’s cautious strategic approach to war changed Chinese perception of Soviet alliance commitments to fighting American forces. Although there are a

⁴²⁸ Christensen, *Worth than Monolith*, 15-16.

⁴²⁹ See Zhai, 4 & 52.

couple of other, more powerful explanations for the Sino-Soviet splits, a perceived change in Soviet security commitments is at least one factor that pushed China to shift from *Favor-carrying* to *Autonomy-seeking*, in order to be prepared for American military intervention and be capable of countering it without Soviet operational assistance. Beijing was successful in receiving surprisingly generous Soviet military assistance throughout the 1950s, despite, and thanks to, its *Autonomy-seeking* strategy.

Chapter VI: The U.S.-Japan Alliance (1951-1990)

1. Introduction

Japan's behavior vis-à-vis the United States during the Cold War is also consistent with the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. Japan was a regional power allied with a great power, the United States. For the better part of the Cold War period, Japan perceived U.S. security commitments to be very strong, partly due to the presence of U.S. forces on its soil and also partly because Japan's most powerful opponent, the Soviet Union, was seen by the United States as its own enemy. Post-war Japan was not revisionist, on the other hand, since it held on to war-renouncing Article 9 of its Constitution and deliberately pursued a mercantilist foreign policy. Given perceived strong security commitments and the absence of revisionist policy, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts that Japan adopts a *Cheap-riding* strategy. This is consistent with Japanese behavior during the 1950s and 1960s. Tokyo maintained small defense budgets as percentage of GDP and deliberately remained incapable of defending itself on its own. It also avoided troop deployment and policy alignment over the U.S. military policy whenever it could. It pursued an "independent" foreign policy and did normalize diplomatic relations with America's primary adversary, the Soviet Union, despite Washington's oppositions.

The strategy apparently did not cost much – the United States was unable to credibly threaten to withdraw its security commitment on the basis of Tokyo’s insufficient contributions – evidence contrary to Glenn Snyder’s prediction for a response to alliance partners’ undercommitment.⁴³⁰

This changed somewhat in the early 1970s, however. As a U.S.-Soviet détente and thawing U.S.-China relations combined to undermine American security commitments to East Asia in the late 1960s and the early 1970s, Tokyo switched, as predicted by the Theory, to an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, increasing its defense spending, assuming additional security responsibilities in the region, and pursuing advanced nuclear technologies.

As in the other case studies, I test the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy against two alternative explanations: the security threat explanation and the hypothesis of ideological solidarity. The security threat explanation predicts that the greater security threats a state faces, the more likely it is to make efforts to build its defense capabilities and stay aligned with its alliance partner – and this is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy which involves continued defense buildup and close coordination.⁴³¹ Conversely, the lower security threats it faces, the more likely it is to be reluctant to coordinate with the partner but still be willing to keep building its own military arsenal given its weaker position vis-à-vis the partner – and this is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, which involves continued defense buildup and a decline in coordination efforts. As we shall see in this chapter, Japan’s behavior is the opposite of what the security threat explanation predicts. When security threats were perceived to be rising, Tokyo was not making efforts to either increase its military capabilities or stay aligned with Washington. It worked toward a defense buildup when security threats subsided.

⁴³⁰ Snyder, *Alliance Politics*, 307.; Also see Snyder, “The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics.”

⁴³¹ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 32.

The hypothesis of ideological solidarity predicts, on the other hand, that the more similar the leaders' ideologies are, the more likely they are to pursue closer policy coordination while continuing their defense buildup to improve capabilities to help one another— which is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy.⁴³² Conversely, the more distant their ideologies are, the more likely they are to not actively pursue policy coordination but still improve capabilities to defend themselves because their ideologically-distant partners are not reliable – which is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. This ideology hypothesis does not perform any better than the security threat explanation in the case of the U.S.-Japan alliance. As both the United States and Japan share the same anti-communist ideology, Tokyo should have stayed closely aligned with Washington if the hypothesis were correct.

Meanwhile, the current literature on the history of this particular alliance does not rely on either of these explanations. With a few exceptions, the literature, by and large, sees this alliance as a unique victor-vanquished relationship originating from post-war U.S. occupation, and as a result does not fully recognize the agency – ability to act by itself – in Japan's behavior vis-à-vis the United States.⁴³³ This is problematic because the victor-vanquished relationship does not sit well with the fact that Washington consistently failed to get Tokyo to stop *Cheap-riding* on American security provisions for decades. Despite pressures from the victor, Tokyo refused to build its defense capabilities or make contributions to America's military operations beyond

⁴³² Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 183–84.

⁴³³ One example is Cha, *Powerplay*, chap. 6: "Win Japan". A few scholars pointed out that Japan had its own strategy. For example, Richard J. Samuels' *Machiavelli's Children* credits Japanese prime ministers, particularly Shigeru Yoshida, for astutely protecting Japan's national interests against the U.S. when the two states' interests did not overlap. Another exception is Kenneth B. Pyle, who argues that Japan developed a strategy of dependence on U.S. security guarantee. See Richard J. Samuels, *Machiavelli's Children: Leaders and Their Legacies in Italy and Japan* (Cornell University Press, 2005). Kenneth B. Pyle, *Japan in the American Century*, First Edition, First Printing edition (Cambridge, Massachusetts ; London, England: Belknap Press: An Imprint of Harvard University Press, 2018).

providing an “unsinkable aircraft carrier,”⁴³⁴ while it used anti-militarism and exaggerated constitutional constraints as a convenient justification. Although some scholarly work does recognize a partial agency in Japanese behavior toward the United States, they often take sociological approaches to explain how Japan’s surrender in WWII turned its citizens into extremely peace-loving people.⁴³⁵ These sociological explanations also seem ineffective, as anti-militarism was not strong in the immediate aftermath of Japan’s independence in 1951-1952, when 51 to 17 percent of the population supported Japan’s rearmament.⁴³⁶

The remainder of this chapter is divided into four sections. The next section will provide the background of the U.S.-Japan alliance, clarifying values this case takes on the independent variables and predicting its values on the dependent variable of the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. The third section examines the extent of empirical support for the *Cheap-riding* strategy – predicted by the Theory when Japan perceived strong security commitments by Washington but had no revisionist policy goal. The fourth section presents empirical evidence for Japan’s *Autonomy-seeking* strategy – a predicted strategy when the senior partner’s security commitments become weak in Japanese eyes. The fifth, final section will conclude by clarifying what caused changes in Japanese alliance strategy.

⁴³⁴ Prime Minister Nakasone was quoted as saying that Japan should become “an unsinkable aircraft carrier” to defend against penetration by the Soviet Backfire bomber. See the Washington post, 20 March 1983.

⁴³⁵ See John W. Dower, *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, First PB Edition edition (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000); Thomas U. Berger, “Alliance Politics and Japan’s Postwar Culture of Antimilitarism,” in *The U.S.-Japan Alliance: Past, Present, and Future*, ed. Michael J. Green and Patrick M. Cronin (New York, NY: Council on Foreign Relations Press, 1999), 189–207.

⁴³⁶ Yomiuri Shimbun, 15 August 1951; Yomiuri Shimbun, 8 February 1952. Also see Akihiko Tanaka, *Anzen Hoshō Sengo Gojūnen no Mosaku [The Quest for National Security Over Fifty Years After the War]* (Tōkyō: Yomiuri Shimbunsha, 1997), 112–14.

2. Background

(1) The Origin of the Alliance

The origins of the U.S.-Japan alliance lie with U.S. occupation of Japan after WWII. The United States strongly desired to keep its access to military bases in Japan and maintain close political and economic relations with Tokyo. This, of course, significantly affected Japanese perception of U.S. security commitments. A key architect of such alliance relations with Japan was George Kennan, then Director of Policy Planning at the State Department. Kennan believed that Japan was the key to Asia, just as Germany was the key to Europe, and envisioned a postwar multipolar world with five power centers, “where the sinews of modern military strength could be produced in quantity”: the United States, Britain, Germany, the Soviet Union, and Japan.⁴³⁷ For this reason Kennan was resolutely opposed to the original U.S. occupation policy toward Japan centered around demilitarization, purges, and war reparations programs. Kennan forcefully argued for a drastic change in the U.S. approach to the military occupation of Japan, and his recommendations were adopted by the National Security Council (NSC) 13/2 on October 7, 1948.⁴³⁸ Punitive measures were soon replaced by those for economic recovery; the purges of Japanese elites stopped. While much of the objective of pre-1948 occupation policies was to

⁴³⁷ George F. Kennan, *Memoirs* (New York: Bantam Books, 1967), 369.; George Kennan, *Realities of American Foreign Policy* (Princeton University Press, 1954), 63–65.

⁴³⁸ The NSC report was titled “Report by the National Security Council on Recommendations with Respect to the United States Policy Toward Japan,” in FRUS, 1948, The Far East and Australasia, vol. 6, 858-62. Also see Paul J. Heer, *Mr. X and the Pacific: George F. Kennan and American Policy in East Asia* (Cornell University Press, 2018), chap. 3.

preserve Allied Powers' security and interests from future Japanese aggression, the new policy aimed to ensure Japan's security from outside aggression particularly by communist countries.⁴³⁹

Within 15 months, Secretary of State Dean Acheson defined the American "defensive perimeter" in the Pacific as a line running through Japan, the Ryukyus and the Philippines in his famous National Press Club speech in January 1950.⁴⁴⁰ Along the same lines, one of the State Department documents argued in 1950 that "the essential objectives of the United States from both the political and the military standpoints are the denial of Japan to the USSR and the maintenance of Japan's orientation towards the Western powers."⁴⁴¹

Military incentives were equally powerful. As Secretary of State John Foster Dulles saw it, the 1951 treaty with Japan amounted to a voluntary continuation of the U.S. military occupation, but in the guise of a normal political relationship between two nation-states. Internally, Dulles told Secretary of Defense, Louis Johnson, that military officials should not be misled by the adept language of the State Department's draft treaty, as it actually gave the United States the right "to station as many troops in Japan as we want where we want and for as long as we want."⁴⁴²

The primary purpose of this "voluntary continuation of the U.S. military occupation" was therefore not to defend Japan specifically, and this is clear from internal discussions within the U.S. government regarding the drafting of the security treaty. The original draft text for Article 1

⁴³⁹ See "Conversation between General of the Army MacArthur and Mr. George F. Kennan, March 5, 1948," in *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1948, The Far East*, volume 6, 699.

⁴⁴⁰ Dean Acheson stated, "The defensive perimeter runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus. We hold important defense positions in the Ryukyu Islands, and those we will continue to hold. In the interest of the population of the Ryukyu Islands, we will at an appropriate time offer to hold these islands under trusteeship of the United Nations. But they are essential parts of the defensive perimeter of the Pacific, and they must and will be held. The defensive perimeter runs from the Ryukyus to the Philippine Islands." For the full text of his statement, see <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/1950-01-12.pdf>.

⁴⁴¹ "Position of the Department of State on United States Policy Toward a Japanese Peace and Security Settlement, 9 March 1950," in *FRUS, 1950, East Asia and the Pacific*, volume 6, 1140.

⁴⁴² Memos by Fearey, 26, 27, and 29 January, 1951, in *FRUS, Asia and the Pacific 1951, Volume 6*, 811-13, 819-23. Also see Melvyn Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War*, 1 edition (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 392.

of the 1951 bilateral security treaty prepared by the U.S. Department of State stated that United States land, air and sea forces stationed in and about Japan “*would be designed solely for the defense of Japan against armed attack...*”⁴⁴³ The U.S. Defense Department, however, insisted on making it clear that “the US forces in and about Japan are not earmarked and dedicated so exclusively for Japan that they could not be used elsewhere to maintain international peace and security as, for example, US forces in and about Japan were used for the aid of South Korea when it was attacked....”⁴⁴⁴ Reflecting the Defense Department’s view, the final text for the treaty stipulated that U.S. forces stationed in Japan “*may be utilized to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East and to the security of Japan against armed attack...*”⁴⁴⁵

The U.S. intention to employ military bases in Japan for broader security purposes stayed intact for decades. A declassified Department of State (DOS) memorandum dated April 24, 1971 made it crystal clear. In response to President Nixon’s National Security Study Memorandum No. 122 – a presidential direction for evaluating the impact of the July 1969 Nixon doctrine on Japan, the DOS paper stated that the U.S. troops deployed in Japan and in its vicinity were there primarily to fulfill other U.S. security commitments in Asia rather than to defend Japan.⁴⁴⁶ It then added: costs associated with keeping Japan cooperating with us included maintaining the nuclear umbrella over Japan and our credible nuclear deterrence; the nuclear umbrella would be there for the United

⁴⁴³ “Unsigned Draft of Bilateral Agreement, February 5, 1951, in FRUS, Asia and the Pacific 1951, Volume VI, Part 1, Document 497 (Emphasis added).

⁴⁴⁴ “The Secretary of State to the United States Political Adviser to SCAP (Sebald), July 27, 1951, in FRUS, Asia and the Pacific 1951, Volume VI, Part 1, Document 661.

⁴⁴⁵ Gibler, *International Military Alliances 1648-2008*, 392. (Emphasis added).

⁴⁴⁶ National Archives, Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, National Security Council Institutional (“H”) Files, National Security Study Memorandums (NSSM), 120 to 123 Box H-182. Also see Mikio Haruna, *Kamen no Nichibei Dōmei: Bei Gaikō Kimitsu Bunsho ga Akasu Shinjitsu [An alliance in disguise: the truth of the U.S.-Japan Alliance revealed by secret U.S. diplomatic documents]* (Tokyo: Bungei Shunjū, 2015), 51–52.

States to ensure its own national security, so there would be no additional cost of defending Japan by providing the nuclear umbrella to Japan.⁴⁴⁷ Another DOS memorandum dated December 29, 1971, prepared by former Ambassador to Japan and then Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson, also stated unequivocally that the U.S. Forces in Japan were not stationed to defend Japan proper but for the purpose of strategic defense in the Republic of Korea, the Republic of China and the Southeast Asia.⁴⁴⁸ Johnson added that unlike NATO, there was neither a bilateral arrangement with regard to a combined command structure nor joint operational plans of any sort; as such, the U.S. military bases in Japan and in Okinawa existed for U.S. troops' logistics and served for the defense of Japan only in a strategic and broad sense of the term.⁴⁴⁹

Japan discerned strong U.S. security commitments to Japan from Washington's insistence that it would maintain military bases in Japan for broader purposes than the defense of Japan. Yoshida thought that the presence of U.S. forces practically offered a deterrent, not the language of the security treaty with the United States.⁴⁵⁰ Yoshida was convinced that the Cold War structure would require the United States to maintain its long-term presence in Japan, which alone would be sufficient to deter a military attack from communist adversaries.⁴⁵¹

(2) No Revisionist Policy

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ "Memorandum For The President, Meetings with Sato," Nixon Presidential Materials Staff, NSC Files VIP Visits, Box 925, December 29, 1971, National Archives (later transferred to the Nixon Presidential Library). Also see Haruna, *Kamen no Nichibeī Dōmei*, 47–48.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid,

⁴⁵⁰ Shigeru Yoshida, *Kaisō Jūnen Dai San kan* [Looking back the last ten years, Volume III], Tokyo: Shinchō-sha, 1957, 116-118.

⁴⁵¹ Kenneth Pyle, *Japan Rising*, First Edition edition (New York: PublicAffairs, 2007), 231.

Post-war Japan had no revisionist foreign policy. By revisionist policy, I do not mean a policy of territorial expansion nor upsetting the current international system all together. I do mean a policy of aiming to change the local status quo – i.e. distribution of power and goods – by force, similarly to the way Arnold Wolfers defined “revisionist powers,” which “are bent on changing the (local) status quo by force if necessary.”⁴⁵² By contrast, status-quo policies are “either [those that] desire to preserve the established order or those that, while actually desiring change, have renounced the use of force as a method for bringing it about.”⁴⁵³ States with no revisionist policy are those that do not prepare to use force in an attempt to change the current international distribution of power and goods. With this definition, postwar Japan clearly had no revisionist policy. It ensured that its foreign policy was consistent with war-renouncing Article 9 of the Constitution, which explicitly prohibits the use of force as a means to resolve international disputes. In fact, the government of Japan, starting in 1954 through the 1980s, interpreted the constitutional ban on the use of force so narrowly that the Japanese defense forces would not have been allowed to assist even a U.S. warship that came under attack while defending Japan.⁴⁵⁴

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When a junior partner perceives strong commitments by its senior partner, while there is no revisionist foreign policy, we should expect the junior partner to pursue a *Cheap-riding* strategy. As long as it perceives strong commitments and has no revisionist goal, Tokyo should operate with small defense budgets, staying incapable of defending itself on its own and reluctant

⁴⁵² According to Wolfers, revisionist policies aim to seek values not already enjoyed, including more power as an end in itself or expanding control over other peoples. See Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration; Essays on International Politics*, 91–92.

⁴⁵³ Wolfers, 125.

⁴⁵⁴ See Samuels, *Securing Japan*, Ch. 2 for how the government of Japan insisted on the self-imposed extremely narrow interpretation of Article 9 in order to deny its war potential.

regarding troop deployment and policy alignment. The next section will test this prediction against empirical evidence.

3. Japan's *Cheap-riding* Strategy

Under the circumstances where a junior partner enjoys strong security commitments from its senior partner but has no revisionist policy goal, it is likely for the junior partner to need small defense budgets because it can rely on the senior partner's protection for security. The senior partner's intra-alliance bargaining power tends not to be proportional to its relative material power because it cannot credibly threaten to abandon a *Cheap-riding* junior partner for various reasons. For one, such alliance abandonment would mean a potential loss of that partner – i.e. the loss of its economic market, military assets, and knowledge base if concurred – to an adversary that the senior partner sees as its own enemy. A *Cheap-riding* junior partner may be particularly valuable if the senior partner keeps troops on the junior partner's soil for purposes other than the provision of local security. In addition, a junior partner employing a *Cheap-riding* strategy is most likely reluctant in coordinating foreign policy with the senior partner or makes an occasional attempt to pursue an independent diplomacy, albeit not going as far as band-wagoning with the adversary's camp. A *Cheap-riding* junior partner could make a plausible argument that a close policy alignment with a great power partner raises concerns about entrapment, in order to justify its pursuit of independent foreign policies.

To show empirical evidence for this argument, this section presents a chronological overview of Japanese defense budgets, its military burden-sharing with the United States, and Tokyo's policy alignment with Washington in the 1950s and 1960s.

(1) Limited Rearmament, Shrinking Defense Budgets as Percentage of GDP in the 1950s

In the early 1950s when Japan's sovereignty was about to be restored, U.S. officials were relentlessly pressuring Tokyo to rearm and participate actively in the Korean War. However, Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida argued that the Japanese people did not support rearmament, because it would impoverish Japan and create the kind of social unrest that Communist adversaries wanted. This was of course an exaggeration, and through backdoor channels Yoshida was even persuading his political opponents, Japan Socialist Party leaders, to whip up popular anti-rearmament demonstrations and campaigns during Secretary of State John Foster Dulles' visit to Tokyo in June 1950.⁴⁵⁵ Yoshida's strategy vis-à-vis Dulles was to make minimal concessions of passive alliance cooperation with the United States in return for an early end to U.S. Occupation, a guarantee of Japan's national security, and an opportunity to concentrate on all-out economic recovery.⁴⁵⁶ Yoshida established his bargaining position with Dulles by making light of Japan's security problems and pretending that Japan could protect itself alone by being democratic and peaceful and by relying on the protection of world opinion.⁴⁵⁷ This was not what Yoshida truly believed, of course, but he assumed that the United States would desire to keep military bases in Japan in a foreseeable future and that as long as their troops stayed, the Soviet Union would never resort to an outright aggression.⁴⁵⁸ In fact, Yoshida in his conversation with his close aids warned against

⁴⁵⁵ Takeshi Igarashi, "Sengo Nihon 'gaikō jōsei' no keisei [the formation of post-war Japan's foreign policy]," *Kokka gakkai zasshi*, no. 5-8 (1984), 486.

⁴⁵⁶ Pyle, *Japan Rising*, 229.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵⁸ See Yoshida's comments during an internal discussion within the Japanese government on January 13, 1951, in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, "Heiwa Jōyaku no Teiketsu ni Kansuru Chōsho III [Report on the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty, Volume III]," 78. The entire report "Heiwa Jōyaku no Teiketsu ni Kansuru Chōsho" is accessible at <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/annai/honsho/shiryo/archives/sk-1.html>.

playing into U.S. psychological war-mongering strategy to exaggerate Soviet threats and cajole Japan into rearmament.⁴⁵⁹

Shortly after the peace and security treaties were signed in October 1951, U.S. Congress passed the Mutual Security Assistance (MSA) Act, which was designed to consolidate the American alliance system through the supply of weapons and equipment, participation of allied officers in U.S. training programs, and the overall coordination of military strategies. While he ignored U.S. demands for a Japanese defense budget worth four percent of GNP, Yoshida still exploited this MSA aid for economic reconstruction and development by diverting the bulk of MSA military support into commercial purposes.⁴⁶⁰

To resist rearmament pressures from the United States, Yoshida hid opinion poll results in 1952, which showed that nearly 60 percent of the country actually favored Japan's rearmament.⁴⁶¹ Certainly, Yoshida grudgingly agreed to upgrade the National Police Reserve, which General MacArthur had created in July 1950 – during the occupation – with 75,000 men, to the status of National Security Force [*Hoantai*] in January 1952 with 110,000 men, and further to the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) with a total of 152,000 men in 1954. But the SDF was still less than half the size of 350,000 that the United States had demanded. At the same time, the Japanese

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁶⁰ For details on U.S.-Japan negotiations over rearmament in this period, see Kazuya Sakamoto, *Nichibei Dōmei No Kizuna [The Bonds of Alliance between Japan and the United States]* (Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 2000), 80–105. Also see Pyle, *Japan Rising*, 234–35.

⁴⁶¹ Information Report, “Rearmament Plans of Prime Minister Yoshida,” 24 October 1952, cited in Tetsurō Katō, *CIA Nihonjin Fairu [CIA Files on Japanese Individuals]*, vol. 10 (Gendai Shiryō Shuppan, 2014). Also see Tetsuo Arima, *Dai Honei Sanbō ha Sengo Nani to Tatakattanoka [What did the Imperial general staff office fight post-war?]* (Tōkyō: Shinchōsha, 2010), 159–60. For the opinion poll results, see Yomiuri Shimbun, 8 February 1952.

government reduced its defense spending as a percentage of GNP from 2.187% in 1951 to 1.154% in 1961.⁴⁶²

(2) Reluctant Policy Alignment in the 1950s

After Prime Minister Yoshida stepped down, subsequent Japanese leaders during the Cold War never publicly called their security relationship with the United States an “alliance.” Even Yoshida, while he was eager for economic integration with the West, wished to “maintain a distinctive foreign policy.”⁴⁶³ Historian Kenneth Pyle observed that, unlike German Chancellor Conrad Adenauer who sought to address the fear of German rearmament by integrating his country into NATO, Prime Minister Yoshida never desired political integration of Japan either with the rest of Asia or with the West.⁴⁶⁴

Japan’s tendency of pursuing an independent foreign policy became particularly pronounced when there were heightened security threats facing Japan and the United States – the opposite of what the security threat explanation predicts. For example, a tendency of an independent foreign policy based on popular anti-American sentiments became stronger in the mid-1950s, after a Japanese tuna fishing boat, *Daigo Fukuryūmaru*, was exposed to nuclear fallout from the U.S. nuclear explosion test at Bikini Atoll on March 1, 1954. This was the moment when Soviet threats were increasing, only six months after Moscow successfully tested its first fusion-

⁴⁶² See Documents 5 and 14, FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume XXIII, Part 1, Japan. For details on Japan’s defense spending in the past, see Kazuhito Kutsunugi, “Sengo ni okeru Bōei Kankeihi no Suii (Chronological changes in Japan’s postwar defense budget),” *Rippō to Chōsa*, No. 395 (December 2017), 81-98.

⁴⁶³ Ōtake, Hideo, “Defense Controversies and One-Party Dominance: The Opposition in Japan and West Germany,” in T. J. Pempel, ed., *Uncommon Democracies: The One Party Dominant Regimes* (Ithaca: Cornell Univ Pr, 1990).

⁴⁶⁴ Pyle, *Japan Rising*, 229.

based nuclear bomb in Siberia. According to the security threat explanation, heightened threats should bind alliance partners more firmly, and it therefore predicts that Japan should stay closely aligned with the United States. On the contrary, Japan distanced itself from America, as wrote U.S. Ambassador John M. Allison in a cable sent to the Department of State on May 20, 1954:

“The record of their attempts [to gain control of the situation in the aftermath of the *Daigo Fukuryūmaru* Incident of 1954] disclosed.... strength of neutralism and isolationism: Finally, record of period has revealed that certain national traits have not been extinguished in postwar Japan: a feverish sense of pride and sovereignty, willingness to sacrifice long-term advantages for short-term gains, and tendency to go it alone. Shrillness and baselessness of attacks on US good will and “sincerity” throughout entire period are indicative of sentiment to disengage from US.”⁴⁶⁵

The Eisenhower administration was so concerned about Japan’s tendency of neutrality that the President immediately ordered a re-evaluation of U.S. foreign policy toward Japan.⁴⁶⁶ In response to the rise of Japanese neutralism, Robert Murphy, then Acting Secretary of State, wrote that “the most important thing that we can do to help is to treat Japan as a full, free-world partner and bring her as much as possible into our own and free world counsels. This is essential if we are to count upon the use of Japanese bases and other cooperation in any future conflict. We recommend regular high-level consultations with the Japanese on politico-military problems.”⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶⁵ “The Ambassador in Japan (Allison) to the Department of State, May 20, 1954,” FRUS, 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, PART 2, Document 762, page 1646.

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid. Also see Hidetoshi Sotōka, Masaru Honda, and Toshiaki Miura, *Nichibei Dōmei Hanseiki (U.S.-Japan Relations in the Last 50 Years)* (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbunsha, 2001), 123–42.

⁴⁶⁷ Murphy’s report implies that pressures for Japanese rearmament should not be the priority for the moment, although he mentioned that “Effective defense of Japan will be very difficult until the Japanese assume a fair load themselves and until they understand their stake in the struggle against Communist tyranny. We are trying to prod them into doing more and are giving them very substantial military assistance.” See “Memorandum by the Acting Secretary of State to the President, May 29, 1954,” FRUS, 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, PART 2, Document 763, page 1649.

The U.S. concern about Japanese neutralism was further exacerbated by a senior Japanese leader's remark on Japanese positioning as a neutral state. Ikeda Hayato, then Secretary General of the Liberal Party (who "has rapidly emerged as dominating figure second only to Yoshida in power and influence" and who would be Japan's prime minister in 1960), "made statements which in substance were reported as follows: a. United States failed in its 'roll-back policy' when Indochina truce signed; b. Truce proved increasing initiative of Communist China amid 'fast-rising racial consciousness in Southeast Asia'; c. This is not time for Japan to choose outright between west and east (...) but is time to decide its own action in full analysis of action either west or east will take politically and economically."⁴⁶⁸ Such U.S. concerns were corroborated by opinion polls in Japan, which clearly recorded the rise of neutralism in the 1950s: support for alliance with the West fell in a straight line from a high of 55 percent in 1950 to a mere 26 percent in 1959, while support for neutrality increased steadily over the same period from 10 percent in 1950 to 50 percent in 1959.⁴⁶⁹

When Yoshida stepped down as prime minister in December 1954, Ichirō Hatoyama, his successor, criticized Yoshida for what he called "an excessively pro-U.S. foreign policy" and argued that Japan should pursue an "independent" foreign policy and improve relations with communist states.⁴⁷⁰ What Hatoyama primarily meant by "independent foreign policy" was to normalize diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union.⁴⁷¹ Having sensed an opportunity to drive a wedge between Tokyo and Washington, the Soviet Trade Representative in Tokyo, Andrew I.

⁴⁶⁸ "The Ambassador in Japan (Allison) to the Department of State, August 11, 1954," FRUS, 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, PART 2, Document 786, page 1698-99.

⁴⁶⁹ Shinkichi Etō and Yoshinobu Yamamoto, *Sōgōampo to Mirai no Sentaku*, Tokyo: Kōdansha, 1991, 223. For more on public opinion with regard to Japanese foreign and defense policies during the Cold War, see Thomas U. Berger, *Cultures of Antimilitarism: National Security in Germany and Japan* (Baltimore, Md: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), chap. 3.

⁴⁷⁰ Ichirō Hatoyama, *Hatoyama Ichirō Kaikoroku [Hatoyama Ichirō Memoir]* (Bungei Shunjū Shinsha, 1957), 117.

⁴⁷¹ Tetsuo Arima, *CIA to Sengo Nihon [the CIA and Postwar Japan]* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2010), 65.

Domnitsky, quickly set up an informal meeting with Hatoyama on January 7, 1955, with a proposal to commence negotiations. Subsequent talks culminated in successful diplomatic normalization in October 1956, while parallel negotiations over territorial disputes with regard to the Northern Islands failed partly due to U.S. intervention to hold back Hatoyama.⁴⁷²

For fear of “the force of Japanese neutralism [which] should not be underrated,”⁴⁷³ the Eisenhower administration adopted a new approach to Japan, which dropped a numerical goal for Japanese rearmament in order to “avoid pressing the Japanese to increase their military forces to the prejudice of political and economic stability.”⁴⁷⁴ Some scholars concluded that Japan’s gesture of seeking independent diplomacy eventually won Tokyo the U.S. government’s *de facto* acceptance of Yoshida’s policy course of minimal defense budgets.⁴⁷⁵

Japan’s tendency of threatening non-cooperation to get what it wanted also seemed to manifest during bilateral negotiations toward a new security treaty in the late 1950s. Tokyo expressed concerns over its one-sided obligation to allow for U.S. access to military bases in Japan. It then proposed a withdrawal of U.S. troops from Japan in exchange for Japan’s collective self-defense responsibilities. Its ultimate goal was to gain explicit written security commitments from the United States, which was missing in the original 1951 treaty. Presumably without consulting a Cabinet Legislative Bureau (CLB), which was supposed to provide “authoritative” interpretations of the Japanese constitution, Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu submitted a draft new treaty to Ambassador Allison in July 1955, which would change the 1951 treaty in two important regards: first, requiring reciprocal security assistance – i.e. collective self-defense – between the two

⁴⁷² See Izumikawa, “Binding Strategies in Alliance Politics,” 113–14.

⁴⁷³ “Memorandum by the Ambassador in Japan (Allison) to the Secretary of State, September 9, 1954,” FRUS, 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, PART 2, Document 798, 1717.

⁴⁷⁴ “U.S. Policy Toward Japan, April 1955,” FRUS, 1955-1957, Japan, Volume XXIII, PART 1, NSC5516/1, 59.

⁴⁷⁵ See Sakamoto, 111-122.

countries in areas covering Japan, Okinawa, Bonins, and Guam, and second, the removal of U.S. troops from the Japanese territory within six years.⁴⁷⁶ In his meeting with Dulles in Washington, D.C. on August 30, 1955, Shigemitsu used communist propaganda movements in Japanese society as a basis both for requesting troop withdrawal as well as for seeking a new, more equal, security treaty.⁴⁷⁷ Shigemitsu argued that devising a more equal treaty would be an effective weapon to combat the Japanese communist party's propaganda.⁴⁷⁸

Dulles quickly turned down Shigemitsu's proposition, however, arguing that one could consider revising the current treaty only when Japan acquired adequate defense capabilities.⁴⁷⁹ Many in Washington thought that even collective self-defense with the United States was unlikely to be approved by the Japanese Diet where the Japan Communist Party was powerful.⁴⁸⁰ But most importantly, getting Japan's upgraded security responsibilities by losing U.S. base access there was a non-starter. The U.S. military echoed Dulles' view. In particular, Admiral Felix B. Stump, Commander of the Pacific Command, fiercely opposed to the new draft treaty, arguing that it was important for the United States to maintain the current unrestricted right to actively utilize military bases in Japan and conduct operations from there in a limited war in the Far East that would not involve Japan. Stump added that the United States had, and should maintain, the right to re-enter

⁴⁷⁶ Shigemitsu presumably did not get the Cabinet Legislative Bureau on board regarding the constitutionality of his offer: there were clear inconsistencies between Shigemitsu's offer of collective self-defense and the Cabinet Legislative Bureau's "official" interpretation of Article 9. The CLB's Director-General, Shūzō Hayashi, stated that a joint declaration by Shigemitsu and Dulles on August 31, 1955, did not mention collective self-defense as it simply clarified Japan's primary responsibility to defend its own territory, which, in turn, would contribute to peace and security in the Western Pacific. See Kokkai Kairigoku [Diet Record of Japan], House of Councillors, Cabinet Committee, Session 24, No. 33, April 26, 1956, 19.

⁴⁷⁷ Diplomatic Archive of Japan, 0611-2010-0791-08-003, page 41-42.

⁴⁷⁸ Diplomatic Archive of Japan, 0611-2010-0791-08-003, page 39.

⁴⁷⁹ Diplomatic Archive of Japan, 0611-2010-0791-08-003, page 41-42.

⁴⁸⁰ Sotooka, Honda, and Miura, *Nichibei Dōmei Hanseiki (U.S.-Japan Relations in the Last 50 Years)*, 142-57.

military bases and facilities that had previously been returned to the Government of Japan in the case of an all-out or limited war in the Far East.⁴⁸¹

Shigemitsu had expected U.S. opposition and refused to back down. In his next meeting with Dulles six months later, in March 1956, Shigemitsu once again brought up the request for troop withdrawal.⁴⁸² Shigemitsu's tenacity eventually led to some U.S. concession one year later, after the Eisenhower administration conducted yet another complete review of the U.S. policy toward Japan. The major reason for the U.S. concession was that Dulles started worrying that U.S. troops could one day be expelled from Japan.⁴⁸³ During his summit meeting on June 21st, 1957, with Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi, President Eisenhower promised to "substantially reduce the number of United States forces in Japan (USFJ) within the next year, including a prompt withdrawal of all United States ground combat forces."⁴⁸⁴ Soon thereafter, the area of U.S. bases and facilities was reduced by 70% within two years, from 1.056 billion m² in 1957 to 0.336 billion m² in 1959.⁴⁸⁵ The troop size of USFJ also dropped by 15% from 54,000 in 1957 to 46,000 in 1960.⁴⁸⁶ Eisenhower also started negotiating a new security treaty, which would make written U.S. security commitments less ambiguous and require Washington to consult Japan in advance of

⁴⁸¹ "Letter From Felix B. Stump To Douglas MacArthur II, February 24, 1958", RG84 Japan, Tokyo Embassy, Classified General Records, 1952-1963, Box 45, National Archives. Also see Takashi Shinobu, *Nichibei Anpo Jōyaku to Jizen Kyōgi Seido [The U.S.-Japan Alliance and its Mechanism for Prior Consultation]* (Tokyo: Kōbundō, 2014), 20–21.

⁴⁸² A memorandum laying out Japanese positions on various issues for Dulles notes, "in order to enhance cordial Japan-U.S. relations it is necessary to alleviate difficulties and hardships caused to the Japanese people by the U.S. military bases in their midst; it is earnestly desired that the United States Government make an overall review of the existing U.S. military facilities and areas in Japan and explore the possibility of releasing these facilities and areas to the greatest extent possible." See "Memorandum on Current Problems, March 18, 1956," Diplomatic Archive of Japan, A'.1.6.2.4-5, page 3.

⁴⁸³ "Telegram from the Department of State to the Embassy in Tokyo, No. 1623, January 31, 1958" (Secret), RG59 Central Decimal File, 1955-1959, Box 2579, National Archives.

⁴⁸⁴ "Joint communique of Japanese Prime Minister Kishi and U.S. President Eisenhower issued on June 21, 1957," FRUS: 1955-1957, Volume XXIII, 368-410.

⁴⁸⁵ Tsuyoshi Watanabe, *Nihon ha Naze Beigun wo Motenasunoka [Why does Japan give U.S. forces such warm hospitality?]* (Tokyo: Junpōsha, 2015), 82.

⁴⁸⁶ Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 42.

major changes in the deployment of its troops or equipment or in the use of its bases in Japan for combat operations.⁴⁸⁷ Once again, Japan's threat of kicking U.S. troops out won Tokyo substantial concessions from Washington.⁴⁸⁸

(3) Declining Defense Budgets and Continued Non-cooperation in the 1960s

The United States in the 1960s continued to press Japan to increase its defense budgets and military capabilities, while Tokyo kept a quasi-legal cap of “GNP1%” on its defense budgets every year. Japan's military expenditure was 1.154% of GNP in 1961, while it was consistently declining toward 1970, even after it reached around 1% of GNP in 1966 (see **Figure 3**).⁴⁸⁹

Japan continuously exploited U.S.-imposed war-renouncing Article 9 of the constitution as a justification for small military budgets as well as for its lack of policy alignment with the United States over nearly every issue involving its military or relations with the alliance's major adversaries. The Japanese government maintained an excessively narrow interpretation of Article 9 with a doctrine of “defensive defense” to argue that the Self-Defense Forces can act only “when there is a sudden unprovoked attack on Japan and there are no other means available to protect the

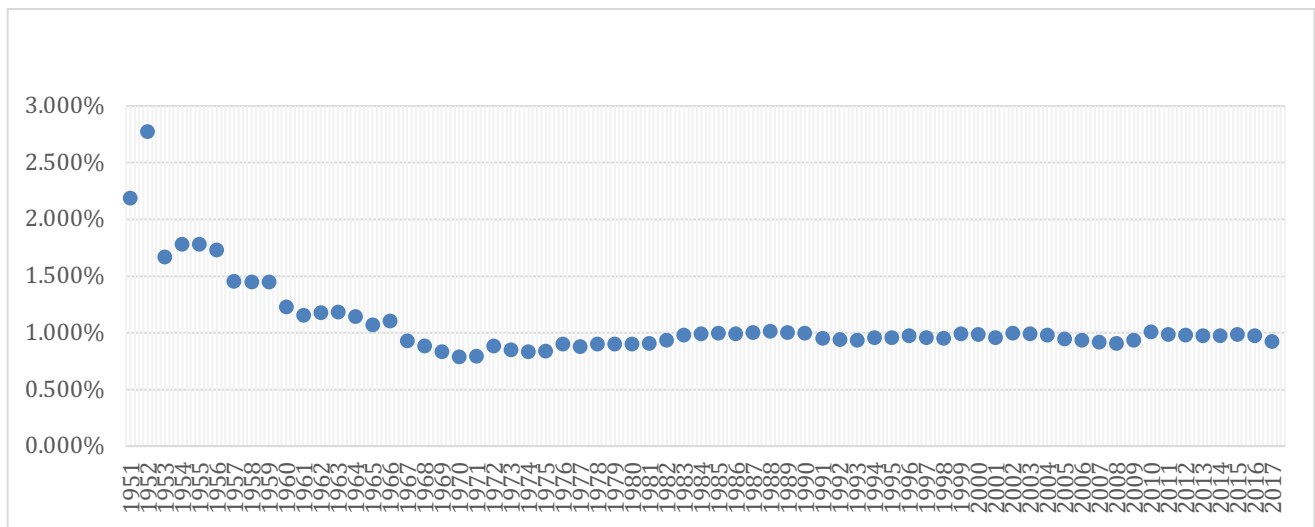
⁴⁸⁷ Article 6 of the new treaty stipulates that “For the purpose of contributing to the security of Japan and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East, the United States of America is granted the use by its land, air and naval forces of facilities and areas in Japan.”

⁴⁸⁸ Note, however, that the swift U.S. change over the new treaty can be attributed to the fact that Washington saw a window of opportunity for revising the treaty on U.S. terms to perpetuate its military presence and unrestricted basing rights in Japan when Nobusuke Kishi became Prime Minister in February 1957. Kishi was known for close relations with the United States: Kishi had been freed by the U.S. occupation forces after having been indicted as a war criminal due to his service in the wartime Tōjō Hideki cabinet; since his release, Kishi had been in good relationship with the U.S. forces and the C.I.A. In May 1957, Ambassador MacArthur II convinced Dulles that the United States should take the lead for a new treaty during Kishi's tenure as Prime Minister. See Shinobu, *Nichibei Anpo Jōyaku to Jizen Kyōgi Seido [The U.S.-Japan Alliance and its Mechanism for Prior Consultation]*, 18–19. Also see The New York Times, 9 October 1994; FRUS, 1955-1957, Volume XXIII, page 325-330.

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid.

lives and safety of the people.”⁴⁹⁰ In addition, political leaders allowed the Cabinet Legislation Bureau (CLB), a bureaucratic organ under their *de facto* control, to offer “authoritative” – but sometimes opportunistically evolving – interpretation of Article 9 and deny collective self-defense. The CLB “decided” that the Self-Defense Forces would not even be allowed to assist a U.S. warship that came under attack while defending Japan.⁴⁹¹

Figure 3: Japan's Military Expenditures as % of GDP



Source: Asagumo Shimbun Newspaper, “National Defense Handbook 2018”⁴⁹²

The ban on collective self-defense effectively enabled the government to reject U.S. demands for troop contributions to the Korean War and the Vietnam War. By contrast, another U.S. ally in East Asia, the Republic of Korea (ROK), sent as many as 300,000 troops in total to Vietnam over a 12-year period, which made the ROK the second largest army fighting in

⁴⁹⁰ Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 47.

⁴⁹¹ Samuels, 48.

⁴⁹² Asagumo Shimbunsha Shuppan, *Boei Handobukku 2018 [National Defense Handbook 2018]* (Tokyo: Asagumo Shimbunsha Shuppan, 2018).

Vietnam.⁴⁹³ The ROK's military expenditure as a percentage of GDP fluctuated between 7.2 % and 4.0 % throughout the Cold War period (1960-1990).⁴⁹⁴

Just as it was not sending troops for the Korean War and the Vietnam War, Japan was also reluctant to cooperate with the United States over nuclear nonproliferation in the latter half of the 1960s. Security threats facing Japan mounted in the mid-1960s after Communist China detonated its first nuclear device in October 1964, so Japan should stay closely aligned with its security partner according to the security threat explanation. However, Prime Minister Eisaku Satō was playing a nuclear card vis-à-vis the United States by pretending to have interests in acquiring nuclear weapons, even though he was not necessarily keen on launching an indigenous nuclear program immediately. Just two months after China conducted its first nuclear explosion in 1964, Satō told Ambassador Reischauer that “if other fellows had nuclear weapons it was only common sense to have them oneself.”⁴⁹⁵ He added that “nuclear weapons were much less costly than was generally assumed and Japanese scientific and industrial level was fully up to producing them.”⁴⁹⁶ In his meeting with President Johnson on January 12, 1965, on the other hand, Satō mentioned, “Japan has no nuclear weapons but a security treaty with the United States, (...) can we expect U.S. forces to come to aid when Japan is under attack not only by conventional weapons but also by nuclear weapons?”⁴⁹⁷

⁴⁹³ The Republic of Korea behaved differently during the Vietnam War because it employed a *Rescue-compelling* strategy to gain further military assistance from the United States.

⁴⁹⁴ See data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Yearbook: Armament, Disarmament and International Security, available on the World Bank website: data.worldbank.org.

⁴⁹⁵ Telegram from the Embassy in Japan to the Department of State, December 29, 1964, FRUS, 1964-68, Volume. XXIX, Part II, 37.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ “Memcon, Sato and Johnson, January 12, 1965,” 1/11-14/65 Sato’s Visit Memo & Cables, Box 253, Lyndon B. Johnson Library. Prompted by Satō, Johnson confirmed his security commitment, adding that “if Japan needs U.S. nuclear deterrence, we will provide Japan with necessary defense measures.” Satō then responded, “that answer was exactly what I wanted to hear, although I cannot admit that publicly,” for fear of provoking popular backlash against the U.S.-Japan security treaty. Also see Akira Kurosaki, *Kakuheiki to Nichibei Kankei [Nuclear Weapons and US-Japan Relations]* (Tōkyō: Yūshisha, 2006), 57, 191–92.

Starting in 1966, the Satō administration conducted a series of confidential studies to evaluate the costs and benefits of developing indigenous nuclear weapons.⁴⁹⁸ One study by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) concluded that “whether it joins the NPT or not, Japan should continue to not possess nuclear weapons for the time being; on the other hand, Japan should always maintain its economic and technological potential to manufacture nuclear weapons and make sure that such efforts would never be hindered.”⁴⁹⁹ The Cabinet Research Office (CRO), an intelligence organization reporting to the prime minister’s office, hosted a study group with nuclear physicists and international relations experts and suggested that “at least from the technological standpoint, it is relatively easy to produce a small number of plutonium-based atomic bombs.” But the same CRO study also pointed out that “Japan’s security may not necessarily increase with nuclear weapons in the short term” due to “the PRC’s 10-year lead-time” and “Japan’s geographic vulnerabilities with a lack of defensive depth.”⁵⁰⁰ The Defense Agency conducted similar research in 1970 concluding that it was not hard for Japan to manufacture nuclear warheads both technically and financially, as it would take only five years and about 200 billion yen.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁸ For details on how Japan acquired nuclear capabilities, see Mayumi Fukushima, *Japanese Nuclear Ambition: An Important Decision Yet to be Made?* (Cambridge, MA: Department of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, May 2015); Takaaki Daitoku, *Same Bed, Different Dreams: The G-5 and an Emerging Interdependent World, 1971-1976* (Evanston, IL: Department of History, North Western University, 2016).

⁴⁹⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy Planning Committee, “Wagakuni no Gaikō Seisaku Taikō [Guidelines for Japanese Diplomacy],” September 25, 1969, 67-68, available at: http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/kaku_hokoku/pdfs/kaku_hokoku02.pdf.

⁵⁰⁰ Kokusai Jōsei Kenkyūkai [Association for International Relations Study], “Nihon no Kaku Seisaku ni Kansuru Kisoteki Kenkyū [Basic Research on Japan’s Nuclear Policy] Part I and Part II,” 1970. For an analysis of this report, see Yuri Kase, “The Costs and Benefits of Japan’s Nuclearization: An Insight into the 1968/70 Internal Report,” *The Nonproliferation Review* 8, no. 2 (June 1, 2001): 55–68. By the “lack of defensive depth,” the authors of the study meant that, with 100 million people living in a narrow territory with a population density 3.6 times that of China, Japan was unable to absorb even one H-bomb that hits one of its big cities.

⁵⁰¹ Yasuhiro Nakasone, *Jiseiroku [Autobiography]* (Tokyo: Shinchōsha, 2004), 225. It should be noted that the purpose of this study was not to push for nuclear breakout, according to Yasuhiro Nakasone, then the agency’s director-general, who argued decades later that “in case Japan joined a nonproliferation regime, Japan’s position would be to voluntarily remain non-nuclear despite its advanced nuclear capabilities, so Japan needed to demonstrate its ability to produce nuclear weapons, and this is why our Defense Agency conducted that research” (See Nakasone, 215). Also note, however, that Nakasone’s attitudes toward nuclear weapons were ambivalent at times in his statements and memoirs, and may have been evolving over time during the Cold War.

Japan also positioned itself against U.S. and Soviet efforts to establish a global nonproliferation regime (NPT) in the late 1960s. Instead of helping preserve U.S. nuclear capability advantage vis-à-vis its enemies, Tokyo bluntly asked for U.S. disarmament and opposed the idea of such a nonproliferation regime. Tokyo cited its concern over the discriminatory nature of the proposed treaty, which would perpetuate the privileged status of nuclear weapons states by keeping their right to nuclear explosion while confining non-nuclear states into a "second-tier status" [*Niryūkoku*]. In a meeting with Deputy Secretary of State Nicolas Katzenbach on December 2, 1966, for example, Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister, Nobuhiko Ushiba, argued, "it is extremely regrettable that the treaty would draw a line between nuclear weapons states as first-tier states and non-nuclear weapons states as second-tiers."⁵⁰²

In June 1965 the Japanese government argued that several requirements needed to be met for Japan to consider joining the NPT such as the participation of all actual *and potential* nuclear weapons states in the regime, comprehensive nuclear test ban, and various measures for effective nuclear disarmament.⁵⁰³ This was not a public relations strategy to reassure anti-nuclear civil society groups in Japan, as the government made the same set of arguments in bilateral meetings behind closed doors.⁵⁰⁴ Japan's opposition to the NPT was thus deemed serious and genuine by the

⁵⁰² For more details, see "Memorandum of Conversation, Ushiba and Katzenbach, December 2, 1966," POL JAPAN-US, 1/1/66, Box 2383, CF, RG59, National Archives. Also see Kurosaki, 2006, 80-81.

⁵⁰³ See "Memo, Foster to the Members of the Committee of Principles, June 25, 1965," Thompson Committee, Box 11, 1961-1966, Lot Files, RG59, National Archives. Similarly, Foreign Minister Etsusaburō Shiina, in his speech at the UN General Assembly in September 1965, emphasized the following three requirements for any non-proliferation measures to be acceptable to the Japanese government: "(a) the treaty respect security measures necessary to ensure the defense of each signatory member, (b) both nuclear weapons states and non-nuclear weapons states sacrifice themselves in some ways, and (c) the voice of non-nuclear states with sophisticated nuclear capabilities be respected." For more on Shiina's speech, see Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, *Waga Gaiko no Kinkyō, 1966 Nen* [*The Current Status of Our Diplomacy 1966*], Vol. 10, Tokyo: Ministry of Finance Publication Bureau, 1966, 23.

⁵⁰⁴ For example, Japanese Ambassador Ryūji Takeuchi sent an informal but confidential memo to William C. Foster, Director at the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency to request three changes to a proposed NPT draft: (a) that the treaty include no article prohibiting only non-nuclear weapons states from conducting nuclear tests; (b) that the treaty allow signatory countries to convene a meeting, regularly or when necessary, to review all issues related to the treaty's

U.S. government, which noted March 9, 1967, that “Japan's dissatisfaction with the draft [NPT] treaty was surprisingly strong for a country where any debate over nuclear capabilities had been a taboo for long.”⁵⁰⁵

Even after sixty-eight countries signed the NPT on July 1, 1968, Japan continued to express its reservation, arguing that Japanese reactors would be subject to more stringent IAEA inspections while Europeans would only need to meet lax EURATOM conditions.⁵⁰⁶ Tokyo was also considering anti-NPT policy coordination with West Germany. In February 1969, high-level officials at MOFA’s research bureau including Bureau Chief Ryōhei Murata held secret talks with West German foreign service officers. Murata intended to find a way to “pursue more diplomatic freedom from the United States together.”⁵⁰⁷

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Throughout the period of the 1950s and 1960s, Japan maintained small defense budgets as percentage of GDP despite mounting U.S. pressures for substantial rearmament (but only with conventional weapons), while staying reluctant to offer troop deployment and policy alignment – reluctant over nearly all policy issues that were central to the alliance.⁵⁰⁸ Japan was reluctant to

implementation including disarmament efforts by nuclear weapons states; and (c) that after a certain period of time, signatory countries have an opportunity to review their position without excluding the possibility of withdrawal. See Telegram 110302, Department of State to the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, December 29, 1966, Non-Proliferation Treaty Vol. 1, Box 26, National Security Files, LBJ Library. Also see Kurosaki, 2006, 84-85, 90.

⁵⁰⁵ Intelligence Note, Hughes to Rusk, March 9, 1967, Non-Proliferation Treaty Vol. 1, Box 26, National Security Files, LBJ Library.

⁵⁰⁶ Foreign Minister Takeo Miki’s remarks in an August 1968 meeting with U.S. Ambassador U. Alexis Johnson. See “Telegram 11300, U.S. Embassy in Tokyo to Secretary of State, August 21, 1968,” Japan-US, Box 2249, CF, RG59, National Archives.

⁵⁰⁷ Egon Bahr, head of the German Delegation, cited in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, ““Kaku wo Motometa Nihon” Hodo ni Oite Toriagerareta Bunsho Tou ni Kansuru Gaimusho Chosa Hokokusho [Investigation Report on Documents Introduced in the Documentary on “Japan Pursuing Nuclear Weapons],” November 29, 2010, 3, available at http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/kaku_hokoku/pdfs/kaku_hokoku00.pdf.

⁵⁰⁸ By being reluctant to pursue policy alignment with Washington, I do not mean that Japan’s foreign policy mostly diverged from America’s. Over many foreign policy issues involving countries and regions outside East Asia, Japanese foreign policy was on the heels of the U.S. State Department’s decision-making. However, Japan did not

cooperate over what was deemed as the most important elements of U.S. military policy, including relations with the Soviet Union, war operations in the Korean and Vietnam War, and nuclear nonproliferation efforts. This *Cheap-riding* strategy proved less viable in an era of détente with the Soviet Union and China in the 1970s, however. Japan started *Autonomy-seeking* as a result, as will be discussed in the next section.

4. Japan's *Autonomy-seeking* Strategy (From the Late 1960s through the Late 1980s)

In the latter half of the 1960s, Japanese perception of U.S. security commitments started shifting, as security situations were evolving rather quickly. President Richard Nixon declared in July 1969 that each ally of the United States should undertake the responsibility of its own security in general, and that “except for the threat of a major power involving nuclear weapons, the United States is going to encourage and has a right to expect that this problem will be increasingly handled by, and the responsibility for it taken by, the Asian nations themselves.”⁵⁰⁹ In November 1969, the two superpowers launched SALT I talks in Helsinki, Finland, which by 1972 had produced a Soviet-American agreement capping the number of intercontinental and submarine-launched ballistic missiles each side could deploy.⁵¹⁰ President Nixon’s surprise visit to Beijing in July 1971 opened a new era where Communist China no longer posed security threats to the United States.

proactively align its foreign policy involving military issues or other questions that were central to the alliance, such as relations with the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China.

⁵⁰⁹ President Richard Nixon’s statement called “Guam Doctrine,” July 25, 1969.

⁵¹⁰ Gaddis, *The Cold War*, chap. 5.

In 1975 U.S. troops withdrew from Vietnam, no longer needing to launch day-to-day operations from their military bases in Japan.

For Japanese leaders, the Nixon Doctrine and the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam both meant that Japan may no longer be protected from nuclear threats posed by non-major powers such as Communist China.⁵¹¹ Along the same vein, Kubo Takuya, Director-General of the Defense Policy Bureau at the Japanese Defense Agency, wrote in 1971 that the Nixon Doctrine would lead to a substantial withdrawal of U.S. troops from Asia, and he concluded that Japan could no longer rely on the prospect of “automatic U.S. military interventions in contingencies” surrounding Japan.⁵¹²

Under such circumstances, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts that a junior partner should pursue an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, as long as it has sufficient technical capabilities relative to its primary adversary for building an independent deterrent. An *Autonomy-seeking* ally typically aims to improve its intra-alliance bargaining position by beefing up its defense spending, demonstrating its ability to build an independent nuclear deterrent, and refusing policy alignment. This is how Japan behaved from the late 1960s.

(1) Assuming Larger Defense Responsibilities

⁵¹¹ Chihiro Hosoya, ed., *Nichi-Bei Kankei Shiryōshū [Documents on US-Japan Relations]* (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1999), 779–85.

⁵¹² As Director-General of the Defense Policy Bureau at the Japanese Defense Agency, Kubo was the key person in formulating Japanese defense policy. See Takuya Kubo, “Boueiryoku Seibi no Kangaekata (A Point of View regarding Japan's Defense Capabilities),” *World and Japan Database*, University of Tokyo Institute of Oriental Culture, February 20, 1971, available at <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/JPSC/19710220.O1J.html> (retrieved on January 12, 2015).

From 1970 through 1988, Japan's defense budgets as percentage of GDP increased gradually, starting at 0.786% in 1970 and reaching 1.013% in 1988 (see **Figure 3** above). In absolute terms, measured by constant US dollars in 2018, their defense expenditures more than doubled between 1968 and 1987.⁵¹³ As Director-General of the Defense Agency, Yasuhiro Nakasone determined to break through the quasi-legal limitation on defense spending that stipulated expenditures of only 1 percent of GDP.⁵¹⁴ Arguing that the Nixon Doctrine created growing concern over geopolitical changes as U.S. forces were withdrawing from Asia, Nakasone advocated the need for greater self-reliance by Japan, and chanted the slogan of "Jishu Bōei" (autonomous defense).⁵¹⁵ Accordingly, he announced a summary of the fourth defense buildup plan in 1970, which presented a significant expansion of Japan's military capability over time to make it comparable to advanced industrialized countries in Europe such as the U.K. and France. It committed 2.2 times as much budgets as the third buildup plan, with a price tag of 5.2 trillion yen.⁵¹⁶ This radical buildup plan proved abortive due to resistance from within the Liberal Democratic Party, but had it gone forward as conceived, then Japanese defense expenditures would have successfully risen to nearly 2 percent of GDP.

The years between 1976 and 1978 saw a significant change in Japan's attitude about its defense responsibility. A bilateral ministerial meeting called the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee, held on July 8, 1976, decided to establish a Subcommittee for Defense Cooperation, which, two years later, agreed on Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation.⁵¹⁷ For the first

⁵¹³ See SIPRI Military Expenditure Data 1949-2019.

⁵¹⁴ Pyle, *Japan Rising*, 273.

⁵¹⁵ Sheila A. Smith, *Japan Rearmed: The Politics of Military Power*, 1 edition (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2019), 195.

⁵¹⁶ Sotooka, Honda, and Miura, *Nichibei Dōmei Hanseiki (U.S.-Japan Relations in the Last 50 Years)*, 329.

⁵¹⁷ See the text of the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, November 27, 1978, at http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/anpo/19781127.html.

time in the alliance's history, Tokyo, by signing the Guidelines, explicitly acknowledged that it had responsibility for defending itself as well as for responding to contingencies in geographic areas surrounding Japan in 1978. Japan also declared that it would conduct military operations with the United States "in the event of an armed attack against Japan," and, to this end, it would facilitate cooperation between the Self-Defense Forces and the U.S. Forces in such areas as operations, intelligence and logistics."⁵¹⁸ What is most striking in the 1978 Guidelines is the fact that Japan promised such basics of alliance cooperation as late as 27 years into the alliance relationship with the United States.

From 1980 on, moreover, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Forces (JMSDF) was rapidly augmenting its anti-submarine warfare capabilities. It started preparing itself for the role of defending critical sea lines of communication (SLOC) through blockading key chokepoint straits around the Japanese waters.⁵¹⁹ In the early 1980s, the JMSDF also began to engage in anti-Soviet undersea intelligence operations with top-secret vessels called "Ninmukan," which involved much more casualty risks than any of the post- Cold War JMSDF activities overseas.⁵²⁰ The JMSDF participated for the first time in a multilateral RIMPAC military exercise in 1980 alongside the navies of the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and five other nations, which significantly broadened the geographical scope of Japan's security responsibilities.⁵²¹ Although some observers see such JMSDF activities as part of Japanese alliance cooperation with the U.S.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ See Narushige Michishita et al., *Lessons of the Cold War in the Pacific: U.S. Maritime Strategy, Crisis Prevention, and Japan's Role* (Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2016).

⁵²⁰ Records of such intelligence activities have only recently been declassified. For more details, see Asahi Shimbun, 23 September 2004.

⁵²¹ Defense of Japan 1986, Part III, Chapter 3, Section 3.

military, I categorize them as efforts toward Japan's defense buildup because they were primarily about strengthening Japanese capabilities in areas surrounding its own territory.

The upward trend of defense expenditures continued during the tenure of Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone (1982-87), who sought, and partially achieved, a defense buildup with annual increases of 5-7 percent in defense spending. With his belief that intelligence activities provided the basis for national security, Nakasone also invested a significant amount of political capitals in a so-called "Spy Prevention Act," which he submitted to the National Diet in June 1985. Nakasone was also known for his contribution to the reform of Japan's national security decision-making system. In 1986, Nakasone established the Security Council of Japan (SCJ), which replaced the National Defense Council to be a more centralized organ for civilian control under the authority of the prime minister's office.⁵²² These efforts did not bear as much fruits as he hoped for, however. The defense budgets as percentage of GDP barely exceeded 1% in the last year of his tenure as prime minister in 1988 with 1.013%.⁵²³ The Spy Prevention Act was met with vigorous opposition in the Diet. And the SCJ was given only a nominal role in decision-makings.⁵²⁴ The dominant view held that his failure in these reforms is largely attributable to fierce resistance from Japan's powerful bureaucracy, where Yoshida's mercantilist ideology was still popular.⁵²⁵ Nevertheless, Nakasone had a strategy – which I argue is consistent with *Autonomy-seeking* – and laid the foundation for future leaders' efforts for further reforms toward autonomous defense.

⁵²² Mayumi Fukushima and Richard J. Samuels, "Japan's National Security Council: Filling the Whole of Government?," *International Affairs* 94, no. 4 (July 1, 2018): 775–76, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiy032>.

⁵²³ Samuels, *Securing Japan*, 57.

⁵²⁴ For a full account of Japanese intelligence and national security reforms during this period, see Richard J. Samuels, *Special Duty: A History of the Japanese Intelligence Community* (Ithaca New York: Cornell University Press, 2019), chap. 3.

⁵²⁵ Pyle, *Japan Rising*, 276.

(2) Pursuing Advanced Nuclear and Other Military Technologies

Not only did Japan start assuming larger defense responsibilities, it also began to put serious efforts into its nuclear research and development to acquire advanced nuclear technologies in the 1970s, when, despite U.S. opposition, Japan built a plutonium-reprocessing plant with French assistance. The U.S. government had refused to permit the transfer of spent fuel reprocessing technology to Japan, with a view to not setting an unfavorable precedent for other U.S. allies that could pose much higher proliferation risks. Tokyo, as a result, turned to France for technical assistance in building a pilot reprocessing plant in Tokai-mura, Ibaraki Prefecture, which was expected to be completed by 1972 and start operation by 1974.⁵²⁶

Toward the mid-1980s, Tokyo's efforts to pursue advanced military capabilities became increasingly relentless. In the early 1980s, Japan's first spent-fuel reprocessing plant in Tōkai-mura finally commenced its stable operations and aroused the U.S. government's concerns once again. At this point, the United States still refused to allow spent fuel from any reactors of U.S. origin to be reprocessed in this newly constructed plant in Japan, on the basis of Japan's alleged inability to effectively prevent the diversion of plutonium from the plant. However, Japan established a *fait accompli* by signing a contract with the French and argued that the French contractor would have to process at least some fuel in Japan to fulfill its contractual obligation. In exchange, Japan promised not to have unencumbered use of its own reprocessing plant.⁵²⁷

⁵²⁶ Justin L. Bloom, "The U.S.-Japan Bilateral Science and Technology Relationship: A Personal Evaluation," *Scientific and Technological Cooperation among Industrialized Countries*, 1984, 89.

⁵²⁷ Bloom, 90.

It was also in the 1980s that Japan started conducting its full-scale research toward indigenous production of enriched uranium.⁵²⁸ The United States was in no position to offer uranium enrichment technologies to Japan since it was classified and not available under the agreement for bilateral cooperation. Tokyo, however, proceeded to develop indigenous uranium enrichment capabilities without foreign assistance, and subsequently acquired research reactors and critical assemblies powered by uranium enriched to 90 or 93 percent.⁵²⁹ Their practical application came in the late 1970s, when Japan's two largest owners of HEU-fueled facilities, Kyoto University and the Japan Atomic Energy Agency, began to work with the GOJ-led Reduced Enrichment for Research and Test Reactors (RERTR) program.

(3) Continued Reluctance in Troop Contributions and Policy Alignment

In contrast to changes in Japan's defense capabilities, little development occurred in the domain of alliance coordination after 1970. Tokyo continued to be reluctant in troop contributions and policy alignment with the United States over some of the most important alliance coordination issues, as is consistent with an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy.

For one, Japan delayed its signing and ratification for the NPT, one of the highest priority foreign policies of the United States. When Japan signed the NPT in February 1970, it was not about responding to U.S. pressures. Japanese senior diplomats believed that if not signing before the NPT entered into effect, this would put Japan in the same group of countries with what they regarded as rogue states such as India, Pakistan, and Israel. They thus argued that postponing the

⁵²⁸ See the website of the Nihon Gen-nen or the Japan Nuclear Fuel at <https://www.jnfl.co.jp/recruit/business/uran.html>.

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

signing would arouse international suspicion of their nuclear ambition.⁵³⁰ There is also evidence that the United States avoided pressuring Japan. President Nixon, in a summit meeting with Prime Minister Satō in November 1969, stated that “I wouldn't press Japan to sign the treaty. This is an issue to be decided by Japan itself.”⁵³¹ Furthermore, in another meeting with Prime Minister Satō more than two years later, President Nixon rather suggested Japan should delay its ratification to “cause its neighbors some concern” and “not say specifically what it would not do.”⁵³²

In signing the NPT in 1970, Tokyo assumed that the NPT regime could “disintegrate long before completing its term of validity of 25 years.”⁵³³ According to recently declassified MOFA documents, some Japanese diplomats argued that the NPT's collapse was likely for two reasons: first, the NPT's success hinged on sustained U.S.-Soviet cooperation, which was questionable in their view; second, the NPT would be unable to prevent nuclear proliferation anyway, because “a number of nonaligned nations like India would find it a necessity to develop nuclear weapons to ensure their own security independently.”⁵³⁴ Signing the NPT, on the other hand, would allow Japan to make a good cooperative gesture to the international community, while biding its time for a potential nuclear breakout, if it decided to do so, through further accumulating technological capabilities. The Japanese government eventually signed the treaty in 1970, but emphasized that

⁵³⁰ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, “Kakuheiki Fukakusan Jōyaku no Chōin Jiki ni Tsuite [When to Sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty], January 19, 1970, Diplomatic Archive of Japan, 2002-861.

⁵³¹ See “Memorandum of Conversation, Satō and Nixon, November 21, 1969,” JAPAN, Box 2245, RG59, National Archives.

⁵³² Meeting with Eisaku Satō, Japanese Prime Minister, 7 January 1972, Japan and the United States: Diplomatic, Security and Economic Relations, 1960–1976, Digital National Security Archive, Accession Number: JU01500.

⁵³³ Remarks by Atsuhiko Yatabe, Director of Science Affairs, who led a series of internal discussions in MOFA regarding the NPT in November 1969. See the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, “Dai 480 Kai Gaikō Seisaku Kikaku Iinkai Kiroku [Minutes, the 480th Foreign Policy Planning Committee Meeting],” November 20, 1969, 8.

⁵³⁴ Ibid.

it had “the right to withdraw from the Treaty if it decides that extraordinary events (...) have jeopardized the supreme interests of its country.”⁵³⁵

Six years passed before Japan finally ratified the NPT in 1976, and the delay was primarily due to strong opposition to the NPT regime from leading politicians both in the ruling and opposition parties of Japan, who insisted on keeping advanced reprocessing capabilities.⁵³⁶ Currently available evidence does not shed lights on how the government and the Diet deliberated and proceeded to the ratification. But NPT proponents apparently rushed to vote when they expected the least resistance from hard-liner opponents such as Yasuhiro Nakasone and Minoru Genda (Upper House member and former Chief of Staff), who were suspected of their involvement in the Lockheed scandals and thus unable to make their voice heard effectively. The Lockheed Incident threw the Diet into total dysfunction between February and April 1976, and led to the arrest of several key policymakers including former prime minister Kakuei Tanaka. Right after the Diet resumed its normal sessions in the late April of 1976, it approved the NPT ratification without substantial deliberation.⁵³⁷

Japan also remained uncooperative, sending no “boots on the ground” for any of U.S. military interventions in the 1970s and the 1980s. In 1980, U.S. Army and Air Force units arrived in the Sinai and stayed there for four months to help the Egyptian Armed Forces implement the Camp David peace accords. Two years later, President Reagan deployed military personnel and equipment to participate in the Multinational Forces in the Sinai Peninsula and in Lebanon. In

⁵³⁵ Government of Japan, “Kakuheiki Fukakusan Jouyaku Shomei no Sai no Nihonkoku Seifu Seimei [the Japanese government’s statement on the occasion of Japan’s signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty],” February 3, 1970.

⁵³⁶ Don Oberdorfer, *Senator Mansfield: The Extraordinary Life of a Great American Statesman and Diplomat*, First Edition (Washington, D.C: Smithsonian Books, 2003), 464.

⁵³⁷ Some anecdotal evidence suggests that the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Shigesaburo Maeno, “was determined to achieve the NPT ratification during his tenure as Speaker.... because the Emperor had strong wishes for the ratification.” See Nikkei Shimbun, 18 December 2011.

1987-88, U.S. military forces were escorting Kuwaiti oil tankers through the Persian Gulf to protect them from Iraqi and Iranian attacks. And from 1989 through 1990, the United States conducted the Operation Just Cause to invade Panama and capture General Manuel Noriega. None of these U.S.-led military operations led the Japanese government to even consider helping the United States in one way or another. Even calling its relationship with the United States an “alliance” can be a political suicide at the time. The term “alliance” was openly rejected in May 1981 by Prime Minister Suzuki Zenkō, who fired his foreign minister, Itō Masayoshi, for using the term.⁵³⁸

5. Alternative Explanations and Conclusion

Throughout the Cold War period, Japan’s behavior vis-à-vis the United States was consistent with predictions by the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. Japan was *Cheap-riding* on U.S. security protection when it perceived strong U.S. security commitments, despite heightened security threats from the Soviet Union and Communist China. Tokyo had small and declining defense budgets as percentage of GDP and deliberately remained incapable of defending itself on its own against the Soviet Union. It also avoided troop deployment and policy alignment over U.S. military interventions including the Korean War and the Vietnam War. It pursued an “independent” policy on other key alliance issues such as dealing with Moscow, and did normalize diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, despite Washington’s fierce opposition.

⁵³⁸ See Samuels 2007, 44.

A series of events at the turn of the 1970s, including the Nixon Doctrine in particular, undermined the Japanese perception of U.S. security commitments, prompting Tokyo to change its alliance strategy to *Autonomy-seeking*. Tokyo started assuming larger defense responsibilities and initiated a radical defense buildup plan in 1970, even though it was aware that the intensity of security threats it faced decreased overall. Anticipating the need for autonomous defense in the near future, Japanese leaders attempted to accumulate “basic defense capabilities” (Kibanteki Bōeiriyoku) and decidedly resisted American efforts to put restrictions on Tokyo’s pursuit of advanced military technologies including nuclear reprocessing and uranium enrichment capabilities.

The way its behavior varied across the four decades of the Cold War period is thus the opposite of what the security threat explanation predicts: limited defense buildup under heightened security threats in the 1950s and 1960s, while more defense expenditures and capabilities during the *détente* period. This suggests that Japan’s perception of American security commitments is a much superior prediction of the junior partner alliance behavior than its security threats.

As a junior partner of the asymmetric alliance, Tokyo knew its value as an alliance partner went up when Washington was fighting a war with day-to-day operations launched from the military bases on the Japanese territory. High-threat environments made it harder for a senior partner to credibly threaten to abandon its junior ally, creating some room for maneuver for the junior partner’s *cheap-riding*. Japan’s insistence on acquiring reprocessing and enrichment technologies after 1970 does not necessarily mean that Japanese leaders intended to build an independent nuclear deterrent and put an end to the alliance relationship anytime soon. They were employing an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy to improve their intra-alliance bargaining position. By demonstrating Japan’s technological prowess, Tokyo hoped to gain its leverage over Washington.

That is, when faced with the Japanese people's latent technological capabilities to ensure their security on their own if they decided to do so, Washington would become more willing to offer stronger U.S. security guarantee. If Japan was ever to get out of the alliance due to a U.S. failure to provide security, this would be a loss to the United States of many of its special relations it enjoyed since 1945, not to mention its negative ramifications over other U.S.-led asymmetric alliances.

Director-General of the Defense Policy Bureau at the Japanese Defense Agency, Takuya Kubo, offered this line of arguments in a policy memo in February 1971, which some call a prototype of "nuclear hedging." Kubo argued that "when Japan has acquired enough capabilities for the peaceful use of atomic energy to be able to develop substantial nuclear forces at any time (as Japan already has in fact), the United States, for fear of destabilized international relations provoked by nuclear proliferation, will desire to maintain the U.S.-Japan security treaty with reassured extended deterrence."⁵³⁹ Indeed, Washington was willing to give in to Tokyo's demands to a considerable extent when it believed that a U.S. concession would help solidify its basing rights prerogatives. Henry A. Kissinger once made this point, when asked why he acquiesced to accommodate Japanese demands for the reversion of Okinawa in the early 1970s, even though the United States counted on its airfields as a staging area for Vietnam and as an emergency facility for B-52S. Kissinger responded, "our refusal to negotiate an accommodation could well lead as a practical matter to our losing the bases altogether."⁵⁴⁰

⁵³⁹ Takuya Kubo, "Boueiryoku Seibi no Kangaekata (A Point of View regarding Japan's Defense Capabilities)," *World and Japan Database*, University of Tokyo Institute of Oriental Culture, February 20, 1971, available at <http://www.ioc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~worldjpn/documents/texts/JPSC/19710220.O1J.html> (retrieved on January 12, 2015).

⁵⁴⁰ Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years*, Reprint edition (Simon & Schuster, 2011), chap. IX (Location 6885 of 34376).

Chapter VII: The France-Israel Alliance (1956-67)

1. Introduction

This chapter examines Israel's behavior vis-à-vis France in the French-Israel alliance (1956-67), which was a case of asymmetrical alliances between a great power, France, and a regional major power, Israel. While there was no official security treaty between the two partners, a security alliance was formed when France explicitly committed to provide operational military assistance to protect Israel against Egypt in 1956. On September 20, 1956, Israeli Prime Minister Ben Gurion informed his colleagues at the Mapai Central Committee that Israel would soon have a "true ally."⁵⁴¹ And ten days later, French and Israeli ministers and staff officers started discussions on a possible joint military campaign against Egypt. On October 24, France and Israel reached an agreement, in which France promised to provide Israel with air defense and warships during the joint military campaign to be conducted in later October.⁵⁴² Three French air squadrons

⁵⁴¹ Jerusalem Post, 24 & 30 September 1956; Henri Azeau, *Le piège de suez* (Robert Laffont, 1964), 216. Also see Randolph S. Churchill, *The Rise and Fall of Sir Anthony Eden*, 1st Edition edition (MacGibbon & Kee, 1959), 264–65.

⁵⁴² Israeli Chief of Staff's Bureau Diary, 24 October 1956, "Final Session with the British and the French at Sèvres," cited in Mott Golani, *Israel in Search of War: The Sinai Campaign 1955-1956* (Brighton ; Portland, Or: Sussex Academic Press, 1998), 134. Also see Simon Peres, *David's Sling: The Arming of Israel* (Willmer Brothers Limited,

were stationed at Israeli air bases and provided direct air support to Israeli ground troops, flew interdiction missions, served for transport, attacked targets in Egypt proper, and supplied intelligence. The French also provided naval support, albeit fraught with mishaps and misunderstandings within the French forces.⁵⁴³

The French offer of military assistance was not limited to the context of the 1956 Suez campaign. After the Suez crisis, the Israeli and French General Staffs maintained close relations, and joint meetings of the intelligence wings were held every six months, with the location alternating between the two countries.⁵⁴⁴ Israeli officers continued to visit French military academies, and teams from special Israeli units underwent training and course with their French counterparts. While the French never offered the written statement of security guarantee Israel had requested, they never disputed the principle that if Israel were attacked, France would spontaneously come to its aid, and such assurances were regularly offered by French politicians to their Israeli counterparts.⁵⁴⁵ The Israelis initially perceived strong French commitments to protecting them against hostile Arab states. Simon Peres, Israel's defense minister, wrote that "also of importance was France's genuine concern for the welfare of Israel. The French Government was deeply disturbed by the grave imbalance of arms between Israel and Egypt, and by the scale of Russian supplies of weapons and planes, particularly bombers, to Egypt which could inflict such destruction on Israel's population."⁵⁴⁶

1970), 192–205. Sylvia K. Crosbie, *A Tacit Alliance: France and Israel from Suez to the Six Day War*, Reprint edition (Place of publication not identified: Princeton University Press, 2015), 71.

⁵⁴³ Golani, *Israel in Search of War*, 153–54.

⁵⁴⁴ See Archives du Ministère de la Defense-Archives Armée de Terre, 10T, file 818, cited in Avner Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 39.

⁵⁴⁵ Archives d'Histoire Contemporaine, Couve de Murville, file 9, June 6, 1961. See also Uzi Narkis, *Hayal shel Yerushalaim* (Tel Aviv: Misrad Habitahon), 1991, 242, 252; Also see Cohen, 39.

⁵⁴⁶ Peres, *David's Sling: The Arming of Israel*, 195.

Israel is coded as a state having a revisionist foreign policy, as it had been implementing a policy of reprisals since its establishment in 1949, regularly conducting military raids into the territory of the Arab states that denied the very existence of Israel and harbored infiltrators. Reprisal operations ranged from minor attacks by a dozen soldiers to brigade-size assaults, and included air strikes, heliborne commando raids, and conventional ground attacks.⁵⁴⁷ The policy of conducting such military operations against its neighboring states should be coded as a revisionist foreign policy, since it was the dominant component of Israel's foreign and defense policy in the early 1950s. Prime Minister David Ben Gurion declared a hard-line policy against infiltrators, justifying harsh steps including conquest and occupation of territories on the West Bank, without which, he argued, violent infiltrations and acts of murder penetrated from the Jordanian border would not cease.⁵⁴⁸

Consistent with the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, Israel's perception of strong French commitments along with its revisionist foreign policy led Israel to adopt a *Favor-currying* strategy for the first two years of the alliance relationship. The *Favor-currying* strategy is aimed at submitting to a senior alliance partner through proactive policy alignment and troop contributions, hoping to compel additional military assistance as *quid pro quo* for being a "good" faithful junior partner. Israel conducted the fall 1956 Suez joint operations upon a French request, purchased a massive number of weapons nearly exclusively from Paris, and aligned itself with Paris over major foreign policy issues.

⁵⁴⁷ Barry M. Blechman, "The Impact of Israel's Reprisals on Behavior of the Bordering Arab Nations Directed at Israel," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 16, no. 2 (June 1972): 155.

⁵⁴⁸ Eyal Kafkavi, Pinhas Lavon – Anti-Messiah (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1998) 160-62, cited in Ze'ev Drory, *Israel's Reprisal Policy, 1953-1956*, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 2005), 107.

After Charles de Gaulle came to power in May 1958 and attempted to modify French foreign policy with a view to improving France's international position in the Middle East, however, Israel began to shift to an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy – a strategy designed to increase its intra-alliance bargaining position by demonstrating its ability to build an independent nuclear or conventional deterrent and distancing itself from the senior partner. Israel ceased to actively seek security guarantee from France and to align itself, and in June 1958, David Ben Gurion gave Israel's nuclear research program an explicit military goal of producing weapons systems by placing it under a military authority named RAFAEL. Between 1958 and 1960, Israel began its efforts to diversify the markets from which it imported advanced weapons to include Germany, Britain, and the United States, and it also simultaneously took measures to develop its indigenous defense production capabilities.

As in the other case studies, I test the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy against two powerful alternative explanations: security threats and ideological solidarity. The security threat explanation predicts that the greater security threats a state faces, the more likely it is to improve its defense capabilities and stay tightly aligned with its alliance partner – and this is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy which involves continued defense buildup and close coordination.⁵⁴⁹ Conversely, the lower security threats it faces, the more likely it is to be reluctant to coordinate with the partner but still be willing to keep building its own military arsenal given its weaker position vis-à-vis the partner – and this is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, which involves continued defense buildup and a decline in coordination efforts.

As we shall see below, the security threat explanation does not predict Israel's behavior toward France very well. When Israel continued to face heightened security threats from the Arab

⁵⁴⁹ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 32.

states in the late 1950s, Israel should stay aligned with its senior partner. But Israel, instead, distanced itself from France and opted to challenge French foreign policy, ignoring French pressures on Israel to reverse its reprisal policy. It also sought an alternative security provider in Washington, at a time when France and the United States had difficult relations due to nuclear and other issues.

The hypothesis of ideological similarity predicts that the more similar the leaders' ideologies are, the more likely they are to pursue closer policy coordination while continuing their defense buildup to improve capabilities to help one another— which is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy.⁵⁵⁰ Conversely, the more distant their ideologies are, the more likely they are to not actively pursue policy coordination but still improve capabilities to defend themselves because their ideologically-distant partners are not reliable – which is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. Given the very close ideological solidarity between France and Israel, this ideology hypothesis also has difficulties explaining Israel's distancing itself from France after 1958, when Charles de Gaulle came to power to overhaul the French approach to the Arab world.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into four sections. The second, following section will provide the background of the French-Israel alliance, clarifying values the case takes on the independent variables and predicting its values on the dependent variable of the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. The third section examines the degree of empirical support for the *Favor-currying* strategy – predicted by the Theory when a junior partner harboring a revisionist foreign policy perceived strong security commitments from its senior partner. The fourth section presents empirical evidence for the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy – the predicted strategy when the senior partner's security commitments became weak in the eyes of a junior partner. The fifth, final

⁵⁵⁰ Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 183–84.

section will conclude by comparing the performance of the theory with the two above-mentioned alternative explanations.

2. Background

(1) The formation of the alliance

Between 1956 and 1967, France and Israel were allies, with their military alliance formed during their planning for a Suez campaign in October 1956. Upon a French request, Israel successfully launched a pre-emptive strike against Egypt in 1956. France offered a large quantity of weapons, including its state-of-the-art fighter planes, which effectively shifted the balance of power in the Middle East in Israel's favor. In addition, Israel received a French-built nuclear reactor near Dimona and critical nuclear weapons technologies.

Such close military cooperation was hardly expected in the early 1950s due to their divergent geostrategic interests, however. Despite its victory in a 1948 War of Independence, Israel was facing existential security threats from neighboring Arab states, which refused to recognize the Jewish state's right to exist. In seeking military assistance from a great power, Israel naturally turned to the United States, the first country to recognize it as a state. France, on the other hand, focused most of its diplomatic efforts on maintaining its status in Northern Africa and viewed

Syria, one of Israel's primary adversaries, as a promising channel for keeping its influence in the region. As a result, France's pro-Syrian policy demanded coldness towards Israel.⁵⁵¹

Starting in 1954, however, Israel's desperate need for advanced weapons and France's political isolation in the Middle East rapidly brought the two countries closer. Despite its early recognition of Israel as a state, the Eisenhower administration all but rejected Israel's arms requests in 1953.⁵⁵² In the eyes of Simon Peres, then Director-General of the Israeli Defense Ministry and the architect of the alliance with France, the American utter rejection was largely due to Secretary of State John Foster Dulles's outward hostility toward Jews.⁵⁵³ But from the perspective of the Eisenhower administration, the local balance of power was *de facto* Israeli preponderance, given the purported efficiency of Israeli forces and shorted lines of communication.⁵⁵⁴ In fact, the Arab states' numerical superiority of arms – a combined total of 216 medium tanks vs. Israel's 122 – matters only if Arab leaders were able to stay monolithic.

Unsuccessful in their quest for American military assistance and security guarantee, Israeli leaders looked to France as the most logical alternative security provider. In the mid-1950s, they had a sense of urgency as they were now menaced with Soviet arms both in the north and in the south due to Nasser's September 1955 public announcement of an arms deal with the Czechs as well as the signing of a military alliance between Egypt and Syria on October 19, 1955. It was thus urgent for Israel to find a great power arms supplier and security partner at all costs to sufficiently modernize its army before the next round of conflict with the Arab states. But finding a great power

⁵⁵¹ Gadi Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 1 edition (S.l.: Routledge, 2018), 22.

⁵⁵² For an analysis of the Eisenhower administration's policy toward Israel, see Isaac Alteras, *Eisenhower and Israel: U.S.-Israel Relations, 1953-1960*, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1993.

⁵⁵³ Peres, "Lecture to Senior Defense Ministry Officials," 4 June 1956, File #37, Batch #101042, 1965, Israeli Defense Forces Archives, cited in Guy Ziv, "Shimon Peres and the French-Israeli Alliance, 1954-9," *Journal of Contemporary History* 45, no. 2 (April 2010): 412.

⁵⁵⁴ Zach Levey, "Israel's Quest for a Security Guarantee from the United States, 1954-1956," *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 22, no. 1-2 (January 1995): 46-47.

security partner was a daunting challenge, partly due to the Tripartite Declaration of 25 May 1950, whereby the United States, Britain, and France committed themselves to maintain an arms balance in the Middle East.⁵⁵⁵ What drove France to assist Israel despite this Tripartite Declaration?

In 1954, the turn of events led France to see their strategic interests greatly overlap with Israel's, primarily because Egypt, Jerusalem's major enemy, appeared to challenge French colonial interests in Africa. After an Algerian struggle for independence erupted in violence in November 1954, France began to see Egypt as a serious source of security threat to its interests in Algeria as Nasser was assisting Algerian rebel groups. French influence in Northern Africa was already on the decline – a trend accelerated by the February 1954 ouster of the pro-French military dictator, Colonel Adib al-Shishakli, which caused Syria's drift to the left. But Algeria was of special importance to both French public opinions and political elite circles on the entire political spectrum except for the extreme left. In their eyes, Algeria constituted an integral part of the French Fourth Republic, and Egypt appeared to be challenging it by providing aid to the most radical faction of the Algerian Liberation Front (FLN). Nasser even went as far as to encourage FLN leaders such as Ahmed Ben Bella not to compromise with the French.⁵⁵⁶

There were multiple reasons why France began to see Israel as a natural security partner in addition to facing Egypt as their shared enemy. Israeli intelligence services supplied the French with convincing proof with regard to Nasser's assistance with the Algerian rebellion and its financing – often through illicit counterfeiting operations involving Egyptian arms suppliers.⁵⁵⁷ France and Israel both feared an Arab alliance under the patronage of Britain or the United States,

⁵⁵⁵ From Israel's perspective, this Tripartite Declaration undermined the balance of power in the region, because Arab countries continued to receive arms promised through previous commitments or understandings while Israel had no such treaty. See Ziv, "Shimon Peres and the French-Israeli Alliance, 1954–9," 408–9.

⁵⁵⁶ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 43.

⁵⁵⁷ Crosbie, *A Tacit Alliance*, 58.

which would further undermine French political influence in the region – given that Arab states generally identified with the Algerian revolutionaries – and tip the regional balance of power in favor of Arab states. This concern grew fast as the Baghdad Pact consolidated in the second half of 1954 – an alliance including Britain, Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Pakistan. France especially feared the Iraqi involvement in this alliance, because it increased the likelihood that Syria would also join later and create “Greater Syria” along with Iraq under British patronage – potential development that would likely obliterate French influence in Syria.⁵⁵⁸

Given such geopolitical developments, the French saw aid to Israel as a useful means to combat the Algerian revolutionaries. First of all, the sale of large amounts of weapons to Israel, in which France was competing with Britain, would generate new sources of funds to finance the war in Algeria.⁵⁵⁹ Second, Israel was in a constant state of war and could easily implement military operations in Algeria and beyond in the region. And the Israeli intelligence, with its excellent sources cultivated in Arab capitals such as Cairo, offered a good supplement to the French intelligence from Algeria itself.⁵⁶⁰ Aware of great potential in its partnership with Israel, the French were ready to offer everything short of written security commitments.

(2) France’s alliance commitments and their perception by Israel

By the spring of 1956 the French government of Guy Mollet had reached a comprehensive security understanding with Israel. In April 1956, the French government approved the first deal

⁵⁵⁸ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 23.

⁵⁵⁹ « Influence française dans l’armée israélienne et fourniture d’armé, » Ambassadeur P.E. Gilbert au ministre des affaires étrangères, le 11 janvier 1954, Archives diplomatiques françaises, file 218QO/51.

⁵⁶⁰ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 27.

to supply Israel with Mystère planes and started training Israeli officers at its military colleges.⁵⁶¹ The details of that security understanding were formalized in a secret conference in Vermars on 22, June 1956 between the senior military representatives of the two countries.⁵⁶² Its attendees included Israeli Chief of Staff Moche Dayan, the Director-General of the Defense Ministry, Shimon Peres, and the head of the Intelligence Department, Yehoshafat Harkavi as well as their French counterparts – the head of the French intelligence service, the deputy Chief of Staff, General Maurice Challe, and the French Defense Minister’s advisor, Louis Mangin. In the conference, the French side expressed unprecedented willingness to arm Israel with large quantities of the most advanced French weapons. And the two sides discussed joint operations and the exchange of intelligence, although no specific promises were requested from Israel except for weapons sales.⁵⁶³ With a specified timetable for delivery and methods of shipment, the French promised to provide 72 Mystère planes, 200 AMX tanks, large quantities of ammunition, which would amount to \$100 million.⁵⁶⁴ Israel agreed to cooperate with France both in intelligence and covert military operations to help France in its fighting the FNL and Nasser.⁵⁶⁵ In order to avoid an agreement that would require approval from their respective cabinets, the two countries chose an intelligence accord signed only by their chiefs of intelligence.⁵⁶⁶

One month later, Nasser’s nationalization of the Suez Canal, announced on July 26, 1956, led to a significant upgrade of French commitments to Israel. For France, as well as for Britain,

⁵⁶¹ Through arms deals with France in 1955-56, Israel received the following: 30 Ouragans, 60 Mystères IV, 170 Sherman tanks, 175 AMX-13 light tanks, 400 armored vehicles among others. France also supplied Israel, for free, with 120 Sherman tanks and 200 armored vehicles. See Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 49. Also see Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 23.

⁵⁶² Shimon Peres, *Battling for Peace: A Memoir*, 1st edition (New York: Random House, 1995), 120.

⁵⁶³ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 28.

⁵⁶⁴ Peres, *Ibid.* Also see Golani, *Israel in Search of War*, 27.

⁵⁶⁵ Golani, 27.

⁵⁶⁶ For more on the Vermars conference, see Mordechai Bar-On, *Challenge and Conflict: The Road to Operation Kadesh*, Ben Gurion Heritage Institute, Sde Boker, in Hebrew, 1991, 153-159.

the nationalization of the canal was a direct blow to their economic interests, as the French and the British owned the Suez Canal Company, which had been administering this major oil- and trade-route. The French and the British immediately began to prepare plans to take back the Canal by toppling Nasser.⁵⁶⁷ The following day, Bourges-Maunoury briefed Shimon Peres on an evolving plan of what was called an Operation Musketeer, a joint French and British scheme to land troops in the Canal Zone and reassert their rights over the canal by force, possibly involving Israeli troops.⁵⁶⁸

At the Sèvres conference in late October 1956, France and Israel reached an agreement, in which France promised to provide Israel with air defense during their joint operation.⁵⁶⁹ Without French air support, the Israeli Air Force would have been limited in its ability to protect Israel's skies and to cover troops movements at the same time. In addition, France also offered political support to exercise its veto in the Security Council and protect Israel against any Russian threat.⁵⁷⁰ During the Suez campaign, three French air squadrons were stationed at Israeli air bases such as Ramat David in the north and Lod and Kfar Syrkin in the center, in addition to British bases in Cyprus.⁵⁷¹ The French kept their promises, as they provided direct air support to Israeli ground troops, flew interdiction missions, served for transport, attacked targets in Egypt, and supplied intelligence. The French also provided naval support, albeit fraught with mishaps and misunderstandings within the French forces.⁵⁷²

⁵⁶⁷ Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 121.

⁵⁶⁸ Peres, *Ibid*, 122.

⁵⁶⁹ Israeli Chief of Staff's Bureau Diary, 24 October 1956, "Final Session with the British and the French at Sèvres," cited in Golani, *Israel in Search of War*, 134. Also see Moshe Dayan, *Diary of the Sinai Campaign*, 1st edition (Harper & Row, 1966), 30–34.

⁵⁷⁰ See Jerusalem Post, 31 October 1956.

⁵⁷¹ Tzavta Report, Air Force Archives, file no. 15, cited in Golani, *Israel in Search of War*, 152.

⁵⁷² Golani, 153–54.

After the Suez crisis was over, the French continued to offer security to Israel. The French military never disputed the principle that if Israel were attacked, France would spontaneously come to its aid, and such assurances were also regularly offered by French politicians to their Israeli counterparts.⁵⁷³ The Israeli and French militaries stayed very close, with Israeli officers visiting French military academies and undergoing trainings with their French counterparts. The two countries were holding joint meetings of the intelligence wings every six months.⁵⁷⁴

In the spring of 1958, however, the French attitude toward Israel's primary enemy started shifting dramatically. While Israel still viewed Nasser and a newly established United Arab Republic (UAR) as its major security threats, France sought to improve political and economic relations with these Arab states. A harbinger of this policy change was the so-called Renault Affair. Under the pressure of the French Foreign Minister, Couve de Murville, Renault, France's state-owned company and one of the largest vehicle producers in the world, decided not to renew its 1955 contract with an Israeli company, Kaiser-Fraser in March 1958. The reason for Renault's cancellation was because French leaders hoped it would be possible to reach a substantial deal with Egypt in the near future.⁵⁷⁵ As the Algerian War reached stalemate and led to the fall of the Fourth Republic in Paris, France's new strategy vis-à-vis the Arab world was soon confirmed by Charles de Gaulle, who was named a new prime minister in May 1958. De Gaulle authorized this policy of normalizing relations with the Arab world on June 10, 1958 – just a week after his coming to power.⁵⁷⁶ Soon thereafter, French and UAR representatives secretly negotiated in Geneva a

⁵⁷³ Archives d'Histoire Contemporaine, Couve de Murville, file 9, June 6, 1961. See also Uzi Narkis, *Hayal shel Yerushalaim*, Tel Aviv: Misrad Habitahon, 1991, 242, 252; Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 39.

⁵⁷⁴ See Archives du Ministère de la Défense-Archives Armée de Terre, 10T, file 818, cited in Cohen, 39.

⁵⁷⁵ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 61–69. The French government explained that the termination of Renault's contract with Kaiser-Fraser was a business decision in which the French government played no part. Israel accepted this explanation, but Israeli leaders did not believe it. See Heimann, 81.

⁵⁷⁶ Maurice Vaisse, *La Grandeur. Politique étrangère du général de Gaulle* (Paris: CNRS EDITIONS, 2013), 628.

financial and commercial agreement aimed at restoring the pre-Suez relationship between their countries.⁵⁷⁷ In their meeting with their Egyptian counterparts, the French also proposed to reduce cooperation with Israel in return for a reduction of Egyptian support of the Algerian rebels.⁵⁷⁸ In the early 1960s France continued to reestablish its commercial interests in the Arab world, making inroads into countries not traditionally within the French sphere of influence, such as Iraq, Iran, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia in 1962, and with Iraq and the UAR in 1963.⁵⁷⁹

After President de Gaulle was inaugurated, it took a few years for Israel to assess how the change in the French foreign and economic policy toward Arab states would affect French security commitments to Israel. French leaders remained diplomatic and ambivalent with regard to France's readiness to provide for Israel's security needs and even hinted at closer Franco-Israeli collaboration in certain cases such as arms sales and service-to-service relationships between the two militaries. In the summer of 1958, for example, France "loaned" Israel a sizeable quantity of canon shells in return for the promise that in the future France would receive shells manufactured in Israel.⁵⁸⁰ In November 1959, Israel and France signed a cooperation agreement regarding a joint development of short range missiles.⁵⁸¹ And France was still willing to sell Israel its Vautour bombers—the highest standard of bombers at the time.⁵⁸² In the spring of 1960, a total of 30 Super

⁵⁷⁷ CIA, "The French-Israeli Relationship," JFK Library, CASE #NLK 97-89, Document #4, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000271219.pdf.

⁵⁷⁸ Ibid. This strategic shift of Paris toward the Arab world was exemplified by the so-called Renault Affair, in which France's state-owned company, Renault, decided not to renew its 1955 contract with Israel's vehicle assembler Kaiser-Fraser with a view to reaching a substantial deal with Egypt in the near future.

⁵⁷⁹ Crosbie, *A Tacit Alliance*, 25.

⁵⁸⁰ Israel State Archives, Minutes of the meeting of the Knesset's Foreign and Defense Committee, October 21, 1958, cited in Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 38.

⁵⁸¹ Archives du ministère de la défense-Archives Armée de Terre, T10, file 817, Décembre 2, 1959; Also see Heimann, 38.

⁵⁸² Ibid.

Mystère jet aircraft were delivered, and 60 French Mirage-III jet fighters were on the way with a delivery to begin in September 1960 and continue through 1962.⁵⁸³

The arms-sales relationship with Israel was advantageous for France, because Israeli armed forces, which had astonished the world with their stunning victory during the Suez campaign, were an effective advertisement device for the French defense industry. The success of the Dassault Mystère IVs flown by Israel against the advanced Soviet MIG fighters used by Egypt in the Suez war gave France a competitive edge against the United States and Britain.⁵⁸⁴ Israel subsequently continued to modernize its Air Corps with French equipment.⁵⁸⁵ Furthermore, Israeli battlefield experience also enabled the manufacturers to improve their aircraft models: Israel served as a testing ground for the French weapons industry.⁵⁸⁶

In the post-1958 period, the two countries' militaries still maintained close service-to-service cooperation and collaboration. Israeli pilots and submarine crews continued training in France, and French technical military teams and instructors remained in Israel. During the period of 1959-1960, there were frequent and extended visits of key Israeli military officers to France, and Israeli naval units engaged in March 1960 joint antisubmarine warfare exercises with the French.⁵⁸⁷

In early January 1960, bilateral talks culminated in an agreement between the General Staffs of the two militaries in which France reconfirmed its promise to come to aid if Israel was under attack and strengthened it by adding some specifics – within five days of the outbreak of

⁵⁸³ CIA, "The French-Israeli Relationship."

⁵⁸⁴ Stewart Reiser, *The Israeli Arms Industry: Foreign Policy, Arms Transfers, and Military Doctrine of a Small State*, 1st ed. edition (New York: Holmes & Meier Pub, 1989), 41.

⁵⁸⁵ Matti Golan, *Shimon Peres: A Biography* (New York: St Martins Pr, 1982), 98.

⁵⁸⁶ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 36.

⁵⁸⁷ CIA, "The French-Israeli Relationship."

hostilities.⁵⁸⁸ A French Foreign Ministry official conceded that relations in the military field after de Gaulle's ascent to power remained extremely close, and that even the working level at the Foreign Ministry did not know exactly what form of agreement existed between the services of the two countries. Likewise, an Israeli foreign ministry official admitted that military ties with France continued to be such an important aspect of Israelis' thinking that Israeli defense personnel considered all Israeli-French relations basically within their province, which is "a circumstance of some distaste and embarrassment to the foreign minister." Golda Meir was even on the point of resigning in September 1959 over interference in foreign affairs by the Ministry of Defense.⁵⁸⁹

De Gaulle also offered a verbal commitment himself to his Israeli counterpart. During Ben Gurion's state visit to France in 1961, de Gaulle made the unexpected public declaration that Israel was France's ally, by raising his glass in a toast and saying "to Israel, our friend and ally."⁵⁹⁰ When Ben Gurion mentioned an agreement between the French and Israeli General Staffs guaranteeing French aid to Israel in case of an attack on Israel, de Gaulle nodded in agreement, confirming France's commitment to Israel's security.⁵⁹¹

Despite all that French reassurance at the diplomatic level, Israel perceived France's ever weakening commitments brought into stark relief when, to Israel's dismay, France refused to abstain in a vote to extend for five more years the mandate of the UNWRA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees) at the UN Conciliation Commission in December 1959. Haim Yahlil, Director General of the Foreign Ministry of Israel, expressed Israel's

⁵⁸⁸ Archives d'Histoire Contemporaine, Archives Maurice Couve de Murville, file 9, June 6, 1961, cited in Heimann, 39.

⁵⁸⁹ CIA, "The French-Israeli Relationship."

⁵⁹⁰ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 49.

⁵⁹¹ Archives d'Histoire Contemporaine, Archives Maurice Couve de Murville, File 9, June 6, 1961, cited in Heimann, 41. However, when the Quai d'Orsay received the transcript of this conversation, the French Foreign Ministry clarified to the Israelis that "no military agreement exists between France and Israel." See Israel State Archives, Foreign Ministry files, file 935/13, June 23, 1961, cited in Heimann, 41.

disappointment and anger, reminding the French that on many occasions Israel had unreservedly supported France at the expense of its own African interests.⁵⁹²

Prime Minister Ben Gurion at this point saw matters in cold political terms and stated that “Israel did not have France in its pocket and must recognize this.”⁵⁹³ Ben Gurion also stated that Israel should not presume France would always be willing to supply the country with arms, suggesting the Israelis should try to find alternative sources, perhaps Germany. The Prime Minister’s statements may indicate a change in the decision-makers’ thinking regarding the nature of the alliance relationship between the two countries.⁵⁹⁴ The French refusal to abstain at the UN Conciliation Commission was a quintessential expression of France’s desire to draw closer to the Arab world, in particular Egypt. To this end, France distanced itself from Israel, and this trend was spearheaded by Couve de Murville, French foreign minister.⁵⁹⁵ More than once Israeli Foreign Ministry officials voiced the claim that the French foreign ministry was consciously working to make the Nasser regime acceptable to the French public and decision-makers; as such the Quai d’Orsay did not hesitate to conceal information, distort reality and at times even purposefully lie. An especially hostile attitude towards Israel was attributed to Couve de Murville.⁵⁹⁶ The Israelis felt betrayed, perceiving relations between France and Israel to be reaching the brink of political conflict in the final months of 1959. At the beginning of 1960 de Gaulle stated explicitly, if not publicly, that he did not wish for France to bear the burden of helping Israel alone or for France to

⁵⁹² At the UN General Assembly, for example, Israel voted in favor of France conducting nuclear experiments in the Sahara and supported the French on the Algerian issues. See Israel State Archives, Foreign Ministry files, file 211/13, December 6, 1959. Also see Heimann, 82.

⁵⁹³ Ben Gurion’s words, Israel State Archives, Prime Minister’s Office, Stenograms of Government Meetings, December 6, 1959, cited in Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 82.

⁵⁹⁴ Heimann, 83.

⁵⁹⁵ On the French foreign ministry’s desire to move closer to the Arab states, see Israel State Archives, Foreign Ministry files, file 934/8, March 25, 1960; file 936/17, June 1, 1960; file 935/5, March 23, 1961; file 945/6, March 13, 1962. Also see Heimann, 89.

⁵⁹⁶ Heimann, 85.

be perceived as Israel's primary supporter – a remark that led a curtailing of meetings between the two countries' intelligence services.⁵⁹⁷

Ben Gurion's successor as the prime minister of Israel, Levi Eshkol, did not perceive strong security commitments by France either, even though President de Gaulle attempted to reassure his Israeli counterpart in his summit meeting on 29 June 1964. After Eshkol discussed serious security threats posed by countries backed by the Soviet Union, the French president mentioned: "Je ne pense pas actuellement que l'Egypte ait l'intention d'attaquer Israël. Ses déclarations belliqueuses sont sans grandes conséquences pratiques."⁵⁹⁸

In sum, Israel perceived strong French commitments for the first few years of the alliance relationship, and it reassessed French commitments in the final months of 1959.

(3) Israel's Revisionist Policy

In addition to the senior partner's commitments, another important predictor of the junior partner's alliance strategy is whether the junior partner has a revisionist foreign policy – a policy to change the international distribution of power and goods by force. Israel, after its establishment in 1949, had been pursuing a policy of reprisals, conducting military raids into the territory of the Arab states harboring infiltrators. Reprisal operations ranged from minor ones by a dozen or fewer

⁵⁹⁷ Archives d'Histoire Contemporaine, Archives Maurice Couve de Murville, file 09, Mars 2, 1960. Also see Heimann, 86.

⁵⁹⁸ "Entretien du General de Gaulle et de M. Levi Eshkol," 29 juin 1964, IN-6-3, Archives diplomatiques français, file 218QO/106. In the same summit meeting, Eshkol emphasized Israel's defense efforts with 10% of its GDP spent on its military – the number being twice that in France. Toward the end of the meeting, de Gaulle also mentioned that "Si votre pays était attaqué, je tiens a vous affirmer, comme je l'ai déjà fait devant M. BEN GURION et Madame GOLDA MEIR, que nous serions avec vous. Mais franchement, je ne crois pas que cela arrive. C'est trop tard. Le monde a pris l'habitude de votre présence, a admis l'idée que vous existez. Les pays arabes eux-mêmes l'admettent et je ne pense pas que l'on veuille maintenant détruire l'Etat d'Israël."

soldiers to brigade-size assaults, and included artillery salvos, air strikes, and heliborne commando raids, as well as conventional ground attacks.⁵⁹⁹ Such reprisal operations were the dominant component of Israel's foreign and defense policy in the first half of the 1950s. In February 1953, David Ben Gurion declared a hard-line policy against infiltrators. In his opinion the violent infiltration and acts of murder penetrated from the Jordanian border would not cease unless harsh steps were taken, including conquest and occupation of territories on the West Bank.⁶⁰⁰ Reprisal operations that preceded Qibya were deliberately directed against civilians, seeking to harm those Arab villages from which the infiltrators were sent in order to create pressure on the Arab regimes to prevent the infiltration. Moshe Dayan, then the head of the IDF Southern Command and later Israel's defense minister, made this strategy very explicit with the following:

The only method which has proven itself effective, not that it could be justified or ethically condoned, but effective when Arabs lay mines among us... [is that] we disturb the neighboring village tranquility, including the women, children and elderly; [and] then they wake up and complain to the government about the border crossing, and in this way the Egyptian and Jordanian governments are motivated to prevent incidents of this nature... And they must prevent deeds of this sort, that is, they must stop them on the Arab side. The method of collective punishment has up till now demonstrated its effectiveness.⁶⁰¹

⁵⁹⁹ Barry M. Blechman, "The Impact of Israel's Reprisals on Behavior of the Bordering Arab Nations Directed at Israel," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 16, no. 2 (June 1972): 155.

⁶⁰⁰ Eyal Kafkavi, Pinhas Lavon – Anti-Messiah (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1998) 160-62, cited in Drory, *Israel's Reprisal Policy, 1953-1956*, 107.

⁶⁰¹ Dayan's view expressed in 1950. See Tal, *Israel's Concept of Routine Security Measures*, 84, cited in Drory, 114.

The Qibya raid of October 1953 killed 69 civilians, half of whom were women and children.⁶⁰² After the Qibya Operation that provoked harsh international criticisms, the Israeli government ordered the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) to refrain from targeting civilians so the target list started to include military and infrastructural installations of the state sending infiltrators.⁶⁰³ Moshe Sharett, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister during this period, also sought to moderate the Arab-Israeli conflict through diplomatic means, regarding the policy of reprisal as a basic mistake harming the vital interests of the state, particularly its ability to conduct an effective foreign policy in the international arena. But this does not mean that Israel abolished its reprisal policy or its tendency to resort to the use of force to resolve disputes with neighboring states.

The return of Ben Gurion to Sharett's government as Minister of Defense in February 1955 strengthened the standing of Moshe Dayan, then Chief of General Staff and the leading proponent of the reprisal policy as well as that of a 'policy of deterioration,' which dominated Dayan's national security strategy. Dayan believed that the current situation, with the rise of infiltrations, was opportune for bringing about a war against the major enemies of Israel, seizing upon the window of opportunity to conduct a preventive war against Egypt before the Czech arms deal with Egypt and the general arms race in the area chipped away at Israel's military advantages.⁶⁰⁴ As influential as Dayan in promoting the policy of reprisal was Ariel Sharon, a commander of the Paratroop Unit that carried out more than 70 reprisal operations from 1953 through 1956. According to Sharon, the reprisal policy was incubated in his unit.⁶⁰⁵

⁶⁰² Drory, 111 and 181.

⁶⁰³ Zeev Maoz, "Evaluating Israel's Strategy of Low-Intensity Warfare, 1949–2006," *Security Studies* 16, no. 3 (August 24, 2007): 325.

⁶⁰⁴ Drory, *Israel's Reprisal Policy, 1953-1956*, 182.

⁶⁰⁵ Drory, 184. Note that there was a three-year hiatus in Israel's massive reprisal operations between 1956 and 1959. See "Relations franco-israélienne," Direction Generale des Affaires Politiques, Afrique-Levant, Février 4, 1960, Archives diplomatiques français, file 218QO/106.

Certainly, the Israeli government did not seek out a war to expand their territory, but it was revisionist since it attempted to resolve international disputes by resorting to the use of force. The military-security outlook of Moshe Dayan and Ariel Sharon dominated the foreign and defense policy of Israel in the 1950s, while the political leadership, including Moshe Sharett as Prime Minister, Ben Gurion and Pinhas Lavon as Ministers of Defense, did not manage to restrain the military activist positions of prominent army commanders.⁶⁰⁶

A junior partner harboring a revisionist foreign policy should adopt a *Favor-currying* strategy as long as it perceives its senior partner's security commitments to fighting its adversary to be strong. Once the perception changes, the junior partner would then switch to an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. The next two sections will examine the extent of evidence for these two strategies respectively.

3. Israel's *Favor-currying* Strategy

Israel adopted a *Favor-currying* strategy for the first two years of the alliance. It was providing useful resources and offering extraordinary service to its senior partner, as predicted by the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy for a revisionist client. Upon French requests, Israel participated in a military operation to take back the control over the Suez Canal in October and November 1956. With its large military expenditures, it procured weapons primarily from the

⁶⁰⁶ Drory, 184.

senior partner's defense industry. It also proactively conducted intelligence operations to assist French attempts to maintain its colonial control over Algeria.

(1) Israel's contributions to the French during the Suez Crisis in 1956

On July 26, 1956, Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal company, which supplied the excuse for military intervention long sought by the French. The following day, French Prime Minister Guy Mollet suggested to the Israelis that the Egyptian threat to Israel security might be the pretext for military action against Nasser. Mollet sought Israeli collaboration, partly to prevent Britain from uniting the "good Arabs" against France and thereby winning a monopoly of influence in the Middle East. In addition, French military strategists were particularly anxious to secure bases in Israel in order to solve tactical difficulties facing the Anglo-French forces and foreclose the possibility of Nasser's sending troops to aid the rebel forces in Algeria.⁶⁰⁷

Prime Minister Ben Gurion was careful to restrict collaboration with the French to the supply of intelligence information only at least until early August 1956. Certainly, for a year prior to the nationalization of the Suez Canal by Nasser in July 1956, Israel had been looking for a pretext to launch a war against Egypt. But Ben Gurion thought it was premature, arguing "for now we have to restrain ourselves, complete the French arms deal, grow stronger – and then look for the appropriate opportunity to lash out [at Nasser]."⁶⁰⁸ He showed no sign, as yet, of willingness to involve Israel in any political or military Anglo-French move. He would rather provide secret

⁶⁰⁷ Crosbie, *A Tacit Alliance*, 69.

⁶⁰⁸ Ben Gurion's personal diary, 9 August 1956, Ben Gurion Archives, Ben Gurion Heritage Institute, Kibbutz Sde Boker, cited in Golani, *Israel in Search of War*, 65.

intelligence aid to the French and let them and the British do the job – toppling Nasser.⁶⁰⁹ In short, by late August 1956, Israel preferred a wait-and-see posture, committing itself to nothing and trying not to get directly involved in the crisis.

During late August and early September 1956, however, there were increasing indications that France and Britain were determined to move against Nasser by force. In late September 1956, French Defense Minister Bourges-Maunoury invited high-ranking Israeli officials to St. Germain to discuss a joint operation against Egypt.⁶¹⁰ The French attitude towards collaboration with Israel was quite different from what Israel hoped for: the French did not regard the Israelis as equal partners and were unwilling to act simultaneously. In the talks with their Israeli counterparts about a joint operation, French deputy Chief of Staff, General Challe, suggested that Israel would serve as the catalyst for such an operation by initiating an early attack on the Sinai. In other words, the French were interested in having Israel providing a pretext to provoke an Anglo-French war against Egypt.⁶¹¹ The Israeli delegation expressed strong reservations about this plan. Dayan and Peres laid down certain conditions for such an operation: Britain's commitment not to act against Israel in Jordan; informing Washington and receiving their authorization for the operation; France's agreement to territorial changes in the Sinai in Israel's favor.⁶¹² Most importantly, Ben Gurion did not like the idea that Israel would serve as Britain and France's scapegoat and be accused of aggression in order to portray the two European powers in a positive light. The Israeli

⁶⁰⁹ Ben Gurion's personal diary, 5 August 1956, Ben Gurion Archives, Ben Gurion Heritage Institute, Kibbutz Sde Boker, cited in Golani, 65.

⁶¹⁰ Golani, 80.

⁶¹¹ Golani, 86–87.

⁶¹² Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 29.

prime minister insisted that his country should not take any action that would cause world opinion to view the country as an aggressor.⁶¹³

Negotiations continued involving the highest levels of the French and Israeli political and military elite, who met at the Sèvres summit that began on October 22. The French insisted that the Israelis accept the proposed scenario with the Israeli initiating an early attack on the Sinai, as the window of opportunity for the operation was closing. By doing so, Paris attempted to make it more palatable by shortening the period during which Israel would fight alone from 72 hours to 36 hours. Although the three conditions above were not met, Ben Gurion eventually accepted it as he did not want to slam the door on the French. Despite his reservations, Ben Gurion perceived this joint operation to be in Israel's greatest interest since it would not only deepen the nascent alliance with France but also ensure an organized supply of weapons in the necessary quantities and of the appropriate quality needed to ensure his state's security.

The Israel's extraordinary alliance decision was at least partly influenced by the announcement that Jordan would join the Joint Egypt-Syria Military Command to unify the fronts of all three states and coordinate military plans.⁶¹⁴ No condition was attached to this acquiescence by Israel. However, it is possible that Israel acquiesced in exchange for a French promise over nuclear assistance, as the nuclear issue was discussed briefly at the end of the Sèvres conference. France decided to construct a nuclear reactor on behalf of Israel without any conditions attached, except that the use by Israel of plutonium, which France would provide by reprocessing spent fuel from the reactor, would be subject to bilateral agreements between France and Israel.⁶¹⁵ Shimon

⁶¹³ For a detailed description of Israeli-France deliberations before the Suez campaign, see Frederique Schillo, *La Politique Française à l'égard d'Israel 1948-1959* (Paris: ANDRE VERSAILLE, 2012), 696–733.

⁶¹⁴ Peres, *David's Sling: The Arming of Israel*, 170.

⁶¹⁵ "Accord Franco-Israelien," 25 October 1956, IS-6-1, Archives Diplomatiques Français, file 218QO/50.

Peres also described the moment when the two countries reached an agreement over the construction of a nuclear reactor as follows: “Before the final signing, I asked Ben Gurion for a brief adjournment, during which I met Mollet and Bourges-Maunoury alone. It was here that I finalized with the two leaders an agreement for the building of a nuclear reactor at Dimona in southern Israel, and the supply of natural uranium to fuel it.”⁶¹⁶

It was not that the nuclear reactor in Dimona was the price France paid for, or a condition attached to, Israel’s involvement in the Suez joint operation. Perhaps the nuclear issue was an important element implicit in the Israeli calculation for cooperation with the French. But it was not raised during the substantive negotiations about the Israeli role in the Suez campaign. It was only after the understandings of the Sèvres conference were reached that Peres briefly mentioned the reactor deal, which had already been concluded at the technical level, and thanked his French counterparts.⁶¹⁷

(2) Israel’s Procurement of French Weapons in the period of 1956-1958

Consistent with observable implications of a country pursuing a *Favor-currying* strategy, Israel was enthusiastically purchasing weapons from its senior partner, France, instead of focusing on developing its own indigenous defense industrial capabilities. In the period of 1956-1958, Israel’s defense expenditures as percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rapidly increased from 2.5% (1955) to 4.6% (1956) to 5.9% (1957) to 5.9% (1958).⁶¹⁸ Israel heavily depended on

⁶¹⁶ Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 130.

⁶¹⁷ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 54.

⁶¹⁸ SIPRI Yearbook 1973, 241.

France for weapons supply, as France provided 69 to 80% of Israel's overseas arms (68.9% in 1956, 79.7% in 1957, and 80.4% in 1958).⁶¹⁹

As such, Israel at the time did not focus on developing an indigenous arms industry. The successes of the 1956 Sinai Campaign led Israeli leaders to put a priority on the acquisition of tanks and aircraft that would enable a rapid victory based on mobility, armored assault, and air superiority. However, financial constraints limited the IDF's ability to procure new equipment, despite the rapid increase in defense expenditures. Tanks and aircraft were beyond the capability of Israel's budding arms industry, which was focused on providing spare parts and modifying obsolescent equipment acquired from a variety of sources.⁶²⁰

(3) Israel's policy alignment after the Suez Campaign

Israel was also proactively aligning itself with France on major military and diplomatic issues surrounding their alliance relationship even after the Suez campaign. Israel helped France in Algeria, another major theater for French military operations in the late 1950s. As part of their collaboration among military professionals, Israel was sending missions to Algeria, where the Israeli personnel helped the French in fighting the guerrillas through the use of helicopters.⁶²¹ The intelligence services of the two countries were cooperating closely in Algeria and beyond in Africa, where Israeli contacts were utilized by the French.⁶²² French officers were learning new techniques

⁶¹⁹ The total trend-indicator value (TIV) of arms imports by Israel, SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, published on 9 March 2020.

⁶²⁰ Aaron S. Klieman, *Israel's Global Reach: Arms Sales As Diplomacy* (Washington: Potomac Books Inc, 1985), 17.

⁶²¹ Crosbie, *A Tacit Alliance*, 107.

⁶²² Crosbie, 105.

of psychological warfare in Algeria.⁶²³ By providing intelligence the Israelis deliberately fanned French fears of Nasser's involvement in Algeria and stressed his ambitions elsewhere in the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa in order to increase French willingness to assist Israel.⁶²⁴

The two countries also supported each other on the political front, albeit to a lesser degree. At the UN General Assembly, for example, Israel voted in favor of France conducting nuclear experiments in the Sahara and supported the French on the Algerian issues – the vital issues that concerned Paris most.⁶²⁵ Israel accepted the French contention that it was a domestic issue. Furthermore, Israel chose to align itself with France with regard to its reconciliation with West Germany. In 1957, Jean Monnet had privately suggested to Shimon Peres that he contact the Germans. Peres then convinced Ben Gurion that “if it is imperative that we should develop our relations with France – and this no one doubts in Israel, except the Communists—we must develop our relations with France's friends: with Italy, in so far as it depends on us, and no less, with Germany.”⁶²⁶

In dealing with the Arab world Israel was guided by an understanding that it was to avoid conflict with Syria and Lebanon, as this might prejudice French attempts to reestablish influence there.⁶²⁷ France adopted a moderate approach in discussions of border incidents involving Israel, while Israel offered repayment by supporting French interests in northern Africa and promoting the status of the French language in the UN. The two also shared an interest in opposing the Baghdad Pact.⁶²⁸ However, the Israeli position on Baghdad Pact was more ambivalent due to the

⁶²³ Crosbie, 107.

⁶²⁴ Crosbie, 58.

⁶²⁵ See Israel State Archives, Foreign Ministry files, file 211/13, December 6, 1959. Also see Heimann, 82.

⁶²⁶ Ben Gurion, David, “Israel's Security and Her International Position. Before and After the Sinai Campaign,” State of Israel Government Yearbook 5720 (1959/1960), 81, cited in Crosbie, *A Tacit Alliance*, 101.

⁶²⁷ Crosbie, 102.

⁶²⁸ Schillo, *La Politique Française à l'égard d'Israel 1948-1959*, 572–76.

country's desire to avoid angering the US and Britain, as well as internal disagreement within the Israeli Foreign Ministry concerning the advantages and disadvantages of this treaty. Only in 1956 did Israel accept the French position and explicitly declare its opposition to the Baghdad Pact.⁶²⁹

Israel's ostensible efforts to be a good alliance partner of France did not last long, however. It gradually came to the realization sometime in the period of May 1958 – December 1959 that France was normalizing relations with Arab states for commercial and cultural interests at the expense of Israel's security. This prompted a change in Israel's alliance strategy, as will be discussed in the next section.

4. Israel's *Autonomy-seeking Strategy*

After the spring of 1958, French views of Egypt gradually shifted as the Algerian War reached stalemate in the late 1950s. Paris sought to achieve other objectives, such as the renewal of political and economic relations with Arab states, and Egypt in particular, and the dissemination of French culture in these countries.⁶³⁰ As the Algerian War reached stalemate and led to the fall of the Fourth Republic in Paris, France's new strategy vis-à-vis the Arab states was soon confirmed by Charles de Gaulle, who was named a new prime minister in May 1958.

In response to the increasingly clear indication that its senior partner was no longer committed to fighting Egypt and the UAR by force, Israel's alliance strategy shifted, as predicted by the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. Having concluded that France would no longer

⁶²⁹ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 26.

⁶³⁰ Heimann, 73.

give a security guarantee, Ben Gurion gave up obtaining such a guarantee from an external power.⁶³¹ He was concerned about a surprise attack by an Arab coalition, starting with aerial bombardment of Israeli cities. A security guarantee from a Western power might be irrelevant because of the time it would take to rush aid to Israel.⁶³² In his meeting with de Gaulle in June 1960, Ben Gurion responded to de Gaulle's offer of security commitments to Israel by elaborating his concerns about Israel's vulnerability to an Arab surprise attack. He argued that if Egypt launched a surprise attack, Israel would suffer catastrophically – even if outside help were extended to Israel. “If Nasser should break Israel's air force, the war would be over in two days” and any American or French military assistance would come too late, argued Ben Gurion in his meeting with American Ambassador Walworth Barbour on April 2, 1963.⁶³³

The change in Israel's alliance strategy was reflected in three major areas of defense policy: its pursuit of independent nuclear deterrent; its search for a third-party security provider by diversifying its weapons procurement market to include West Germany, Britain and the United States; and its efforts to develop indigenous defense production capabilities. With all of these three measures, each of which will be discussed below, Ben Gurion sought to strengthen Israel's armed forces, especially its air force, by acquiring sophisticated weapons systems to balance those that the Soviet were supplying to Egypt.⁶³⁴

In 1958 the IDF was still a small army equipped with outdated weapons with its regular order of battle was thirty-seven thousand troops, including a navy of sixteen hundred men and

⁶³¹ See “Relations franco-israélienne,” Direction Generale des Affaires Politiques, Afrique-Levant, February 4, 1960, Archives diplomatiques français, file 218QO/106. Also see Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 65.

⁶³² Bar-Zohar, *Ben Gurion*, vol. 3, 1316-17, cited in Cohen, 65.

⁶³³ See Telegram no. 724, pt.1, Ambassador Barbour to Secretary of State Rusk, 3 April 1963, Box 119, NSF, John F. Kennedy Library, cited in Cohen, 65.

⁶³⁴ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 65.

women and an air force of thirty-one hundred men and women. The combat force structure of the IDF was made of one regular infantry brigade, twelve reserve brigades, one regular paratroops brigade, one regular armored brigade, and two reserve armored brigades; the Israeli Air Force (IAF) had 118 jets. Facing the thirteen Israeli infantry brigades were forty-five to forty-eight Arab infantry brigades.⁶³⁵

(1) Israel's pursuit of its indigenous nuclear deterrent, starting in 1958

Ben Gurion gave up trying to obtain a security guarantee from France and any other external power, and instead started to pursue an independent nuclear deterrent in the second half of 1958 and the year 1959. While Israel had been conducting nuclear research for several years by then, the latter half of 1958 was a watershed moment because the Israeli government endorsed the research as a military project for the first time. In June 1958, David Ben Gurion reorganized the Division of Research and Infrastructure (Agaf Mechkar Ve'tichun, or EMET) as a new military research and development authority named RAFAEL (the Hebrew acronym for the Armaments Development Authority). While EMET focused on scientific nuclear research, RAFAEL's responsibility lay with the development of weapons systems. It is unlikely that Israel's decision to pursue an independent nuclear deterrent was made before 1958.

In 1955-56, Israeli policymakers and scientists had agreed that their country must take advantage of new opportunities posed by the Eisenhower administration's Atoms-for-Peace initiative to launch a national nuclear energy project. However, there was no agreement over what

⁶³⁵ Ben Gurion's personal diary, 31 May 1958; cf. Yitzhak Greenberg, *Defense Budgets and Military Power: The Case of Israel 1957-1967* (in Hebrew) (Tel Aviv: Misrad Habitachon, 1997), 188 (Table 15); 194 (Table 21), cited in Cohen, Avner, *Israel and the Bomb*, 66.

the objectives, priorities, and timetable of the project should be, and how to pursue them.⁶³⁶ Ernst Bergmann, the founder of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC), advocated an ambitious dual-purpose nuclear energy program to construct a 10-MW natural uranium, heavy-water reactor with both peaceful and military applications.⁶³⁷ On the other hand, Amos de Shalit, an internationally known nuclear physicist, found Bergmann's idea dangerous and pushed for a modest program directed at research and training by way of building a small swimming pool research reactor. And a 1956 nuclear agreement with France was meant for peaceful research cooperation with France providing Israel with 385 tons of natural uranium over the next 10 years, while Israel agreed to return the uranium after enrichment, giving France control over the reactor's uses.⁶³⁸

In 1957 significant disagreements still existed among Ben Gurion's cabinet members, particularly between Golda Meir and Shimon Peres, about the direction the nuclear project should be going. In the spring of 1957 Israeli Chief of Staff Moshe Dayan called a meeting in his office, soliciting the opinions of leading nuclear scientists, but Dayan had doubts regarding the technological-scientific feasibility of the undertaking in Dimona as well as the reliability of the French.⁶³⁹ Dayan's skepticism was warranted, since the Dimona agreement with France on October 3, 1957, was reached when France was still undecided about its own military nuclear program. In addition, recurrent political crises in the French Fourth Republic meant significant uncertainties about the reliability of French nuclear assistance. Potential deals with a Norwegian

⁶³⁶ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 41.

⁶³⁷ Cohen, 51.

⁶³⁸ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 97.

⁶³⁹ On Dayan's reservations concerning the Dimona project, see Munya M. Mardor, Rafael, Tel Aviv: Misrad Habitachon 1981, 149-50, cited in Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 64.

company called NORATOM were still uncertain during the first half of 1958 with regard to the heavy water needed for a 40-MW reactor.⁶⁴⁰

In June 1958, David Ben Gurion placed nuclear research under the RAFAEL, as mentioned above – an organizational change designed to achieve an integrative work aimed at producing weapons systems. RAFAEL’s mission was “the development of powerful and sophisticated deterrent weapons systems that Israel could not purchase elsewhere.”⁶⁴¹ The organizational change happened exactly when Israel came to the realization that the French foreign policy toward the Arab world was experiencing drastic changes to undermine French security commitments. Israel’s defense budgets do not include the cost of the nuclear project, and it is difficult to assess the exact cost of developing the infrastructure needed for the nuclear project in 1958-65.⁶⁴² According to his diary Ben Gurion authorized U.S. \$5 million in 1958, which was around 15 percent of Israel’s defense budget at the time, for the Dimona project.⁶⁴³ The numbers more than doubled the following year. According to data presented by Israel to the United States in early 1961, “the reactor and ancillary facilities are expected to cost \$34 million, of which \$15.4 million would be the cost of the reactor itself.”⁶⁴⁴ This indicates the fact that in 1961, the Dimona project’s budget already surpassed Israel’s weapons procurement budget, which was U.S. \$27.7 million at the time.⁶⁴⁵

⁶⁴⁰ Cohen, 61.

⁶⁴¹ Mardor, Munya M. Rafael (in Hebrew). Tel Aviv: Misrad Habitachon, 1981, 171-74, cited in Cohen, Avner. *Israel and the Bomb*, Columbia University Press, 68.

⁶⁴² Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 67.

⁶⁴³ Ben Gurion’s personal diary, 31 May 1958, Ben Gurion Archives, cited in Cohen, 67.

⁶⁴⁴ See “Summary of Additional Recent Information on Israeli Atomic Energy Program,” 17 January 1961, National Security Agency, cited in Cohen, 67. The budget for the Dimona project remains obscure to this date. In his 1995 memoirs Shimon Peres wrote that the Dimona reactor alone cost about U.S. \$80 million in 1960 dollars). See Peres, *Battling for Peace*, 136–37.

⁶⁴⁵ Greenberg, 184-85 (Table 13), cited in Cohen, 67.

While France under de Gaulle decided to discontinue its nuclear cooperation, Israel kept going with its nuclear program, which would serve as “an option for a rainy day” – a code term for referring to the nuclear program used by politicians and journalists.⁶⁴⁶ On June 17, 1958, de Gaulle called the first meeting of his national security council, which led to a French decision to cease all nuclear cooperation with other states, Germany, Italy, and Israel, in order to obtain American nuclear assistance.⁶⁴⁷ The decision to cease nuclear cooperation with Israel was not implemented immediately, however, and French-Israeli nuclear aids continued at least for several more years, including French assistance with construction of the plutonium separation plant in Dimona.⁶⁴⁸ On May 13, 1960, Couve de Murville sent a formal letter to the Israeli embassy in Paris regarding the government’s decision to cease nuclear cooperation including uranium supplies, unless certain conditions were met: the existence of the Dimona reactor be made public; Israel declare that its purpose was solely peaceful; Israel submit to international monitoring of its nuclear capability.⁶⁴⁹ Israel obviously did not concede to meet these conditions, but uranium supplies continued at least until the mid-1963.

France’s competition with the United States and Britain in terms of their spheres of influence in the Middle East partly explains why it took as long as several years for the centralized Fifth Republic government to implement de Gaulle’s decision to cease nuclear cooperation with Israel. As de Gaulle’s 1960 policy memo reveals, he did not wish for his country to bear the burden of helping Israel alone or for France to be perceived as Israel’s primary supporter.⁶⁵⁰ This was

⁶⁴⁶ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 65.

⁶⁴⁷ Documents Diplomatique Français, 1959 II, Vol. 16, doc. 69, July 27, 1959 (note de l’éditeur) ; Also see Heimann, 94.

⁶⁴⁸ Pierre Péan, *Les Deux Bombs*, Paris: Fayard, 1982, 134, cited in Heimann, 97.

⁶⁴⁹ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 106. Also see Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 97.

⁶⁵⁰ A secret document written by de Gaulle in March 1960, outlining his policy toward Israel in the Archives d’Histoire Contemporaine, Archives Maurice Couve de Murville, file 7(9), March 2, 1960, cited in Heimann, 87.

because relations with Israel did not help improve France's status among Arab states or its economic relations with them at the time. On the other hand, he hoped to preserve French influence over Israel, since the United States and Britain deemed France's ability to influence Israel valuable. De Gaulle claimed that it was necessary to ensure that extreme caution would not harm France's relations with Israel, since the Anglo-Saxon powers would take pleasure in the deterioration of Franco-Israel relations no less than they enjoyed the difficulties France faced as a consequence of the close relationship with it.⁶⁵¹ This reveals to what extent competition with other great powers – even if they were not enemies – constituted a central layer in a patron's calculation for alliance management, making it harder for the patron to credibly threaten abandonment.

(2) Pursuit of an alternative security provider

In addition to pursuing an independent nuclear deterrent, Ben Gurion also sought an alternative security provider in the United States. In his May 12, 1963, letter to President Kennedy, Ben Gurion asked the United States to conclude a "Bilateral Security Agreement" with Israel, sell more arms to Israel in order to balance the new Soviet supply to the Arabs, and propose a plan for general disarmament in the Middle East.⁶⁵² The Kennedy administration responded positively. In his December 1962 meeting in Palm Beach with Golda Meir, President Kennedy clearly stated that the United States was committed to Israel's defense in case of an Arab surprise attack and that a formal security arrangement was not necessary for Israel.⁶⁵³ In his letter to Ben Gurion dated

⁶⁵¹ Ibid.

⁶⁵² Letter, Ben Gurion to Kennedy, 12 May 1963, Israel State Archives, Foreign Ministry Record Groups, 3377/9, cited in Cohen, 122.

⁶⁵³ Department of State, Memorandum of Conversation between Governor Averell Harriman and Jewish Leaders, "Subject: U.S. Security Guarantee to Israel," 8 May 1963, NSF, Box 119a, JFK Library; Also see Cohen, 122.

October 3, 1963 – a reply to the Israeli Prime minister’s letter of May 12, 1963 – Kennedy reiterated the American commitment “for the security and independence of Israel,” stressing that the United States had “the will and ability to carry out its stated determination to preserve it.”⁶⁵⁴ Kennedy was not interested in providing formal security arrangements Ben Gurion had sought in his letter, however.⁶⁵⁵ On the other hand, the Kennedy administration offered regular security dialogues with the Israeli Embassy in Washington, starting in August 1963.⁶⁵⁶

After 1958, Israel started to also diversify its weapons procurement to reduce its dependence on France. While the Dimona project was an important pillar of his defense policy, Ben Gurion’s major goal with regard to weapons procurement was to strengthen Israel’s conventional forces, especially its air force by acquiring sophisticated weapons systems to balance those that the Soviets were supplying to Nasser. Ben Gurion was committed to the idea that the IDF must be able to defeat any combination of Arab armies in a conventional war. To this end, he approved a plan to build a new modern air base in Hatzetim in the Negev in addition to other training bases. The Armored Corps initiated a program to purchase dozens of British Centurion medium tanks (later increasing the number to hundreds), and the navy purchased its first submarines.⁶⁵⁷

Data on the origin of Israel’s weapons procurement corroborate its diversification. According to the SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, between 1954 and 1959 Israel was heavily

⁶⁵⁴ Letter, Kennedy to Eshkol, 3 October 1963, Israel State Archives, Foreign Ministry Record Groups, 3377/10.

⁶⁵⁵ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 169.

⁶⁵⁶ “Memorandum for Record: Luncheon with Israeli Minister Gazit, 23 September 1963,” 24 September 1963, NSF, Box 119, JFK Library. See also “Consultations on the Matter of the Exchange with the President of the United States,” 6 September 1963, Israel State Archives, Foreign Ministry Record Groups 3377/10; telegram No. 61, Levi Eshkol to Avraham Harman and Mordechai Gazit, 10 September 1963, Israel State Archives, Foreign Ministry Record Groups 3377/10, cited in Cohen, 170. The first U.S.-Israeli security dialogue had taken place in July 1962, but this was meant to be a one-time meeting, not an institutionalized dialogue, which started in August 1963.

⁶⁵⁷ Cohen, *Israel and the Bomb*, 66.

dependent on French weapons markets, and they had constituted about 80% of Israel's arms imports (87.8% in 1954, 84.6% in 1955, 70.0% in 1956, 79.7% in 1957, 80.4% in 1958, and 78.0% in 1959).⁶⁵⁸ In 1960, however, Israel started to diversify the market for advanced weapons to include Germany, Britain and the United States. As a result, the French share of Israel's imported weapons dramatically dropped to 24.53% in 1960, while Germany and Britain had the shares of 28% and 38% respectively the same year.⁶⁵⁹ Israel must have started its efforts to sign contracts with these alternative suppliers in 1958 or in 1959 at the latest for it to have such results in 1960. Israel purchased centurion tanks from the UK, and West Germany became a conduit for both German surplus weapons such as M-48 tanks and covert U.S. arms supplies in the early 1960s. According to Shimon Peres, the IDF received from the German Bundeswehr M-48 tanks and other equipment valued by the Arabs at 500 million Israel pounds without payment.⁶⁶⁰

(3) Development of Indigenous Defense Production Capabilities

Israel also started to set aside large funds for rapid development of an indigenous defense industry in the late 1950s. Israel at the time was self-sufficient only in the manufacture of small arms and explosives.⁶⁶¹ Among these weapons was an Uzi submachine gun.⁶⁶² In the decade starting in 1958, however, defense expenditures in real terms increased by approximately 15

⁶⁵⁸ The total trend-indicator value (TIV) of arms imports by Israel, SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, published on 9 March 2020. In the 1957–60 period IAF purchased from France thirty supersonic Super Mystères and twenty-eight Vautour light bombers, and signed contracts for sixty Mirages (soon to become seventy-two).

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁰ Peres, *David's Sling: The Arming of Israel*, 85.

⁶⁶¹ « Exposition de materiel de guerre, » P.E. Gilbert au ministre des affaires étrangères, le 2 juin 1957, Archives diplomatiques français, File 218QO/45. Also see SIPRI, *The Arms Trade*, 1971, 768-69.

⁶⁶² Wall Street Journal, 27 June 1995.

percent per year, while GNP expanded about 5 percent per year.⁶⁶³ During this period, growth in the defense industries was twice the rate of growth in other industrial sectors.⁶⁶⁴ Certainly, local defense industries produced few major indigenous weapons systems during this period, but an extensive industrial infrastructure was established for both research and development and, if necessary, production of new weapons.⁶⁶⁵ The official figures of the defense budget indicate that starting in the late 1950s, the science and R&D components of the defense budget grew significantly. The R&D component of the defense budget was IL7 million (2.8 percent of the defense budget) in 1957, IL12 million (4.2 percent) in 1958, IL25 million (7.3 percent) in 1960, IL44 million (11.2 percent) in 1961, and IL99 million (14.4 percent) in 1963. By the mid-1960s the R&D component stabilized at the level of 11 percent.⁶⁶⁶

By 1966, just one year before the French-Israeli alliance ended, Israel's *Autonomy-seeking* strategy succeeded in diversifying its arms supply among several European states and in developing sophisticated military-industry infrastructure. Strong political support, rational and focused economic investment as well as dedicated R&D programs in the period of 1960-1966 provided Israel with a significant level of independence in production of small and light arms and ammunition, and the capability to carry out relatively sophisticated modification projects for existing weapons.⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶³ Israel's military expenditures as percentage of GDP stayed relatively high between 1953 and 1966, ranging from 2.8 % in 1954 to 9.8 % in 1966. Timothy D. Hoyt, *Military Industry and Regional Defense Policy*, 1 edition (London: Routledge, 2011), 79. Also see Eliezer Sheffer, "The Economic Burden of the Arms Race Between the Confrontation States and Israel," in Z. Lanir, *Israeli Security Planning in the 1980s: Its Politics and Economics* (New York: Praeger, 1984).

⁶⁶⁴ Aharon Klieman and Reuven Pedatzur, *Rearming Israel: Defense Procurement Through The 1990s*, 1 edition (Routledge, 2019), 75.

⁶⁶⁵ Herbert Wulf, ed., *Arms Industry Limited* (Solna, Sweden : New York: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, 1993), 370–71.

⁶⁶⁶ Greenberg, Yitzhak. Defense Budget and Military Power: The Case of Israel (in Hebrew). Tel Aviv: Misrad Ha'bitachon, 1977, 177-79 (Table 9 & 10), cited in Cohen, 67.

⁶⁶⁷ SIPRI, *The Arms Trade*, 1975, 208.

After the Six Day War of 1967, France put an end to the alliance when it blocked delivery of the Mirages, which Israel had already paid \$70 million for. But Paris permitted the transfer of spares for existing Mirage III aircraft in Israeli Air Force (IAF) service until 1969, when a complete embargo was imposed.⁶⁶⁸ After 1969, Israel found itself in a single-supplier defense relationship with the United States, relying on Washington for a supply of their two most important combat systems: tanks and aircraft. On the other hand, Israeli Defense Force (IDF) increased procurement of locally produced goods by 86 percent in the period of 1967-1972.⁶⁶⁹

5. Alternative Explanations and Conclusion

Israel's behavior vis-à-vis France was consistent with predictions of the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. It shifted from *Favor-currying* to *Autonomy-seeking* around the latter half of 1958, when its perception of French security commitments changed as Paris attempted to draw closer to the Arab world to prioritize its commercial and cultural gains from its pro-Arab diplomacy over its commitments to Israel. Israel had adopted a *Favor-currying* strategy for the first two years of the alliance relationship, conducting the fall 1956 Suez joint operations upon a French request and purchasing massive amounts of weapons from Paris. After Charles de Gaulle came to power in May 1958, however, Israel gradually came to the realization that the French were more interested in developing and normalizing relations with Arab states, particularly with Egypt and the UAR, than in reassuring Israeli leaders. As a result, Israel began to employ an *Autonomy-*

⁶⁶⁸ Yitzhak Rabin, *Rabin Memoirs*, First Edition (London: Little, Brown, 1979), 64.

⁶⁶⁹ Naftali Blumenthal, "The Influence of Defense Industry Investment," 169.

seeking strategy in the latter half of 1958. In June 1958, for example, David Ben Gurion gave Israel's nuclear research program an explicit military goal of producing weapons systems by placing it under a military authority named RAFAEL. Between 1958 and 1960, Israel began its efforts to diversify the markets from which it imported advanced weapons to include Germany, Britain, and the United States, and it also simultaneously took measures to develop its indigenous defense production capabilities.

The security threat explanation does not adequately explain Israel's behavior in this case. Between 1956 and 1958, it certainly sits well with Israel's participation in the Suez campaign and with subsequent proactive coordination with France. One could argue that such close alignment as well as its rapid defense buildup were driven by an increasing level of threats posed by Arab nations. In the period of 1958-1967, however, Israel gradually but clearly distanced itself from France while it was still facing imminent security threats from Egypt and other Arab states. In fact, mounting security threats were nearly constant throughout the period of 1958-1967: the founding in 1958 of the United Arab Republic (UAR); the popularity of Nasser's Arab socialism in the early 1960s; the Rotem Crisis of February 1960, in which Egypt mobilized its troops in a way that caught Israel off guard; and the establishment in 1963 of the PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) which was committed to destroy the Zionist. In early 1960, Ben Gurion was deeply concerned about a surprise attack by an Arab coalition, as he discussed it in the above-mentioned meeting with President de Gaulle in June 1960. Although the UAR collapsed in 1961, Egypt, Syria and Iraq signed an Arab Federation Proclamation in Cairo in April 1963 to form a military union whose purpose was to bring about the liberation of Palestine. While some critics outside Israel questioned the feasibility of such an Arab military union, Ben Gurion took the gravity of this initiative very

seriously.⁶⁷⁰ In his letter to President Kennedy on April 25, 1963, Ben Gurion stated that “recent events (referring to the Arab Federation Proclamation) have increased the danger of a serious conflagration in the Middle East” and warning that the Arab proclamation to liberate Palestine meant “the obliteration of Israel.”⁶⁷¹ From 1964 to 1967, Israel and its Arab neighbors fought over control of water sources in the Jordan River drainage basin, which was related to Ben Gurion’s political agenda of mass Jewish settlement in the Negev desert.

And yet, Israel was clearly distancing itself from its senior partner, France, rather than staying closely aligned as predicted by the security threat explanation. And even vis-à-vis the United States, Israel exhibited behavior that is consistent with the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, rather than the *Favor-currying* strategy.

With regard to the ideological similarity hypothesis, France and Israel shared anti-communist ideologies and were both members of the West. The two states were led by leaders strongly committed to anti-communism and support for the Jews. In France’s Fifth Republic, the Parti Communist Français (PCF) was politically marginalized in opposition to Charles de Gaulle, who PCF leaders saw as a right-wing autocrat with fascist tendencies. Leaders and the media in post-war France were self-conscious about their role during the Vichy regime (1940-44), and thus they tended to be sympathetic towards Jews: some politicians in the 1950s had been involved in the Resistance during the war; others had been prisoners in the concentration camps that had held Jews.⁶⁷² De Gaulle believed that the Jews deserved a national home, “as some compensation for

⁶⁷⁰ According to Michael Bar-Zohar, “the anxiety the Cairo Tripartite proclamation triggered in Ben Gurion exceeded even situations in which Ben Gurion had faced much more real and serious dangers.” See Michael Bar-Zohar, *BEN GURION: A BIOGRAPHY*, vol. 3 (Tel Aviv: Zmora Bitan, 1987), 1550. Also see Cohen, 119.

⁶⁷¹ Shimshon Arad, Israeli Representative to the UN, to Harman, 25 April 1963, Israel State Archives, Foreign Ministry Record Groups, 3377/9. Also see State Department to the Embassy Tel Aviv, NSF, Box 119a, JFK Library.

⁶⁷² Ziv, “Shimon Peres and the French-Israeli Alliance, 1954–9,” 414.

suffering endured through long ages,” and praised David Ben-Gurion as one of the “greatest leaders in the West.”⁶⁷³

Certainly, France may be at times seen as sympathetic with the Soviet Union as a country resisting the expansion of U.S. influence in Europe during the Cold War. But Israel was aware of France’s apprehensions regarding Soviet penetration of its former African colonies and was convinced that the French viewed Israel as a factor that could help to halt the Soviet progress.⁶⁷⁴

Given considerable ideological similarities between the two states, Israel should have stayed closely aligned with France all the time if the hypothesis is correct. The ideological similarity hypothesis can explain French leaders thinking better than Israeli leaders. The aid France granted to Israel was partly motivated by ideological-emotional factors reflected in the testimonies of central French political figures such as Prime Minister Mollet, Defense minister (and later Prime Minister) Bourgès-Maunoury and Foreign Minister Pineau.⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷³ Gary J. Bass, “Opinion | When Israel and France Broke Up,” *The New York Times*, March 31, 2010.

⁶⁷⁴ Heimann, *Franco-Israeli Relations, 1958-1967*, 4.

⁶⁷⁵ Heimann, 208.

Chapter VIII: The U.S.-Republic of China Alliance (1953-1979)

1. Introduction

The United States and the Republic of China (ROC) formally signed an alliance treaty amidst the first Taiwan crisis in 1954 and 1955, but the origin of this alliance dates back to the Korean War, in which Taiwanese troops participated in CIA-led covert operations on the Chinese mainland. As soon as the war ended, Chiang Kai-shek requested a formal security treaty. Pushed by Chiang's powerful lobbying in Washington, D.C., the Eisenhower administration formally incorporated Formosa into the Western Pacific defense perimeter in November 1953, which marked the beginning of this alliance. Bilateral treaty negotiations started in November 1954 during the first Taiwan Strait crisis, and a security treaty came into effect in 1955.⁶⁷⁶ The bilateral security treaty expired in 1979, when the United States severed its diplomatic relations with the ROC, but a *de facto* alliance relationship continued based on the Taiwan Relations Act, which

⁶⁷⁶ The treaty's text includes mutual defense agreements (Article V) and is thus categorized as a defense pact, or the Type I alliance according to the Correlates of War.

publicly declares U.S. support for the ROC. Due to page constraints, this chapter will analyze the period of 1953-1979.

The case of the U.S.-ROC alliance also fits the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy very well. It was an asymmetric alliance between a great power, the United States, and a small power, the ROC. American security commitments to fighting the PRC on behalf of the ROC remained weak or ambiguous in Taiwanese eyes through most of this period, except in the 1960s when America conducted military operations in Indochina, where U.S. forces fought North Vietnam backed by Beijing. The ROC, in the first few decades of the alliance, had a revisionist policy of “*Fangong Dalu*” (counterattack the mainland) to “*Guangfu Dalu*” (recover the mainland), for which the Taiwanese desperately needed U.S. military assistance.

The ROC’s alliance strategy varied over time, ranging from *Rescue-compelling* (1950s) to *Favor-currying* (1960s) to *Autonomy-seeking* (1970s), consistent with the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. Changes in the ROC strategy occurred according to how the Taiwanese leadership interpreted both U.S. commitments to fighting its communist adversary and the local balance of power with Communist China. The ROC employed its *Rescue-compelling* strategy – the one aimed at gaining renewed security commitments from the senior partner by staying dependent and aligned⁶⁷⁷ – in the period between 1954 and 1962, when the ROC saw Washington trying to mediate between the two sides across the Taiwan Strait rather than fight Communist China, while the ROC faced an unfavorable balance of power vis-à-vis the mainland. The Taiwanese strategy shifted from *Rescue-compelling* to *Favor-currying* in the mid-1960s, when Washington was fighting North Vietnam, a close junior ally of Beijing. The *Favor-currying*

⁶⁷⁷ The *Rescue-compelling* strategy is predicted when the junior partner perceives its senior partner’s security commitments to be weak, while it does not have sufficient capabilities to pursue an independent deterrent due to an unfavorable balance of power.

strategy is a strategy to compel additional military assistance for a revisionist policy by proactive alliance contributions and exemplary defense buildup efforts.⁶⁷⁸ Taipei was becoming less dependent but was remaining proactive in coordinating with Washington.

After President Nixon's overture to Beijing in 1972 – a radical change in U.S. strategy to the mainland that made U.S. commitments to the ROC unreliable – Taipei began *Autonomy-seeking* and sought an independent nuclear deterrent. *Autonomy-seeking* is a strategy whereby a junior ally increases its intra-alliance bargaining position by demonstrating its ability to build an independent deterrent and by distancing itself from its senior partner.⁶⁷⁹ In the 1970s, Taipei reacted to weakened U.S. security commitments by adopting an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy rather than *Rescue-compelling*, since it considered the local balance of power in its own favor, as the PRC was plagued by enormous upheavals of the Cultural Revolutions as well as militarized border disputes with the Soviet Union.

In this chapter as in the previous ones, I test the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy against two powerful alternative explanations: the security threat explanation and the hypothesis of ideological solidarity. The security threat explanation predicts that the greater security threats a state faces, the more likely it is to ramp up its defense buildup efforts and stay tightly aligned with its alliance partner– and this is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy, which involves continued defense buildup and close coordination.⁶⁸⁰ Conversely, the lower security threats a state faces, the more likely it is to be reluctant to coordinate with the partner but still be willing to keep

⁶⁷⁸ A junior partner is more likely to employ this strategy when it perceived the senior partner's strong commitments to fighting its adversary while it harbors a revisionist policy which requires additional security assistance from the senior partner.

⁶⁷⁹ The *Autonomy-seeking* strategy is more likely to be used when the junior partner perceived weak commitments by the senior partner while having, thanks to a favorable balance of power, sufficient technical capabilities to pursue an independent deterrent against the adversary.

⁶⁸⁰ Walt, *The Origins of Alliances*, 32.

building its own military arsenal given its weaker position vis-à-vis the partner – and this is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, which involves continued defense buildup and a decline in coordination efforts.

As we shall see below, the security threat explanation fails to predict the ROC's *Rescue-compelling* strategy in the 1950s. As the PRC's capabilities were rapidly growing, we should expect the ROC to improve its defense capabilities. But the ROC was instead deliberately putting its national survival at higher risk and making its troops more vulnerable to Chinese Communist military attacks. The security threat explanation also fails to predict the ROC's *Favor-currying* strategy in the 1960s. The local military balance was no longer shifting in favor of the mainland. According to the security threat explanation, one should not expect an ally to be *Favor-currying* when security threats are subsiding.

On the other hand, the ROC's *Autonomy-seeking* in the 1970s seems to fit the security threat explanation. After the PRC entered into a decade-long cultural revolution in 1966 that held back its military modernization efforts, Taipei's perception of diminishing security threats weakened its incentive to stay tightly aligned with Washington in the 1970s, although this explanation certainly has difficulty squaring with Taipei's insistence on its nuclear weapons program.

The ideological solidarity hypothesis posits that the closer and more similar the leaders' ideologies are, the more likely they are to pursue closer policy coordination while continuing their defense buildup to improve capabilities to help one another – which is an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy. Conversely, the more distant their ideologies are, the more likely they are to not actively pursue policy coordination but still improve capabilities to defend themselves because

their ideologically-distant partners are not reliable – which is an equivalent to the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy.

This hypothesis also has difficulties explaining variation in the ROC's alliance strategy. It is fair to argue that since there was little temporal variation in U.S. and Taiwanese leaders' ideologies during the Cold War, we should not have seen as much fluctuations in the choice of Taiwanese strategies as we did. Perhaps a notable exception is the ROC's *Autonomy-seeking* behavior in the 1970s, which can be explained by a perceived reduction in the degree of shared ideologies between Washington and Taipei, when U.S. officials worked to normalize diplomatic relations with Beijing.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into five sections. The second, following section will provide the background of the U.S.-ROC alliance, including its origin and the values the case takes on the independent variables – security commitments and revisionist foreign policy. It also predicts the ROC's alliance strategy – the dependent variable of the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy. The third section presents empirical evidence for its *Rescue-compelling* strategy during the 1950s and the early 1960s. The fourth section examines the degree of empirical support for the ROC's *Favor-currying* strategy in the better part of the 1960s. The fifth section will examine the ROC's *Autonomy-seeking* strategy in the 1970s. The final section will conclude by comparing the performance of the Theory with the two alternative explanations.

2. Background

The U.S.-ROC alliance was born from the two countries' secret collaboration during the Korean War. Prior to the war, the Truman administration had not been interested in the ROC and ruled out the possibility of massive American intervention to defend it.⁶⁸¹ On January 5, 1950, Truman even declared that the United States would not intercede to prevent a Communist takeover of the ROC. Specifically, Truman stated:

“The United States has no desire to obtain special rights or privileges, or to establish military bases on Formosa at this time. Nor does it have any intention of utilizing its Armed Forces to interfere in the present situation. The United States Government will not pursue a course which will lead to involvement in the civil conflict in China. Similarly, the United States Government will not provide military aid or advice to Chinese forces on Formosa.”⁶⁸²

Seven days later Secretary of State Dean Acheson famously reiterated this “hands-off” policy at the National Press Club, placing the ROC outside America’s defense perimeter in the Western Pacific.⁶⁸³ The United States, warned Acheson, should not incur the righteous anger of the Chinese people for imperialist intervention in China’s domestic affairs.⁶⁸⁴

⁶⁸¹ Nancy Bernkopf Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992: Uncertain Friendships*, First Printing edition (New York : Toronto : New York: Twayne Pub, 1994), 30.

⁶⁸² President Truman’s statement on Formosa delivered on January 5, 1950.

⁶⁸³ Dean Acheson stated, “The defensive perimeter runs along the Aleutians to Japan and then goes to the Ryukyus. We hold important defense positions in the Ryukyu Islands, and those we will continue to hold. In the interest of the population of the Ryukyu Islands, we will at an appropriate time offer to hold these islands under trusteeship of the United Nations. But they are essential parts of the defensive perimeter of the Pacific, and they must and will be held. The defensive perimeter runs from the Ryukyus to the Philippine Islands.” For the full text of his statement, see <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/1950-01-12.pdf>.

⁶⁸⁴ Acheson argued that “we must not undertake to deflect from the Russians to ourselves the righteous anger, and the wrath, and the hatred of the Chinese people which must develop. It would be folly to deflect it to ourselves. We must take the position we have always taken—that anyone who violates the integrity of China is the enemy of China and is acting contrary to our own interest. That, I suggest to you this afternoon, is the first and the great rule in regard to the formulation of American policy toward Asia.”

The Korean War suddenly led to a very different outcome, however. Immediately after the North Korean invasion of the south in late June 1950, the Nationalist Chinese authorities volunteered to send 33,000 troops and 20 air transports of the type C-46 in June 1950.⁶⁸⁵ On his part, President Truman ordered the 7th Fleet to be interposed between Communist China and the Nationalists in order to “prevent any attack on Formosa.”⁶⁸⁶ Although this order was presented as a “neutralization” of the Taiwan Strait on rhetoric, it, in effect, served to prevent the Communists from completing their victory in the civil war. Already just one month later at an NSC meeting Truman approved a military assistance program and a U.S. military mission for the ROC.⁶⁸⁷

Among all U.S. institutions involved in the Korean War, the CIA was playing the largest role in cooperating with the Taiwanese. In early 1951, the CIA supplied military equipment for the covert activities of as many as 100,000 Taiwanese troops, which operated under the cover of a specially created commercial company called Western Enterprises. This arrangement allowed the CIA to provide training, logistical support, and the capabilities to carry out overflights, leafletting and radio broadcasts.⁶⁸⁸ All of these were made possible by close ties between the CIA’s station chief in Taipei and ROC security services headed by Chiang Kai-shek’s son, Chiang Ching-kuo.⁶⁸⁹

⁶⁸⁵ Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1950, Korea, Volume VII, 178, “Memorandum of Conversation, by the Acting Deputy Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs (Freeman)” June 30, 1950.

⁶⁸⁶ “Statement by the President,” June 27, 1950. For the full text of this statement, see <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/116192.pdf?v=31e383a7e226b441e40fb0527a828da0>.

⁶⁸⁷ “Notes Regarding National Security Council Meeting, July 27, 1950,” Secretary of State File, Harry S. Truman Library, <https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/research-files/notes-regarding-national-security-council-meeting?documentid=NA&pagenumber=2>. Also see FRUS, 1951, Volume VII (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983), 1474-76 and 1671-72.

⁶⁸⁸ 793.5/8-3051 Memorandum of Conversation between General William C. Chase and Robert W. Barnett, box 4219, RG59, National Archives. Also see Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992*, 64.

⁶⁸⁹ Steven M. Goldstein, “The United States and the Republic of China, 1949-1978: Suspicious Allies,” *APARC Working Paper, Stanford University*, 2000, 15.

President Chiang Kai-shek, on the other hand, dealt directly with General Douglas MacArthur in Tokyo, who pushed for the introduction of Taiwanese troops into Korea.⁶⁹⁰

These covert activities notwithstanding, the United States eventually rejected most of Chiang's offers for operational cooperation in Korea, however. Chiang proposed a large-scale amphibious assault on the mainland, a coastal blockade of China, and bombing of Chinese facilities with U.S. planes in 1952.⁶⁹¹ Washington feared that the involvement of Taiwanese forces in such ostensible ways might lead to escalation into a general war with Communist China, as U.S. senior officials believed that Chiang Kai-shek aimed to enmesh Washington in war with the PRC as a way of returning to the mainland. In the forming years of the U.S.-ROC security relationship, this fear of entrapment shaped the Eisenhower administration's strategy, which, in turn, caused Taiwanese perceptions of weak U.S. security commitments, as we shall see below.

(1) U.S. Security Commitments and ROC Perceptions

As soon as a ceasefire was reached in Korea in July 1953, Chiang Kai-shek, who objected the truce agreement, worried that the ROC's interests would be neglected after U.S. troops withdrew from the Korean Peninsula and the Taiwan Straits. To reassure the quasi-ally, the Eisenhower administration formally incorporated Formosa into the western Pacific defense perimeter with its NSC 146/2 of November 1953, which marked the beginning of this alliance relationship. The NSC decision stated that the United States would "effectively incorporate Formosa and the Pescadores within U.S. Far East defense positions by taking all necessary

⁶⁹⁰ Cha, *Powerplay*, 71. Also see Goldstein, "The United States and the Republic of China, 1949-1978: Suspicious Allies," 16.

⁶⁹¹ "Charge in Republic of China (Jones) to the Department of State, 22 July 1952," FRUS, 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, 76-77.

measures to prevent hostile forces from gaining control thereof, even at grave risk of general war, and by making it clear that the United States will so react to any attack.”⁶⁹²

Meanwhile, the Eisenhower administration rejected Chiang’s request for a formal security treaty until late 1954 for two not entirely consistent reasons. First, such a treaty might involve the United States in hostilities with Communist China through Nationalist actions. Second, it might “tie the hands” of the Nationalists in conducting limited offensive operations against Communist China.⁶⁹³ Secretary of State John Foster Dulles stated, “We are in the position of wanting neither to check Chinese operations against the mainland Communists nor to get directly involved ourselves in these operations. It was feared that a mutual security pact would have one of these undesirable effects. (...) there might be a prospect that the current situation would develop to our mutual advantage and that possibly the present arrangement should not be modified.” For these reasons Dulles originally sought to take the conflict to the UN to secure a cease-fire and a more permanent solution. But the Nationalist Chinese adamantly opposed any intervention on this issue by the United Nations, which they saw as hostile.⁶⁹⁴ As a result, Dulles had to offer a security treaty to reassure Taipei, and started negotiating one in November 1954, when the Strait confrontation was in full swing.

On December 2, 1954, Dulles and Taiwanese Foreign Minister George Yeh signed a mutual defense treaty, which provided that “Each Party recognizes that an armed attack in the West Pacific Area directed against the territories of either of the Parties would be dangerous to its

⁶⁹² See “NSC 146/2 United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect To Formosa and the Chinese Nationalist Government, November 6, 1953,” FRUS 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, 150. Also see the National Security Council, “Progress Report on NSC 146/2,” 16 July 1954. The NSC 146/2 was adopted in November 1953 by modifying the Truman administration’s NSC 48/5 of May 1951.

⁶⁹³ FRUS, 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, Part I, 423.

⁶⁹⁴ Goldstein, “The United States and the Republic of China, 1949-1978: Suspicious Allies,” 11.

own peace and safety and declares that it would act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.” (Article V)⁶⁹⁵ On the other hand, joint efforts to meet the common danger would apply only to “Taiwan and the Pescadores,” along with “such other territories as may be determined by mutual agreement.” (Article VI). In other words, the treaty would not automatically apply to new territories without consent of the United States.⁶⁹⁶ By deliberately not mentioning the offshore islands, Washington hoped to deter Beijing from attacking the Taiwanese forces there and at the same time to discourage Chiang from using the islands as a stepping stone to invade the mainland.⁶⁹⁷ As Article VI implied, U.S. commitments to the ROC were narrower in scope than those offered to the other states within the declared U.S. defense perimeter in Asia due to significant restrictions and consultation requirements imposed on Taipei.⁶⁹⁸ The use of force from the territories under the ROC’s control “will be a matter of joint agreement, subject to action of an emergency character which is clearly an exercise of the inherent right of self-defense.”⁶⁹⁹ In letters exchanged between military commanders of the United States and the ROC in 1953, the latter agreed to consult with the former on “any offensive military operations against mainland China which would radically alter pattern or tempo of operations hitherto undertaken.”⁷⁰⁰ Military actions requiring “joint agreement” – i.e. U.S. endorsement –

⁶⁹⁵ Gibler, *International Military Alliances 1648-2008*, 399.

⁶⁹⁶ The treaty explicitly states, “the terms “territorial” and “territories” shall mean in respect of the Republic of China, Taiwan and the Pescadores; and in respect of the United States of America, the island territories in the West Pacific under its jurisdiction.” (Article VI). See Gibler, 399.

⁶⁹⁷ “Rankin to State Department, December 11, 1954,” RG59, 794A.00 (W)/12-1154, National Archives.

⁶⁹⁸ John W. Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance: Nationalist China and American Cold War Strategy in Asia*, 1 edition (Armonk, N.Y: Routledge, 1997), 53.

⁶⁹⁹ Unpublished diplomatic notes exchanged Yeh and Dulles on December 10 read: The Republic of China effectively controls both the territory described in Article VI of the Treaty of Mutual Defense ... and other territory. It possesses with respect to all territory now and hereafter under its control the inherent right of self defense. In view of the obligations of the two Parties under the said Treaty and of the fact that the use of force from either of these areas by either of the Parties affects the other, it is agreed that such use of force will be a matter of joint agreement, subject to action of an emergency character which is clearly an exercise of the inherent right of self-defense. See United States Treaties and Other International Agreements, Vol. 6, Part 1, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1956, 454.

⁷⁰⁰ FRUS, 1952-54, China and Japan, Volume XIV, 193-94.

included combat raids, reconnaissance operations of greater than company size, sea mining, raids on mainland harbors, air attacks against ships alongside mainland wharves or targets on the mainland, and naval gunfire against mainland targets except when covering the withdrawal of reconnaissance patrols. Actions not requiring U.S. authorization included small-scale intelligence raids against the mainland and naval covering fire for raid withdrawal, reconnaissance operations of company size or less, naval reconnaissance and patrol operations, air reconnaissance operations to the limit of capabilities, and “air-to-air action consistent with other operations requiring no U.S. endorsement, and consistent with the United States policy regarding the undesirability of provoking CHICOM attack against Taiwan and the Pescadores.”⁷⁰¹

In short, Washington spun a web of restrictions that would prevent Taipei from using the alliance to pursue its mainland ambitions and entrapping the United States in an unwanted conflict. This is clear from an NSC meeting in October 1954 that laid out the objectives of the treaty negotiation: any military coordination with the ROC would be “subject to the commitment taken by the Chinese Nationalist Government that its forces will not engage in offensive operations considered by the United States to be inimical to the best interest of the United States.”⁷⁰²

Despite these limitations, Chiang welcomed a security treaty that would not only legitimize his regime in Taipei but also reduce ambiguity about U.S. commitments by providing a legal basis for U.S. military activities on the island of Formosa.⁷⁰³ Chiang Kai-shek succeeded in not only

⁷⁰¹ Memorandum dated January 1958 from CINCPAC to the Taiwan Defense Command (TDC), enclosed in a memo by CNO for JCS, 23 August 1958, RG 218 JCS GF 1958 CCS 381, sec. 37, box 147, National Archives. For internal U.S. communications between U.S. Pacific Command and the Military Assistance Advisory Group in Taiwan on the specific guidelines and restrictions on Taiwanese military actions, see “Memorandum by Gerald Stryker of the Office of Chinese Affairs to the Deputy Director of That Office (Martin), September 22, 1954,” FRUS 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, 655-58. Also see Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 135.

⁷⁰² “NSC 146/2 United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect To Formosa and the Chinese Nationalist Government, November 6, 1953,” FRUS 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, 150.

⁷⁰³ Cha, *Powerplay*, 83.

securing the treaty but also prompting Washington to expand the promises in the treaty to cover small islands. When the PLA attacked Yikiang and threatened the Dachen islands located 200 miles north of Taiwan on January 18, 1955, killing 1,000 Taiwanese troops stationed there, the Eisenhower administration authorized U.S. forces to defend Jinmen and Matsu and dispatched large numbers of U.S. troops to the Taiwan Strait.⁷⁰⁴ He decided to publicly commit to defending Quemoy and Matsu, and Dulles promptly briefed the Taiwanese ambassador on the idea that Washington would offer, in exchange for ROC evacuation from Dachen, an explicit, and public promise to protect these two islands.⁷⁰⁵

However, it was not long after the security treaty was signed that a series of U.S. diplomatic demarches made U.S. commitments to fighting war appear weak in Taiwanese eyes. To start, Eisenhower and Dulles reneged on its pledge to publicly defend Quemoy due to fierce oppositions by the United Kingdom and New Zealand, which saw such a promise as “ill-advised and dangerous.”⁷⁰⁶ Washington decided in late January 1955 that its promise to defend Quemoy would remain secret and might be disavowed if it was leaked,” and this sudden reversal in the U.S. promise regarding Quemoy caused for Chiang Kai-shek significant worries over what the United States would do if the PRC attempted to capture Quemoy and Matsu.⁷⁰⁷

Second, the United States supported a New Zealand proposal in January 1955 for a U.N. Security Council resolution opposing the use of force in the Taiwan Strait. This plan, code-named Operation Oracle, had originally been conceived by Dulles and developed in discussions with the

⁷⁰⁴ Hoover to Taipei, 29 January 1955, Eisenhower papers, Whitman File, International Series, box 9, Formosa Area U.S. Military Operations (3), IKE, Dwight D. Eisenhower Library.

⁷⁰⁵ “Memorandum of a Conversation, January 19, 1955,” FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume II, document 17, 42.

⁷⁰⁶ “Memorandum of Conversation, January 21, 1955,” box 55, Records of the Office of Chinese Affairs, Lot Files, RG 59, National Archives.

⁷⁰⁷ “Memorandum of a Conversation, January 30, 1955,” FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume II, document 61, 121.

United Kingdom and New Zealand in September and October 1954.⁷⁰⁸ Referring to this operation through the UN, Dulles wrote in his diary that the United States should “stimulate UN activity along the lines which had been long considered in the hope that its influence might lead to some pacification in the area.”⁷⁰⁹ Washington’s plan was “genuinely to attempt to bring about a pacification of the area”⁷¹⁰ by exploiting Beijing’s desire for admission to the UN, through vague suggestions that PRC participation in the Security Council debate might lead to its admission to the organization. The Operation Oracle turned out to be abortive, since Beijing rejected the invitation to a Security Council debate in February 1955 as intervening in China’s internal affairs.⁷¹¹ The PRC also declared that it would attend the meeting only if Chiang Kai-shek’s representatives were expelled from it and the PRC attended in the name of China.⁷¹² While Taipei did not exercise its veto on the New Zealand proposal when it came before the Security Council, Chiang Kai-shek had adamantly rejected all proposals to neutralize the Taiwan Straits because this would reduce the chances of spreading the present conflict [over the offshores] into a war with Communist China in which the United States would be involved.⁷¹³ Chiang ultimately conceded to not veto it at the United Nations only because he was calculating that this “policy alignment” would gain firmer U.S. security commitments he so craved.⁷¹⁴

⁷⁰⁸ “Memorandum of a Conversation (Dulles), the White House, January 19, 1955,” FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume II, document 17, 44-45. Also see Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 59.

⁷⁰⁹ “Memorandum of a Conversation (Dulles), the White House, January 19, 1955,” FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume II, document 17, 43.

⁷¹⁰ “Memorandum of a Conversation, Department of State, January 26, 1955,” FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume II, document 42, 131.

⁷¹¹ “Editorial Note,” FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume II, document 77, 202. Also see UN documents S/PV. 689 and 690; UN document S/3358; Department of State Bulletin, February 14, 1955, 254-255.

⁷¹² Ibid.

⁷¹³ Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 56.

⁷¹⁴ Ibid.

Third, the Eisenhower administration in February and March 1955 moved to assure Beijing through public statements that Washington would not support a Nationalist invasion of the mainland, even as it threatened war in defense of Taiwan and the offshore islands. On February 10, for example, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, Robertson, modified his testimony of the year before and said that he had erred in giving the impression that the administration was thinking of solving the problem on the mainland of China by military attack, and that neither he nor the State Department proposed such a solution.⁷¹⁵ On March 2, President Eisenhower emphatically and publicly denied that the United States would aid an invasion of the mainland by the Nationalists.⁷¹⁶ This remark, which was Eisenhower's first public rejection of Chiang's dream, came as a response to a question about a television interview in which Chiang Kai-shek had said that he expected American material and moral aid for such an invasion.⁷¹⁷

Fourth, the United States initiated regular ambassadorial talks with Beijing in August 1955, although they were not successful. Beijing resisted when Washington demanded a Beijing pledge to renounce the use of force in its attempts to reunify China. Taipei, on its part, strongly opposed the U.S.-PRC ambassadorial talks because they might permit Beijing to divide the United States from the ROC. Taipei feared that Beijing might demand U.S. military and political disengagement from the ROC as a quid pro quo for the nonuse of force in the Taiwan Strait and that this could

⁷¹⁵ See U.S. Congress, House Committee on Appropriations, Departments of State and Justice, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies, Appropriations for 1956, Hearings, 84th Congress, 1st session (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1955), 127-8.

⁷¹⁶ The New York Times, 3 March 1955.

⁷¹⁷ The New York Times, 2 March 1955. However, Washington was sending mixed signals to the ROC. Despite its cautious approach to the ROC's ambition to invade the mainland, the Taiwanese armed forces were allowed to join the United States in conducting a number of military exercises that were offensive in nature until 1963.

lead to the end of the Nationalist dream of returning to the mainland to destroy the Communist regime.⁷¹⁸ The Taiwanese foreign minister wrote:

“the Chinese Government is deeply perturbed by the disclosure that, throughout the negotiations between Ambassador Johnson and the Communist representative, the US has repeatedly assured the Communists that renunciation by the Chinese Communists of the use of force would in no way prejudice the peaceful pursuit of Communist policies in the Taiwan area. It is regretted that the US Government should have found it necessary to go to the extent of assuming such a position, the legal and political implication of which could only mean that the US was not only recognizing by inference the claims of the Chinese Communists, but was also giving encouragement to the pursuit of such claims on the part of the Chinese Communists. No amount of legal interpretation could conceal the fact that any arrangement made with the Chinese Communists in the terms offered by the US would gravely injure the basic rights and interests of the Republic of China. The Chinese Government finds it difficult to reconcile the position taken by the US in this regard with the assurances repeatedly given the Republic of China and considers it inconsistent with the spirit of the Sino-American Mutual Defense Treaty.”⁷¹⁹

Furthermore, U.S. restrictions on the ROC’s freedom of action caused frustration and resentment in Taipei. In particular, significant disagreements that emerged over the 1954 treaty exacerbated distrust between the two states. According to the ROC’s interpretation, those

⁷¹⁸ Telegram from the Ambassador in the Republic of China (Rankin) to the Department of State, January 26, 1956, FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume III, 138.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

restrictions applied only to a Communist attack on the ROC, and thus imposed no restrictions upon the ROC's action to recover the mainland from Communist occupation. Moreover, Taipei insisted that it was obligated to secure "mutual agreement" only for the movement of "military elements which are a product of joint effort and contribution." This allowed Taipei to maintain that units being assigned to the offshore islands were not the product of such "joint effort and contribution."⁷²⁰ From the U.S. perspective, however, Washington's obligation to come to the ROC's defense was contingent on Taipei's agreement not to launch a military operation to invade the mainland without U.S. consent. Without such a commitment from Taipei, the United States would never have entered into an alliance relationship to defend the ROC.⁷²¹ The changing perceptions of American commitments led to the deep Nationalist fear that the United States would return to its 1949 policy of dropping nationalist China. This was particularly because they had a mission to retake mainland China, which it was becoming extremely difficult to achieve without American assistance.

(2) The Republic of China's Revisionist Policy Requiring U.S. Assistance

After the Nationalists lost the civil war (1946-49) and fled to Taiwan, Chiang Kai-shek was determined to reclaim mainland China. He maintained that Taiwan was not his new home, even after most of the cities in the mainland had already been overrun by communist forces. His favorite political slogans as he set up a new government on the island were "*Fangong Dalu*" (counterattack

⁷²⁰ See United States Treaties and Other International Agreements, Vol. 6, Part 1, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1956, 454. Also see Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 58.

⁷²¹ Garver, 58. For more on the disagreements between Washington and Taipei, see Garver, 54-59; H.-T. Lin, "U.S.-Taiwan Military Diplomacy Revisited: Chiang Kai-Shek, Baituan, and the 1954 Mutual Defense Pact," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 5 (November 1, 2013): 971-94, <https://doi.org/10.1093/dh/dht047>.

the mainland) and “*Guangfu Dalu*” (recover the mainland).⁷²² The policy of retaking the mainland should be coded as a “revisionist” policy because Chiang knew that to achieve these goals, he needed to wage a war against Communist forces. John Foster Dulles told the NSC that “the Chinese Nationalist Foreign Minister, George Yeh, had informed Dulles repeatedly that there was no hope for the future of the Chinese National Government in the absence of a general war” with China.⁷²³ Both in writing and conversation with Secretary Dulles, Yeh repeatedly “stressed the vital importance for the [Nationalist] Chinese Government to keep alive its political objective of recovering the Chinese Mainland,” according to a NSC meeting record.⁷²⁴ Thus, he asked that “the US will refrain from any action which would, in the eyes of the free world and the Chinese people both on the outside and Mainland, tend to support the view that the Chinese Mainland is lost to the Communists forever.”⁷²⁵

U.S. military assistance was critical for this policy’s success, because the Taiwanese “armed forces do not have sufficient power successfully to invade the mainland.” The U.S. embassy in Taipei suggested in 1957 that “the GRC [i.e. government of the Republic of China] will soon reach the point of maximum efficiency with present equipment. After that point is reached and passed, the Chinese communists will tend to grow proportionately stronger in comparison.”⁷²⁶ Indeed, the Taiwanese were under enormous time pressure due to the local balance of power shifting in favor of the Communists.

⁷²² Cha, *Powerplay*, 70.

⁷²³ “Memorandum of Discussion at the 221st Meeting of the National Security Council, November 2, 1954,” FRUS, 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, Part I, No. 375, 833.

⁷²⁴ Telegram from the Ambassador in the Republic of China (Rankin) to the Department of State, January 26, 1956, FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume III, 138.

⁷²⁵ Ibid.

⁷²⁶ “Memorandum from the Director of the Office of Chinese Affairs (McConaughy) to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Sebald),” FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume III, No. 245, 512.

With that policy set aside, the ROC was also revisionist in practice. In May 1954, for example, Nationalist warships hijacked China-bound Polish merchant vessels in international waters off Taiwan.⁷²⁷ A month later, a Taiwanese warship seized a Soviet oil tanker making for a Chinese port, and the Soviet government lodged an official protest with Washington.⁷²⁸ In July 1954, Nationalist aircraft increased their overflights of PRC territory, and in the confusion Beijing's fighters downed a British airliner, for which the Chinese apologized as a mistake and offered to pay reparations.⁷²⁹

(3) Local Balance of Power

From the Taiwanese perspective, their time was running out as the leaders of the Taiwanese regime were getting old while the power of the Chinese Communists was clearly growing. President Chiang was in his seventieth year, but still “aspires to a “place in history,” which he couldn't ever achieve except through return to the mainland.”⁷³⁰ At the same time, those leaders had perceived the power and influence of the Chinese communists to be rapidly growing. In the mid-1950s, the communists' military buildup widened the capability gap between the Taiwan Straits, even though the Taiwanese forces were better equipped and trained than ever before. Immediately before the 1958 Taiwan Strait crisis, the Chinese communists were considered to have the capability both of establishing air and naval superiority in the Taiwan Straits and of capturing the offshore islands, provided they were willing to accept a large number of casualties.⁷³¹

⁷²⁷ Renmin Ribao, 20 May 1954.

⁷²⁸ Xin Hua Yuebao, 28 August 1954.

⁷²⁹ The New York Times, 24-28 July 1954.

⁷³⁰ Ibid.

⁷³¹ Morton H. Halperin, “The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis: A Documented History” (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1966), 14, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_memoranda/RM4900.html.

The Nationalist Navy was estimated to be capable of lifting one division from Formosa to the offshore islands in order to bolster their defense, but unable to oppose the Chinese Communist PT boat and submarine force in the Taiwan Straits area.⁷³² Besides, the Nationalist Air Force was significantly inferior to the Chinese communist Air Force, according to a CIA estimate.⁷³³

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As we have seen above, the Taiwanese were keenly aware that U.S. security commitments to the ROC did not meet their needs for operational assistance in its mission to retake the mainland. At the same time, they were also concerned about ambiguity as to the extent of help Washington might offer in case of PRC attacks on the offshore islands under the Taiwanese control. Facing ambiguous commitments by the senior partner under the conditions of shifting local military balances, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts that Taiwanese leaders should employ a *Rescue-compelling* strategy. Taipei should proactively pursue policy alignment in exchange for future military support from the United States. But in light of the local power balance shifting in favor of the mainland, Taipei should be attempting to resolve its security problem once and for all before it was too late. This time pressure is more likely to make Taipei more risk-accepting, exhibiting risky escalatory behavior toward its adversary, as will be discussed in the next section.

⁷³² As of 1958, the Nationalist Navy possessed 4 destroyers, 5 escorts, 7 patrol escorts, 9 mine sweepers, and 110 miscellaneous vessels. By contrast, the Chinese Communist navy had 4 destroyers, 16 submarines, 4 escort vessels, 249 patrol boats, 31 mine sweepers, 53 landing crafts, and 300 surface crafts. See “Special National Intelligence Estimate 100-9-58 (“Probable Developments in the Taiwan Straits Area”), Central Intelligence Agency Memorandum, Memorandum to the Intelligence Advisory Committee, Annex A, “Chinese Communist and Chinese Nationalists Military Strengths and Capabilities in the Taiwan Straits Area,” August 22, 1958, cited in Halperin, 5–10.

⁷³³ Halperin, 6. The Nationalist Air Force possessed 450 jet fighters, 1 jet bomber, 9 piston tactical attack planes, 10 land-based ASW planes, 143 piston transports, 167 other piston planes, and 46 other jets. By contrast, the Chinese Communist Air Force had 1785 jet fighters, 275 piston fighters, 450 jet light bombers, 505 piston tactical attack aircraft, 20 land-based ASW planes, 20 piston medium bombers, 260 piston transports, 225 other jets, and 810 other piston airplanes. See “Special National Intelligence Estimate 100-9-58 (“Probable Developments in the Taiwan Straits Area”), Opt. cit.

3. The Republic of China's *Rescue-compelling* Strategy

Evidence suggests that between 1954 and 1962, the ROC was employing a *Rescue-compelling* strategy to increase the chance of receiving U.S. military assistance. As discussed earlier, U.S security commitments to the ROC were both narrowly-scoped and ambiguous at best, leaving Taipei wondering to what extent the United States was willing to ensure the ROC's security and assist its goal of retaking the mainland by force. Taipei's *Rescue-compelling* strategy was thus a tool to reduce uncertainty surrounding U.S. assistance, and it manifested itself in three different forms: Taipei's lack of sufficient defense capabilities as well as proactive policy coordination efforts with the United States.

(1) A Deliberate Lack of Sufficient Defense Capabilities

The best evidence for the ROC's attempt to remain incapable of defending itself in the 1950s was Chiang's troop deployment to the offshore islands such as Quemoy and Matsu off the coast of the Fujian province on the mainland, because Chiang did so in a way that would put the ROC's national survival at higher risk. Not part of the Taiwan-Pescadores formation, those islands are two of the several small island clusters occupied by the Nationalists at the end of the Chinese civil war. In August 1954 – in the middle of the First Taiwan Crisis – Chiang placed 58,000 troops on Quemoy and 15,000 troops on Matsu, and began constructing defensive structures on

Quemoy.⁷³⁴ By doing so Chiang made clear his intention to use those islands as a staging point for mainland invasion or as a point from which to harass Chinese shipping near the coast line.⁷³⁵ Because of their proximity to the mainland, these island clusters also had psychological significance as symbols of Taipei's determination to return to the mainland.⁷³⁶

In the beginning of the alliance, Dulles had hoped to utilize the Nationalist presence on those small islands to harass Communist shipping and to monitor military dispositions from radar installations. The NSC 146/2 of November 1953 had even explicitly called for encouragement and assistance to the ROC to defend the islands and raid both Communist commerce and territory.⁷³⁷ During the 1954 Taiwan Strait Crisis, however, Dulles became convinced of logistical problems associated with defending these islands, and came to believe that Chiang Kai-shek's forces on the offshore islands had a role in provoking the confrontations with the communists.⁷³⁸ Prior to the 1954 crisis, Nationalist troops and their guerrilla allies had been capturing cargoes destined for China, as well as mounted raids against the mainland. It was these activities that the PRC claimed it sought to halt during the Taiwan Crisis of 1954-55.⁷³⁹ In addition, Dulles believed that Chiang viewed such confrontations in the strait as a way to entangle Washington further in Taipei's struggle to retake the mainland.⁷⁴⁰

⁷³⁴ Tucker, "John Foster Dulles and the Taiwan Roots of the 'Two Chinas' Policy," 252–53.

⁷³⁵ Cha, *Powerplay*, 78–79.

⁷³⁶ Gordon H. Chang, *Friends and Enemies: The United States, China, and the Soviet Union, 1948-1972*, 1st edition (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 1990), 117–21.

⁷³⁷ "NSC 146/2 United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect To Formosa and the Chinese Nationalist Government, November 6, 1953," FRUS 1952-1954, China and Japan, Volume XIV, 150.

⁷³⁸ Tucker, "John Foster Dulles and the Taiwan Roots of the 'Two Chinas' Policy," 252–53.

⁷³⁹ The Chinese Communists also claimed that the cause of the 1958 Taiwan Strait crisis was the build-up of Chinese nationalist troops on Quemoy, although they had other, more important motivations. See Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," 8.

⁷⁴⁰ Halperin, 84. Also see "The Joint Chiefs of Staff to Adm. Felt, September 12, 1958," JCSR 218, JCS9447931, CCS381 Formosa (11-8-48) sec. 39.

After the 1954-55 Taiwan Crisis, Chiang still continued to move troops from Formosa to the offshore islands. In July 1955, he began to transfer one Nationalist division from Formosa to Quemoy, although just a few weeks earlier, he had told General Chase that he did not plan to move the division immediately.⁷⁴¹ From July 1955 through October 1956, Chiang was steadily deploying more of his best troops to the offshore islands. The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff considered that the deployment of an additional Taiwanese division to Quemoy would not substantially increase the defensibility of Quemoy, as it was clear that the offshore islands could not be held without American forces.⁷⁴² By April 1956, the offshore island garrisons totaled about 100,000 men and were armed with more than a third of the major items of military equipment available to Nationalist ground forces, undermining the ROC's ability to defend Formosa in the view of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff.⁷⁴³ Troop deployments to the offshore islands still continued: in October 1956, the Quemoy garrison was further increased from 79,000 to 85,000 men.⁷⁴⁴

(2) Proactive Policy Coordination Efforts

Meanwhile, Chiang took advantage of all possible opportunities to push the United States to publicly clarify its commitment to defend Formosa as well as any territories vitally linked to it. In his meeting with Dulles and Assistant Secretary of State Walter Robertson in March 1956, Chiang argued that there is “doubt in many minds in Asia as to ultimate United States policy in

⁷⁴¹ “Letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Davis) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), August 3, 1955,” FRUS, 1955-57, China, Vol. III, Document 7, 13; “Telegram from the Chargé in the Republic of China (Cochran) to the Department of State, June 28, 1955,” FRUS, 1955-1957, China, Volume II, Document 279, 616.

⁷⁴² “Letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs (Davis) to the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs (Robertson), August 3, 1955,” FRUS, 1955-57, China, Vol. III, Document 7, 13.

⁷⁴³ JCS 2118/90, May 7, 1956, CCS 381 Formosa (11-8-48), Sec 32, cited in Condit, JCS and National Policy, 1955-1956, 208.

⁷⁴⁴ Halperin, “The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis,” 8.

regard to China,” and urged U.S. support for wars of national unification across the Taiwan Straits.⁷⁴⁵ Robertson made it clear, however, that “neither Congress, the people of the United States, nor the President will make offensive war anywhere for any purpose,” a remark similar to Eisenhower’s public denial of Chiang’s invasion plan.⁷⁴⁶ Chiang still sent a long letter to Eisenhower the next month, calling on the president to support “sustained action by the forces of free China” to induce revolution in China, but Eisenhower’s response was far from satisfactory to Taipei.⁷⁴⁷ Nevertheless, Taipei was continuously consulting Washington on all of major military activities to get prior approval. On diplomacy, Taipei acquiesced on U.S. ambassadorial talks with Beijing despite its serious reservations.⁷⁴⁸ It also refrained from vetoing the Operation Oracle at the United Nations. Virtually all of the Taiwanese military equipment was of American origin and had been supplied under the American Military Assistance program.⁷⁴⁹

It is unclear how much pressure Washington put on Taipei to stop deploying such a large number of troops to the offshore islands. By 1958, Quemoy was one of the most heavily defended places in the world. At this point, it was unclear why, from an operational standpoint, the offshore islands needed as many as one third of the Nationalist troops. Quemoy was not a base for significant Taiwanese activities against the PRC, and there had been little action around those islands, from either side of the belligerents, since the evacuation of the Tachens Islands in February 1955.⁷⁵⁰ No overflights were ever staged from the offshore islands.⁷⁵¹ Taipei certainly did use the

⁷⁴⁵ “Memorandum of a Conversation, 16 March 1956,” FRUS, 1955-57, China, Vol. III, Document 159, 326-29.

⁷⁴⁶ “Memorandum of a Conversation, March 16, 1956,” FRUS, 1955-57, China, Vol. III, Document 160, 331.

⁷⁴⁷ “Letter from President Chiang Kai-shek to President Eisenhower, April 16, 1956,” FRUS, Diplomatic Papers, 1955-57, China, Vol. III, 343-48.

⁷⁴⁸ Halperin, “The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis,” 341.

⁷⁴⁹ Halperin, 7–8.

⁷⁵⁰ Halperin, 8.

⁷⁵¹ Small planes sometimes flew in close for observation from a single airfield on Quemoy, but they never penetrated over the mainland. There was no airfield on the Matsu islands.

offshore islands in blockading the port of Xiamen, but these largely naval operations could be carried out easily from bases on Formosa.⁷⁵² The troop deployment to the offshore islands would make much more sense as a strategy to keep Washington's attention by raising tensions across the straits, however.

U.S. leaders believed that these troop deployments to the offshore islands were an effort by the Nationalists to provoke a Communist attack on the small islands killing a large number of troops – a condition that would inevitably pose an existential threat to the ROC's national security and trigger a U.S. obligation under Article 5 to render assistance.⁷⁵³ Creating such conditions occasionally would ensure that Washington stayed interested. This was to exploit a prior U.S. commitment that the United States would help defend Quemoy if a Communist attack on it substantially reduced the defensibility of the ROC as a nation. This offer implied that the loss of a large number of men and equipment on Quemoy would certainly do have the effect of invoking the U.S. obligation to come to aid. This behavior also constitutes evidence for another component of the *Rescue-compelling* strategy – a deliberate lack of efforts toward accumulating sufficient defense capabilities.

Consistent with this interpretation of Taiwanese troop deployments, Chiang frequently sought crisis escalation around the offshore islands and then convinced Washington to commit. According to President Eisenhower's autobiography, the Nationalist leader warned the Eisenhower administration that unless Nationalist forces were permitted to take aggressive action

⁷⁵² Halperin, "The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis," 8.

⁷⁵³ Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 135.

on an extensive scale, Quemoy, along with one-third of the ROC's army, would be lost.⁷⁵⁴ A White House meeting minute on August 29, 1958, reads:

“Chiang Kai-shek, despite our advice, had put such a large proportion of his strength on the off shore islands and now came “whining” to us..... Admiral Burke and Governor Herter both indicated that Chiang was seeking to find out if we were really behind him. The President remarked that in effect he had in fact made his soldiers hostages on those islands. Admiral Burke said that this had been done deliberately and in fact made Taiwan virtually a hostage. Mr. Quarles added that Chiang's policy in this respect was designed to put leverage on us.”⁷⁵⁵

While there were various accounts of why the 1958 Taiwan Strait Crisis unfolded the way it did, it is fair to argue that the ROC's escalatory behavior as part of its alliance strategy was at least one non-negligible contributing factor to the crisis. Taipei had ramped up its provocative military activities on the offshore islands in July 1958. Between July 2 and 13, 1958, the 58th Taiwanese Division replaced the 32nd Division on Quemoy. The Taiwanese Ministry of National Defense (MND) infiltrated 150 agents into the mainland from Matsu. During 1958 prior to the Taiwan Strait crisis, the Taiwanese had fired 3,174 rounds of artillery fires from Quemoy, of which two thousands were fired at the Ta-teng causeway and the rest were fired against the mainland.⁷⁵⁶ The Chinese Communist response was modest at best: in the period between July 9 and July 16, the Chinese forces fired 91 propaganda rounds and 108 high explosive rounds against the offshore

⁷⁵⁴ Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The White House Years 1956-61. Waging Peace.*, Book Club Edition. edition (Heinemann, 1965), 298–300.

⁷⁵⁵ “Memorandum of Meeting, Summary of Meeting at the White House on the Taiwan Straits Situation, August 29, 1958,” FRUS, 1958-60, China, vol. XIX, 98-99.

⁷⁵⁶ “Telegram from the Embassy in the Republic of China to the Department of State, September 10, 1958,” FRUS, 1958-60, China, Volume XIX, document 352, 161. Note, however, that two-thirds of the shells were propaganda rather than explosives.

islands.⁷⁵⁷ On the other hand, the Nationalist cancelled all military leaves on the ROC on July 18, 1958.⁷⁵⁸ The Taiwanese Army in August 1958, when the crisis erupted, consisted of 450,000 men, of whom 320,000 were of combat capacity. Approximately one-third of these troops were on the offshore islands, with 86,000 on Quemoy and 23,000 on the Matsu group.⁷⁵⁹

On August 23, 1958, the Taiwan Strait Crisis erupted, when the PRC artillery bombarded Quemoy with approximately 20,000 shells.⁷⁶⁰ But it was clear that Beijing exercised restraint. From August 23 to August 29, the PRC shelled Quemoy with an average of over 10,000 shells per day, but then lowered the level of shelling to less than 1,000 shells per day from August 30 to September 4.⁷⁶¹ An all-out air-sea interdiction attempt never occurred.⁷⁶² Only eight 500-pound bombs were dropped on Quemoy, all on August 24, and PRC naval action was limited to a number of attacks by PT boats.⁷⁶³

In the midst of the crisis, Taiwanese leaders pressed for U.S. permission to bomb the mainland, and sought a firm public statement that the United States would defend the offshore islands.⁷⁶⁴ To raise the pressure on Washington effectively, Taipei sought to increase the intensity

⁷⁵⁷ “Chronology of Taiwan Straits Developments, June 30-September 26, 1958,” Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Intelligence Report No. 7805, September 29, 1958 (hereafter cited as “INR Chronology, June 30-September 26, 1958.”), cited in Halperin, “The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis,” chap. 1.

⁷⁵⁸ Central Daily News (Taipei), 18 July 1958.

⁷⁵⁹ See “Special National Intelligence Estimate 100-9-58 (“Probable Developments in the Taiwan Straits Area”), Central Intelligence Agency Memorandum, Memorandum to the Intelligence Advisory Committee, Annex A, “Chinese Communist and Chinese Nationalists Military Strengths and Capabilities in the Taiwan Straits Area,” August 22, 1958, cited in Halperin, “The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis,” 6.

⁷⁶⁰ Eisenhower, *The White House Years 1956-61. Waging Peace.*, 297.

⁷⁶¹ See “Chronology of Taiwan Straits Developments, June 30-September 26, 1958,” Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Intelligence Report No. 7805, September 29, 1958, in O.S.S./State Department Intelligence and Research Reports: China and India, 1950-1961 Supplement, microfilm, Reel II (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America, 1979). Also see “Table 14: Artillery Fire August 23- September 5,” in Halperin, “The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis,” 160.

⁷⁶² Jonathan T. Howe, *Multicrises: Sea Power and Global Policies in the Missile Age*, 1st edition (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1971), 211, 227.

⁷⁶³ Halperin, “The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis,” 159, 162, 212–14, 244, 306, 355. Also see “Chronology of Taiwan Straits Developments, June 30-September 26, 1958,” Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Intelligence Report No. 7805, September 29, 1958; Howe, *Multicrises*, 199.

⁷⁶⁴ Halperin, “The 1958 Taiwan Straits Crisis,” 340.

of the crisis by misleading information on the supply situation on Quemoy, by threatening to bomb the mainland, and by provoking air battles.⁷⁶⁵ On September 16th, for example, a CIA telegram from Taipei warned that the Taiwanese government was threatening to bomb the mainland if the United States did not take over resupply operations.⁷⁶⁶ In addition, Taipei was repeatedly rebroadcasting Secretary Dulles' press conference – which the Taiwanese saw softening U.S. commitments to the islands – to their troops on the Quemoy garrison, in order to claim that the speech had caused lowering of morale on Quemoy and to get the United States to intervene before it was clear that the communist blockade could not be broken.⁷⁶⁷

Taipei continued to employ its *Rescue-compelling* strategy in the early 1960s. In March 1962, Chiang Ching-kuo, Chiang Kai-shek's son, brought to Washington a detailed plan for a Nationalist return to the mainland, which would involve a large-scale Nationalist landing disguised to look like a spontaneous uprising against the PRC.⁷⁶⁸ While the Kennedy administration was considering this invasion plan in the spring of 1962, Taipei intensified war preparations. It was increasing draft calls; it extended the period of military service indefinitely; it established a Counter-Attack Action Committee; it instituted a special war tax to raise US\$60 million; it began training army cadre at the nationalist cadre school outside of Taipei to reestablish ROC institutions in areas of the mainland liberated by invading ROC armies; and it was increasing surveillance activities along the mainland coast.⁷⁶⁹ In June 1962, the PRC responded with a large military buildup in the Fukien province along the coast opposite Taiwan, as Beijing feared that the

⁷⁶⁵ Halperin, 341.

⁷⁶⁶ Halperin, 347.

⁷⁶⁷ Halperin, 360–61.

⁷⁶⁸ Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 90.

⁷⁶⁹ Roger Hilsman, *To Move A Nation*, First Edition edition (Doubleday & Company, 1967), 303–19. Also see Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 90.; Cha, *Powerplay*, 71.

Taiwanese might invade the mainland anytime soon by taking advantage of serious economic troubles that plagued the PRC.⁷⁷⁰ Naval units were deployed from the northern to the eastern fleet upon Mao Zedong's order.⁷⁷¹ Its fleet of motor torpedo boats and gunboats of various types numbered close to 175 and also possessed more than thirty submarines.⁷⁷² Estimates of the Chinese communist concentrations between Wenchow and Canton and from the coast back to the mountains that hem off the coastal regions range between 300,000 and 400,000 men of the regular army in addition to local military units, along with about 300 jet-fighter aircraft, mostly MIG-17s and MIG-19s.⁷⁷³

These activities inevitably heightened tensions across the Taiwan Straits, although there was no serious shelling of the offshore islands this time. President Kennedy, to avoid an escalation, had to announce in late June 1962 that U.S. policy remained “just what it has been on this matter since 1955.”⁷⁷⁴

4. The Republic of China's Favor-carrying Strategy

⁷⁷⁰ For an account of the 1962 crisis, see Allen S. Whiting, *The Chinese Calculus of Deterrence: India and Indochina* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Center for Chinese Studies, 2001), 62–75.

⁷⁷¹ *Dangdai Zhongguo haijun* [Contemporary China's Navy], (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan, 1987), 369.

⁷⁷² The New York Times, 3 July 1962.

⁷⁷³ The New York Times, 3 July 1962.

⁷⁷⁴ News Conference, June 27, 1962, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, John F. Kennedy, 1962, January 1 to December 31, 1962* (Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1963), 510. Despite Kennedy's announcement on the continuation of U.S. policy, his administration, at its NSC meeting held one week earlier, quietly decided to disassociate itself from Nationalist invasion efforts. And soon thereafter, it informed the PRC that the United States would not support an ROC attack on the mainland and offered to continue talks with Beijing. See Goldstein, “The United States and the Republic of China, 1949-1978: Suspicious Allies,” 19. Also see Kenneth Todd Young, *Negotiating With the Chinese Communists: The United States Experience, 1953-1967*, 1st edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 250.

Starting in 1963, Chiang Kai-shek's dependence posture experienced a change, as he tried to become less dependent on the United States, and his alliance strategy shifting from *Rescue-compelling* to *Favor-currying*. In September 1963, Chiang asserted, in his letter to President Kennedy, that "we shall so conduct ourselves as to make it unnecessary for American armed forces to be involved" in the Nationalists' invasion operation.⁷⁷⁵ There are two major causes of this change in Chiang's dependence posture. First, the local military balance was no longer shifting in favor of the mainland. In the PRC, the failure of agricultural collectivization movements and a series of natural disasters produced massive starvation in 1961 and 1962, with dire ramifications on the PRC's military strengths already heavily affected by the Sino-Soviet split. This suddenly opened up a window of opportunity for the ROC to carry out an invasion without worrying strong resistance or Soviet intervention on the side of Beijing.⁷⁷⁶ By late 1963, Nationalist propaganda had begun to stress that time was now on the nationalist side and that the Nationalists should, therefore, bide their time.⁷⁷⁷

Second, American attitudes toward Beijing also evolved as the United States gradually increased its involvement in Vietnam to fight North Vietnam backed by the Chinese Communists, improving, as a consequence, the Taiwanese perception of American security commitments. In the context of countering China's global assistance for revolutions and punishing its support for Hanoi's revolutionary effort in Indochina, support for a Nationalist invasion of the mainland had much in its favor.⁷⁷⁸ President Kennedy believed that it was necessary to "fight fire with fire" by supporting subversive and guerrilla warfare within Communist countries, which were also

⁷⁷⁵ Letter from Chiang Kai-shek to JFK, 5 September 1963, POF, box 113a, China General, 1963, JFK Library.

⁷⁷⁶ Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992*, 95-96.

⁷⁷⁷ Hilsman, *To Move A Nation*, 319-20.

⁷⁷⁸ Hilsman, 318.

supporting revolution in Vietnam and beyond.⁷⁷⁹ In other words, the best way to counter China's support for subversion and revolution in South Vietnam would be to destabilize the communist power by supporting comparable subversive activities within the mainland. After Kennedy's death, the Vietnam War defined America's policy toward Asia during the Johnson administration, which held the Chinese Communists responsible for the continuing North Vietnamese aggression in Indochina. As a result, President Johnson gave a possibility of military collaboration with Nationalist forces in Vietnam serious consideration.⁷⁸⁰ The perceived value of the ROC as an American ally was boosted by tangible benefits the U.S. military derived from using the Taiwanese territory as a staging area for operations in Vietnam: the U.S. forces stationed C-130 transport squadrons, KC-135 tankers, 13th Air Force fighter aircraft, and two fast-reaction F-4 nuclear bombers; they also established repair facilities and used the island for soldiers' rest and recreation.⁷⁸¹

Sensing positive changes to American attitudes toward the ROC's struggle with the mainland, Chiang's primary concern in the mid-1960s was now less about how to entangle Washington than about how to prepare for future invasion operations. With perceived strong commitments from the senior security partner, Chiang Kai-shek's alliance strategy shifted from *Rescue-compelling* to *Favor-currying*, and the ROC demonstrated two defining features of the *Favor-currying* strategy: proactive policy coordination through troop deployments to Vietnam; and efforts to increase defense capabilities including an end to risky operations that would jeopardize the chance of national survival.

⁷⁷⁹ Louise FitzSimons, *The Kennedy Doctrine* (Random House, 1972), 179–87.

⁷⁸⁰ Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992*, 97.

⁷⁸¹ For more on the importance of Taiwan as a support base for the Vietnam War, see Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 207–10.

(1) Proactive Policy Coordination Efforts

As a strong indication of proactive policy coordination, Taipei provided substantial operational contributions to U.S. fighting in Vietnam.⁷⁸² It sent to South Vietnam aircraft crews to fly transport and espionage missions as well as technical maintenance teams. Since officials in the Johnson administration feared that employing uniformed Nationalist fighting men would be too dangerous, some of those Taiwanese teams were camouflaged as Nung soldiers – an ethnic minority living along the Vietnam-China border – or given Vietnamese identities to hide them from the Chinese Communists.⁷⁸³ A relatively large contingent from the ROC served in southernmost Vietnam as part of the Sea Swallows unit led by a Catholic priest and supported by American aid.⁷⁸⁴ Back home, the ROC established special training programs for Vietnamese troops.⁷⁸⁵

The ROC also offered to send troops to Vietnam on a much larger scale. In April 1964, Chiang told Secretary of State Dean Rusk that the best way for the Republic of China to aid South Vietnam was by airdropping 5,000 to 10,000 Chinese Nationalist guerrillas into China's southwestern province (i.e. the Yunnan Province) to encourage and promote an anti-Communist revolution and disrupt Chinese Communist supply lines to their allies in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Burma.⁷⁸⁶ After the PRC's first nuclear test in October 1964, President Chiang Kai-shek

⁷⁸² Stanley R. Larsen and James L. Collins, *Allied Participation in Vietnam. Vietnam Studies.*, First Edition (Washington: Department of the Army, 1975), chap. V.

⁷⁸³ #315, Hummel, Taipei, 14 September 1965, NSF Country File bx 237-38, f: China Cables, vol. 4, LBJ Library.

⁷⁸⁴ George Kahin, *Intervention* (Garden City, N.Y: Anchor, 1987), 333.

⁷⁸⁵ Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992*, 97.

⁷⁸⁶ "Memorandum of Conversation between Rusk and Chiang Kai-shek, April 16, 1964," Department of State, Secretary's Memoranda of Conversation, Lot 65 D 330, also available in "Telegram from the Embassy in Vietnam to the Department of State, April 29, 1964," FRUS, 1964-68, Vol.1, Vietnam, 1964, 247.

suggested joint military action against China's nuclear installations as well as the creation of a joint U.S.-Taiwanese defense force.⁷⁸⁷ In 1965, Chiang Kai-shek offered to launch an Operation Great Torch-5, a cross-strait invasion of five southwest Chinese provinces where the Chinese Communists' control was weakest – Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Yunnan, Kweichow, and Szechwan – and to coordinate the operation with the war in Vietnam. To follow-up on this offer, Chiang Ching-kuo suggested, in his meeting with Secretary of Defense McNamara, that the operation Great Torch-5 – an all-out Nationalist invasion of the mainland – would create a “barrier” to PRC expansion and would not require U.S. ground forces.⁷⁸⁸ In the same meeting, Chiang Ching-kuo emphasized that “suspicions that the GRC seeks more military aid, or seeks to involve the US in their return to the mainland are superficial and that what is really important is that we consult more closely at high levels of government on matters of Asian policy and strategy.”⁷⁸⁹ Acting on Chiang Kai-shek's direction, Chiang Ching-kuo added that “the GRC forces are ‘available’ to support free world interest in Asia but that if Americans anticipated the GRC forces might be needed the GRC should be given a little notice so they could have their forces ready when an emergency arose.”⁷⁹⁰

In June 1967, furthermore, an ROC military attaché in Saigon wrote to General William Westmoreland, requesting attachment of eight to ten ROC officers in the areas of intelligence, artillery, armor, ordnance, and engineering to U.S. forces serving in Vietnam in order to enhance their combat experience.⁷⁹¹ U.S. leaders eventually declined these Taiwanese offers for fear that the presence of ROC combat troops in South Vietnam might either anger Beijing or provide a

⁷⁸⁷ David Albright and Corey Gay, “Taiwan: Nuclear Nightmare Averted,” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 54, no. 1 (January 1, 1998): 55, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00963402.1998.11456811>.

⁷⁸⁸ “Memorandum of Conversation, September 22, 1965,” FRUS, 1964-68, Volume XXX, China, 209-214.

⁷⁸⁹ “Memorandum of Conversation, September 22, 1965,” FRUS, 1964-68, Volume XXX, China, 211.

⁷⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹¹ Larsen and Collins, *Allied Participation in Vietnam. Vietnam Studies.*, 117–19.

convenient pretext for direct Chinese military intervention.⁷⁹² For Dean Rusk, “the issue of Southeast Asia should not get mixed with the enormous issue of the basic Chinese conflict.”⁷⁹³

(2) Improving its Ability to Defend Itself

As another strong indication of the *Favor-carrying* strategy, the ROC in the 1960s significantly improved its defense capabilities. From the early 1960s, the ROC began to seek at least a commanding technical level of superiority in air forces over the mainland, acquiring modern U.S. fighters and sending dozens of elite ROC pilots to a U.S. training program at Laughlin Air Force Base in Texas.⁷⁹⁴ Despite its financial burden on its developing economy, the ROC purchased a series of then modern US fighters such as F-86F, F-86D, F-100, F-104, and F-5 aircraft as well as tanks, artillery, warships, and anti-aircraft missiles in the 1960s.⁷⁹⁵ These aircraft were more than sufficient to deter the PLA Air Force, which was still reliant on large numbers of now obsolete Soviet designs such as the MiG-19.⁷⁹⁶ It was certainly consistent with U.S. strategy: Washington sought to give the ROC Air Force a margin of technical superiority over the PRC Air Forces with its military aids gearing toward bolstering Taiwan’s defenses rather than its offensive capabilities.⁷⁹⁷ However, American support for the development of Nationalist military capabilities was limited by the U.S. desire to deny Taipei the capability to autonomously initiate large-scale offensive operations against the mainland.

⁷⁹² Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 201–3. Also see Larsen and Collins, *Allied Participation in Vietnam. Vietnam Studies.*, 115. “Memorandum of Conversation, U.S. Embassy in Saigon, April 19, 1964,” FRUS, 1964-68, Volume 1, Vietnam, 1964, 252.

⁷⁹³ “Telegram from the Embassy in Vietnam to the Department of State, April 29, 1964,” FRUS, 1964-68, Volume 1, Vietnam, 1964, 247.

⁷⁹⁴ Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 195.

⁷⁹⁵ Denny Roy, *Taiwan: A Political History*, 1 edition (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), 141.

⁷⁹⁶ Martin Edmonds and Michael Tsai, eds., *Taiwan’s Security and Air Power: Taiwan’s Defense Against the Air Threat from Mainland China*, 1 edition (London ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 163.

⁷⁹⁷ Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 66–68.

In the early 1960s, the ROC ceased to deploy troops to the offshore islands on such a large scale as to pose existential threats to its own nation. In conducting artillery bombardment operations around the offshore islands, live shells were replaced by propaganda sheets. The focus of its offensive operations shifted from the offshore islands to the mainland, but the scale and duration of Nationalist operations in the early 1960s demonstrated restraint on the part of Taipei.⁷⁹⁸ Starting in 1962, Chiang Kai-shek was large numbers of small armed units to the continent, first for the purpose of installing “guerrilla bases” in sparsely populated areas in the interior in 1962, and then for the goal of conducting commando raids against PRC installations along the coast starting in 1963.⁷⁹⁹ For such commando raids, the Nationalist forces sometimes used islands under the jurisdiction of South Korea and South Vietnam as jumping-off points for the operations, and this provides another indication that Taipei was operating through close consultation with Washington.

From the mid-1960s, the ROC Air Force’s 35th Squadron, composed of CIA-provided U-2 aircraft, regularly conducted reconnaissance missions from its home base at Taoyuan Air Base in Taiwan in order to assess the PRC’s nuclear capabilities. Such Nationalist U-2 overflights produced valuable intelligence regarding the reality of the Sino-Soviet split at the turn of the 1960s with photos that made clear the abrupt halt of work at PRC nuclear facilities and at missile and nuclear test sites following the departure of Soviet specialists from China in mid-1960. In late 1960s, Washington transferred to Taipei U-2R, a more powerful version of the U-2, that could fly higher and farther, and could carry considerably heavier reconnaissance equipment.⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁸ For a list of limited Nationalist offensive operations for the period of 1960-65, see Garver, 107.

⁷⁹⁹ Garver, 103–7.

⁸⁰⁰ Garver, 195–96. The U-2R’s new long-range oblique photography allowed Taipei to take detailed photographs at oblique angles from a distance of 93 miles.

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Toward the end of the 1960s, however, the close alignment of Washington and Taipei gradually disintegrated, to a large extent, due to developments elsewhere, including President Nixon's Guam Doctrine calling for a reduction of American military presence in Asia; the breakdown of Sino-Soviet alliance relations; and most importantly, a turnabout in American diplomacy toward normalization of relations with the PRC – a dramatic shift that inevitably eroded the basis for an alliance between Washington and Taipei for the previous two decades.

By the time Richard Nixon took office as president in January 1969, Taipei had anticipated these developments. In fact, Nixon had already committed himself in a *Foreign Affairs* article of October 1967 to bringing China into the community of nations while reducing American responsibilities as the “policeman” of Asia.⁸⁰¹ In February 1970, when a 135th PRC-U.S. ambassadorial meeting took place at Warsaw, the Nixon administration broke with precedent by failing to inform the ROC, prior to the meeting, of what Washington planned to bring up at the talks with Beijing. When ROC representatives asked subsequently for a briefing on the ambassadorial talks, they were given vague and evasive replies from their American counterparts. This led ROC leaders to suspect that the United States was discussing questions relating to the ROC behind their back.⁸⁰² In an April 1970 meeting with ROC Vice-Premier Chiang Ching-kuo, who flew to Washington to gauge the extent of U.S. rapprochement with Beijing, Nixon reassured Chiang that the talks in Warsaw would not fundamentally alter America's protective relation toward the ROC. But Chiang Ching-kuo, rightfully, did not take Nixon's words at face value: Chiang was left with no doubt that the Nixon administration intended to undertake an overhaul of

⁸⁰¹ Richard Nixon, “Asia After Vietnam,” *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 46, No. 1 (October 1967), 116-23.

⁸⁰² James C. H. Shen, *The U.S. and Free China: How the U.S. Sold Out Its Ally*, First Edition edition (Washington, D.C: Acropolis Books Inc, 1983), 66. Also see Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 265–68.

relations with the PRC at the expense of Taipei.⁸⁰³ Chiang Ching-kuo subsequently became resolute about reducing the ROC's dependence on the United States.⁸⁰⁴

Chiang Ching-kuo's instinct proved correct. In November 1970, President Nixon directed Henry Kissinger to study the question of "Red China's" admission to the United Nations. President Nixon's visit to China in 1972 was yet another watershed moment, which transformed the PRC from an adversary to a strategic partner for the United States. In accord with the U.S.-PRC Shanghai communiqué of February 1972, U.S. military forces began withdrawing from the ROC the same year, and by the end of 1973, more than one-third of all U.S. military personnel previously stationed in the ROC had been withdrawn.⁸⁰⁵ Henry Kissinger's subsequent talks with PRC leaders suggest that the United States was pursuing even a virtual alliance with Communist China.

Meanwhile, Taipei had a relatively optimistic assessment of the local balance of power – the PRC's military buildup was slowed down by disastrous consequences of the Cultural Revolution. In addition, the PLA faced Soviet threats in a serious border dispute with Moscow. In November 1971, ROC military planning posited the PLA as possessing between 8 and 11 infantry armies; 9 artillery, armor, and amphibious divisions; 109 warships, 322 cargo vessels, and 425 junks; and 1,036 fighter aircraft.⁸⁰⁶ While U.S. leaders discounted the realistic possibility of a PLA assault in the Taiwan Strait, they still took a number of moves designed to ensure Taipei would have military superiority over the PRC; one such move was that the Pentagon, in April 1971,

⁸⁰³ Shen, *The U.S. and Free China*, 48–54. Shen, then vice foreign minister of the ROC and later Ambassador to the United States, accompanied Chiang Ching-kuo on his trip to Washington in April 1970.

⁸⁰⁴ Hsiao-ting Lin, "Taiwan's Cold War in Southeast Asia" CWIHP, no. 70 (2016), <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/taiwans-cold-war-southeast-asia>.

⁸⁰⁵ U.S. Taiwan Defense Command, Command History, 1 January -31 December 1973, compiled by the Public Affairs Office, headquarters USTDC, Taiwan, 1974, Washington: Naval Historical Center, 11-13.

⁸⁰⁶ Ministry of National Defense, *Meijun zaiHua gongzuo jishi (xiefangzhi bu)* [Record of U.S. military activities on Taiwan (defense assistance section)] (hereafter cited as Xiefang zhi bu), Taipei: Historical Bureau, October 1981, 13–18.

approved the lease of two submarines to the ROC navy – the very first submarines Taipei had long sought to acquire; these were transferred to the ROC in 1973 after ROC navy personnel had completed training in the United States.⁸⁰⁷ To help improve Taiwanese technical superiority, elements of the U.S. military conducted joint exercises with the ROC military throughout the 1970s: in May 1973, May 1974, May 1975, March-May 1976, April-May 1977, and May 1978.

Keenly aware not only that the United States was gradually walking away from its security commitments to the ROC but also that the local military balance was rather in the ROC's favor, Taipei's alliance strategy shifted once again—this time, from *Favor-carrying* to *Autonomy-seeking*, as is predicted by the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy.

5. The Republic of China's *Autonomy-seeking* Strategy

The ROC lost confidence in American security commitments in 1970. But this time, it did not need a *Rescue-compelling* strategy unlike in the 1950s, because the local balance of power was relatively stable, at least not favoring the PRC, which was in paralysis due to upheaval of the Cultural Revolution. As U.S.-PRC rapprochement accelerated during the first Nixon administration, Taipei toyed with two new policy options, which constitute the major pillars of the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy: one is rapprochement with the Soviet Union – or an end to its faithful

⁸⁰⁷ Ministry of National Defense, *Meijun zaiHua gongzuo shiji (haijun guwen zhibu)* [Record of U.S. military activities on Taiwan (naval advisory section)], Taipei: Historical Bureau, 1981, 220–22. In transferring these submarines to Taiwan in 1973, the Nixon administration had Taiwan promise not to arm them and to use them solely for training purposes. Despite this commitment, ROC government agents, the following year, recruited the assistance of Chinese criminal gangs based in San Francisco in obtaining torpedoes from the black market. The ROC government sought thirty torpedoes and would pay \$100,000 apiece for them, which was a generous price considering the submarines themselves had cost \$153,000 each. For details on this submarine transfer, see David E. Kaplan, *Fires of the Dragon* (Place of publication not identified: Scribner, 2002), 184–91.

coordination with Washington – and the other is its pursuit of an independent deterrent – i.e. advanced nuclear technologies.

(1) A Lack of Policy Alignment – Rapprochement with the Soviet Union

The ROC's diplomatic flirting with Moscow started in the late 1960s and accelerated in the 1970s. In October 1968, the ROC held secret talks with Moscow, via Victor Louis (Vitalii Evgen'evich Lui), a Moscow-based freelance reporter for the London Evening News, who met Chiang Ching-kuo before spending four days touring Taiwan.⁸⁰⁸ Soon thereafter, Taipei deliberately leaked the news of Louis' visit to Stanley Karnow the *Washington Post*.⁸⁰⁹ Having lived in the Soviet Union from 1925 to 1937, the younger Chiang was fluent in Russian and married to a Russian wife. A leading China expert, Michael Share, suggests that it was the Taiwanese authorities, unnerved by the increasing isolation of their country, that approached the Soviets for secret talks.⁸¹⁰ According to memoirs published in 1995 of Wei Jingmeng, who organized Louis' visit to Taipei in 1968 as the head of the ROC Intelligence Bureau, the two sides first contacted via the ROC embassy in Tokyo. Louis, writing in the *Washington Post*, noted that the Taiwanese took pride in no longer requiring American economic aid, and that 'Taiwan maintained an independent foreign policy.'⁸¹¹ Louis subsequently visited Taipei at least four times – October 1968, November 1971, December 1974, and June 1975 – and met with Wei in Europe at least

⁸⁰⁸ Michael Share, "From Ideological Foe to Uncertain Friend: Soviet Relations with Taiwan, 1943-82," *Cold War History* 3, no. 2 (January 2003): 22, <https://doi.org/10.1080/713999981>.

⁸⁰⁹ *Washington Post*, 2 November 1968. Also see Czeslaw Tubilewicz, "Taiwan and the Soviet Union During the Cold War: Enemies or Ambiguous Friends?," *Cold War History* 5, no. 1 (February 1, 2005): 79–80, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1468274042000339179>.

⁸¹⁰ Share, "From Ideological Foe to Uncertain Friend," 22–23, 28–29.

⁸¹¹ *Washington Post*, 19 March 1969.

twice, in May 1969 and October 1970.⁸¹² When Wei met with Louis in Vienna in May 1969, the two sides agreed: that in the event of the ROC's invasion operations against the mainland, the Soviet Union would not support Beijing; that the two countries would establish regular cooperation and collaboration between their intelligence agencies. Louis had another meeting with Wei in Vienna in late October 1970, in which he stated that Moscow hoped to cooperate with Taipei to destroy Mao's regime. After this second Vienna meeting, both Chiang Kai-shek and Chiang Ching-kuo requested all relevant intelligence reports to be sent to Moscow and considered the release of all remaining sailors captured during the 1954 Tuapse Incident⁸¹³ – a good will gesture toward Moscow designed to warn Washington of the possibility of the ROC's partnership with the Soviet Union, according to Wei.⁸¹⁴

In May 1969 a former ROC Deputy Minister of Education, Ku Yu-shin visited Moscow. One month later, the ROC sent an official governmental delegation with two Nationalist cabinet ministers, the Minister for Tourism and the Minister of Communications, to a World Inter-Governmental Conference on Tourism in Sophia, Bulgaria, and the Taiwanese delegation traveled to Moscow after the conclusion of that conference. In 1969 and 1970, there were increasing informal contacts between Soviet and ROC diplomatic personnel in Tokyo, Washington, and elsewhere. In the spring of 1969, for example, the PRC claimed that the military attachés of the

⁸¹² Wei, Jingmeng, *Sulian tewu zai Taiwan: Wei Jingmeng riji zhongde Wang Ping dang'an* [Soviet Special Agent in Taiwan: Wang Ping's files from Wei Jingmeng's Diary], Taipei: Lianhe Bao She, 1995, 21; Li, Jian, *Taiwan yu Qiansulian jiaowang milu* [Secret Record of Contacts Between Taiwan and the Former Soviet Union], Beijing: Zhongguo Shehui Chubanshe, 1995 Vol. 2, 560–61; The Far Eastern Economic Review, 27 June 1975; Yu, Kejie, "Taiwan yu Sulian de mimi jiechu [Secret contacts between Taiwan and the Soviet Union]," *Bai nian chao*, no. 2 (2000): 34–39; Bellows, Thomas J., "Taiwan's Foreign Policy in the 1970s: A Case Study of Adaptation and Viability." *Asian Survey* 16, no. 7 (July 1976), 597.

⁸¹³ The Tuapse Incident refers to a capturing by the ROC Navy on July 23 1954 of a PRC-bound Soviet oil tanker Tuapse. Forty-nine Soviet crew members were arrested and the tanker was taken by the ROC navy on the ground that the tanker violated a United Nations embargo on trade with the PRC following Beijing's entry into the Korean War.

⁸¹⁴ Wei, *Sulian tewu zai Taiwan*, 21.

Soviet and ROC embassies in Tokyo held talks for the Soviets to give a detailed briefing on the Chen Pao (Damansky) Incident to the ROC side.⁸¹⁵ In February 1970, Hsieh Jen-Chao, a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the ROC's parliament, the Legislative Yuan, published a series of articles, one of which stated: "At this time we should not regard the Soviet Union as our enemy."⁸¹⁶

In November 1971, after the United Nations voted to admit the PRC and expel the ROC, Taiwanese Foreign Minister Chow Shu-kai announced that since the ROC was no longer in the UN, it would trade with all Communist countries other than Communist China.⁸¹⁷ While not envisioning formal diplomatic relations between the USSR and the ROC, Chow said, in a meeting with American reporters, that the ROC would explore what it could do with the Soviet Union.⁸¹⁸ Chow simultaneously pursued "secret talks" between Moscow and Taipei, similar to the U.S.-PRC talks in Warsaw, in order to study the possibilities and feasibilities that arose from such talks. Were the United States to make important concessions to Beijing, or to seek to completely disengage itself from the West Pacific, "The Free nations of Asia would begin turning toward the Soviet Union," Chow said.⁸¹⁹

Moscow did not miss the opportunity to exploit Taipei's souring relations with the United States to its own advantage, and signaled its interests in rapprochement with Taipei. There were repeated reports that the Soviet Union was secretly providing financial support for the development

⁸¹⁵ New China News Agency, June 3, 1969. Also see John W. Garver, "Taiwan's Russian Option: Image and Reality," *Asian Survey* 18, no. 7 (1978): 757, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2643529>.

⁸¹⁶ "Cable from American Embassy in Taipei to Secretary of State, February 13, 1970," POL Chinat (1970-1973), RG59, National Archives.

⁸¹⁷ John W. Garver, *China's Decision For Rapprochement With The United States, 1968-1971*, 1 edition (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1982), 757.

⁸¹⁸ Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 277.

⁸¹⁹ China News, March 9, 1972. Note, however, that two days after Chow's remarks about rapprochement with the USSR, he issued an "explanation" that diluted his words a bit.

of various industrial enterprises in Taiwan.⁸²⁰ Around 1972, for example, the Soviet Union contributed funds via a Swiss bank to the construction of the large, new shipyard at Gaoshung in Taiwan.⁸²¹ In May 1973, the Taipei-Moscow tie even reached a military level: two days before the head of the newly established U.S. Liaison Office in Beijing was scheduled to assume his post, several Soviet warships passed through the Taiwan Strait between 20 and 40 miles from the mainland coast and then turned back north to circumnavigate Taiwan – action of military significance that the Soviets would have never undertaken without Taipei’s knowledge and permission.⁸²² A leading expert in Chinese foreign policy, John Garver, argues that “there were sufficient interactions between Taiwan and the Soviet Union in the late 1960s and early 1970s to justify the statement that during that period there existed a substantive relation between the two.”⁸²³

(2) Pursuing an Independent Deterrent

The ROC’s *Autonomy-seeking* strategy is also attested by Taipei’s serious attempt to acquire advanced nuclear technologies in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The U.S.-PRC rapprochement led to the rise of a “hawk” faction, within the ROC political circle, which insisted that, with the American partner now having been discredited, nuclear weapons were a necessary last-resort defense against attack by the mainland. Even those who were opposed to such a move on the basis of its fiscal burden also thought that ROC interests in nuclear weapons might signal

⁸²⁰ Garver, *China’s Decision For Rapprochement With The United States, 1968-1971*, 757.

⁸²¹ New China News Agency, June 3, 1969.

⁸²² “Cable from American Embassy in Taipei to Secretary of State, May 21, 1973,” RG59/1613/2204, National Archives. Also see Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 278.; Garver, “Taiwan’s Russian Option,” 757.

⁸²³ Garver, “Taiwan’s Russian Option,” 757.

to Washington that U.S. interest would not be served if the Taiwanese felt compelled to rely entirely on itself for defense.⁸²⁴

Taipei's move toward an independent nuclear deterrent started in 1969 – the same year that President Nixon inaugurated. The ROC had signed a peaceful nuclear cooperation agreement with Washington in 1955, under which the United States provided U-235 and research reactors for use in scientific, engineering, and medical programs, while the ROC agreed to accept various safeguards and inspections.⁸²⁵ The agreement allowed the ROC to accumulate a substantial store of nuclear expertise, with over 700 Taiwanese studying nuclear technologies at U.S. government laboratories and universities.⁸²⁶ Taipei briefly considered nuclear weapons as an option in the mid-1960s, after the PRC's nuclear test in October 1964. The ROC's defense ministry came up with a \$140-million proposal called the Hsin Chu program for producing indigenous nuclear weapons, and place it under the auspices of the Chungshan Institute of Science and Technology (CSIST), the ministry's research institute. The plan included the purchase of a heavy-water reactor, a heavy-water production plant, and a plutonium separation plant.⁸²⁷ Chiang Kai-shek's science adviser, Ta-You Wu, dissented over the Hsin Chu program, however, on the ground that it underestimated the true costs of a nuclear weapons program, including the risk of confrontation with the United States. Wu was directing a newly formed Committee for Science Development of the ROC National Security Council. In mid-1966, the ROC and the West German company Siemens neared finalization of a \$50-million deal for the purchase of a single, multi-purpose, 50-megawatt, natural

⁸²⁴ The New York Times, 30 August 1976; Washington Post, 31 August 1976; Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 279.

⁸²⁵ *Treaties Between the Republic of China and Foreign States (1927-1957)*, Taipei: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1958, 831-35.

⁸²⁶ Washington Post, 29 August 1976.

⁸²⁷ Ta-You Wu, "A Historical Document – A Foot-note to the History of Our Country's 'Nuclear Energy' Policies," *Biographical Literature*, Vol. 52, no. 5, May 1988, cited in Albright and Gay, "Taiwan," 55.

uranium oxide-fueled heavy-water-moderated nuclear reactor.⁸²⁸ Ultimately, President Chiang accepted Wu's recommendations and opted not to buy the nuclear facilities offered by Siemens, primarily in consideration of U.S. oppositions.⁸²⁹ The ROC government, as a result, put on hold all plans for reprocessing domestically-produced plutonium, and signed a nonproliferation treaty (NPT) in 1968.⁸³⁰

In early 1969, President Nixon's foreign policy toward the PRC inevitably rocked this underlying logic behind Taipei's decision not to pursue indigenous nuclear weapons the previous year. Soon thereafter, the ROC began construction of a reprocessing laboratory with components obtained from around the world, while Washington refused to cooperate with the ROC's reprocessing efforts, arguing that the ROC's civil power program did not require a reprocessing facility.⁸³¹ To be clear, the U.S. government at the time did not necessarily object to the development of a Taiwanese reprocessing plant, as long as any separated plutonium was put into mixed oxide fuel outside the ROC.⁸³² Negotiations with the IAEA on the standard comprehensive safeguards agreement, called INFCIRC/153, were finalized in 1971. After the ROC lost its seat in the United Nations in October 1971, however, it was no longer able to sign any nonproliferation agreements with UN-affiliated organizations including the IAEA as a sovereign state. While the ROC signed a tripartite safeguards agreement known as INFCIRC/158 with the IAEA and the United States in 1972, this alternative inspection modality was much weaker than the previous

⁸²⁸ David Albright and Andrea Stricker, *Taiwan's Former Nuclear Weapons Program: Nuclear Weapons On-Demand* (Washington, DC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2018), sec. 285.

⁸²⁹ Albright and Gay, "Taiwan," 56.

⁸³⁰ Albright and Stricker, *Taiwan's Former Nuclear Weapons Program*, sec. 375.

⁸³¹ Testimony by Assistant Secretary for East Asia Arthur W. Hummel, Jr., before Subcommittee on Arms Control, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, 22 September 1976 (hereafter cited as Testimony by Hummel), in Department of State Bulletin, 11 October 1976, 454–56. Also see Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 279.

⁸³² Cable from Secretary of State to the U.S. Embassy in Taipei, *ROC Nuclear Reprocessing Plant*, August 22, 1973; Memorandum from Sullivan to Hummel, *Nuclear Study Group Visit to Taiwan*, October 29, 1973.

INFCIRC/153, allowing for access only to the Taiwan Research Reactor (TRR) twice a year and not to other nuclear facilities at the ROC's Institute for Nuclear Energy Research (INER).⁸³³ In early 1972, a few months after the ROC lost its seat in the United Nations and the IAEA, it decided to acquire a reprocessing plant from West Germany's UHDE, and secretly initiated a new program called Plan Tao Yuan. The new plan aimed to acquire the capability to produce indigenous weapons-grade plutonium by separation, using irradiated TRR fuel, which went critical in January 1973.⁸³⁴ In late 1972, the ROC had secretly signed an agreement with a German company UHDE-Lurgi to provide parts for a reprocessing facility.⁸³⁵

Furthermore, Taipei obtained 100 metric tons of natural uranium from South Africa with no strings attached in 1973 and 1974.⁸³⁶ The ROC also acquired uranium from German suppliers in small batches of less than 400 kilograms via Britain.⁸³⁷ In 1974, the CIA reported that "Taipei conducts its small nuclear program with a weapon option clearly in mind, and it will be in a position to fabricate a nuclear device after five years or so."⁸³⁸ By the end of 1975, the ROC's reprocessing facility became fully operational, producing fifteen kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium, and came under intense scrutiny by the IAEA and the United States in 1976.⁸³⁹ Major inspections by the IAEA raised more suspicions about secret reprocessing activities in the ROC in July 1976, but Taipei continued its Plan Tao Yuan through obfuscation or deception in the latter half of the 1970s. Chiang Ching-kuo, who became the ROC's premier in 1972 and continued to

⁸³³ Albright and Stricker, *Taiwan's Former Nuclear Weapons Program*, sec. 788.

⁸³⁴ Albright and Stricker, sec. 611.

⁸³⁵ Albright and Stricker, sec. 641.

⁸³⁶ At the time, IAEA safeguards did not require a country to report uranium imports. In addition, Taiwan's safeguards agreement with the IAEA did not require IAEA inspection of the uranium metal.

⁸³⁷ Albright and Stricker, location. 1023.

⁸³⁸ Director of Central Intelligence, Memorandum, "Prospects for Further Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons," September 4, 1974, NSA EBB 181, Doc. 8.

⁸³⁹ Testimony by Hummel, 22 September 1976.

pursue his father's goal of acquiring nuclear weapons capabilities, said in early September 1976, "we have the ability and the facilities to manufacture nuclear weapons (...) we will never manufacture them."⁸⁴⁰ One week later, Premier Chiang made a promise to the U.S. Ambassador in Taipei that the ROC would not acquire its own reprocessing facilities or engage in any activities related to reprocessing.⁸⁴¹ Despite this pledge by Chiang, the United States learned a few months later that negotiations between INER and Comprimo – a Dutch company – over a potential reprocessing contract had continued.⁸⁴² Around this time, the press revealed that 15 Taiwanese specialists under contract with the Ministry of National Defense's Chung Shan Research Institute came close to completing an inertial navigation program at MIT aimed at imbuing skills sufficient to build missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. They were believed to be able to assemble missiles within 5 to 10 years that could hit within a one-mile radius of a target at 1,000 miles.⁸⁴³

The Taiwanese pursuit of nuclear weapons became much more challenging once President Carter inaugurated in January 1977, when the United States firmly demanded that the ROC halt its sensitive nuclear activities and reorient INER's activities to focus on civilian use. In April 1977, the Carter administration presented the ROC with a list of six demands regarding its nuclear activities, including 1) temporarily suspending the TRR; 2) disposing of all spent fuel from existing and future reactors located in the ROC; 3) terminating all fuel cycle activities and reorienting facilities involving weapons-usable materials; 4) transferring all present holdings of plutonium to the U.S.; 5) henceforth avoiding all program or activities which the U.S. judges have an application

⁸⁴⁰ The New York Times, 5 September 1976.

⁸⁴¹ Senate Subcommittee on Arms Control, International Organizations, and Security Agreements, Committee on Foreign Relations, Hearings on Non-Proliferation Issues, March 19, April 16 and 28, July 18 and 22, October 21 and 24, 1975; February 23 and 24, March 15, September 22, and November 8, 1976 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), 345–71.

⁸⁴² Cable from American Embassy in Taipei to Secretary of State, Taiwan's Continued Interest in Reprocessing, January 8, 1977.

⁸⁴³ Washington Post, 13 June 1976.

to the development of a nuclear explosive capability; and 6) having all nuclear materials, equipment and facilities subject to the trilateral U.S./ROC/IAEA safeguard inspections.⁸⁴⁴ Apparently, the ROC had no choice but to agree in 1977 that the United States would be “afforded unlimited access to all ROC nuclear facilities on an ongoing basis.”⁸⁴⁵

However, the ROC’s military leadership was defiant and upset by the fact that the leaders of INER and CSIST had agreed to shut down all of the nuclear programs. The military was resentful of the U.S. demands and started, soon thereafter, to discuss how to improve the readiness of nuclear weapons capabilities.⁸⁴⁶ Specifically, the military initiated its internal debate about how to carry out the activities of a nuclear weapons program without openly violating the 1977 U.S. restrictions.

Conditions surrounding the ROC grew considerably worse after the Carter administration inaugurated in 1977, not just for its nuclear program but also for overall security relations with the United States. The Carter administration’s May 1977 NSC study known as PRM-24, which was leaked to the media in June, noted that the main stumbling block to progress in relations had already been surmounted; that is, the Nixon and Ford administrations made concessions to all of Beijing’s demands regarding the ROC, including removal of troops, relinquishing of the defense treaty, and maintenance only of unofficial ties after normalization.⁸⁴⁷ Sacrificing an ally’s protection to accept demands from its main adversary is a perfect recipe for undermining the

⁸⁴⁴ Cable from Secretary of State to American Embassy in Taipei, The Taiwan Research Reactor, December 22, 1977 (declassified on December 3, 2015). A cable from Secretary of State to American Embassy in Taipei dated March 26, 1977 presents initial six principles, which evolved over months of negotiations with Taipei to be finalized in December 1977. These six demands presented above are final according to the cable dated December 22, 1977.

⁸⁴⁵ Cable from Secretary of State to American Embassy in Taipei, The Taiwan Research Reactor, December 22, 1977.

⁸⁴⁶ Albright and Stricker, location 1944.

⁸⁴⁷ Harry Harding, *A Fragile Relationship: The United States and China since 1972*, 1st ptg. edition (Washington, D.C: Brookings Institution Press, 1992), 70–73. Also see Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992*, 128–30.

credibility of security commitments.⁸⁴⁸ The way Jimmy Carter announced the termination of the 1954 defense treaty on December 15, 1978, electrified Taiwanese leaders and further opened up the wound in U.S.-ROC relations. Jimmy Carter's National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, the main driver behind normalization with the PRC, ignored the U.S. Congress' calls for prior consultation before any change in the 1954 defense treaty, and also dismissed the ROC as a minor casualty of a grand strategic accomplishment.⁸⁴⁹ The reason for not allowing prior consultation was the need for extreme secrecy, which would give the administration both control over the pace of normalization negotiations and protection against the Taiwanese lobby attempting to thwart before the final package was arranged.⁸⁵⁰ But this logic was a quintessential example of how the Carter administration place its grand strategy over an ally's security interests in Taiwanese eyes. As a result of secrecy, Carter gave its ambassador in Taipei only some 12 hours warning prior to its December 15th announcement, but the ambassador, since he was attending a party, notified Chiang Ching-kuo only 6 hours before the termination of the treaty was announced.⁸⁵¹

The 1954 defense treaty was now replaced by a U.S. domestic law, the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), as a legal basis for the two countries' security cooperation in 1979. According to the TRA, the United States would "consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the

⁸⁴⁸ The Carter administration's Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance on his first exploratory trip to Beijing in August 1977 attempted regain more flexibility in favor of US-Taiwanese relations with maximum demands, including official U.S. representatives in Taipei and a renunciation-of-force declaration by Beijing. But both were met with flat refusals by the PRC. See Washington Post, 7 September 1977.

⁸⁴⁹ About 20 members of the Congress, including Senators Robert Dole and Richard Stone among others, sponsored a bipartisan amendment to the international security assistance authorization bill, which passed unanimously, calling for consultation prior to changes in the 1954 U.S.-ROC defense treaty. See Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992*, 131-32.

⁸⁵⁰ Michael Oksenberg, "Congress, Executive-Legislative Relations, and American China Policy," in Edmund S. Muskie, Kenneth Rush, and Kenneth W. Thompson, eds., *The President, the Congress and Foreign Policy* (Lanham: University Press Of America, 1986), 215. Oksenberg was the Carter administration's NSC staff member at the time.

⁸⁵¹ Tucker, *Taiwan, Hong Kong, and the United States, 1945-1992*, 132.

Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States.” The TRA also declares that it is U.S. policy “to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan,” and that “the United States will make available to Taiwan such defense articles and defense services in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capabilities.”⁸⁵² The reassurance language in the TRA could hardly make any difference to the damage already done to the credibility of U.S. security commitments, especially in light of how the Carter administration had been dealing with Taipei during and after the normalization talks with Beijing. As part of the requirements from the normalization accord with Beijing, the Carter administration informed the ROC in early 1978 that foreign military sales credits would be cut from \$80 million in 1978 to \$10 million in 1979 and phased out completely in 1980.⁸⁵³ At about the same time, the Carter administration also denied advanced bombers to the Nationalists and blocked the sale of the F-5G, which had been built by Northrop specifically for the ROC on Pentagon’s orders, presumably for fear of any complications that approval of the new airplane could cause for Washington-Beijing normalization talks.⁸⁵⁴

6. Alternative Explanations and Conclusion

⁸⁵² Taiwan Relations Act: Public Law 96-8 96th Congress Sec. 4 under Application of Laws; International Agreements.

⁸⁵³ Leonard Kusnitz, *Public Opinion and Foreign Policy: America’s China Policy, 1949-1979* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 1984), 144.

⁸⁵⁴ Los Angeles Times, 25 October 1978.

The ROC's alliance strategy varied over time, ranging from *Rescue-compelling* to *Favor-currying* to *Autonomy-seeking*, consistently with the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy – i.e. according to both perceived U.S. security commitments as well as the local balance of power. The ROC employed its *Rescue-compelling* strategy in the period between 1954 and 1962, when the United States was trying to mediate the two Chinas rather than to take on Beijing, whereas the ROC faced an unfavorable balance of power vis-à-vis the mainland. The Taiwanese strategy shifted from *Rescue-compelling* to *Favor-currying* in the mid-1960s, when Washington was fighting North Vietnam, a close junior ally of Beijing. After President Nixon began a diplomatic normalization process with Beijing, the ROC began *Autonomy-seeking* and sought an indigenous nuclear deterrent. Taipei reacted to weakened U.S. security commitments by adopting an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy rather than a *Rescue-compelling* strategy this time, since it considered the local balance of power favorable vis-à-vis the mainland, which was overwhelmed by enormous upheavals of the Cultural Revolutions as well as militarized border disputes with the Soviet Union.

The security threat explanation has limited success in predicting Taipei's strategy. First, it fails to explain the ROC's *Rescue-compelling* strategy in the 1950s. The local balance of power was rapidly shifting in favor of Beijing in the 1950s. The PLA began using its recently acquired MiG-15 jets, which quickly won air superiority over the offshore battle zone because MiG-15s were vastly superior to the piston-powered F-47s and P-51s flown by Nationalist pilots at the time. By mid-1956, the PLA put in place basic air defenses, with a ground radar net that would guide interceptor aircraft to the vicinity of intruders allowing visual contact by moonlight.⁸⁵⁵ According to the security threat explanation, one should expect Taipei's efforts to increase its ability to defend itself and close consultation with Washington. This is certainly what Taipei tried to do when it

⁸⁵⁵ Garver, *The Sino-American Alliance*, 191.

sought naval vessels and aircraft transferred from the United States. What the security threat explanation cannot predict, however, is the measure Taipei took to put its own national security at higher risk: for as much as several years it was repeatedly deploying a large proportion of elite troops and the most advanced equipment to tiny offshore islands near the Chinese coastline, thereby deliberately jeopardizing its own ability to defend Formosa and other major islands. The ROC certainly did spend a large percentage of its national budgets on the military, but it maintained its large wartime troop size rather than focusing on modernizing its armed forces.

The security threat explanation is also unable to predict the ROC's *Favor-currying* strategy in the 1960s – a strategy to be expected when security threats are rising. But threats from the PRC became stagnant due to multiple factors: the failure of the PRC's agricultural collectivization movements; a series of natural disasters causing massive starvation in 1961 and 1962; and the Sino-Soviet split. As a result, the PRC did not modernize its military in the 1960s as fast as it did in the 1950s.

On the other hand, the security threat explanation predicts the ROC's *Autonomy-seeking* in the 1970s. One could argue that after the PRC entered into a decades-long cultural revolution in 1966 that held back its military modernization efforts, Taipei's perception of diminishing security threats weakened its incentive to stay tightly aligned with Washington in the 1970s.

The ideological solidarity hypothesis, on the other hand, can only explain the ROC's *Favor-currying* strategy in the 1960s and its *Autonomy-seeking* strategy in the 1970s. Anti-communism was constant in U.S. domestic politics in the 1950s and the 1960s. So was it with Chiang Kai-shek and his circles in Taipei. When leaders from the two states share the same ideology, one should expect them to make their utmost efforts to increase their own capabilities to defend themselves and help their partner state. One should therefore expect to see the same strategy

– a *Favor-currying* strategy – throughout the two decades in the 1950s and the 1960s. This is in contradiction with Chiang Kai-shek’s behavior in the 1950s, when he deployed troops in a way that would put the ROC’s national survival at higher risk.

In the 1970s, however, the degree to which U.S. and Taiwanese leaders share anti-communism declined. U.S. leaders no longer used overblown anti-communist rhetoric as they pursued a *détente* with Moscow and rapprochement with Beijing, while Chiang Ching-kuo grew even more anti-communist than his father. Such ideological distances appear to explain the lack of policy coordination we have seen in the 1970s.

While it is difficult to analyze the ideological predispositions of each leader on both sides in all periods in this chapter, it is fair to argue that one should not expect as much fluctuation in the ROC’s behavior as we have seen here, since most of the presidents both from the United States and the ROC had little sympathy for the communist ideology during the Cold War.

Chapter IX: Conclusion

Throughout the six empirical cases studied in the dissertation, I examined how well the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy explains temporal variation in alliance strategy compared to the two alternative explanations – security threats and ideological similarity. This final chapter begins with a brief summary of the six cases. It will then compare the results to the competing explanations and discuss the Theory’s external validity as well as policy implications.

1. Summary of the Empirical Cases

The France-Poland Alliance (1921-1939)

In the France-Poland alliance, both countries faced threats of German revenge after WWI, while Poland also feared Soviet attacks across its eastern border. After the alliance was established, Poland first adopted a *Cheap-riding* strategy with shrinking military expenditures to focus on its economic recovery. Poland shifted from *Cheap-riding* to *Autonomy-seeking* in the latter half of the 1920s, however. The Treaties of Locarno in 1925 rendered French commitments to Poland unreliable. The Treaties required all signatories to exhaust political processes at the League of Nations before taking any military action, and they also implicitly encouraged German expansion

to the east by leaving the eastern borders unsettled. Under these circumstances, only by preparing an offensive operation across the Rhineland, would France have been able to credibly commit to protecting Poland. And yet, Paris took purely defensive measures including the construction of the Maginot Line that began in 1927, and by 1930, French troops had withdrawn from the Rhineland completely. As French security commitments became weak, the Poles in the late 1920s shifted to *Autonomy-seeking*, building an indigenous defense industry and embracing an independent foreign policy such as seeking security assistance from Britain. The shift in alliance strategy took place even though the level of security threats stayed largely unchanged and political leaders from both countries shared anti-communist ideologies to a great extent.

In the first six months of the year 1933, however, Poland briefly employed a *Rescue-compelling* strategy. Adolf Hitler's rise to power and his pledge for rapid rearmament in Germany both contributed to a shift in the local military balance in favor of Berlin. With its *Rescue-compelling* strategy, Poland attempted to escalate in order to compel the French to respond. But once Polish leaders realized that their French counterparts were not addressing German problems by force, they switched back to their *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, and signed, in January 1934, a German-Polish nonaggression pact without consulting the French.

Poland's *Autonomy-seeking* strategy was not very successful in terms of developing indigenous defense capabilities, partly because the economic crisis of 1929-1935 had devastating impacts on the Polish industry. The vast majority of major Polish firms went bankrupt and were acquired by foreign capital in the early 1930s, which made it practically impossible for Poland to re-build its military industry. Meanwhile, Hitler's willingness to sign a non-aggression pact with Poland gave a false sense of security, leaving the Poles focused on surveillance activities along their eastern border and unprepared for German aggression.

The USSR-Iran Alliance (1921-1941)

The Soviet Union and Iran, while ideologically opposed to each other, did share the goal of removing British political and economic influence from Iran. Major security threats facing Reza Shah lay in the northern regions where the British were instigating local disturbances. Soon after its establishment in 1926, Reza Shah's regime started fighting tribal uprisings by the Kurds and the Lurs in mid-1926 as well as new disturbances flaring up in the provinces of Kermanshah and Fars in early 1927 – a primordial stronghold of the British.

Iran never perceived strong Soviet commitments to fighting the British or those British-backed nomadic tribes by force. Being anti-communist, Reza Shah was suspicious of the Soviet Union's intent – as he feared that Moscow might send militias into the northern regions to fuel social uprisings and spread communism. His distrust of Soviet commitments led him to adopt an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy during the whole period, which involved an expedited defense buildup to supplant Britain as the major security provider of the region.

His *Autonomy-seeking* strategy also resulted in closer relations with Germany and a lack of alliance coordination – delaying and neglecting negotiations with the Soviets over major bilateral issues including trade boycotting by Iranian merchants under British influence. However, the strategy did not equip Tehran with sufficient bargaining power to keep Moscow committed, nor did it arm the country with enough capabilities to fend off British aggression. In the end, Iran's conscious efforts to pit multiple great powers against one another ultimately backfired, leaving no single great power willing to defend Iran's sovereignty.

The USSR-People's Republic of China Alliance (1950-1960)

In the Sino-Soviet alliance (1950-60), an ideologically-motivated security partnership against the United States, Beijing first employed a *Favor-currying* strategy and then shifted to an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy in the late 1950s.

After the Korean War erupted in the summer of 1950, Mao Zedong sent troops to the Korean War primarily because he needed to meet Stalin's expectations for supporting Kim in order for Mao to be able to seek a similar favor from Moscow in the future when he implemented his own unification plan in China. This reasoning is consistent with the *Favor-currying* strategy, even though not supporting Kim would not have been a viable option for Mao. In addition to Korea, Mao demonstrated his proactive coordination approach by closely consulting with the Soviets on a range of foreign policy issues including Indochina and India. Meanwhile, Mao was purchasing a large amount of weapons equipment exclusively from Moscow in order to modernize his armed forces.

In the late 1950s, however, Beijing's approach shifted to *Autonomy-seeking* vis-à-vis Moscow. Certainly, the most widely accepted explanation for the change in Beijing's attitude toward Moscow consists of Mao's policy of self-reliance (*Zili Gengsheng*) and his ideological radicalization. I argue, however, that a shift in perceived Soviet security commitments is at least a partial contributing factor in the eyes of some Chinese military leaders. Khrushchev's strategic thought changed to emphasize the prevention of major war. Reflecting this shift, post-Stalin soviet military strategy heavily relied on preemption and first strikes with nuclear weapons, making it difficult for Chinese leaders to imagine Moscow's operational assistance in their future war against Washington. While China's nuclear program was initiated during the Korean War, its pace of nuclear acquisition accelerated in the late 1950s. Beijing's alliance coordination efforts petered

out. In 1956, Beijing adopted the PRC's first-ever military strategy, rejecting the Soviet approach. In 1957, Beijing began to publicly criticize Moscow's foreign policy and engage in acrimonious ideological disputes over proper socialism.

The U.S.-Japan Alliance (1951-1990)

The United States and Japan became alliance partners after they fiercely fought each other during World War II. Nevertheless, Japan perceived U.S. security commitments to be very strong for a better part of the Cold War period, partly due to the presence of U.S. forces on its soil and partly because Japan's most powerful opponent, the Soviet Union, was seen by Washington as its own primary enemy. While ideology was not the major motivation behind this alliance, leaders from both countries by and large shared their anti-communism throughout the Cold War period.

Post-war Japan was not revisionist, on the other hand, since its foreign policy was greatly constrained by war-renouncing Article 9 of its Constitution and anti-militarist popular sentiment. As predicted by the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, Japan adopted a *Cheap-riding* strategy during the 1950s and 1960s. Tokyo had small and shrinking defense budgets as percentage of GDP and avoided troop deployment and policy alignment over the U.S. military policy whenever it could. It pursued an "independent" foreign policy and did normalize diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, despite Washington's oppositions.

In the early 1970s, when a U.S.-Soviet détente and thawing U.S.-China relations combined to undermine American security commitments to East Asia, Tokyo switched, as predicted by the Theory, to an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy, increasing its defense spending, assuming additional security responsibilities in the region, and pursuing advanced nuclear technologies.

The France-Israel Alliance (1956-1967)

France and Israel shared both enemy and ideology. Their alliance was initiated when the two states reached an agreement to work together to topple Egypt's Nasser in a June 1956 conference in Vermeers, outside of Paris. Although no written security treaty existed for this security partnership, France offered air cover to defend Israel during the Suez campaign as well as the general reassurance, after the Suez campaign, that if Israel were attacked, France would spontaneously and immediately come to its aid. Both countries were also united by their anti-communist ideologies and strong solidarity against anti-Semitism.

Israel adopted a *Favor-currying* posture for the first two years, conducting the fall 1956 Suez operations exactly as French leaders directed and purchasing a massive number of weapons nearly exclusively from Paris. After Charles de Gaulle came to power in May 1958, however, Israel gradually came to the realization that the French were more interested in developing and normalizing relations with Arab states, particularly with Egypt and the UAR, than in reassuring Israeli leaders. Israel, soon thereafter, began to employ an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy in the latter half of 1958 despite high levels of security threats. In June 1958, for example, David Ben Gurion gave Israel's nuclear research program an explicit military goal of producing weapons systems by placing it under a military authority named RAFAEL. Between 1958 and 1960, Israel began its efforts to diversify the markets from which it imported advanced weapons to include Germany, Britain, and the United States, and it also simultaneously took measures to develop its indigenous defense production capabilities.

The U.S. - Republic of China Alliance (1953-1979)

The United States – Republic of China (ROC) alliance was established soon after the Korean War ended for Washington to help defend the ROC against communist aggression. Leaders from both countries shared the same ideology throughout the period when the defense treaty was in effect. And yet, the ROC's alliance strategy varied greatly over time, ranging from *Rescue-compelling* (1950s) to *Favor-currying* (1960s) to *Autonomy-seeking* (1970s), according to variation in both U.S. security commitments as well as the local balance of power. The ROC employed its *Rescue-compelling* strategy in the period between 1953 and 1962, when U.S. commitments were perceived to be weak as Washington was trying to mediate the two Chinas rather than to take on Beijing. Meanwhile, the ROC faced an unfavorable balance of power as the PRC's capabilities rapidly grew with Soviet assistance. The Taiwanese strategy shifted from *Rescue-compelling* to *Favor-currying* in the mid-1960s, when Washington was fighting North Vietnam, a close junior ally of Beijing. The Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts a *Favor-currying* strategy when a junior ally perceives strong senior partner commitments and harbors a revisionist policy that requires additional security assistance.

After President Nixon's overture to Beijing in 1972, the ROC began adopting an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy and sought an indigenous nuclear deterrent. Taipei reacted to weakened U.S. security commitments with an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy rather than with a *Rescue-compelling* strategy, since the local balance of power was favorable. The PRC was overwhelmed by ramifications of the Cultural Revolutions as well as militarized border disputes with the Soviet Union. The ROC continued its *Autonomy-seeking* strategy through the end of the 1970s, when the Carter administration abrogated the security treaty with Taipei.

*

Throughout these six cases, there was considerable temporal variation in alliance strategy, except for the U.S.S.R.-Iran alliance. In the next section, I will compare my theory's performance with the two competing explanations.

2. The Results – Comparison with the Two Alternative Explanations

With my “crucial-case study approach,”⁸⁵⁶ these six cases have been selected as the least-likely cases for the theory I propose and the most likely cases for the two competing explanations. To recap, the security threat explanation posits that, when security threats are rising, alliance partners are more likely to improve both their capabilities and coordination – an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy. When security threats are not on the rise, on the other hand, alliance partners are less likely to cooperate but should not grow more dependent on the partner – an equivalent of the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy. According to this hypothesis, alliance cooperation – external balancing – is a tool to be used when their own defense buildup – internal balancing – is insufficient to meet the growing danger, while states always want to improve their capabilities to ensure their survival, especially for those in a weaker position relative to others.

The ideological similarity explanation predicts that when alliance partners share the same values and ideologies, they are more likely to pursue closer policy coordination while continuing their efforts to improve capabilities and help one another – an equivalent of the *Favor-currying* strategy. Conversely, when their ideologies are different from one another's, they are less likely to pursue policy coordination but they still need to improve capabilities to defend themselves because

⁸⁵⁶ Eckstein, “Case Study and Theory in Political Science.”

their ideologically distant partners are unreliable – an equivalent of the *Autonomy-seeking* strategy.⁸⁵⁷

The most likely cases for these two existing explanations are the ones in which the purported causal factors, security threats and ideological similarity, are present at a high level. They are the ones where junior allies face security threats from an adversary with much superior capabilities, and where junior allies share the same values and ideologies with their senior partner, although empirically, most of the defense pact dyads share the same ideologies. In each of the six empirical cases I studied, the junior partner faced threats from great powers rather than from their regional peers. Poland confronted the Soviet Union and Germany in the 1920s and the 1930s; Iran against Great Britain; the People’s Republic of China against the United States; Japan against the Soviet Union; Israel was fighting a group of Arab states backed by the Soviet Union; and the Republic of China confronted mainland China allied with the Soviet Union. In all but one case, the alliance partners shared the same ideologies.

Since they involve high levels of security threats and shared ideologies, these six cases should be favorable testing grounds for the competing explanations. As presented in **Table 4**, however, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy still better predicts temporal variation in a junior ally’s choice of strategy than the two alternative theories do.

Across these six cases, there are a total of 14 values on the dependent variable – i.e. the alliance strategy of the junior partner: four in the France-Poland alliance, one in the U.S.S.R.-Iran alliance, two in the U.S.S.R.-PRC alliance, two in the U.S.-Japan alliance, two in the France-Israel alliance, and three in the U.S.-ROC alliance. The three right columns of the table show whether each of the three explanations correctly predicts the dependent variable. The green-colored symbol

⁸⁵⁷ For more discussion on the alternative explanations, see Section VII of Chapter II.

(✓) means a success, whereas the red-colored x mark (✗) indicates a failure. The combination of the two symbols (✓/✗) denotes a limited success.

Table 4. Cross-case Comparison of the Three Competing Explanations

	Dependent Variable	Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy	Security Threat	Ideological Similarity
France-Poland (1921-1939)	Cheap-riding (1921-1925)	✓	✗	✗
	Autonomy-seeking (1926-1932)	✓/✗	✓/✗	✗
	Rescue-compelling (1933)	✓	✗	✗
	Autonomy-seeking (1934-1939)	✓	✓	✗
U.S.S.R.-Iran (1921-1941)	Autonomy-seeking (1921-1941)	✓	✓	✗
U.S.S.R.-PRC (1950-1960)	Favor-currying (1950-1954)	✓	✓	✓
	Autonomy-seeking (1955-1960)	✓	✗	✓/✗
U.S.-Japan (1951-90)	Cheap-riding (1951-1970)	✓	✗	✗
	Autonomy-seeking (1971-1990)	✓	✗	✗
France-Israel (1956-1967)	Favor-currying (1956-1958)	✓	✓	✓
	Autonomy-seeking (1959-67)	✓	✗	✗
U.S.-ROC (1953-1979)	Rescue-compelling (1953-1962)	✓	✗	✗
	Favor-currying (1962-1968)	✓	✗	✓
	Autonomy-seeking (1969-1979)	✓	✓	✓/✗

The Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy predicts almost all of the 14 values. By contrast, the security threat explanation correctly predicts only six of them, or a little more than one third, although one of them is a limited success regarding Poland's *Autonomy-seeking* strategy

(1926-1932). The ideological similarity explanation shows a full success in three of the 14 values or about 20 % of the time and a limited success in two of the remaining 11 values on the dependent variable. In total, it proves successful or somewhat successful in predicting 5 of the 14 values, a result similar to the security threat explanation.

Admittedly, these two alternative explanations are an extrapolation from theories of alliance formation, and therefore they are not meant to explain alliance management after the formation of an alliance. But this is not the primary reason why these alternative explanations underperform in predicting alliance behavior. The security threat hypothesis has shown a limited success mainly because it cannot predict when a junior ally grows more dependent for security even though it confronts rising security threats – i.e. it is unable to predict both *Cheap-riding* and *Rescue-compelling* strategies. I argue that the level of security threat does not always affect a junior ally's behavior, because threats are filtered through the lens of perceived senior partner security commitments.

Junior allies that perceive strong commitments from their senior partner may have no particular reason to improve their capabilities. Japan in the 1950s is a good example, as it chose a *Cheap-riding* strategy despite severe threats from the Soviet Union. Tokyo attempted to remove U.S. troops in the 1950s and soon thereafter learned that Americans would hold on to their bases at all costs. Alternatively, junior allies that perceive weak commitments from their senior partner and face a local balance of power shifting in their adversary's favor should increase their capabilities as well as alliance coordination efforts according to the security threat hypothesis. However, it underappreciates the possibility that under such circumstances junior allies may give up their defense buildup due to a security dilemma and instead consider “weaponizing” their weakness with a *Rescue-compelling* strategy – that is, they may try to compel their senior partner

into offering stronger commitments by keeping themselves vulnerable. The Republic of China's behavior in the 1950s illustrates this logic when it jeopardized its readiness to defend the main island, Formosa.

The ideological similarity explanation fares well when a junior ally adopts a *Favor-currying* strategy in an alliance driven by strong ideological causes. Examples of such cases include the PRC's *Favor-currying* strategy in the first half of the 1950s. Ideological alliances like the Sino-Soviet alliance often aim to propagate their ideology and recruit new members, and achieving this goal together inevitably involves high levels of foreign policy coordination as well as each member's capability buildup efforts – hence, a *Favor-currying* strategy. From this perspective it is not surprising to see Beijing engage in *Favor-currying* behavior in the early days of the alliance.

On the other hand, the ideological hypothesis does not perform well when, as was also the case for the security hypothesis, a junior ally is willfully growing more dependent on its senior partner. A main reason for its weakness is the fact that leaders' ideology does not vary over time as often as their alliance strategy. After all, shared ideology between alliance partners does not always produce the senior partner's strong commitments and reliable assistance. An ideological alliance can be prone to internal fighting, as was the case for the Sino-Soviet alliance in the late 1950s. As a result, junior allies perceiving weak commitments have to do something to ensure their national survival, either through *Autonomy-seeking* or *Rescue-compelling* strategies – neither of which the ideology hypothesis predicts very well, especially when the alliance partners share the same ideology. For example, even though both French and Israeli leaders shared strong sentiments against anti-Semitism and communism, Charles de Gaulle treated David Ben-Gurion poorly to rebuild close economic ties with the Arab states, which drove Israel toward an *Autonomy-*

seeking strategy. The France-Poland case after the late 1920s is a similar example, where both states embraced anti-communist ideologies but the senior partner's weakened commitments led Poland to utilize an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy.

In sum, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy is a more useful framework for predicting a junior ally's alliance behavior and strategy toward its senior alliance partner.

3. External Validity

Beyond these six cases, the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy should apply to all asymmetric alliances as far as its two assumptions hold: a senior partner established an alliance to advance its own great power interests rather than out of generosity for protecting its junior partner; states are unitary, reasonably rational, and autonomous actors. It is, thus, difficult for the Theory to explain a junior ally's behavior in a semi-colonial alliance relationship where it has limited decision-making authorities (e.g. some of the members of the Warsaw Pact). The Theory also performs poorly in predicting an ally in an identity-driven security relationship (e.g. Australia, which is *Favor-currying* in its relationship with the United States, should be employing a *Cheap-riding* strategy according to the Theory).

The six empirical cases are selected not only to provide favorable testing grounds for the alternative explanations but also to maximize variation in time, regions of the world, adversary states, and senior partner states. The six case studies extend over the periods before and after World War II, and involve Europe, North America, the Middle East, and Asia. The adversary states or the sources of security threats in the six cases include the Soviet Union, Germany, Great Britain, the United States, Egypt, and Communist China. The senior partner states across the six cases

include the United States, the Soviet Union, and France. The theory's external validity, thus, should not be bounded by peculiar characteristics of some historical periods such as the Cold War or by specific regional and cultural backgrounds.

Had the cases been selected randomly from the universe of cases, the performance difference between the Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy and the two alternative explanations would have been greater. Both the security and ideology hypotheses fail to predict a junior ally's *More Dependent* approach in the *Cheap-riding* strategy – the most common behavior in the universe of cases (see **Figure 4**). A *Cheap-riding* ally, characterized by a combination of small or declining defense budgets and the lack of alliance coordination efforts, can certainly be explained by a lack of security threats or by collective action problems in a multi-lateral alliance. One could argue that *Cheap-riders* can easily be overrepresented in the Western hemisphere where there are arguably no significant security threats while there exists a multi-lateral alliance called the Rio Pact. However, the empirical distribution of strategies does not significantly change after eliminating all alliances in the Western hemisphere (see **Figure 5**).

4. Policy Implications

The dissertation provides cautionary tales for alliance managers and offers a useful framework for understanding conditions under which a junior ally's behavior could raise alliance management costs and entrapment risks. U.S. policymakers tend to assume that junior partners are easy to control given their dependence for security. This assumption is incorrect when the United States also has important political and economic stakes in its asymmetric alliance relationships. Unless the United States is ready to lose all dividends from a relationship by abrogating the

contract, its junior allies continue to have leverage and can “manipulate” the United States to their advantage.

Figure 4. The Empirical Distribution of the Different Alliance Strategies⁸⁵⁸

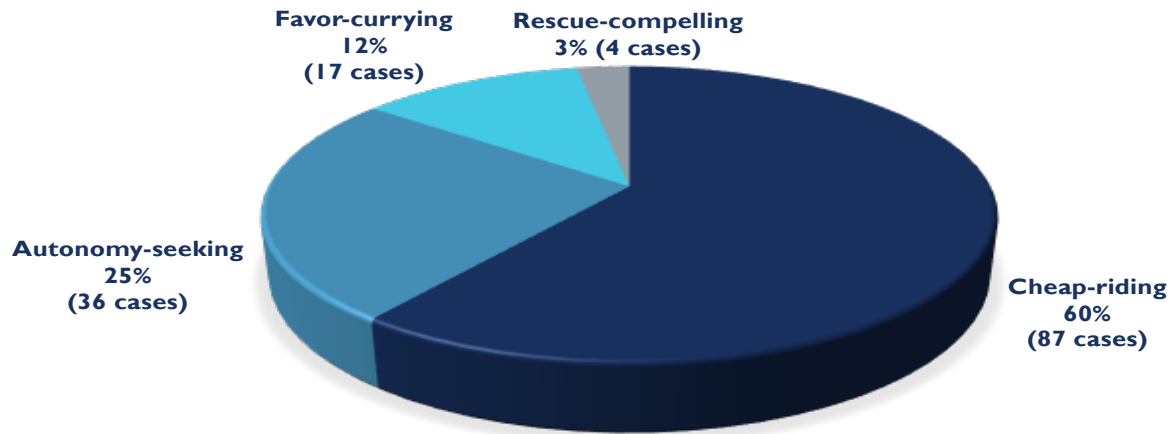
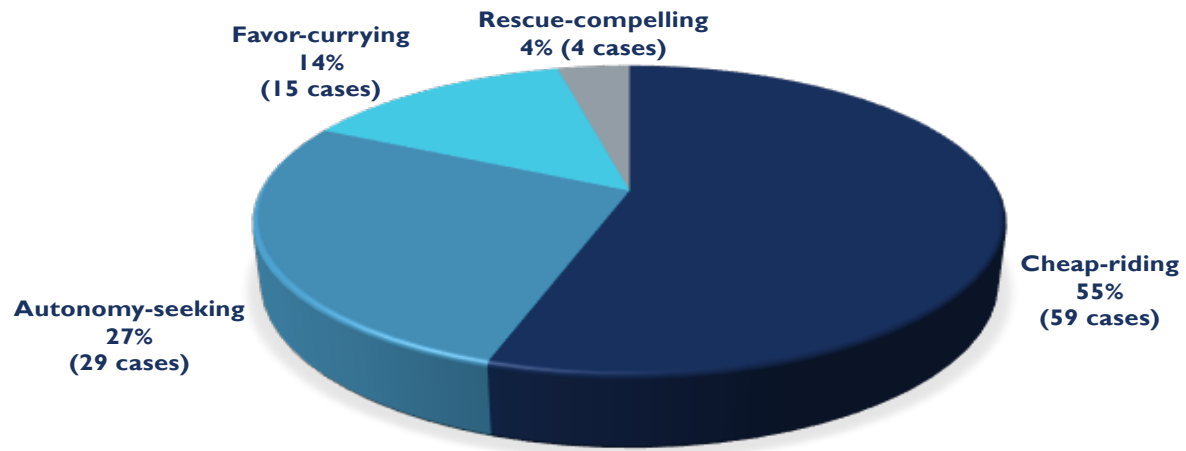


Figure 5. The Empirical Distribution of the Strategies Among Cases excluding U.S. Allies in the Western Hemisphere



⁸⁵⁸ For details on the cases and their distribution in Figures 4 & 5, see Tables 5 & 6 in Appendix.

The junior allies' goals can vary, but some aim to deliberately precipitate a war and cause alliance entrapment – i.e. a state is forced to participate in an unwanted war on the side of its partner just because of its alliance commitment even though none of its own interests are at stake.⁸⁵⁹ The dissertation shows that the risk of alliance entrapment becomes particularly high when a junior ally engages in a *Rescue-compelling* strategy, which is driven by weak or weakened security commitments combined with an unfavorable local balance of power. While junior allies that actually orchestrated a crisis by this strategy are rare, there are a number of allies that could use it to destabilize their region if the above-mentioned set of conditions obtain.⁸⁶⁰ As a corollary to this statement, a U.S. policy of strategic ambiguity can involve high risks of alliance entrapment in Asia, where U.S. allies currently face an unfavorable local balance of power vis-à-vis China.

The framework for understanding what drives an ally's risky behavior and heightens entrapment risks deserves attentions from all U.S. policymakers considering withdrawing or threatening to withdraw from existing security commitments to other states. They ought to consider in advance how their withdrawal decisions might affect their allies' behavior in a way that could potentially have destabilizing impacts on the relevant region. A sudden announcement for withdrawing security commitments to a *Cheap-riding* partner, for example, can prompt it to

⁸⁵⁹ Two prominent IR scholars, Thomas Christensen and Jack Snyder, who use the term “chain-ganging” in lieu of alliance entrapment, offer a hypothesis. Drawing on Kenneth Waltz’s argument on two kinds of mistakes states tend to make – chain-ganging and buck-passing – Christensen and Snyder posit that states tend to “chain-gang” when offense is dominant whereas they are more likely to “buck-pass” when defense is dominant, comparing European leaders’ actions prior to the First World War and the Second World War. But alliance entrapment should not be confused with “chain-ganging,” which is deliberate, rather than inadvertent, participation in a war alliance. Furthermore, both “chain-ganging” and “buck-passing” pertain to the formation of alliances and should be distinguished from “entrapment” and “abandonment” happening only after an alliance has been formed. See Christensen and Snyder, “Chain Gangs and Passed Bucks.” On Kenneth Waltz’s argument on the two kinds of mistakes, see Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 67, 165–69.

⁸⁶⁰ A recent study that evaluated the extent of U.S. entanglement in all postwar U.S. military conflicts after 1948 found five episodes of U.S. entrapment over a sixty-two-year period – the 1954 and 1995-96 Taiwan Strait crises, the Vietnam War, and the interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s. While the author of this study argues that clear-cut alliance entrapment was rare, any conclusion drawn from the examination of events in a time period as short as 62 years is far from conclusive. See Beckley, “The Myth of Entangling Alliances.”

adopt a *Rescue-compelling* strategy before the alliance contract expires (usually in twelve months), if the junior ally is faced with a local balance of power shifting in favor of its adversary. It is difficult for a *Cheap-riding* ally taking their *More Dependent* approach to change its course quickly and build sufficiently large defense capabilities for an independent deterrent. Thus, it would likely choose a risky *Rescue-compelling* strategy, which involves attention-seeking, risk-acceptant behavior that can lead to a crisis escalation. Even if the ally adopts an *Autonomy-seeking* strategy instead, in the short run when its independent deterrent is still under construction – it can also destabilize by opening a window of opportunity for the adversary to neutralize this nascent deterrent. It may be wise to keep strong commitments to such vulnerable allies until they acquire sufficient capabilities to build an independent deterrent.

5. Conclusion

Policymakers and alliance managers should be aware that their junior allies exhibit more diverse behavior than is generally assumed and that their dependence for security does not always translate into their subordination to their senior partner. Rather, they often exercise considerable autonomy. When a senior partner has vested interests in the asymmetric alliances that advance its own interests, its junior partners, as parties to the alliance contracts, also have the power to “manipulate” their senior partner with a variety of strategies to maximize what are often noninstitutionalized benefits from their security relationships.

To explain how and why their behavior and strategy vary, the dissertation proposes a Theory of Asymmetric Alliance Strategy, a new paradigm for understanding four types of junior partner alliance behavior and strategy. In essence, their differences are based upon differences relating to the two most contentious and yet core issues of alliance management – the junior ally’s degree of dependence for security and its level of coordination with the senior partner. As junior allies choose one of the two opposing approaches to each of these two core issues, there are four different, mutually exclusive strategies: [*More Dependent, Reluctant Coordination*], [*More Dependent, Proactive Coordination*], [*Less Dependent, Proactive Coordination*], and [*Less Dependent, Reluctant Coordination*], which I call *Cheap-riding*, *Rescue-compelling*, *Favor-currying*, and *Autonomy-seeking*, respectively.

Particularly problematic from a senior partner’s perspective is the *Rescue-compelling* strategy, which is driven by weak or weakened security commitments a junior ally perceives when it faces a local balance of power shifting in favor of its adversary. A junior ally utilizing this strategy can make a crisis escalation more likely and cause serious consequences including a costly war. The majority of junior allies, on the other hand, adopt a *Cheap-riding* strategy, which also raises their senior partner’s alliance management costs in a different way.

Before offering new commitments to other states, policymakers ought to anticipate how their prospective junior allies might behave once their alliances are established. Moreover, policy decisions to alter existing security arrangements should be made on a case-by-case basis by taking into consideration each ally’s current capabilities relative to its adversary as well as all risks associated with the strategy that the junior partner likely employs in response to the proposed policy changes.

Appendix

Table 5. The universe of cases

	Cases in Chronological Order
U.S.-led Alliances (74)	Cuba (1945-62), Haiti (1945-), Dominican Republic (1945-), Mexico (1945-), Guatemala (1945-), Honduras (1945-), Nicaragua (1945-), Costa Rica (1945-), Panama (1945-), Colombia (1945-), Venezuela (1945-), Ecuador (1945-), Peru (1945-), Brazil (1945-), Bolivia (1945-), Paraguay (1945-), Chile (1945-), Argentina (1945-), Uruguay (1945-), El Salvador (1947-), Canada (1949-), Netherlands (1949-), Belgium (1949-), Luxembourg (1949-), Portugal (1949-), Italy (1949-), Norway (1949-), Denmark (1949-), Iceland (1949-), Turkey (1951-), Greece (1951-), Philippines (1951-), Saudi Arabia (1951-), Australia (1951-), New Zealand (1951-86), Japan (1951-1990), German Federal Republic (1954-90), Republic of Korea (1954), Republic of China (1954-), Thailand (1954-77), Iran (1959-79), Pakistan (1959-), Israel (1962-)*, Trinidad and Tobago (1967-), Barbados (1967-), Jamaica (1969-), Grenada (1975-), Suriname (1977), Dominica (1979-), St. Lucia (1979-), Spain (1981-), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (1981-), Antigua and Barbuda (1981), Bahamas (1982-), St. Kitts and Nevis (1984-), Egypt (1979-)*, Belize (1991-), Guyana (1991-), New Zealand (1996-)*, Poland (1999-), Hungary (1999-), Czech Republic (1999-), Bahrain (2002-)*, Kuwait (2004-)*, Romania (2004-), Bulgaria (2004-), Slovakia (2004-), Slovenia (2004-), Estonia (2004-), Latvia (2004-), Lithuania (2004-), Albania (2009-), Croatia (2009-), Montenegro (2017-).
Soviet-led or Russian-led Alliances (35)	Iran (1921-46), Czechoslovakia (1935-39, 1945-89), Mongolia (1936-91), Yugoslavia (1937-39, 1945-49), Estonia (1939-40), Latvia (1939-40), Lithuania (1939-40), France (1944-55), Poland (1945-89), Republic of China (1945-49), Romania (1948-89), Hungary (1948-89), Bulgaria (1948-89), Finland (1948-91), China (1950-80), German Democratic Republic (1955-89), Czechoslovakia (1955-89), Albania (1955-68), Cuba (1961-), North Korea (1961-95), Egypt (1971-76), Angola (1976-91), Vietnam (1978-91), Moldova (1995-), Ukraine (1995-), Belarus (1995-), Armenia (1992-), Georgia (1992-), Azerbaijan (1992-), Turkmenistan (1992-), Tajikistan (1992-), Kyrgyzstan (1992-), Uzbekistan (1992-), Kazakhstan (1992-), Belarus (1992-).
U.K.-led Alliances (9)	Iraq (1932-55), Egypt (1937-51), Poland (1939), Turkey (1939-45), Iran (1942-46), Jordan (1946-56), Libya (1953-69), Iraq (1955-59), Malaysia (1957-71)
German-led Alliances (4)	Hungary (1940-41), Bulgaria (1940), Romania (1940-41), Turkey (1941-45)
French-led Alliances (9)	Belgium (1920-36), Poland (1921-39), Czechoslovakia (1924-38), Yugoslavia (1937-39), Israel (1953-67)*, Central Africa (1960-76), Chad (1960-78), Congo (1960-78), Gabon (1960-)
Italian-led Alliances (1)	Albania (1927-39).
Japanese-led Alliances (1)	Thailand (1941-45)

(The asterisk (*) indicates informal alliances without formal security treaties)

Table 6. The Distribution of the Different Strategies by Senior Partner State

	Strategy			
	Cheap-riding	Favor-currying	Autonomy-seeking	Rescue-compelling
U.S.-led Alliances	Mexico (1945-), Costa Rica (1945-), Haiti (1945-), Dominic Rep. (1945-), El Salvador (1947-), Guatemala (1945-), Uruguay (1945-), Venezuela (1945-), Nicaragua (1945-), Paraguay (1945-), Panama (1945-), Haiti (1945), Honduras (1945-), Bolivia (1945-), Netherlands (1949-), Belgium (1949-), Luxembourg (1949-), Portugal (1949-), Italy (1949-), Norway (1949-), Denmark (1949-), Iceland (1949-), Japan (1951-1970), TrinidadTobago (1967-), Barbados (1967-), Jamaica (1969-), Grenada (1975-), Suriname (1977-), Dominica (1979-), St. Lucia (1979-), St. Vin.Grenad (1981-), AntiguaBarbuda(1981-), Spain (1982-), Bahamas (1982-), St. Kitts Nevis (1984-), Argentina (1989-), Belize (1991-), Guyana (1991-), New Zealand (1996-)*, Hungary (1999-), Czech Republic (1999-), Bahrain (2002-)*, Romania (2004-), Slovenia (2004-), Estonia (2004-), Latvia (2004-), Lithuania (2004-), Bulgaria (2004-), Slovak (2004-), Albania (2009-), Croatia (2009-), Montenegro (2017-)	Colombia (1945-), Canada (1949-), Saudi Arabia (1951-), Australia (1951-), New Zealand (1951-86), Philippines (1951-), Turkey (1952-60), Thailand (1954-77), Rep. China (1962-70), Poland (1999-) <p style="text-align: right;">Total: 10</p>	Cuba (1945-62), Chile (1945-), Ecuador (1945-), Peru (1945-), Brazil (1945-), Argentina (1945-88), Greece (1952-), FRG (1954-90), Iran (1959-79), Pakistan (1959-), Turkey (1962-), Israel (1962-)*, Japan (1971-90), Rep.China (1970-), Rep.Korea (1970-), Uruguay (1975-85), Egypt (1979-)*, Kuwait (2004-)* <p style="text-align: right;">Total: 17</p>	Rep. China (1953-62, 1995-), Rep. Korea (1954-70) <p style="text-align: right;">Total: 2</p>

	Total: 52			
Soviet-led or Russian-led Alliances	Yugoslavia (1937-49), CzechSlov (1935-89), Estonia (1939-40), Latvia (1939-40), Lithuania (1939-40), Romania (1948-89), Hungary (1948-89), Bulgaria (1948-89), Finland (1948-91), EastGermany (1955-89), Albania (1955-68), Poland (1945-89), Vietnam (1978-91), Belarus (1992-), Kazakhstan (1992-), Tajikistan (1992-), Kyrgyzstan (1992-), Uzbekistan (1992-), Georgia (1992-2004), Moldova (1995-) Total: 20	Cuba (1962-91), North Korea (1961-91), P.R.China (1950-55) Total: 3	Iran (1921-46), Mongolia (1936-91), Rep. China (1945-49), P.R.China (1955-60), Egypt (1971-76), Ukraine (1992-), Armenia (1992-), Azerbaijan (1992-), Turkmenistan (1992-), Georgia (2004-) Total: 10	Angola (1976-91) Total: 1
U.K.-led Alliances	Turkey (1939-45), Libya (1953-69) Total: 2	Poland (1939) Total: 1	Iraq (1932-55), Iran (1942-46), Egypt (1937-51), Jordan (1946-56), Iraq-CEATO (1955-59), Malaysia (1957-71) Total: 6	
German-led Alliances	Turkey (1941-45), Hungary (1940-41), Bulgaria (1940) Total: 3	Romania (1940-41) Total: 1		
French-led Alliances	Belgium (1920-36), Romania (1921-38), Poland (1921-25), CzechSlov (1921-35), Yugoslavia (1921-38), Cent.Africa (1960-76), Chad (1960-78), Congo (1960-78), Gabon (1960-) Total: 9	Israel (1956-58) Total: 1	Poland (1925-39), CzechSlov (1935-38), Israel (1958-67) Total: 3	Poland (1933) Total: 1
Italian-led Alliances	Albania (1927-39) Total: 1			
Japanese-led Alliances		Thailand (1941-45) Total: 1		
	87	17	36	4

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