Not in Your Backyard: 
Transitive Compellence, Base States, and Violent Non-State Groups

by

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ABSTRACT

Violent non-state actors have consistently served as a destabilizing force within the international system. These groups create a base within a state’s sovereign territory, the “base state,” and utilize this platform to mount conventional attacks, insurgencies, and terrorist campaigns against other states, with or without the support of the base state. Coercion directed at base states has been declared a central tenet of American Foreign policy and one that is shared by many states threatened by these groups. This study examines the efficacy of coercion as a tool to compel a state to halt the basing of violent non-state groups, a strategy which I call “transitive compellence.” Empirically, employing transitive compellence has produced a broad range of outcomes. At times, this strategy has achieved its desired objective of inducing a state to contain the violent group, whereas at other junctures, these tactics have backfired. This study offers a theory to explain the conditions under which a base state can be successfully coerced into taking action against a violent group that resides within its borders and addresses why states have varying reactions to transitive compellence over time.

I argue that the cost of compliance for the base state is shaped by the foreign policy and domestic political relationship between the violent group and the state. These components define the base state’s cost-benefit calculation, which impacts the state’s willingness to comply with the coercer’s demands. The violent group’s cross-border activity necessarily affects the base state’s foreign policy, and thus the base state has a stake, positive or negative, in the international dimension of the group’s action. Similarly, to the extent that the group resides within the base state, and interacts with its population and political system, the base state has a domestic stake as well. Specifically, acting against the group domestically triggers all of the costs and risks of a protracted political or military conflict with the group. Thus, it is necessary to examine the costs of containing the violent group across both dimensions. These two distinct elements of the relationship each impose different and often conflicting costs and benefits for complying with the coercer’s demands. Analyzing these components yields insights into the complex dynamic between the group and the state, as well as the magnitude of difficulty in severing these ties.

This theory is tested with three longitudinal in-depth case studies where transitive compellence was utilized in an attempt to quell violent non-state actor activities: Israel vis-à-vis the Fedayeen in Jordan; Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Syria; and Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Iraqi Kurdistan. A focused, structured comparison of these cases relied on interviews in the field with current and former policymakers, military personnel, journalists, academics, and analysts, in addition to extensive archival research, secondary historical materials, and media accounts. An analysis, within and across these cases, reveals strong support for the theory.

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CHAPTER 1: A THEORY OF TRANSITIVE COMPELLENCE

INTRODUCTION & CENTRAL QUESTION

The threat of violent non-state actors continues to be a significant challenge within the international system. These groups create a base within a state’s sovereign territory, the “base state,” and proceed to launch conventional attacks, insurgencies, and terrorist campaigns towards other states, with or without the support of the base state. This destructive dynamic can be observed with Hezbollah in Lebanon vis-à-vis Israel; fedayeen in Jordan, Syria, Egypt and Lebanon vis-à-vis Israel; Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK) in Syria and Iraq vis-à-vis Turkey; Al Qaeda in Afghanistan, Sudan, and Yemen vis-à-vis the United States, Spain, Great Britain; the FARC in Venezuela vis-à-vis Colombia; Lashkar-e-Taiba in Pakistan vis-à-vis India; among others.

Since the 9/11 attacks, national security agendas worldwide have refocused attention on the importance of eliminating the bases of operation for violent groups. This problem is especially challenging due to the three way relationship between the base state, the state that is threatened and the violent non-state group, which introduces ambiguity about accountability and the optimum strategy for diminishing this threat. Some states encountering such threats undertake direct action against the group itself. However, others try to coerce the base state into taking steps against the violent actors in its territory, a strategy which I call transitive compellence.

At least rhetorically, coercion against the base state has been a focal point for many states that have encountered violent non-state actors. In his now famous September 20, 2001 speech before the joint session of Congress, President George W. Bush stated that “[the United States]
will pursue nations that provide aid or safe haven to terrorism. Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists. From this day forward, any nation that continues to harbor or support terrorism will be regarded by the United States as a hostile regime.”\(^1\) The National Strategy for Combating Terrorism later echoed this sentiment and added that “when states prove reluctant or unwilling to meet their international obligations [to combat terrorism]...the United States...will take appropriate steps to convince them to change their policies.”\(^2\) In that same vein, in 2010, when an incident arose from Yemen, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton proclaimed that “Yemen must take ownership of the challenges it faces, and of its internal affairs,” once again promoting the preferred U.S. policy of each state taking control of extremists based within their own borders.\(^3\)

However, despite frequent public espousal of the merits of employing transitive compellence, states have historically found that the strategy has delivered only mixed results, with little explanation for the variance. Certainly, in numerous cases, states have achieved their desired objective of containing the violent group. Yet, at other times, these same strategies have backfired and even empowered the group. For example, Jordan served as a base state for various *fedayeen* organizations, including the PLO, from the 1950s until the 1970s. Throughout this

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\(^1\) *Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People*, September 20 2001.


\(^3\) Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice reiterated this position, stating that “it is vital to our national security that states be willing and able to meet the full range of their sovereign responsibilities, both beyond their borders and within them.” Condoleezza Rice, "Rethinking the National Interest: American Realism for a New World," *Foreign Affairs* 87, no. 4 (2008).

period, Israel employed an explicit coercive strategy directed at the Jordanian regime that consisted of reprisal raids within Jordan. At times, the Jordanian regime responded to Israeli coercion by actively containing the activity of the fedayeen. However, in other situations, Jordan relaxed its previous efforts and allowed the fedayeen to have increased freedom of action and tacit support.

Similarly, Syria, has served as a base for various violent non-state actors, ranging from Palestinian groups such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, to Kurdish groups such as the PKK. These groups have presented threats to Syria’s neighbors, mainly Israel and Turkey. Both Israel and Turkey have attempted to coerce Syria into addressing and containing the threat with varying degrees of success. In the Israeli case, the Syrians made some efforts to curtail the activities of the Palestinian groups, but continue to allow them to operate headquarters in Damascus. In contrast, Turkish threats in 1998 ultimately led to the extradition of the PKK leader, Abdullah Ocalan, and the general dismantlement of the organization in Syria.

Ultimately, if one is to develop a successful approach for addressing threats posed by non-state actors based in another state, we must have a clear answer to the central question: Why, and under what conditions, can a base state be coerced into taking action against a violent group that resides in its backyard? Why do states have varying reactions to similar coercive threats over time? As will be discussed, current research has failed to properly address transitive compellence. By focusing on this central puzzle, this project will strengthen the current literature and advance a new theoretical approach for understanding the conditions that favor transitive compellence success. Understanding these conditions will help policymakers develop a coherent strategy to better contain the threat posed by violent non-state groups.
This dissertation attempts to fill this void by focusing directly on the subset of transitive compellence cases. As outlined above, transitive compellence is a type of coercion whereby a state that has been attacked by a violent group, coerces the base state to address a threat presented by the violent non-state group which resides in its borders. This theoretical framework focuses on the trilateral relationship between the coercer, the base state and the violent group, and unpacks the costs and interests of each actor involved in the coercive endeavor. Specifically, the theory builds upon the existing coercion literature by examining the costs and benefits of compliance for the base state. An analysis of the relationship between the base state and the violent group identifies the magnitude of these costs and demonstrates how they impact the probability of coercion success or failure.

**The Players: Managing a Trilateral Relationship**

The triangular relationship between the three actors, the coercer, the base state and the violent non-state group creates a challenging environment for the implementation of transitive compellence. Unlike traditional coercion, where the interaction is generally bilateral, here, the interaction is trilateral.\(^4\) Even prior to the coercion, within this triangle, each actor has a separate bilateral relationship with one another, and accordingly, has a different set of interests associated with each relationship. Although each actor can pursue independent relationships, because of the nature of the basing situation, these relationships are overlapping and necessarily affect one another. Thus, in order to understand the essence of base state transitive compellence, it is

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\(^4\) On occasion, there are multiple states that are in a coercive coalition. This, however, does not change the bilateral nature of the strategic interaction, mainly that there is a coercer and a coerced in a dispute over a particular issue. Additionally, there is a large amount of literature on extended deterrence, which is also trilateral, but it is not transitive.
essential to explore the key players’ characteristics, as well as the complexity of their interactions.

**Coercer:**

Within transitive compellence, the coercer is defined by two primary characteristics. First, the state has been the explicit target of violence by the violent non-state actor residing in another state. These violent acts can vary and range from small terrorist attacks to pseudo conventional warfare. However, in these instances, the security concern for the coercer is not only the ongoing attacks from the violent non-state actor, but also the existence of their base in another sovereign state. To survive, let alone succeed, these groups require a base that enables them to perform their basic organizational functions including obtaining weapons, training, organizing and at times, physically hiding. Without a relatively secure physical base, it would be exceedingly difficult for these groups to operate. As Byman explains, “At times the greatest contribution a state can make to a terrorist’s cause is simply not to act against it. A border not policed, a blind eye turned to fundraising, or even the toleration of recruitment all help terrorists build their organizations, conduct operations and survive.” Thus, for the coercer, eliminating the bases of violent group activity can be an important step in combatting the threat.

Second, the coercer is a state that has or will choose the strategy of coercion against the base state to compel them to contain the problem posed by the violent non-state group. As will

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5 This does not include states that have been the target of violence by exclusively domestic violent non-state actors. Empirically, there are violent groups that have important bases both within the state and in an external location. For example, the FARC in Colombia also has important training facilities within Ecuador. For the purposes of this study, the important dynamic is with the elements of the group that reside outside of the state.

be discussed in greater detail below, the state has a series of options for addressing this security concern, including cooperation, bribery, cajoling, diplomacy, and even brute force or war. However, for the purposes of this study, I am only looking at the instances where coercion was directed against the base state.

**Base State:**

The base state designation applies to any state in which a violent non-state actor resides within a state’s sovereign borders. The violent group uses the state as a base from which it can organize, train or carry out its activities against other states. Some groups utilize the base state for all of the aforementioned functions, while other groups may only use the state for one or two functions. A base state may serve only as the central headquarters for a violent non-state group, but the group does not launch cross-border attacks from within this state. This arrangement often appears when the group is dispersed across several states. For example, while Hamas maintains its headquarters in Damascus, it does not launch attacks from there. Alternatively, a violent group can conduct its training solely in camps within the base state, and then send its fighters abroad. This arrangement exists with Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, and Hezbollah and other Shia militias in Iran. Some base states fulfill all of the functions for the violent group. For example, Hezbollah organizes, trains, recruits and conducts attacks all from within Lebanon.

Being designated as a base state does not connote that the state is complicit with the group or that they function as an active "state sponsor" of the group. State sponsors of violent

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7 Ibid. p. 65. At times, these types of arrangements are referred to as “safe havens,” but this implies a certain level of safety and protection for the group which “base” does not imply.

8 Iran has long been accused of training Hezbollah, and most recently Iraqi Shia groups. By Michael reporting, "Hezbollah Trains Iraqi Militants in Iran, American Officials Say," (2008).
groups have an explicit, though often not public, relationship with the violent group and actively support the group in their activities. Furthermore, state sponsors can often support these groups, financially or otherwise, from abroad without the group ever residing within their borders. This type of active relationship is not a prerequisite for inclusion in or exclusion from the broader set. Conversely, the term base state does not connote that the state opposes their presence. A state can be ambivalent about the group and still be considered a base state. Ultimately, the term “base state” is agnostic with respect to the relationship between the group and the state, as discussed in greater detail below. While this dynamic is important for distinguishing among the base states, any state that has a violent non-state actor within its borders is considered within this framework.

![Figure 1: Base States and State Sponsors - the Universe of Cases](image)

**Violent Non-State Actors:**

I define violent non-state actors by using several criteria identified by Claude Bruderlein. First, the group is armed and has a basic command structure whereby the

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9 Byman, *Deadly Connections: States That Sponsor Terrorism*. Byman defines state sponsors as intentional assistance to a terrorist group to help it use violence, bolster its political activities, or sustain its organization.

10 For example, some states may provide arms or funds, or even trainers for these groups, but for a variety of reasons, the group is not physically present within the borders of the state.

11 The three criteria are based on Claude Bruderlein’s definition of non-state actors, but have been slightly modified to meet my research criteria. Claude Bruderlein, "The Role of Non-State Actors in Building Human Security," ed. Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (Geneva: 2000).
commanders have at least a minimum level of control over their combatants. Second, the group utilizes violence to achieve political ends. Third, the armed group is independent of state control. These groups can vary in their organizations and tactics and include insurgents, militias and terrorists. Additionally, for purposes of this project, I will only include violent non-state actors that pose international threats.

In these instances, the violent non-state group is involved in a violent conflict with the coercer. This conflict can arise over a range of issues including territorial claims, as well as ideological, religious or ethnic issues. The nature of the demand can certainly influence the interaction between the coercer and the violent group, but all types of conflict are included in this study.

Furthermore, these groups can reside within the base state for a variety of both pragmatic and ideological reasons. Some may reside within the group because it is geographically proximate to their opponent. Others may choose the base state because it provides a desirable or permissive environment for their activities. Others may be there for historical reasons. Irrespective of the reason, the important feature is that the group utilizes the base state to conduct its violent activity.

Within this crisis, there are multiple relationships to manage, all of which are integral to the outcome of the coercion. This overlap calls into question even the most basic assumptions regarding threat and accountability, and the optimum manner in which to address the current threat. For example, when the violence occurs from within the base state, who should be accountable, the base state or the violent group? Who should be the target of a response to this

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12 The non-state group may have conflicts with other states and even the base state. At a minimum, they are involved in a conflict with the base state.
violence? The varied interests of the three actors within the conflict, and the ambiguity of these circumstances complicate the selection of the coercion target, the optimum strategy and ultimately, expectations of coercion success or failure.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Coercion against base states is a topic that has received sparse treatment in the literature. To date, there has been no systematic cross case analysis focused on base state transitive compellence that assesses its specific characteristics and explains its success or failure historically. When the matter is addressed, it usually falls into three broad categories of literature: (1) weak and failed states, (2) passive and active sponsorship of terror, and (3) ad hoc case studies. Underlying these explanations are some misguided assumptions about why base states allow violent groups to organize, train, recruit, and often act from within their borders. Furthermore, these overly simplistic lenses do not provide for a full examination of the phenomenon of basing and the opportunities and limitations of transitive compellence.

Weak States

Some scholars that acknowledge the importance of the base state tend to assume that the state is either a weak or a failed state and therefore, it is not within their capacity to take action.13 These scholars correctly highlight the propensity of violent non-state actors to utilize weak and

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failed states as their base of activity, and the ensuing dangers. When states become weak, non-state actors "can take opportunistic advantage of a deteriorating internal security situation to mobilize adherents, train insurgents, gain control of resources, launder funds, purchase arms, and ready themselves for assault on world order." This growing literature continues to demonstrate the potential threats that these weak and failed states present, but almost by definition, dismisses their capacity to act against these groups.

However, such assertions appear to be overstated, as history has repeatedly shown that even ostensibly weak base states often possess a remarkable capacity to act against violent groups when they deem it necessary. First, all weak states have some capabilities and some have even used their scarce resources to contain the threat of the violent group that resides within their borders. For example, Jordan mustered its comparatively limited capabilities following the 1967 War to contain the fedayeen in the 1970s. Similarly, the Lebanese military was reported to have dismantled at least eight militant rockets during the 2008 Gaza War. Most recently, the Pakistani military offensive in the Swat valley once again demonstrated, to the surprise of many observers, that there existed latent capabilities that could be used effectively, when acting against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda became a national priority. While in some instances, states are in fact too weak to contain or eliminate the violent groups, it is often the case that the inaction is driven by will and unspoken priorities, rather than capabilities. Additionally, the set of measurable standards do not always correctly predict the ultimate capacity to act. Thus, even among

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ostensibly weak states, it is necessary to examine why at times, they mobilize their limited resources to confront these types of threats. In sum, while this literature correctly focuses on the role of base states and their interaction with violent groups, it underestimates the ability of base states to contain these groups, and ultimately, the ability to respond to coercive threats.

**State Sponsors**

In addition to the state capacity argument, there is also a literature on the active and passive sponsorship of terrorism, which focuses on the ways in which states aid terrorist groups, including financial support, training, recruitment, and basing. However, the issues associated with basing a terrorist group receive only scant attention in the current literature, and the strategies are not tailored to this particular problem. The state sponsorship literature assumes an overt or covert supportive relationship between the state and the violent non-state group, and attributes a high degree of difficulty for severing these relationships. The implicit assumption is that since the state has made a deliberate choice to sponsor a group for seemingly strategic reasons, it must perceive a high benefit from this relationship. Through the decision to support the group, the state has calculated the costs, risks and potential wrath of the group’s targets, and still decided that despite these costs, the group was worthwhile to support. This level of commitment is therefore necessarily difficult and costly to alter. However, even in cases where strategic support exists, the sponsorship can vary dramatically over time, across different issues, and in regard to different strategies that a violent group employs. Some relationships may in fact

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possess these deeply ingrained ties, whereas other base states may have much more superficial relationships with these groups. These differences are important to disaggregate as they each may represent distinct opportunities for coercion success. Furthermore, empirically, states have abandoned relationships with violent non-state groups in the past when they no longer suited their needs. For example, Egypt actively supported fedayeen activity in the early 1950s, but following the 1956 war, generally withdrew their support and curtailed the *fedayeen’s* freedom of action.

Additionally, not all base states even offer strategic support or an alliance with these groups. Thus, the characterization of overt or covert support does not capture the variation and nuance inherent in the base state relationship, nor does it capture the universe of problematic cases in the international system. Moreover, by narrowly focusing on terrorist groups, rather than violent non-state groups as a whole, this literature again only addresses a subset of the problem which I am examining. While violent non-state groups include terrorists, the category also includes a broader range of interesting and valuable cases. State weakness and sponsorship are certainly important factors to consider in the nexus between base state and violent non-state groups, however, they do not represent the universe of cases and are not sufficient in explaining the variation of base state responses to violent groups.

**Case Studies**

Finally, some scholars have examined the role of base states and the strategies directed towards them within specific case studies. However, the treatment of these cases is generally ad hoc and more descriptive of the events that occurred, than driven by a theoretical foundation. While there is often an implicit discussion about capabilities and the willingness to act against violent non-state groups, this analysis is done in an inconsistent way that does not lead to
systematic findings. For example, historians that have examined Al Qaeda, PKK, Palestinian militants and other violent groups, have all been forced to address the base state to a certain extent. However, while much can be learned from these historical accounts, it is difficult to generalize the findings beyond the specifics of the case at a particular moment in time. To date, no one has analyzed the relationship between the base state and the violent group, or the efficacy of coercive strategies in these circumstances in a systematic way that can be applied across space and time.

**TRANSITIVE COMPELLENCE**

When threatened internationally by a violent non-state group, a state can respond to this scenario in two ways. One option is for the state to undertake direct action against the violent group, with or without the consent of the base state. For example, the United States launched drone attacks against Al Qaeda operatives in Pakistan which were designed to kill Al Qaeda’s leadership and hinder their operational capacity.19

Alternatively, the state can act against the base state to quell activity emanating from its borders. This action can take one of three forms: cooperative partnership, brute force, or coercion against the base state. For example, the United States has attempted to partner with the Pakistani government in order to strengthen their capacity to confront and contain the Al Qaeda

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18 In some cases, the violent group may have a separate state sponsor. In these cases, a third option is available, mainly a policy directed at the state sponsor of the group.

and Taliban threats. In contrast, the United States, after a failed coercion attempt, decided to pursue a brute force strategy against Afghanistan following the 9/11 attacks. A third option, and the focus of this dissertation, is a coercion strategy aimed at compelling the base state to contain the threat emanating from its borders.

Definitions of coercion abound within the political science literature, ranging from broad to very narrow definitions of this state strategy. I define coercion as the threat of force, or limited use of force, to convince an adversary to comply with the coercer's demands. These threats can also be accompanied by promises of rewards to increase the incentive to comply with the coercer's demands.

Coercion is juxtaposed against what Thomas Schelling has termed brute force. "Brute force succeeds when it is used, whereas the power to hurt is most successful when held in reserve. It is the threat of damage, or of more damage to come, that can make someone yield or comply." A key feature of coercion is that unlike in a brute force strategy, the coerced retains the element of choice to comply with or reject the demands of the coercer, even while being

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21 This definition is based on Schelling's definition, where he explains that "it is the threat of damage, or of more damage to come, that can make someone yield or comply." Thomas C. Schelling, Arms and Influence (New Haven; Yale University Press, 1966), p. 3. This definition is consistent with those found in: Daniel Byman and Matthew C. Waxman, The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might, Rand Studies in Policy Analysis (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), Alexander L. George, William E. Simons, and David Kent Hall, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy, 2nd ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), Lawrence Freedman, Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
23 Schelling, Arms and Influence. p. 3.
subjected to power and often force. The object or issue at hand is not taken through the use of overwhelming force.

The goal of coercion is to convince the adversary that they are better off complying with the demands of the coercer than to deal with the alternative. The coercer seeks to change the cost-benefit calculation in favor of complying with its demands. In that vein, I utilize a cost-benefit model to better understand the success or failure of a particular coercive strategy.

Coercion can be divided into two subcategories that highlight the types of demands that are made: deterrence and compellence. Deterrence seeks to prevent an action from occurring through the fear of the consequences. This approach includes actions such as preventing a state from conquering a neighbor or acquiring nuclear weapons. In contrast, compellence seeks to reverse an action that has already occurred or to alter the status quo. Compellence requires action on the part of the coerced, whereas deterrence seeks to maintain the status quo.

Coercion directed against a base state falls into a subset of compellence which I have termed transitive compellence. Transitive compellence is a coercive strategy whereby a state coerces another state to address a threat presented by a third party, which in the context of this project is a violent non-state actor. The goal of coercion in these scenarios is to compel the base state to contain the threat posed by the violent non-state group. If it chooses to comply with the

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25 There are many critiques of using a cost-benefit model for capturing the success and failure of coercion. Mainly they argue that these models fail to capture some important factors including cultural differences, the impact of the framing of the coercive threat beyond the actual demand, varying preferences, bureaucratic influences, among others. For a thorough discussion of these shortcomings see: Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might*. p. 12-14. However, despite these shortcomings, the cost-benefit approach provides a beneficial framework by which to examine coercion and the in-depth cases hope to account for some of the neglected factors that are often not included in the generic model.
coercive demands, the base state can use a variety of strategies towards the group. However, the coercion itself is transitive in nature, to the extent that the ultimate target is the violent group.

Coercive goals are achieved by increasing the costs or decreasing the benefits of having these violent groups continue to use the base state as a locus for their activities. As in traditional coercion, the coercer seeks to increase the costs of a particular action, in this case, basing the violent group, to the point where the base state no longer wishes to preserve the status quo. This shift can be achieved through a range of positive and negative inducements. Whereas before the coercive action was taken, the base state was either willing to bear the costs or derived some benefit, or both, from allowing this group to reside within its borders, after the coercive action, this situation should become less tolerable.

When a state utilizes a transitive compellence strategy against a base state, they punctuate the current equilibrium within the base state. Irrespective of how the base state related to the violent non-state group previously, after the moment of coercion, there is at minimum, a need to reconsider the status quo. The transitive compellence strategy invariably places new costs on the status quo and the base state needs to evaluate whether it is worth preserving. Thus, if a coercer can credibly threaten or uses limited action to increase the pain for the base state, one would expect that such transitive compellent action would cause the base state to at least evaluate the cost of compliance before opting to defy the demands of the coercer. Although there may be many reasons that led to the existing *modus vivendi* between the base state and the violent non-state group, at the moment of coercion, the status quo is challenged and the calculus is necessarily reconsidered.

Until the moment of coercion, allowing the violent group to use its territory as a base may not have been particularly disruptive and may have even conferred certain benefits to the
state. Alternatively, the group may have been somewhat problematic for the base state, but when compared to other domestic priorities, confronting the issue ranked relatively low. However, now that there are increased costs associated with permitting this behavior, the earlier priorities or position of the base state may be revisited. Historically, even in the absence of any external pressures, states have acted as rational actors in abandoning these violent groups when they no longer viewed the group’s presence to be beneficial to the state. Given this precedent, any additional external pressure that a coercer may exert on this base state-group relationship could lead to a significant change in policy. Certainly, this recalculation does not mean that the base state will automatically comply with the coercer’s demands, rather, at the moment of coercion, the status quo is disrupted and one can expect to observe some kind of change following the coercive action.

Ultimately, as in traditional coercion, there are two distinct sides of the equation. On the one side, is the threat or imposition of costs by the coercer, and on the other, is the cost-benefit calculation of compliance by the coerced. In cases of transitive compellence, with a few differences that will be discussed below, the best practices and mechanisms of coercion remain largely the same, for the coercer and the base state are ultimately engaging in a bilateral coercive encounter. The coercion literature has focused extensively on how to create credible costs that are likely to persuade the adversary to adjust its policies and comply with the demands. Most prominently, Thomas Schelling, Alexander George and William Simons have identified a series

27 Byman, "Confronting Passive Sponsors of Terrorism." p. III.
28 For example, while the Kurdistan Regional Government acts strongly against Arab jihadists that attempt to base themselves in Kurdistan, it does not take similar steps against the PKK, even though the regional government appears to have the capabilities to do so. While it is the case that the PKK are stronger than the Arab jihadists, however, this is not a sufficient explanation for their inaction. Byman, "The Changing Nature of State Sponsorship of Terrorism." p. 15.
of best practices that influence the outcome of coercion, concluding that: the threat issued must be potent, credible, and must target a state's pressure points; the coercer should possess escalation dominance; the asymmetry of motivation should favor the coercer; there must be credible commitment not to escalate if the base state complies; and there should be a clear timeline for compliance. Similarly, scholars have focused on the specific mechanisms of coercion that are more likely to achieve the desired outcome. Byman and Waxman identify four possible punishment mechanisms: power based erosion, unrest, decapitation, weakening and denial. They argue that all of them have the potential to be successful, but each have a set of tradeoffs that make them more or less advantageous for different situations. All of these factors are essential components for the coercer to consider and utilize when implementing a coercive strategy.

However, it is on the other side of the equation, in studying the coerced base state's calculus, where the transitive compellence theory makes a significant contribution to the literature. Specifically, how can one estimate the benefits accrued from the basing relationship? What are the costs of compliance endured by the base state if the coercive demands are met? Focusing on the base state side of the cost-benefit analysis is an essential component in understanding coercion success or failure.

29 Schelling, Arms and Influence. George, Simons, and Hall, The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy. P. 76-81; Byman and Waxman, The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might, Alexander L. George, Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1991). p. 30; Byman and Waxman limit their best practices to targeting an adversary's pressure points and escalation dominance. They define pressure points as "much more than those areas sensitive to the adversary - they are also areas the adversary cannot impenetrably guard." They also define escalation dominance as the "ability to increase the threatened costs to the adversary while denying the adversary the opportunity to negate those costs or counter escalate."

30 For a more detailed discussion about the various advantages and disadvantages of each mechanism see: Byman and Waxman, The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might. Pp. 48-86.
Key Differences of Transitive Compellence

There are several key differences between traditional coercion and transitive compellence, which systematically distinguish this subset of cases from the broader category of coercion. First, in this scenario, all of the coercive threats are compellent, since the political demands of transitive compellence require some type of action by the base state to contain the activities of the violent group, resulting in a change in the status quo. These actions can range from a direct confrontation with the group, to an indirect strategy of border patrols or monitoring. Even in circumstances where the ultimate goal is to contain or deter the violent group from acting, the base state must act in order to create this new strategic environment. To comply with the demands of the coercer, passivity, on the part of the base state, is not an option. Whereas before the coercive action, the violent group conducted activity within the base state, following the transitive compellence, this arrangement should be viewed as a significantly less attractive or convenient option. If successful, the base state is necessarily required to take some action either directly or indirectly against the group. Ultimately, transitive compellence is defined by its focus on the base state as the target of coercion with the goal of changing the status quo within the base state and reducing the threat posed by the violent group.

Second, while traditional compellence is viewed as a challenging strategy because the coercer must compel a party to publicly reverse course, under instances requiring transitive compellence, in many cases, the coerced party has not actually acted aggressively against the coercer. Rather, the coerced party, the base state, is a presumed “accomplice” to the violence through its failure to control activities within its borders that are aimed at the coercer or any other states in the international system. Consequently, the coercer is specifically demanding that the coerced party fulfill its sovereign responsibility as a member of the international arena. This
expectation persists, even though the state may have limited or no control over the actions of the violent group. The goal of coercion is to prevent the violent group’s activity by limiting their freedom of action within the state. Once this shift is accomplished, the coercer has no additional claims on the base state. This distinction eliminates one of the key challenges of traditional compellence, mainly that even if the coerced party complies, there is no guarantee that the demands will not continue to grow.

The third key difference is the source of the conflict. The source of conflict in instances of traditional coercive diplomacy between two states can vary greatly. The issues can include reversing occupation of land, preventing or halting nuclear programs, preventing conventional attacks, enabling free flow of goods and oil, and protecting humanitarian aid. In all of these cases, both states have a vested interest in the issue which sparked the conflict, and usually the coerced has purposefully or inadvertently contributed directly to the conflict. While not always easy to measure, this issue is presumably important to both actors, or it would have been settled without a confrontation. The source of conflict for the coercer and the issue at hand are one and the same and the coerced has the ability to prevent, halt or reverse its activity.

However, in this circumstance, each actor in this triangle has a different set of interests in relation to both the crisis that sparked the coercive encounter, specifically the violent actions of the non-state actor, and the issue of the coercion, mainly the basing of the violent non-state group. The crisis has been sparked by the violent group through their violent activity against the

31 For example: US coerces Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait in 1991; US coerces North Korea to halt its nuclear program in 1993; Israel coerces Egypt to stop cross border attacks in the 1970s; US coerces Iran to secure the free flow of oil in 1987; US coerces Somali factions to stop interference with humanitarian aid in 1993. For a comprehensive table of coercive attempts see: Byman and Waxman, The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might. p. 52-58.
coercing state, with or often without the consent or control of the base state. The conflict which sparked the coercive interaction is not the issue that is being disputed in the strategic interaction. Instead, the issue between the coercerer and the coerced is the basing of the violent group, and more specifically, the role of the base state in permitting violent acts to be perpetrated against the coercing state's citizens. Though the base state may have a significant stake in the conflict between the coercerer and the violent group, this is not the predominant issue of the coercion. Thus, the cost-benefit analysis over the specific issue may vary greatly within and across these triangular relationships.

The coercerer's political demands are limited to a strategy of base state punishment. In traditional coercion, the coercerer can generally choose between a punishment or a denial strategy.\(^2\) Punishment works by raising costs or risks to the state through attacks on its civilians, industry, trade, and even military targets. The key is that in hitting these state targets, the coercerer seeks to increase costs, but does not preclude military success. Whereas denial operates by using military means to prevent the target from attaining its political objectives or territorial goals.

However, in cases of transitive compellence, the choice is limited to punishment strategies. In these cases, the coercerer is seeking to coerce the adversary to act against the non-state actor and deny them a base. Especially since successful coercion requires decisive state action, it is not clear what the target of a denial strategy ought to be. Unlike holding or defending a piece of territory, where the assets critical for an adversary's success may be evident, here the coercerer needs to find a manner in which to create costs for the state without

severely weakening the assets required to act against the group. For example, any effort to target a base state’s military must not ultimately undermine the base state’s ability to act against the group. In a traditional punishment strategy, the coercing state aims to impose great costs on the state with the hope that this pressure will lead them to acquiesce to the coercer’s demands. Scholars often emphasize that for a punishment strategy to work, it needs to inflict a significant level of pain. Under traditional coercion, continual state decline can lead to capitulation. However, since the coercer’s demands all require some level of action, weakening the base state too much through the use of conventional coercive mechanisms may in fact preclude its ability to comply with demands. This limitation does not suggest that punishment always works, but by design, a denial strategy appears to be non-existent, or at minimum, fraught with problems.

THE ADVANTAGES OF TRANSITIVE COMPELLENCE

Despite the inherent challenges associated with its implementation, transitive compellence appears to be a preferred policy among states threatened by violent non-state actors. Coercion against the base state can be an attractive option for several complementary reasons. First, it places the onus of responsibility on the base state, which is responsible for preventing violence emanating from its borders. Second, the base state can be best positioned for addressing the violent group, both in terms of its informational advantages, as well as its potential domestic latitude of action. Third, coercion against a state is a familiar and economical strategy for the coercer, particularly when compared to brute force. Finally, it avoids many of the pitfalls associated with dealing directly with the group through coercion or brute force.

Though this strategy has associated risks and costs, when successfully pursued, it deflects the most trying elements of containing violent groups onto the base state.

At the most basic level, the base state has a clear legal and normative responsibility as a sovereign state in the international system to control violence that emanates from its borders. Additionally, a state’s mere acquiescence to terrorist activity on its soil is a significant violation of the state’s obligations towards other states in the system, as most clearly codified through the United Nations. Not only are states technically responsible for eliminating bases from their backyards, but particularly since the 9/11 attacks, there has been a growing consensus regarding attribution of terrorist activity to the government of the base state. This consensus has provided additional leeway and legitimacy to operate against the base state directly.

Whereas it was clear that a state had a responsibility to contain violence emanating from its borders, it was initially unclear whether once this violence had occurred, a state would be held responsible for the attacks. In 1992, “the Security Council explicitly linked involvement in terrorist activity to a state’s obligation to refrain from the use of force under Article 2(4) of the

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34 "General Assembly Resolution 2625," ed. United Nations (1970), "Resolution 1373," ed. United Nations Security Council (2001). This responsibility was most clearly articulated in Resolution 2625 where it states that: “Every state has the duty to refrain from organizing, instigating, assisting or participating in acts of civil strife or terrorist acts in another State or acquiescing in organized activities within its territory directed towards the commission of such acts, when the acts referred to in the present paragraph involve a threat or use of force.” These responsibilities were further elaborated following the 9/11 attacks in Security Council Resolution 1373. For full text view: http://daccess-ods.un.org/TMP/6461077.92854309.html


37 While the notion of attribution has increasingly become accepted in international law, there is still a range of discussion regarding when the state can become the direct target of force. For the most detailed review of this debate see: Becker, Terrorism and the State : Rethinking the Rules of State Responsibility.
charter. 3 This important shift implied that even if a state does not commit, control, or even support the activities of the violent non-state actors, that passivity does not alter the state’s responsibility for the group’s actions. “Once a state makes it clear that it is uninterested in eliminating a terrorist threat emanating from its soil, it has assumed responsibility for the actions of the terrorists, and has opened itself to the lawful use of force by a threatened state.” 39

While politically, many states have long employed this logic, this notion of state attribution has also increasingly become the international legal standard. 40 These changes created two mutually reinforcing benefits. First, the base state was now deemed responsible for reigning in violent groups and preventing violence from their borders. Second, when a base state fails to comply, it is increasingly legitimate to use force to induce a base state to fulfill its international obligations.

As mentioned previously, the base state has a sovereign right and responsibility to control activity within its borders, particularly violent activity. This responsibility affords the base state the discretion and often latitude, to take violent action against these groups if necessary. To the extent that states in the international system regard the problem of basing to be significant, they are willing to tolerate and generally encourage the use of significant force to eliminate these

38 Travalio and Altenburg, "Terrorism, State Responsibility, and the Use of Military Force." P. 107 Travalio and Altenburg explain that this principle is analogous to the rules relating to neutrality. Specifically, when a state remains neutral, it cannot allow belligerents to move troops, weapons or supplies across their territory, nor use it as a base for organizing or recruiting. If the neutral state violates this, then the other belligerent state is justified in attacking the forces in the state.
39 Ibid. p.111
groups. These actions tend to be far better received as internal domestic decisions by the base state than comparable actions taken by a foreign power across recognized borders. The former action is generally considered more legitimate, or at minimum, there is less international interference, even when it produces much damage.

International norms aside, practically speaking, the base state may also be better positioned, relative to the coercer, to address the violent group directly. Although action against the violent non-state actor may be extremely difficult and costly, the base state generally possesses greater knowledge of the terrain, demography, and the group’s strongholds within the state. Additionally, the base state, through its own intelligence agencies, can possess much more detailed and relevant information regarding these groups, and at times, has the capacity to infiltrate them. Consequently, these informational advantages place the state at a comparative advantage relative to the coercer for dealing with these groups.

Furthermore, base state coercion has several implementation advantages. First and foremost, the base state has a clear address and enables the coercer to utilize its familiar strategies for addressing the threat. While the object of coercion is ultimately the containment of the violent non-state group, the mechanisms for addressing the threat are essentially between two sovereign states. While there are some important differences between traditional coercion and transitive compellence, the means employed and targets selected are often identical to those employed in traditional coercion. Additionally, coercion is generally considered an attractive

41 For example, the Jordanians closely monitored the fedayeen throughout 1950-1970 and even during moments of relative weakness, used the mukhabarat (the Jordanian Intelligence Services) to infiltrate these groups and keep tabs on their activities. Kamal S. Salibi, *The Modern History of Jordan* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris & Co; St. Martin's Press, 1993). P. 228

42 These advantages do not counteract some of the inherent difficulties of addressing these groups, which will be discussed shortly, but they do place the state at a distinct comparative advantage.
option because when successfully implemented, a state can achieve its goal economically, with little bloodshed, fewer political costs, and with a lower risk of escalation, than a strategy that is aimed directly at the violent group.\textsuperscript{43} Although the threat posed by violent non-state actors is significant, addressing it through a brute force strategy can be extremely costly and protracted.\textsuperscript{44}

Finally, coercing the base state also avoids many of the complexities associated with addressing the violent group directly. Several scholars have highlighted key challenges of using coercive strategies directly against violent non-state actors.\textsuperscript{45} First, even though the assets of the coercer usually dwarf the assets of the non-state actor, the coercer’s resolve is limited in comparison to the resolve of the violent group. For the non-state actor, power and survival are often at stake, and thus their willingness to commit resources and sacrifice more for their cause are disproportionate to the resources that the coercer is able or willing to commit.\textsuperscript{46} Thus, acting against a non-state actor directly will likely be a costly endeavor if it is to succeed and actually change the cost-benefit analysis for the violent group.\textsuperscript{47}

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
\item Alexander L. George, George, \textit{Forceful Persuasion: Coercive Diplomacy as an Alternative to War}. p. 6.
\item The recent war in Afghanistan serves to illustrate the difficulties and high costs associated with addressing a violent non-state actor through a brute force strategy against a state.
\item Byman and Waxman, \textit{The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might}. pp. 21, 190; Davis and Jenkins, "Deterrence & Influence in Counterterrorism: A Component in the War on Al Qaeda." p. 3.
\item This challenge is also present for the base state in some cases; however, from the perspective of the coercer, if it is possible to pass those costs onto the base state, it is to their advantage. Also, as will be discussed later, in some instances, the stakes for the state can be higher, therefore their willingness to put significant resources for this cause may also be proportionally higher.
\end{itemize}
Another challenge is that the non-state actor often lacks targetable assets which makes the implementation of a coercive strategy far more challenging.48 Many of these groups lack targetable traditional military and economic infrastructure such as munitions factories, power plants and airports that are typically central to a coercive strategy. Additionally, the difficulty of even physically locating these groups reduces the leverage of certain types of threat.49 This situation is further complicated by the fact that these groups are often embedded among the local population of the base state, so it is difficult to surgically act against these groups without inflicting costly collateral damage.

Even if a violent non-state actor expresses a willingness to comply with the base state’s demands, due to their organizational structure, they often lack control over their splinter groups, which reduces their ability to make credible commitments. Therefore, even violent groups that are willing to change course can make few guarantees.50 This reality is particularly problematic because so long as the base state does not preclude the activities of these non-state groups, splinter groups can continue to pose these international threats, even if the center of the original group has conceded or changed tactics. Ultimately, dealing with the group through the base state maximizes opportunity, as well as avoids the inherent pitfalls of directly addressing the group.

While base state transitive compellence has potential advantages, like all coercive strategies, it is not without risks. First, there is always the possibility of escalation between the two states that could even result in war. Although in theory, this strategy has the promise of an

49 Trager and Zagorcheva, "Deterring Terrorism: It Can Be Done."
economical outcome, when it fails, the escalation can be extremely costly. Second, although the coercive strategy is designed to contain the threat posed by the non-state group, if the strategy fails, the worst case scenario is not merely status quo, but rather a heightened threat from the violent group. Even though the coerker is attempting to create a wedge between the base state and the group, it is possible that the coercion will backfire, and possibly result in a tighter knit relationship between the base state and the group.

Third, transitive compellence strategies should be constrained to inflict sufficient punishment for the state to be motivated to act, but not to the point that it precludes this possibility. If these limits are inadvertently exceeded, it can result in state failure for the base state or an enhanced position for the violent group. This reality is especially daunting because of the aforementioned challenges of addressing the group directly, which necessarily fall upon the base state, if it complies.

Fourth, while coercion seems to be an increasingly accepted policy in a post 9/11 environment, this viewpoint is far from universal, and the international community may not support this action, especially when it entails force. Ultimately, when pursuing this option, it is important to recognize the benefits, but also the possible drawbacks of pursuing what is often a very difficult strategy.

A THEORY OF TRANSITIVE COMPELLENCE

This theory augments the existing coercion literature by examining instances of transitive compellence and highlighting the challenges involved with assessing the costs and benefits of compliance for the base state. Specifically, this theory assesses the base state’s costs of complying with the coerker’s demands, as imposed by transitive compellence. This theory
focuses on both the foreign and domestic elements of the base state-violent group relationship, and the significant costs to be borne by the state if it complies. As in traditional coercion, the base state is assumed to be a rational actor who will take action against the violent non-state group when its expected utility exceeds that of not taking action. Consequently, the magnitude of the cost of compliance greatly impacts the probability of success.

For coercion to succeed, the coercer must make a threat or take action that increases the costs of defiance beyond the costs of compliance. In traditional coercion, coercing states attempt to understand the value that the other state places on the issue of conflict, whether it is a piece of land or a nuclear program. Presumably, once this calculation has been made, a threat is issued in proportion to the value that the coercer has estimated. Consequently, coercion is more likely to succeed when there is a credible threat that effectively alters the calculation of the coerced state. All things being equal, the greater the costs of compliance, the lower the likelihood of coercion success.

Since the issue of conflict between the coercer and the base state is the basing of the group, the coercer needs to understand the costs and benefits conferred by this relationship, and most importantly, the costs of altering this relationship. Unlike traditional coercion, which usually revolves around the importance of a particular strategic issue, here the focus is centered on unraveling a dynamic relationship. It is therefore necessary to unpack the different aspects of the relationship to discover the benefits, costs and risks. Once the relationship between the base state and the violent group is understood, one can evaluate the level and type of coercive pressure that is necessary to alter the cost-benefit relationship, as well as the likelihood that the demands will be met.
This theory seeks to assess the base state’s cost of altering the existing status quo between the base state and the violent group. To estimate the magnitude of cost required, it is necessary to look at the components of the base state-violent group relationship: foreign policy and domestic politics. The relationship of the base state and the group necessarily affects the base state’s foreign policy. The group’s cross border actions impact the state’s international standing. To date, this aspect of the relationship has been the primary focus of those scholars that study state sponsors of terrorists, as well as proxy warfare.  

Thus, it is clear that the base state has a stake, positive or negative, in the international dimension of the group’s action. However, particularly since the violent group resides within the base state, and interacts with its political system and population, the base state necessarily has a domestic stake as well. Specifically, it is necessary to understand the potential domestic costs associated with suppressing the violent group.

This theory examines the costs and benefits associated with altering each part of the relationship, in order to ascertain the likelihood of coercion success or failure. The magnitude of the effort required to change the base state’s relationship with the violent non-state group is determined by the balance of foreign policy and domestic contextual variables that shape their interaction. Understanding the cost and benefits of defiance, or the value placed on maintaining the status quo, provides insight into the counterbalancing coercive threat required to provide sufficient incentive for the base state to embrace these costs. In this estimation, the costs of

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52 These measurements of cost depart from the traditional coercion literature which evaluates the level of commitment to the issue that sparked the conflict.
compliance include foregoing positive elements accrued to the state from the relationship, as well as the negative costs associated with taking action against the group. The expected utility of maintaining the status quo and avoiding confrontation with the group exists before and after the coercive action. In essence, this calculation reflects the value of the base state-violent group relationship on the eve of coercion. Ultimately, we expect coercion to succeed in those instances where the base state can comply with low foreign and domestic costs.

While the relationship between the base state and the violent group can vary widely across cases, it will always be shaped and defined by the foreign policy and internal domestic relationship with the violent group. Each of these categories of relational variables imposes different and often conflicting costs and benefits upon the base state and thus defines the context for coercion. Together, the variables highlight the interaction and interdependence between the group and the state. Each of these relational categories can create an environment which is either more or less conducive to coercion success. In isolation, neither category is a sufficiently good predictor. Only through an understanding of both of these categories independently, as well as through their interaction, can a complete picture of the relationship between the base state and the group be formulated. The coercer can ultimately utilize this knowledge to identify if, where, and how much coercive pressure would alter the status quo.

However, as mentioned previously, this pressure, threat or limited use of force cannot be so great as to weaken the base state’s ability to act against the group. Ultimately, the question is whether it is possible to sufficiently raise the costs in order to create an incentive to act, without simultaneously eliminating the desired outcome. Therefore, unpacking the different aspects of the relationship will reveal the areas that present the greatest opportunity for coercion success, as well the greatest hurdles and costs of action for the base state. Alexander George and William
Simons introduced this approach in their book, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*, where they identified contextual variables that affect the likelihood of success in traditional coercion.  

Specifically, this theory analyzes the contextual variables which shape the interests of the base state, as well as the costs that the base state would incur in acting against the violent non-state actor. Identifying the context within which coercion is not only theoretically plausible, but a particularly effective strategy, is an essential tool for understanding the past, as well as for evaluating future crises. The contextual variables are the precursors to the strategy, and as will be discussed in greater detail below, have a significant impact on explaining the success or failure of base state transitive compellence. In this case, the essential contextual variables to understand are those that define the relationship between the base state and the violent non-state actor. Specifically, the relational variables capture the cost and effort that the base state would need to expend to change its current relationship with the violent group and comply with the coercer’s demands. Coercion adds costs to the status quo, and seeks to counterbalance the necessary costs of compliance required for the base state to act.

**Foreign Policy Costs & Benefits**

In assessing the foreign policy relationship of the base state and the violent group, this theory examines the potential costs associated with altering this relationship. At the most basic level, a base state can gain utility from the violent group when the violent group’s actions

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53 Alexander L. George, David K. Hall, and William E. Simons, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy: Laos, Cuba, Vietnam* (Boston, Little, 1971), George, Simons, and Hall, *The Limits of Coercive Diplomacy*. George and Simon identify the following contextual variables that affect the likelihood of coercion success: global strategic environment, type of provocation, image of war, unilateral or coalitional coercive diplomacy and the isolation of the adversary. Other scholars have expanded this approach in order to further specify and operationalize the contextual variables that are most important for affecting the likelihood of success and failure. For example see: Peter Viggo Jakobsen, “The Strategy of Coercive Diplomacy” in Freedman, *Strategic Coercion: Concepts and Cases*.  

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advance its foreign policy objectives. Conversely, if the violent group’s actions hinder the foreign policy objectives of the state, acting against them would potentially provide a benefit in terms of the state’s foreign policy. All things being equal, the greater the divergence of the foreign policy goals of the violent non-state group and the state, the lower the costs associated with altering the status quo, and the more favorable the conditions are for achieving coercion success.

The violent non-state group generally has specific foreign policy goals and can pursue these goals by utilizing different violent means. The base state may or may not share these ambitious foreign policy goals, or be comfortable with the means by which the group intends to pursue them. However, if the state has common goals, then it may view the violent group as a cheaper means by which to accomplish their strategic objectives and it may therefore obtain some foreign policy benefits from the group’s action. This type of foreign policy dynamic has received the most attention in the state sponsorship of terrorism, and foreign policy proxies literature. Irrespective of whether they actively support them, Daniel Byman highlights the variety of ways in which a violent non-state group can potentially serve the foreign policy interests of a base state. These benefits include: destabilizing their neighbors, projecting power onto other states beyond their own capabilities, changing a regime in a neighboring state, and

exporting ideology. In these cases, the violent group can be instrumental in the base state’s foreign policy. The risks associated with their presence are a calculated aspect of the base state’s grand strategy. This calculation is particularly relevant for base states that also serve as active state sponsors of terrorism. Here, the base state can overtly or covertly support the activities of a terrorist group in order to pursue their foreign policy goals. In these cases, the foreign policy goals of the violent group and the base state are most closely aligned in that the violent group advances the goals of the base state through its actions. For example, the *fedayeen* in Egypt shared many common goals with the Egyptian government in the 1950s, and were viewed as instrumental in the grand strategy of the Egyptian regime.

While the aligned foreign policy relationship tends to receive more attention, scenarios on the other end of the spectrum are also prevalent. A violent group may be pursuing goals that are in direct conflict with the objectives of the base state. Such a group may consider the coercer a staunch enemy, while the base state may be neutral or even have friendly relations with that state. As described earlier, the basing relationship need not emerge as a result of strategic or ideological affinity and this is most evident in the potential differences in their grand strategic goals. In light of this rift, the violent group’s actions can undermine the state’s foreign policy and impose a significant cost on the base state through its actions. This cost can be borne by damaging their relations with the coercing state or more broadly, their foreign policy goals within the international system. Additionally, even in those cases where the foreign policy goals of the violent group align with the base state, they may or may not approve of the means utilized to pursue their objectives. There are numerous ways in which the violent group and the base state

can pursue their goals. At times, the means selected by the violent group are counterproductive for the state, even if the end goals remain aligned. For example, both the violent group and the base state may share a common enemy and have specific goals that they are pursuing against the coercer. However, the base state may have preferences for the timing of a confrontation that the violent group may not share. Alternatively, the base state may believe that a violent provocation may compel the coercer to escalate beyond what the base state considers a reasonable cost for achieving this goal. For example, Arab states, who shared many foreign policy goals with the *fedayeen*, often did not support their tactics.

Alternatively, it is possible that while the foreign policy goals of the group and base state are unaligned, the actions of the violent group may advance the base state’s agenda in other areas of its foreign policy. In these cases, the violent group may pursue its own agenda, which is not aligned with the state, but the unintended consequences of these actions may in fact have some benefits for the base state. As will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3, the Syrian regime did not support the goals of the PKK in their insurgency against Turkey, and in particular the establishment of an independent Kurdish state. However, through their basing of the PKK, and their violent campaign, they derived leverage in other contentious issue areas with the Turkish government, most importantly, water rights.

Ultimately, in assessing the foreign policy variables, one must examine the alignment of the base state and the violent group’s foreign policy ends, as well as their means. If the base state is deriving, or perceives to be deriving a foreign policy benefit from the actions of the violent group, complying with the coercer’s demand would entail foregoing this benefit. Thus, the more closely aligned the ends and means, the greater the costs required to alter the relationship, and ultimately, the less favorable the context for coercion success. Alternatively, the farther apart the
group and base state are in terms of their foreign policy goals, the smaller the potential benefit derived from this relationship and the lower the costs of altering it.

**Domestic Political Costs and Benefits**

In transitive compellence, although the coercive interaction is international in nature, for the base state, acting against the violent non-state actor is largely a domestic matter. The violent group resides within the state, can become enmeshed within the state and can even be well organized domestic contestants for the state. The base state regime wants to survive and needs to maintain its domestic security, an area in which the violent non-state actor can play a critical role. Thus, in addition to assessing the foreign policy factors described above, the coercer needs to identify and assess the domestic relationship of the base state and the violent group.

Utilizing internal domestic variables to explain coercion success or failure builds upon the literature examining the relationship between domestic politics and foreign policy. Steven David demonstrates that leaders "omnibalance", by considering both domestic and foreign threats when making alliance decisions. Similarly, Taylor Fravel explains that domestic conflict can compel leaders to cooperate, even making territorial concessions, in exchange for assistance in addressing their domestic sources of insecurity. A growing literature emphasizes that for many regimes, the most pressing threats to their survival emanate from within their borders, and thus, these threats invariably interact with and affect their foreign policy decisions.

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The common denominator in this research is the emphasis on exploring domestic variables, and specifically threat, to better understand externally directed foreign policy decisions. Here too, one must evaluate the costs and risks that are posed domestically to the state by the violent non-state group.

Complying with the coercer’s demands requires the base state to confront the group and prevent that group from acting within its territory. Any action necessarily requires some costs and risks be absorbed by the state. In some cases, taking action against these domestic threats entails the risk of absorbing enormous costs. Since regime survival and maintaining domestic security are of utmost importance, the largest concern and source of cost for the base state is engaging in a protracted political or military conflict with the violent group. A protracted conflict with the violent group can destabilize the state and ultimately, threaten the regime’s hold on power. Protracted conflicts incur costs that are not solely quantifiable for the regime in terms of blood and treasure. If a base state cannot defeat or contain the violent group expediently, the costs in blood and treasure have no clear limit. However, even more significant for the state is the possibility that the conflict will destabilize its hold on power and in the worst case, lead to an overthrow of the regime.

Protracted conflict can destabilize the regime through a variety of mechanisms. For example, in a protracted conflict, the base state may lose effective control of territory that the violent group holds or one that contains a population that is sympathetic to the group. Similarly, the risks of assassination rise dramatically and the loyalty of the security forces may be tested.

during a long conflict. The population may become dissatisfied with the regime policy and either
demand a change of policy or aid the group. The risks of a protracted conflict for the regime
entails the absorption of significant material costs in blood and treasure, but more importantly, at
its most extreme, threatens the survival of the regime.

When the costs of containment are high for the regime, it generally corresponds that the
benefit of eliminating the group would also be high for the regime. Thus, one might expect that
the state would be inclined to confront the group in order to rid itself of this domestic threat and
comply with the coercive demands. However, while it is clear that the state would derive a
benefit when the threat is deemed high, the outcome of the interaction is a troublesome
unknown. Consequently, if the regime strongly believes that it could potentially lose power as
result of such an interaction, it is a risk that is unlikely to be embraced in response to coercion.

In the absence of coercion, this threat persists, yet presumably the state has already calculated
that it is not worthwhile at the current juncture to embrace the risk of confrontation. That
assessment is unlikely to be altered by coercion because the mechanisms of military coercion
have limited means by which to make this engagement more palatable to the state. \(^{59}\) Ultimately,
I argue that unless the violent group directly confronts the state, the state has signaled that it
generally prefers to live with the status quo, however difficult, rather than embrace the
uncertainty presented by a confrontation which could end disastrously. The uncertainty and risk
makes the state more likely to forgo the benefit of confrontation, particularly in response to
coercive threats.

\(^{59}\) However, as will be discussed in the conclusion, there are alternative non-coercive strategies that could be
employed that would lessen the costs for a state in this situation, that may be better suited for inducing the state to
take the desired action against the violent group.
The violent group’s ability to impose domestic costs is driven primarily by two important factors. First, one must determine whether the violent group has the military capability to survive against the base state’s army and ultimately pose a sustained military challenge to the regime. This variable captures the magnitude of the fight required to tame the violent group and the violent group’s chance of jeopardizing the regime. Second, one must evaluate the ability of the violent group to mobilize popular support and use it to take effective political action. This variable provides an indication of how much latitude the base state possesses in acting against the violent group before eliciting a backlash from its population. These two factors enable the violent group to potentially mount a protracted conflict against the state, with all of its aforementioned costs. Understanding the magnitude of these costs and risks are at the heart of understanding the costs of compliance domestically for the base state. Ultimately, the potential domestic political costs for the regime are orders of magnitude higher than those that potentially come from foreign policy.

Interaction between the Foreign Policy and Domestic Factors

As described above, the foreign policy and domestic political costs of the relationship combine to create an environment that is either more or less conducive to transitive compellence. At the most basic level, this strategy results in four possible scenarios (illustrated in Table 1 below). In two of the cases, both factors point in the same direction, towards a context that indicates likely coercion success or failure. In the other two cases, the factors point in opposite directions.

However, as seen above, although the base state does stand to absorb costs at both the foreign policy and domestic levels, the stakes at each level are vastly different. The kinds of
costs of compliance that can be imposed at the domestic political level are significantly greater than those that can be imposed at the foreign policy level. Whatever a base state’s foreign policy benefit from its relationship with the violent group, it does not usually extend into the world of political survival. By contrast, domestic politics revolves around political survival. At the high end of the cost spectrum, the regime fears that it would not survive a direct confrontation with the violent group. Under these circumstances, even if the foreign policy of the violent group and the base are highly divergent, the challenges of the domestic situation are so costly that they outweigh the foreign policy benefits that may be conferred from acting against the group. Thus, irrespective of the low costs of foreign policy, action will be difficult for the state to consider. Ultimately, in these scenarios, it is very difficult to alter the cost-benefit situation domestically through coercion and thus, the context will not favor transitive compellence. Though coercion is not impossible in these scenarios, it is important to recognize the effects of an unfavorable domestic situation, even when the foreign policy elements appear to favor coercion.

However, in cases where the domestic political costs are deemed low, it is still necessary to understand the intricacies of the benefits conferred from the foreign policy aspects of the relationship. While these advantages may still be difficult to forfeit, these costs are generally less than the domestic price that may need to be incurred. Furthermore, coercive action and the possibility of escalation often negate some of the foreign policy benefits derived from the relationship. Thus, in these circumstances, there is an opportunity for coercion to succeed, since the countervailing cost of coercion has the ability to alter the base state’s calculations. Ultimately, it is easier to make cheap foreign policy more expensive through coercion, than it is to make expensive domestic calculations cheaper or more palatable.
Determining whether transitive compellence of the base state is a worthwhile strategy to attempt depends on a thorough review of both the domestic and foreign policy variables which define the relationship. This approach considers not only the specific costs and risks that the base state would need to embrace if they capitulate to the coercer’s demands, but also evaluates whether such an endeavor would be successful. The often conflicting relational variables at play between the base state and the violent group highlight the complex reality within which this relationship operates.

By understanding the relationship between the base state and the group, and the coercive context, the coercer can gain awareness about the type of demands that can reasonably accompany each of the coercive strategies. Some states are able to contain groups through very strong and direct measures, whereas others are only able to externally monitor a group, or their own borders. The options available to a state will inevitably change over time, as the relationship between the base state and the violent group evolves.

Table 1: Transitive Compellence: Success or Failure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domestic Costs</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>High</th>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Success &lt;br&gt; Higher probability</td>
<td>Failure &lt;br&gt; Lower probability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td><strong>Success</strong> &lt;br&gt; Lower probability</td>
<td><strong>Failure</strong> &lt;br&gt; Higher probability</td>
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</table>
The Dependent Variable: Coercion Success and Failure

In the broadest terms, the goal of the coercer is to compel the base state to take specific action against the violent group. Following a coercive action, there is a wide spectrum of possible outcomes, and it is essential to define precisely which of these outcomes can be defined as success and which as failure. It is in these actions of the base state that the transitive nature of the compellence is captured, in that the coercer seeks to contain the group transitively through its interaction with the base state. The base state can choose to limit the action of the violent group, maintain the status quo, or foster a more permissive environment for the group. In these cases, the base state confines its actions to the violent group. It is within this subset of action where potential coercion success lies. Specifically, if the base state’s reaction to coercion is to contain the actions of the violent group, the coercer has succeeded.

Success and failure of transitive compellence is first and foremost measured in relation to the demand made by the coercer on the base state and, specifically, how closely the outcome correlates with these demands. A complete coercive success would be one where the base state changes its behavior with respect to the violent group in the specific manner that is demanded by the coercer. The demands that can be made of a base state can vary greatly across cases. Demands can include a variety of actions including: the complete dismantlement of the violent group, disarming the group, preventing cross-border infiltrations, and closing training camps and headquarters, among others.

At one end of the spectrum, a complete transitive compellence success would be one where the base state changes its behavior with respect to the violent group in the exact manner that is demanded by the coercer. However, success in coercion is rarely that straightforward or as dichotomous and the base state will often not meet the demands of the coercer in this exact
manner. Meeting the coercer’s demands can be a difficult task and one that often cannot be fully met by the base state. The common denominator across all of the coercive demands is that they all require a substantial change in the base state’s policy towards the violent non-state group. The coercer seeks to shift the base state from the status quo to an environment that is less accommodating towards the group. This policy change can range from very significant actions against the group, such as an expulsion or forceful disarmament, to more symbolic actions, such as condemning their actions publicly, or making promises of action. Thus, coercion success can also be measured on a sliding scale that relates to the extent to which the base state has made the environment more inhospitable for the violent non-state group.

Alternatively, coercive attempts against a base state can backfire and create the opposite effects. Coercion can fail along a spectrum and include a range of undesirable outcomes. First, the base state can ignore the demands of the coercer and even embrace the violent group in response to the base state may even proactively attempt to strengthen the group or take other conciliatory policies that are directly against the demands of the coercer. (See Figure 3 below)

Second, the base state’s response to coercion need not be limited to the base state’s behavior towards the violent group. Specifically, the base state may opt to escalate by reacting directly against the coercer and thus engage in a bilateral conflict, which may or may not include the third party. 60 While the coercer intends to produce a behavioral change towards the third party, the base state may utilize these actions as a pretext for direct violence against the coercer. This reality needs to be a part of the calculated risk associated with coercing the base state.

60 For example, some argue that Israeli coercive action against Egypt with respect to Fedayeen activity in Gaza ultimately led to the 1956 War.
Even though the coercer’s ultimate target is the violent group, the immediate bearer of costs in many scenarios is the base state. Consequently, in some instances, the coercive action can be particularly costly, resulting in a significant weakening of the existing state or the ruling regime. In these cases, the state’s ability to act towards the violent group may inadvertently be eliminated. The resulting position of the violent group is indeterminate and in some cases, the weakening of the state can create an opportunity for the violent group to rise in prominence within the state. Thus, both success and failure of transitive compellence can vary widely and by degree across cases.

Additionally, when evaluating transitive compellence success and failure, it is often necessary to distinguish between the base state’s intentions and the successful implementation of its policies. At times, the state intends to address the coercer’s demands. This approach is traditionally observed in forceful statements against the violent group and declarations of intended actions. However, despite the best of intentions, the state is sometimes unsuccessful in fully implementing their promises. This failure can occur for a variety of reasons not directly related to the state’s sincere intention to contain the threat. For example, the base state may select a poor strategy to address the violent group or the group may put up an unexpectedly good fight. This fundamental shift in policy is especially important because the task required of the state is often a long counter-insurgency campaign, which even for the most capable militaries can be wrought with implementation problems. This first step of changing the policy towards the group, even in the absence of success in carrying out their plans, is still necessary for eventually containing the group. Additionally, when a change in the state’s behavior is observed, this change creates opportunities for the coercer, or other international actors, to take positive measures to implement the desired policy. Ultimately, while in an ideal scenario, the change in
state policy is ushered in by its successful implementation, it is essential to isolate some of these practical observations in order to fully capture the success or failure of the transitive compellent strategy.

Figure 3: Spectrum of Coercion Success and Failure

RESEARCH DESIGN

Operationalizing and Measuring the Variables

The theory of transitive compellence necessarily relies on obtaining a consistent measurement of the costs of compliance across both foreign policy and domestic factors. To assess the importance of these variables, it is imperative not only to measure these variables at each moment of coercion, but to track their changes over time. A consistent measurement both
within each case and across cases requires a structured, focused comparison. By disaggregating the variables, asking consistent questions, and identifying measurable components, it is possible to more closely estimate the costs of compliance for the coerced state in each case independently, as well as relative to each other.

This method recognizes the inherent challenges in measuring these variables and provides a transparent approach to tackling this challenge. Typically, coerced states do not directly or openly express their estimated costs of compliance across the aforementioned foreign and domestic variables. Certainly in the rare cases where this evidence exists, it presents strong evidence for the theory. However, in most cases, it is necessary to examine proxies that provide sufficiently strong estimates of the costs and risk of compliance. When the proxies all point in the same general direction, the estimate is strong. However, often times, within both the foreign and domestic settings, there are conflicting data points, some of which raise and others lower the costs. When the proxies point in opposite directions, it is necessary to judge the interaction of these factors and arrive at a reasonable estimate. These measurement challenges are present both for researchers, in retrospect, and policymakers, in crises, alike. Ultimately, I argue that despite the difficulties and challenges in obtaining an accurate assessment, exploring these potential costs and risks of compliance provide a better method for predicting coercion success or failure. This next section, elaborates on the measurement criteria and seeks to provide a more transparent method for assessing the costs of compliance across both foreign and domestic variables.

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61 For additional information on structured, focused comparison, see: Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2005).
Operationalizing Foreign Policy Benefits

When measuring the alignment or divergence of the foreign policy of the base state and the violent group, and the potential costs involved with altering this relationship, it is necessary to examine several types of evidence. The first measurement consists of an assessment of the base state’s goals, and specifically, what the base state hopes to achieve with respect to the coercer. Similarly, it is important to assess the foreign policy objectives of the violent group, and determine how these goals interact with the base state’s objectives. Here the question is, “Do the base state and the violent group have shared foreign policy goals towards the coercer? Do they also share broader external political goals?” In rare cases, the base state may express the benefits that the violent group provides to them internationally. However, particularly in light of the often guarded nature of the base state-violent group relationship, such direct evidence is unlikely. Instead, a close examination of the stated goals of each party provides a proxy for understanding their alignment. All else being equal, the greater the convergence of foreign policy goals between the base state and the violent group, the higher the foreign policy benefit.

Within this analysis, it is important not only to assess the degree of alignment or divergence of goals, but to also assess how the base state regards the violent group’s potential impact. Specifically, “If the violent group contributes, how important is the violent group’s contribution in the overall foreign policy agenda of the state?” In some cases, the violent group is potentially advancing a central foreign policy goal for the base state. For example, one could argue that Syrian basing of Palestinian groups supports and provides leverage towards a settlement of its dispute with the Israelis, which is of great importance in its foreign policy agenda. In this case, the expected benefit would be potentially high. However, in other cases, the violent group may be advancing a less important or even marginal part of the state’s foreign
policy agenda. In these cases, while there is certainly some benefit, particularly if perceived to be a cheap manner to advance a goal, it is not central. For example, Syrian basing and support of the PKK would fall into this category. While the PKK served to advance some of Syria's goals with respect to Turkey, the goals under consideration were of significantly less importance than the Israeli conflict. Thus, though the PKK provided some foreign policy benefits, these benefits were limited.

Finally, it is important to evaluate whether the means employed by the violent group, irrespective of the broader aims, appear to be advancing or hindering the foreign policy aims of the base state. Here the question is “Does the base state approve and derive benefit from the violence utilized by the non-state group in pursuit of its goals?” All things being equal, if the means the violent group is employing appear to be advancing the foreign policy aims of the state, the foreign policy benefit would be greater.

Ultimately, through a careful assessment, it is possible to estimate the general level of cost associated with altering the foreign policy aspect of the relationship. Although the domestic and foreign policy variables are not purely additive, in combination they do provide a picture of the costs to be borne by the state in terms of their foreign policy, and can lead to a high, medium or low assessment, which in turn informs the base state’s costs of compliance and expected utility calculation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foreign Policy Costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Base State – Violent Group Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do the base state and the violent group have shared foreign policy goals towards the coercer?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Do they share broader FP goals?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violent Group FP Contribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the violent group contributes, how important is its contribution in the overall FP agenda of the state?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violent Group Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the state approve, and/or derive benefit from the violence utilized by the group?</td>
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</table>
Operationalizing Domestic Political Costs & Benefits

As with foreign political costs, measuring the costs and risks of a protracted conflict with the violent group requires an examination of several different types of variables. The first, and most straightforward measure is whether the base state expresses concern about the threat of political or military confrontation with the violent group. However, as with foreign policy, this type of direct evidence is rare. In part, the absence of such information is due to the authoritarian nature of regimes and the limited access to their private documents and discussions. Furthermore, in the absence of access, states may not publicly discuss the threat perceived by these groups, or wish to downplay their actual concerns. Thus, even in the absence of such direct evidence, it does not necessarily indicate that the base state perceived no such threat. However, when such evidence arises, it provides a strong indicator of the potential costs and risks perceived by the state.

In the absence of such direct evidence, one can identify several proxies to estimate the magnitude of costs and risks of a protracted conflict. The first variable examines the political intentions of the violent group. The central question here is “Does the group have political claims on the base state?” With respect to intentions, some groups explicitly declare control of the base state as a policy goal and take steps to destabilize the present regime. Even while a violent group is engaged in an international conflict with a coercer, that does not preclude a group from simultaneously pursuing violent activity against the regime domestically. For other groups, the base state serves merely as a residence and the local politics are not of great interest to them. Rather, their aspirations are oriented externally. These political intentions, like the other variables, are dynamic, and can change over time. For example, the fedayeen in Egypt did not make claims to controlling the Egyptian state and largely stayed outside of the Egyptian political
arena. In contrast, in Jordan, in the late 1960s, the fedayeen increasingly made claims on the government, often questioning their legitimacy and acting violently towards members of the regime. Similarly, Hezbollah has historically been perceived as a threat to the Lebanese government. All else equal, the more signs that the violent group is hostile to the regime, the greater the threat of protracted conflict, creating higher domestic costs.

The second measure aims to estimate the political and military organizational capacity of the violent non-state group. Specifically, the question is, "How capable and sophisticated is the violent non-state group’s political and military organization?" While in theory, all armed groups within a state present some threat to the regime, the degree to which they can effectively mount a challenge can vary greatly. Thus, it is necessary to assess the basic power of the violent group, including its organizational structure, the number of fighters and how they are armed. Additionally, one must examine the primary source of the group’s power and the extent of its reliance on the base state’s resources. This dynamic reveals the potential power base of the violent group and focuses on the group’s ability to magnify its power. Whether the group obtains its power locally, externally, or even from the base state itself, affects the ease with which the base state can limit the group’s power. All else equal, the more capable and sophisticated the violent group, the greater the threat presented to the regime militarily, leading to a higher risk of a protracted conflict, and thus, higher domestic political costs for compliance.

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62 This threat has been historically perceived, even ahead of their 2008 entry into government. In May 2008, Hezbollah took over West Beirut after the government shut off its communications network. Following this incident, Hezbollah was granted veto power in the Lebanese parliament, while still maintaining its arsenal of weapons. Andrew Mills, "Deal Boosts Hezbollah’s Fortunes; Agreement Giving Opposition Veto Power Resolves Central Issues That Led to a Violent Assault on West Beirut," The Globe and Mail (Canada), May 22 2008.
The third variable seeks to assess the base state’s military capabilities when acting against the group. Here the question is, “How strong is the base state’s military, and can it utilize these means effectively against the violent group?” When examining state power, I first quantitatively measure the basic material capabilities of the state’s military and security apparatus. This initial assessment provides insight into whether the state possesses a sufficient military advantage over the violent group. In pure numbers, the base state will frequently possess a large military advantage over the violent group. However, this measure alone is insufficient for capturing whether the military can act. In addition, it is necessary to examine qualitative elements of the military, including whether there is a precedent for internal action against violent groups, the estimated level of loyalty of the military and its control by the regime, and the makeup of the forces and officer corps. If the military is split along political lines or not well suited for a counter-insurgency campaign, these challenges would clearly hinder the ability of the state to act. These qualitative measures assess the ease with which the regime can implement its desired policies against the violent group. All else being equal, the weaker the base state security forces, the greater the threat of protracted conflict and the higher the value of domestic political costs.

The final variable assesses support for the violent group amongst the population, or roughly the public’s opinion towards the violent non-state group. Specifically, “Does the group have popular support and how willing is the population to rally behind the violent group?” Popular support amongst the population can amplify or minimize the cost of action against the group by the state. The level of popular support can fluctuate over time and is affected by the domestic environment and the actions of the violent group. Violent groups can obtain support through a variety of techniques including: belonging to a local ethnic group, being involved in a
popular liberation movement, or providing basic goods and services. Groups can also lose or erode their popular support by imposing high costs on the locals, mistreating the population where they reside, or simply by pursuing goals that are not aligned with the population’s goals. Additionally, the group’s support can vary greatly among different segments of the population.

For example, Hezbollah generally possesses popular support amongst the Shias of Lebanon. The group is part of the indigenous Shia population and provides many goods and services, which increases their broad base of support. However, their level of support still fluctuates amongst the population with respect to their military actions. In contrast, the PLO in Lebanon was predominantly made up of foreign implants, visitors and refugees within the state. Their ethnic and political makeup, among other things, did not provide them with as much popular legitimacy amongst the indigenous population. Ultimately, there are particular factors that make popular legitimacy more or less likely, but these variables are dynamic and vary over time. Thus, it is insufficient, and can often be misleading, to limit the assessment to static measures. Understanding where a groups stands with the population on the eve of coercion is an essential element in understanding the environment in which the base state will need to act, and how costly the population can make such action. Even relatively small changes within this variable can present opportunities or costs for the base state.

Popular support can either amplify or minimize the costs of action against the group. When popular support for the group is high, action by the government may embroil the population and can weaken the legitimacy of the state. The population’s alignment with the group can provide the group with shelter and resources which are essential for sustaining an insurgency against the state. In some cases, a violent or non-violent protest may even impede action by the base state. Conversely, if the group is not viewed as legitimate and the population
is ambivalent about their presence, or even against it, the group will be unable to mobilize this support and this indifference provides the government with additional latitude to confront the group.

Additionally, since action by the state is necessarily domestic, any government encounter with the group may impose unintended costs upon the general population. If the citizens believe that the government action is not justified due to their support of the group, their willingness to pay these costs will be diminished. Conversely, they may have a high tolerance for the pain of coercion in light of their alignment with the violent group. In contrast, if the population is unsupportive of the group and deems their presence as problematic, their willingness to support even costly action by the government will be increased. Additionally, their sensitivity to the costs of coercion may be heightened and thus, their willingness to bear costs as a result of the actions of the violent group significantly diminished. The level of popular support for the group is essential for the base state because it often interacts directly with the state’s legitimacy in general, and for action against the violent group in particular. All things being equal, the greater the amount of popular support for the violent group among the population, the more easily a violent group can withstand a counter-insurgency, and thus the domestic costs are higher.

Popular support is often difficult to measure, particularly where survey data is unavailable and supporting a violent group is risky or clandestine. However, despite these challenges, one can estimate the level of support, and specifically, changes in that variable. First, regimes often monitor the level of popular support for these groups and report on the popular sympathies they observe. Second, journalistic and government reports often gauge the levels of support and provide an assessment through observations of flags, fund raising, and recruitment
by the violent group. Finally, interviews with individuals present at the time can provide an insight into the general popular mood of the people and their support of the violent group.

All of these indicators provide a general assessment of the risk and costs of a protracted conflict with the violent group, and in turn the risks for the regime in confronting the group. Although not purely additive, the interaction of these variables provides a more complete picture of the complex landscape that a base state must navigate when faced with a coercer’s demands. Thus, when all of these variables point towards high domestic costs, complying with the coercer’s demands can impose serious and potentially devastating costs on the regime, and it is hard to imagine a coercive threat that would be sufficiently motivating for the state to embrace these risks. In contrast, if the domestic costs of action appear to be low, it is more reasonable to accept that the base state, with a sufficient coercive threat, would be willing to accept the domestic costs.

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<tr>
<th>Domestic Political Costs</th>
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<tr>
<td>Violent Group Political Intentions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violent Group Organizational Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base State Military Capacity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Group Popular Support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Methodology & Case Selection**

To test this theory and isolate the impact of the contextual variables described above, I conduct three in-depth qualitative case studies, where transitive compellence was utilized as a strategy to quell the activities of a violent non-state actor. Specifically, I examine the following
cases: Israel vis-à-vis the fedayeen in Jordan, Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Syria, and Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in northern Iraq. Each of the cases listed above have addressed the issue of violent non-state actor basing with coercive strategies over a prolonged period of time in varying capacities. Within and across each of these cases, there is great variation in the relationship between the base state and the violent group, the coercive strategies employed, and ultimately, the success of these tactics. This variation enabled me to test my theory, as well as evaluate its explanatory power when compared to the most prominent competing explanations.

The complexity of these cases lend themselves to in-depth case studies where each of the categories of the relationship between the base state and the violent non-state group can be properly observed and measured, and alternative explanations can be explored. In selecting my cases, I sought cases where a costly, consistent and credible transitive compellence strategy was utilized over an extended period of time. This consistency enabled me to hold constant the impact of the particular coercive tactic. Consequently, rather than success or failure being attributed to the specific approach, the focus lies squarely on the context within which the strategy was being implemented. Furthermore, in each case, the coercer utilized a strategy that reflected many of the best practices identified in the coercion literature. The “best practice” cases create an expectation that coercion would likely impose a sufficient cost on the base state to spark a departure from the status quo. At minimum, in these cases, the coercion literature

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63 In some cases, the coercer may attempt to address the non-state actor via multiple channels, rather than coercion exclusively. These cases are not excluded from the study, though direct state-to-state coercion must be present, and the impact of alternative strategies isolated. I have also excluded cases where a foreign force comes to the aid of a state and subsequently becomes a target. For example, the case of the U.S. in Vietnam, where the U.S. became a target of a violent non-state actor, only after its intervention. These cases, while of great interest, introduce another level of complexity to the case of coercion that should be investigated further but is outside the scope of this project.

64 For example, the coercive strategies were costly for the target, expectations were expressed clearly, timelines were often given. See: Byman and Waxman, *The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might*, Schelling, *Arms and Influence*. 
would anticipate that the base state would at least be compelled to reevaluate its basing policy. Ultimately, by identifying cases in which the coercive strategy remained constant, but the outcomes varied, one can focus on the impact of the relational variables for coercion success.

As an additional dimension of the case selection process, I sought cases with variation on both of the independent variables, mainly the foreign policy and domestic relationship between the base state and the violent group, and the dependent variable, the outcome of the coercive strategy. Movement across these variables enabled me to test whether shifting values on the independent variables resulted in corresponding changes in the dependent variable.

Additionally, I've identified cases that isolated the central variables in my theory from the competing explanations, specifically, the state sponsorship and state failure explanations. I've selected hard tests of my theory by identifying a case of a historical state sponsor, Syria, as well as a nascent weak state, northern Iraq. These two cases fit the models envisioned by the conventional wisdom, thus each generate distinct predictions as to the outcome of each case. In the case of Syria, the state sponsorship literature anticipated that coercion would be difficult to achieve because of the high stakes involved in severing state sponsorship. Similarly, in the case of northern Iraq, the burgeoning quasi-state of Iraqi Kurdistan was weak by traditional state measures, and the literature predicted that it would lack the capacity to comply with the demands of the coercive threats.

A refined set of methodological tools are utilized within and across each case to isolate the sources of variation and assess the causal impact of the relational categories intended to predict coercion success or failure. The within-case comparison employs both process tracing and congruence testing to determine whether the contextual relationship variables influence coercion success or failure in the way described above.
The within-case comparison offers several distinct advantages for exploring the impact of the relationship between the base state and the violent group. First, these longitudinal case studies control more tightly for potentially confounding variables. Specifically, throughout each case, the three actors remain the same: the coercer, the base state, and the violent group. Additionally, other more general variables may remain relatively static as well, such as regime types, the relationship between the base state and the coercer, and the international settings, among others.\(^{65}\)

Within each case, multiple instances of coercion are closely examined with a high level of detail. In total, there are seven instances of transitive compellence, which allow for repeated measurement of the variables, and importantly, changes in the relationship across time. As mentioned previously, the relationship between the base state and the violent group is dynamic. The ability to examine multiple instances of transitive compellence within one state more definitively highlights the impact of the changing coercive context, while holding relatively constant other variables.

Another advantage of within-case analysis is the opportunity to gain greater insight into the causal process that produced an observed outcome. First, within-case analysis “can strengthen causal claims by forcing the theory to explicate the causal mechanism through which causes are transformed into effects.”\(^{66}\) Second, through process tracing, one can identify the causal chain and limit the list of potential causes.\(^{67}\) Third, this analysis enables one to explore

\(^{65}\) This is not necessarily the case, in some cases, there are shifts in these broader variables. When these changes exist, their impact will be evaluated within each of the cases. However, in many of the cases, the changes do not appear significant.


\(^{67}\) George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. P. 205-210
the contingent relations and interactions among the variables. Within the cases, this method enables one to make several observations of the relationship across time and examine its impact on coercive success or failure, while holding constant other potential confounding variables.

The within-case analysis will be complemented by pairing two of the macro-cases in a comparative case design that utilizes the method of difference, specifically, the case of Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Syria (Chapter 3) and northern Iraq (Chapter 4). In the “method of difference, the analyst compares cases with similar background characteristics and different values on the study variable (that is, the variable whose causes or effects we seek to discover), looking for other differences between cases.” Here, I paired two of the longitudinal case studies with each other, where two of the three actors remain constant, specifically, the coercer, and the violent non-state group, while the base state varied. These paired comparisons can serve to neutralize some of the internal differences that may be present in the within-case analysis and will also test whether the explanatory variables are equally significant across cases and interact in parallel ways.

Finally, my cases are geographically confined to the Middle East, broadly defined. Studying the efficacy of transitive compellence in the Middle East presents several advantages. First, the challenge of violent non-state basing has been a prevalent and persistent phenomenon in the Middle East for decades. These violent non-state groups have launched attacks both within and outside of the region. Consequently, understanding and resolving this crisis is of

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69 For example, 18 of the 47 Terrorist groups listed on the State Department’s Foreign Terrorist Organization list are based in Middle Eastern States. While this study is not limited to terrorist groups, this demonstrates the ongoing struggle in the region. United States State Department Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Foreign Terrorist Organizations (2010 [cited September 27 2010]); available from http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/other/des/123085.htm.
significant strategic importance. Second, the prolonged nature of these regional conflicts has produced cases with enduring basing relationships despite extensive efforts to reverse this trend. In some instances, the bases have been eliminated, for example, the PKK no longer resides in Syria, nor do militant Palestinian groups reside in Jordan. Nonetheless, many situations remain volatile, threatening the stability, and in some extreme instances, the basic viability, of base states in the region. Despite the inherent challenges, the strategy of transitive compellence has been used repeatedly in the region by multiple states, which presents an opportunity to explore the impact of coercion over time, as well as glean lessons from episodes of success and failure.

Third, within the region, there is significant variation in the relationship between the base states and the violent groups that reside within them. Moreover, some states serve as bases to multiple groups, while other violent groups have relied upon multiple states within the Middle East as their bases. These groups typically travel regionally, thus expanding the number of cases and enabling one to observe distinct dynamics at play in certain states, as well as examine a violent group’s behavior across different state settings. Finally, a regional approach engages a reader of this study by providing a proper landscape, one with a varied cast of characters and a set of historical details that are unique to the region. The prevalence of violent groups in the Middle East and the variation both within and across the cases offer a dynamic environment to explore, while still providing enough universal threads to weave a larger narrative about how to address the challenges of basing.

While a focus on the Middle East potentially presents the advantages noted above, it simultaneously presents the possibility that the findings of this study cannot be generalized and do not travel beyond this region. With regards to the matter of basing, other regions may operate in a distinctly different manner. Moreover, while the study focuses on the trilateral interactions
between the coercer, the base state and the violent non-state actor, this dynamic may invariably be affected by broader regional developments and the implicit "rules" of that particular arena. Consequently, while studying the matter regionally is a mechanism by which to hold these rules constant, it nonetheless poses the question of global applicability. The great degree of variation present within and across the cases certainly appears to move beyond the particularities of the Middle East, however, one cannot be absolutely certain in this observation without further exploration. Nonetheless, to the extent that the Middle East serves as a region of strategic significance and one that continues to base violent groups that present both regional and global threats, it is a rational place to start such an undertaking. Furthermore, by understanding these particular dynamics, it will provide a baseline for future assessments in other regions.

To examine each of these cases, detailed historical research was utilized to gather evidence for each variable, including: interviews with policymakers, military personnel, journalists and analysts; primary documents (where available); personal memoirs; journalistic accounts; and secondary materials. The primary documents available in the Jordanian case offered thousands of pages of extensive data on many of the variables of interest, as well as insight into the decision making process of the policymakers at the time. British involvement with Jordan until the late 1950s, as well as their ongoing interest in the region, provided well-documented insights typically not available in authoritarian regimes. In addition, interviews conducted with Jordanian and Kurdish policymakers, military officers, journalists and analysts provided rich data on the variables of interest, as well as the manner in which the policymakers
characterized the problem of basing. In all, over 30 interviews were conducted. While it was still difficult to obtain precise information due to significant data constraints, the objective was to utilize multiple sources as a means by which to confirm proper measurement.

Each macro-case begins with an overview of the basing problem, the transitive compellence strategy utilized, and the puzzle of coercion success or failure. After providing an overview of the period studied, specific instances of coercion are selected and examined in more detail. In each case, I selected the most costly coercive attacks, since these events create the greatest expectation that the base state would most likely respond in some fashion. By focusing more narrowly on specific instances of coercion, it is possible to observe the cause and effect of coercion more clearly, in a limited time horizon, and without as many potential intervening contingent variables. Each individual strategic interaction is then described in detail. Drawing upon the data described above, the values for the foreign and domestic variables are obtained prior to the coercive instance, an assessment of the overall coercive context is provided, and an evaluation is offered as to whether the costs of compliance were relatively low or high. Particular attention is given to shifts in the variables across each time period which would alter the coercive context. Given this assessment, each section generates predictions about whether transitive compellence should succeed or fail. Finally, a within-case comparison explores the changes over time within each case, and their impact on coercion success. Each chapter also addresses case specific alternative explanations.

70 Due to the sensitive nature of the basing issue in both Jordan and northern Iraq, many policymakers preferred to keep their interviews off the record. However, in both the case of Jordan and Iraq, interviews were conducted with officials that had insight into the decision making process. 71 Additional justification for the instances of transitive compellence utilized is provided within each chapter.
Alternative Explanations

While examining the cases for evidence of changes in the contextual variables serves as one test of the explanatory power of the theory, a further test lies in whether there are alternative explanations that can better explain the variation in outcomes. I have gleaned the existing literature described earlier for plausible alternatives that could be considered within the case studies. Through this process, I have identified two viable sets of hypotheses that emerge from these sources. In addition, within the cases, I have also included case-specific alternatives that have been raised in the literature.

1. **Base states that also serve as state sponsors should be more difficult to coerce successfully.**

   The central argument is that once a base state decides to actively sponsor a violent non-state group it is less likely to be willing to jeopardize this relationship and act against the group. The implicit assumption is that in selecting to sponsor these groups, the state has made a calculated decision and derives a significant benefit from the sponsorship; otherwise, it would not have taken on the risk and expense of this relationship. Since this sponsorship is an important strategic partnership, defined predominantly by foreign policy, the greater the level of support offered by the base state, the more difficult it should be for coercion to succeed.

2. **The stronger the base state is relative to the group the more likely coercion will succeed, and vice versa.**

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This hypothesis focuses exclusively on state strength and weakness. This notion is drawn primarily from the weak and failed state literature that attributes inaction to the amount of state power. The argument is that states that are well institutionalized and possess a strong state apparatus should be able to respond more aptly to the coercer’s demands, irrespective of other aspects of the base state-violent group relationship or other elements of the coercive strategy. Conversely, relatively weak states should be significantly constrained in their ability to respond to coercion irrespective of the costs imposed by the coercer, since it is, practically by definition, outside of their capacity.

To provide the most comprehensive analysis of these complex issues, I will fully explore both of these alternative hypotheses, as well as other explanations that emerge from the specific cases, within the case studies summarized below.

ROAD MAP

The balance of this dissertation tests the theory presented above through three in-depth case studies of transitive compellence. Chapter 2 analyzes the case of Israel vis-à-vis the fedayeen in Jordan in 1950-1970. Within this case, I examine why the consistent transitive compellence strategy employed by the Israelis against Jordan achieved varying degrees of success when trying to contain the fedayeen activity in 1953, 1966, and 1968. I argue that the variation in outcomes can be attributed to the shifting relationship between Jordan and the fedayeen in each of these periods. In 1953, the context for coercion favored success as a result of

73 These findings can be found in the literature regarding how to best address failed states and the dangers they present by providing havens for terrorists and other unsavory groups. In fact, it may be the case that truly failed states are not ideal for violent groups because they are too unstable and generally lack infrastructure and the provision of basic goods. Rotberg, State Failure and State Weakness in a Time of Terror, ibid.
the divergence of the foreign policy goals of Jordan and the fedayeen, coupled with the relatively low domestic costs of compliance. Following this first encounter, Jordan contains the fedayeen activity by instituting tougher measures in response to Israeli reprisal raids. By the second raid, the fedayeen had imposed increasing costs upon the Jordanian regime through their increased threat and growing popularity. These domestic changes raised the costs of action for Jordan, though it was still possible and not prohibitively costly to comply. In the second instance, Jordan responded by taking additional measures against the fedayeen, but the strategy also led to a significant deterioration of the bilateral relationship with Israel. Leading up to the final episode of coercion in 1968, the domestic situation within Jordan had significantly deteriorated and the fedayeen now posed a significant threat to the regime, and the costs and risks of confrontation were exceedingly high. Despite continued foreign policy divergence, the domestic changes significantly altered the Jordanian regime’s calculations. As predicted, the domestic volatility precluded action on the part of the Jordanian regime. Then, following this third coercive instance, Jordanians loosened their restrictions and even aided the fedayeen in their efforts. Throughout this period, the Jordanian regime and the fedayeen had divergent foreign policy goals, and consequently, the fedayeen were not instrumental in pursuing Jordan’s aims. Instead, I argue that the variation is explained by changes in the internal domestic contextual variables, which transformed the context for coercion over time, from one that was conducive to success to one that contributed to failure.

Chapter 3 examines the case of Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Syria. In contrast to the other cases highlighted in this study, the Syrian case demonstrates the particular dynamics of basing in the absence of significant domestic costs of compliance. Syria had served as a state sponsor for the PKK, allowing Abdullah Ocalan, its leader, to establish the organizational
headquarters and political training facilities within Syria. Despite a two decade long relationship with the PKK, in 1998, in response to a more aggressive coercive threat by Turkey, Syria extradited its leader and barred the PKK from exploiting Syria as a base. Though this reaction surprised many observers, a close examination of the relationship between Syria and the PKK throughout this period highlights that there was an opportunity for coercion to succeed. In contrast to the Jordan case, where domestic variables had to be delicately navigated, Syria’s relationship with the PKK was almost exclusively in the foreign policy realm, and Syria encountered very few constraints or costs in its domestic relationship. Syria utilized the PKK instrumentally to balance and gain leverage against Turkey but did not support the PKK’s goals for establishing a Kurdish state. However, during this period, Turkey was effective in containing the PKK, thus diminishing the group’s strength and limiting its value as an instrument of Syrian foreign policy. Furthermore, domestically, the PKK did not pose any threat to the regime and was easily contained by the Syrian state. The combination of moderate foreign policy alignment and low domestic challenges presented a context that was more favorable for coercion than might have otherwise been expected. Ultimately, exploring this case through the theoretical framework highlights the favorable context that was present during this period, as well as challenges the conventional wisdom regarding the intransigent nature of state sponsorship.

Chapter 4 further advances the analysis of Turkey’s challenges with the PKK, but now explores the dynamic within Iraqi Kurdistan. Unlike the sponsorship relationship described in Chapter 3, the Iraqi Kurdish parties have a fundamentally different interaction with the PKK. This case explores the challenge of basing within a nascent and weak state, and among political parties that are ostensibly co-ethnics. During the period of 1991-1998, Turkey utilized a transitive compellence strategy aimed at the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) and the Iraqi
Kurdish political parties more broadly. Though technically not a state, following the implementation of a no-fly zone through Operation Provide Comfort (OPC), the Iraqi Kurdish parties collectively governed a quasi-state in northern Iraq. In this period, three transitive compellence instances are examined in detail: 1991/2, 1995, and 1997. As in the previous cases, significant shifts in both the domestic and foreign policy relationship between the KRG and the PKK greatly impacted the context for coercion. Most importantly, the domestic infighting which began in 1994 between the KDP and the PUK, the two dominant Iraqi parties, fundamentally altered the costs and risks of complying with Turkey’s demands. Furthermore, KRG’s eventual split into two administrative units dominated separately by each Iraqi party forces one to assess the differing foreign and domestic costs of compliance for each party, and to observe their differing reactions to coercion. In 1991-92, when the parties were united, the context favored coercion and the parties embraced costly measures in order to contain the PKK. However, in 1995, as the infighting heightened the costs of action domestically, the parties became increasingly reticent to divert their forces and risk entanglement in another conflict. In this case, neither party took significant action against the PKK, though the KDP took some symbolic measures. In the final period, when the tide of the civil war favored the KDP, lowering the domestic costs of action, there is once again increased action against the PKK. However, since the domestic situation had worsened for the PUK, the PUK chose to utilize the PKK as a tool against the KDP. Once again, this case demonstrates the importance of the domestic context and the costs of compliance for explaining coercion successes and failures. Importantly, this case highlights that even nascent states have the capacity to act against violent groups when their interests dictate the exigencies of such a policy. It is essential not to underestimate the power of even emerging states. Additionally, the willingness of the KRG to take action against the PKK,
a fellow Kurdish rebel group, highlights the limits of co-ethnic identification. Although there was clearly some level of identification among the Kurdish parties, this shared heritage seldom restrained their action against one another.

The final chapter concludes the dissertation and discusses the theoretical and policy implications of the research presented. I hope that through the lens of transitive compellence and the color provided by these three cases, one can observe how the external foreign policy and internal domestic variables influence the base state’s compliance calculations and ultimately shape the outcome of any coercive action. Additionally, one implication of the theory of transitive compellence is that it can inform policymakers about the how to best implement a coercive strategy, which tools to employ and where the state’s pressure points lie. These last pages also explore the implications of the theory for other state to state strategies that can be employed for containing violent non-state groups, including brute force against the violent group, and cooperation with and bribery of the base state.
CHAPTER 2: ISRAEL VIS-À-VIS THE FEDAYEEN IN JORDAN

INTRODUCTION

The case of the fedayeen in Jordan during the period of 1950-1970 exemplifies the complicated triangular relationship inherent in instances of transitive compellence. During this period, Jordan served as a base for fedayeen groups from which they conducted training, as well as organized and launched terror and sabotage raids directed at Israel. In response, Israel implemented a consistent transitive compellence strategy directed at the Jordanian regime with the explicit goal of inducing them to clean up their backyard and prevent cross-border infiltrations by the fedayeen. At times, the Israeli strategy yielded the desired outcome and the Jordanian regime took active steps to reign in the activity of the fedayeen. However, at other junctures, this strategy failed to achieve its desired goals. Since Israel was consistent in the application of its strategy throughout this longitudinal struggle, there is an opportunity to explore the contextual variables at play and find an explanation for this variation in outcome. Understanding this variation will help us to better ascertain the conditions under which transitive compellence can succeed and when it is likely to fail.

This chapter explores this puzzle and seeks to explain the variation by examining the shifts in the foreign policy and domestic relationship between Jordan, the base state, and the fedayeen, the violent non-state group, and the dynamic’s impact on coercion success and failure. Within the case of Jordan, I am focusing on three infamous reprisal raids conducted by Israel against Jordan, the attack on Qibya in 1953, Es ‘Samu in 1966, and the attack on al-Karameh in 1968. These raids are well suited for comparison because they were significant raids, conducted in a similar fashion, and each elicited changes in the policies of the Jordanian regime. The
similarity between these raids enables us to hold constant the specific conduct and
implementation of the coercive raid, as well as potential confounding variables, and instead
focus on contextual changes that led to the variance in Jordan’s reaction.

I argue that these divergent outcomes can be explained by the shifts in the relationship
between Jordan and the fedayeen during each period, particularly on the domestic dimension.
Specifically, the domestic costs and risks of compliance rose significantly, and consequently,
coercion failed to achieve its objectives.

This chapter proceeds in the following manner. First, I provide a broad overview of the
problem of basing and infiltrations conducted by the fedayeen during the period of 1950-1970. I
then examine Israel’s general transitive compellence strategy during these same years.
Following this discussion is a detailed exploration of the three raids, at Qibya in 1953, Es ‘Samu
in 1966 and Karameh in 1968. In each case, I explore the details of the raid itself, the Jordanian
regime response, and the relationship between Jordan and the fedayeen in each period leading up
to the raid. This analysis explores the domestic and foreign policy variables that created the
context for coercion success or failure. Additionally, I examine the additional reprisal raids that
occurred after Karameh and their impact. Finally, I consider and reject potential alternative
explanations that might otherwise explain the variation in transitive compellence outcomes.

INfiltrations FROM Jordan: 1949 – 1969

Following the 1948 War, official hostilities ended with the signing of several ‘general
armistice’ agreements between Israel and each of her neighbors in the spring and summer of
1949. On April 3, 1949, Israel signed the general armistice with Jordan, which officially
delineated the border along the Beit Shean Valley and the Arava (see Map 1 [p.198] & Map 2
However, despite the delineation of borders and cessation of conflict, a new problem of border infiltrations emerged shortly after the war ended. At its peak in 1952, the IDF reported a total of 16,000 infiltrations across the border, 11,000 of which emerged from the Israeli-Jordanian Border. Though many minor incidents occurred throughout this period, between 1949 and 1969, there were approximately 1300 significant infiltrations by fedayeen which resulted in about 1,500 Israeli casualties (see Table 1). While the number of infiltrations ebbed and flowed throughout this time period, this problem continued to vex the Israelis, especially along the Jordanian border through the 1960s with varying levels of intensity. Though infiltrations were a persistent problem, four distinct periods emerge: (1) 1949-1956, (2) 1956-1964, (3) 1965-June 1967, and (4) July 1967-1970 (see Figure 1 below).

During the period of 1950-1970, the fedayeen employed a consistent infiltration strategy. However, within the data, four distinct chronological periods emerge, which are distinguished by: (1) the ebb and flow of infiltrations, (2) key changes within the fedayeen organizations, and (3) important regional developments. Thus, it is helpful to explore them separately. The first period following the 1948 war, begins the escalation and politicization of infiltrations, and culminates with the 1956 Suez campaign. The second period, which begins after the 1956 war until 1964, includes an eight year period of relative calm along the Jordanian Israeli border. The third period, beginning in 1965 includes the reemergence of significant and organized infiltrations along the border until the 1967 war. The final period, which begins after the conclusion of the 1967 war, signals a significant escalation of infiltrations and culminates

75 Ibid. p. 28.
76 The third period ends in June 1967 as a result of the June 1967 Arab-Israeli War
with the complete cessation of border violence in 1970.

Figure 2: Frequency of Serious Fedayeen Infiltrations from Jordan 1949-1969
Source: Middle East Military Events Data 1949-1969
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Fedayeen Infiltration Incidents</th>
<th>Israeli casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
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</tr>
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<td>101</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1311</td>
<td>1511</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Significant Fedayeen Infiltration Incidents and Israeli Casualties by Year 1949-1969
* Data through June 1969
Source: Middle East Military Events Data 1949-1969

1949-1956

Most of the infiltrations following the 1948 War came across the Jordanian border. This trend could be attributed to the porous 400 mile border, in conjunction with the 500,000 Palestinian refugees that were now settled in Jordan. At least initially, many infiltrations were conducted by refugees who sought to plow or harvest their land, retrieve some of their
belongings, or look for missing relatives that were on the other side of the armistice line.⁷⁷

Others crossed the border to steal from Israelis or smuggle goods.⁷⁸ Between 1948 and 1952, the majority of infiltrations were motivated by economic, rather than political aims. However, regardless of the motivations for crossing, the Rhodes Armistice Agreement had clearly stated that civilians were not to cross the armistice line, and therefore, any violation would be considered a violation of the truce.⁷⁹ Furthermore, while these infiltrations were not conceived with the sole purpose of causing Israeli fatalities, in this period, 119 Israelis were killed as a direct result of infiltrations from Jordan.⁸⁰

In 1953, the infiltrations changed in nature and began to be carried out by fedayeen, Arabic for ‘self-sacrificers.’ The attacks lost their innocence and resembled guerilla activity, designed to kill and harm Israelis. These infiltrations were conducted by organized armed Palestinians, independent of the Jordanian state, and were clearly political in nature.⁸¹ As Sir John Bagot Glubb, head of the Arab Legion, Jordan’s military, noted, “In the summer of 1953, however, appeared a new feature – infiltrators who went only to kill...Now, at occasional intervals, two or three Arabs would appear in Israel and shoot one or two people at night, or throw a hand grenade into a window. These parties were all armed with new Sten guns and hand

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⁷⁹ "Israel-Jordan Armistice Agreement, 3 April 1949," (1949). Article IV, Section 3 states: “Rules and regulations of the armed forces of the Parties, which prohibit civilians from crossing the fighting lines or entering the area between the lines, shall remain in effect after the signing of this Agreement with application to the Armistice Demarcation Lines defined in articles V and VI.”
⁸⁰ Barry M. Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment" (Ph.D., Georgetown University, 1971). p. 69
⁸¹ Morris, Israel's Border Wars, 1949-1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, and the Countdown to the Suez War. p. 59
In 1953, there were 118 significant and violent infiltration incidents, as opposed to 17 between 1949 and 1952. These incidents resulted in 176 Israeli fatalities.83

Though the raids were political, at this phase they were conducted in a decentralized manner and with limited political organization. However, despite the fragmented nature of these efforts, distinct groups still applied these tactics uniformly. Haj Amin al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem and the principal leader of Palestinian nationalism in this period, often used his networks to send armed infiltrators against Israel, especially from the West Bank, as a means of embarrassing Abdullah and his successor Hussein. As early as 1951, the British embassy in Amman reported that it had received a report that “Haj Amin [al-Husseini] and his associates now plan to form irregular bands on the west bank which will make trouble on the Israeli frontier.”84 Despite their plans, these only accounted for a small proportion of the incidents from 1949 to 1956.85 More common were former mujahidin who set up their own bands or operated on contract for Arab military intelligence services. Yet neither the mujahidin, nor Husseini, constructed modern political organizations on the basis of these infiltrations. In this period, political Islam had the greatest following and was built upon the natural religious attachment of the refugees, thus attracting recruits through its emphasis on jihad and the need for Palestinians to rely on themselves and take military action to regain their homeland.86 Often they had the

82 Glubb, A Soldier with the Arabs. p. 305
83 Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment". p. 71
86 Ibid. p. 48-49
support of external regimes, specifically Egypt and Saudi Arabia.\textsuperscript{87} As early as 1950, Glubb had suspicions that others were supporting the armed groups, much of which was confirmed when Egypt boasted about their involvement.\textsuperscript{88} The increasingly violent nature of these infiltrations raised their status as a serious security concern for the Israelis. Although early infiltrations were considered security violations, the changing motives and nature of the attacks signaled an important change and required a more serious response by the Israelis and Jordanians.

\textbf{Figure 3: Frequency of Serious Fedayeen Infiltrations from Jordan 1949-1956}

\textit{Source: Middle East Military Event Data 1949-1969}

\textsuperscript{87}Glubb, \textit{A Soldier with the Arabs}. pp. 305-306; Salibi, \textit{The Modern History of Jordan}. pp. 236-237.

\textsuperscript{88}Glubb, \textit{A Soldier with the Arabs}. p. 250
1956-1964

Following the 1956 Suez campaign, there was a lull in infiltrations and relative tranquility along the Jordanian-Israeli border. Though as can be seen in the data below (see: Figure 3), there were still some infiltrations, however, the scale of activity was greatly diminished. The decrease in infiltrations during this period appears to reflect both strategic and tactical considerations on the part of the fedayeen organizations, as well as the inter-Arab rivalries which dominated this period.

During this period, many of the fedayeen organizations joined the broader Pan-Arab unity movement and believed that their liberation would emerge from their support of this unity. In many ways, the union of Egypt and Syria in 1958 under the United Arab Republic (UAR), as well as the increasing Pan-Arab activity, created a belief that through this movement their Palestinian goals would be obtained. George Habbash, founder of the Political Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) explained that following the 1956 Suez War, they saw the path to liberation through cooperation with Egypt. He asserted that:

From 1956-1964, we worked for Arab unity, for larger entities, in order to bring about a state encircling Israel...Meanwhile Egypt favored the expansion of Arab armies and the building up of classical warfare capabilities. This was a terrible mistake. We lost six to eight years by neglecting guerrilla warfare in favor of relying on the myth of Egypt’s conventional armed forces and not preparing ourselves properly for guerrilla warfare.

Two important political events shifted the Palestinian movement’s approach away from its reliance on the Arab states and specifically, on Arab unity, to bring about its liberation. In 1961, the end of Egyptian and Syrian unity highlighted the fragility of Pan Arab unity and the

90 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.  
problems of relying on it for obtaining independence. The following year, the Algerian
Revolution created a model for a successful popular war of liberation and gave an additional
push towards independent political action beyond the agendas of the Arab states. As these
ideas shifted, the organizations within the Palestinian movement began to undergo a significant
political reorganization and military buildup effort, which resulted in a temporary lull in armed
activity across the Jordanian-Israeli border.

Simultaneously, following the 1956 Suez Attack, the Arab states were undergoing some
significant changes. First, this period was marked by an inter-Arab battle which pitted the
revolutionary Pan Arab regimes, specifically Egypt and Syria, against the remaining
conservative, often monarchical, Arab regimes. Several critical political shifts occurred during
this period: 1) the 1957 coup in Syria and subsequent union with Egypt in 1958 (mentioned
above), 2) the 1958 Iraqi coup, which ousted the monarchy and replaced it with a revolutionary
regime, and 3) the Islamic alliance between Saudi Arabia, Iran and Pakistan. These forces
presented significant challenges within Jordan as well. Most notably, in April 1957, there was a
serious coup attempt by the Free Officers in Jordan which was prevented, but subsequently led to
the institution of martial law. Thus, throughout this period, the Jordanian regime was
predominantly occupied with addressing the Pan-Arab pressure exerted by Egypt and Syria, as
well as elements of its own population. Ultimately, this period was dominated by political
infighting and posturing among the Arab states and the internal events borne out of the

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93 Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The
94 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011; Interview with Zaid Rifai, Nov. 12, 2011; Interview with Samir
Mutawi, Nov. 12, 2011.
revolutionary Pan-Arab movement. Though the fight with Israel remained a priority rhetorically, these larger issues ultimately dominated the agenda.

Furthermore, the Suez War highlighted to Jordan, and the other Arab states, Israel's will and capacity to escalate to an aggressive war, and its ability to conquer territory. Although in some respects, Nasser claimed that the Suez War was a political victory against the West and Israel, the quick Israeli military victory, and its implications for the future were not lost on the Arab states. The increasing focus on the inter-Arab and internal pressures on the Jordanian regime, coupled with the apparent risk of entering into a war with Israel, created significant incentives for restraining any Palestinian action that could both divert resources away from their primary Arab struggle by sparking an unnecessary escalation along its borders. Thus, in this period, the Jordanians continued to take measures to patrol their border and limit whatever Palestinian action was being organized, both with respect to their ongoing support of the revolutionary regimes, as well as their potential acts against Israel.

The relative quiet throughout this period seems to be driven both by the strategic and tactical changes that the Palestinian Movement was undergoing, as well as the broad inter-Arab and internal conflicts that were dominating the Arab regimes. Most importantly, during this period, the Israelis temporarily halted their coercive policy because of the relative tranquility.

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97 Due to the absence of coercion in this period, this period is excluded from the study on the impact of coercion, though it was important to include to provide a broader overview and context for the period.
1965-1967

In 1965, infiltrations from Jordan reemerged in a significant way and continued through the end of the decade. The beginning of this period is marked by a failed terror attack aimed at an irrigation project, which was conducted explicitly by Fatah. These infiltrations continued to be politically motivated with a primary goal of inflicting as many Israeli casualties as possible. These operations were carried out by commando groups that were part of the newly established Palestinian liberation movement, which included groups such as al-Fatah, the Arab Nationalist

98 Schiff and Rothstein, *Fedayeens: Guerrillas against Israel*. p. 16
Movement (ANM), and the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA). Due to increased support for these groups, predominantly from Syria and Egypt, the commando units increasingly became more competent and lethal. Only the communist Palestinian groups did not make an effort to compete militarily with the other groups and did not feel pressure to conduct operations and in fact, saw them as counterproductive to their cause.

From January 1965 - June 1967, there were a total of 59 infiltration incidents that resulted in 84 Israeli fatalities and casualties. Although infiltrations during this period did not return to their pre-1956 rate, these two years produced a significant increase with approximately the same number of infiltrations as the previous eight years combined.

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100 Ibid. p. 168.
101 Barry M. Blechman, "Middle East Military Event Data, 1949-1969," (Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) [distributor], 1984). 47 fatalities and 37 casualties
102 During the period of 1957-1964, there were a total of 57 infiltrations and 34 fatalities and casualties. Ibid.
1967-1970

Following the June 1967 War, Fatah tried to establish a base of operations in the West Bank, which had been occupied by Israel. However, this endeavor continuously failed as the Israelis kept destroying the network and killed or captured approximately 200 members. The failure to set up an operating base in the occupied territories resulted in a search for a new base of operations amongst Israel’s neighbors. Jordan was the best candidate because of its large Palestinian population and its long border with Israel.有一次 the Palestinian groups had

103 Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993. p. 165-66, Though the 1967 War shortened the Israeli-Jordanian border through the capture of the West Bank, it still remained one of the longest borders with an Arab State, especially
established themselves on the East Bank, the conflict escalated further. The Israeli Defense
Ministry reported that between June 11, 1967 and July 31, 1969, there were a total of 473 border-
crossing incidents from Jordan, of which 141 resulted in direct engagement between fedayeen
and the Israeli army forces, troops in border posts or on border patrol. In all, between July
1967 and June 1969, there were 240 significant infiltration raids that resulted in 371 casualties
and fatalities. Infiltrations from Jordan continued to be a menacing problem for the Israelis until
the Jordanian government expelled the fedayeen starting with Black September, in September
1970, until they were completely removed by 1971. As will be discussed in greater detail, the
regime’s actions against the militants eliminated the guerrilla bases within Jordan and
subsequently removed the issue of infiltrations permanently.

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104 Service By Alfred FriendlyWashington Post Foreign, "Israeli Figures Show Heavy Guerrilla Losses," The
Figure 6: Frequency of Serious Fedayeen Infiltrations from Jordan June 1967-June 1969  
Source: Middle East Military Event Data 1949-1969

**Israeli Perception of Infiltration Threat:**

In light of Israel’s small size and long borders, infiltrations across the Israeli-Jordanian border remained a critical security issue during the period of 1949-1969. These infiltrations, which occurred during technical periods of non-violence, inflamed the Arab-Israeli conflict. Moshe Dayan clearly articulated Israel’s concern with respect to these infiltrations.

This densely settled area has an average width of no more than twelve miles between the Mediterranean and the Jordanian border…Scarcely anywhere in Israel can a man live or work beyond the easy range of enemy fire. Thus the term ‘frontier security’ has little meaning in the context of Israel’s geography. The entire country is a frontier, and [the] whole rhythm of national life is affected by any hostile activity from the territory of neighboring states.\(^{105}\)

Complaints about the infiltrations’ cost in both blood and treasure became a persistent Israeli complaint to both American and British policy makers in this time period, as well as to the Mixed Armistice Committee (MAC), which was tasked with addressing violations of the Armistice Agreements. For example, in a memorandum from the permanent representative of Israel to the Secretary General of the United Nations dated July 23, 1953, they expressed that “since the signing of the armistice agreement with her Arab neighbours[sic], Israel has been subjected to a continuous campaign of infiltration by Arab marauders, which has brought in its wake acts of murder, destruction of property, robbery, theft and sabotage.”

Similarly, Moshe Sharrett, then Foreign Minister, in reference to events in early 1953, stated that these attacks were an “outrage culminating ‘long and continuous series, carried out by armed bands involving loss of life, robbery of property and dislocating of normal conditions.’ He said it was a shock to public sense of safety and challenge to government and defense authorities of country.”

Starting in 1953, infiltrations were transformed into a political tool designed to inflict maximum damage on Israeli civilian and military targets. Although the actors later became more organized through the growth of the Palestinian Liberation Movement, the objectives for these

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106 Memorandum on the situation on the Israel-Jordan border submitted to the Secretary General of the United Nations, 23 July, 1953, in Israel: Boundary Disputes with Arab Neighbours, 1946-1964, 10 vols. (England: Hobbs the Printers of Southampton, 1995).vol. 6, pp. 256-261. Similarly, Moshe Sharrett, then Foreign Minister, explicitly complained to U.S. Ambassador to Israel, Davis, on January 27, 1953 about the growing seriousness and costs of these infiltrations. No. 550 The Ambassador in Israel (Davis) to the Department of State (684.A.85/1-2753) in United States. Dept. of State., "Foreign Relations of the United States," in Department of State publication (Washington, DC.: Dept. of State). Vol. IX, pp.1106-1107. These kinds of complaints are abundant in both the British and American records for more on this see: Israel : Boundary Disputes with Arab Neighbours, 1946-1964. United States. Dept. of State., "Foreign Relations of the United States." Furthermore, as the infiltrations escalated, Israeli complaints about their seriousness increased. However, as seen above, and will be discussed in greater detail below, from the beginning, they were considered a significant security concern.

107 Foreign Minister Moshe Sharrett quoted in No. 557 The Ambassador in Israel (Davis) to the Department of State (684.A.85/2-553), February 5, 1953 in United States. Dept. of State., "Foreign Relations of the United States." Vol. IX, pp. 1117-1118
infiltrations were consistent. Finally, while there were periods of relative quiet, infiltrations from Jordan continued to be a persistent security issue for Israel until the fedayeen’s expulsion to Lebanon in 1970.

ISRAELI COERCIVE POLICY

The Rationale

Shortly after the 1948 War, Israel adopted a coercive strategy to address the security issues presented by the infiltrations across the border. Israeli policy was interested in maintaining the relative inter-state quiet it had achieved and wanted to avoid engaging in another full scale war, particularly since it did not believe that it would necessarily succeed again in the face of the combined power of the Arab militaries. In light of this assessment, it adopted a reprisal policy which was aimed at coercing the Jordanian state and its citizens to actively prevent these infiltrations. Israel did not seek to take control of any additional territory or devise a strategy aimed directly at the fedayeen in order to prevent these raids, but rather attempted to redirect the responsibility to Jordan, by increasing the costs of allowing the raids to continue.

Upon adoption of these policies, Israeli policymakers were explicit in their rationale for this coercive strategy and clearly outlined their anticipated results. The four policymakers that were instrumental in establishing this policy were David Ben Gurion, in his capacity as Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Moshe Sharett as Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Pinhas

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109 Israel adopted a series of defensive measures within their borders mainly through bolstering its border police, establishing new settlements along the borders, mining and booby trapping, and expelling communities that may harbor infiltrators. However, despite these measures, the Israeli government was keenly aware that these measures were insufficient for addressing the growing problem of infiltration. For more detail on these activities, see: Morris, Israel’s Border Wars, 1949-1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, and the Countdown to the Suez War. p. 118-184.
Lavon as Minister of Defense, and Moshe Dayan as the Chief of Staff. Early on, Ben Gurion expressed his perception of the gravity of these infiltrations when he explained that “[i]f the armistice lines along the border are open to terrorist[s] and murderers, our defenders and those who stand on guard will be constantly vulnerable. But if our rights are violated by violent acts perpetrated either by land or by sea, we reserve freedom of action.”110 With the increasing prevalence of raids, and their changing political nature, Israel established a coercive strategy to directly address this threat.

Israel understood that it would be very costly to effectively patrol the 400 mile border with Jordan and deny infiltrators the ability to cross into Israel. Instead, it adopted a coercive approach which was designed to increase the costs on the Jordanian government, as well as its military and civilian population, for permitting these raids. Israel believed that the Arab states, and Jordan in particular, were best positioned to halt the infiltrations. Furthermore, the Israeli government believed that it was the sovereign responsibility of the Arab states to prevent, seize and punish the infiltrators. Thus, the Israeli strategy employed, while at times targeting the infiltrator strongholds, was not aimed at preventing the attacks directly. Rather, the objective was to compel Jordan to take a more forceful stance against the residents of their state and prevent the infiltrations internally.

Moshe Dayan most aptly described the rationale and principles of the Israeli coercive strategy in a lecture to officers where he explained:

We cannot guard every water pipeline from explosion and every tree from uprooting. We cannot prevent every murder of a worker in an orchard or a family in their beds. But it is in our power to set a high price on our blood, a price too high for the Arab community, the Arab army, or the Arab government to think it worth paying. We can see to it that the

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Arab villages oppose the raiding bands that pass through them, rather than give them assistance. It is in our power to see that Arab military commanders prefer a strict performance of their obligation to police the frontiers rather than suffer defeat in clashes with our units. We can cause the Arab governments to renounce a 'policy of strength' towards Israel by turning it into a demonstration of weakness. The decision not to get into quarrels with Israel will only come if the Arabs have reason to suppose that otherwise they will have to reckon with sharp reactions from our side and be dragged into a conflict in which they would be the losers.111

Dayan and other policymakers repeatedly made it clear that the Israeli government held the Arab states accountable for infiltrations that emanated from their borders and that the price for allowing this situation to continue would be incurred through military retaliation. For example, following the Sjineh raid in 1965, General Yitzchak Rabin, stated:

We continue to hold every Arab state responsible for the activities of such elements from that State, whether the government concerned wants these activities or not. Every state is obliged to bear the responsibility for acts perpetrated from it across its borders.112

This position was reiterated following the Es ‘Samu raid in 1966 by Prime Minister Levi Eshkol, in a meeting with his cabinet where he stated:

Israel will not permit sabotage against life and property to continue; it will hold responsible the government and the inhabitants of the neighboring states who aid and harbor the marauders...They should not consider themselves immune from the responsibility they bear.113

Despite the mixed results of this policy, as will be discussed, Israeli policymakers continued to believe that this form of coercion was not only desirable, but had proven effective in addressing the threat of infiltrations. There was a general belief that the reprisal raids motivated Arab governments to reign in infiltrations and take harsher measures against the

112 Yitzchak Rabin quoted in: Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment".
113 Levi Eshkol quoted in ibid. p. 50
infiltrators. As early as 1950, Moshe Dayan expressed his views that "[t]he only method which has proven itself effective...[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 crossings, and in this way the Egyptian and Jordanian governments are motivated to prevent incidents of this nature." Additionally, even though Dayan acknowledged that this strategy was morally problematic, because it relied on collective punishment, he continued to believe that this was the most effective method to curb the violence. Consequently, the Israelis maintained that this policy would promptly come to an end when the border violence ceased. For example, in May 1967, Levi Eshkol, the Israeli prime minister at the time, stated that "any border which is tranquil on their side will be tranquil on our side as well. And if they try to sow unrest on our borders, unrest will come to theirs." Ultimately, the coercive strategy that developed in the early 1950s, following the emergence of infiltrations, remained a central tenet of Israeli security policy until the end of the 1960s. While the level of destruction, the targets, and the methods of the reprisal raids varied over time, the fundamental coercive strategy aimed at the Arab governments in general, and the Jordan in particular, remained deliberate and stable.

Israeli policymakers broadly communicated their policy rationale outside of Israel to members of the international community including the United Nations, and American and British

114 Moshe Dayan quoted in Derori, Israel's Reprisal Policy, 1953-1956: The Dynamics of Military Retaliation. p. 144
115 Ranan D. Kuperman, "The Impact of Internal Politics on Israel's Reprisal Policy During the 1950s," Journal of Strategic Studies 24, no. 1 (2001). p.3
116 As mentioned previously, these promises were credible, as the reprisal raids ceased between 1956 and 1965 when infiltrations decreased.
policymakers, as well as the press. For example, on July 23, 1953, in a Memorandum submitted to the United Nations, the Israelis expressed that “[a] solution to the problem of marauding is possible only if the Arab Governments themselves are prepared to honour [sic] their obligations under the Armistice Agreements, to accept full responsibility for the crimes committed by their people across the Israel border and to take action accordingly. The comparative quiet on the Syrian, Lebanese and Egyptian sectors indicate that such action is possible. It is the hope of the Government of Israel that the adoption by Jordan of effective anti-infiltration measures...will result in improvement of the situation.”118

Following the issuing of the Memorandum, a report from the British Foreign Office confirmed that the Israeli message had been unequivocally understood. This report noted that “[e]arlier this year the Israel authorities appear to have adopted the tactics of mounting limited raids in reprisal against infiltrations, with the object of persuading the Jordanians to exercise greater control over infiltrators and to induce them to enter high-level talks.” General Glubb, the commanding general of the Arab Legion from 1939 to 1956, questioned the international legitimacy of such a policy, stating, “in international practice, every country is solely responsible for its own frontier. If a party of Frenchmen enter Britain without passports, Her Majesty’s government does not complain against the French Government for letting them leave France...The only possible justification for Jewish complaints would be if the Jordan Government were itself organizing or encouraging infiltration.” Though Glubb objected to the rationale and use of this policy, it is clear from these complaints that Israeli thinking on this

matter was sufficiently transparent. Although many in the international community questioned the policy's efficacy and even condemned it, it is clear that even from its early onset, the objectives that were sought by the Israelis were clearly communicated and received.\textsuperscript{119}

\textit{Israeli Reprisal Raids}

In the first phase of the reprisals, when their nature was predominantly economic, Israel adopted an 'eye for an eye' strategy. Israeli reprisal raids were targeted at civilians from the villages where the infiltrators emerged. These raids were conducted by two to three soldiers who would cross the armistice line and take reciprocal measures to those taken by the Arab infiltrators.\textsuperscript{120} For example, if a herd was stolen, Israeli forces were sent out to retrieve another herd from the Jordanian side. Until 1953, Israel sought to prevent escalation, kept the level of violence low and treated these incidents more like neighborly quarrels.

As the nature of infiltrations changed and presented more serious security concerns, Israeli reprisal raids adapted to this new reality. Initially, Israel took a three-pronged approach to addressing the increasing threat from infiltrations. First, Israel appealed to Western powers, as well as Turkey and the UN, in order to influence Jordanian policy and prevent attacks. For example, on April 11, 1953, following a machine gun wounding of a woman and her 21 year old son, the Director General Foreign Ministry Walter Eytan met with the American Charge d'Affaires in Israel, Francis Russell to discuss the border situation and request assistance from

\textsuperscript{119} It is interesting to note that though there was condemnation for this policy, there were those in the international community that accepted the policy. For example, in a conversation between the French Charge d'Affaires, Mons. More-Francos, and Mr. Charles Duke, in Amman, it was reported that Mons. More Francos stated that he clearly thought that Israeli actions were "if not justified, understandable." In Israel: Boundary Disputes 1946-64, vol. 6, p. 458,

the Americans to pressure the Jordanians to increase their efforts. Second, Israel made vague threats of a West Bank invasion, though these were not particularly direct. Finally, the Israeli government expanded the breadth and depth of its reprisal raids in order to send a more direct and costly signal to the Jordanian government to contain the threat of the Palestinian infiltrators and later, the fedayeen.

The turning point in Israeli reprisal policy was the raid on Qibya on October 15, 1953. While this raid and its outcome will be discussed in greater detail below, it is important to note that the key difference between this incident and previous raids was its size and scope. Unlike previous raids, this raid was conducted by a designated commando unit, the 101, and was carried out by at least a hundred soldiers. Additionally, this raid brought about unprecedented fatalities and destruction of property that were previously unseen during reprisal raids. These new larger raids were designed to send a more forceful message to the Jordanian regime that the Israelis were unwilling to tolerate ongoing infiltrations and that the consequence of permitting such raids would be extremely costly for the Jordanian state. Whether or not they obtained their desired outcome, these types of coercive raids could not be ignored by the Jordanian regime, as they were credible and costly.

Between 1953 and 1969, the Israelis continued to conduct a combination of small and large scale reprisal operations against the Jordanian state in response to infiltrations. There was a

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121 This meeting was reported in No. 593 The Charge in Israel (Russell) to the Department of State (684A.85/4-1153), April 11, 1953. In United States. Dept. of State., "Foreign Relations of the United States." Vol. IX, pp. 1170-1171. In fact, the Americans were quite pleased with the ostensibly new approach of the Israelis stating that the "[f]act that Israel government despite general uneasiness over recent incidents has apparently replaced reprisal policy with approach to western powers is step forward." Many more approaches of this kind occurred in this period.


lull in activities following the Suez crisis in 1956 and the border remained relatively quiet until the reemergence of infiltrations in 1965. In all, the Israelis conducted 76 reprisal actions in this period, of which 17 were on a significant scale (see Table 2 below).  

Table 3: Significant Israeli Reprisal Raids*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Fatalities</th>
<th>Total Casualties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/7/1951</td>
<td>Sharafat</td>
<td>10 to 14</td>
<td>18 to 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/29/1953</td>
<td>Falameh</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/15/1953</td>
<td>Qibya</td>
<td>66 to 70</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/29/1954</td>
<td>Nahhalin</td>
<td>5 to 9</td>
<td>19 to 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/2/1954</td>
<td>Beit Ligya</td>
<td>2 to 3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/11/1956</td>
<td>Rahwa</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/13/1956</td>
<td>Gharandal</td>
<td>9 to 14</td>
<td>13 to 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/26/1956</td>
<td>Husan</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/11/1956</td>
<td>Qalqilya</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/30/1966</td>
<td>Rafat, et al</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/13/1966</td>
<td>Es 'Samu</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/21/1968</td>
<td>Karameh</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/4/1968</td>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/1/1968</td>
<td>Wadi el Abyad</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/8/1969</td>
<td>Aqaba</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/18/1969</td>
<td>East Bank</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All reprisal raids with more than 10 total casualties were included.  
Grayed cells highlights raids that will be discussed in greater detail.  

The Puzzle: Differing Outcomes Produced by Transitive Compellence

Although the Israelis utilized a consistent transitive compellence strategy between 1952 and 1970, Jordanian responses diverged significantly. At times, this compellence strategy...
achieved its aims and induced Jordan to redirect its policy against the fedayeen. In these instances, Jordan embraced costly measures through direct action against the fedayeen, as well as increased border patrols and intelligence gathering, and extensive collaboration with village leaders. However, at other times, Israeli transitive compellence did not achieve its desired results, and instead led to a loosening of the reigns or even tacit consent.

To better understand the shifts in Jordanian policy, it is necessary to delve deeper and explore the specific reactions to individual reprisal raids. Following each of the major reprisal raids that I examine, the Jordanian regime adjusted its policy in a distinctive manner. By analyzing the words and actions of the Jordanian government in the aftermath of these incidents, it is possible to isolate the impact that these events had on shaping Jordan’s evolving policy towards the fedayeen. Furthermore, in evaluating the success or failure of each of these coercive attempts, it is essential to examine its impact on the spectrum of potential outcomes. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the first step is to examine coercion’s direct impact on the base state’s behavior towards the violent non-state group. However, it is also important to examine whether, and in which ways, the coercion altered the bilateral relationship between the coercer, and the base state. Finally, even when observing policy changes against the violent non-state group, it is important to classify these actions on a spectrum, and to differentiate between state intentions and successful implementation.

In exploring shifts in decision making processes with respect to the fedayeen, the central figure of importance was King Hussein. The King surrounded himself with trusted advisers including, his Prime Minister, the Royal Hashemite Diwan, his cabinet and foreign minister, and in some cases, they had a notable influence on this process. However, many attest to the continued centrality of the King in decision making, especially as it pertained to foreign policy.
Zaid Rifai explains “that Jordan has a highly personalized system of government in which decisions are made by the King, through the influence of the King’s advisers and in some cases by the PM and his cabinet. It is not an institutionalized process. It is a fact of political life in Jordan that we do not have institutionalized decision making.”

Uriel Dann similarly notes that a prime principle of the Hashemite Kingdom was that the cabinet’s function was to carry out the policy that was determined by the Hashemite ruler. In fact, throughout the reign of King Hussein, frequent Prime Minister and cabinet resignations were the norm and it was clear that these changes were driven by the King’s desire to signal a shift in policy. Similarly, even at the time, it was noted that the Parliament of Jordan “serve[s] primarily as a safety valve for political emotion and are free to act so long as they do not seriously challenge the wishes of the regime.”

Thus, when identifying policy shifts and analyzing which considerations were the most pressing, it is evident that the King’s own deliberations and ultimately, his actions, reigned supreme.

Additionally, although there is much data on the frequency of *fedayeen* infiltrations and attacks throughout this period, those quantitative measurements alone do not provide a sufficient measure of success or failure of coercion. While sudden spikes and dips in infiltrations following a coercive raid can be potentially instructive about Jordanian efforts towards the *fedayeen*, alone they are insufficient for several reasons. First, by its nature, the number of attacks and perpetrators was driven by the strategies and tactics of the *fedayeen* organizations.

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The data that is observed only accounts for those attacks which were successfully perpetrated and cannot account for the numbers that were either prevented or stopped by the Jordanian or Israeli forces. It is possible to imagine a scenario where the state makes significant efforts and those are countered by an increased supply of guerilla attacks, which would not necessarily appear in the data. Alternatively, the fedayeen organizations may make a strategic decision to halt attacks for a limited period, which would appear as though the regime is taking action, but the shift in attacks is not driven by the state. This particular data problem is endemic to all situations of this trilateral relationship. While the state may try to interfere with the supply or success of guerilla attacks, because by its nature they do not control its flow, measuring its flow is insufficient for assessing success.

This problem is compounded in this case, because there is a general question regarding the reliability of data. Specifically, the data on infiltrations often relied on the reporting of Israel and Jordan, either through the press, internal reports of the military or governments, or the Mixed Armistice Committee of the United Nations. The documentary record suggests that on many occasions, both states politicized the data and reported excessively when it was politically expedient for a variety of domestic or international reasons. Often the states engaged in a tit for tat approach to reporting, whereby if Jordan placed two complaints, Israel would reply in kind, and vice versa. Thus, the exact statistics regarding infiltrations are not that important, nor

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128 Nathan A. Pelcovits, *The Long Armistice: Un Peacekeeping and the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1948-1960* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993). p. 52; In a report dated February 20, 1954, Lt. Col. Price, Military Adviser to the British Embassy in Amman, reported after observing that “[t]here have never been so many complaints submitted to the Mixed Armistice Committee as at the present time, and never, probably, has the general situation been so quiet. This leads one to believe that a ‘race’ is in progress to register as many complaints as possible...and this trivial nature of the complaints for the most part is tending to make a mockery of the Armistice Agreement.” “Report on the Situation on the Border between Jordan and Israel Submitted to Her Majesty’s Ambassador at Amman by Lt. Colonel N.J. Price In His Capacity as Military Adviser to this Embassy” In: Israel Boundary Disputes, vol. 6 p. 506.
likely to be known precisely because both states understood that they could use the reporting of data in an instrumental way.\textsuperscript{129} Thus, while the rate of infiltrations can provide one perspective, to truly understand the impact of coercion, it is important to look at the decision making process, as well as the policy changes that emerged, regardless of whether they had a sufficiently noticeable correlation in the statistics.

Three coercive episodes merit a close comparative analysis, the Qibya raid in 1953, the Es ‘Samu raid in 1966 and the al-Karameh raid in 1968. First, all three raids were conducted for explicitly coercive purposes in order to prevent infiltrations from fedayeen into Israel across the Jordanian border. Second, these raids were large demonstrations of force, especially when compared to other raids that had occurred in the immediate past. Each of these raids escalated the level of threat that was presented to the Jordanian government and signaled additional resolve on the part of the Israeli government to address the issue of infiltrations. In all cases, there were significant casualties and infrastructure damage. Additionally, each of these raids were followed by explicit policy statements from the Israeli government that indicated that the raids were intended to raise the costs for the Jordanian government of basing groups that infiltrate into Israel, thus signaling the political target of the attack. Ultimately, these coercive raids imposed significant costs on the Jordanian regime and altered the status quo in a meaningful way. Following these raids, it is reasonable to expect that at minimum, there would be a reconsideration of the basing issue and ideally, a change in policy.

However, despite these similarities, each of these raids had dissimilar effects in terms of both the Jordanian government response towards the infiltrators, as well as the subsequent rate of

\textsuperscript{129} Cooley, \textit{Green March, Black September: The Story of the Palestinian Arabs}. p.155
infiltrations. Whereas Qibya can be viewed as a great success, Karameh proved to be an abject failure, and Es ‘Samu resides somewhere in the middle. As mentioned above, following the Qibya raid, the Jordanian government took additional costly steps to contain the infiltrators and was quite successful in implementing this policy. Similarly, following Es ‘Samu, Jordan again enhanced its anti-infiltration measures and generally clamped down harder on the fedayeen organizations. However, this raid ultimately created a significant deterioration in the bilateral relationship between Israel and Jordan. After Karameh, the Jordanian government reversed its official containment policy and verbally declared a closer allegiance with the fedayeen.

Additionally, while the Jordanian government did not provide the fedayeen with targeted support, they created tacit agreements and there was a general lack of supervision, which increased their freedom of action.

Given the similarities in the coercive strategies, what accounts for the starkly different responses of the Jordanian government? Many elements at play in these three raids remained the same. Specifically, all three coercive raids, utilized similar tactics and targets, and made consistent demands. In addition, other potentially confounding variables, such as regime type, leadership and other structural factors, are also largely static. These circumstances present an opportunity to sharply focus on the costs of compliance and the coercive context of each episode.

EXPLAINING TRANSITIVE COMPELLENCE: UNPACKING THE RELATIONSHIP

To understand why coercion succeeded in inducing Jordanian action following the Qibya and Es ‘Samu raids, but failed following the al-Karameh raid, it is necessary to examine the relationship between Jordan and the fedayeen during these periods. As mentioned previously, in instances of transitive compellence, the base state, in this case, Jordan, needs to take proactive
measures to contain the violent group, the fedayeen. Therefore, the costs imposed by the coencer, Israel, need to be great enough to offset the costs of compliance required to act against the fedayeen, or the potential benefits that are derived from the fedayeen’s presence.

To estimate the magnitude of costs, it is necessary to examine the relationship between the base state, Jordan, and the violent group, the fedayeen, along both foreign policy and domestic political variables. Specifically, these variables capture the cost and risks that the base state would incur in order to comply with the coencer’s demands. The foreign policy cost is assessed by the extent to which the violent group, through the pursuit of its ends, advances or hinders the foreign policy goals of the base state. The domestic cost is assessed by examining the degree to which the violent group threatens the regime’s hold on power, and the likelihood that complying could result in a protracted conflict. Together, these variables capture the costs and risks the base state would need to incur to comply with the coencer’s demands. Since all of the demands bear upon the status quo between the violent group and the base state, understanding the complexities of this relationship ahead of the coercive action is an essential element in explaining the variation in success and failure.

To that end, I assess the context that existed in 1953, 1966 and 1968, ahead of the major Israeli coercive raids. By examining both the foreign policy and domestic factors that shaped the context, independently and through their interaction, it is possible to estimate the magnitude of the costs of compliance and establish whether the context favored coercion success in each case. In light of the divergent outcomes in Jordanian policy, when reviewing these cases, one would expect that similar changes should be present in either or both of the relational variables outlined above.
Foreign Policy

In pursuing a destructive campaign against Israel from Jordan, the fedayeen, has necessarily affected the foreign policy of the Jordanian regime. The base state, Jordan, may or may not share the ambitious goals of the violent group, or the means used to pursue them. The level of alignment between the base state and the violent group determines the potential benefit derived from this relationship and the subsequent costs that would be incurred by severing it. All things being equal, the farther apart the group and the base state are in terms of foreign policy, the lower the costs of compliance, and the more favorable the context for coercive success.

To assess the level of alignment in these cases, I examined the foreign policy goals of Jordan and the fedayeen in public and private statements that were made at the time, as well as historical accounts of the time period. In addition, I conducted interviews with Jordanian government officials and journalists that were present during this period. Through this process, it is possible to identify the areas of convergence and divergence between Jordan and the fedayeen and ultimately determine the foreign policy context for success.

Domestic Factors

In instances of transitive compellence, although the coercive interaction is international, for the base state, acting against the non-state group is also a domestic matter. Thus, in addition to assessing the alignment of the foreign policies described above, it is necessary to assess the domestic relationship between the base state and the violent group. Specifically, it is necessary to understand the costs and risks potentially absorbed by the base state through domestic action taken against the group. Since regime survival and maintaining domestic security are of utmost
importance, the greatest risks and costs for the base state involve a direct threat to the regime and the possibility of a protracted conflict with the group. All things being equal, the lower the threat presented by the group, the lower the probability of a protracted conflict resulting from containing them, the lower the costs of compliance and the more favorable the domestic context for coercion success.

To assess the domestic relationship between Jordan and the fedayeen, I examined four primary variables at each coercive interaction: (1) the fedayeen's political intentions towards the Jordanian regime; (2) the fedayeen's organizational and military capacity; (3) Jordanian military capacity; and (4) the popular support for the fedayeen. Particularly, since the fedayeen were a clandestine and fragmented organization, I relied on estimates and accounts given at the time. Also, through interviews, primary documents and media accounts, I sought to identify the regime's perspective on the threat they perceived, their estimated strength of the fedayeen, as well as general actions that gauged their attentiveness and concern, or lack thereof, for the domestic actions of the violent group. As will be highlighted below, the King closely monitored the domestic activities of the fedayeen organizations throughout this time period, and both the historical record and interviews highlight the seriousness with which the regime dealt with this issue.

To measure popular support, I used reports of the population's identification with the fedayeen broadly, as well as its violent activities. Additionally, especially due to the monarchic nature of the state, I sought to establish whether and in which ways popular support constrained
Throughout his rule, King Hussein was attentive to and gave importance to the prevailing popular mood among his population. As Hazem Nussaibah, former foreign minister of Jordan between 1962 and 1966, explained that “even though public opinion and the factors that influence people are not formally included in the decision-making process, they are taken into account and are present. They have influenced every decision which King Hussein has taken.” Even outside assessments, such as those conducted by the CIA, took into account the impact of popular sentiment on Jordanian decision making. In fact, one of the explicit tasks of the Royal Diwan was to keep the King informed of popular opinion.

King Hussein was considered a man of the people and took great measures to communicate both formally and informally with his citizens. Samir Mutawi points out that between January 1962 and December 1967, the King delivered 154 public speeches. Only 11 speeches were addressed to parliament, and the balance were delivered at public rallies or broadcast on the radio. The frequency of speeches also tended to increase during times of crisis, where the King used the speeches to generate support and reaffirm loyalty towards the

130 Establishing this relationship was important because it served to confirm that popular support for the group in fact imposed costs that were considered by the regime. Unlike regime threat, which seems like an obvious and important consideration for the regime, especially in autocratic regimes, the role of popular opinion and support is not inherent to the regime’s decision making process.

131 Nussaibah quoted in Mutawi, Jordan in the 1967 War. p. 4

132 For example, in the special national intelligence estimate number 30-3-56, July 31, 1956, available at http://www.foia.cia.gov/ the analyst suggested, in relation to the British subsidy, that “the present weak Jordanian government is probably unwilling to jeopardize its British support and subsidy, but will temporize for fear of the public reaction to any pro-Western stand.” Though not in relation to the fedayeen, the assessment highlights that the popular reaction to government policy was taken into consideration.


134 Mutawi, Jordan in the 1967 War. p. 4
Finally, the King’s willingness to allow popular feelings to influence his foreign and domestic politics can be seen in several key moments, including the decision not to join the Baghdad Pact, and his recognition of the PLO. In each of these instances, the King expressed significant reservations and even the opposing policy preference, yet ultimately chose the popular view. In both interviews, as well as through the historiography, popular mood was noted as a critical component that shaped the King’s decision making process.

Ultimately, by examining the foreign and domestic variables in a focused, structured comparison of each coercive episode, it was possible to derive an estimate of the costs of compliance, analyze how those costs vary over time, and ascertain the context for coercion. Through this assessment, it is possible to predict the likelihood of coercion success or failure in each episode of Israeli transitive compellence.

QIBYA – OCTOBER 15, 1953

The Qibya raid occurred on October 15, 1953 in response to an attack in Yehud two days earlier. Infiltrators from Jordan had lobbed a grenade into a home, killing a mother, her two children, and wounding another. Qibya had been selected as the site for the retaliation due to its close proximity to the border, as well as being a known staging ground for terrorist crossings. The operation was conducted by 103 combat troops from the newly formed commando Unit 101, headed by Ariel Sharon, as well as some troops from Battalion 890. The raid was aimed at the sabotage and destruction of the city’s infrastructure, communal buildings and many personal

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135 Ibid. p. 4
137 Interview with Marwan Muasher, Sept. 12, 2011; Interview with Taher Masri, Nov. 13, 2011; Interview with Samir Mutawi, Nov. 12, 2011; Nawaf Tell, Nov. 11, 2011; Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
138 Derori, Israel’s Reprisal Policy, 1953-1956 : The Dynamics of Military Retaliation. p. 108-113
homes. In all, 45 buildings were destroyed, including the National Guard buildings, the police station, the grammar school, water pumping stations, several cafes and all two-story buildings in the city. In addition, this raid exacted a heavy human price, resulting in the deaths of 12 Jordanian National Guardsmen, as well as 69 civilians, mainly women and children.139

Foreign Policy Costs and Benefits

In 1953, the Jordanian government and the Palestinian fedayeen had fundamentally divergent policies with respect to Israel. While neither party had good relations with Israel, their approach to resolving the ongoing conflict, and their ultimate vision of the end goal was quite different. Jordan had an explicit policy of keeping the border quiet and maintaining the post 1948 War status quo. Furthermore, Jordan did not have larger plans of destroying the State of Israel.

At the most strategic level, King Abdullah and then King Hussein both were determined to expand the Hashemite Kingdom to include the Palestinian territories, specifically the West Bank, which they had conquered in the 1948 War. Ultimately, Jordan was against the establishment of an independent Palestinian state in the West Bank, and endorsed a strategy for obtaining the remaining parts of Palestine.140 King Hussein’s interpretation of a just solution to the Palestinian problem was based on Arab self-determination, not on Palestinian self-determination, and this did not preclude the absorption of Palestine into Jordan.141

Hussein’s worldview was in sharp contrast to many of the other Arab states and many elements of the Palestinian population. Hussein’s commitment to resolving the Palestinian issue

140 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
141 Mutawi, Jordan in the 1967 War. p. 23
through incorporation was perhaps most evident through the Act of Union of the East and West Bank in April 1950, which added nearly 800,000 Palestinians from the West Bank, and nearly 130,000 Palestinians on the East Bank to the Jordanian population, which was estimated at 340,000. In 1953, all Palestinian inhabitants were offered Jordanian nationality and the term refugee was officially dropped from all passports. These efforts were not put forth with Palestinian approval or input and many Palestinians were resistant to the Jordanization process that the regime had initiated.

In contrast, the Palestinians broadly, and the fedayeen in particular, had an explicit policy of actively engaging in the conflict and deliberately infiltrating the border to disrupt the status quo with Israel. While this politically oriented policy was organized internally, it was supported externally by Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria. Ultimately, the fedayeen’s raison d’être was to continue the conflict with the Israelis and use force to challenge the status quo.

In addition to the divergence of ends, the Jordanian regime and the fedayeen fundamentally differed in their means. Jordan was very pragmatic in its foreign policy. Specifically, Jordan was concerned about the possibility of escalating tensions and the outbreak of full-fledged hostilities with the Israelis, where Jordan believed the Israelis had the upper hand. The King understood that Jordan was constrained by its military weakness in relation to Israel and this limitation reinforced the King’s desire to preserve the status quo. Importantly, he believed that it was a foolish attempt to fight Israel directly since neither Jordan, nor a united

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142 Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993*, p. 41. In fact, the failure to truly integrate the Palestinians into the Jordanian nation after the 1948 War, despite the regime’s best efforts, created a continual domestic problem that would reemerge domestically and internationally in the years that followed.

143 Ibid. p. 44; Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
Arab force could hope to win. In light of these concerns, the Jordanian government sought to maintain a quiet border and at times, even entertained the possibility of a separate peace treaty with Israel in order to resolve the conflict. These accommodating policies towards Israel did not stem from a general identification with or affection for Israelis, but rather, from very pragmatic reasons.

Maintaining a quiet border was not an objective supported by the fedayeen. Likewise, the refugees, villagers, and other Arab regimes all shared this viewpoint. In contrast to the Jordanian regime, the Palestinians broadly, and the fedayeen in particular, had an explicit policy of actively engaging in the conflict and deliberately infiltrating the border. Until 1952, this strategy was largely disorganized and conducted by individuals who crossed for predominantly personal reasons. However, by 1953, this was a politically oriented policy that was organized internally and supported externally by Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria. These policies directly challenged the Jordanian government’s approach to addressing the conflict with Israelis and ultimately sabotaged their efforts.

In assessing the foreign policy costs of acting against the group, three elements were examined: (1) the alignment of foreign policy goals, (2) the foreign policy contribution of the violent group, and (3) the possible benefits of the fedayeen’s violent campaign in advancing Jordan’s foreign policy. While neither the regime, nor the fedayeen had a favorable view of Israel, they had fundamentally opposed approaches for resolving the conflict. Jordan sought to maintain the status quo, and incorporate the Palestinian people and territories into the Hashemite Kingdom. In contrast, the fedayeen sought to challenge the status quo and continue an active

144 Mutawi, *Jordan in the 1967 War*. p. 40
145 Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs*. p. 252
conflict with the Israelis. Additionally, in support of his foreign policy, King Hussein sought to maintain a quiet border in order to prevent any possible incitement of the Israelis and an escalation of violence. Thus, the fedayeen’s infiltration campaign worked in direct opposition to Jordan’s preferred foreign policy approach. Across all of these dimensions, it is clear that there were no complementary aspects of their strategies.

Since the fedayeen provided no foreign policy benefit to the Jordanians, this assessment suggests that severing or containing the fedayeen would not have a negative impact on their foreign policy goals towards Israel, and in fact, quite the contrary. In particular, because the fedayeen’s actions undermined King Hussein’s policies, containing the fedayeen could produce a benefit by minimizing the impact of a group that was agitating against Jordan’s foreign policy interests. Thus, on the foreign policy dimension, the compliance costs were deemed to be low.

| Foreign Policy Cost of Compliance |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|
| **Jordan vs. Fedayeen Goals** | • Jordan aims to maintain status quo and prevent escalation with Israel  
   • *Fedayeen* seeks to incite Israel and spark another conflict |
| **Fedayeen FP Contribution**  | • *Fedayeen* efforts are counter-productive to Jordanian foreign policy |
| **Fedayeen Means**            | • *Fedayeen* infiltrations harm Jordanian foreign policy by inciting Israeli reprisals |
| **Overall Foreign Policy Costs of Compliance** | **LOW** |

**Domestic Political Costs and Benefits**

During the period of the Qibya raid, the fedayeen had minimal direct claims on the regime. The fedayeen were only beginning to emerge as organized political actors, and many
factions did not have well developed political programs. Of those factions that had a clear political ideology, they were directed externally towards their conflict with Israel, rather than destroying or destabilizing the regime. However, the Palestinian fedayeen, in obtaining external support, opened the door to the support of states that were interested in explicitly destabilizing the monarchy. Foreign governments who supported the fedayeen sought to coopt them for the dual purpose of fighting the Israelis, while also serving as a destabilizing force within the Jordanian state.

As early as 1951, it was noted that Haj Amin al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, “now plan[s] to form irregular bands on the west bank which will make trouble on the Israeli frontier, and then, when they have got the Arab Legion occupied checking Israeli reprisals, turn to creating internal disorders and so bring down the existing regime.” 146 The assassination of King Abdullah several years earlier was orchestrated by Palestinian followers of the Mufti of Jerusalem, ostensibly motivated by the widely perceived cooperation between Abdullah and the Zionist movement before the 1948 War. This type of assassination threat was ever-present in King Hussein’s calculations and he took measures to protect himself and members of his regime. 147 General Glubb reported that “there seems to be no doubt that the plan put into execution was the original Mufti’s idea to kill the King and raise rebellion and civil war between ‘Trans-Jordan’ and ‘Arab Palestine.’ The Egyptians and perhaps the Mufti, secretly realized that they can do nothing about the Jews. Thus they concentrate their efforts against the Arabs. It was arranged (or at least anticipated) that rioting…would follow the King’s death…In actual practice,

147 In total, during this period, there were no documented assassination attempts against Hussein, though in the following decade, there were several attempts on King Hussein’s life.
the King’s murder caused a remarkable demonstration of solidarity.” Consequently, Saudi Arabia began to support *fedayeen* activity both as a means for attacking Israel, as well as a mechanism by which to destabilize the regime. While some groups, such as the Arab Nationalist Movement (ANM) aimed explicitly to overthrow regimes that stood in the way of Arab unity, such as the Hashemites, in this period, they had not become fully established within Jordan and were quite slow to grow their membership.

Finally, King Hussein was aware of the potential for the budding Palestinian movement to develop into a significant threat and took measures to suppress it. For example, each time there was a reprisal raid by the Israelis, it triggered a public outcry with demonstrations in the West Bank to protest the inability of the government to protect the villages. However, the predominant slogans of these protests railed against either the Arab Legion’s security failure, British imperialism in general, or the prospect of a peace treaty with Israel. Notably, these efforts presented complaints about the shortcomings of the regime, rather than direct claims against the legitimacy of the regime. However, the government still took active steps to suppress the protests and arrest suspects, which only emboldened the vocal opposition. This cycle of public demonstrations, especially among the Palestinians, created domestic unrest which

149 Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs.* p. 305-306
151 Mr. G Furolonge to Mr. A Eden, 27 October 1953, FO 371/104890 in Priestland, *Records of Jordan : 1919-1965.* v. 7, 1950-1953, p. 693. The nature of the demonstrations was also emphasized by Adnan Abu Odeh, stating that in the early phases, the demonstrations were complaints against the government rather than questioning its legitimacy. As will be discussed later, the content of Palestinian protests shifted greatly over time and perhaps most significantly after the establishment of the PLO in 1964.
threatened the stability of the young king’s regime. Moreover, one of the guiding principles of the regime was to prevent an independent power base among the Palestinian members of the population since this group’s newfound strength would erode the regime’s stability and thus, its staying power. While some groups had aims of destabilizing the regime, by and large, the *fedayeen* were externally focused and did not seek to capture the state. However, the King was still aware of the potential threat that these groups could pose in the long run if they ultimately turned inward.

In the early 1950s, the *fedayeen* gradually emerged as a distinct political actor. Prior to this period, infiltrations were generally conducted by individuals who crossed the border for a variety of personal reasons, rather than as a means to make a political statement. Despite the *fedayeen*’s brief track record, the group secured support from several external states and non-state groups, mainly the Mufti of Jerusalem, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Syria. These states provided the group with the critical financial, political and strategic resources required to conduct these operations. In several instances, the *fedayeen* trained within these states and entered Jordan shortly before conducting a raid. This scenario was especially common along the Jordanian-Syrian border. The *fedayeen* performed these missions through a group of dispersed militias. Though Haj Amin al-Husseini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, organized through his network of infiltrators, in this period, even he did not attempt to convert his bands of infiltrators into a robust political organization. While the *fedayeen* numbers did not compare to the Arab

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153 King Hussein had only been ruling for a couple of years during this period and was establishing himself as the monarch. Additionally, he was largely inexperienced and very young, which added to the challenge of establishing a firm and strong regime.
155 Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The*
Legion, there was an advantage to residing among the local population and operating from within clandestine centers. Overall, the *fedayeen* were clearly in the nascent stages of organizational and military capacity.

In 1953, Jordan possessed a marked advantage in terms of the balance of power. By most historian and military accounts, the Arab Legion was regarded as the most competent Arab army of its era.\textsuperscript{156} The Jordanian army was a professional indigenous military who was trained and led by British officers.\textsuperscript{157} The British training and leadership created a distinct advantage. Furthermore, the Arab Legion, which had been relatively small in 1948, with approximately 12,000 troops, nearly doubled in the period between 1949 and 1956, resulting in a significant manpower advantage.\textsuperscript{158}

For the previous three decades, the Arab Legion had consistently prevented infiltrations by Arab nationalists against French patrols along the Syrian border, thus gaining invaluable experience in anti-infiltration missions.\textsuperscript{159} The Transjordanian authorities also took a strong stance against Bedouin raiding amongst the nomadic tribes.\textsuperscript{160} To combat this nomadic raiding phenomenon, the regime had to simultaneously inflict severe punishments on perpetrators or raids, and also establish intense cooperation with local shaikhs.\textsuperscript{161} By 1937, this patrolling also extended to tribes that were supporting Palestinian guerrilla gangs that had crossed the border.

\textsuperscript{157} According to Pollack, all but five of the officers of rank of major or higher were British including Glubb who was its commander. Ibid. p. 269.
\textsuperscript{159} Abu Odeh, \textit{Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process}. p. 17
\textsuperscript{161} Ibid. p. 77.
The Legion increased border patrols and conducted raids against tribes that were particularly egregious in their infiltration efforts.\textsuperscript{162} Thus, the Arab Legion was accustomed to actively patrolling internally among the different tribes, against nationalist raiders and even Palestinian guerrilla gangs, and had successfully established order. The Legionnaires gained experience against such attacks and clearly demonstrated their ability to act against fellow Arabs.

Additionally, at this point, the composition of the military was dominated by Bedouin fighters. Glubb had specifically recruited Bedouins and preferred them to others because they tended to be apolitical and fiercely loyal to the Hashemites.\textsuperscript{163} Although Palestinians were not banned from the military, and many enlisted, it took approximately 10 to 15 years after the union of the East and West Bank before they had risen in the ranks.\textsuperscript{164} Palestinians also tended to fill more technocratic roles within the military due to their higher levels of education, so they were rarely involved in the infantry. The extensive experience of halting infiltrations and patrolling internally, coupled with the loyalty of the military, positioned the Legion well for acting against the fedayeen.

The popular support for the fedayeen during the 1950s must be examined from multiple perspectives. Following the 1948 War, the Jordanians annexed the West Bank and provided full citizenship to 750,000 residents and refugees.\textsuperscript{165} Throughout this period, King Abdullah and later King Hussein, took measures to try to integrate the Palestinians into the Jordanian population, including appointing Palestinian Senators and Cabinet members into the

\textsuperscript{162} Ibid. p. 77; James D. Lunt, \textit{The Arab Legion} (London: Constable, 1999). p. 65.
\textsuperscript{164} Abu Odeh, \textit{Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process}. p. 51
\textsuperscript{165} Salibi, \textit{The Modern History of Jordan}. p. 165
The King was very strategic in ruling the West Bank, and appointed mayors and city councilors who were predominantly drawn from pro-Jordanian local traditional Palestinian families who were loyal to the King and his government. As a result of these efforts, the Palestinians tended to prefer annexation by Jordan because of the opportunities that it afforded them. Furthermore, the East Bank population was empathetic to the Palestinians and many Jordanians even rushed to their aid in the 1948 War. Thus, at some level, members of the Palestinian and TranJordanian populations exhibited mutual support.

However, there were still many divisions between the east and west bank populations. Specifically, after the assassination of King Abdullah in 1951, Palestinians were frequently viewed as being in opposition to the TransJordanian people and their interests. Despite the explicit efforts of the regime as well as many similarities among the two populations, some of the differences in culture, education, and political inclination began to deteriorate the connection of the two peoples. The rapid annexation left a portion of the local population frustrated and wary of developing autonomous political institutions. In many ways, the Palestinians living in the West Bank had become “subject to the state but not psychologically members of the nation. On the whole, their loyalty remained to a concept of a Palestinian or Arab Nation.” Many opposed the Jordanian regime because of the “black legend,” which centered on the claim that Abdullah had betrayed the Palestinians by cooperating with the Zionist movement before the

167 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
169 Ibid. p. 56-67
1948 War and entering into direct negotiations with the Israeli government. Consequently, the Palestinians had little faith that the Jordanian government would ultimately protect them. They continued to look to Jerusalem as their center of power, and generally looked down on their new neighbors on the East Bank. Additionally, the political experiences of the young and educated Palestinians under British rule led many to be fundamentally opposed to monarchical rule and specifically, the Hashemite Kingdom. Generally, these individuals advocated for securing additional rights, rather than sedition or succession. Though at this early stage, many of the residents of the West Bank were not interested in politics, their general sympathies tended to reside with antagonists of the regime. Among the original TransJordanian population, there was increasing resentment towards the Palestinian population which had been absorbed. Part of this tension emerged out of the increasing role of Palestinians in the administration. This strategy was adapted by the regime both as a means to integrate the Palestinians, as well as an acknowledgment of their high levels of education and technocratic skills. Thus, this growing tension between the two populations invariably affected their views towards the regime and the fedayeen.

In 1953, despite the lack of unification of the two peoples, the Jordanian population, on the whole, continued to express sympathy for the Palestinian cause, though this sentiment was

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often eroded when Jordanians were the targets of Israeli reprisals. Consequently, the population's perception of the fedayeen's infiltration policy was mixed. Yet while some of the Jordanians aligned with the government and had a generally negative outlook on the infiltrations, a significant portion of the population still identified with and even benefited from the raids.\textsuperscript{179} Generally, the Palestinians identified strongly with the fedayeen efforts, because they were viewed as significant acts in opposition to Israel. Many failed to understand the regime's central rationale for opposing the fedayeen, mainly that there was a real possibility of losing the West Bank to Israel in the event that escalation occurred.\textsuperscript{180} This popular antipathy towards Israel lent additional credibility to the actions of the fedayeen, even when there was no uniform consensus about their utility and their overall impact on the state.

During this time, there was still a very clear separation between the East Bank and West Bank populations. Despite strident efforts on the part of the regime to integrate these populations, there remained significant differences that divided them across both political and social dimensions. Although there was general sympathy towards the fedayeen and the Palestinian cause, the ongoing divisions prevented any unified support for their actions.

To assess the domestic political costs of compliance, four elements were examined: 1) the domestic political intentions of the fedayeen; 2) the fedayeen's political and military capacity; 3) the Jordanian military capacity; and 4) the popular support of the fedayeen. While the Jordanian regime was not naïve about the potential threat that the fedayeen could present, at this stage, the

\textsuperscript{179} Morris, \textit{Israel's Border Wars, 1949-1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, and the Countdown to the Suez War}. p. 79-81. Contrary to the official orders of the Arab Legion, some officers and village heads benefited from the smuggling and theft that occurred along the border. While this was not a sanctioned policy, these benefits led some to endorse or even facilitate infiltrations.

\textsuperscript{180} Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
fedayeen posed only a limited threat to the regime. While some minor groups aimed to overthrow the regime, most of the fedayeen were primarily occupied with their fight against Israel, and had limited, if any, domestic aims. Moreover, the fedayeen were both politically and militarily in their nascent stages and could not mount a formidable force to challenge the regime. In contrast, the Arab Legion was considered to be the best military in the region, and had significant training and experience for curtailing infiltrations such as the ones conducted by the fedayeen. That tactical disadvantage was compounded by the reality that despite general sympathy towards the general Palestinian cause, overall support for the fedayeen was mixed. Certainly, many among the Palestinian population identified and supported the fedayeen's actions, however, Transjordanians, who supported the regime, understood their deleterious effect on Jordanian policy. Ultimately, this bifurcated support amongst the Palestinian and Jordanian population provided the regime with the necessary latitude to act against the fedayeen without aggravating their powerbase.

A full examination of these variables reveals that at this stage, the domestic costs to contain the fedayeen were low. Militarily and politically, the fedayeen did not pose a threat that couldn't be handled by the regime's superior military. Furthermore, the mixed level of popular support suggested that the regime would not encounter significant opposition to its actions, particularly amongst its most loyal supporters within the Transjordanian population. This combination of factors limited the domestic costs of compliance and indicated that the Jordanian regime could act against the fedayeen with minimal risk that this action would escalate into a larger domestic conflict.
Assessing the Costs of Compliance

In the period immediately preceding the Qibya raid, both the foreign policy and domestic costs of compliance were low and thus favored coercion success. There was clear divergence between the foreign policy goals of the regime and those of the fedayeen. Whereas the King preferred to maintain a quiet border with Israel and maintain the status quo, the fedayeen were clearly interested in continuing to engage violently with the Israelis. Not only were their policies at odds, but the King viewed the fedayeen’s efforts as counterproductive to his broader strategy. Thus, the fedayeen presented no foreign policy benefit to the regime and thus containing them during this period presented low foreign policy costs.

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<th>Domestic Costs of Compliance</th>
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| **Fedayeen Political Intentions** | - *Fedayeen* has a limited domestic political agenda – though some groups make direct claims on the regime  
- External state support seeks to direct *fedayeen* activity towards destabilization of regime  
- Jordanian regime anticipates potential threat posed by growing *fedayeen* political presence |
| **Fedayeen Organizational and Military Capacity** | - Organization in nascent stages  
- Limited military capacity |
| **Jordanian Military Capacity** | - Arab Legion considered the best military in region  
- Training and experience for curtailting infiltrations positions the Arab Legion well for containing *fedayeen*. |
| **Fedayeen Popular Support** | - Support for *fedayeen* split among the population between Palestinians, who support them, and TransJordanians who cling to the regime.  
- General sympathy towards *fedayeen* cause; but no unified support for their actions |
| **Overall Domestic Costs of Compliance** | LOW |
Similarly, on the domestic front, as highlighted above, the regime’s costs of compliance were low. Due to the nascent stage of the fedayeen organization and their limited force relative to the regime, it was well within the military’s power to contain this very limited threat. Additionally, the fedayeen received only moderate support from the population, which was divided along East and West Bank lines, and would likely not stand in the way of a regime-fedayeen confrontation.

Ultimately, the divergence of foreign policy goals, coupled with the permissive domestic environment, predicts that in this period, the King has the ability to act against the fedayeen with relatively limited cost and a comfortable degree of latitude from the general populace. Overall, the low costs of action presented a context that was favorable for coercion success.

Coercive Outcome

Before the raid at Qibya, the Jordanian government and its military asserted that they were committed to preventing infiltrations. As early as 1948, the Jordanian government understood that it could not have competing armed forces within Jordan and took steps to disarm or absorb them into the Arab Legion.¹⁸¹ The Jordanian government and General John Glubb stated that they were making significant efforts to halt infiltrations because the Israeli reprisals imperiled the Arab Legion, the state’s territorial integrity, and the regime itself.¹⁸² Secret Jordanian documents captured during the 1967 War highlight the efforts that Glubb was making as early as 1952. For example, on July 2, 1952, Glubb met with district commanders to discuss

¹⁸¹ Glubb, A Soldier with the Arabs. p. 192
¹⁸² Morris, Israel’s Border Wars, 1949-1956: Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, and the Countdown to the Suez War. p. 71
decreasing infiltrations. Within this meeting, he asserted that if stricter measures were taken, they could reduce infiltrations by 85%. Similarly, in March 1953, the Jordanian Council of Ministers, following a meeting to discuss border aggression, devised a six step plan to minimize tensions on the border which included: (1) direct the Arab Legion to repulse attacks, (2) construct fortifications along the truce line, (3) pay salaries to national guards for conducting night patrols, (4) provide national guardsmen with automatic weapons, (5) instruct officers on the importance of this issue, and (6) distribute loans to frontier villages to improve their economic condition and lessen their financial crisis.

However, the effects of these efforts varied widely, even causing outside observers to wonder about the sincerity of the Jordanian regime to actually stop infiltrations. In February 1953, six months before the Qibya attack, the British Ambassador in Tel Aviv wrote:

Certainly the situation on the Lebanese and Syrian borders is not closely comparable by the remarkable disparity between the figures of infiltrations from Jordan and the less than a score each of cases reported from the Syrian and Lebanese frontiers respectively, surely indicates that the Jordan authorities are less than whole-hearted in their measures to deal with infiltrators. The fact that this time last year infiltrations almost did stop; and the cessation shows either that the Jordanians can stop infiltrations if they want to or that reprisals are effective or both. Therefore, though we are right in expressing to the Israelis our strongest disapproval of their attempts to deal with infiltrations by organised [sic] counter attacks...I do not think we are justified in awarding them the major share of blame for the frontier situation generally.

Similarly, in February 1953, a United States Department of State analysis found that:

[the] HKJ [Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan] authorities state all possible measures to prevent infiltration have taken place. Nevertheless, the National Guard is the main, if not

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only border enforcing agency, except in the Jerusalem area where the Arab Legion exercises some, if not complete control. Indications are National Guard [is] not completely reliable and hence not capable of handling its responsibility. Greater use of Legion would undoubtedly decrease border violations.  

Thus, at least on the surface, it appears that official Jordanian policy was aimed at halting infiltrations, though clearly their efforts produced mixed results.

Following the Qibya raid, the Jordanian government and military restated its intent to prevent future infiltrations. However, it wasn't until new military efforts were authorized, that it demonstrated the state's increased commitment to the cause. On October 16, 1953, one day after the raid, Amman ordered the deployment of the Arab Legion into the West Bank. In addition, heavy reinforcements were also sent from Zerka to the West Bank. In a secret message from Amman to the Air Ministry in London, they reported that “from other sources learned [that] Arab Legion now disposing 10[,000] to 14,000 men near frontier. This is [the] entire legion save recruits and technicians.” In all, two-thirds of the Legion’s combat units were deployed around the area in order to prevent infiltrations and defend against subsequent Israeli raids. Jordan increased the number of police assigned to the border area, as well as the number of patrols by 30%. Furthermore, Jordan removed officers who were reluctant to prevent infiltrations. These military measures were designed to intercept potential infiltrators, as well as smugglers that had been penetrating the armistice line.

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189 Morris, Israel's Border Wars, 1949-1956 : Arab Infiltration, Israeli Retaliation, and the Countdown to the Suez War. p. 265
190 Shimshoni, Israel and Conventional Deterrence : Border Warfare from 1953 to 1970. p. 46-47
Jordan also recognized the role of the villages in harboring infiltrators and permitting these activities. Consequently, the regime employed a communal approach to preventing attacks. Earlier in the year, the British Embassy in Tel Aviv reported that despite Jordanian efforts, “it is not surprising that village mukhtars are not very ready to take action against their own men.” Following the Qibya raid, the Jordanians took proactive steps to replace three village mukhtars, the village heads, and 13 National Guard commanders who had not displayed a serious commitment to halting infiltrations.

Finally, the Arab Legion pursued the infiltrators significantly more aggressively than before the raid. In the period following Qibya, the intelligence operated more vigorously to gather information on the general activities of infiltrators. This shift produced several harsh measures. First, the regime removed suspected infiltrators from the border regions. Second, they imposed strict punishments on grazers that grazed their cattle too close to the border. Lastly, they enforced heavy jail sentences on actual and suspected infiltrators. In the six months following the Qibya raid, the Jordanians arrested and jailed more than 1,000 individuals for attempted or actual infiltrations. Consequently, the prisons in Nablus, Hebron, and Amman were teeming with suspects. Following the Qibya raid, the IDF reported a 40% decrease in infiltrations from the Jordanian border. This trend continued into 1954, when acts of murder and

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theft decreased 50% from the previous year.\textsuperscript{196} The facts on the ground, specifically, the decreased number of infiltrations seems to suggest that the Qibya raid yielded the desired containment of the infiltrators.

In all, these measures demonstrated the Jordanian regime’s commitment to, and stricter enforcement of, its policy against infiltrators. These changes signaled a new resolve to combat this issue, which was a direct result of the Israeli reprisal raid on Qibya. These collective efforts led to the significant reduction in infiltrations that was observed through April 1956. As Elmo Hutchinson, chairman of the Israel-Jordan MAC, observed, “During my three years on the Jordan-Israel Mixed Armistice Commission, I watched Jordan’s attitude towards border control change from one of mild interest to a keen determination to put a stop to infiltration.”\textsuperscript{197} The changes observed on the part of the Jordanian regime, occurred immediately following the Qibya raid, which had forced the regime to reevaluate its policies towards the fedayeen. The Qibya raid sufficiently raised the costs for the Jordanian regime and created an impetus to change the status quo, even at great cost to itself and other national priorities. In this respect, the Qibya raid can be viewed as a successful outcome of the Israeli coercive policy, whereby they not only attained a reduction in infiltrations, but a new commitment from the Jordanian regime to prevent their reoccurrence.

\textbf{Es ‘Samu – November 13, 1966}

On November 13, 1966, the raid on Es ‘Samu occurred in response to ongoing acts of sabotage from Jordan, particularly a recent mine blast in the southern Israeli town of Arad that

\textsuperscript{196} Derori, \textit{Israel’s Reprisal Policy, 1953-1956: The Dynamics of Military Retaliation.} p. 113-114
\textsuperscript{197} Hutchison, \textit{Violent Truce; a Military Observer Looks at the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1951-1955.} p. 102.
killed three Israeli soldiers and wounded 6 others. Es ‘Samu is located 16 kilometers south of Hebron and 6.5 kilometers from the then border with Israel. This reprisal raid was considerably larger than previous raids and included a mechanized brigade, supported by large formations of tanks, artillery and engineers, as well as air support by two Mirage fighter aircraft squadrons.\textsuperscript{198} This was the largest Israeli military engagement since Suez in 1956. The Israelis’ primary objective was to destroy buildings throughout the town. Upon arrival, they evicted the civilian population and began to dynamite the structures. Though estimates vary, it is clear that the damage was quite extensive and included many homes, a medical clinic, girls’ school, a police post, and a mosque.\textsuperscript{199} Between 15 and 21 Jordanian soldiers were killed, and at least 37 were wounded, in addition to more civilian casualties. Across all dimensions the raid on Es ‘Samu exacted a significant toll on the Jordanian population and the military. However, despite the destruction, the raid at Es ‘Samu was presented by the regime as a military victory inasmuch as the Jordanian military was able to repel the Israeli force to some extent and inflict some damage. In all, one Israeli was killed, 10 were wounded and 22 vehicles were reportedly damaged.\textsuperscript{200} As Prime Minister Wasfi Tal stated, “As a limited local campaign, the battle of Es’ Samu was a sweeping victory for our armed forces. Israel concentrated an armored force and artillery brigade at half the level it had deployed in the [1956] Sinai Campaign. In the Jerusalem area, it

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item\textsuperscript{198} Mutawi, \textit{Jordan in the 1967 War}. p. 76.
\item\textsuperscript{199} Estimates of the number of homes destroyed range from 40 to 118, however, in all estimates it is clear that the damage was extensive and that the village was devastated as a result of the raid. See: ibid. pp. 76-77; Lunt, \textit{Hussein of Jordan: Searching for a Just and Lasting Peace}. p. 80; Moshe Shemesh, \textit{Arab Politics, Palestinian Nationalism and the Six Day War: The Crystallization of Arab Strategy and Nasir’s Descent to War, 1957-1967} (Brighton ; Portland: Sussex Academic Press, 2008). p.86; Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), \textit{Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993}. p. 138.
\item\textsuperscript{200} Mutawi, \textit{Jordan in the 1967 War}. p. 77.
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deployed even greater forces, and directed a larger army group in the North at Jenin."\textsuperscript{201} The statement obfuscated the military’s failure and highlighted the extent of the forces that the Jordanian Army had to repel, and the manner in which they did so.

**Foreign Policy Costs and Benefits**

Though the Jordanian regime went through a tumultuous period domestically between 1956 and 1964, its policy towards Israel and particularly, border violence, was remarkably consistent. First, much like before, King Hussein continued to claim that Jordan was the rightful leader of Arab Palestine, which was in stark opposition to the increasingly vocal and organized Palestinian goals.\textsuperscript{202} Jordan remained opposed to the establishment of a Palestinian entity because the regime believed it was part of the struggle for the integrity and survival of its Kingdom. In 1959, both Gamal Abdel Nasser, president of Egypt, and Colonel Abd al-Karim Qasim, who came to power after the 1958 revolution in Iraq, both proposed solutions to the Palestinian problem which involved the establishment of an independent Palestinian entity.\textsuperscript{203} King Hussein clearly understood the threat that these plans presented to his Kingdom. Despite growing opposition, he opposed these proposals and instead offered his own solution to the Palestinian problem. King Hussein believed that he was the de facto representative of the Palestinians living in Jordan, as they were his citizens and had the ability to influence policy within his state system. He once again emphasized the official union of the two banks and


\textsuperscript{203} For a detailed descriptions of these plans see: Shemesh, *Arab Politics, Palestinian Nationalism and the Six Day War: The Crystallization of Arab Strategy and Nasir's Descent to War, 1957-1967*. pp. 7-17
maintained that the West Bank joined freely under one crown.\textsuperscript{204} In 1962, King Hussein formally articulated his vision that Jordan was destined to become the political and military center of a solution to the Palestinian problem, in part because there was a lack of readiness on the part of the other Arab states. King Hussein subsumed the Palestinian issue into a Jordanian and Arab-unity framework which essentially precluded their independence and also demonstrated a lack of appetite for a reengagement with Israel.\textsuperscript{205} Ultimately, both his opposition to the existing Arab proposals, as well as his own counter proposal, highlighted the extent to which the King was committed to not only keeping the West Bank within the Hashemite Kingdom, but also his reluctance to reengage with the Israelis.

In 1964, at the first Arab Summit, King Hussein made his first major strategic concession on the Palestinian issue. Specifically, he voted in favor of the establishment of a Palestinian entity, whose role, under Ahmad Shuqairi, was to organize the Palestinian people, facilitate the liberation of the homeland and ultimately, achieve self-determination.\textsuperscript{206} This decision allowed for an independent voice of Palestinian nationalism and ushered in the creation of the PLO.\textsuperscript{207} However, while the Jordanian regime acceded to the establishment of a Palestinian entity, Hussein simultaneously created significant barriers to its actions within Jordan and especially the West Bank. The King sought three primary assurances and constraints from the PLO for his

\textsuperscript{204} The level of agreement that the Palestinians displayed towards the matter of unity continues to be disputed as discussed previously, but this narrative of freely joining the state was often employed to justify the King's belief in his ownership of the West Bank. See: Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), \textit{Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993.} pp. 42-44; Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
\textsuperscript{205} For a full description of the plan see: Shemesh, \textit{Arab Politics, Palestinian Nationalism and the Six Day War: The Crystallization of Arab Strategy and Nasir's Descent to War, 1957-1967.} p. 20-22
\textsuperscript{206} Ibid. p. 46
agreement. First, King Hussein insisted that there would be a significant Jordanian presence in the Palestinian National council. Second, and equally important, he demanded official assurances in the PLO’s Covenant and Constitution, that it would not assert sovereignty, nor interfere with the internal affairs of Arab States. This understanding was elaborated upon in Articles 24 and 26 respectively where the covenant stated that:

This Organization does not exercise any regional sovereignty over the West Bank in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, on the Gaza Strip or the Himmah Area. Its activities will be on the national popular level in the liberational, organizational, political and financial fields...the Liberation Organization co-operates with all Arab governments each according to its ability, and does not interfere in the internal affairs of any state.

The King was quite cautious with respect to permitting the Palestinian organizations to develop autonomous, or semi-autonomous military forces on his sovereign territory. Despite repeated requests, he opposed the decision to set up an independent Palestinian Liberation Army, and only accepted the decision when their operations were theoretically subordinate to the United Arab Command. When it appeared that the PLA was beginning to act independently, the King was not shy about expressing his disapproval and stated that “we no longer believe in the efficacy of passionate displays and extemporaneous activities undertaken by any bodies or organizations outside the framework of the United Arab Command...Such unwarranted activities...serve only to impede Arab planning, weaken the mustering of Arab forces, and allow our enemies to attack us.” Additionally, even during the First Arab summit, King Hussein,

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\[208\] Shemesh, Arab Politics, Palestinian Nationalism and the Six Day War : The Crystallization of Arab Strategy and Nasir’s Descent to War, 1957-1967. Shemesh, p. 73-75

\[209\] Mutawi, Jordan in the 1967 War. p. 57

\[210\] http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Peace/covel.html


\[212\] Hussein quoted in Mutawi, Jordan in the 1967 war, 1987, p. 65 based on quote from arab political documents 1965, p. 358

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and others, “warned the members of the conference against furnishing Israel with the slightest pretext for starting a premature war...It was stated on several occasions — in instructions that we received from Amman — that the commando raids had to cease during this period that was so essential to the achievement of our common defense and to the avoidance of a situation like that of 1956. In other words, we didn’t want to give Israel the opportunity to start fighting before we were ready.”

King Hussein continued to be vigilant of Palestinian Guerrilla activity aimed at creating border violence and inciting Israel. In 1965, he took significant security and intelligence measures to prevent border violence. For example, the mukhtars, or elders, of border villages were ordered to notify the regime of the identities of individuals crossing the border. Similarly, the Jordanian military accepted lists of potential infiltrators from the Israeli military who kept an especially close watch on the Jordanian border villages. In general, Fatah faced significant problems and restrictions on their activities in Jordan as a result of the government crackdown. However, as will be discussed later, these actions were not solely motivated by their foreign policy objectives.

Ultimately, through the King’s shifting position on the Palestinian issue in the years leading up to the Es ‘Samu raid was significant, in many ways, the King attempted to make this shift symbolic. The King took steps to limit the actual power of the Palestinian groups to change his broader strategic stance with respect to Israel, and his desire to maintain the status quo, a

214 Schiff and Rothstein, Fedayeen; Guerillas against Israel. p. 63.
quiet border. and reduce the possibilities of a military confrontation with Israel.\footnote{Mutawi, \textit{Jordan in the 1967 War}. p. 57}

In contrast to the Jordanian regime’s approach towards Israel, the strategic objectives of different elements within the Palestinian national movement began to crystallize and become more clearly articulated. Two important historical moments began to shift Palestinian strategy during this period back towards heightened guerrilla action. First, in 1961, the dissolution of the UAR dashed the Palestinians’ hopes that their liberation would emerge through Arab unity.\footnote{Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), \textit{Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993}. p. 31.} This reality was further reinforced in a famous speech by Nasser in December 1963, in which he expressed that Egypt at this time was unable to wage a war with Israel.\footnote{Ibid. p. 95; Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011. Odeh stated that this was an important moment because it caused the movement to lose faith that the liberation of Palestine would be pursued aggressively by the Revolutionary Arab States} The second major event was the success of the Algerian revolution in 1962, which provided a successful example of a popular war of liberation.\footnote{Rayyes and Nahas, \textit{Guerrillas for Palestine}. pp. 15-16.} Ultimately, Palestinian thinking shifted away from their previously subordinated position to the Arab states, within the framework of Arab unity, and towards autonomous organizations that would pursue Palestinian interests. Between 1959 and 1964, several key themes dominated Fatah, the prominent Palestinian guerrilla group at the time, thinking, mainly: “war should be waged relentlessly against Israel, political deals that left Israel in existence should be rejected, the Arab governments were not to be trusted and their attempts at hegemony or tutelage should be resisted, and above all, the people of Palestine should take their fate into their own hands and unite all their resources in the armed struggle.”\footnote{Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), \textit{Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993}. p. 84-85.}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item Mutawi, \textit{Jordan in the 1967 War}. p. 57
\item Ibid. p. 95; Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011. Odeh stated that this was an important moment because it caused the movement to lose faith that the liberation of Palestine would be pursued aggressively by the Revolutionary Arab States
\item Rayyes and Nahas, \textit{Guerrillas for Palestine}. pp. 15-16.
\end{thebibliography}
ultimate goal of liberating the whole of Palestine, and destroying the colonialist, Zionist occupation state and restoring Palestine as it existed before 1948.221

In addition, Fatah had an explicit strategy of creating conflict along Jordan’s border with Israel. Fatah believed that Arab resources could only be mobilized through military activity, and that the cycle of Palestinian action and Israel reaction would demonstrate the real threat posed to the Arabs by Israeli expansionist aims. At the very least, it would “raise the heat of confrontation along the borders in order for the border villages to pressure their capitals to place weapons in the hands of the masses.”222 Khalid al-Hasan, also known as Abu Said and one of the original founders of Fatah, argued that “[o]ur military action provokes an Israeli reaction against our people, who will then be transformed from a supportive role into a proactive one [on our side]. The cycle affects the evolution of Arab policy and has further international repercussions and so feeds back to influence the central sphere...[ultimately, the Arab Armies] would intervene to decide the conflict and bring it to an end after the revolutionary masses had prepared the way for them.”223 Fatah’s general strategy was to drag the Arab states into war with Israel by stoking the fire along the borders.224 January 1, 1965 marked the official re-launch of guerilla activities across the border occurred with the failed attack on the Israeli National Water Carrier. Despite a desire for independent and popular action for the liberation, at this stage, the Palestinian guerrilla fighters believed that to achieve their ultimate goal of liberating the whole of Palestine, they needed to find a way to engage the Arab States in a total war, and border infiltrations could lead to such an outcome.

221 Ibid. p.87.
222 Ibid. p. 119.
223 Khalid al-Hasan quoted in ibid. p. 120.
In assessing the costs of compliance, it is evidenced that in the period leading up to the Es ‘Samu raid, the Jordanian regime and the burgeoning Palestinian guerilla movements had fundamentally conflicting grand strategies towards Israel and the Palestinian question more broadly. Whereas Jordan was generally protective of the status quo for both strategic and pragmatic reasons, Fatah, and the other smaller Palestinian groups, were intent on recapturing the whole of Palestine and ultimately changing the status quo dramatically. Additionally, Jordan desired, at least for the near term, to maintain a quiet border with the Israelis that would protect the regime and its people from Israeli counter actions. Hussein was determined to prevent a possible escalation towards a war that he rightfully believed he would lose. In contrast, a central strategy of the Palestinian fedayeen fighters was to specifically engage the Israelis on the border, both to increase their popular support, but also to incite an escalation between the Israelis and the Arab states. Thus, the regime and the fedayeen’s grand strategies and foreign policy goals stood in stark opposition. As the Palestinian guerrillas further crystallized their strategies, this divergence became only more apparent.

As in the previous period, it is clear that the fedayeen did not provide any foreign policy benefit to the Jordanian regime, and in fact worked directly against many of its goals. Thus, complying with Israeli demands, and containing the fedayeen would not interfere with Jordan’s foreign policy and would likely produce a positive impact on their immediate foreign policy interests. Thus, the foreign policy costs of compliance remain low in this period.
### Foreign Policy Cost of Compliance

| Jordan vs. Fedayeen Goals | • Jordan remains committed to incorporating West Bank into Kingdom and against a separate Palestinian state  
• Jordan seeks to keep border quiet  
• Fedayeen working towards an independent state and believes that it is only achievable through force |
| Fedayeen FP Contribution | • Fedayeen efforts are counter-productive to Jordanian foreign policy |
| Fedayeen Means | • Jordan opposes fedayeen infiltrations into Israel due to incitement fears |
| Overall Foreign Policy Costs of Compliance | LOW |

### Domestic Political Costs and Benefits

In the years leading up to the Es ‘Samu raid, the atmosphere within Jordan changed dramatically, marked perhaps most significantly by the establishment of the PLO in 1964 and the subsequent emergence of Fatah in the West Bank. In many ways, the establishment of the PLO officially severed the ostensible unity of the two peoples, and instead strengthened Palestinian identity. The PLO provided an outlet for the Palestinians, which enabled them to express their political aspirations. At the most basic level, it created a competing political organization to the regime that now stood to represent more than half of the Hashemite Kingdom’s citizens.

The PLO questioned the right of Jordan to exist as a political entity dominated by

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225 Shemesh, Arab Politics, Palestinian Nationalism and the Six Day War: The Crystallization of Arab Strategy and Nasir’s Descent to War, 1957-1967. p. 79
226 Mutawi, Jordan in the 1967 War. p. 41
TransJordanians, even though the majority of the population was Palestinian. Likewise, the Jordanian regime questioned the PLO’s right to exist as a representative of the Palestinian people with their own distinctive identity, separate from the Jordanian state. For example, in June 1966, at a meeting of the Palestinian National Council, the PLO made explicit claims that they were responsible for the majority of the Jordanian population, and as such, had the right to intervene in its domestic affairs and in international security.

In addition to representation, the PLO sought to create parallel government institutions which began to appear as the development of a state within a state. During this same period, the organization also began to militarize large portions of the Palestinian population within the West Bank. Although Ahmad Shuqairi, head of the PLO, tried to reassure his hosts that this new entity would not exercise territorial sovereignty, the increasing demands on separate political and military organizations defied these promises.

In early 1965, Shuqairi submitted a list of highly problematic demands for the Jordanian regime that demonstrated that he deliberately sought to create a state within a state that would have a separate executive function from the King. First, he wanted to institute conscription of Palestinians in the West Bank and arm and train them as part of a PLA battalion in Jordan, which would be subordinate to the PLA command, as opposed to the Arab Legion. Second, he sought to establish popular training camps for civil defense exercises for the West Bank population and provide them with weapons for emergencies. Third, he urged the creation of ideological military summer camps for youth and students. Fourth, he lobbied for holding general elections for the

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228 Susser, *On Both Banks of the Jordan: A Political Biography of Wasfi Al-Tall.*, p. 82
Palestinian National Council (PNC) amongst only the Palestinians in Jordan. Fifth, he demanded diplomatic immunity for the PLO. Sixth, he requested time on the radio for broadcasting. Finally, he argued for a three percent tax on the salaries of Palestinians in Jordan and these funds would be used to support the PLO.230

The Jordanian regime did not acquiesce to most of Shuqairi’s demands and took a strong stance to preserve its sovereignty, particularly along the military front. Jordan refused to accept any of the military requests that were made including conscription, training and basing.231 The regime repeatedly asserted that since 60 percent of its soldiers were Palestinians and all Palestinians in Jordan receive citizenship, the proposed measures were unnecessary.232 On the political front, the regime made some concessions, including agreeing in principle to hold elections, grant diplomatic immunity, and issue a tax, so long as it did not distinguish among the Jordanians.233 In a speech on January 1, 1966, the King expressed that his biggest concern was the formation of a military power inside Jordan that was not under Jordanian law.234

The PLO opened yet another front in this confrontation by encouraging supporters to form organizations that essentially duplicated elements of Jordanian civil society. For example, the Palestinian Red Crescent was established alongside the Jordanian Red Crescent. The PLO’s

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231 Abu Odeh, Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process, pp. 119-120.
proponents also established their own Palestinian court of justice and police force. These organizations challenged the regime’s ability to rule and serve its population through the existing civil institutions. Ultimately, through their political activities, the PLO provided a political framework to appeal to the majority of the population, in a manner that could threaten the very existence of the state. While not as direct as the previous threat, this initiative reinforced the divide that was emerging between the two populations and created an alternative center for the Palestinian people. Through the military and civic associations, the PLO was laying its claims against the regime’s rule and gradually providing a clear governing alternative.

Shortly after its establishment, the PLO was infiltrated by radical elements that were not only seeking to represent the Palestinians, but were also overtly hostile to the Jordanian regime. Likewise, during this same period, there was also a sudden emergence and growth of several primarily militant Palestinian organizations, including Fatah, whose primary purpose was to engage in the violent liberation of Palestine, but ultimately became a direct threat to the regime as well. In 1965, the PLO and Fatah arguably represented a more serious threat to King Hussein and his supporters than Israel. These organizations had the potential to compete with the regime and the King was afraid of a possible takeover because they represented a rival competing for the population’s allegiance.

The PLO did not make great efforts to conceal its significant power aspirations. For example, in 1966, after a clash with the Jordanian regime, Shuqairi stated that the “way to Tel

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236 Susser, *On Both Banks of the Jordan: A Political Biography of Wasfi Al-Tall*. p. 8
238 Schiff and Rothstein, *Fedayeen; Guerillas against Israel*. p. 63
239 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
Aviv passes through Amman... the liberation of [Palestine] must begin with the liberation of Jordan from [Hussein's] regime through the establishment of a nationalist regime."240 Similarly, more minor groups like the PFLP and the Popular Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PDFLP) had a much broader definition of the enemy, which broadly included Western imperialism and also extended to the Jordanian regime.241 This movement to overthrow the regime in favor of the resistance forces even began to appear on graffiti within Amman, thus, it was not uncommon to see statements like "the authority to the resistance."242

Though the atmosphere leading into the Es 'Samu raid was already quite contentious, following the Es 'Samu raid, the open direct opposition to the regime became even more pronounced. For example, during the riots, Shuqairi inflamed the crowds by calling for the establishment of a Palestinian republic in Jordan and the Jordanian armed forces were openly encouraged to overthrow the King.243 Additionally, as opposed to the riots that occurred in 1953-1956, the population now began demanding that the PLO protect them and become their guardians, a significant change from the period where they sought additional protection from the Jordanian regime.244 Similarly, "a caricature in the edition of al-Hurriyya published on Dec. 28, 1966 depicted a guerilla action as a time bomb about to explode in the face of a terrified Jordanian Prime Minister Wasfi Tal, indicating that Jordan, not Israel was the real target."245 These kinds of calls for the overthrow of the regime became increasingly common, with the PLO

242 Interview with Samir Mutawi, Nov. 12, 2011.
244 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
and Syrian broadcasts calling daily for people to rise against the King and kill him.246

Despite the increasingly harsh rhetoric and expanding political aims, the military wing of the Palestinian groups within Jordan remained limited. It’s difficult to find exact figures on the fedayeen strength in this period, particularly because of the burgeoning nature of most of the groups that emerged, as well as their clandestine tendencies. However, most estimates at this time suggest that the fedayeen groups had not yet obtained a significant membership. One estimate suggests that in 1965, while there were approximately 400 military organizations in Jordan, their individual membership ranks ranged from 2 to 400.247 These total figures imply that even Fatah, which was the largest organization at the time, had only 400 members. Similarly, Sayigh explains that after the 1967 war, guerilla strength in the Jordan valley grew to 600-1,000, by early 1968, 500 belonged to Fatah and 300-400 to the PFLP.248 This estimate suggests that prior to 1967, the total number of guerrilla fighters in Jordan was something considerably less than that. Ultimately, it seems that at most, guerilla strength in this period could not have exceeded 1,000 fighters, and was likely even smaller. While certainly a potentially menacing threat to the military, the Arab Legion could have certainly contained this threat.

Although it is clear that the establishment of the PLO, as well as the proliferation of militant Palestinian groups challenged the legitimacy of the regime and at times, even made clear threats, the Jordanian Army continued to maintain a distinct military advantage when addressing

their threat. During the period of 1956-1967, the Jordanian armed forces grew from a total strength of 25,000 to 55,000.\textsuperscript{249} In order to grow the military at such a rapid pace and to meet increasingly technical needs, the military began to recruit among the Palestinian population. However, because of fears of Palestinian loyalty and possible coup attempts, the King structured the army in a segregated manner, assigning mostly non-Palestinian officers to combat units.\textsuperscript{250}

At this point, Bedouins “make up about 70 percent of the personnel in the two armored brigades and about 50 percent of the royal guards brigades – the key units in the army from the standpoint of the regime’s security...The Palestinian two-thirds of the populace is represented by only 28 percent of the armed forces total strength. Most of these are in the technical services; there are fewer in the artillery and fewer still in the infantry. Virtually none are in the armored units.”\textsuperscript{251}

In March 1965, the regime disbanded the National Guard and transferred them into the regular army because they feared that these forces, which operated more independently, could be used against the regime. However, despite the regime’s domestic concerns, the military had repeatedly demonstrated its loyalty and capacity in the prior decade. The first opportunity came after the 1957 coup attempt, where the King demonstrated his leadership of the military and the ability and willingness of the core of loyal Bedouin forces to maintain order and preserve the status quo.\textsuperscript{252} As Uriel Dann notes “[it] was not the first time that the legion had done this, but what is remarkable is that the qawmi (nationalist) period of Jordan — the Nabulsi government and the year that preceded it — had not affected the loyalty of the rank and file once the order for

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item \textsuperscript{249} Mutawi, \textit{Jordan in the 1967 War}. p. 42.
  \item \textsuperscript{251} CIA intelligence Memorandum: Jordan’s Armed Forces, January 17, 1967 available at \url{http://www.foia.cia.gov/}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
action was given... The political and military authorities worked together, a tribute to the King who directed both as their unquestioned master, but a tribute also to the potential the Hashemite monarchy could mobilize with proper leadership.253 Although the King took significant steps to purge the military of dissidents, even with this internal threat, at the height of the crisis, the military demonstrated its competence, capacity, and most importantly, loyalty.254

Similarly, in 1963, after a week of angry demonstrations in response to the Tripartite Federation of Egypt, Syria and Iraq, the military did not hesitate to act internally, exchanged fire with protesters in the West Bank, and was able to defuse the crisis within a couple of weeks.255 The issue of the union was clearly split between those on the East Bank and the West Bank. The East Bank was against the union, whereas the West Bank was for it because “believed that only through union could Israel be defeated, and for that unity, the Palestinians were willing to jettison King Hussein and Jordan too.”256 This crisis demonstrated, at minimum, the loyalty of the Jordanian military to maintain the status quo, act against fellow Jordanian citizens, and specifically Palestinians, who were challenging domestic order and the regime. Without external prompting, King Hussein took proactive measures to reign in the influence and operations of the PLO in the West Bank, highlighting the extent to which he perceived them to be a serious threat. Most importantly, in June 1966, King Hussein explained:

253 The Nabulsi period was a period of significant Arab Nationalist challenges to the Hashemite Regime. After failing to join the Baghdad Pact, King Hussein installed Nabulsi as prime minister as a concession towards the nationalist camp. This move strengthened further the pro-Nasser/Arab Nationalist camp and gave it an official voice within Jordan, and was most pronounced during the failed coup attempt in 1957. Dann, King Hussein and the Challenge of Arab Radicalism: Jordon, 1955-1967. p. 63; Alon, The Making of Jordan: Tribes, Colonialism and the Modern State. p. 153.
256 Lunt, Hussein of Jordan : Searching for a Just and Lasting Peace. p. 74
It was I who closed the offices of the PLO in Jordan. They had begun to practice subversion on a grand scale. They were trying to divide the populations of the east and west banks of the Jordan. They were taking into their ranks people who belonged to what we considered illegal political parties, such as the Baathists, communists, and leftists nationalists. Actually, their goal was to replace Jordan’s monarch with some other political authority.257

Similarly, in 1965, Wasfi Tal, then prime minister, provided amnesty to the Transjordanians that had been part of the 1957 coup attempt and had since been exiled in Egypt. The pardons were given because the PLO had started to recruit from among these exiled coup organizers in order to strengthen the political standing of the PLO among the Jordanians, which indicated that the regime itself was among the PLO’s targets.258 In addition, on April 13, 1966, the regime pursued widespread arrests among activists of the Baath, Communist party and the ANM. These individuals were PLO activists with leadership roles on the West Bank, and authorities feared that these leaders could launch an insurgent national movement there.259

The period leading up to the Es’ Šamu raid is defined both by increasing national awareness among Palestinians, as well as continued friction and separation with the East Bank population. As mentioned previously, one example of this friction was observed clearly in protests of the Tripartite Federation.260 The differences in the political aspirations of both sides of the Jordan River, also led to bifurcated support for the fedayeen among the population. In 1964, the creation of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) crystallized a dominant Palestinian identity and led the population to question whether the West Bank belonged to Jordan

257 Hussein quoted in Hussein, Vance, and Lauer, Hussein of Jordan: My "War" with Israel. p. 21-22
258 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
and to rebel against the all-embracing Jordanian identity that the regime had tried to inculcate. This new institution, with Shuqairi at its head, as the official representative of the Palestinians, created a semblance of separate rights and continued to reinforce the idea of separate peoples. For example, many Palestinians regarded individuals from the West Bank who sought office and continued to cooperate with the regime as power-seekers, who were acting against the best interests of their fellow nationals. Especially after the closure of the PLO offices in Jordan, the alienation between the Palestinian population and the regime only intensified. As discussed earlier, this division was especially evident through public demonstrations. Whereas previously, the West Bank population expressed frustration at the perceived failure of the regime to protect them or further their interests, in this period, the protests began to express a desire for the PLO to represent them, rather than the regime. Furthermore, this movement solidified a distinct identity, which excluded, by its nature, the East Bank population, who in turn began to generate their own form of TransJordanian identity.

This bifurcation also extended to views on the efficacy of the reemerging fedayeen activity. Many Palestinians, as part of the reinvigorated national struggle, supported the armed groups and their attempts to infiltrate. As Adnan Abu Odeh, who was an intelligence officer in this period, explained, there was a lot of ignorance among the Palestinian population. While many West Bank Palestinians were neither political, nor did they actively support the fedayeen, many in the West Bank failed to see the broader implications of the fedayeen action and

263 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011; Bligh, The Political Legacy of King Hussein. p. 33.
264 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
understand the reasoning behind the regime policy.” He recalled that when he would return to visit family in the West Bank and explained why it was a bad policy to support the infiltrations, they thought he was a spy. In contrast to the West Bank population, many on the East Bank were opposed to the infiltrations and supported the regime’s efforts to halt these activities.

During this period, two new developments unfolded within the domestic context which ultimately affected the costs of compliance for Jordan. First, the establishment of the PLO and its parallel state institutions began interfering directly with the regime’s ability to rule and control its Palestinian population. This competing political voice provided a welcome alternative to this large constituency within Jordan. As these political and military organizations developed, their popular support amongst the Palestinian population grew. Second, the emergence of new Palestinian organizations created a more unified political force among the Palestinians that could verbally oppose and potentially use its new resources to resist any action targeting the fedayeen. The potential for a strong negative reaction by a significant segment of the Jordanian population increased the costs and risks for the regime when contemplating any possible action against the fedayeen. However, these concerns were sufficiently mitigated by the Jordanian military’s sustained power advantage. This advantage enabled them to confront the fedayeen, as well as generally control the Palestinian population when necessary. Furthermore, this prominent display of Palestinian nationalism strengthened the Transjordanian identity and drew them closer to the regime. Consequently, while the regime might encounter some resistance within the West Bank against any efforts to contain the fedayeen, this opposition was not likely to be powerful

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266 Interview with Samir Mutawi, Nov. 12, 2011.
267 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
268 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
enough to impact the regime’s power center within the East Bank. Ultimately, while the regime would likely sustain higher costs than the prior period, these costs still did not rise to level which would preclude action for the regime.

### Domestic Costs of Compliance

| Fedayeen Political Intentions | • Direct and indirect threat to the regime  
|                            | • Beginning of ‘state within a state’  
|                            | • Establishment of PLO provides a governing alternative to the regime |
| Fedayeen Organizational and Military Capacity | • Organization is growing from previous period  
|                                           | • Limited capacity, at most 1,000 fighters in Jordan |
| Jordanian Military Capacity | • Significant growth in military organization → 55,000 troops  
|                            | • Continued demonstration of loyalty among troops  
|                            | • Segregated Bedouin forces are able and willing to act against Palestinian fedayeen |
| Fedayeen Popular Support | • Bifurcated support between Palestinians on the West Bank and TransJordanians on the East Bank |
| Overall Domestic Costs of Compliance | MODERATE |

### Assessing the Costs of Compliance

The costs of compliance in this period shifted primarily on the domestic front. On the foreign policy front, they remained low. As in the previous period, the fedayeen’s goals and tactics towards Israel remained at odds with the Jordanian regime’s foreign policy goals. The extent of their diverging goals became more apparent as the Palestinian organizations increasingly declared their goals of liberating Palestine forcefully. King Hussein was not only opposed to the idea of establishing an independent Palestinian state on the West Bank, but was also strongly opposed to the notion of using force to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict because he believed that he would lose in a confrontation. Thus, in this period, the divergence of their grand
strategies and foreign policy objectives, between the regime and the fedayeen, grew even deeper. Thus, the cost of compliance on this dimension remained low.

On the domestic front, the costs of compliance rose from the previous period, primarily due to the establishment of the PLO and the growth of the fedayeen organizations which created a competing political voice for the large Palestinian population within Jordan. However, at this time, part of the regime threat was moderated by the Jordanian military's size and structure, which still possessed a marked balance of power advantage, and had even, prior to the Es 'Samu raid, confronted the Palestinian groups militarily. Finally, this period is marked by a continued bifurcation of popular support along East Bank and West Bank lines, with those in the East Bank clinging closely to the regime. The promulgation of the Palestinian national identity, at the necessary exclusion of the Transjordanians, further fanned the tensions between the populations and naturally led to a split of support along those lines. As mentioned above, the increased political and military organization of the fedayeen, coupled with their growing support among the Palestinians increased the costs and risks of action. However, the regime's continued military advantage, coupled with the ongoing loyalty of the Transjordanian population mitigated these costs. In all, during this period, there were moderate domestic costs of compliance.

Ultimately, the context during this period still favored coercion success, though less so than before Qibya. Although there was once again an increasing divergence of foreign policy goals, the domestic situation had significantly changed, and made action against the fedayeen potentially more costly. However, as was observed, this was a cost that the regime prior to Es 'Samu demonstrated it was able and willing to embrace. Finally, while on average the fedayeen gained the support of more Palestinians, the lack of support amongst the backbone of the regime, mainly the TransJordanian East Bank population, provided the King with the additional latitude
required to contain the fedayeen even more forcefully. Ultimately, although the costs of compliance were higher than in the previous period, the moderate costs created a context which still favored coercion success.

**Coercive Outcome**

Following the Es 'Samu raid, the Jordanian regime once again intensified its efforts against the fedayeen in a variety of manners. First, following the raid, there was intense rioting in the West Bank and the army was immediately called into the area to calm the rioters. This action led to widespread arrests, as well as some instances of firing into the demonstrations by the military. On December 22, 1966, due to continued unrest, Wasfi Tal resigned as prime minister and created a new cabinet the same day, which instituted martial law. The domestic unrest, which was only seen in the towns of the West Bank and the refugee camps, was calmed eventually through tough military action. However, the growing Palestinian resentment towards the regime was now evident. Following the raid, a strict watch was placed on all dissidents within Jordan and the army was charged with the task of preventing any commando raids into Israel from Jordanian territory. At the end of 1966, the position of the Jordanian government was clearly reflected in Fatah writings, where they stated in their “El-Asifa” paper that: “In Jordan and Lebanon, the mad campaigns against the fighters of El-Asifa are intensified daily, spreading and embracing anyone suspected of carrying arms and fighting Zionist invaders in the occupied land. Every spot through which the fighters could pass is blocked with formidable force

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269 Mutawii, *Jordan in the 1967 War*. p. 81
that conducts searches and arrests of dozens of suspects." During this period, the regime systematically rounded up Fatah cells in the West Bank and even falsified encoded messages to Fatah operatives to lure them from Syria to Jordan in order to apprehend them. 

Furthermore, the Jordanian regime began to publicly justify its actions against the fedayeen by stating that they were interfering with the United Arab Command (UAC), and justifying their aggressive stance towards the fedayeen on the basis of the agreements reached at the Arab Summit in Casablanca in 1965. Additionally, the regime began to assert that the other Arab states only nominally supported the fedayeen's activities. For example, at a press conference on November 21, 1966, days after the attack, King Hussein asked: "If [fedayeen] cross the border action is Arab policy, then why don't they operate out of Sinai, the Gaza Strip and Syria?" The King was increasingly less apologetic about clamping down on the fedayeen behavior and even went as far as privately defining the actions of the Palestinians, be they PLO or Fatah, as the factor most dangerous to the existence of the regime. Ultimately, the King firmly believed that his swift and deliberate measures against the fedayeen were the most effective means by which to protect the state and prevent a future Israeli raid. Nonetheless, on November 23, 1966, so as to appear responsive to the outcry for self-defense in the West Bank, and empower his people, he formally instituted a 90 day mandatory conscription of all male Jordanians between the ages of 18 and 40.

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272 "El Asifa" quoted in Ehud Yaari, Strike Terror; the Story of Fatah (New York: Sabra Books, 1970). p. 89; Further evidence of this policy can also be seen in the Tel el-Arbaim incident where Jordanian forces clashed with Fatah fighters in the Northern Jordan Valley and subsequently killed four terrorist.

273 Susser, On Both Banks of the Jordan: A Political Biography of Wasfi Al-Tall. p. 90


275 Bligh, The Political Legacy of King Hussein. p. 34.

While the Es 'Samu raid created an impetus for King Hussein to act aggressively against the fedayeen, it also dramatically changed his general attitude towards his bilateral relationship with Israel. Following the raid, King Hussein became convinced that Israel was planning a massive invasion of the West Bank, now or in the near future, and that this raid signaled that resolve, and perhaps was even intended to be an escalatory measure. On January 25, 1967, two months after the raid, the King declared that "the enemy’s present objective is the West Bank; after that it will be the East Bank and after that they will expand throughout the Arab homeland to achieve their aims and ambitions." Wasfi Tal, then prime minister, expresses similar views by stating that "fortunately, we concluded at the time that the enemy operation in Es 'Samu was an attempt to draw us into a battle which Israelis could claim amounted to aggression against her. This sentiment, together with the previous commando raids on her installations and military camps would provide her with an excuse to invade the West Bank." These fears of Israel’s escalatory motives created additional incentives to crack down on fedayeen activity and to ensure that Israel had no excuse for escalation. Wasfi Tal explains that in "[his] view, we were not ready for war. Therefore we decided to enhance our defenses, to defend the armistice line and to avoid giving Israel anything that might give it the excuse to drag us prematurely into armed conflict. Accordingly we refrained from taking any reprisal action for Es 'Samu and tried to prevent commandos from carrying out any action along the armistice line."

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278 King Hussein quoted in Mutawi, *Jordan in the 1967 War*. p. 69  
279 Wasfi Tal quoted in ibid. p. 79  
280 Wasfi Tal quoted in ibid. p.125
After the Es ‘Samu raid, King Hussein was convinced that Israel viewed all Arabs as the same, and thus he would be treated likewise, despite his historically warmer relations with them. This conclusion was drawn mainly from the fact that while the fedayeen raids technically emanated from within Jordan, they were often organized and supported within Syria. However, this time, Israel did not retaliate against Syria, but focused on Jordan instead. As noted in a CIA post-raid assessment, “there is a glaring contrast between Israeli treatment of Jordan and of Syria, which has severely provoked the Israelis, had received public Soviet support, and had been left alone by Tel Aviv’s army.”

King Hussein noted that, “In 1966 the Israelis complained this time that the terrorists operated out of Syria, and so it was we in Jordan who took the brunt of the ‘punitive expedition’ against Es ‘Samu. The conclusion was obvious: differences among the Arabs were significant only to the Arab camp. To the Israelis, we were all alike. We were all Arabs.”

King Hussein felt that this particular raid was a betrayal by the Israelis. It was conducted on his birthday, and he viewed it as a personal message to him.

**KARAMEH RAID, MARCH 21, 1968**

On March 21, 1968, the Israelis raided Karameh in response to increased fedayeen activity over the prior two months which was emanating from the East Bank, inside Jordan proper. Most directly, the Karameh attack was in response to the detonation of a mine that killed 2 children and wounded 28 on a school bus. Karameh was a refugee camp approximately four miles east of the Jordan River, which served as the Fatah headquarters. Although the attack targeted an al-Fatah stronghold, rather than a Jordanian military, government or civilian target,

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Dayan made it clear that the political target remained the Jordanian government. He stated clearly that “the government from whose territory these acts are carried out – in this case the government of Jordan – must accept full responsibility for them. From all the evidence and information available to us it is clear to my government that the Government of Jordan is taking no effective sets to curb these activities.”

The attack was carried out by a brigade equivalent, including helicopters and infantry support. The Israeli raid was similar to previous raids, though it was on a larger scale than prior reprisals. The Israelis entered the city and began to dynamite homes and public buildings and were successful in destroying the fedayeen bases. However, during this raid, the Israelis were met with resistance from approximately 300 Fatah fighters, as well as Jordanian artillery, which was stationed nearby. Although the Israelis inflicted much damage to Karameh, there were heavy casualties on all sides, including 28 Israelis, 61 Jordanians, and 92 fedayeen killed. In addition, the Jordanian and Palestinian counter-attack destroyed several Israeli vehicles, including tanks. Although fedayeen fighters were involved in the fighting surrounding the raid, the raid was directed at sending a coercive message to the Jordanian regime and inducing them to once again curtail fedayeen activities.

**Foreign Political Costs and Benefits**

By 1968, many domestic and international changes had occurred, driven predominantly

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284 Moshe Dayan quoted in Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment”. p. 140
287 Ibid. p. 279; Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment”. p. 119
288 These tanks were later displayed within Jordan and there are famous photos of the King exploring the wreckage. This display of Israeli made an impression on the Jordanian population, who interpreted the outcome of Karameh as a great success. "A Jordanian Village During the Raid and an Abandoned Israeli Tank," *New York Times (1923-Current file)*, 1968 Mar 23 1968.
by the aftermath of the 1967 War and specifically, by the loss of the West Bank. The loss of the West Bank and Jerusalem, and particularly, the speed of defeat in approximately three days, was a big shock for King Hussein, the regime more broadly, and the entire state.\textsuperscript{289} Thus, King Hussein felt a personal responsibility to regain the West Bank, which he considered an integral part of the Hashemite Kingdom.\textsuperscript{290}

Even after 1967, King Hussein continued to view himself as the representative of the West Bank in both the regional and international arena, rather than the Palestinian resistance.\textsuperscript{291} At most, King Hussein was willing to concede that the West Bank population would be permitted to control local affairs as part of a United Arab Kingdom, which was ruled by the Hashemites. Thus, Hussein was strongly opposed to a separate Palestinian-Israeli agreement, as he realized that such an arrangement would significantly undermine his position for regaining control of the West Bank.\textsuperscript{292} With the Israelis, his primary method for achieving these aims was a policy of accommodation and the pursuit of a peaceful resolution to the conflict.\textsuperscript{293} With the Palestinians in the West Bank, Hussein made active attempts to strengthen the ties between the West Bank inhabitants and his government through aid, as well as directing them towards strikes and boycotts.\textsuperscript{294}

In contrast to the Jordanian state, the PLO, which had become the official representative of the Palestinian people in 1964, had a broader and more defined set of goals and strategies.

\textsuperscript{289} Interview with Taher al Masri, Nov. 13, 2011.
\textsuperscript{290} Interview with Zaid Rifai, Nov. 12, 2011.
\textsuperscript{291} Abu Odeh, \textit{Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process}. p. 165
\textsuperscript{294} Yaari, \textit{Strike Terror; the Story of Fatah}. p. 242
First, the PLO articulated a strategy whereby it declared that the Palestinian resistance was the representative of the Palestinian people and its interests. Second, and perhaps most importantly, the West Bank was declared a Palestinian entity and not a Jordanian territory that should be reunited with the East Bank of the Hashemite Kingdom. While increasingly unified after the 1967 War, this difference in perception of the West Bank existed prior to the Israeli occupation in 1967, when in 1966, Ahmad Shuqairi expressed that secession of the West Bank was an explicit policy goal. Additionally, King Hussein was viewed as a rival to the Palestinian cause, though it was believed that he might be able to serve some of the Palestinians' goals. During this period, the PLO and Jordan were no longer solely competing over who was the legitimate representative of the Palestinians, but rather, they were now competitors over the future of the West Bank, each claiming they were the lawful owner and destined to control it if Israel withdrew.

King Hussein fundamentally believed that the most sensible way to regain the West Bank was through negotiation and diplomacy. Furthermore, as part of this diplomatic approach, he was willing to accept the reality of Israeli existence in exchange for a political settlement that would return the West Bank to Jordan. Jordan embraced most of the international diplomatic efforts, including the Jarring commission, UN Resolution 242, and later the Rogers Plan. Jordan arrived at this belief in large part because of its assessment that Israel was too strong militarily to be defeated, even by the Arab states working in unison. Despite this realization, at times, King

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Hussein seemed to support some fedayeen raids because he felt that they may be instrumental in increasing the pressure on Israel and keeping the question of the West Bank alive. The King looked for any possible advantage, since he felt that he had very little leverage on the Israelis since the end of the 1967 War.\(^{300}\) It's fairly clear that the King did not believe that this approach would directly enable him to regain the West Bank. Rather, his calculation was to employ the strategy as a short-term tactic to keep the West Bank on the agenda.\(^{301}\) Above all, King Hussein continued to believe that the only manner in which the West Bank could be recovered was through negotiations and not through violence and escalation, and thus on the whole, he was not eager to provoke the Israeli government.\(^{302}\)

However, Palestinian groups chose an alternative approach. They sought to achieve their goal of a Palestinian entity in the West Bank through an active resistance towards Israel, which manifested itself in border infiltrations and other terrorist activities directed against Israeli military and civilian targets. There was a belief, particularly among Fatah, that only a prolonged ongoing struggle that included terrorism, sabotage and successive wars could bring about a change in the status quo.\(^{303}\) Fatah believed that the Israeli military advantage was through a blitzkrieg, whereas the advantage of the Arab population was through waging a protracted war with Israel. Israel "was geared to achieve quick military victories out of economic necessity, and so the Arabs should rely on their advantages of human and geographic depth to neutralize its superiority and drain its resources in a lengthy conflict...and guerilla war was the strategy to

\(^{300}\) This approach came up in an interview with Adnan Abu Odeh on Nov. 14, 2011, as well as with Zaid Rifai, on Nov. 12, 2011.
\(^{301}\) This approach came up in an interview with Adnan Abu Odeh on Nov. 14, 2011, as well as with Zaid Rifai, on Nov. 12, 2011.
\(^{302}\) All the interviewees stressed that King Hussein was significantly committed to finding a negotiated settlement, especially because of the disparity of force between the Israelis and Jordanians.
\(^{303}\) Yaari, Strike Terror: the Story of Fatah. p. 115
adopt since it allowed the evasion of the enemy’s blows and pre-empted his blitzkrieg doctrine.304 Ultimately, the Palestinian guerrillas would spearhead the regular Arab armies by exhausting the enemy forces. Once this feat was accomplished, the Arab main forces would join in the liberation war and strike the decisive blow.305 Not only were they opposed to a political settlement, but believed that for the struggle to be successful, lulls in violence could not be tolerated.306

Despite the large regional changes, the goals of the Palestinian fedayeen and the Jordanian government remained at odds. Although both the Jordanian regime and the fedayeen aimed to alter the status quo and regain the West Bank, they were competitors for its ultimate rule. King Hussein continued to believe that he was the rightful rule of the West Bank territory, and opposed any independent Palestinian entity therein. In contrast, the fedayeen viewed the territory as a Palestinian entity separate from the Jordanian state, and increasingly aimed for secession. Furthermore, each envisioned a different and conflicting way to accomplish their goals. King Hussein continued to believe in diplomacy as the primary manner for reacquiring the West Bank. While at times, he saw a short term tactical advantage from the raids, because they kept the West Bank issue alive, he was not under the illusion that this would result in a West Bank settlement, and was wary of any escalation. In contrast, the fedayeen continued to believe they could achieve their aims through a persistent war of attrition, which would eventually escalate and involve the Arab armies. This strategy was opposed to King Hussein’s goals. Thus, both the means and ends of their strategies were generally in conflict and executing one strategy

305 Ibid. p. 200.
306 Yaari, Strike Terror; the Story of Fatah. p. 315
necessarily sabotaged the other on almost every level. Whereas in previous periods the difference was more evident, since only the Palestinians sought to alter the status quo, there was still significant divergence in this period. Thus, the fedayeen did not provide a foreign policy benefit for King Hussein and containing them would not harm King Hussein’s policies towards Israel. Ultimately, even in this period, the costs of compliance on this dimension remained low.

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<th>Foreign Policy Cost of Compliance</th>
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<td>Jordan vs. Fedayeen Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Both Jordanian and fedayeen policy aimed to regain the West Bank</td>
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<td>• However, each claimed to be the rightful rulers of the region – so they were competitors for control</td>
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<td>Fedayeen FP Contribution</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Fedayeen provides minimal contribution to Jordanian foreign policy by potentially keeping West Bank issue alive</td>
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<td>Fedayeen Means</td>
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<td>• Hussein believes that regaining the West Bank is only possible through negotiations and diplomacy</td>
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<td>• Continued infiltrations incite the Israelis and make obtaining a settlement more difficult</td>
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<td>Overall Foreign Policy Costs of Compliance</td>
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<td>LOW</td>
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**Domestic Political Costs and Benefits**

By 1968, the Jordanians experienced a surge in regime threat that emanated directly from the fedayeen movement. First, and most explicitly, following the 1967 War, several resistance groups, most notably the PFLP and the PDFLP, began to even more openly challenge the monarchy and the King’s right to rule Jordan. Previously, the resistance groups challenged specific policies or actions of the Jordanian regime, but did not have revolutionary aims within
Jordan proper. These groups now called openly for the overthrow of the regime and the installation of a militant left-wing regime in its place. The PDFLP argued openly that the throne was opposed to the masses and their liberation movement and that the guerillas should plan for the inevitable conflict with it. Similarly, the PFLP advocated for the establishment of an Arab Hanoi in Amman. These general sentiments did not ultimately translate into a singular, unanimous position for all of the fedayeen groups. However, these movements nonetheless presented a serious threat, and began to orchestrate activity directly aimed at undermining its rule.

Though the PFLP and PDFLP made open claims to overthrow the regime, Fatah arguably posed a greater threat to the monarchy, though this threat strategically presented itself in a different manner. Though on the surface, Fatah expressed the need for internal Arab stability to pursue its goals, within Jordan it acted as though it was an equal, if not superior force to the regime. Additionally, following the 1967 War, Fatah began to obtain much support from within the government, among parliament, elements of the military and even some cabinet members. “The real challenge, however, lay not in the possibility that Fatah might seek to overthrow the government, but rather in its determination to develop a Palestinian national identity and situate it within the statist framework of its own.” During this period, Fatah’s support grew exponentially and it soon had the backing of the majority of Palestinians, particularly the national right. However, it is important to note, that there was a subsection of

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309 Ibid. p. 245.
310 Interview with Zaid Rifai, Nov. 12, 2011; Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011; Ibid. p. 245.
311 Ibid. p. 245.
Palestinian middle class that continued to be interested in the preservation of the regime, mainly because it protected their economic interests.\textsuperscript{312}

Following the 1967 War, and in light of the Israeli occupation of the West Bank, the fedayeen were now headquartered within the East Bank. This relocation brought fedayeen activity into the heartland of the Hashemite Kingdom and even closer to its population and power centers. Additionally, as Israeli reprisals continued after the 1967 War, the fedayeen increasingly moved into the cities, including Amman. Their presence gradually brought a tremendous number of violations of law and order, ranging from traffic laws to kidnappings, and detentions and torturing of citizens suspected of collaborating with the regime. In some cases, there were even executions of individuals suspected of collaborating with Israel.\textsuperscript{313} These actions directly challenged the state’s monopoly on the use of force, basic order, and the legal and judicial system of the Jordanian regime. The combination of these three currents of regime threat seriously undermined the regime and created political instability within Jordan. These challenges invariably raised the cost of action against these groups.

Compounding the state’s political challenges was the fact that the balance of power had shifted dramatically after the 1967 War. After 1967, there was significant growth of existing groups, as well as a proliferation of many new Palestinian groups with distinct military wings. As mentioned previously, following the 1967 War, guerrilla strength grew to 600-1000 fighters, 500 of whom were Fatah and another 300-400 belonged to the PFLP.\textsuperscript{314} Many groups had

\textsuperscript{312} Interview with Nawaf Tell, Nov. 11, 2011.
\textsuperscript{313} As will be discussed later, the descent into chaos was even more profound after the Karameh raid, but already at this point, there were significant abuses of power. Abu Odeh, \textit{Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process}. p. 174
\textsuperscript{314} As will be discussed in more detail, following the battle of Karameh, the fedayeen recruitment swelled among both its fighting core, as well as its militia; Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), \textit{Armed
explicit external state support, while others acted as affiliates of the state parties. The Palestinian
groups equipped their guerrillas with arms from a variety of sources, including expanding
volumes of infantry weapons that were arriving from Egypt, Iraq, Syria, and China. In 1968,
China donated “Soviet designed AK-47 automatic rifles, RPG-2 and RPG-7 anti-tank rocket
launchers, 60 millimeter and 80 millimeter mortars and 130 mm artillery rockets in quantities
sufficient for 2,000.” Additionally, Bedouin smugglers collected abandoned weapons from
the battlefields of the 1967 War. These groups were also well resourced through state and
civilian Palestinian support and consequently grew in both number and strength. They had
become increasingly sophisticated and thus created additional opportunities for engaging the
Israelis, as well as the Jordanian state. The largest challenge for the fedayeen immediately
following the 1967 War was the lack of experience and leadership due to the loss of many
veteran cadres either in the occupied territories or in the 1967 War.

In addition to the fedayeen's growing strength, the regime had to weigh the possibility of
an actual intervention in Jordan by the Arab states on behalf of the fedayeen. Following the
1967 War, the fedayeen received overwhelming support from most of the Arab States that had
been defeated. What was unclear at the time was how far these states would extend their
support. The two sources of concern were the possibility of a Syrian intervention along the
northern border, as well as an Iraqi intervention by approximately 15,000 Iraqi troops which
remained stationed within Jordan. This potential force multiplier was a consideration that

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315 Ibid. p. 182.
316 Ibid. p. 182.
317 Ibid. p. 181.
318 Interview with Abdel Salam Majali, Nov. 13, 2011.
319 Interview with Nawaf Tell, Nov. 11, 2011.
King Hussein took into account, and needed to evaluate when assessing the balance of power. 320

While the Jordanians maintained the upper hand, the par between the fedayeen and the Arab Legion was narrower. First, the Arab Legion had been involved in a significant inter-state conventional war in 1967, where it was sorely defeated and suffered 700 fatalities and 6,000 wounded or missing individuals. 321 In addition, the war annihilated the Jordanian air force and 80% of its armour, and only four of its eleven brigades were still operational. 322 Following the war, the Jordanians brought in the Pakistani military to conduct an after action review, which resulted in several changes to their military including a strengthening of their general staff, stripping redundancy in the ranks, the establishment of divisions, and a revamped training regimen. 323 This experience certainly weakened the military immediately following the war. However, the regime was proactive in trying to regain its strength in a rapid fashion. Perhaps the emergence of this recovery was most evident in the battle of Karameh itself, where the Jordanian military was the main fighting force against the Israelis, and fared relatively well. 324

However, despite this ostensible weakness, the Jordanian military continued to monitor the fedayeen groups and sought to maintain some degree of control. Specifically, the Mukhabarat, the Jordanian intelligence, actively monitored their movements and arranged for all of these groups to be infiltrated. 325 Amidst these temporary setbacks, the regime remained confident that the military had the capacity to handle these groups in the event that it was

320 It is important to note, that during the fighting in September of 1970, the military took preemptive steps to neutralize the Iraqi forces within its borders, and the Syrians did in fact intervene on behalf of the fedayeen. So these concerns were in fact quite reasonable.
322 Ibid. p. 164-165
324 Ibid. p. 334.
One challenge that emerged from within the military was the support that they provided to the fedayeen following the 1967 War. The military felt humiliated and shocked by their rapid defeat by the Israelis. Thus, in the immediate aftermath of the war, many members of the military, across the ranks, supported the initiative that was displayed by the fedayeen and their continued attempts at reengaging the Israelis.\textsuperscript{327} In effect, the fedayeen were the only ones that were doing anything proactive to fight the Israelis and presumably attempt to redeem the Arab honor that was lost in the War.\textsuperscript{328} It was reported repeatedly that the Jordanian military provided cover and diversions for the fedayeen infiltrators in this period. It was even reported that at times, when the troops were under orders to shoot members of the PLO who were infiltrating into Israel, they refused to carry out their orders.\textsuperscript{329} This behavior by the military was quietly condoned by the regime, and at times conducted with tacit consent. This newfound identification, which differed greatly from previous periods, limited to some degree the ability of the regime to utilize the military against the fedayeen.

Immediately following the 1967 War, the Jordanian defeat and the West Bank occupation, the fedayeen became much more popular among the population at large. Their activity represented the only continuation of the conflict and a demonstration of force against the Israelis. At this time, there was a deep sense of guilt among Jordanians who felt that the army had not done enough to protect the Palestinians.\textsuperscript{330} Many Arabs felt that they had been left

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\textsuperscript{326} Ibid. p. 228 \\
\textsuperscript{327} Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011. \\
\textsuperscript{328} Interview with Abdel Salam Majali, Nov. 13, 2011. \\
\textsuperscript{329} Bligh, \textit{The Political Legacy of King Hussein}. p. 115-116 \\
\textsuperscript{330} Interview with Taher Masri, Nov. 13, 2011; Abdel Salam Majali, November 13, 2011.
\end{flushright}
behind to watch the defeat of their armies, and the occupation of their territories, and with this
failure and humiliation, embraced the notion of a ‘popular war’ led by the fedayeens. 331 "People
are in hopeless frame of mind, as they have been since the war. Because no one has held out
hope for them, they are creating, in desperation, the false hope that by continuing the fight they
can see Israel defeated in the end. Logic plays no part in this process, but the man on the street is
a creature of emotions always." 332 Both Palestinians and East Bankers began to actively host and
protect the fedayeens in their homes. 333 Resistance was further legitimized among the population
because now they were liberating the West Bank, which was previously a part of the country. 334
These feelings were not only prevalent among the masses, but also shared among members of the
intellectual and political elite. 335 This support extended even to young, educated East Bankers,
who King Hussein viewed as the backbone of the Jordanian regime. 336 It was increasingly
common for East Bankers to raise funds for the Palestinian cause openly. 337 At least initially,
when the Israelis performed a reprisal raid, the attack would unite the entire population and even
brought the fedayeens and the military closer together. 338 Ultimately, the general mood following
the 1967 War led many to embrace the strategies and tactics of the fedayeens.

Though many of the underlying tensions continued to exist between the Jordanians and
the Palestinians, the Jordanian defeat in the 1967 War provided a newfound legitimacy and

332 Copy of Memorandum for: Mr. J.P. Walsh, Executive Secretariat, Department of State, 2 August 2, 1967,
available at http://www.foia.cia.gov/
333 Interview with Taher Masri, Nov. 13, 2011.
334 Interview with Zaid Rifai, Nov. 12, 2011.
335 Joseph Nevo, "Changing Identities in Jordan," in Israel, the Hashemites, and the Palestinians: The Fateful
337 Interview with Marwan Muasher, Sept. 12, 2011.
338 Abu Odeh, Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process. p. 167-168
broader based support for the resistance movement and the infiltrations, in particular. Hussein was keenly aware of this increased popular legitimacy and even tried to combat their influence in various ways including devising schemes that would undermine their legitimacy. For example, the regime created their own fida’i organizations whose purpose was to provoke and antagonize the population and discredit the fedayeen.\(^{339}\) While these groups did not achieve their intended objective, the effort dedicated to discrediting the groups highlights the attention that this legitimacy was given.

However, while the regime had a strong desire to weaken the support of the fedayeen, following the 1967 War, the regime was in a very fragile position and in many ways in a state of shock by the loss that had occurred. This weak condition, coupled with the all-encompassing popular support that the fedayeen received, significantly constrained the King, and the regime begrudgingly accepted the current mood, thus creating a permissive environment in which the fedayeen could freely operate.\(^{340}\) Although the fedayeen raids were counterproductive to its foreign policy, allowing the fedayeen raids seemed to restore the regime’s dignity among the population.\(^{341}\) After the humiliating defeat of 1967, the King lacked the popular support needed to clamp down on the Palestinians, who were viewed as the only ones still fighting to get back what the King had lost.\(^{342}\)

Enabling fedayeen activity increased the popular standing of the government, but came at

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\(^{339}\) Susser, *On Both Banks of the Jordan: A Political Biography of Wasfi Al-Tall*. p. 134

\(^{340}\) This was noted in CIA special report Weekly Review: “Anti-Israeli Arab Terrorist Organizations,” Oct. 4, 1968 available at [http://www.foia.cia.gov/](http://www.foia.cia.gov/) Within this document it was stated that “Jordan and Lebanon are prevented by domestic pressure from openly and actively suppressing Fatah activities within their borders.” Similarly, during the interview, Mr. Masri suggested that this pressure was similar to the King’s decisions during the first Gulf War, where the King stood with public opinion in support of Saddam Hussein, Interview with Taher Masri, Nov. 13, 2011.

\(^{341}\) Abu Odeh, *Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process*. p. 158

\(^{342}\) Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
a significant cost in other respects. At least for a brief period, the Jordanians were forced to absorb some of the costs associated with the fedayeen policies, and take a calculated risk because of the population’s overwhelming support for this fight.343 The extent of popular support for the fedayeen was so overwhelming that some interviewees suggested that the King was aware that if he acted against the fedayeen prematurely, a popular revolution against the King would result.344

In assessing the costs of compliance in this period, one observes that the domestic costs of action rose across all of the dimensions evaluated. First, following the 1967 War, several fedayeen organizations began to openly challenge the legitimacy of the regime and agitated against the King’s rule. Similarly, Fatah increased its political influence within Jordan amongst the traditional political elites, including parliament, the military and the cabinet. Thus, the fedayeen organizations became increasingly enmeshed in Jordanian society. These new positions increased the costs of action for the regime because it was now acting against more established and supported groups, whose influence was spreading into traditional regime centers of power. Second, the geographic relocation of the fedayeen within the urban centers of the East Bank further increased the costs of action as the fedayeen were now entrenched within Amman, and any action by the regime would necessarily include urban warfare amongst the Transjordanian population. Unlike previous action which occurred in the West Bank, far from the traditional centers of power, action now would expose large segments of the population to military activity, and the subsequent collateral costs of such action. Third, as a result of the 1967 War, the balance of power shifted within Jordan. Though the Arab Legion continued to possess a numerical advantage over the fedayeen, the gap was diminished, particularly when one

343 Ibid.
344 Interview with Samir Mutawi, Nov. 12, 2011.
considers the uncertain status of the 15,000 Iraqi troops stationed within Jordan. Furthermore, within the Jordanian military, there was increasing sympathy and active support for the *fedayeen* actions, which limited the ability of the regime to count on its troops to act forcefully against the *fedayeen*. Although the regime still believed that it could act against the *fedayeen*, action in this period would be more difficult, both in terms of utilizing its depleted force, as well as motivating its troops for action.

Further compounding the costs of action was the now ostensibly universal popular support for the *fedayeen*. In this period, support for the *fedayeen* was no longer limited to the Palestinians, but now included the East Bank Jordanian population, even those educated individuals considered to be the backbone of the regime. This growing support suggested that action against the *fedayeen* would not be well received within the kingdom and that resistance to this action among the population was likely. This political reality invariably elevated the costs of action, as it increased the risk of a protracted conflict and a potential revolt against the regime. This confluence of factors significantly raised the stakes for the Jordanian regime. Across all four measures, the costs of compliance grew, as the risk of becoming embroiled in a broader domestic conflict increased. As a result, the costs of compliance were deemed to be high.
<table>
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<th>Domestic Costs of Compliance</th>
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| **Fedayeen Political Intentions** |  - Heightened regime threat  
  - Many Palestinian groups directly question the legitimacy of the regime  
  - Continued development of ‘state within a state’ |
| **Fedayeen Organizational and Military Capacity** |  - Organization grows in capacity, but still a limited fighting force  
  - Potential reinforcements from Arab States bolster their power |
| **Jordanian Military Capacity** |  - Arab Legion recovering from the 1967 defeat, but quickly taking steps to regain strength  
  - Continued focus on monitoring and infiltrating Palestinian groups  
  - Increased military sympathy and military support to Palestinian *Fedayeen* and reluctance to act against them. |
| **Fedayeen Popular Support** |  - High level of popular support among both Palestinians and TransJordanians.  
  - *Fedayeen* viewed as only group continuing the struggle against Israel and reestablishing the Arabs’ honor. |
| **Overall Domestic Costs of Compliance** |  **HIGH** |

**Assessing the Costs of Compliance**

The period following the 1967 War and leading up to the Karameh raid saw many domestic changes within Jordan that fundamentally altered the coercive context, greatly increased the costs of action, and made this period one that was not conducive to coercion success. As noted above, compliance costs increased as a result of domestic changes, especially the overwhelming popular support that the *Fedayeen* had obtained from all elements of the Jordanian population, which severely constrained the regime’s actions. In this period, regime threat continued to rise, due to the ongoing efforts of the *Fedayeen* organizations to delegitimize
the regime directly, or indirectly, as well as their growing strength and support within the Jordanian military establishment. During this period, confronting the fedayeen presented a significant risk for sparking a protracted conflict, and possibly even a popular revolution, which clearly were high costs and risks to the regime.

Despite these domestic developments, during this period, the foreign policy costs of compliance remained low since the fedayeen’s actions remained at odds with the foreign policy goals of the Jordanian regime. Though on the surface, both aspired to regain the West Bank, the fedayeen hoped to liberate Palestine for themselves, whereas the King continued to view the West Bank as part of the Hashemite Kingdom. Furthermore, the King was keenly aware that Israel’s overwhelming strength meant that the West Bank could only be regained through a diplomatic solution, a view that was clearly anathema to the fedayeen organizations at this time. Thus, despite the continued divergence of foreign policy goals, these concerns were trumped by the highly charged domestic situation. Ultimately, the significant shift in the domestic relationship, made action against the fedayeen increasingly risky and very costly, thus making the possibility of coercion success highly unlikely. Furthermore, while it may have been advantageous for the King to contain the fedayeen, as he had during previous periods, the great risk of a protracted domestic conflict suggests that these costs would supersede the foreign policy considerations.

**Coercive Outcome**

The Karameh raid failed to curb infiltrations, and specifically, weakened Jordanian containment of the fedayeen. In fact, this reprisal raid had a distinctively negative effect in that following the Karameh raid, King Hussein declared openly a reversal of his previous official
position of containment of the *fedayeen*. At a news conference following the raid, King Hussein proclaimed:

...I assure you that neither I, nor my government, nor my armed forces would agree to accept responsibility for the protection of the Israeli occupation forces on the West Bank of the Jordan, or in any other occupied territory. I try hard to exert control in my capacity as head of the Jordanian state, but it is difficult to tell who is a commando and who isn’t. And besides, what do you expect me to do? What should I do to a people who have lost everything, who were driven out of their country? Shoot them? Wipe them out? Besides, I think that we have come to the point now where we are all *fedayeen*.345

Hussein’s statement publicly signaled a dramatic shift to tacit consent and even support of *fedayeen* activity against Israel. This kind of public statement stood in sharp contrast to the King’s statements ahead of the 1967 War that were discussed previously. Furthermore, following the Karameh raid, the King also reversed previous restrictions on the basing of Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA) forces in Jordan. Ahead of the 1967 War, the King had been publicly opposed to stationing any PLA forces. However, in April 1968, a few weeks after the attack, King Hussein authorized the transfer of 130 officers and soldiers from the PLA 29th battalion to Southern Jordan.346 Though this order represented a relatively small number of troops, it signaled a shift in the attitude and signaled the potentially collaborative nature of the new relationship of the Palestinian resistance with the Jordanian regime.

Following the Karameh raid, there was also a significant swell in recruits to Fatah. By June 1968, only a few months after the attacks, guerilla strength had grown approximately 300% to about 3,000 dedicated fighters and approximately 12,000 supporters and volunteers in the

346 Prior to the 1967 War, King Hussein was reticent to allow an independent Palestinian military force on his territory and was keenly aware that this could create challenges internally as well as with Israel. Though the King did not oppose the creation of the PLO or its military wing, it placed severe restrictions on their presence in Jordan. Mutawi, *Jordan in the 1967 War*, p. 57; Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993*, p. 180.
toms and refugee camps.\textsuperscript{347} Alongside this domestic development, the Jordanian government and the PLO had a tacit agreement that Palestinians of Jordanian nationality could escape compulsory service in the Jordanian army if they joined the \textit{fedayeen} organizations.\textsuperscript{348} Once again, at least temporarily, this significant change in Jordanian policy eased the recruitment and retention of \textit{fedayeen} into Fatah. While the Jordanian government did not appear to officially subsidize the Palestinian groups, these arrangements certainly bolstered their ability to conduct infiltrations and signaled tacit consent on the part of the Jordanian government and military. These public statements and informal agreements were clearly a major departure from the previous policies of the regime, and demonstrate the ways in which the Karameh attack failed to achieve its objectives. As further evidence of this new reality, shortly after the Karameh raid, there was a spike in infiltrations from the Jordanian border.\textsuperscript{349} "The rate of attacks nearly doubled within three months of Karama, totaling 90 attacks in June and then rising to a month[ly] average of 203 during 1969 and 231 in 1970 (until the September Civil War)."\textsuperscript{350}

Ultimately, not only was the status quo within Jordan not maintained, but instead of emboldening Jordanian efforts towards the \textit{fedayeen}, Jordan relaxed its existing policy and adopted measures that fostered the growth of the \textit{fedayeen} and the associated rise in infiltrations. While Jordan did not go so far as to sponsor these groups, they were certainly more accommodating towards them.

\textsuperscript{348}Salibi, \textit{The Modern History of Jordan}. p. 229
\textsuperscript{349}Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment". p. 142. Whereas in January and February of 1968, there were 16 and 20 infiltrations respectively, following Karameh, there were 32 infiltrations in April, 42 in May, and 48 in June, and 100 in July.
ISRAELI REPRISALS FOLLOWING KARAMEH & THE LEAD-UP TO BLACK SEPTEMBER

Following the Karameh raid, the Jordanian regime continued its policy of tacit consent of the fedayeen’s activities. However, by September 1970, a period that is historically referred to as ‘Black September’, the regime once again reversed its policy and violently opposed the fedayeen, resulting in their eventual expulsion to Lebanon in 1971. Although the Israelis continued their coercive campaign until 1970, it only had a marginal effect on the decision making process of the regime. Israel’s military operations between 1968 and 1970 did little to change the King’s complicity. Rather, the eventual showdown between the regime and the fedayeen was driven overwhelmingly by domestic developments and the fedayeen’s direct abuses of the Jordanian regime and its people. As will be discussed below, the ineffective nature of the coercive campaign stemmed largely from the continued domestic context which was equally, if not less conducive to coercion success than prior to the Karameh raid. Ultimately, it would have been extremely difficult and costly for the Israelis to utilize coercion, to alter an already challenging domestic landscape.

In response to the significant increase in attacks, Israel continued its vigorous reprisal policy which now consisted of cross-border fire, hot pursuit of infiltrators, commando raids, and increasingly, air strikes, directed both at fedayeen camps, as well as vital economic targets. In many ways, the direct raids on fedayeen bases, as well as the hot pursuit of guerilla fighters is outside of the scope of this project, in that it was direct force applied to the fedayeen with the purpose of diminishing their power, rather than as a means to compel the Jordanian government to contain the fedayeen. As such, it is interesting to note that in the period following Karameh,

351 Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment". p. 122
there were seven significant attacks on economic targets that were explicitly designed to send the
Jordanian government a message regarding ongoing guerilla activity. For example, due to the
shelling of the Jordan Valley, the Israelis destroyed a large part of Jordan’s bread basket. That
bombardment led to approximately 100,000 refugees fleeing that area. Similarly, the repeated
attacks on the East Ghor Canal project, an irrigation project intended to utilize the Jordan River
tributaries and one of the largest economic projects in Jordan, brought its development to a
halt. In addition, there were ongoing attacks on the Jordan valley which were designed to
impose costs on villages harboring fedayeen fighters as well as to force the fedayeen fighters to
relocate farther away from the border, thus hindering their ability to infiltrate. Finally,
simultaneously with the offensive reprisals, the Israelis bolstered their defenses on their new
border. In June 1968, the Israelis began to erect a security fence along the Jordan River that was
designed to impede infiltrations. By 1970, the use of mobile patrols, pursuit tactics and the
electronic anti-infiltration barrier had significantly limited infiltrations from Jordan.

Overall changes to the Coercive Context following Karameh

While there were some changes across the factors in the period following the Karameh
raid, the costs of compliance in this period remained high, deeming it unfavorable to coercion.
By 1970, the domestic factors shifted, lowering the potential costs of action. However, the
regime reaction to the fedayeen at this point was dominated by the unruly domestic situation

352 Military events data set
353 Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The
Abdel Salam Majali, Nov. 13, 2011.
356 Mutawi, Jordan in the 1967 War. p. 172
which the fedayeen had created within Jordan and was only marginally affected by the costs imposed by Israeli coercion.

**Foreign Political Costs and Benefits**

In the period following the Karameh raid, there was no significant shift in the regime’s foreign policy objectives. If anything, the King’s determination that the conflict could only be resolved through negotiations grew stronger. During this period, the King requested direct contact with the Israelis. On May 3, 1968, just months after Karameh, Abba Eban, the Israeli foreign minister, and Dr. Yaacov Herzog, who maintained a secret communication channel with Hussein, met with King Hussein and Zaid Rifai in London.357 Despite the risks involved if these conversations were exposed, both domestically and within the broader Arab world, King Hussein still engaged in the secret dialogues. Even if little noticeable progress was made at this time, he was still determined to find a negotiated solution to the conflict. Most importantly, he sought to regain the West Bank and Jerusalem.358

However, King Hussein’s efforts to obtain a diplomatic resolution to the conflict were not completely clandestine. Rather, King Hussein actively engaged in American-led diplomatic efforts including the Jarring Mission and the Rogers Plan. Though neither plan resulted in tangible results, the King continued to be invested in resolving the conflict diplomatically. Thus, in the period from the Karameh raid until 1970, and even beyond, the King continued to have a

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357 Shlaim, *Lion of Jordan: The Life of King Hussein in War and Peace*. p. 198, 282. Dr. Yaacov Herzog was the brother of Chaim Herzog, who was director of intelligence and later became president of Israel. Until shortly before his death in 1972, he maintained the secret channel with King Hussein and developed a close relationship with him. 358 For more details on the secret dialogues see: ibid. p. 281-314.
steadfast commitment to addressing the conflict through nonviolent means.\textsuperscript{359} While he continued to place a great importance on the reunifications of the banks and especially the return of East Jerusalem, he did not believe that these goals could be achieved through violence or war.

In contrast, as the strength of the fedayeen fighters grew, their commitment to liberating Palestine through armed struggle became even more resolute.\textsuperscript{360} "It was now up to the Palestinian guerillas to accomplish its tasks...of exhausting the enemy forces and shaking its bases."\textsuperscript{361} Ultimately, the grand strategy of engaging with the Israelis did not shift during this period. This reality is expressed most clearly through the rise in attacks from the Jordanian border following the Karameh raid, until their confrontation with the Jordanian regime, beginning in September 1970. As mentioned previously, the rate of attacks following the Karameh raid doubled within three months, and continued to rise to an average of 231 raids per month in 1970.\textsuperscript{362} Additionally, the fedayeen continued to be at odds with the King regarding who would rule the West Bank, if and when, it would be liberated. Throughout this period, the King's and the fedayeen's policies towards Israel and the West Bank remained at odds, both in their strategy and tactics.

\textit{Domestic Political Costs and Benefits}

During the period following the Karameh raid, the domestic relationship between the regime and the state remained extremely challenging, producing a difficult context for coercive

\textsuperscript{359} For example, see: "Wary Watch on the Commandos" by Dana Adams Schmidt; New York Times; March 9, 1969.
\textsuperscript{360} Lunt, Hussein of Jordan : Searching for a Just and Lasting Peace. p. 119
success. Although, as discussed above, the regime’s decision to reverse its stance towards the fedayeen was driven predominantly by internal domestic developments, it is interesting to examine the changes in the context that first severely constrained regime action and eventually provided the regime with latitude to act against them. As early as 1968, members of the regime began to advocate a harsher stance against the fedayeen, and sought opportunities to clamp down on their activities and the resulting domestic unrest they were creating.\footnote{Interview with Zaid Rifai, Nov. 12, 2011.} For example, in November 1968, Al-Nasr, a small fedayeen group, clashed with Jordanian police and temporarily seized control of a police station. In response to these domestic provocations, the Jordanian army raided the group, arrested its leader Taher Dablan, and sentenced him to death.\footnote{Salibi, \textit{The Modern History of Jordan.} p. 230} Following this incident, several members of the cabinet, including Zaid Rifai advocated for the King to clamp down on fedayeen activity writ large. Though this option was rejected by the King, it was a policy option which was considered even as early as 1968, highlighting that government’s attitudes towards the fedayeen were already shifting only six months after the battle of Karameh. What ultimately contributed to this delay in action? Though outside the scope of my study, it is interesting to note that the same domestic factors that set the context for coercion success or failure, continued to play a role in constraining and then creating the King’s latitude for action more broadly. As will be seen below, several important domestic shifts needed to occur to enable the King to act decisively against the fedayeen forces.

Following the Karameh raid, the fedayeen demonstrated increasing hostility and violence towards the state and its institutions, especially the military. The erosion of the relationship between the military and the fedayeen began immediately following the battle of Karameh. In
the aftermath of the battle, the fedayeen claimed the Karamah victory as solely their own, though the Jordanian army was much more responsible for the outcome than the Fatah fighters.\textsuperscript{365} The military felt that this victory was stolen from them and this feeling began the deterioration of their short-lived partnership.\textsuperscript{366} Hassem Nusseibeh, who was then Minister of Reconstruction and Economic Development later argued that taking sole credit for the victory was the PLOs biggest mistake. Had the fedayeen been prepared to acknowledge the role of the army at Karamah, perhaps the clash of 1970 might never have taken place.\textsuperscript{367}

The disaffection between the military and the fedayeen grew as the fedayeen began to directly abuse members of the military. Their abuses included constant harassment of soldiers and officers, as well as violence directly targeted at members of the military and their families. For example, when the soldiers returned unarmed, they would humiliate them at checkpoints, throwing their ranks or hats on the ground, and even precluding them from buying goods for their families.\textsuperscript{368} Soon the abuses became so frequent that many soldiers began to return home on the weekends in plain clothes to avoid the harassment.\textsuperscript{369} This dishonorable behavior towards the soldiers was especially damaging to the Bedouin soldiers who took the issue of honor very seriously.\textsuperscript{370} The fedayeen fighters began to have the misperception that they were stronger than the military, and began to escalate their abuses.\textsuperscript{371} They kidnapped and killed army officers, publicly beheaded a Major in the Roman Theater, and on several occasions, even played

\textsuperscript{366} Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
\textsuperscript{367} Ashton, \textit{King Hussein of Jordan: A Political Life}. p. 139, a similar sentiment was expressed in my interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, date.
\textsuperscript{368} Interviews with Abdel Salam Majali, Zaid Rif'ai, Adnan Abu Odeh, and Taher Masri
\textsuperscript{369} Interview with Nawaf Tell, Nov. 11, 2011.
\textsuperscript{370} Lunt, \textit{Hussein of Jordan: Searching for a Just and Lasting Peace}. p. 119
\textsuperscript{371} Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
soccer with the heads of beheaded soldiers. This abuse was not limited to East Bank Jordanians who were members of the military, but also to the Palestinian soldiers and officers. As this abuse continued, the army became completely disenchanted with the fedayeen fighters and their supposed cause. Instead, they began petitioning the regime to permit them to reign in this objectionable behavior.

The fedayeen's pattern of abuse also extended to official members of the government. For example, Zaid Rifai, then head of the Royal Court and one of the King's closest advisors, explained that every day en route from his house to the royal palace, he would pass through a roadblock that was controlled by the PFLP. When he arrived, despite knowing that he was an official of the government, they would fire on him and his guards. His guards would engage in a fire fight until the PFLP would eventually flee the checkpoint and his guards would crash through the barricade to continue on their way. Similarly, Abdel Salam Majali, who was Minister of the Interior in 1970, was kidnapped twice, once in Jordan and once in Beirut. As the confidence of the fedayeen groups grew, no one was immune from the ongoing harassment and violence perpetrated by them on the streets of Amman and throughout the country.

In addition to the harassment, the fedayeen organizations increasingly made direct claims questioning the legitimacy of the regime and some even began to prepare and advocate for a confrontation. For example, while Fatah attempted for as long as possible to avoid the issue of direct confrontation, the PFLP and PFLP anticipated that a conflict was imminent and began to

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372 Interviews with Zaid Rifai, Nov. 12, 2011 and with Nawaf Tell, Nov. 11, 2011.
373 Interview with Zaid Rifai, Nov. 12, 2011.
374 Interview with Abel Salam Majali, Nov. 13, 2011.
promote the slogan of "no power above that of the resistance," among others. Furthermore, the fedayeen continued to establish parallel institutions to the kingdom within the cities, but especially within the refugee camps, including their own military police, security forces, courts, information offices, media, and trade unions. These new establishments directly lowered the authority and power of the state and created an increasingly robust competitor. Furthermore, not only did they continue to establish their presence, but they generally disregarded Jordanian state authority by failing to adhere to Jordanian laws, refusing to pay national taxes, and bypassing all forms of state control, even registration of vehicles. "A study published by the Jordanian Ministry of Defense in 1970 blamed the guerillas for a staggering 43,397 violations of peace, including illegal arrest, murder, injury, forced attacks on government property, and forgery of official documents."

This increasingly unruly behavior occurred as the power of the fedayeen swelled due to new recruits. Immediately following the battle, 5,000 new recruits applied to join Fatah, and eventually Fatah was able to triple its pre-raid size and grow to 3,000 active fighters. Though estimates vary, by 1970, it is believed that they had approximately 25,000 guerilla fighters and 76,000 militiamen. In 1970, the Jordanians continued to grow their military and had between

376 Ibid. p. 244.
377 R. D. McLaurin, "The PLO and the Arab Fertile Crescent" in Norton and Greenberg, _The International Relations of the Palestine Liberation Organization_. p.26
65,000 and 70,000 soldiers and 10,000 paramilitary troops in the police and security forces.\(^3\)81 On paper, the balance between the Jordanian military and the fedayeen is obviously closer than at any other point in King Hussein’s rule, however, it is important to note, that the fedayeen fighters were relatively lightly armed and did not have armor, or heavy weapons.\(^3\)82 Thus, although the Jordanian military continued to have numerical superiority, from the raid on Karameh until 1970, the fedayeen continued to increase their strength and slowly bridge the gap in forces.

As the fedayeen resistance grew, the King made efforts to strengthen the military amongst his most loyal supporters, mainly the Bedouin tribes. Furthermore, in mid-1969, he established a secret Special Branch whose job it was to set up intelligence networks in the refugee camps and main towns to monitor all aspects of the activities of the fedayeen, and recruit agents from within the guerilla groups.\(^3\)83 Finally, as the 1970 conflict neared, the King took measures to boost the morale of the military, for example, raising their pay and also removing officers with suspect loyalty out of their units.\(^3\)84

One major change that emerged from this period was the overall motivation of the military to act against the fedayeen. Whereas ahead of the Karameh raid the military was in support of the fedayeen activity, the regime’s recent estrangement from these groups created a military force that was not only in favor of, but advocated for harsh action against the fedayeen. The military’s motivation to take action was a significant factor contributing to the ability to pay

\(^{381}\) Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), *Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993.* p. 263. Though Sayigh suggests that in private statements, these estimates were lowered to anywhere between 10-20,000.


\(^{384}\) Ibid. p.254.
the high cost of their battle against the *fedayeen*. Shortly following the battle of Karameh, the military desired to engage the *fedayeen*, and the King was well aware of this reality, and in fact, at times, even had to rein them in.\(^3\)^385

Following the battle of Karameh, there was a surge in popular support for the *fedayeen* and their continued struggle with the state of Israel. Fatah, in particular, claimed the Karameh victory as its own success and used it as a propaganda tool to increase support and spur massive recruiting.\(^6\)^386 Though the victory at Karameh was predominantly achieved by the military, the population believed the propaganda and continued to demonstrate their support for their cause. These beliefs contributed to the aforementioned swell in recruits and volunteers to Fatah, among both Palestinian and Jordanian.\(^7\)^387 While many of the guerilla fighters were not Jordanian or even West Bank Palestinians, the militias were predominantly from Jordan.

While the initial victory at Karameh brought a significant swell of public support to the *fedayeen*, the infatuation with their cause quickly declined among the masses due to the growing abuse of power demonstrated by the guerilla fighters. As Israeli raids pushed the *fedayeen* away from the border and into Amman, their presence began to worry and then anger the population.\(^8\)^388 The *fedayeen* fighters quickly overran the streets of Amman, bringing disorder, chaos and violence wherever they went. Through their actions, they began to interfere with the daily lives of the residents of Amman and other cities, and this behavior gradually began to

\(^3\)^385 Interviews with Nawaf Tell, Zaid Rifai, and Samir Mutawi.

\(^6\)^386 Bligh, *The Political Legacy of King Hussein*. p. 125


discredit them amongst the population, thus diminishing their popular support.\textsuperscript{389}

As the power of the \textit{fedayeen} grew, so too did their abuses of the population. Their abuses included involuntary taxing, racketeering, setting up checkpoints throughout the cities, and general hostility and violence towards the population. There were many shakedowns of merchants and ordinary citizens were forced to give money and other goods to support real and fake commandos.\textsuperscript{390} The \textit{fedayeen} often set up checkpoints in order to tax the population and appropriate their goods, including cars. For example, Samir Mutawi recalled that when he was working for Jordanian television, he purchased a new car. The \textit{fedayeen} stopped him and demanded that he ‘donate’ the car to the services of the \textit{fedayeen} because they needed it to transport items for the cause. Though he refused to obey, this type of behavior was a common practice among the guerilla fighters.\textsuperscript{391} Shopkeepers and merchants were angered by the petty extortion and general instability which affected their businesses.\textsuperscript{392}

The guerilla fighters would also conduct street fights, often amongst different \textit{fedayeen} groups, on a regular basis, forcing much of the population to remain off of the streets at night, and during parts of the day as well. For example, Taher Masri recalled that during this time period, he spent several overnight stays at the Central Bank because he could not return home, and that he would not go out to dinner without prearranging sleeping arrangements en route to his destination because he was always unsure whether there would be street fights that would preclude his return.\textsuperscript{393} \textit{Fedayeen} fighters also began to walk around Amman fully armed and

\textsuperscript{389} Interviews with Abdel Salam Majali, Nov. 13, 2011 and with Nawaf Tell, Nov. 11, 2011.
\textsuperscript{391} Interview with Samir Mutawi, Nov. 12, 2011; Robins, \textit{A History of Jordan}. p. 130.
\textsuperscript{392} Ibid. p. 130
\textsuperscript{393} Interview with Taher Masri, Nov. 13, 2011.
would enter public establishments without regard for the fear they caused. They also regularly conducted random acts of violence such as kidnappings and killings. Finally, particularly the left wing groups, such as the Popular Democratic Front, showed contempt and disrespect for the religious institutions and general conservative outlook of many citizens of the state. In all, the general population began to live in fear of the *fedayeen* fighters and their presence and actions severely disrupted daily living within the cities.

Compounding this unfortunate reality was the fact that the *fedayeen* were largely ineffective in their pursuits against the Israelis, and though they often exaggerated their success, the population soon understood their limits. The ongoing abusive behavior led many to question whether the cost of having the *fedayeen* pursue the cause of liberation was worth the price that they were imposing within Jordan. Although most Jordanians still understood and even continued to sympathize with the Palestinian desire to liberate their homeland, their disruptive behavior made them increasingly unpopular. "'It was more than I could stand' said one long serving NCO who was himself Palestinian 'we were proper soldiers, not the so called commandos who couldn't hit a target at fifty paces if you gave them a hundred dinars. They insulted our women and said bad things about our King. I cannot understand why we ever gave them houseroom.'" However, it is important to note that these frustrations with the *fedayeen* emerged gradually and were not universally expressed. Even in 1970, there were many,

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395 Interview with Zaid Rifai, date
397 Lunt, *Hussein of Jordan: Searching for a Just and Lasting Peace*. p. 120
398 Interview with Nawaf Tell, Nov. 11, 2011.
especially Palestinians, that continued to support the *fedayeen* despite their behavior.\textsuperscript{400} However, this increasing disaffection, particularly amongst the East Bank population, created some latitude, and a more permissive environment to act against the *fedayeen* with a diminished threat of popular revolt.\textsuperscript{401} The King understood that the people were increasingly angry and desired change, which enabled him to act aggressively to change the current landscape.\textsuperscript{402}

**Assessing the Costs of Compliance**

In the period following Karameh, the context for coercion did not shift dramatically. If anything, the increasing threats to the regime from the *fedayeen*, coupled with swelling popular support, made any action against them increasingly costly, and thus these conditions did not favor coercion success. Interviews, as well as the historical record clearly highlight the limited impact of the Israeli coercive policy on Jordanian decision making. However, as can be seen over time, the King took measures to consolidate his power, and the people grew disaffected with the *fedayeen*. This assessment reveals an initial rise in costs, followed by a gradual decline. Although throughout this period, the costs of containing the *fedayeen* remained high, by 1970, the King had obtained some level of domestic latitude that enabled action.

**Coercive Outcome**

Overall, Israeli coercive efforts during this period did not have the intended effect of inducing Jordanian action against the *fedayeen*. However, many of Israel’s direct efforts against

\textsuperscript{400} Interview with Taher Masri, Nov. 13, 2011.  
\textsuperscript{401} Interview with Samir Mutawi, Nov. 12, 2011.  
\textsuperscript{402} Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
the fedayeen effectively impeded infiltrations into Israel during this period. Furthermore, on the micro scale of the villages, the shelling and air strikes had an effect on their individual decision making. For example, TransJordanian villages that were repeatedly shelled became alienated by this policy and eventually ceased to harbor fedayeen within their midst. However, this response was not imposed on them by a regime policy, but rather by the increasingly isolated costs that they were bearing for harboring the guerrillas.

However, despite the costs imposed through coercion, the Israeli efforts to compel the Jordanian government to take a harsher stance against the fedayeen did not succeed. Throughout this period, the Jordanian government took no perceptible steps in response to coercion, to contain fedayeen activity against Israel, but rather maintained the status quo that had been established after the 1967 War and was reinforced after the battle of Karameh. For example, on February 17, 1969, King Hussein hosted Yasser Arafat, then head of Fatah and the PLO, at the palace and publically reinforced the image of their cordial relationship. Furthermore, often following these raids there was an increase in fedayeen attacks on the Israelis. While there are repeated examples of the regime negotiating with the PLO, Fatah and several other groups, most of these negotiations tended to center around fedayeen conduct within Amman and other cities, rather than directly regarding their conduct relating to Israel. Furthermore, several isolated

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404 Interview with Adnan Abu Odeh, Nov. 14, 2011.
405 "Hussein and Fatah’s Leader Meet in Amman" by Dana Adams Schmidt; New York Times; February 18, 1969.
406 Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment". p. 144
407 For example, in October 1968, the King tried to negotiate with Fatah and limit the entry of guerillas without permits and insisted that guerillas not enter the cities without special government issued permits. Furthermore, they tried to limit the movement of military vehicles in civilian areas. However, these negotiations failed. Similarly in February 1970, the King attempted to only allow vehicles with license plates or documents issued by the
examples of military action against fedayeen groups were not sparked by their actions against Israel, but rather domestic acts that affected the regime. For example, the aforementioned Dablan incident demonstrated this regime response. However, although this incident demonstrated Jordan’s capacity to act, the impetus for this reaction was predominantly driven by the group’s actions domestically, rather than as a response to the Israeli reprisal raids or the fedayeen’s actions against the Israelis.

Finally, in September 1970, the Jordanian regime decided to change its policy towards the fedayeen and act forcefully against the fedayeen fighters in Amman and later throughout the country, eventually expelling them to Lebanon. However, while these actions represented a significant change in regime policy, and was in Israel’s broader interests, it is clear from the historical record, as well as from my interviews, that these actions were not driven by Israeli reprisal raids, but rather by domestic developments that had occurred within Jordan in the period leading up to September 1970. While the raids may have had a marginal effect on the King’s decision making process, the reversal of policy was largely driven by the domestic costs that the fedayeen groups had continued to impose on the government and its people and ultimately, the increasing threat that they posed to the survival of the Hashemite Kingdom. As one interviewee said, the Israeli raids imposed serious costs through their bombings of the Jordan Valley and areas closer to home, like the area near the University of Jordan in Amman or Irbid, however, the Palestinians were quite good at destroying the relations with the East Bankers all by government to travel within the cities. Furthermore, transport of arms and ammunition within municipal boundaries would be prohibited. As can be seen, these efforts are predominantly aimed at preserving or restoring law and order within the cities and do not weigh in on other guerilla activity. Sayigh and Institute for Palestine Studies (Washington D.C.), Armed Struggle and the Search for State: The Palestinian National Movement, 1949-1993. pp. 184, p. 246-247.

409 Interviews with Zaid Rifai, Nawaf Tell, Adnan Abu Odeh, Taher Masri, Samir Mutawi.
themselves, and the raids paled in comparison to their own actions.\textsuperscript{410}

Ultimately, by September 1970, the domestic internal considerations created significant incentives, and increasing opportunity, for actions against the \textit{fedayeen}, which dominated the King's decision making processes and the Israeli raids were only marginal to this process. As the military grew in strength and motivation, and the people grew increasingly disenchanted, King Hussein took action. Although the reversal of Jordanian regime policy in September 1970 served Israeli interests with regards to infiltrations and guerilla attacks more broadly, this change in policy cannot be attributed to Israeli action, and thus the causes are outside of the scope of this study.

\textbf{ASSESSING THE CONTEXT FOR COERCION SUCCESS AND FAILURE: 1950-1970}

An examination of the Jordanian-\textit{fedayeen} relationship between 1950 and 1970 reveals that while the problems of infiltrations and the Israeli coercive strategy remained relatively static, the relationship between the Jordanian regime and the \textit{fedayeen} underwent significant changes. These changes directly affected the potential cost of containment and the Jordanians' willingness to act against the group, thus explaining the variation in outcomes.

This case highlights the important role of the domestic relationship in shaping the context for coercion. During the period of 1950-1970, one element which did not change markedly was the Jordanian regime's grand strategy with respect to the role of infiltrations in their foreign policy towards Israel. While the Jordanians had recently engaged Israel in a conventional interstate war, they did not seek a continuation of the conflict through infiltrations and terrorism. Rather, they preferred to find an accommodation with the Israelis, often through secret talks, and

\textsuperscript{410} Interview with Nawaf Tell, Nov. 11, 2011.
publicly through the maintenance of a quiet border. Conversely, the fedayeen continued to place
greater emphasis on the impact that infiltrations could have on accomplishing their foreign
policy goals. This clear divergence in policy placed these two actors on fundamentally different
foreign policy routes. This analysis dispels the notion that the fedayeen activity along the
Jordanian border was instrumental in Jordanian foreign policy, or that the group served as a sub-contracted unit of the state. Additionally, this divergence created a potential opportunity for a
coercer to exploit this significant wedge in their relationship.

However, while the foreign policies of Jordan and the fedayeen were at odds, this
divergence is insufficient for determining the success of coercion. Rather, the domestic context
played a significant role in determining the costs of compliance for Jordan and ultimately
determining the context for coercion success or failure. The dramatic changes in the domestic
relationship help to explain why coercion was successful following the Qibya and Es ‘Samu
raids, but failed following the al-Karameh raid. Whereas the domestic context was initially ripe
for transitive compellence, these changes made it more costly as time progressed.

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

Alternative explanations for the success or failure of transitive compellence can be
gleaned from the literature on state capacity, and the coercion literature, specifically the impact
of the balance of power.411 Additionally, another alternative explanation emerges from the
historical literature and posits that the Jordanian military and the fedayeen’s success in
countering the Israelis prevented them from acting against the fedayeen. However, as discussed

411 Although state sponsorship is presented as an alternative in the second chapter, it is not relevant here. Although
the relationship between Jordan and the fedayeen does change, it does not become a state sponsor, therefore, this last
alternative cannot be tested here.
below, these alternative explanations do not provide adequate insights into the variation in transitive compellence success and failure in the case of Israel, Jordan and the fedayeen.

State Capacity

As previously discussed, a common explanation for an inactive regime stems from its capacity to act. Specifically, the state does not act because it is incapable of curtailing the activities of the non-state actor. In this particular case, some have suggested that following the 1967 War, Jordan was too weak to act against the fedayeen. While acting against the fedayeen in 1968 would have been a costly endeavor, the evidence suggests that the Jordanian regime still had the capability to act. Furthermore, the regime did not merely adopt a passive stance, but rather aligned itself more closely with the fedayeen.

Several actions by the Jordanian military raise doubts about the claim that the inaction following Karameh was caused by an inability to act. First, both shortly before and after the Karameh attack, in response to other incidents, the Jordanian military took several steps to contain fedayeen activity. In February 1968, in response to Israeli long range artillery and aircraft strikes against 13 villages and a refugee camp, the Minister of the Interior declared: “We shall not allow any group to act on its own in such an extemporaneous manner. The government is determined to protect the security of Jordan and establish the rule of law.” Additionally, Jordan took steps to contain the fedayeen’s activity, including seizing arms and ammunition. The Minister of the Interior was dismissed shortly after this incident, which seems to indicate

412 Salibi, The Modern History of Jordan. p. 228
413 Abu Odeh, Jordanians, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process. p. 171
414 Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment". p. 141
this action did not have the full backing of the regime, but it nonetheless demonstrated latent state capacity.415

In October 1968, the Jordanian military once again took steps to contain elements of the fedayeen movement. While these actions were not in response to Israeli raids, they do reflect the regime's ability to act when it determined that it was in their best interest to do so. In October, a Fatah radio station began to discuss a revolution in Jordan and at this same time, Al-Nasr, a small fedayeen group, repeatedly clashed with Jordanian police. In response to these provocations, the Jordanian army raided the group, arrested its leader Taher Dablan, and sentenced him to death. Both the February incident, which preceded the Karameh raid, as well as the October action, which followed the raid, highlight the limits of the capacity argument, particularly in comparison to previous periods. The regime continued to keep tabs on the fedayeen and intervened against them when they deemed it necessary, despite the potential costs and risks involved. It appears that the Jordanian regime had the military capacity, if not the political inclination, to take limited actions against the fedayeen. While acting against the fedayeen was undoubtedly costly and challenging for the regime, at minimum, these actions highlight that severing or at least altering the relationship was not necessarily outside the realm of possibilities. Under the right circumstances, and with sufficient motivation, the regime was willing to employ their strength against these groups.

415 There are divergent versions of this episode. Some suggests that the minister of interior acted on his own without the consent of the regime. Interview with Nawaf Tell, Nov. 11, 2011. Others suggest that this action was not intended to curtail fedayeen activity, rather to encourage more state cooperation. Interview with Zaid Rifai, Nov. 12, 2011.
The Balance of Power:

Another explanation that is taken from the coercion literature states that the greater the disparity between the coercer, in this case, Israel and the base state, Jordan, the more likely coercion will succeed. This explanation focuses primarily on the relative balance of power between the coercer and the base state. When examining instances of transitive compellence, this theory makes a prediction regarding when to expect coercive success or failure that directly conflicts with how the events actually unfold in this case. Specifically, while the Israelis maintained an upper hand in terms of the balance of power in both cases, in 1968, the balance of power significantly favored the Israelis as a result of the outcome of the 1967 war. During the war, the Jordanians suffered great territorial and human losses and were in a far inferior position relative to the Israelis. This theory would have predicted that the attack at Karameh in 1968 should have been more successful, all things being equal, as this was when the power differential between Jordan and Israel was the greatest. Furthermore, it is clear from the analysis above, that the King had no illusions about this disparity of power and often feared giving the Israelis any context for escalation and additional land grabs. Thus, the King understood the threat of escalation and correctly believed that the Israelis had an overwhelming advantage. As demonstrated above, the Israelis were far more successful following the raid in Qibya in 1953, and even Es ‘Samu. Ultimately, this theory alone cannot explain the outcomes based on the balance of power between the two states.

Jordanian Success during Raids

Another alternative hypothesis that emerges from the historical literature asserts that the Jordanian government's response, or lack thereof, was a product of the success that the military
and the fedayeen had in repelling the attack at Karameh in 1968. The fedayeen and the military suffered significant losses during the Karameh raid, including infrastructure damage. Despite these losses, the fedayeen and the Jordanian military were able to inflict casualties on the Israelis, which was perceived as a great success. This theory suggests that this defensive success emboldened the Jordanian state and in light of their recent losses in the 1967 War, this did not create incentives to act against the fedayeen, but rather prop up this joint success. In fact, following the raid at Karameh, there was a rejuvenation of the Jordanian military, and to this day, one of the three national monuments in Jordan can be found on that site.416

Remarkably, the fedayeen and the Jordanian military bitterly fought about who was the greater victor in this raid. Though the military was internally rejuvenated, externally among the Jordanian population, the fedayeen received full credit. This situation greatly angered them, and following the Karameh raid, the military began to withdraw their support for the fedayeen and eventually even advocated strongly for direct action. Of all the government institutions, the military was the first to outwardly challenge the right of the fedayeen to continue to operate within Jordan.

Furthermore, while it may be the case that the ability of the Jordanian military and the fedayeen to repel the Israelis rejuvenated or even increased their stature, these victories alone do not explain why in the aftermath of the attack, the reaction was to enable a policy of infiltrations. This victory was not the first time that the military had succeeded in repelling the Israelis or in inflicting significant casualties on their forces. Specifically, in October 1956, the Israelis raided the town of Qalqilya. On October 9, 1956, infiltrators murdered two workers in Even Yehuda, a

416 Abu Odeh, Jordaniens, Palestinians, and the Hashemite Kingdom in the Middle East Peace Process. p. 171
city that is 14 kilometers deep into the heart of the country. Following this incident, in the late hours of October 10 and into the following morning, the Israelis set off to occupy and demolish the Qalqilya police fort, a mere fifteen kilometers from Even Yehuda. The troops were specifically instructed to avoid harming civilians. The operation was met with fierce resistance both in Qalqilya and from a relief column of Jordanian troops. Though the Israelis successfully demolished the police fort, eighteen Israelis were killed and sixty-eight wounded, and the Jordanians destroyed several half-tracks. The Jordanians also suffered heavy losses, with an estimate of 50-90 fatalities, and significant number of casualties. Ultimately, the Jordanian military was able to exact a heavy price on the Israelis, thus boosting their confidence.

Shortly after this raid, due to the losses, the Israelis began to have serious concerns about the efficacy of using reprisal raids. The Israelis subsequently explored a ground force alternative that would conduct these raids and minimize casualties. Specifically, artillery and air power were discussed as possible alternatives for implementing this policy from a distance. The Israelis’ need to revisit their strategy demonstrates the amount of resistance that the Jordanians were able to muster.

However, despite their ostensible success, the Jordanians also took significant steps to prevent infiltrations. Shortly after the attack, the Jordanians moved a regular army battalion into the region, gave additional authority to district commissioners with respect to ‘disturbers of the

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420 Derori, Israel’s Reprisal Policy, 1953-1956: The Dynamics of Military Retaliation. p. 174-175
peace, and deployed additional patrols of the Arab Legion. It is difficult to assess the lasting effect of the Qalqilya raid because it occurred in such close proximity to the 1956 Suez Campaign, which began less than a month later on October 29, 1956 and invariably had an impact on Jordanian calculations regarding Israeli power and infiltrations. However, it is clear that even in the short time ahead of the Sinai Campaign, the Jordanian regime took active measures to reduce infiltrations further, thus signaling that this raid independently factored into and influenced Jordanian decision makers.

Based upon this particular instance, it is evident that the recent successful military engagement did not preclude the Jordanian government from taking serious steps to halt infiltrations. These tactical successes, in and of themselves, cannot explain the response of the Jordanian government following Karameh.

CONCLUSION

The within case analysis of the raids at Qibya, Es ‘Samu, and Karameh highlight the importance of the complex relationship between the base state and the violent non-state group for understanding the conditions under which transitive compellence can succeed. Only through a comprehensive approach, which includes both an examination of the foreign policy and domestic variables, is it possible to create a complete picture of the coercion context.

Several important lessons can be drawn from this analysis. First, it is important to understand the interaction of the foreign and domestic variables. A cursory look at the

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421 Blechman, "The Consequences of the Israeli Reprisals: An Assessment". p. 155
422 Understanding the indirect impact of the demonstrative compellent effect of the Suez Campaign is outside of the scope of this dissertation, however, it is clear that the quick military victory of the Israelis had an impact on assessing relative strength and the potential costs of escalation.
divergence of foreign policies between Jordan and the fedayeen could have produced a misguided assumption about Jordan’s willingness to comply with a coercive demand. Only by including the domestic variables was a more complete understanding obtained.

Second, this case also demonstrated the importance of the domestic variables in shifting the balance between a context that was suited for success and one that was not. Third, the relationship between the base state and the violent group is fluid, rather than static. The ongoing and dynamic interaction between all three players in this coercive endeavor affects these relational variables and can change the context of coercion rapidly.

Finally, the case of Es ‘Samu highlights the potential for unintended consequences of transitive compellence, which can extend beyond the violent non-state group. Though on one measure, Es ‘Samu compelled Jordan to take additional steps against the fedayeen, it simultaneously caused significant damage to the relatively stable bilateral relationship between Israel and Jordan. Some suggest that this raid significantly contributed to Jordan’s entrance into the 1967 War, which would constitute a significant, though delayed, escalation.
CHAPTER 3: TURKEY VIS-À-VIS THE PKK IN SYRIA

INTRODUCTION

In 1998, following a relatively brief coercive crisis between Turkey and Syria, Syria severed nearly two decades of sponsorship of the Partiya Karkari Kurdistan (PKK) and forced its leader, Abdullah Ocalan to leave the country. Syria’s complete accession to Turkish demands and the relative speed with which the crisis was resolved, with only the threat of force and symbolic escalation, surprised many observers at the time and still confounds many scholars even today. On October 4, 1998, in the midst of the crisis, a diplomat from Cairo explained “this is [a] fire that has been smoldering for a long time, but it has not reached the point at which it wouldn’t take a whole lot more to turn it into a real blaze,” thus expressing significant concerns regarding a possible escalation to war. Even amidst reports of Syria’s willingness to expel Ocalan, some remained skeptical that this agreement would hold. In many ways, Syria’s severing of its relationship with the PKK defied the expectations of the theoretical literature on the efficacy of coercion against state sponsors, as well as the numerous experts who had followed Syria’s defiance of Turkish demands for the preceding decade. Although Turkey approached this latest crisis with stronger threats, and mobilized troops to demonstrate its resolve, it was far from a foregone conclusion that these actions would be sufficient to coerce Syria.

Daniel Byman, who most thoroughly addresses the state sponsorship question,

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consistently assumes a high degree of difficulty for severing these relationships. The implicit assumption in this literature is that because a state has made a strategic choice to sponsor a group, it perceives a high benefit from this relationship. Through its decision to support a group, the state has calculated the costs, risks, and potential wrath of its targets, and decided that despite these potential costs, this relationship continued to be worthwhile. The attribution of an assumed high benefit to the state sponsor implies that coercion ought to be more difficult to implement and at minimum, require a higher cost to alter the cost-benefit calculation for the basing state. In this respect, the Syrian outcome seems to challenge some of these implicit assumptions.

Observers at the time of the crisis were generally doubtful that it would be resolved without either an escalation to violence, or alternatively, a dissatisfying outcome for the Turkish state. This widespread skepticism was based upon two primary assumptions. First, Syria, to this point in time, had been a notorious state sponsor of terrorism, not just of the PKK. It appeared that part of Syria’s modus operandi for pursuing its grand strategic objectives was utilizing proxy groups that strategically advanced their agenda, or at minimum served as leverage against other states. In this respect, it seemed unlikely that after 20 years of support, Syria would be willing to forego the benefits afforded by its continued support of the PKK. This line of reasoning is quite similar to the general arguments presented about the nature of state sponsors of terrorists. Second, Syria’s track record of reneging on agreements with Turkey since the late 1980s cast doubt on its willingness to uphold its end of the bargain in this particular instance.

I argue that a close examination of the foreign policy and domestic relationship between

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Syria and the PKK reveals the rather limited nature of the PKK-Syrian relationship and the corresponding costs of severing this connection. Specifically, though the Syrians clearly utilized the PKK to balance against Turkey and advance a set of foreign policy issues, on the whole, their relationship was quite shallow and cheaply provided limited foreign policy benefits. By 1998, these ostensible benefits were greatly diminished. Moreover, the PKK were not ensconced domestically, and consequently, there were only marginal costs associated with severing the relationship. Once the potential benefits were significantly minimized through Turkish coercive threats, the costs of compliance were sufficiently low to produce a quick severance. Though the successful coercive outcome was not a foregone conclusion, the nature of the Syrian sponsorship of the PKK certainly provided some indicators that Syria, with a sufficiently costly incentive, would be willing to renege even on its long-standing relationship.

The Syria case, in stark contrast to the other cases within the study, highlights the dynamics at play when the violent group serves an instrumental part of the state’s foreign policy, yet is not integrated into the broader domestic political context. The two independent variables of interest, the foreign policy and the domestic relationship between the violent group and the state, are positioned on the opposite ends of the spectrum. Unlike the cases of Jordan and Iraq, Syria was a known state sponsor of the PKK, and willingly allowed the PKK to reside within its borders and factored their presence and actions into its foreign policy strategy. In this case, the PKK appears to be instrumental for the Syrian state. For a variety of reasons illustrated below, the PKK were not ensconced domestically within Syria. Once again, this domestic situation differs from the fedayeen’s position in Jordan, and the PKK’s position within Iraq. The lack of entrenchment of the PKK in Syria releases the constraints and costs present in the other two cases. Thus, in this case, the shifts occur primarily in the realm of foreign policy, and Syria’s
compliance rests largely with their assessment of the continued utility of the PKK in their grand strategy. Since Syria is free from domestic constraint, this case looks most like a traditional bilateral coercive encounter, whereby the base state can limit its calculations to the utility and value of the conflict issue, which in this case is the use of the PKK as an instrument of foreign policy.

This case notably serves as another data point on the diverse spectrum of base state-group relationships and offers an opportunity to see how these particular dynamics affect the prospects for coercion success. In contrasting cases with and without significant domestic costs, it only further highlights the importance of the domestic context and its impact on the base state’s willingness to concede to the coercer. Finally, it is important to note, that not all state sponsors will be free of domestic costs. However, in those cases where such conditions exist, the state can assert a great degree of control over its relationship with the violent group, and under the right circumstances, can sever the relationship with limited costs.

The chapter addresses the issues outlined above in the following manner. First, I provide a brief overview of the PKK problem for Turkey, and the challenges associated with the group’s basing in Syria. Second, I examine Turkish coercive attempts to resolve this problem, culminating in the October 1998 crisis. Following this discussion, I examine the relationship between the PKK and Syria and analyze the context for coercion. I then consider some possible alternative explanations that may explain the transitive compellence success.

The Challenge of the PKK and Syrian Basing

Beginning in 1984, the PKK were embroiled in an increasingly violent campaign against
Turkey. The PKK, headed by Abdullah Ocalan, aimed to incite a communist revolution and establish an independent Kurdish state that would include areas of Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran. The PKK was the first among the Kurdish groups to advocate for secession and the establishment of an independent state for the Kurds. Especially in light of the continued suppression of other Kurdish groups by the Turkish government, the PKK became the predominant voice of Kurdish separatism both within Turkey, as well as throughout the world.

The PKK’s first target was the Turkish state and its government, as this was where the majority of Kurds, estimated at 13 million, resided within the four southeastern provinces of Turkey.

The PKK’s violent campaign within Turkey ebbed and flowed between 1984 and 1998, but in all, Turkish authorities estimate that the PKK claimed 30,000-35,000 lives within that period.


Bacik and Coskun, "The PKK Problem: Explaining Turkey's Failure to Develop a Political Solution." p. 249.


McDowall, A Modern History of the Kurds. p. 3.
period. Within Turkey, PKK violence was initially directed towards the Kurdish population, especially those civilians loyal to the Turkish regime within the southeastern area of Turkey. The group soon broadened their focus to include Turkish government targets, including: security patrols and government troops, police stations and gendarmerie outposts, Turkish infrastructure targets, laying mines to protect PKK strongholds, and assassinations of political and military figures. Following the 1991 Gulf War, it is estimated that Turkey spent 6-8 Billion dollars a year domestically to quell the PKK violence. The increasing popularity of the PKK amongst Turkey’s Kurdish population only further increased their challenge to the state. As of 1993, Turkey had officially designated the PKK as their number one security threat, ahead of even external threats presented by Greece, which had previously been regarded as the primary threat.

The threat of the PKK extended into Syria, as it served as an important base of operations for the PKK, which helped to sustain their continued armed struggle. The Syrian basing of the PKK fulfilled three important functions for the organization. First, Syria became the organizational headquarters of the PKK and its leaders. Abdullah Ocalan resided there and controlled the organization from this location. Second, the PKK established training facilities within Syria proper, as well as within the Syrian-controlled Lebanese Bekaa Valley. Third, in

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433 Robert Olson, "Turkey-Syria Relations since the Gulf War: Kurds and Water," Middle East Policy 5, no. 2 (1997).


the mid to late 1990s, the PKK began to use Syria as a launching pad for direct limited attacks into Turkey from the far western border of Syria. It is important to note that Syria was not the only state that was utilized as a base by the PKK. Rather, the PKK also established a network of bases within Iraq and Iran, where they housed many of their militants and launched numerous attacks. However, the Syrian base was crucial for the organization and became its nerve center, serving to launch its campaigns both within Turkey, as well from other bordering states.

The PKK’s relationship with Syria began in the period leading up to the September 1980 coup d’état in Turkey. Since then, Syria has been regarded as a state sponsor of the PKK. As early as a year before the 1980 coup in Turkey, the Turkish military had begun to arrest members of the Kurdish opposition, including high ranking PKK leaders. The increasing military and police raids had made southeastern Turkey an increasingly difficult place for the PKK to organize and train. Following the coup, 1,790 suspected PKK members were captured, a number that was disproportionate in comparison to other Kurdish groups. The captured individuals notably included several members of the PKK’s central committee. In light of the inhospitable conditions within Turkey, Ocalan decided to flee across the border to Syria and establish a sanctuary for himself and his followers.

From the start, there was an internal debate within the PKK about whether Syria was the


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ideal base for the PKK. Initially, many raised concerns that Syria was a dictatorship that severely repressed its Kurdish population, which may not make it ideally suited for its headquarters. Furthermore, from a more tactical standpoint, Syria was well suited to be a refuge, but ill-suited for launching direct attacks against Turkey because the terrain was too flat and Syria placed significant constraints on PKK militants fighting from its territory. In many respects, Iraqi Kurdistan, with its mountainous terrain was better suited operationally for the PKK, and some argued that their primary bases and headquarters should be located there. However, despite the internal debate, Ocalan ultimately decided to set up his primary organizational headquarters and training facilities within Syria.

Beginning in 1980, Abdullah Ocalan utilized Syria as his primary residence, as well as the PKK’s political and military organizational headquarters. The Syrians provided Ocalan with a residence within Damascus, an armored Mercedes, and Syrian Kurdish bodyguards. As Ismet G. Imset, a prominent journalist who covered the PKK extensively, explained, “In every way, he was living the life of a Syrian official.” In addition to Ocalan, several senior members of the organization also took up residence within Syria and the organization regularly convened its leaders and made critical political and military decisions within Syria. The first three PKK party congresses were convened in Syria, and it was at the second one in August 1982, that the

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440 Following the coup, many Turkish leftist extremist groups fled to Syria, which at minimum, allowed them to enter freely. Some of these groups used Syria as an interim stop, before proceeding to Europe, Lebanon, or Iraq. Marcus, Blood and Belief : The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. pp. 53-54.
441 Ibid. p. 59.
442 Ibid. p. 69.
443 For more on the PKK bases in northern Iraq see Chapter 4: Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in northern Iraq.
PKK decided that it was time to launch the insurrection in Turkey. From their offices in Damascus, the PKK organized politically and militarily, created political propaganda, raised funds, and operated in a generally protected environment, out of the direct reach of the Turkish government. This safety also enabled many of the leaders of the PKK to travel freely to Europe, as well as to the broader Middle East, which only further bolstered their organizational capacity.

Abdullah Ocalan’s leadership was central to the organization, and thus his continued protection within Syria was critical for the PKK. Ocalan, as chairman of the PKK, ruled the organization with a tight fist and was central to its decision making. The PKK appears to have had a clear hierarchical structure, which included provincial organizations and European branches. Despite this structure, Ocalan ruled the PKK as a solitary leader, without any successful challenges to his authority. At times, to the detriment of the organization, Ocalan sought to directly harness all of the power and promote himself and his dominance within the PKK. To protect his role, Ocalan regularly engaged in leadership purges amongst those that challenged his authority in any way, demonstrating that he was unwilling to allow dissenting opinions. As the PKK membership became more educated and potential competitors to his

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448 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 265; Erlich, "Terrorism as a Preferred Instrument of Syrian Policy."
450 Bacik and Coskun, "The Pkk Problem: Explaining Turkey's Failure to Develop a Political Solution." p. 51.
rule grew in number, Ocalan signaled his resolve to remain in power by conducting random
executions and taking increasingly harsh measures against PKK members. Even at the height
of PKK power and popularity, Ocalan did not redistribute power away from the center. He
stymied the development of semi-autonomous Kurdish cultural institutions for fear that such
organizations would diminish his power. Even though the fighters gradually became less
interested in Ocalan as a leader and his ideological rants, they nonetheless understood his
centrality in the organization and the power he wielded. Ocalan's influence over the Kurdish
question also extended beyond the PKK. “The PKK has been successful at creating a central
system in which all Kurdish organizations are chained hierarchically. In this organizational
command, Ocalan controls youth, women, and student associations, media outlets (including
newspapers), news agencies and satellite channels.” Though the wisdom of Ocalan's
totalitarian policy was certainly questionable, all of his efforts to maintain his power within the
organization ultimately elevated his importance. “It is hard to overstate the cult of personality
that developed around him within the PKK during the height of its operations. His charisma and
willingness to ruthlessly suppress any internal leadership challenges led to his undisputed
command of the group.” Clearly, Ocalan was vital to the PKK organization, and therefore,
Syria's role in harboring him was a critical factor in protecting and sustaining the PKK.

In addition to harboring its leadership, Syria, and by extension, the Syrian controlled
Lebanese Bekaa Valley, became the main political and military training grounds for PKK

453 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 140; for more details regarding
the systematic leadership and fighter purges see ibid. pp. 135-140.
455 Ibid. pp. 256-257.
456 Bacik and Coskun, "The PKK Problem: Explaining Turkey's Failure to Develop a Political Solution." p. 258.
457 Lawrence E. Cline, "From Ocalan to Al Qaida: The Continuing Terrorist Threat in Turkey," Studies in Conflict &
militants. In 1980, when the PKK first entered Syria, they trained with other Marxist organizations, such as Abu Nidal, and the Palestinian Democratic Front, both of whom had bases within Syrian-controlled Lebanon. In this period, training was coordinated with the Palestinians and included both military and political training. Military training focused on basic tactical skills, such as explosives and marksmanship, while staff officers were also trained in more sophisticated skills such as military topography, artillery, and guerrilla fighting more broadly. Additionally, the Palestinian trainers included non-kinetic skills, such as how to utilize propaganda effectively, organize the civilian population, and the benefits of a home front civilian militia that could support the fighters logistically. On occasion, Syrian officers were even directly involved in the military training of Ocalan and other top militants, as well as regular fighters. With the increasing number of PKK fighters crossing into Syria, a dedicated training camp was established at Helwe, which was within the Syrian-controlled Bekaa valley. Over a three year period at Helwe, the PKK trained thousands of militants, which were eventually sent into Turkey to conduct operations. The PKK also established two political training centers on the outskirts of Damascus. As compared to the military training at Helwe, these facilities were on a smaller scale, usually accommodating about 200 people per session. On average, fighters spent upwards of a year in training. Overall, significant elements of both the military training and political indoctrination occurred in areas that were under Syrian

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459 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 56.
460 Ibid. p. 57.
462 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 56
463 Ibid. p. 254.
control. Ultimately, Syria functioned as the main training grounds for PKK fighters, as well as a gateway for infiltrating the surrounding region and locating the most advantageous terrain for launching attacks.

Finally, by the mid-1990s, the PKK began a limited campaign of violence emanating from Syria’s far western border, which included the contested Turkish-Syrian Hatay area. The majority of attacks within Turkey still emanated from fighters that were based within Iraq, but the PKK’s training prowess and enhanced capabilities led the group to seek new opportunities to expand their influence. Though this region was comparatively disadvantageous for the PKK, they increasingly conducted attacks in the area, and opened another PKK front with Turkey. As Selahattin Celik, one of the original founders of the PKK noted:

What did we gain by fleeing to Syria? ...In reality, we were finished as an organization after 1980. We had no strength in Europe, in Turkey we were in prison. But in Syria we could gather ourselves together. The minute we got money we used it to send people to Europe [to work in the Kurdish community there]. From the Palestinians we learned things. We learned about making demonstrations for martyrs about ceremonies. We did a lot of reading on a people’s war, we also had armed training. They gave us clothing, cigarettes. We owe the Palestinians something.

The PKK base within Syria was correctly perceived as a significant challenge in Turkey’s broader counterinsurgency campaign against the PKK. The Turkish government often portrayed the PKK threat as being mobilized and conducted by outside forces, rather than a byproduct of its own Kurdish population. Since Ocalan’s refuge in 1980, Turkey viewed Syrian support for the PKK “as a sine qua non for that organization’s ability to wage war against Turkey on all its

464 Though some training occurred in neighboring countries, Syria remained the primary training ground for PKK militants.
465 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 262.
466 Celik quoted in ibid. p. 58
Middle Eastern Borders."\textsuperscript{467} "Turkey considered Damascus the PKK’s main external supporter and lifeline and thus cutting off Syria’s nourishment of Ocalan and the PKK appeared increasingly imperative in Ankara."\textsuperscript{468} The former President of Turkey, Kenan Evren, reportedly declared as early as October 1981 that "the Kurdish problem stems from foreign incitement."\textsuperscript{469} Similarly, in 1989, General Necip Torumtay, the Chief of Staff in Ankara asserted that the PKK "received important support from foreign powers."\textsuperscript{470} The belief was that "as long as a separatist camp remains open in Syria, Lebanon, Iran, and Iraq, and as long as they receive indirect support from European countries, Turkey will have to counter a resurrection of armed terrorism every year."\textsuperscript{471} Syria’s importance in the fight against the PKK was even further elevated due to the refuge provided to Ocalan and other top leadership of the PKK. Turkey’s ardent belief that Syria was central to the fight against the PKK elevated the importance of severing this relationship and closing the external bases of support for the organization. In the midst of the 1998 coercive crisis, Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz stated "If Syria did not shelter the head of the bandits, if it did not set up camps and give money then it would not be possible for this separatist bandit to continue his path."\textsuperscript{472}

Ultimately, Syria’s continued support of the PKK served as a significant threat to Turkey, and facilitated the group’s continued insurgency within Turkey. Syria’s harboring of Ocalan, its

\textsuperscript{467} Makovsky and Eisenstadt, "Turkish-Syrian Relations: A Crisis Delayed."
\textsuperscript{469} Gunter, "Transnational Sources of Support for the Kurdish Insurgency in Turkey."
\textsuperscript{470} Quoted in ibid. pp. 7-8.
\textsuperscript{471} Ibid. pp. 7-8.
\textsuperscript{472} "Turkey Warns Syria on Helping Kurd Rebels," \textit{New York Times} Oct. 12, 1998. Interestingly, following the 1998 severance of the relationship, violence in Turkey was significantly reduced and the status of the PKK was diminished, lending additional credence to Turkey’s belief about the importance of Ocalan, and the basing relationship in Syria.
provision of training facilities, and its ability to serve as a launching pad for attacks compelled the Turkish government to take steps to sever this relationship through coercion. Furthermore, as will be observed below, Turkey's efforts to close the Syrian base and remove Ocalan from his position of power within the organization were shrewd moves. Ultimately, Syria's eventual compliance with Turkish demands severely diminished the capacity of the PKK organization.

**TURKISH COERCIVE POLICY AND THE 1998 CRISIS**

In 1984, shortly after the PKK began its campaign of violence, Turkish officials began to pressure Syria to stop supporting the PKK and allow Abdullah Ocalan to reside in Damascus, set up the PKK headquarters and train militants within Syria. Initially, Turkey attempted to diplomatically resolve this issue and offered Syria some enticements for severing its relationship with the PKK. As the PKK violence increased within Turkey, eliminating this safe haven grew in importance. Turkish coercive threats towards Syria occurred most prominently in 1993, 1995-1996, and finally culminated with the October Crisis of 1998. Though the problem of PKK basing did not get resolved until the 1998 crisis, the first two, more minor instances of coercion and their results are instructive about both the dynamics of transitive compellence, as well as the relationship between Syria and the PKK.

*Initial Attempts to Cooperate with Syria*

When the Turkish government initially encountered the Syrian basing of the PKK, it did not immediately resort to using coercive diplomacy. Rather, for a short while, they attempted to engage Syria diplomatically through a cooperative agreement. In 1987, the most prominent attempt at a cooperative diplomatic solution occurred, when Prime Minister Turgut Ozal tried to negotiate a cessation of support for the PKK by promising economic cooperation, and most
importantly, offering Syria secured access to water from the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers.\textsuperscript{473} As will be discussed in greater detail, the linkage between Syria's water constraints and the PKK remained a prominent feature of Turkish and Syrian strategic considerations throughout this period. In July 1987, Prime Minister Turgut Ozal signed a security cooperation protocol with Hafiz al-Asad, the President of Syria.\textsuperscript{474} Under the terms of the agreement, Syria agreed to prevent attacks on Turkey emanating from its territory, as well as to remove PKK training camps. In return, Turkey agreed to supply Syria with no less than 500 cubic meters per second of water.\textsuperscript{475} However, at this time, despite significant evidence to the contrary, Syria denied that Ocalan was residing with Syria. To give credence to this claim, they even temporarily sent him to the Syrian controlled Lebanese Bekaa Valley.\textsuperscript{476}

Despite their initial agreement, these security protocols did not yield a significant change in Syria's policy towards the PKK. A Turkish report issued shortly after the protocols, which was based in part on the testimony of captured PKK agents, concluded that "there is still evidence that Syrian territory is being used in many of the PKK attacks which are still taking place."\textsuperscript{477} In the period following the agreement, the PKK headquarters, training, and recruitment within Syria continued unhindered, and Ocalan was allowed to continue to reside

\textsuperscript{473} Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.} p. 99.
\textsuperscript{474} Aras, "Similar Strategies, Dissimilar Outcomes: An Appraisal of the Efficacy of Turkey's Coercive Diplomacy with Syria and in Northern Iraq." p. 594.
\textsuperscript{475} Gunter, "Transnational Sources of Support for the Kurdish Insurgency in Turkey." p. 10; Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.} p. 99; Aras, "The Role of Motivation in the Success of Coercive Diplomacy: The 1998 Turkish–Syrian Crisis as a Case Study." pp. 211-212.
\textsuperscript{477} Gunter, "Transnational Sources of Support for the Kurdish Insurgency in Turkey." p. 10.
there.\textsuperscript{478} In fact, Imset claimed that shortly after the protocol was signed, Syria allowed Ocalan to meet with Soviet officials in Damascus.\textsuperscript{479} While Syria placed some restrictions on PKK militants crossing directly into Turkey from Syria, it is not clear how long this limitation remained in effect, nor whether this demand had any significant impact on the group’s operations, since most militants could easily penetrate into Turkey from Iraq or Iran.\textsuperscript{480} Ultimately, Turkey’s first significant effort to curtail Syrian support of the PKK through cooperation failed to produce any meaningful change.

\textit{A Shift towards Coercive Diplomacy: 1987-1997}

Following this failed attempt at a negotiated solution to the PKK problem, a noticeable shift towards coercion occurred in Turkey’s strategic approach. Immediately following these failed negotiations, Turkey began to issue verbal threats to the Syrian government demanding that they cease support for the PKK and prevent them from using their territory as a base. Most prominently, Turkish rhetoric escalated in 1993 and again in 1995. At least initially, Syria appeared to be willing to come to the negotiating table and reconsider its basing relationship with the PKK and take some limited steps to comply with Turkish demands, however, small and short-lived. Despite the increasingly harsh rhetoric, Syria only made marginal changes to its basing policy and most appeared to obfuscate the ongoing relationship, rather than sever it.

Already in 1989, Turgut Ozal, who later became Turkey’s president, was making veiled threats towards Syria, threatening to cut off their water supply if they continued to support the


\textsuperscript{479} Olson, "Turkey-Syria Relations since the Gulf War: Kurds and Water." p.170.

\textsuperscript{480} Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence}. p. 99.
PKK. 481 This threatening tone was further escalated by Suleyman Demirel, who had become the Prime Minister in 1991. In 1992, Demirel “attacked Syria openly saying it was unacceptable for Syria to give the PKK permission to have bases in the Bekaa Valley and that Turkey was running out of patience.” 482 Following Demirel’s coercive threats, Interior minister Ismet Sezgin visited Damascus in order to increase the pressure on the Syrian regime and see whether a new agreement could be reached, thus avoiding further escalation. 483

In response to Turkish coercion, Syria took some limited steps both rhetorically and practically to contain the PKK. However, these actions still fell far short of Ankara’s demands. Syria once again agreed to a new security protocol regarding PKK activity within their borders, which at least on its surface appeared to meet many of Turkey’s demands. Syria agreed to close down the Bekaa Valley camp immediately, to control its borders more effectively, extradite Ocalan and cease its shelter of PKK militants. 484 After signing the protocols, Syrian rhetoric towards the PKK shifted as well. Nasir Kaddur, the Syrian State Minister for Security, stated in a television interview that Syria “had begun to ban the PKK on President Hafiz al-Asad’s orders.” He further added that PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan and other “terrorists” would no longer be allowed to use Syrian territory for operations against Turkey. Kaddur noted that some PKK members had already been arrested and that Ocalan would not be welcome in Syria henceforth. Kaddur finished the interview stating that “Turkey’s stability and integrity is important for Syria and the region. Therefore, there is no room for any groups perpetrating

481 Gunter, “Transnational Sources of Support for the Kurdish Insurgency in Turkey.” p. 10.
483 Ibid. p. 212.
484 Ibid. p. 212.
terrorism and causing trouble for Turkey.” Similarly, Major General Adnan Badr al-Hasan, Syrian Interior Ministry Chief of Security, expressed that Syria would not be a thoroughfare for “those against Turkey’s interest.”

The new security protocols produced some short term changes in Syrian policy. Nevertheless, the Agreement did not have the desired, sustained impact. Syria closed the Helwe camp, which served as the main PKK training facilities in the Bekaa Valley, but allowed the PKK’s political training centers outside of Damascus to function unimpeded. As before, Syria continued to deny that Ocalan was in Syria, even when presented with evidence to the contrary by Demirel. Additionally, after a short break, PKK activities continued from Syria, this time with direct attacks within Turkey emanating from Syria. Importantly, Syria continued to harbor the PKK’s leader Ocalan, and allow the group to operate organizationally, politically, and to a lesser extent, militarily, from within its borders. Thus, in this instance, the Turkish government’s coercive victory appeared to be largely rhetorical, and the PKK in Syria were not ultimately expelled from their safe haven in Damascus.

By mid-summer 1995, despite a brief period of relative calm in Syrian-Turkish relations, in response to reports that the PKK was opening a new front with Turkey in the contested region

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485 Kaddur quoted in Robert Olson, “The Kurdish Question and Turkey’s Foreign Policy towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf war.” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s : Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East. p. 86.
486 Robert Olson, “The Kurdish Question and Turkey’s Foreign Policy towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf war.” in ibid. p. 86.
489 Olson, "Turkey-Syria Relations since the Gulf War: Kurds and Water." p. 170.
of Hatay, along the Syrian-Turkish border, Turkey resumed its coercive policy. With this new PKK activity, once again Turkey became increasingly concerned about the support and basing that the PKK received from Syria. In response to these increasing provocations, on January 23, 1996, Turkey submitted a demarche to Mamduh Haidar from the Syrian Embassy in Ankara. The note called upon Syria to cease its support for the PKK and specifically referred to Article 51 of the UN Charter, which emphasizes the right of self-defense if an armed attack occurred. A second note followed in which Ankara demanded that Syria extradite Abdullah Ocalan. Although Turkey had been vocal about its unhappiness with the Syrian sheltering of Ocalan, this was the first time that they had requested extradition publicly. According to Damla Aras, an official claimed, off the record, that Ankara was prepared to declare war if Syria did not comply with their demands.

However, despite the clear threats to Syria, this coercive episode appears to have been externally capped by the impending Kardak-Imia crisis between Greece and Turkey. According to Damla Aras, Turkey had planned to escalate further with Syria, but was derailed by this crisis. In late December 1995, a Turkish cargo vessel ran aground near a contested region in the southeast Aegean, which reignited the controversy over possession of these islets. In early 1996, Prime Minister Tansu Ciller claimed 3,000 Aegean islands and islets as Turkish and

490 Robert Olson, "The Kurdish Question and Turkey’s Foreign Policy towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf war." in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East. p. 88.
492 Olson, "Turkey-Syria Relations since the Gulf War: Kurds and Water." p.170.
495 Ibid. P.169-175.
warned that any attempts by Greece to take these territories would be a casus belli.496 This crisis, with Turkey’s traditional external foe, occupied Turkey’s foreign policy attention, and was not mediated until July, 1997.497 Consequently, despite the fact that the verbal threats in 1995 and 1996 had clearly escalated, the Turkish coercion against Syria was occurring concurrently with the broader Greek crisis, which inevitably decreased the likelihood that Turkey would follow through on its threats of war.

Between 1996 and 1997, Turkish government officials continued to issue both explicit and implied verbal threats to Syria, however, these threats were not backed up by any visible form of action or mobilization. In April 1996, as tensions mounted, Turkey once again expressed its discontent with Syria and threatened action if it continued to shelter the PKK. Specifically, Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz expressed clearly that “[s]ome of our neighbors shelter those who seek to destroy the unity of our land...Either this neighbor puts an end to the situation or it will sooner or later surely be punished for its enmity...We Turks are a patient people, but when our patience runs out our reaction will be violent.”498 Similarly, Deputy Prime Minister Nahit Mentese reiterated the threat in the Turkish Parliament, by stating that the Syrian regime “has ambitions to establish Greater Syria – these ambitions will be foiled and if circumstances warrant, Syria will be taught a lesson.”499

Despite the strongly worded note sent to Damascus, Hafiz al-Asad did not acknowledge

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497 Although many issues remain unresolved, on July 8,1997, an agreement of fundamental principles for conduct was signed by the foreign ministers of Greece and Turkey. Kramer, A Changing Turkey : The Challenge to Europe and the United States. P. 171
499 Ibid. p. 35
it, let alone respond. Several months later, Damascus sent a reply to the Foreign Ministry Authorities that indicated that the request was not taken seriously by the Syrian regime. Similarly, the continued verbal threats did not elicit a response from the Syrian regime, nor did it alter its behavior towards the PKK. Ultimately, Turkish coercive threats in this period failed to yield a noticeable change in Syrian attitudes or support of the PKK. Most visibly, Ocalan remained comfortably within Damascus throughout this period.

The October 1998 Crisis

By October 1998, Turkey's transitive compellent posture towards Syria increased in intensity. First, Turkey's issued both direct and public threats to Syria, which lent significant credibility to their words. Second, Turkey clearly laid out its demands of Syria and their rationale. Although they didn't provide a clear deadline, their urgency was nonetheless conveyed. Finally, for the first time in their relations with Syria, the Turks lent support to their threat of force through the mobilization of its troops along the Turkish-Syrian border. Though the Turks had previously demonstrated their willingness to use force over the PKK issue against other base states, mainly Iraq, they had never mobilized forces on the Syrian border. These three changes made the October coercive crisis more credible and intense than previous coercive encounters.

In early 1998, after several failed attempts to resolve this issue through diplomacy, the Turkish National Security Council considered implementing a new round of coercive diplomacy

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501 Coercion theorists highlight the importance of setting a clear deadline. Although a specific date was not set, the message was clear that the Turks expected a timely response to their demands. Byman and Waxman, The Dynamics of Coercion: American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might, Schelling, Arms and Influence.
and even contemplated using limited force to address Syrian basing of the PKK.\footnote{In early 1998, Turkey attempted to restart the dialogue with Syria. In February, the head of the Middle East Department of the Turkish Foreign Affairs Ministry, Ambassador Aykut Cetirge, visited Damascus. This meeting was then followed by a visit to Ankara by the Syrian Foreign Minister, Adnad Omran in June. Despite these efforts, these visits still did not yield any progress on the PKK issue. Aykan, "The Turkish-Syrian Crisis of October 1998: A Turkish View." pp. 176-177; Aras, "The Role of Motivation in the Success of Coercive Diplomacy: The 1998 Turkish–Syrian Crisis as a Case Study." p. 216.} Turkey made a series of strong, public verbal threats towards Syria that communicated clearly that Turkey’s patience with regards to the PKK in Syria was quickly running out. These new threats were made publicly and began justifying the use of force in this situation. This new tone was distinctive from previous periods and signaled a new approach for addressing this nagging problem. In September, General Atilla Ates, commander of the land forces, visited the contested region of Hatay and gave a speech where he expressed Turkey’s continued discontentment with Syrian support of the PKK and their determination to put an end to this support, by military means if necessary.\footnote{Aras, "Similar Strategies, Dissimilar Outcomes: An Appraisal of the Efficacy of Turkey's Coercive Diplomacy with Syria and in Northern Iraq." p. 598; Ozdag and Aydinli, "Winning a Low Intensity Conflict: Drawing Lessons from the Turkish Case." p. 116; Marcus, Blood and Belief : The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 270.} Specifically, he warned that “by supporting the bandit Apo [Ocalan], they [the Syrians] have confronted us with the plague of terrorism. Turkey has made necessary efforts for good relations. If Turkey does not receive any response to its efforts, it will have the right to take all appropriate measures. We have no more patience.”\footnote{Quoted in Robert W. Olson, Turkey's Relations with Iran, Syria, Israel, and Russia, 1991-2000 : The Kurdish and Islamist Questions, Kurdish Studies Series (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 2001). p. 110.}

On October 1, the rhetoric escalated further when President Demirel, in his address to parliament, declared “once more to the world that we have the right to retaliate against Syria.”\footnote{Quoted in ibid. p. 111.} In this speech, President Demirel highlighted Syria’s unresponsiveness to Turkey’s diplomatic approaches. He also alluded to Article 51 of the UN charter, which stressed Turkey’s right to
self-defense. This sentiment was reinforced by Turkish Chief of Staff, General Huseyin Kivrikoglu, who expressed that this was "a situation of undeclared war between Turkey and Syria," and Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's statement that "the military was waiting for the order."  

In addition to these public threats, for the first time, Turkey made its case in the international arena by utilizing the United Nations Security Council, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and the Arab League. Though these international efforts did not yield direct pressure on Syria, they signaled the resolve that Turkey possessed. In all, the resoluteness of Turkey's message had been received both by Syria, as well as the broader international community.

On October 8, with the backdrop of its strong rhetoric and ostensible military preparations, Turkey laid out its specific grievances against Syria. Ankara formally identified Syria's offenses as: 1) harboring Abdullah Ocalan and top PKK leaders since 1979; 2) hosting multiple PKK congresses; 3) permitting military personnel to train PKK guerillas, including Ocalan; 4) accommodating the growth of operations in the Hatay region since 1995; and 5) allowing the PKK to combine forces with Armenians and Greeks against Turkey.

In addition to the verbal assaults, Turkey created the impression that they were mobilizing large numbers of troops on the 386 mile fortified border with Syria that were ready

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509 Olson, Turkey's Relations with Iran, Syria, Israel, and Russia, 1991-2000 : The Kurdish and Islamist Questions. p.112.
for an assault.\textsuperscript{510} There were rumors that Turkey had moved 10,000 troops to the Syrian border.\textsuperscript{511} American State Department official, Henri Barkey, met with Syrian officials to confirm the Turkish mobilization, as well as Turkey’s intent.\textsuperscript{512} Similarly, Egyptian President, Hosni Mubarak flew to Syria to convey the severity of the Turkish threats and encourage Asad to comply with Turkish demands. Though it later became apparent that these troops were actually preparing for an ongoing NATO maneuver, Ankara had deliberately created the impression that these troops were designated for the potential fight with Syria.\textsuperscript{513} This military mobilization backed up the harsh rhetoric that was increasingly prevalent among Turkey’s civilian and military leaders. Furthermore, throughout the 1990s, Turkey had invaded northern Iraq with large numbers of troops and demonstrated their willingness and ability to utilize force.\textsuperscript{514} This precedent lent additional support to their threat. Finally, although the Israeli government repeatedly declared that it had nothing to do with the Turkish military threats, the Turkish-Israeli military cooperation presented the possibility of an Israeli intervention.\textsuperscript{515}

In all, this final coercive episode was not only more intense than previous coercive threats, but was implemented utilizing coercive best practices, which increased its credibility and demonstrated resolve. The Turkish government made it clear at the national level, as well as in the international arena, that it would no longer accept Syria’s continued harboring of Ocalan. The mobilization of troops further heightened the pressure felt by the Syrian regime. Following

\begin{footnotes}
\item[510] Ibid. p. 111.
\item[512] Interview with Henri Barkey, former US State Department Official, August 5, 2013.
\item[514] For more detail on Turkish invasions of northern Iraq, see Chapter 4: Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in northern Iraq.
\item[515] Kramer, \textit{A Changing Turkey: The Challenge to Europe and the United States}. p. 136
\end{footnotes}
this episode, Syria now had reason to reconsider its policy towards the PKK, as this threat could no longer be ignored.

**EXPLAINING TRANSITIVE COMPELLENCE: UNPACKING THE RELATIONSHIP**

To fully understand why Syria so quickly reversed its policy towards the PKK, and conceded to Turkey’s coercive demands, it is necessary to closely examine the relationship between Syria and the PKK. Turkish demands necessarily required Syria to take proactive measures to change the status quo with respect to the PKK within its borders. Therefore, the costs imposed by Turkey needed to offset the costs of compliance required to act against the PKK or the potential benefits derived from their presence. This analysis of the compliance costs requires an examination of the foreign policy and domestic elements of the relationship. These variables capture the costs and risks of action for the Syrian regime.

As will be explained below, Syria derived some foreign policy benefits from its ongoing relationship with the PKK, thus complying with Turkey would have meant sacrificing the gains associated with this arrangement. However, leading up to this latest coercive episode, these potential benefits were revisited and had declined significantly in comparison to earlier periods. This analysis also reveals that despite its prolonged relationship with the PKK, severing the ties with the group entailed limited domestic costs of compliance. The PKK did not pose a significant threat to the regime, nor did it possess significant popular support amongst the broader Syrian population. These two factors in combination limited the costs of severing the relationship domestically. Thus, an assessment of the context for coercion in this instance highlights that the context favored coercion in 1998, beyond what might have been expected. Consequently, when Turkey escalated its threats, thereby increasing the costs of the Syria-PKK relationship, it
followed that Syria ultimately decided to comply with Turkey’s demands.

The case of Syria presented significant challenges for gathering direct evidence for base state decision making and the value placed on this relationship. Instead, to assess the foreign and domestic variables, it was necessary to rely predominantly on the indirect proxy measurements detailed in the theory chapter. Unlike the case of Jordan or Iraqi Kurdistan, where leaders at the time, and in retrospect, were willing to discuss the basing of the *fedayeen* and the PKK respectively, this was not the case in Syria.

Two significant challenges precluded getting first-hand information about this problem: the closed nature of the Syrian state, and the clandestine nature of the relationship. First, since Syria is a closed society, this naturally limits access to archives and policymakers, but also significantly affects the accuracy and openness of media accounts at the time and in retrospect.516 Secondly, despite the open secret that Syria served as a state sponsor for the PKK, Syria routinely denied this relationship. Syria’s specific foreign policy rationale is elusive and needs to be deduced. Until 1998, under the Adana agreement, Hafiz al-Asad continually denied Ocalan’s presence in Syria, its training facilities in Damascus, and its general relationship with the PKK, and certainly did not provide any strategic rationale for ongoing support.517 Asad’s unwillingness to acknowledge this relationship made it even more difficult to understand the reasoning behind the relationship or the value that the Syrian regime placed on its continued presence in Syria. Despite these inherent challenges, it is possible to utilize the systematic proxy measures and obtain estimates of the value that the Syrian regime likely placed on this

516 This problem was further exacerbated by the ongoing civil war in Syria, which began in 2011,, concurrent with this research.
517 This behavior is consistent with many states that support violent groups, in part, because their allure and benefit stems from the opacity of the relationship and the unattributed connection between the state and the violent group.
relationship, and its eventual willingness to sever it. However, this case highlights the challenge of evaluating these types of relationships, both in real time and in retrospect, and the importance of creating proxy measurements to estimate the nature of the relationship and the subsequent costs of compliance.

_Foreign Policy_

Preceding the final coercive episode in 1998, the foreign policy costs of compliance for Syria were moderate. As the following analysis will show, the PKK played an instrumental role in Syria’s foreign policy towards Turkey. Hafiz al-Asad regularly utilized violent groups to further his foreign policy objectives, and the PKK was no exception to this strategy. Since the partnership’s nascent stage in 1980, Syria and the PKK always had a functional, yet bifurcated, relationship with respect to their foreign policy goals. The PKK and Syria both viewed Turkey as a target, and in turn, this overlap created functionality in their relationship. Syria viewed Turkey as an increasingly dominant regional power that needed to be balanced against, and utilized the PKK to further specific foreign policy objectives. In contrast, the PKK was primarily concerned with establishing an independent and later, autonomous, Kurdish region in Turkey. These grievances were quite different, and produced no overlap in demands, and Syria often actively worked against the PKK’s broader goal of an independent Kurdistan. Instead, Syria gained leverage against Turkey through its support of the PKK’s violent campaign against Turkey, but this was a relationship of convenience. Furthermore, the PKK’s diminishing power, as a result of Turkey’s campaign against them reduced the PKK’s utility for Syria during this period.

Generally, Syria viewed Turkey as a regional rival, especially in light of its alignment
with the West, and most recently with Israel, and thus sought to balance against it. Following the end of the Cold War, Turkey’s role as a regional player was growing, which invariably challenged the Syrian regime. Asad believed that the new world order that was emerging from the end of the Cold War was “profoundly biased against Arab and Syrian interests. The balance of power, he declared, had been upset [with the collapse of bipolarity] and the ‘main winners have been the Arabs’ enemies.”

The deepening alliance between Turkey and Israel led Asad to feel encircled regionally and heightened his concern about Turkey’s growing dominance in the region. The Syrian Minister of Information, Muhammad Salman, stated that “Netanyahu’s alliance with Turkey” was “to besiege Syria and strengthen the military capability of Ankara and Tel Aviv.” Similarly, Vice President Abd al-Halim Khaddam described the Israeli-Turkish alliance as “the greatest threat to the Arabs since 1948.” Following the Oslo accords in 1993, relations between Turkey and Israel began to develop across economic and military dimensions. After a series of high-level visits, the Israelis and Turkish governments signed a series of far-reaching cooperation agreements. The first, in February 1996, was a military training cooperation agreement, followed in March by a free trade agreement. The military agreements quickly expanded towards a more comprehensive level of cooperation, which included, a strategic

518 Byman, Deadly Connections: States That Sponsor Terrorism. p.151.
520 For additional detail regarding the Turkish-Israeli strategic partnership see: Efraim Inbar, “The Strategic Glue in the Israeli-Turkish alignment,” in Rubin and Kiri*sci, Turkey in World Politics: An Emerging Multiregional Power. pp, 115-127.
dialogue among high-ranking military officers, acquisition of hardware and upgrades of weaponry, joint production of missiles, military training, and intelligence sharing.\textsuperscript{524} In essence, through this agreement, the two of the most powerful economies and militaries were joining forces to the exclusion of the Arab states in the region. These developments represented a sharp departure from prior periods in which the Israelis were reticent about embarking in strategic cooperation with the Turks, for fear that Asad would feel that the Israelis were “ganging up on him.”\textsuperscript{525} Interestingly, despite worries to the contrary, these accords withstood the changing political tides in Turkey, and were not reversed with the election of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, who was an outspoken critic of Israel and a fundamentalist Muslim.\textsuperscript{526} By 1997, the military partnership had expanded to such a degree that nearly all ranking flag officers of both militaries had met each other, a semi-annual strategic conference was established, and Turkish naval vessels visited Israeli ports. Turkish-Israeli cooperation was not a traditional alliance, but became a strategic partnership which extended to both regional and global issues.\textsuperscript{527}

While the Israelis and the Turks had a series of overlapping strategic goals that motivated these new accords, it is clear that an improved position vis-à-vis Syria was a high priority for both countries. In particular, the countries were allied against Syria due to its financial and tactical support of terrorism. It appears that the Israelis were directly helping the Turks in their struggle against the PKK by improving their intelligence gathering within Iraq and helping them

\textsuperscript{524} Ibid., p.131-133. Pipes, "A New Axis: The Emerging Turkish-Israeli Entente."
\textsuperscript{526} Pipes, "A New Axis: The Emerging Turkish-Israeli Entente."
secure their borders. The Syrians feared the possibility of the “two countries coordinating a ‘strategic pincer,’ pressing it when necessary from the southwest and the north.” Understandably, the increasingly close relations between Turkey and Israel threatened to encircle Syria and they believed that this coalition strengthened their adversaries’ respective bilateral positions. Notably, Israeli and Turkish statements highlighted the importance of this new relationship for the balance of power in the region, and emphasized their combined strength as a vital axis against regional instability. This increased cooperation fundamentally changed the regional strategic environment for Syria, and improved Turkey’s position vis-à-vis Syria considerably. The combination of the decline in the PKK’s strength, coupled with Turkey’s growing bilateral position, lowered the utility of the PKK in Syria’s foreign policy during this period.

Asad always aspired to be a leader within the Middle East, however, these aspirations were often curtailed by Syria’s unfavorable position in the balance of power, which stemmed from its geographic position and relatively limited resources. In light of these known constraints, Asad sought to creatively balance against his foes, limited his regional aspirations, and took pragmatic measures to avoid a direct military confrontation with any of his rivals. In this respect, the PKK was instrumental, by providing Asad with a violent group that was actively attacking Turkey and could bleed the state and weaken their relative power. Thus, in the broader balancing strategy that Asad utilized, the PKK could play a supporting role.

529 Efraim Inbar, “Turkey and Israel,” in Radu, Dangerous Neighborhood : Contemporary Issues in Turkey’s Foreign Relations , p. 176.
Asad's instrumental use of violent non-state groups to advance his own foreign policy objectives was a part of his *modus operandi* practically since he seized power in 1970. As Moshe Ma'oz described, "Asad transformed his occasional usage of terrorism and guerilla warfare into a highly organized and elaborate state-run affair." CIA director, William Casey explained that "Syria traditionally has regarded terrorism as a weapon to be used in precisely defined and coldly calculated ways to wage war against Israel and to intimidate or eliminate forces resisting Syrian President Hafiz Asad's drive to redefine Syria as the dominant force in the Arab world." For example, Asad utilized Abu Nidal and other Shia and Lebanese radicals to instigate attacks in both Lebanon and Jordan in order to dissuade them from pursuing a separate peace settlement with the Israelis. Asad similarly utilized terror organizations to hit Israeli targets. In all, Asad's regional competitors, both Arab and Israeli regimes, were often political targets of terrorist organizations that Asad directly supported and most likely guided. Asad frequently denied using these groups, but simultaneously praised their actions. However, despite these denials, Asad's use of these groups for political gains became an open secret in the region.

Although the efficacy of these violent non-state groups in advancing Asad's foreign policy objectives is unclear, it is certain that Asad utilized these groups, and calculated their

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533 William Casey quoted in ibid. p. 175

contributions within his broader regional grand strategy. Furthermore, the exact rationale or objective behind supporting each of these groups, can only be inferred from the broader strategic context, since Asad continually denied his involvement with these groups. However, it appears that Asad believed that he could obtain a benefit by having an indirect, and plausibly deniable, hand in the affairs of his neighbors. This additional leverage against Syria’s neighbors could partially compensate for its inferior conventional military forces. Overall, this type of sponsorship offered Syria an opportunity to engage in a relatively low cost, low risk conflict. Throughout this period, Syria had two ongoing grievances against Turkey, neither of which were associated with the Kurdish plight: 1) the distribution of water from the Tigris and Euphrates; and 2) the incorporation of the Hatay region in 1939. The primary dispute with Turkey centered on the allocation of water from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, which originate in Turkey. Like many Middle Eastern states, Syria suffers from a limited supply of water, and Syria depended on the continued water flow from these two rivers. Beginning in the 1980s, Turkey embarked on an ambitious $30 Billion development plan known as the Southeastern Anatolia Project (known by its Turkish acronym GAP). This project established fourteen dams in the Euphrates and eight within the Tigris, as well as nineteen hydropower plants, and a series of irrigation networks that were aimed at the agricultural development of the Southeastern Anatolia region, which would also accelerate the economic and social development of the

535 Byman, Deadly Connections: States That Sponsor Terrorism. P. 118
536 Rubin, "The Truth About Syria." p. 78. In many cases, even when Syria was clearly implicated, as in the murder of Jordan’s prime minister in 1981, or Lebanon in 2005, there was no direct action taken against the Syrian regime.
538 Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy." p.35.
 Upon the project's completion, Turkey forecasted a 40% increase in irrigated land. This project was intended to alter the economic landscape for nine underdeveloped provinces in Turkey's mainly Kurdish region, while also increasing Turkey's overall capacity for electric power. However, these dams reduced the downstream flow of water to Syria. Syria and Iraq claimed that this project could reduce water flow into Syria by 40% and into Iraq by as much as 90%. Furthermore, this new network could also negatively impact the quality of the water as a result of fertilizer, salt and general pollution seepage into the downstream water supply. Scientists outside of Syria also noted the potential environmental impact of this project. Furthermore, Syria's rapid population growth, urban sprawl, and vulnerability to droughts further heightened the threat presented by Turkey's control of water distribution. A UK Defence Forum report warned that the GAP project is "one of the region's most dangerous water time bombs. The dispute has not erupted yet because the project has not yet reached its full potential. By the time of its planned completion in 2010, the vital interests involved give it the potential to become one of the region's most dangerous flashpoints." Ultimately, the concerns over water were not solely about immediate shortage concerns, but the reduction of water supply after the completion of the GAP project and its accompanying irrigation projects.

Although Turkey had previously made some water concessions towards Syria by guaranteeing 500 cubic meters of water per second, there was no guarantee that these agreements would be upheld or modified as demand shifted. Turkey repeatedly made clear that it had sole jurisdiction over the water issue. For example, Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel stated:

Neither Syria nor Iraq can lay claim to Turkey’s rivers any more than Ankara could claim their oil. This is a matter of sovereignty. We have the right to do anything we like. The water resources are Turkey’s, the oil resources are theirs. We don’t say we share their oil resources, and they cannot say they share our water resources.  

Furthermore, Turkey repeatedly refused Syrian and Iraqi demands to enter into a binding international agreement which specified the exact amount of water that each would receive. Additionally, Turkey tried to influence Iraq and Syria’s use of water, since they attested that neither had systems that optimize usage. In general, Turkey had not demonstrated any willingness to include either Syria or Iraq in their development of the GAP project and proceeded unhampered by their protests. Consequently, this resource dispute remained at the forefront of Syrian-Turkish relations. In Syria’s view, Turkey’s dominance on the water issue extended beyond the usage and distribution concerns, as this project provided Turkey with an opportunity to rise as a regional power because of the large economic and energy implications of the GAP project.  

In 1939, the Turkish ascension of the former Syrian province of Alexandretta, known as the Hatay in Turkey, created a second dispute. The Hatay is a small, but strategically significant piece of land that is located on Syria’s northwestern border, adjacent to the

547 Ibid. p.139.
548 Ibid.Kramer, p.140
549 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 60.
Mediterranean. The region’s demographic mix included Arabs, Turks and Kurds. “Syrians were unable to forget what seemed to them the arbitrary transfer of the province of Alexandretta by the French mandatory authorities into the hands of the Turks...In the eyes of the Syrians, Alexandretta was the legal property of the Syrian people and the Turks were nothing but usurpers.”

Though this issue had lingered since 1939, and was generally internationally dormant, Syrian maps used on daily weather reports still showed the Hatay as part of Syria. Furthermore, this region had particular importance to the regime, because many of the Baath party elites were Alawi refugees from this area.

In contrast to the Syrian objectives, the PKK, under the leadership of Abdullah Ocalan, sought to liberate the Kurdish people from their Turkish overlords in Kurdistan. The ultimate goal was to establish a greater independent Kurdish area which would span territory across Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. The PKK was founded as a mix of Kurdish nationalism and Marxist-Leninist ideology and distinguished itself from other rival Kurdish groups at the time through their unwavering commitment to liberate Kurdistan through violence, as opposed to any other avenue. At least initially, Ocalan rejected any attempts to solve the Kurdish issue through the Turkish democratic or legal system and eschewed any Kurdish rivals who were pursuing these methods.

In the 1990s, Ocalan began to moderate his goals and oscillate between demands for

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550 Makovsky and Eisenstadt, "Turkish-Syrian Relations: A Crisis Delayed?"
552 Pipes, Syria Beyond the Peace Process. p. 54.
553 Hinnebusch, Syria : Revolution from Above..p. 31.
554 Gunter, the Kurdish Problem in Turkey, Middle East Journal, vol 42, no. 3, Summer 1988 p. 395
555 McDowall, A Modern History of the Kurds. p. 421.
Kurdish independence and the lesser demand of federalism or autonomy within Turkey. Following the 1993 Turkish-Syrian agreements, Ocalan began to give increasing importance to issues of cultural freedoms and improving political rights in the Kurdish areas of Turkey, as opposed to the previous calls for self-determination. For example, on April 16, 1993, following a brief ceasefire with Turkey, Ocalan explained that “we should be given our cultural freedoms and the right to broadcast in Kurdish. The village guard system should be abolished and the Emergency legislation lifted. The Turkish authorities should take the necessary measures to prevent unsolved murder and should recognize the political rights of the Kurdish organizations.” Simultaneously during this period, the PKK began its foray into cultural and legal activities, thus expanding their repertoire of tactics to gain traction against the Turkish state and amongst the Kurdish population in Turkey. Specifically, Ocalan expanded the role of Islam within the organization. Ultimately, the PKK seemed to soften some of its irredentist aims and refocused its energies on obtaining a quasi-independent area for the Kurds with an emphasis on the Southeastern areas of Turkey.

Not only were Syria’s goals different than those of the PKK, but Syria did not support the establishment of an independent Kurdish entity and often worked directly against the objectives of the PKK in the international arena. Nor did they come out in strong support of the establishment of an autonomous area within Turkey. While Syria supported the PKK and provided them with a safe haven, they simultaneously engaged in discussions with Iran and

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558 Ocalan quoted in McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds*. p. 437
Turkey and declared their “unalterable opposition to the creation of an independent Kurdish state in Iraq.” Similarly, in 1993, at the Damascus Summit between Turkey and Syria, Syrian officials expressed their opposition to the fragmentation of Middle Eastern countries, which at minimum, alluded to the Kurdish independent movements in both Iraq and Turkey. These policy positions were in direct opposition to the PKK’s goals. Rather, each had their own set of issues and the overlap seemed to be limited exclusively to their target, the Turkish state.

The Syrians also placed significant limitations on their direct support of the PKK, both in terms of military acquisitions, as well as activities. There is the sense, as Marcus explains, that “The PKK’s foreign supporters — foremost Syria and then Iran — wanted the PKK to hurt Turkey, but had little interest in the PKK actually succeeding in its battle.” For example, though the PKK militants seemed to have open channels for acquiring basic weapons, such as Kalashnikovs, BKC machine guns, Dushka anti-aircraft guns, and rocket propelled grenades, they struggled to find sources for heavier weapons which were better suited to address Turkish helicopters and airplanes, such as shoulder-fired surface to air missiles (SAMs). The PKK did not lack for funds, rather the perception was that Syria had blocked their acquisition. Selim Curukkaya, a former PKK member, suggested that the real reason was that “Syria did not want us to have them.” Similar limitations were also placed on launching attacks directly into

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561 Robert Olson, “The Kurdish Question and Turkey’s Foreign Policy towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf war.” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East. p. 87.
562 Robert Olson, “The Kurdish Question and Turkey’s Foreign Policy towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf war.” in ibid. p. 87.
563 Ozdag and Aydinli, "Winning a Low Intensity Conflict: Drawing Lessons from the Turkish Case." p. 105.
564 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 188. Ozdag, The PKK and Low Intensity Conflict p.16.
565 Quoted in Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. Marcus, p. 188.
Turkey. They blocked this avenue despite its clear potential contribution to furthering the PKK's fight with Turkey. Furthermore, as will be discussed in greater detail, Syria's repressive treatment of its own Kurdish population further highlighted the disconnect between their support of the PKK and their support of the PKK's broader objectives.

As opposed to the ends, Syria obtained a foreign policy benefit from the PKK's violent means against the Turkish state. Turkey's continued struggle with the PKK, and Syria's role in providing a base for the PKK, provided Syria with both leverage, and proxy fighters, on the Turkish-Syrian strategic issues. Despite some ideological softening by the PKK, violence against the Turkish state and Kurdish supporters of the Turkish state continued to be central to achieving its objectives. Between 1990 and 1998, the PKK continued to engage in a fierce insurgency campaign within Turkey aimed at advancing Kurdish autonomy, first and foremost within Turkey. Syria's relationship with the PKK was seemingly based on the principle that 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend'.

Supporting the PKK proved to be a large thorn in the side of Syria's rising regional competitor, Turkey, as well as an opportunity to create pressure for Turkish concessions on Syria's bilateral foreign policy goals. As discussed previously, Turkey's ongoing counterinsurgency campaign against the PKK required a significant investment of Turkish resources. Continuing this fight against the PKK, invariably diminished Turkey's power, and

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566 Ibid. p. 69.
567 Ibid. p. 53.
occupied its forces. Particularly in light of Asad’s growing concerns about his strategic position in the Middle East, preoccupying his increasingly dominant neighbor in an internal war could be perceived as beneficial. Ultimately, supporting the PKK was a form of traditional balancing against Turkey. Asad used the PKK as a pawn in his negotiations with its rival. Harbor the PKK provided leverage for Syria in their negotiations over water. For example, in August 1993, at a summit meeting between Syria and Turkey, “the Turks emphasized that they would not pursue negotiations on the water question until Syria assured them that they would no longer support PKK activities or shelter Abdullah Ocalan.” Similarly, in several bilateral meetings, with the exception of the Adana agreement in 1998, the issue of the PKK and the GAP project water concerns were addressed together. Furthermore, the GAP project was predominantly located in the Kurdish areas of Turkey, and its full benefits could not be fully realized unless the area remained relatively stable. Thus, having the PKK within its borders, and sabotaging the stability of the GAP project, provided Syria with its sole card to play in the water negotiations.

Syria also directly benefited from, if not instigated, the PKK’s violent campaign in the Hatay region. This benefit is most akin to the envisioned state sponsorship relationship which provides proxy fighters for the state. Though secondary to the more pressing water concerns, this Hatay issue remained prominent for the Syrians, and in the mid-1990s, it was alleged that Syria had encouraged the PKK to expand its insurgency to this area. Though the Hatay was not an area traditionally associated with the Kurdish plight in Turkey, the PKK began attacks in the

and Aydinli, "Winning a Low Intensity Conflict: Drawing Lessons from the Turkish Case." pp. 105, 114.
570 Robert Olson, “The Kurdish Question and Turkey’s Foreign Policy towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf War.” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s : Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East. p. 87.
571 Karakoç, "The Impact of the Kurdish Identity on Turkey’s Foreign Policy from the 1980s to 2008." p. 921.
region in 1995. Additionally, the demographic mix, which included Arabs and Turks, precluded the establishment of a strong support network present in Southeastern Turkey. In July 1995, the commander of the People’s Liberation Army of Kurdistan (ARGK), stated that the PKK had stationed forces in the region since 1994 and that the Turkish forces only began addressing their presence in 1995. During this same period, Abdullah Ocalan proclaimed that he “would turn Hatay into Bohtan,” referring to an area in northern Iraq from which the PKK had conducted many attacks. On March 31, 1997, Utku Acun, the governor of Hatay reported at a meeting of the National Security Council that Syria was directing PKK activities in Hatay and were instigating activities against Turkomen there. Though this region was comparatively disadvantageous for the PKK, they increasingly conducted attacks in the area. While there were no significant advancements on this issue as a result of PKK’s involvement, the Syrians were able to utilize PKK violence to inflame an issue of contention with Turkey.

By 1998, despite Syria’s continuing need to balance Turkey regionally, the expected utility of the PKK had been significantly reduced as a result of their declining power against Turkey. The PKK’s losing battle against Turkey hindered its ability to serve as a tool in Syria’s foreign policy. This development affected the potential benefits that the Syrians could expect to obtain on the foreign policy front and highlighted the risk of utilizing the PKK to advance their goals. Syria’s leverage perilously hinged on the value that Turkey placed on its fight with the PKK. Thus, the extent to which Turkey had success in its overall fight with the PKK necessarily affected Syria’s potential benefits from this relationship. This contingency is particularly

important in evaluating the worth of the relationship for Syria in 1998.

Although throughout the 1990s, Turkey deemed its fight with the PKK as its biggest threat, by 1998, Turkey had made significant inroads on combating the PKK threat on two fronts. First, Turkey's counter-insurgency campaign in Southeastern Turkey greatly minimized PKK violence within Turkey. According to the Global Terrorism Database, by 1998, PKK attacks within Turkey had declines to less than 50, from a peak of 350 per year.\(^{576}\) By this point, several developments, including the depopulation of the southeast, and the movement of Kurdish civilians into defensible centers, enabled the Turkish military to hinder the activity of the PKK in Turkey.\(^{577}\) Second, Turkey conducted a series of coercive attacks into Iraq, most recently in 1997, which were successful in moving the PKK away from the Turkish border, significantly impacting the PKK's ability to launch raids.\(^{578}\) Both of these developments reduced the value of the Syria-PKK foreign policy relationship. Although Turkey continued to place a high importance on the PKK issue, its progress in containing them reduced the PKK’s power and in turn, Syrian leverage provided from this relationship. The PKK’s inability to inflict significant damage upon the Turkish government made their foreign policy value for Syria ambiguous, since they would likely be unable to weaken the Turks’ regional position sufficiently to assist Syria’s balancing efforts. These developments minimized the benefits to Syria and in turn, lowered the costs of compliance associated with severing this relationship in 1998.

In assessing the foreign policy costs of compliance, it is clear that for Syria, the benefits of the relationship were obtained through the instrumental use of the PKK for pursuing their

\(^{576}\) Global Terrorism Database, available at: http://www.start.umd.edu/
\(^{578}\) For more detail on the Turkish Coercive Raids in Iraq, see Chapter 4.
grand strategy. Syria’s continued support for and basing of the PKK had a foreign policy strategic rationale, driven predominantly by Syria’s use of the PKK to balance against Turkey, as well as obtain leverage to advance its bilateral disputes. However, the foreign policy alignment between the PKK and the Syrian regime was extremely limited. Syria did not support the PKK’s broader objectives against Turkey, and at times, actively worked against them. As Henri Barkey explained, “the temptation for the different states to use their neighbors’ Kurds in pursuit of their regional ambitions is matched only by the willingness with which the Kurds have accepted assistance from neighboring states as a means of eluding the limits imposed by state boundaries.” Though not superficial, the relationship in terms of foreign policy was instrumental. Furthermore, as a result of Turkish progress in containing the PKK, the utility and leverage provided through this relationship decreased substantially in this period due to the PKK’s declining power. Thus, from a foreign policy perspective, it is clear that Syria derived some benefits from its relationship with the PKK, thus complying with coercion would have entailed foregoing the benefit of pursuing their foreign policy goals towards Turkey indirectly through PKK action. Ultimately, while the costs of compliance were lower than in previous periods, there were still moderate costs associated with severing the relationship.

579 Henri J. Barkey “Under the Gun: Turkish Foreign Policy and the Kurdish Question” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East. p. 77.
<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Foreign Policy Cost of Compliance</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Syria</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Base State vs. Violent Group Goals</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Syria and PKK did not share FP goals with respect to Turkey</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Syria sought to balance against Turkey and obtain leverage on bilateral water and territorial disputes</td>
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<td>• Syria worked against PKK goal of an independent Kurdish state</td>
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<td><strong>Violent Group FP Contribution</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Declining PKK power in this period lowers their potential contribution</td>
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<td>• Turkish-Israeli alliance improved Turkey’s position vis-à-vis Syria and enhances risk of utilizing PKK</td>
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<td><strong>Violent Group Means</strong></td>
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<td>• PKK provides leverage to Syria on its regional balancing strategy, as well as issues of contention with Turkey, mainly water and the Hatay region</td>
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<td>• Syria benefits from continued PKK insurgency because the greater the insurgency, the greater Syria’s leverage</td>
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<td><strong>Overall Foreign Policy Costs</strong></td>
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**The Domestic Context**

Throughout the period when Ocalan and the PKK found refuge in Syria, they presented a very limited threat to the Syrian regime, and were never entrenched domestically. While basing an armed group that is outside of the direct control of the state presents some level of regime threat, the threat was severely limited for three complementary reasons. Across all of the dimensions examined, the PKK’s ability to challenge and impose potential costs on the regime was minimal. First, politically, the PKK did not make direct claims on the Syrian regime and limited their focus to their fight within Turkey. Despite the absence of direct claims, Asad was aware of the potential for the PKK to arouse the political passions, and sow unrest among its own Syrian Kurdish population and took proactive measures to repress the Syrian Kurds and contain any potential threat. Second, the Syrian regime was exceedingly strong, especially in relation to
the PKK’s limited capabilities within Syria. Third, the PKK had minimal popular support among the Syrian population writ large. Even among the Syrian Kurds, popular support for the PKK was mixed, in part due to the PKK’s maltreatment of the Syrian Kurds and their ongoing collaboration with the Syrian regime. Ultimately, containing the PKK within Syria did not present a significant domestic challenge to the regime and thus, the domestic costs of compliance of the Syrian regime were deemed to be low.

The PKK in this period had no immediate direct claims on the Syrian regime. The PKK’s most expansive political goal was to establish an independent Kurdistan, which spanned across the traditionally Kurdish areas in Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria. However, the PKK’s primary focus was liberating the Kurdish region within Turkey, and when that task was completed, they expected the other regions to wage war under the guidance of the new Kurdish state. In this respect, though the PKK clearly had political goals that may have affected the Syrians in the long run, in the near to medium term, it is clear that their focus was limited to their fight with the Turkish state. Even their most expansive goals included only a limited area of Syria, and at no point during their stay in Syria did they take any measures to attempt to consolidate the PKK power at the expense of the Syrian regime.

Moreover, by the early 1990s, the PKK began to scale back their political aspirations, from clear demands for independence to demands for federalism or autonomy within the Turkish state. All other Kurdish areas became secondary to their cause. Presumably, in light of the

580 Gunter, the Kurdish Problem in Turkey, Middle East Journal, vol 42, no. 3, Summer 1988 p. 395
581 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 100.
583 This is especially evident after the 1991 Gulf War, where the PKK continued its struggle against Turkey rather than joining the potential movement within Iraq.
ongoing support of the Syrian regime, Ocalan began distancing the PKK’s goals from any demand that would appear to infringe on Syria’s territorial sovereignty. He even went so far as to claim that the Syrian Kurds were not fully Kurdish.\(^5\) Thus, the PKK did not have explicit political intentions that were aimed directly at the Syrian regime.

Although the PKK did not pose a direct threat to Syria, Asad worried about the PKK’s potential to awaken the political passions of the Kurdish population in Syria and have them rally for independence. Approximately 1.5 million Kurds lived in Syria during this period. They were the largest non-Arab minority, comprising about 10% of the population and were generally excluded from the power centers of the Syrian state.\(^5\) Indirectly, a Syrian Kurdish movement instigated by the PKK had the potential to cause domestic problems. Asad was broadly known for his strategic management of potential political opposition within Syria. Asad recognized the slew of potential threats that could emerge from various factions within the Syrian state, including the Kurds, and took proactive and strategic measures to contain these potential threats, and limit the PKK’s interaction with them.\(^5\) This potential threat was deemed to be plausible, especially in light of the wave of Kurdish opposition to state governments in neighboring states, including Turkey and Iraq.

Historically, the Kurdish ‘threat’ was perceived to be greater than those posed by other minorities, as demonstrated by the disproportionate restrictions placed on the development of


Kurdish identity and culture. Generally, Asad sought to create broad coalitions amongst minorities within Syria. However, since Asad’s regime legitimacy emanated from claims of national unity under Arab nationalism, the Kurds were generally left out of the political coalition, and even considered a threat to this enterprise. Instead, most of the strategies directed at the Kurdish community consisted of repressive actions that were designed to suppress their ethnic identity and political involvement. This extreme treatment was not directed at all ethnic minorities within Syria. Assyrians and Armenians were allowed to express many elements of their identity without similar restrictions.

The disenfranchisement of the Kurds in Syria can be traced to the official adoption of Arab nationalism in 1958. The Kurds were described in a Syrian report as a malignant tumor that needed to be excised from the Arab nation. That same year, the Syrians conducted a census of the Kurds, which resulted in approximately 120,000-150,000 Kurds being stripped of their citizenship, as well as additional infringements including bans on: (a) property ownership, (b) entry into certain professions and (c) the ability to acquire a passport. Following the census, the repressive measures intensified and included denial of: (1) basic education, (2) employment opportunities, (3) voting rights and (4) political party affiliation, as well as the

589 For example, Assyrians and Armenians are allowed to maintain private schools, clubs, and cultural associations, and to continue to teach their respective languages. "Group Denial: Repression of Kurdish Political and Cultural Rights in Syria," ed. Human Rights Watch (Organization) (Human Rights Watch, 2009).
592 Ibid. pp. 33-34; more details can be found in McDowall, A Modern History of the Kurds. pp. 474-475; Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 61; Ziadah and United States Institute of, The Kurds in Syria Fueling Separatist Movements in the Region? p.4. The ramifications of the citizenship stripping remain to this day, with many restrictions placed on the children of individuals that were deemed foreigners in this period. Thus, the implications of this policy have not yet been rectified within Syria.
adoption of a ‘divide and rule’ policy towards the Kurds. The Ba’th regime continued to implement rigid and ruthless policies to counter the potential threat of Kurdish separatism. Between 1973 and 1975, there was an explicit policy of creating an Arab belt by forcibly displacing Kurds, thus separating the Turkish and Syrian Kurds along the border. These measures continued into the 1990s, with many cultural restrictions placed on the Kurds, including an order forbidding Kurdish parents from registering their children with Kurdish names, as well as restrictions on publishing books, newspapers or magazines in Kurdish.

Thus, it seems that the Syrian treatment of the Kurds was designed to contain their perceived threat to the regime’s commitment to Arab nationalism, as well as the possibility of uniting with the broader Kurdish movements in adjacent states. Ultimately, Asad’s treatment of the Kurdish minority within Syria sought to extinguish any possibility of political mobilization among the Kurdish population. These harsh measures suppressed any element of regime threat that might have otherwise emanated from this community.

These severe policies were fairly effective in stifling the Kurdish community. The Syrian Kurdish population was not particularly politically active in the 1990s, especially in comparison with the neighboring Kurdish populations. Unlike Kurds in other states, the Kurdish political parties within Syria never called for independence, nor took up arms against the Syrian

593 In 1963 Lt. Muhammad Talab Hilal published a confidential report entitled “study of national, social, political aspects of the province of Jazira,” where the majority of Kurds resided. In this report he laid out a plan to repress the Kurds and prevent them from developing into a significant problem in Syria. Though it was denied that this was the official policy of the Syrian regime, these policies were implemented over time. Tejel, *Syria’s Kurds: History, Politics and Society*. p. 60; Yildiz and Project, *The Kurds in Syria: The Forgotten People*. p. 35.
The Kurds’ primary grievances against the Syrian regime tended to be consistent with those of most Syrians, mainly a desire to increase their basic political freedoms, garner respect for their human rights, and broaden their economic opportunities. At most, they sought some recognition of the Kurdish population, as well as political representation of Kurdish interests.

Asad was keenly aware that the presence of the PKK could awaken the Kurds’ political consciousness. In order to avoid this potential threat, Asad imposed significant constraints and monitored the PKK’s interaction with the Syrian Kurdish population. As a condition of Syrian support, the PKK abandoned its claim to lead Syria’s Kurds. Ocalan went so far as to suggest that Syria had no Kurds of its own and that those living within Syria were refugees from Turkey, and that it would be desirable if these Kurds moved back northward. The PKK’s statements regarding the legitimacy of the Syrian Kurds reflected a shift from its initial declarations, but were consistent with the broader Syrian state strategy of delegitimization and repression of Syrian Kurdish identity. Instead, the PKK directed any Kurdish nationalist sentiment towards the “true Kurdistan, which is to say, the Kurdish regions of Turkey and Iraq,” and away from any claims against the Syrians. As Celik, a former PKK militant expressed, “It was always clear that we wouldn’t take any action that was against Syria. There was no decision, we just knew that we couldn’t do anything proper...that’s it.” Thus, as a precondition of obtaining Syrian

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598 Brandon, "The Pkk and Syria's Kurds.”
600 Brandon, "The Pkk and Syria's Kurds.”
support, the PKK helped to direct Syrian Kurdish political activity away from the Syrian state, thus reinforcing Syria's policy, and reducing any potential political threat to the regime.\textsuperscript{604} Ultimately, the PKK did not have a direct political claim on the regime and importantly, Syria took great measures to reduce the PKK's potential political threat by suppressing their political and cultural voice and by limiting the PKK's interaction with the Syrian Kurds.

Interestingly, the steps taken to control the PKK and prevent entrenchment validate the potential costs associated with the domestic political relationship. It appears that, despite the potential benefits at the foreign policy level, Asad went to great lengths to prevent the PKK's domestic involvement in Syria and avoid the possibility of having to remove a domestically connected violent group in the future. Asad seems to have understood that once a violent group is domestically involved, it is more difficult for the regime to control the group itself and handle the associated costs of removing it. The importance that the Asad regime placed on preventing this scenario further highlights his fear of the potential range of significant costs that can be borne out of a domestically entrenched group, even for a strong regime, such as that of Syria.

In addition to the low level of political threat directed at the Syrian regime, Syria had a significant power advantage over the PKK. Though exact numbers are difficult to obtain, by 1992, it was estimated that the PKK had about 10,000-12,000 militants and supporters across the region. However, most of its militants resided either in Iraq or within the mountains of Turkey.\textsuperscript{605} Though the PKK had headquarters and training facilities within Syria, the actual

\textsuperscript{604} As will be discussed below, the PKK's cooperation with the Syrian to maintain their low position within the Syrian state created tensions and lowered the population's support amongst some Syrian Kurds.

\textsuperscript{605} Ozdag and Aydinli, "Winning a Low Intensity Conflict: Drawing Lessons from the Turkish Case." p. 105; Criss, "The Nature of Pkk Terrorism in Turkey." p. 20; Michael Radu "The Rise and Fall of the PKK" in Dangerous Neighborhoods" p. 143
number of militants residing within the state was limited. In 1990, the Helwe camp in the Syrian-controlled Lebanese Bekaa Valley, which had grown considerably, had approximately 300 recruits.\textsuperscript{606} Similarly, the PKK's two training facilities outside of Damascus, each contained up to 200 fighters.\textsuperscript{607} Thus, at any given time, the PKK did not have many militants within Syria. Based on these estimates, the number of militants within Syria probably could not have exceeded 1,000. Though many more militants passed through Syria during the 1990s, their continued presence was significantly limited. Furthermore, it appears that the PKK was quite deferential to the Syrian regime. On the few occasions ahead of the 1998 crisis when Syria reigned in PKK activity, it was done without force and the PKK accepted the new conditions without engaging the Syrians.\textsuperscript{608}

In contrast to the PKK's limited power, Syria under Asad was a strong regime that placed a significant emphasis on maintaining domestic stability and regime control. Since the coup in 1970, which brought Hafiz al-Asad to power, Asad had taken many measures to strengthen and expand the role of the Syrian military. Through these efforts, he created a strong military with a personal stake in maintaining the status quo.\textsuperscript{609} Additionally, Asad placed loyal and predominantly Alawi officers in key strategic positions within the military and intelligence, a policy which was designed to prevent future coups and generally eliminate any competition to the regime, particularly internal threats.\textsuperscript{610} Asad also kept a close watch on the loyalty of his

\textsuperscript{606} Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence}. p. 158.

\textsuperscript{607} Ibid. p. 254.

\textsuperscript{608} For example, in 1993 when the Syrians closed down the training camps in the Bekaa Valley, this was done without any noted resistance from the PKK. See McDowall, \textit{A Modern History of the Kurds}. p. 437; Aras, "The Role of Motivation in the Success of Coercive Diplomacy: The 1998 Turkish–Syrian Crisis as a Case Study." p. 212.

\textsuperscript{609} Yildiz and Project, \textit{The Kurds in Syria: The Forgotten People}. p. 43.

military officers, and on occasion, conducted systematic purges among those that opposed his policies. Asad also established an elaborate network of security and intelligence to transmit dissenting views to him, as well as a presidential guard whose sole purpose was to protect the presidency from any threats. Ultimately, the military answered directly to him, and was integral to his longevity as ruler of Syria. The Syrian armed forces were indispensable in preserving the regime, particularly in guarding against any potential threats.

The military’s loyalty was on full display during the suppression of the Islamic uprising, between 1976 and 1982, which culminated with the infamous attacks at Hama in February 1982. In this episode, the military demonstrated its commitment to the Asad regime by fiercely acting against the Islamic uprising and decimating the city of Hama. On February 2, 1982, the military laid siege to the city with artillery and shelling, while special forces stormed the city and severely punished the population. After 27 days, it was estimated that thousands of civilians had been killed and many more were left homeless. This incident demonstrated both Asad’s willingness to take drastic measures to maintain his control, as well as the military’s loyalty in pursuing his orders, even against their fellow Syrians. Action against a foreign implant, such as the PKK, or an ethnic minority like the Kurds, would be significantly less trying than those against fellow Syrians. Thus, the military had both the power and loyalty necessary to act against the PKK if necessary.

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612 Ibid. p.107; Pollack, _Arabs at War: Military Effectiveness, 1948-1991._ p. 480
614 Ibid. p. 81.
616 Yildiz and Project, _The Kurds in Syria: The Forgotten People._ p. 44.
617 Zisser, _Asad’s Legacy: Syria in Transition._ p. 17.
The popular support for the PKK across the Syrian population appears to have been minimal and was not even uniform within the Syrian Kurdish population. The Kurds were portrayed by the Syrian state as outside of the framework of their Arab nationalist mantra. The state’s overall treatment of the Kurds was repressive and limited their opportunities for development and growth. Though the Syrian state clearly supported the PKK, there is no evidence that this support extended to the Arab citizens of Syria. In fact, the generally negative attitude towards Kurds was institutionalized and made it unlikely that a majority of Syrians would find an affinity for, let alone support, the Kurdish plight. Consequently, the Syrian regime was not constrained by the Syrian population’s sentiments towards the PKK.

Ultimately, any popular support seems to have been limited to the Syrian Kurdish community, which comprised only 10% of the population.618 There were Syrian Kurds who fully embraced the PKK, volunteered and were recruited into its ranks. On the other hand, there were those that were suspicious and even against the PKK in light of their ongoing collaboration with the Syrian regime, which oppressed the Kurdish minority. Although Syria was cautious about permitting the PKK to agitate the Kurdish community, Ocalan and other PKK militants initially traveled to the Kurdish areas for propaganda and to collect money for their cause. 619 At the outset of this relationship, Syrian Kurds were excited by the PKK’s message of an independent Kurdistan and the group received much communal sympathy and support for their cause.620 University students were especially drawn to the promise of Kurdish independence, even if that state would be in Turkey. Particularly in comparison to the constrained and limited Syrian

political mobilization, the PKK was disciplined, organized, intellectual and socialist, all traits that appealed greatly to the Kurdish population at large, but especially to the younger Syrian Kurds. With Syria’s blessing, the PKK even began recruiting among Syria’s Kurds. It seems that Syria believed that if the PKK would recruit among the enthusiastic members of the Syrian Kurdish population, it would redirect Kurdish political action away from Damascus. Though exact numbers are difficult to obtain, it is estimated that 7,000 - 10,000 Syrian Kurds died or disappeared in clashes with the Turkish army. Interestingly, several reports suggest that families of these PKK recruits never obtained military call up papers from the Syrian government, indicating that at minimum, the Syrian government was informed of Syrian casualties by the PKK, or at most, that they had come to accept this recruitment in lieu of military service. Either way, these reports indicate that the PKK recruiting activities within the Kurdish areas was done with the tacit consent of the Syrian government. In addition, beyond those that were willing to take an active role in the PKK struggle, there was a willingness to provide food, money and shelter, particularly among the remaining Turkish-Syrian border villages.

However, with the passage of time, it appears that the Syrian Kurdish community slowly began resenting the PKK, both because of their treatment of the Kurdish community, as well as their ongoing collaboration with the Syrian regime. In the 1990s, the PKK began to impose themselves more forcefully onto the Syrian Kurdish community by demanding money, goods

621 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 100.
622 Ibid. p. 100; Tejel, Syria’s Kurds: History, Politics and Society. p. 76.
and services. However, the PKK did not help the Syrian Kurds in a meaningful way for fear of damaging their relations with the Syrian government, even though the Kurds had clearly helped them. Furthermore, Ocalan began to publicly call into question the legitimacy and authenticity of the Syrian Kurds and risked alienating elements of the Syrian community. Nevertheless, while many Syrian Kurds sympathized with the PKK, and viewed their Kurdish identity as central, they also saw themselves as part of the Syrian state. Despite harboring feelings of being marginalized and disrespected by Syrian government, the Kurds still valued their Syrian identity. Consequently, having their loyalty questioned created significant tensions within the PKK. This frustration was further exacerbated by the fact that the PKK received support and sanctuary from the Syrian regime, while the Kurds continued to be treated as second class within Syrian society. This double standard created friction in their relationship with the broader Syrian Kurdish community. Though it is hard to know precisely how widespread this resentment was and how much it detracted from the overall level of support, it is clear that the Syrian Kurdish community’s relationship with the PKK was not one of universal support and not without its problems.

Once again, to assess the domestic political costs of compliance, four elements were examined: 1) the domestic political intentions of the PKK; 2) the PKK’s political and military capacity; 3) Syria’s military capacity; and 4) the popular support of the PKK. Though past

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625 McDowall, A Modern History of the Kurds. p. 479.
629 There are not many systematic surveys of the Kurdish population within Syria, however, in a recent survey of 300 Syrian Kurds, 223 identified themselves first as Syrians, while the rest considered themselves Kurds or people without a civic identity. Ziadeh and United States Institute of, The Kurds in Syria Fueling Separatist Movements in the Region? p. 5.
behavior did not preclude a possible altercation in the future, across all of the dimensions, the Syrian regime appears to have been in full domestic control of the basing agreement. The PKK posed a very limited political threat to the regime and militarily was at a severe disadvantage. Similarly, the only reliable support that the PKK found within Syria was amongst its own co-ethnics and not within the broader Syrian population. At most, this base of support represents a fraction of the Syrian population and a relatively weak and alienated segment, which could not hinder the Syrian regime’s actions. The Syrian regime demonstrated on many occasions that it was willing to act swiftly against the Kurdish population. This combination of factors limited the domestic costs of compliance for the Syrian regime, and indicated that the Syrian regime could act against the PKK without much risk that this matter would escalate. As a result, were Syria to comply with Turkish demands, it could do so with low domestic costs.

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<th>Domestic Costs of Compliance</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Violent Group Political Intentions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PKK has no direct claims on the Syrian regime</td>
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<tr>
<td>Potential clam to Kurdish areas in Syria, though low priority for the PKK and increasingly relinquish claims</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syria aware of potential threat and places great constraints on PKK political activity to prevent potential domestic unrest and mobilization among Syrian Kurds</td>
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<tr>
<th>Violent Group Organizational Capacity</th>
<th>Syria</th>
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<tr>
<td>PKK leadership headquarters in Syria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Limited fighting capacity</td>
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<tr>
<th>Base State Military Capacity</th>
<th>Syria</th>
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<tr>
<td>Syrian state very strong militarily</td>
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<tr>
<td>Troops well trained and loyal and prepared to use force domestically</td>
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<th>Violent Group Popular Support</th>
<th>Syria</th>
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<tr>
<td>No significant popular support within broader Syria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed levels of popular support among Syria’s Kurdish population who represent less than 10% of population</td>
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<tr>
<th>Overall Domestic Costs</th>
<th>LOW</th>
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COERCION CONTEXT ASSESSMENT

In the period preceding the 1998 transitive compellence episode, the costs of compliance were moderate on the foreign policy dimension and low on the domestic front. The combination of these factors created a context that was favorable for success. In particular, the declining costs on the foreign policy front, as a result of the PKK’s declining utility created a greater opportunity for coercive success in this period.

Syria utilized the PKK as an instrumental tool of its foreign policy for two decades. However, the Syrian regime did not share broader foreign goals with the PKK. Rather, it utilized the PKK to balance against Turkey’s growing power in the region, as well as to gain leverage on bilateral foreign policy disputes. In many ways, the PKK was treated by Syria as a pawn in its regional geo-strategic game. Ultimately, while this relationship offered distinctive foreign policy benefits, Syria and the PKK were clearly not aligned in their goals and aspirations. However, as the PKK’s power declined, and subsequently its ability to impose pain on the Turkish regime was reduced, its utility for the Syrian regime invariably decreased. Thus, in this period, the foreign policy costs of complying and severing this relationship were deemed moderate. The Syrians would have had to relinquish some benefit from the PKK, but less than in previous periods where the PKK was successfully mounting its campaign against Turkey.

The domestic costs of compliance, across all of the measures, were deemed to be low. The Syrian regime was unquestionably strong and overpowered any challenge that the PKK could present. Domestically, though the PKK enjoyed many benefits within Syria, these were tightly controlled by the Syrian regime, and Asad took measures to prevent their entrenchment. Consequently, with only minimal cost, their position could be reversed. Furthermore, even among the Kurdish minority, the PKK’s support was not universal. Syria was in a domestic
situation that would likely allow it to act, if necessary, with domestic impunity. As a result, the Syrian regime could act against the PKK without a significant risk of escalation, and thus the costs of compliance were deemed to be low.

Though Syria certainly needed to consider the costs of foregoing its foreign policy benefits, they did not have high costs to contend with domestically that could otherwise limit their action. In all, the combination of moderate, and generally declining, costs on the foreign policy front, coupled with low domestic costs, made the context favorable for coercion success.

OUTCOME OF COERCION

Syria’s initial reaction to the Turkish coercive threats and mobilization in 1998 did not seem promising. In fact, statements released from the Syrian Embassy in Ankara blamed the crisis on an Israel-Turkish military pact and held the Turkish government responsible for the lack of dialogue between the two states. At this time, Syria also massed troops 30-40 kilometers from the Turkish border and installed 36 of its 120 Scud-C missiles 55 kilometers from the border. This initial reaction seemed to suggest a continuation of Syria’s intransigence with respect to the PKK issue.

However, despite these public responses, rifts in the Syrian camp soon became evident. Despite their outward resistance, Syria allowed Hosni Mubarak, President of Egypt, to mediate an agreement between itself and Turkey. Additionally, divisions among Syria’s civilian and military leaders began to become public, particularly because many Syrians were skeptical of a

632 Ibid. pp. 176-177.
633 Olson, Turkey’s Relations with Iran, Syria, Israel, and Russia, 1991-2000: The Kurdish and Islamist Questions. p. 111.
Syrian victory in the event that Turkey escalated to a full-scale war.634

Following these internal debates, Hafiz al-Asad, sent Turkey a verbal message through the Iranian Foreign Minister Kemal Kharrazi, stating that Syria had already begun to arrest PKK members and would expel Ocalan through private back channels.635 By October 9, Ocalan had left Syria for Moscow, and began seeking asylum in Rome, Russia, the Netherlands, and Greece.636 Ocalan explained that after Egypt confirmed that Turkey was serious about its military threats, Syrian officials communicated to him that they faced an unpleasant choice and requested that he leave the country. Ocalan was told by Syrian officials “either war is going to break out between us and Turkey, or we will arrest you and turn you over to the Turks, the choice is yours.”637 Following this interaction, Ocalan slipped out of the country. Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari recently confirmed this account and recalled Hosni Mubarak telling him that after he delivered a letter about the sincerity of Turkey’s threat, Asad agreed to expel Ocalan and avoid a military confrontation with Turkey.638 Though Syria did not fully comply with Turkey’s demand to hand over Ocalan, it is clear that Ocalan left Syria at the behest of the Syrian government.639

By October 13, Syria had signaled through the Iranian and Egyptian foreign ministers that they were taking concrete actions against the PKK and were willing to begin unconditional

635 Ibid. p.178.
636 McDowall, A Modern History of the Kurds. p. 443; see also Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence. p. 279. On February 15, 1999, after several failed attempts by Turkey to extradite him, he was eventually apprehended in Nairobi, as he attempted to fly to South Africa.
638 “Zebari: Turkey was Behind Ocalan’s 1998 Expulsion from Syria,” Rudaw, November 11, 2013. Available at: http://rudaw.net/english/middleeast/iraq/17112013
talks with Turkey.640 One week later, Turkey and Syria signed the Adana agreement which laid out a clear framework for the parties going forward. In response to the coercive demands laid out by Turkey, Damascus assured Ankara that Ocalan was not in Syria and would not be allowed to return.641 Syria finally recognized the PKK as a terrorist organization. The regime reaffirmed that the PKK camps were no longer operational and they would not be permitted to reestablish camps, other facilities of shelter, or conduct commercial activities within its borders. Likewise, Syria would no longer allow the transit of PKK members across the country. The state also confirmed that PKK members had already been arrested and the names of these individuals would be passed on to Turkish authorities.642 Finally, in an effort to maintain quiet at the border, Syria agreed that it would not permit any activity from its territory which in any way jeopardized the security and stability of Turkey, including the flow of weapons, logistics, material or financial support and propaganda.

To ensure that this agreement was upheld, several measures were agreed upon, including: (a) a direct phone link between the security officials on both sides, (b) special representatives in the diplomatic missions, (c) monitoring of the agreement, and (d) an ongoing dialogue with Lebanon to address any residual PKK activities found therein. Ultimately, the Adana agreement was the most comprehensive framework to date between Syria and Turkey, and most of Turkey’s demands were met in full.

The Adana agreement represented a major step in ending Syrian support for the PKK.

641 "Minutes of the Agreement Signed by Turkey and Syria in Adana (Unofficial Translation)," (1998).
642 Ibid.
Shortly after the agreement, there were already signs that Syria was upholding its end of the bargain. Aside from the major step of expelling Abdullah Ocalan, between 300-400 PKK fighters were arrested and driven out of Syria. In all, the coercive strategy which began in earnest on October 1, came to a rapid conclusion whereby almost all of Turkey's demands had been met within a period of less than three weeks. As a result of this campaign, Syria halted its support of the group and PKK-related violence within Turkey was reduced significantly.

What remains remarkable about the October 1998 coercive crisis is the rapid reversal of Syrian policy after a prolonged period of sponsoring the PKK. Turkey clearly escalated its threats and appeared more credible, both through its communication of verbal threats, as well as its mobilization of troops. While the Turkish efforts were certainly intensified, the crisis concluded rapidly without a single shot being fired. Furthermore, while Syria had been quite intransigent in its previous dealings with Turkey, at the Adana agreement, it met Turkey's demands without preconditions. Before the ink had even dried on the agreement, Syria had proactively taken steps to evict the PKK from its territory, most importantly by expelling Ocalan. These actions represented a clear departure from Syria's prior behavior and demonstrated a clear coercive success for Turkey.

Ultimately, a reexamination of the 1998 Turkish coercive crisis reveals a context that was quite favorable to coercion success. On the one side of the coercion equation, Turkey employed an increasingly aggressive and credible coercive strategy that demanded Syrian attention. Furthermore, the international forums utilized to convey the coercive message and the

643 Makovsky, "Defusing the Turkish-Syrian Crisis: Whose Triumph?.
confirmation by Egyptian and American policymakers of Turkish resolve further heightened the stature of this coercive crisis beyond those that occurred in prior periods. However, this fact alone does not appear to be sufficient for explaining the outcome, as Asad had evaded Turkish threats for two decades. While the threats were increased, they were still in line with previous threats that had been ignored. On the other side of the equation, there were changes in the relationship between the PKK and the Syrian regime on the foreign policy dimension, as well as a corresponding reduction in the costs of compliance. These changes in the foreign policy utility of the PKK lowered the potential benefits for Syria. Asad was likely aware of the changing tide with regard to the PKK, and in the face of a potential escalation with Turkey, he was finally willing to comply with their demands. This confluence of events, which is difficult to completely disentangle, appear to be mutually reinforcing, and together accounted for the swift compliance of the Syrian regime.

**ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS**

Most examinations of the Syrian-Turkish crisis tend to focus on the question of what motivated Turkey’s shift in policy towards a more escalatory coercive stance. While this is an important question and there is little doubt that Turkey’s coercive threats in 1998 exceeded those previously made in 1993 and 1996, these studies focus on the Turkish side of the coercion equation with relatively little emphasis on Syria’s calculations. Although this crisis resulted in a stunning success for Turkey, at the time, it was not a foregone conclusion that Syria would so

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645 For example, see: Aykan, "The Turkish-Syrian Crisis of October 1998: A Turkish View.", Makovsky and Eisenstadt, "Turkish-Syrian Relations: A Crisis Delayed?.", Mufti, "Daring and Caution in Turkish Foreign Policy.", Olson, *Turkey’s Relations with Iran, Syria, Israel, and Russia, 1991-2000: The Kurdish and Islamist Questions.*
quickly relinquish its ties to the PKK.

To date, the literature has put forth two alternative explanations to provide insight into Syria's decision making in 1998. The first hypothesis suggests that because Syria did not share a 'resonant identity' with the PKK, it was willing to abandon its relationship with them more swiftly than others with whom it may share a resonant identity. The second supposition focuses on the role of immediate domestic challenges in explaining coercive outcomes and argues that Asad's concerns about bequeathing the state to his son Bashar increased his willingness to accede to Turkish demands.

**Resonant Identity**

The first alternative theory suggests that coercion was more likely to succeed because Syria did not share a 'resonant identity' with the PKK. A resonant identity includes situations whereby "the sponsor-state and the group can have a common factor of identity, such as ethnicity, nationalism, religion or ideology, and these projected factors can create common aspirations and motives." The theory argues that when the resonant identity exists, it makes coercion more difficult, and vice versa.

This line of reasoning suggests that Syria was willing to comply with Turkish demands because of its lack of resonant identity and highlights that Syria's treatment of the PKK is a departure from its treatment of the Palestinian groups. This argument privileges shared identity, or lack thereof, above other strategic considerations. In this case, it is clear, that Syria does not have a resonant identity with the PKK, however, the independent effect of this variable is

646 Aras, "Similar Strategies, Dissimilar Outcomes: An Appraisal of the Efficacy of Turkey's Coercive Diplomacy with Syria and in Northern Iraq."

647 Ibid. p. 590.
difficult to assess in this case, since it is constant throughout. Although the Syrian regime had no identity ties with the PKK, this distinction did not lead them to concede to Turkey in any of the previous coercive encounters. The Syrians maintained their relationship with the PKK for almost two decades despite ongoing calls to sever it, as well as the absence of any resonant identity. While it may be the case that the lack of a shared identity reduced the costs of action, this factor did not preclude other strategic considerations and was certainly not determinative in predicting coercion success.

Additionally, this theory posits that resonant identity should have led Asad to be constrained in acting against co-ethnics, and in particular, the Palestinians. Although resonant identity is present between Syria and the Palestinian groups, this variable did not preclude Asad taking costly action against them when he deemed it to be in his interest. Asad acted in a strategic fashion, often placing limitations on their actions, such as prohibiting the crossing of the ceasefire lines. Specifically, in 1976, Asad acted defiantly against Palestinian and leftist forces in Lebanon despite an ostensible resonant identity. Though Asad's action's vis-à-vis the Palestinians were clearly costly for the regime, and would have implications domestically and internationally, he nonetheless intervened when he deemed that it was in Syria's national interest. Once again, resonant identity did not supersede other considerations, nor historically preclude action against the Palestinians.

At minimum, Asad's willingness to act against groups who presumably share a resonant

identity, calls into question the determinative and independent effect of this variable on coercion decisions. While this element is clearly absent in the Syria case, the regime’s lack of constraints even with groups with which it shares this identity, suggests that while it may be a factor in the decision making, it alone is not sufficient to predict the state’s response.

**Domestic Regime Weakness**

The Syria case could also be viewed through another lens, by focusing on developments that weakened the regime domestically, and in turn, may have affected Asad’s motivation for complying with Turkey’s demands. Damla Aras argues that in 1998, Asad had diminished motivation for continuing to sponsor the PKK, because of his declining health and concerns about bequeathing to his son, Bashar al-Asad, a smooth leadership transition upon his death.\(^{650}\) In light of this relative decline in regime stability, the argument is that Syria was unwilling to engage in a war with Turkey to protect the PKK.\(^{651}\)

This argument, while alluding to some of the factors outlined in the case study, gives too much credence to the immediate domestic leadership challenges within the regime and their impact on motivation. In essence, this theory appears to have two implications. First, in the absence of Asad’s declining health, and impending transition of power, Asad would have not have complied with Turkey’s demands and may have been willing to risk war for the sake of the PKK. However, as demonstrated throughout the chapter, the value of the PKK for Asad had declined in this period, and thus, while his motivation had declined, it is not clear that this was driven solely, or primarily by his health. In fact, there is no direct evidence that his health


\(^{651}\) Ibid.
factored into his calculations. In 1998, Asad was certainly in declining health and the question of succession was certainly of great importance to him, and likely part of his calculation, it is still unclear how much this issue actually influenced his overall motivation towards the PKK.

Second, an implication of this theory should be that the declining stability of the regime, as dictated by Asad's health, would have led to a more cautious ruling posture, on both domestic and foreign fronts, in order to ensure his son's quiet rise to power. However, during this period, it did not appear that Asad allowed his illness to substantially change his ruling behavior in other meaningful ways. Although Asad refrained from making many public appearances at this time, Zisser explains that "Assad's regime does appear stable and his control over the country firm...Observations of Assad's action in the course of the [1998]...did not reveal any substantive changes...even though the pace of Assad's activities has slowed, which is understandable, nothing seems to have influenced his ability to rule effectively."⁶⁵² Similarly, Asad did not move away from his general modus operandi of sponsoring violent non-state groups, and continued to allow Palestinian groups to reside within Syria. In all, the relative decline in regime strength did not seem to affect Syria's overall foreign policy posture.

Ultimately, while Asad certainly demonstrated that he was willing to sacrifice the PKK in response to Turkey's coercion, and thus likely had diminished motivation, it is unclear that this shift was attributable to his illness, rather than the cost-benefit analysis driven primarily by the diminished value of the long-standing PKK relationship and the increased risk of a military confrontation with Turkey. An examination of the relationship over time, suggests that Asad utilized the PKK in an instrumental way from the beginning, and even took precautions to limit

the costs associated with severing the relationship, if necessary. Given the fact that the benefits of the PKK had declined, it is hard to imagine that even in good health, Asad would have risked a war with Turkey over this relationship. The maintenance of the status quo in most other areas of Asad’s rule further questions the effect of his health on his rule. Ultimately, the limits of this relationship seem to be more relevant than the proximate changes in the general domestic setting. This assessment does not intend to suggest that Asad’s succession plan for his regime did not play any role, it just does not seem that it was the most important factor for explaining Asad’s compliance to Turkish demands. Based on Asad’s traditionally calculating and pragmatic approach to foreign policy, it seems that he would likely have complied in a more stable domestic circumstance.

CONCLUSION

An examination of the Syria-PKK relationship from 1980, when Ocalan relocated to Syria, until the termination of the relationship in 1998, highlights the complexity present, even within ostensible state sponsors. Although Syria purposefully and actively maintained its relationship throughout this period, this situation did not preclude the possibility of coercive success, as was clearly observed in 1998.

The case of Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Syria highlights the importance of examining the intricacies of the relationship between the base state and the violent group, even among state sponsors. Even when states make deliberate choices regarding their support for groups, this political stance does not enable one to draw subsequent assumptions about the depth of their relationship, or the state’s willingness to continue to support these groups, particularly when faced with potential costs. Furthermore, as clearly seen in the Syria case, regional developments
can reduce the value of the violent non-state group, and therefore lead the state to more easily reconsider its basing relationship. Rather, focusing on both the specific benefits accrued through the relationship, as well as the costs of altering it, it is possible to more accurately assess the depth of the relationship and determine whether a state can be coerced into changing the status quo.

Syria has long been considered one of the most notorious state sponsors of terrorism. Consequently, the successful coercive outcome in 1998 may lead one to consider how this approach could be replicated with respect to the other groups that Syria sponsors, such as Palestinian Islamic Jihad or Hamas. In fact, shortly after the Turkish success, some Israeli scholars began to consider the Turkish lessons that could be extrapolated to Israel’s benefit. Most of the lessons drew their primary conclusions around the differences in risks between Turkey and Israel. The relatively low cost with which Syria gave up the PKK, was particularly appealing to others facing similar problems with groups that Syria sponsors. However, following this encounter with Turkey, Syria did not reevaluate its role as a state sponsor of terrorism, writ large, but only its role as state sponsor of the PKK.

While Syria, like other states in the international system, plays the role of state sponsor to many groups, each of these groups has an independent relationship with the state on both a foreign policy and domestic level. Syria’s relationship with the PKK is different than its relationship with many of the Palestinian groups. Even amongst those groups, there are various nuances as well, perhaps evidenced most clearly by Syria’s disparate treatment of each of these groups.  

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groups over time. Consequently, one of the important lessons to be gleaned from the Syria case is that state sponsors are not monolithic in their relationship with violent groups. These differences are important to consider when evaluating the efficacy of coercing a state into altering, or ideally, severing, its relationship with a group. Ultimately, for predictive purposes, assessing the circumstances surrounding a particular coercive encounter proves to be just as critical a consideration as evaluating the nature of the relationship between the base state and the group.

Finally, while the domestic costs of action were low in this case, Asad’s actions to control these costs highlight their significance. Although Asad actively sought relationships with violent non-state groups, he was not naïve about their potential to threaten the regime and impose significant costs if they are left unchecked. Asad was pragmatic in his usage, and his regime’s proactive steps appear to have limited any potential domestic costs.

654 As mentioned previously, Syria acted against the PLO/Fatah in 1976, but continued to support other Palestinian groups in this same time frame as well as later on, thus highlighting that these relationships are not monolithic.
Map 3: SYRIA AND TURKEY. Map reproduced from Perry-Castañeda Library, available at:
CHAPTER 4: TURKEY VIS-À-VIS THE PKK IN NORTHERN IRAQ

**TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 January – 28 February 1991</td>
<td>Operation Desert Storm</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 August 1991</td>
<td>First Turkish Coercive Raid since OPC</td>
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<tr>
<td>19 May 1992</td>
<td>Kurdish Regional Government elections</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 October – 15 November 1992</td>
<td>Operation Northern Iraq (Kuzey Irak)</td>
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<td>May 1994</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 March 1995 – 4 May 1995</td>
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<td>31 August 1996</td>
<td>KDP-Saddam Hussein jointly attack the PUK</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 May – 7 July 1997</td>
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</tr>
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<td>September 1998</td>
<td>Washington Agreement – resolving the Iraqi Kurdistan Civil War</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Since 1984, the Turkish government has been entangled in a long, hard fought battle with the Partiya Karkari Kurdistan (PKK). The regime has consistently regarded the group as one of its top security threats. Throughout this period, the PKK has utilized the mountains of northern Iraq as a base of operations for its insurgency against Turkey. This base has proven to be an intractable irritant to the Turkish regime due to its proximity to the Turkish border, as well as the challenge of patrolling and monitoring the mountain ranges.

In 1991, Turkey's southern neighbor was dramatically transformed. During this period, a diverse international coalition carried out Operation Provide Comfort (OPC), a humanitarian mission aimed at protecting Kurdish refugees fleeing Iraqi military action. OPC created a safe haven for Iraqi Kurds, enabling them to finally achieve some level of autonomy and self-governance. Shortly thereafter, a new, quasi-state emerged called the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG). Consequently, the Turkish government had a new actor to engage in its efforts to rein in the PKK — the Iraqi Kurds, as represented by the KRG. From that point on, the Iraqi Kurdish parties were simultaneously working to consolidate their power within the new government while also contending with Turkey's coercive tactics.

This case is particularly interesting because it challenges the conventional wisdom and demonstrates the theory's explanatory power in cases of nascent weak states. Additionally, this case tests the theory among transnational co-ethnics, as the PKK and the KRG were both 655 For more on the PKK's insurgency in Turkey and the resulting challenges see: Bacik and Coskun, "The PKK Problem: Explaining Turkey's Failure to Develop a Political Solution.", Barkey and Fuller, Turkey's Kurdish Question, Criss, "The Nature of PKK Terrorism in Turkey.", Gunter, "The Kurdish Problem in Turkey.", Imset, The PKK: A Report on Separatist Violence in Turkey, 1973-1992, McDowall, A Modern History of the Kurds.

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The combination of a weak state and the shared ethnic identity makes this case a harder test for the theory, as the conventional wisdom would predict that these two factors should make coercive success more difficult to achieve.

Between 1991 and 1997, Turkey applied a consistent military coercive strategy against the KRG, yet the Iraqi Kurdish response varied significantly throughout this period. At times, the Turkish government successfully induced the Iraqi Kurds to contain the PKK by securing their cooperation both during and after military actions. During these particular periods, the two dominant Iraqi Kurdish parties, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) cracked down on the PKK by ejecting them from their mountain strongholds and creating checkpoints which significantly hampered their ability to act from within northern Iraq. However, at other key junctures, Turkish coercion failed to achieve its desired ends. In these instances, Turkey was unable to break through the alliance that had formed between the PKK and the PUK.

Given the consistency of the Turkish coercive strategy, what accounts for the varying responses of the Iraqi Kurdish parties? Since many elements across these cases remained the same, including the coercive strategy, regime type, and other structural factors, these circumstances once again create a distinct opportunity to explore how the shifting foreign policy and domestic factors altered the costs of compliance for the KRG and ultimately affected the

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respective coercive outcomes.

Three coercive episodes merit a closer comparative analysis: the military incursions in 1991-92, 1995, and 1997. These raids are well suited for a focused structured comparison because they were significant and costly raids, conducted in a similar fashion, and each elicited change in KRG policies. Ultimately, the coercive pressure leading up to the raids, as well as the raids themselves, were significant and altered the status quo in a meaningful way. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that at minimum, the events would elicit some reconsideration by the Kurdish parties with respect to their basing of the PKK. The similarities between these raids enables one to hold constant the specific conduct and implementation of the coercive raid, regime type, leadership, and other structural factors, and focus more narrowly on the changing contexts and their impact on the costs of compliance and the Iraqi Kurdish reactions.

Consistent with the predictions that spring from transitive compellence theory, I demonstrate that the divergent outcomes within each period can be explained by shifts in the foreign and domestic costs of compliance for the KRG, particularly on the domestic dimension. Throughout this period, there were significant foreign and domestic changes that affected the calculus of the Iraqi Kurdish parties and facilitated or challenged their ability to act against the PKK. Particularly, the civil war between the dominant Iraqi Kurdish parties, the KDP and the PUK, loomed large over their cost-benefit calculations of containing the PKK. Though not a foregone conclusion, as domestic costs increased, Turkish coercive success became elusive. However, once these costs decreased, it once again became a palatable option for the Iraqi Kurdish parties.

This chapter proceeds in the following manner: first, I provide an overview of the establishment of the quasi-state in northern Iraq. Second, I examine the challenge for Turkey of
PKK basing in northern Iraq throughout this period. I then examine the Turkish government’s general coercive strategy. Following this discussion is a detailed exploration of three coercive episodes: 1991-92, 1995, and 1997. In each case, I examine the details of the military incursions, the foreign and domestic relationships, the costs of compliance, and the coercive outcome of each raid. Finally, I consider and ultimately reject the potential alternative explanations.

**OPERATION PROVIDE COMFORT AND THE QUASI-STATE IN NORTHERN IRAQ**

In the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf War, the United States and its allies, France, the United Kingdom, and Turkey, conducted Operation Provide Comfort (OPC) to aid Kurdish refugees fleeing Iraqi military action. This operation provided the Iraqi Kurds with an opportunity for self-rule, through the establishment of a quasi-state. Given the shelter provided by the Iraqi government, the Iraqi Kurds quickly consolidated power in the region and took important measures to internally and externally be regarded as the ruling authority within northern Iraq.

In April 1991, U.N. resolution 688 established a no-fly zone north of the 36th parallel, which developed into a de facto autonomous region under Kurdish control. Initially, the no-fly zone was intended to protect the C-130 Hercules transport planes that were delivering aid to the refugees. However, over time, the mission served "to reassure the Kurds and to warn the Iraqis not to stampede another exodus to the Iranian and Turkish frontiers." 657

Consequently, in the spring of 1991, for the first time in their collective history, Kurds had the opportunity, albeit limited, for self-rule under the newly established, Kurdish Regional

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Government (KRG). The lack of Iraqi control over this region led one analyst to call it Kurdish "statehood by stealth." Yet, the Iraqi government did not willingly cede power and imposed an economic blockade on northern Iraq that cut off the workers' salaries and prevented the flow of many essential goods, causing numerous shortages. The blockade further strengthened the resolve of the Kurds, who were ostensibly being compelled to establish their own government in order to survive. The KRG ultimately justified many of its actions on the fact that Iraq had essentially abandoned its administrative function within Kurdistan. "The situation of Iraqi Kurdistan was quite unparalleled in history, for there was a U.N. protected enclave within a foreign state, at the same time economically severed from that state, and to all outward purposes, functioning as an independent territory." In essence, the Kurds had been granted a quasi-state.

The Kurds quickly recognized and embraced this opportunity for self-rule and took steps to actualize their self-governance. Jalal Talabani, the leader of the PUK, explained that "Saddam Hussein's aggression against Kuwait ... led to the emergence of a situation in Iraq which we exploited to establish a free local administration [because] none of the region's states can allow the Iraqi regime to launch a new aggression against Kurdistan." In this unique environment, the KDP and the PUK, the two leading political parties, elected to join together to form the KRG. Under this arrangement, both parties began consolidating power and performing the duties of a

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659 Tripp, *A History of Iraq*, p. 272
national government. In May 1992, the KRG held its first elections. These elections confirmed that only the KDP and the PUK had a large following among the Iraqi Kurds. The KDP and PUK received 45% and 43.6% of the vote, respectively, and agreed to split their power evenly within Parliament.\(^\text{64}\) While both parties were left disappointed by not being declared the outright winner, the results were ultimately accepted by the parties, as well as the people.

In addition to consolidating the centers of power within Iraqi Kurdistan, the elections also advanced the development of the burgeoning quasi state. Talabani "personally believe[d] that the elections proved that the Kurdish people are worthy of freedom and capable of engaging in democracy and the electoral process, despite the lack of experience... [this election showed that] this people can exercise government in their region and that they deserve to enjoy the right to self-determination within a unified democratic Iraq."\(^\text{65}\) While there were some limited allegations of fraud and ballot tampering, by and large, the Kurds managed to conduct a fair and free election.\(^\text{66}\)

With the election successfully administered, the KRG turned its attention to other state-like functions. By the end of 1992, the KRG had established a state flag, a police force, and a court system, as well as security and intelligence forces, a bank, a postal service, and an agency for issuing passports.\(^\text{67}\) In addition, the KRG possessed a significant military force through the Peshmerga forces of the PUK and the KDP, estimated to be at least 20,000 regular fighters, and

\(^\text{64}\) McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds.*, p. 380-1; Some scholars have placed the results even closer, stating that the KDP received 50.22% of the vote, compared to the PUK with 49.78%, Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope.*, p. 88

\(^\text{65}\) Talabani quoted in Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 300.


as many as 40,000 civilian militias. Though not a fully integrated modern force, the combined peshmerga forces were relatively well trained for combat in the mountains, and had acquired increasingly sophisticated weaponry, much of which was captured from Saddam Hussein. These forces, in combination with their police force, enabled the Iraqi Kurds to provide security for their population. During this same period, ministries were established and responsibilities were split between the two ruling parties. In the subsequent year, the administration began rebuilding towns and improving infrastructure which had been devastated in the Iraqi assaults. In addition, they began to perform economic functions such as monitoring and taxing the border crossings with Turkey and Iran. They even exported 25,000 barrels of oil to Turkey through a business entity known as Kurdoil. The U.S. State Department recognized the KRG’s increasing capacity in noting that “the Kurdish Front has raised enough to pay some salaries and maintain some semblance of a social services network.” The majority of their income came from their custom posts at Dohuk, Rawanduz and Raniya. However, despite their growing administrative capacity, the Kurds remained cautious about their newfound freedom and took measures to deflect criticism. For example, they continued to fly the Iraqi flag and outfit their police in Iraqi uniforms. Though the Kurds stopped short of declaring independence, and were inexperienced in administration, they nonetheless were performing the basic functions of a state.

The international community was ambivalent about the burgeoning quasi-state that was

668 Gunter, Kurds of Iraq, pg. 40-41.
670 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 110
671 Gunter, The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope., p. 94
672 Ibid., p. 94
673 Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 301
674 Randal, After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness? : My Encounters with Kurdistan., p. 30
forming in northern Iraq. Simultaneously, there was praise for the efforts to establish a
democracy within the region, as well as a stated desire for Iraq to stay intact. This
incongruence is reflected in the fact that while many states within the international community
withheld formal recognition, they nonetheless began dealing with the Kurdish leaders as if they
represented a state. As early as February 1992, Ma’sud Barzani, the head of the KDP, travelled
throughout Europe to meet with heads of state and inform them of the Kurdish viewpoint, as well
as to establish bilateral relations. During the summer following the elections, Barzani and
Talabani were part of a large delegation which traveled to the U.S., France, and Saudi Arabia, as
well as several other stops. In the United States, Talabani met with Secretary of State Warren
Christopher and NSA advisor Anthony Lake. Interestingly, in the run up to the Gulf War, Jalal
Talabani went to Washington D.C. to join the international effort, but the “State Department
cold-shouldered him,” thus highlighting the significant shift in American attitudes towards
Kurdish leaders following the implementation of OPC. Talabani explained, “that even when
Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, the State Department was not ready to listen to me. I went to
the United States, but it refused to see me.” Yet, by the end of 1992, the United States had a
representative in Arbil and Sulamaniya, and the Kurds had individual representatives in
Washington. The United Kingdom also recognized the region as a separate entity from Iraq,

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675 Yildiz and Kurdish Human Rights Project., The Kurds in Iraq : The Past, Present and Future., p. 46-7
676 Gunter, The Kurds of Iraq : Tragedy and Hope., p. 87
677 Michael M. Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq : A Political Analysis (New York: St. Martin's Press,
1999), p. 29
678 Relations between the US and Iraqi Kurdish leaders were extremely limited ahead of OPC. The state department
had a deliberate policy of stringently restricting visas to Kurdish leaders. Even in embassies with Kurdish
populations, such as Damascus, the State Department refused to meet with them, Randal, After Such Knowledge,
What Forgiveness? : My Encounters with Kurdistan., p. 38,88-9
679 Talabani quoted in Anderson Jon Lee, "Mr. Big; Profiles," The New Yorker, Feb 05 2007.
680 Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 304
as reflected in its attempt to return asylum seekers to Iraqi Kurdistan. 681

Importantly, Turkey also began to relate to the KRG and its associated political parties as a quasi-state. After the establishment of OPC, Turgut Ozal, Turkey’s President, made direct contact with Barzani and Talabani and invited them to hold general discussions. This engagement represented the first time that the Kurdish parties were able to establish relations with a regional power at the highest political level, directly with the president. Previous communication had always occurred at the secondary level, usually through the security establishment. 682 Ozal used this meeting to address the Kurdish question at home, and gain influence with northern Iraq. On March 8, 1991, the first formal meeting occurred between the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Tugay Ozceri, Talabani, and a senior Barzani aide, Muhsin Diyazi. 683 Barzani subsequently visited Ankara and met with President Turgut Ozal, the new Turkish Prime Minister, Suleyman Demirel, Deputy Prime Minister, and Erdal Inonu, Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin, among others. 684 During this visit, the Turks treated the KDP leaders like unofficial heads of state. 685 The KDP and the PUK subsequently established offices in the Turkish capital of Ankara, which had previously been unthinkable in light of prior Turkish-Kurdish relations. 686 However, Turkey did not formally reciprocate the representation and did not open offices within Iraqi Kurdistan. 687 In addition to formal government relations, the Iraqi Kurds and the Turks also established trade relations, predominantly through the Khobar

681 Yildiz and Kurdish Human Rights Project., The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future., p. 47
683 Philip Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003.), p. 321
684 Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 295
685 Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 324
686 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 38
687 Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 304
crossing along their shared border.\textsuperscript{688} Despite engaging directly with the leaders of the KRG, Turkey did not officially recognize the establishment of the government in northern Iraq.\textsuperscript{689} Turkey was quite torn about this new entity, as they were dealing domestically with the PKK insurgency, which was working towards increased rights for and recognition of the Turkish Kurds. This increased engagement represented a deep contradiction in Turkey's policy towards the Kurds and some feared it was a bad precedent.

Most importantly, the Turks regarded border patrol and the general containment of the PKK, as falling under the jurisdiction of the KRG, KDP and PUK. For example, in 1991, ahead of a Turkish military incursion into northern Iraq, both Talabani and Barzani were warned of the operation, whereas Baghdad was not. The Turks explained, "it is normal that the Iraqi Government should not be given any information about military operations north of 36 degrees north latitude."\textsuperscript{690} Turkey's differing attitudes towards Baghdad and the KRG highlight the extent to which the Iraqi state was no longer viewed as the ruling authority in the region. Instead, the two main Kurdish parties now shared that title. Ultimately, the function of securing one's borders, and preventing cross-border violence, is clearly a state responsibility which the Kurds now owned. Turkish threats that were directed towards the KRG, KDP, and PUK highlighted the extent to which the Turks recognized the shift to the new governing authority in the area.

Despite the KRG's progress in self-rule, tensions between the KDP and the PUK erupted, leading to a civil war in the region. In April 1994, violence broke out and continued, with

\textsuperscript{688} Gunter, \textit{The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope.}, p. 94
\textsuperscript{689} Robins, \textit{Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.}, p. 325
\textsuperscript{690} Gunter, \textit{The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope.}, p. 74
varying degrees of intensity, until September 1998, when both parties came to a formal agreement in Washington, D.C. Although this period damaged the ostensible unity the parties had fostered through the KRG, the parties still managed to collectively control northern Iraq. However, due to the ongoing internal dispute, Iraqi Kurdistan was effectively partitioned between the parties – the KDP administered the northern region and the PUK administered the southern region. During this period, despite the tumult, the political system stabilized within each party and the economic and security conditions significantly improved within each region. Ultimately, “Kurdistan had two executive jurisdictions, two premiers, two cabinets and two army forces.” The close political and military balance between the parties throughout this period, despite their shifting alliances, created stability, albeit with little cooperation amongst the parties. Gareth Stansfield, a renowned expert on the Kurds, noted that the Kurds created “a consociational type of political and administrative system,” amongst the parties. Though far from perfect, the KDP and PUK remained the source of governance in the region. Furthermore, despite the infighting, Turkey continued to relate to the parties as the arbiter of the region and did not lower its expectations with respect to controlling the border and the PKK. Thus, even in this tumultuous period, northern Iraq could still be regarded as a quasi-state since the KDP and the PUK managed to maintain control over their respective areas and preserve the state-like elements of northern Iraq.

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691 Robert W. Olson, “The Kurdish Question and Turkey’s Foreign Policy Towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf War.” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s : Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 105
694 Ibid., p. 86
695 Ibid., p. 86
Even at this nascent stage, the KRG fulfilled many state-like functions with relative proficiency. While not formally a state, the KRG actually governed more efficiently than many weak states. However, one ongoing challenge to the quasi-state was the persistent internal competition between the KDP and the PUK. Although the parties were technically under the umbrella of the KRG, they often acted independently, and were vying for additional power. The Iraqi Kurdish parties had the challenging task of responding to Turkish coercion while simultaneously consolidating their power internally. Ultimately, navigating through this demanding environment, rife with competing interests, only further highlights the latent capacity that base states, even the weakest ones, possess, as well as the broader relevance of the theory.

The Challenge of PKK Bases in Northern Iraq

The PKK presented a formidable challenge to Turkey's control of its Kurdish areas, as well as a persistent terrorist threat throughout Turkey. This conflict extended into northern Iraq, as the PKK increasingly utilized the mountains of northern Iraq as a base from where they could train, organize, recruit, launch attacks, and retreat. The elimination of these bases and the prevention of cross border activity ultimately became a top strategic priority for the Turkish government in their fight against the PKK.

In the early 1980s, the PKK began using Iraqi Kurdistan as a vital base of operations for its terrorist activities. Nonetheless, when the PKK's leaders escaped from Turkey, Abdullah Ocalan, amidst some intense internal debate, decided to set up his organizational headquarters.

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696 For more detail regarding the PKK threat within Turkey see Chapter 3: Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Syria; Bacik and Coskun, "The Pkk Problem: Explaining Turkey's Failure to Develop a Political Solution.", Barkey and Fuller, Turkey's Kurdish Question, Svante E Cornell, "The Kurdish Question in Turkish Politics," Orbis 45, no. 1 (2002), Michael M. Gunter, The Kurds and the Future of Turkey (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.
within Syria. However, Iraq still remained an essential base for their operations. Ocalan set up a network of bases both within Iraq and Iran where they could house many of the militants and more easily launch attacks from the rugged mountains. Iraq became a convenient safe haven in part because Saddam Hussein had lost control of much of northern Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war.

Initially, PKK militants settled in camps that belonged to the Iranian Kurdish Democratic Party (KDPI). However, Ocalan sought to establish a more permanent spot that would enable his fighters to have free passage in northern Iraq, stage attacks within Turkey, and withdraw if necessary. This staging area within Iraq was crucial for the PKK, because without it, the guerrilla attacks would have been launched almost entirely from within hostile Turkish territory. In 1982, to advance this effort, Ocalan reached an agreement with Barzani, in his capacity as head of the KDP, to allow the PKK to use the border territory which was controlled by Barzani’s fighters. Under the agreement, the KDP allowed Ocalan’s militants to build camps and agreed not to prevent them from crossing into Turkey.

In the early 1980s, the PKK was in its nascent stages and the Iraqi bases were still fairly limited. However, over the next decade, the organization grew in number and military capabilities, and by the 1990s, it became a formidable force within Iraq. During this period, it was estimated that the PKK had between two and four thousand guerillas located in ten mobile

697 Marcus, *Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.*, p. 59
698 McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds.*, p. 422; Gunter, "Transnational Sources of Support for the Kurdish Insurgency in Turkey.", p. 260-262
700 Marcus, *Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.*, p. 69
701 Ibid., p. 70
702 Ibid., p. 69-70
703 Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.*, p. 313
bases along the Turkish-Iraqi border, in the area under the control of the Iraqi Kurdistan Front (IKF) and protected by allied forces through OPC.\textsuperscript{704} Each mobile camp was fortified by the support of approximately 100 fighters.\textsuperscript{705} In addition to setting up mobile bases within the mountains, the PKK also established a larger, more permanent site, referred to as Lolan. Lolan was the PKK’s largest camp within Iraqi Kurdistan, and was located in a clutch of valleys and mountains at the triangle where Turkey, Iran and Iraq intersect. The proximity of the camp to the border made it a particularly strategic location for PKK operations and an ideal spot for a central camp.\textsuperscript{706} Lolan had previously served as the KDP headquarters and also housed their clandestine radio stations.\textsuperscript{707} The PKK saw similar value in this locale and set up its press and publications center at Lolan.\textsuperscript{708}

Despite Lolan’s strategic advantages, at certain junctures, the PKK was compelled to utilize other outposts for similar functions. In October 1992, following a Turkish coercive raid, the PKK temporarily withdrew from its bases along the Turkish-Iraqi border and established a new training site far to the south in Zele, an area bordering Iran in the Zagros Mountains.\textsuperscript{709} The PKK even established bases and safe houses in some of the main Iraqi Kurdish cities, including Sulamaniya, the PUK stronghold.\textsuperscript{710}

\textsuperscript{704} The Iraqi Kurdistan Front was a conglomerate organization which included the peshmerga fighters from the main Iraqi parties, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), as well as several smaller ones, Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 37; Robins, Suits and Uniforms : Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 323
\textsuperscript{705} Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 42-43
\textsuperscript{706} Marcus, Blood and Belief : The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 70
\textsuperscript{707} Michael M. Gunter, “Kurdish Infighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s : Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 51
\textsuperscript{708} Aras, "Similar Strategies, Dissimilar Outcomes: An Appraisal of the Efficacy of Turkey's Coercive Diplomacy with Syria and in Northern Iraq.", p. 602; Gunter, The Kurs of Iraq : Tragedy and Hope., p. 109-110
\textsuperscript{709} Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 92
\textsuperscript{710} Hussein Tahiri, The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State, Kurdish Studies Series (Costa Mesa, Calif.: Mazda Publishers, 2007)., p. 298
While urban locations were utilized out of necessity, the mountainous region was preferable for establishing guerrilla bases, as it was an area that was exceedingly difficult to control. The steepness of the crevices and the valleys made it difficult to penetrate. The rough, rolling terrain is difficult to navigate and favors the defender since any invader can be seen from a great distance.\(^{711}\) These mountains were notoriously treacherous and could not be tamed by either modern states, such as Iraq and Turkey, or the ancient Ottoman and Persian empires (See Map 3).\(^{712}\) KRG official, Safeen Dizayee, explained that “5,000, even 50,000 troops could not control Qandil, just as Saddam never managed to control the area either.”\(^{713}\) Thus, the proximity of these mountains to Turkey and Iran, coupled with the difficult terrain, provided a particularly strong location for both harboring militants, as well as launching attacks.

The PKK astutely utilized these camps for enhancing their militants’ skills after completing their initial political and military training within Syria.\(^{714}\) Conditions within the rugged mountain camps were well suited for training for the rigors of guerrilla warfare. “In Lebanon, they learned how to make bombs and grenades, in Iraq, they learned how to survive.”\(^{715}\) In addition to the training advantages, establishing a presence in Iraq also provided access to military hardware that had been abandoned in the region by the Iraqi military.\(^{716}\)

Ultimately, the PKK bases in Iraq were critical to sustaining the insurgency against

\(^{711}\) Interview with Retired Colonel, US Army Special Forces, Stationed at Zakho house in OPC and in northern Iraq in 2003, June 20, 2013.
\(^{712}\) David Romano, “Deterring Kurdish Insurgent Attacks”, within Wenger and Wilner, Deterring Terrorism: Theory and Practice., p. 231
\(^{713}\) Ibid., p. 243
\(^{714}\) Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 37
\(^{715}\) Marcus, Blood and Belief : The Pkk and the Kurdisch Fight for Independence., p. 70.
Turkey. The strategic location in the rugged mountains provided cover, shelter, training, and a launching pad for militants. For Turkey, this base of operations was difficult to penetrate, which made it challenging to thwart PKK attacks from this area. According to Turkish government sources, 3,533 PKK terrorist incidents occurred between 1984 and 1990 and those figures spiked to 15,146 events between 1991 and 1994. The nearly ten-fold increase in attacks was attributed by many Turkish officials to be the direct result of the PKK’s ability to operate more freely from the mountains of northern Iraq. As Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit stated in an interview, in reference to the PKK bases, that “the so-called security-zone...has harmed Turkey’s security significantly and created instability in the region.”

TURKEY’S POLICY TOWARDS THE PKK IN NORTHERN IRAQ

The Turkish government adopted a two-pronged strategy to contain the PKK within northern Iraq: 1) a brute force strategy aimed directly at the PKK bases and militants and 2) a coercive strategy aimed at the KRG. These strategies were pursued concurrently and often overlapped in their targets and intent. Specifically, individual attacks aimed at PKK strongholds, were rarely limited to the PKK and more generally imposed civilian and military costs on the Iraqi Kurdish parties.

Under the brute force strategy, Turkey sought to attack the PKK directly through air and ground raids against their mountain bases in northern Iraq. As will be described in greater detail, the Turkish military crossed the Iraqi border en masse to attack the PKK. The Turkish goal was to eradicate the PKK bases in the mountains. However, implementation was very difficult and

717 Kirisci and Winrow, The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict., p. 27
718 Ibid., p. 27
719 Republic of Iraq Radio, Baghdad and Ina in Arabic 1800 gmt 26 Dec. 92
produced very limited success. As mentioned previously, the mountain ranges where the PKK sought shelter were incredibly difficult to penetrate, and favored the defender, who could observe the military buildup on the border and relocate with relative ease.\footnote{Interview with Retired Colonel, US Army Special Forces, Stationed at Zakho house in OPC and in northern Iraq in 2003, June 20, 2013.} Finally, Turkey lacked the necessary intelligence to not only locate the bases, but also differentiate friend from foe in the mountains. Though not unique to this struggle, the ability of the insurgents to blend with the population made it difficult to kill or apprehend PKK militants without inflicting significant collateral damage in the surrounding mountain villages.\footnote{Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013, Interview with Sheri Laizer, June/July 2013; Interview with Henri Barkey, former US state department official, August 5, 2013. See also: Randal, After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness?: My Encounters with Kurdistan. p. 25-29.} Though the Turks often exaggerated the casualties suffered by the PKK, most analysts agree that the Turks were unable to inflict significant damage through their direct actions. As the KDP representative to Turkey explained aptly, "'you can’t use a wagon to chase mice,’ meaning that tanks and aircraft are ill suited for chasing guerillas hiding in the mountain caves and ravines."\footnote{David Romano, “Turkish and Iranian Efforts to Deter Kurdish Insurgent Attacks,” in Wenger and Wilner, Deterring Terrorism: Theory and Practice., p. 234; Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.}

The challenges involved with a direct PKK containment strategy led the Turks to simultaneously embrace a coercive strategy aimed at the Iraqi Kurdish parties and the KRG. Through a variety of political, economic and military levers, the Turkish government sought to coerce the Iraqi Kurdish parties to contain the PKK, which was based within their borders. Turkey’s coercive leverage vis-à-vis the KRG was particularly strong during this period. Turkey’s pivotal role in OPC, coupled with its economic leverage, and its willingness to use
military force provided the underpinnings for Turkey's coercive policy.

The Turkish government demanded the following three actions from the KRG (and subsequently the Iraqi Kurdish parties): 1) dislodge the PKK from within their area of control, 2) monitor the border to prevent the use of bases to launch attacks, and 3) cooperate with the Turkish military in their raids. After the implementation of OPC and the subsequent meetings in Ankara, Turkey maintained that the Iraqi Kurdish parties were responsible for establishing a quiet border and preventing infiltrations by the PKK. This sentiment was reiterated clearly, both privately and publicly, throughout this period.723

Turkey's political leverage stemmed from its critical role in the implementation and maintenance of Operation Provide Comfort (OPC), which secured the KRG's autonomy in northern Iraq. Continued access and usage of the Incirlik military base in Turkey enabled the American, British and French flights to maintain the no-fly zone, drop necessary supplies, mobilize cargo riggers, and continue to impose sanctions on Iraq, more generally.724 Permission to continue the use of this base was renewed in six month intervals, with often contentious debates, within the Turkish Parliament, highlighting the fragile nature of the agreement and the potential to reverse this arrangement with little advance warning if the political winds changed.725 At the most fundamental level, the Turkish government was critical in ensuring the

724 Randal, After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness? : My Encounters with Kurdistan., p. 65; Robins, Suits and Uniforms : Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 334-5. David Romano, “Turkish and Iranian Efforts to Deter Kurdish Insurgent Attacks,” in Wenger and Wilner, Deterring Terrorism : Theory and Practice., p. 234
725 Philip Robins, "Turkish Foreign Policy under Erbakan," Survival 39, no. 2 (1997)., p. 85; opponents of OPC fear that continuing to provide a no-fly zone and autonomy to Iraqi Kurds may lead to the establishment of an independent Kurdish state, which would encourage separatist tendencies amongst its own Kurdish population, Emrullah Uslu, "Turkey’s Kurdish Problem: Steps toward a Solution," Studies in Conflict & Terrorism 30, no. 2 (2007)., p. 159.
continued autonomy of northern Iraq.

The Iraqi Kurds were well aware that Iraqi Kurdish autonomy was a contentious policy in Turkey because many hawks believed that this could have a demonstration effect among their own population and contribute to their own Kurdish insurrection.\footnote{Henri Barkey, "Turkey, Islamic Politics, and the Kurdish Question," World Policy Journal 13, no. 1 (1996)., p. 49} At various times during OPC, Turkish officials made statements that were worrisome to the Iraqi Kurds and called into question Turkey's willingness to facilitate their continued autonomy. For example, following the Turkish intervention in 1995, Turkish Defense Minister, Mehmet Golhad stated that Turkey's security could only be guaranteed if Iraq could reinstate its control over its northern region.\footnote{Quoted in Kemal Kirisci, "Turkey and the Kurdish Safe-Haven in Northern Iraq," Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies 19 (1996). p. 35.} Furthermore, over time, there were increasingly contentious debates surrounding the extension of OPC. Statements like those of the Defense Minister, coupled with the resistance to the operation's renewal, reinforced the Kurds' anxiety regarding the precarious state of their autonomy and Turkey's role in maintaining it.

Turkey's broad leverage was noted by the leaders of the Kurdish movement. The leaders of the Kurdish parties understood that U.S. protection was completely contingent on Turkey.\footnote{Interview with Dr. Najmiddin Karim, Current Governor of Kirkuk, June 12, 2013.} Even on a personal level, both Jalal Talabani and Ma'sud Barzani were dependent on Turkey for international access, since they were travelling on diplomatic passports issued by Turkey.\footnote{Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, a journalist in Turkey, Iraqi Kurdistan during this period, August 1, 2013.} These arrangements further highlighted Turkey's ability to significantly impact the political situation in Iraqi Kurdistan. Although the Turkish government had their own strategic reasons for continuing OPC, mainly preventing another refugee crisis, they still retained this political
leverage over the Kurds. Hoshyar Zebari, a spokesman for the KDP explained that “Turkey is our lifeline to the West and the whole world in our fight against Saddam Hussein. We are able to secure allied air protection and international aid through Turkey’s cooperation. If Poised Hammer [OPC] is withdrawn, Saddam’s units will again reign in this region and we will lose everything.”

In addition to its political leverage, Turkey was also an important economic lifeline for the Kurds. Although the Kurds had finally obtained a significant level of autonomy, they remained isolated and dependent on outside powers. During this period, the international community, through U.N. Security Council Resolutions 661 and 667, imposed significant financial and trade sanctions on Iraq. These sanctions impacted access to goods in northern Iraq as well. In addition to these broad sanctions, in response to the establishment of the no-fly zone, Saddam Hussein imposed an internal embargo on northern Iraq which further prevented the flow of goods and isolated the region. In late October 1991, Hussein stopped providing government services, paying civil servants, and making food and fuel deliveries to northern Iraq.

In light of these significant constraints, the main outlet for trade and international aid

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730 Turkish fears of a destabilizing refugee crisis were based on their past experiences, most recently during the Anfal Campaign in 1988 and the failed uprising in 1991. Following the failed uprisings in 1991, between 500,000-750,000 Kurdish refugees approached the border in order to escape Saddam Hussein’s attacks on civilians. As the Economist noted in 1991, “The Turks have decided that the emergence of some sort of a Kurdish enclave in Iraq would be less dangerous than the arrival of millions of Kurds inside Turkey itself.” Quoted in Kirisci and Winrow, The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict., p.160; Bill Park, "Turkey’S Kurdish Complex," The Adelphi Papers 45, no. 374 (2005), p20; Robins, "Turkish Foreign Policy under Erbakan."


732 Initially the sanctions were in response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait, but after the war, they were extended and linked to the removal of weapons of mass destruction.


734 During this period, Hussein stopped the salaries of approximately 300,000 civil servants and severely curtailed health care, water, and sanitation. ibid., p. 78; Randal, After Such Knowledge What Forgiveness, p. 107.
became Turkey. The Khabur crossing point between Iraq and Turkey, located north of Zakho, became the only legal entry point into Iraqi Kurdistan. Turkey allowed as many as 2,000 trucks per day to bring food, and other goods, in exchange for oil, which was estimated at two hundred million dollars per year.\textsuperscript{735} In addition, it was estimated that the customs collected at this crossing amounted to one hundred fifty thousand to one million dollars per day. By some estimates, the KRG depended on this revenue for up to 60\% of its operating budget for the regional administration.\textsuperscript{736} Turkey was also a primary source for electricity in Iraqi Kurdistan, which was cut off frequently and directly undermined the Kurds' ability to rule. Control over this utility provided an additional economic lever, which the Turks used often.\textsuperscript{737} In addition to the trade and international aid that came through the Khabur crossing, Turkey launched a $13.5 million assistance program in 1993, and an additional $12 million package was introduced in March 1995.\textsuperscript{738}

In 1991, under President Ozal, the Turkish goal was to reframe the relationship with the Iraqi Kurds to secure maximum leverage by capitalizing on their economic dependence. "Ozal argued [that] Turkey should bring the impoverished northern Iraqi economy into its orbit, as a way of maximizing Turkish influence in the territory. Ozal believed that for as little as $30-40

\textsuperscript{735} Kirisci and Winrow, \textit{The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict.}, p.162
\textsuperscript{736} Michael Gunter, "Kurdish infighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict" in Olson, \textit{The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East.}, p. 52; Robins, \textit{Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.}, p. 333; The importance of the Khabur crossing continued throughout this period and was often at the center of intra-Kurdish fighting. As will be discussed in greater detail, because the Khabur crossing was within the KDP region, they were often accused by the PUK of keeping a disproportionate amount of the revenue generated at the crossing, and utilizing it for their own party, rather than the collective KRG.
\textsuperscript{737} Interview with Sheri Laizer, journalist in Iraqi Kurdistan during this period, June/July 2013.; Robins, \textit{Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.}, p. 322; In 1995, it was reported that Ankara was supplying the city of Dohuk with one million watts of electricity per day. This was part of a program to assist the Kurds. BBC summary of World Broadcasts, May 16, 1995.
\textsuperscript{738} Kirisci and Winrow, \textit{The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict.}, p.162
million, Turkey could create a relationship of dependence.” 739 However, there was ambivalence, particularly among the military and more hawkish members of Parliament, which preferred to limit economic ties and believed that strengthening Iraqi Kurdistan was contrary to Turkish interests and could facilitate secessionism. 740

The Kurdish parties were also keenly aware of this dependency. In 1991, Barzani noted that Turkey “has become our only window to the outside world. We consider our relations with Turkey to be extremely vital.” 741 “The Kurdish enclave remained under the sword of the Turkish government. For as long as Khabur constituted the only lifeline to the enclave, the Turks could continue to impose distasteful conditions on the Kurdish administration. In exchange for keeping the route open, Turkey demanded the cooperation of the Iraqi Kurds in Turkey’s war on the PKK.” 742 Ultimately, the double embargo imposed on the Iraqi Kurds provided Turkey with a significant economic lever which Turkey exploited to increase its coercive position.

Turkey also possessed significant military leverage over the KRG. Turkey had previously demonstrated its ability and willingness to invade Iraqi Kurdistan in pursuit of PKK militants, as well as to threaten Iraqi Kurds. 743 Well before the Kurdish parties had any level of autonomy in the region, they were the target of Turkish military attacks. This policy was conducted largely with the tacit approval of Saddam Hussein through a hot pursuit agreement, which generally failed at reigning in the PKK, but was successful in leaving behind mass destruction, as well as

739 Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 321
740 Ibid., p. 322
741 Barzani quoted in Kirisci and Winrow, The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict., p.163
742 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 109
743 This period is outside the scope of my study because during this period the KRG and the Kurdish parties were not autonomous, and thus the coercion utilized was between a state and a non-state group. Though many of the same elements were in play, this dynamic requires further research, as the general elements of state-state coercion were not present.
Iraqi Kurdish casualties.744

As early as 1983, Turkey conducted its first major incursion into northern Iraq. Although the policy was supposedly aimed at PKK militants, the initial raid destroyed Barzani’s bases. The Turks explicitly threatened to invade the region again if support for the PKK continued.745 Three years later, Turkey conducted an operation in which the Turkish Air Force bombed northern Iraq, killing at least 100 Iraqi Kurdish civilians.746 Prime Minister Ozal stated clearly, “Let this [be] a warning to those who shelter rebels.”747 Ultimately, throughout the 1980s, the Turks utilized military incursions across the border to attack the PKK, but more importantly to pressure Barzani’s KDP to reign in the PKK.748 Despite the limited success of this policy, the Turks continued to threaten the continued use of this costly policy at the expense of the Iraqi Kurds.

The military precedent set by Turkey led the Kurdish parties to understand Turkey’s message and heed the warning. The Kurds understood that the Turks were willing to use force.
and by accident or design, their actions would lead to Iraqi Kurdish casualties.\footnote{Kirisci, "Turkey and the Kurdish Safe-Haven in Northern Iraq.", p. 30.} "Iraqi Kurdish officials, struggling to build up their own administration, assumed the accidents were on purpose. They believed that the Turkish military wanted to send them a warning: either they help push the PKK out of the region, or they would be treated as part of the problem."\footnote{Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 200} Furthermore, in light of their critical position with OPC, it appeared that the Turks had additional leeway for conducting this military incursion policy. The Turks continued to utilize this policy repeatedly during OPC, until the capture of Abdullah Ocalan and the PKK ceasefire which followed.\footnote{Uslu, "Turkey’s Kurdish Problem: Steps toward a Solution.", p. 159}

Turkey gained significant political leverage as a result of its pivotal role in OPC. That political advantage, coupled with the economic leverage provided by the Khabur crossing, served as the backdrop to Turkey’s military coercive policy. Lurking in the background behind the KRG’s policy towards the PKK were military and economic sanctions that if imposed, would significantly affect the viability of the Kurdish parties and the KRG more broadly. Unlike the cases of Jordan or Syria, Turkish coercion often preceded the actual military incursions. Specifically, the Turks would coerce the KRG to cooperate in their military assaults in the region. The Turkish military was cognizant of its limitations in the mountains and understood the potential contribution of the Iraqi peshmerga fighters during the actual incursion. Clearly, Turkey had the capacity to coerce in this manner because of the implicit and explicit threats to the viability of the quasi-state.

When examining the coercive success or failure of Turkey’s policy, it is important to examine not only the conduct of the parties following the incursion, but also their participation in
or refusal to engage in the assaults. Later on in this chapter, an analysis of four significant coercive military incursions which occurred at key junctures in 1991 and 1992, 1995 and 1997 will be explored in depth. Although smaller military incursions and air raids appeared within this period, these were the only large scale raids that occurred in this period. These raids were utilized simultaneously to attack PKK bases, and also to coerce the Iraqi Kurdish parties to contain the PKK within their borders.

Ultimately, the Turkish coercive policy reached its pinnacle with the capture of the PKK leader, Ocalan, in February 1999, as discussed in the previous chapter. Consequently, many in Turkey have interpreted this event as a victory for the hardliners, who always advocated that the answer to the Kurdish problem, both within Turkey, as well as regionally, was coercive action. However, despite Turkey’s enormous leverage over the Kurdish region, it failed to consistently coerce the Iraqi Kurdish parties into containing the PKK.

EXPLAINING TRANSITIVE COMPELLENCE: UNPACKING THE RELATIONSHIP

To understand why, at times, Turkish coercion succeeded in inducing Iraqi Kurdish action against the PKK, while at other times it failed, it is necessary to examine the relationship between the KRG and the PKK during these periods. To that end, I will assess the foreign policy and domestic costs of compliance. As mentioned previously, in instances of transitive compellence, the base state, in this case, the KRG, needs to take proactive measures to contain the violent group, the PKK. Therefore, the costs imposed by the coercer, Turkey, need to be great enough to offset the significant costs of complying and acting against the PKK, as well as

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752 Kirisci and Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict*, p. 300-1
753 Following the civil war in 1994, I examine the KDP and the PUK separately, as their costs of compliance are affected by the infighting between them.
the potential benefits that are derived from the PKK’s presence.

To estimate the magnitude of the compliance costs, it is necessary to look closely at the key components of the base state-violent group relationship: foreign policy and domestic politics. The foreign policy cost is assessed by the extent to which the violent group, through the pursuit of its ends, advances or hinders the foreign policy goals of the base state. The domestic cost is assessed by examining the degree to which the violent group threatens the regime’s hold on power, and the likelihood that complying would potentially result in a costly protracted conflict. Together, these variables capture the costs and risks that the base state would need to incur in order to comply with the coercer’s demands. Since all of the demands require a change in the status quo, understanding the cost of action is an essential element in explaining the variation in success and failure.

To that end, I will examine the coercive context that existed ahead of the three significant instances of Turkish coercion in this period: 1991-92, 1995, and 1997. By estimating the foreign policy and domestic variables, separately and through their interaction, it is possible to estimate the costs of action against the PKK for the Iraqi Kurds, and determine whether the context favored coercion. In light of the divergent outcomes in Iraqi Kurdish policy, one would expect that changes should be present for one or both of the relational factors that either increase or decrease the costs of action, and ultimately explain the success or failure in each case.

**Foreign Policy Costs & Benefits**

In pursuing its violent insurgency campaign against Turkey from within Iraq, the PKK necessarily affects the KRG’s foreign policy. To assess the level of foreign policy alignment in these cases, I examined three primary variables: (1) comparing the respective goals of the base state and the violent group; (2) analyzing the foreign policy contribution, if any, of the violent
group to the base state; and (3) examining the potential benefits, if any, of the violent group’s means. To obtain insight into these variables, I analyzed public statements that were made at the time, conducted interviews with KRG policymakers, journalists and analysts, and studied historical accounts of the period. Through this process, it was possible to identify areas of convergence and divergence between the KRG and the PKK, and determine the costs of compliance and the context for coercion success.

**Domestic Political Costs and Benefits**

To assess the domestic relationship between the violent group and the state, one must understand the costs and risks absorbed by the base state when domestic action is taken against the group. All things being equal, the lower the threat presented by the group and the higher the probability of a cheap victory against the group, the more favorable the domestic context is for coercion success.

To assess the domestic relationship between the KRG and the PKK, I examined four primary variables at each coercive interaction: (1) the PKK’s political intentions towards the KRG; (2) the PKK’s organizational and military capacity; (3) the KRG’s military capacity; and (4) the popular support of the PKK among Iraqi Kurds. Once again, I utilized public statements by both the KRG and the PKK leadership, interviews with policymakers, journalists, and analysts, as well as historical accounts. Particularly, since the PKK is a clandestine organization, and the KRG was a nascent quasi-state, exact figures are often lacking regarding their respective strength. To overcome this challenge, I relied on estimates provided at the time, and sought
multiple sources whenever possible. In addition, through interviews, as well as journalistic reports, I sought to determine the KRG’s perspective on the threat they perceived, including the estimated strength of the PKK, as well as their general assessment of the basing relationship.

Evaluating the level of popular support during each key period highlights whether the population felt constrained by or supported action against the PKK. However, in the absence of survey data on the Iraqi Kurdish population, it was difficult to get precise measures of their attitudes. Instead, through interviews, journalistic impressions of the period, and historical accounts, I define a baseline level of support, but more importantly, identify changes to this variable over time. Ultimately, by examining these variables in a focused, structured comparison of each period, it was possible to derive an estimate of the costs of compliance and analyze how those costs vary over time.

Another important facet of this case is that the Iraqi Kurds and the PKK had shared ethnic ties and were both part of the broader Kurdish national movement. Some have argued that these ties make coercion success even less likely to succeed because the groups’ inherent connection makes it difficult to induce costly action. Within this case, ethnicity and nationalism are not considered as a separate category with independent effects. Rather, its role, if any, is evaluated within the relational categories. In many ways, this theory is agnostic about the impact of this shared identity, but acknowledges that it could potentially interact with the variables, though not in a uniform way. For example, shared ethnic ties may increase popular support for the violent group, but not necessarily in a different way than social services, or other drivers of popular support.

Fortunately, despite the wide range of estimates, the magnitude of difference between the power of the PKK and the KRG was sufficiently great and allowed for a wide margin for error. Even accounting for the wide ranges, the analysis was not swayed because the different in power remained large, even when utilizing the strongest estimates for the PKK and the weakest of the KRG. Ultimately, other factors proved more important.
support. In this case, it is the level of popular support, rather than its precursors or causes that affects the outcome. Similarly, ethnicity can affect the alignment of the violent groups’ foreign policy since these groups are part of the broadly defined Kurdish national movement. Again, this is a potential input that can affect the alignment, rather than a separate category. Shared ethnicity is important inasmuch as it can raise or lower the costs of compliance, but not necessarily as a separate category, particularly because, as will be seen in this case, the effects are not uniform across the variables or across time.755

Finally, as will be seen in the analysis below, one can estimate the costs of compliance and ascertain the context for coercion through a careful measurement of the foreign and domestic variables. Through this assessment, it is possible to predict the likelihood of coercion success or failure in each episode of Turkish transitive compellence. When both variables point to low or high cost of compliance, coercion is likely to succeed or fail respectively. I argue that when they point in opposite directions, the domestic costs of compliance will overshadow the foreign policy costs. As predicted by the theory, and will be demonstrated below, when the domestic costs are sufficiently high, even a state with as much coercive leverage as Turkey, is unable to successfully alter the status quo and achieve success.

AUGUST 1991 & OCTOBER 1992

Only a few months after the implementation of OPC, Turkey aimed its coercive policy against the newly formed KRG. Over a period of approximately a year and a half, the Turks conducted two significant operations within northern Iraq, the first in August 1991 and then

755 The limited explanatory value of this category alone will be treated more thoroughly in alternate explanations. See pp. 99-105 of this chapter.
again in October 1992. The close proximity of these large raids, coupled with the nascent stages of the KRG, require that they be looked at together. Although each raid elicits a specific response that will be analyzed, the relational variables in this time period remain constant across both the domestic and foreign policy factors.

On August 5, 1991, the Turkish military conducted its first large scale operation in northern Iraq since the beginning of OPC in April. The attack was in retaliation for a PKK attack the day before, where PKK militants attacked a gendarmerie post at Samanli, killing nine Turkish soldiers and abducting seven others and taking them to the PKK bases in northern Iraq.\(^{756}\) The Turkish operation, which lasted until the 15\(^{th}\) of August, consisted of land and air operations in the area located near the convergence of the Turkish, Iraqi and Iranian borders. Approximately 40,000 Turkish troops and 2,000 Turkish commandos crossed the border, supported by more than 130 air sorties and helicopter gunships, and ultimately penetrated 10-20 miles across the border.\(^{757}\)

Despite their scale, these operations were hardly successful in directly targeting the PKK strongholds. The Turkish military claimed they were successful in destroying PKK camps, killing guerillas, and capturing weapons caches.\(^{758}\) However, the PKK seemed largely unaffected, reported minimal losses, and many bases were missed altogether. Some reports suggested that no PKK were hit during the attack, though 18 villagers died.\(^{759}\) In addition, the Turkish military attacked villages that were loyal to Barzani’s KDP, including the village of

\(^{756}\) William Hale, "Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf Crisis," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-*) (1992), p. 689


\(^{758}\) Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope.*, p. 74

Barzan. Upon further review, it’s unclear whether these locations were a product of poor intelligence and a lack of familiarity with the political geography of northern Iraq, or by design, but regardless, the attack led to significant casualties amongst Iraqi Kurdish civilians, particularly women and children. The lack of success in routing the PKK only increased the need to obtain Iraqi Kurdish cooperation, since the Iraqi Kurds had superior intelligence, could navigate the terrain with greater ease, and could easily differentiate friend from foe in the region.

Both Ma’bud Barzani of the KDP and Jalal Talabani of the PUK were warned about the operation in order to remove their peshmergas from the area, and avoid casualties. Albeit reluctantly, both leaders tacitly cooperated with the Turkish government and even managed to convince the Turks to end their operation earlier than previously planned. With increasing civilian casualties, particularly among Barzani supporters, tensions emerged in this developing relationship, and Barzani declared that he would oppose further incursions. Nonetheless, despite these declarations, tacit support continued. Furthermore, though unsuccessful in directly targeting the PKK, the Iraqi Kurds understood the coercive power of this raid and heeded the

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760 Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 323; Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 44
761 Although the Turkish military had a difficult time differentiating the PKK from the Iraqi Kurdish peshmerga, these differences were not difficult for the local population. There were significant linguistic and cultural differences among the fighters. Furthermore, the PKK had distinct uniforms which did not conform to the traditional garb of the peshmergas. Interviewees repeatedly explained that these distinctions while difficult for the Turks, were clear to the local population. Even western journalists who spent time in the region could easily make these differentiations. Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013, Interview with Sheri Laizer, June/July 2013; Interview with Henri Barkey, former US state department official, August 5, 2013. For more on cultural differences see: Graham E. Fuller, "The Fate of the Kurds," Foreign Affairs 72, no. 2 (1993); Uslu, "Turkey’s Kurdish Problem: Steps toward a Solution." p. 161-2.; Henri Barkey, “Turkey and the New Middle East,” in Henri J Barkey and Unite States Institute of Peace, Reluctant Neighbor: Turkey's Role in the Middle East (United States Institute of Peace Press, 1996). p. 33.
762 Gunter, The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope., p. 74
763 Ibid., p. 75
warning that was being sent by the Turks.\textsuperscript{764} “Turkey had repeatedly asked the Iraqi Kurds to expel the Turkish Kurd units from Iraq.”\textsuperscript{765} In fact, many of the casualties were villagers in the Barzan area, which is a KDP stronghold. “‘The Turks,’ a KDP official said, ‘were trying to tell us that we had better keep our Turkish counterparts [PKK] under control — or else.’”\textsuperscript{766}

In mid-October 1992, the Turkish military once again entered Iraq in order to attack PKK strongholds. However, this time, the Turks had successfully induced the Iraqi Kurds to participate in the operation. Thousands of Turkish forces drove southwards in the direction of Kurdish forces who were sweeping the mountains.\textsuperscript{767} This latest attack was in response to a PKK attack at the Turkish Derecik Jandarma border outpost, where they killed 23 soldiers and five Kurdish village guards.\textsuperscript{768} Turkish soldiers pursued the militants across the border, killing approximately 100 PKK militants. Several days later, approximately 5,000 Iraqi Kurdish fighters attacked the PKK positions along the border with support from Turkish bombing raids in the same area.\textsuperscript{769}

The PKK commanders were not prepared for this onslaught. “Their supplies had long been arranged in nearby depots designed to carry them through the harsh winter, so they had no choice but to defend the encampments. Their fighters too, were less than perfect for such a war. The experienced rebels were inside of Turkey and half of the 2,000 militants in the border camps

\begin{footnotes}
\item[764] Laizer, \textit{Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War.,} p. 45
\item[765] BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, October 12, 1991.
\item[767] McDowall, \textit{A Modern History of the Kurds.,} p. 436
\item[768] The Turkish village guards were a Kurdish militia set up by the Turkish government to protect the Kurdish villages from the PKK. These village guards were often the target of PKK attacks because they collaborated with the government.
\item[769] Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief : The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.,} p. 203
\end{footnotes}
were not really fighters." Many of the PKK militants quickly surrendered to the PUK \textit{peshmerga} in order to avoid confrontation with the Turkish military or the KDP \textit{peshmerga}. In all, it was estimated that approximately 160 PKK fighters, 160 Iraqi Kurdish fighters, and a few Turkish soldiers were killed. Although the Iraqi Kurds worried that Turkey may not withdraw, and would consider creating a buffer zone along the border, at the end of October, they withdrew. At the conclusion of the confrontation, the Turkish government once again warned the Iraqi Kurds that it was their responsibility to keep the border quiet.

\textbf{Foreign Policy Costs and Benefits}

During this episode, the overall foreign policy costs of compliance for the KRG were low. As the following analysis will demonstrate, the PKK and the KRG had divergent foreign policy ends and means, which in turn created a context which was conducive to coercion success.

Following the Gulf War and OPC, the Iraqi Kurdish parties and the PKK had increasingly divergent foreign political goals towards Turkey. Although both groups were part of the broader Kurdish national movement, their attitudes toward Turkey headed in opposite directions. The Iraqi Kurdish parties’ dependence on Turkey for the maintenance of their newly acquired autonomous region created great incentives for the Iraqi Kurds to mend and improve their relations with Turkey. Shortly after OPC, both Talabani and Barzani understood that

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{770} Ibid., p. 203 \textsuperscript{771} Robins, \textit{Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.}, p. 327 \textsuperscript{772} Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.}, p. 205 \textsuperscript{773} Robins, \textit{Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.}, p. 327 \textsuperscript{774} Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.}, p. 205 \textsuperscript{775} Ibid., p. 201}
Turkey was essential in the region’s future and they both subsequently set up liaison offices in Ankara. As mentioned previously, Hoshiyar Zebari, the Foreign Policy spokesman for the KDP explained, “Turkey is our lifeline to the West and the whole world in our fight against Saddam Hussein. We are able to secure allied air protection and international aid through Turkey’s cooperation. If Poised Hammer (OPC) is withdrawn, Saddam’s units will again reign in this region and we will lose everything.” Similarly, Talabani explained that “Turkey must be considered a country friendly to the [Iraqi] Kurds.” Talabani further declared that “the people in northern Iraq will never forget the help of the Turkish Government and people in their difficult days.” The vulnerability of the Kurds, and their reliance on Turkey was exacerbated by the Iraqi blockade and persistent threats to attack them made by Saddam Hussein. Ultimately, the Iraqi Kurdish parties felt that it was important not only to maintain friendly relations with the Turks, but to take steps to please them. The increasingly friendly relations were reciprocated by Turkey. In 1992, Prime Minister Demirel even referred to the PUK leader as “my dear brother Talabani.”

The Iraqi Kurdish parties’ historical experiences, coupled with their awareness of their tenuous situation led them to take a pragmatic approach to their newfound autonomy. Both

776 McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds.*, p. 383-4
778 Ibid., p. 52
780 Interview with Dr. Najmiddin Karim, Current Governor of Kirkuk, June 12, 2013; Interviews with Kurdish policymaker, May 30, 2013
Talabani and Barzani took great measures to assure their Turkish neighbors, and the international community more broadly, of their limited aims in Iraqi Kurdistan. Although the Iraqi Kurds had aspirations for their own state, both parties ultimately believed that federalism was their best option. This pragmatism was not new. Even in 1975, the PUK and the KDP adopted slogans that highlighted their commitment to remaining within Iraq, “democracy for Iraq,” and “autonomy for Kurdistan within Iraq,” respectively. 783 “In early October 1992, the Kurdistan National Assembly unanimously committed Iraqi Kurdistan to its goal of federation within a democratic parliamentary Iraq.” 784 This practical approach was evident when Barzani explained “the situation in the world today is such that it will not permit any changes in regional borders. Nor will it stand for any partitioning.” Similarly Talabani expressed, “we do not want to break away from Iraq; we only want a democratic Iraq.” 785 Even after their elections, Talabani stated “that they [the Iraqi Kurds] deserve to enjoy the right to self-determination within a unified democratic Iraq.” 786 The Iraqi Kurdish parties assured the Turks that they did not intend to declare an independent Kurdish state or pose a threat to them. 787 Ultimately, whether the Iraqi Kurds ultimately wished for an independent state, they adopted a pragmatic approach with limited aims to ensure continued Turkish and international support and protection.

The Kurds were not without reservations about their new relations with Turkey, however, the current exigencies required them to embrace some of these contradictions. Specifically, the Kurds were well aware of the Turkish treatment of their Kurdish minority in southeastern Turkey.

783 Tahiri, The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State., p. 161
784 Bengio, "The Challenge to the Territorial Integrity of Iraq.", p. 80
785 Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis., p. 133
786 Talabani quoted in Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 300
787 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 55
and the ongoing struggle against the PKK. Additionally, the Turks, at various junctures, made it clear that they were not supportive of the increasing state-like status of Iraqi Kurdistan. Early on, Turkish President Turgut Ozal stated that Turkey would not tolerate a Kurdish state.788 Similarly, the Turks met with Syrian and Iranian government officials to jointly express their support for preserving the territorial integrity of Iraq. The Turks even opposed the 1992 KRG elections, and expressed their concern that continued provision of protection to Iraqi Kurds would not only lead to a state, but would have a demonstration effect on the Turkish Kurds.789

The Iraqi Kurds understood that a significant portion of Turkey’s continued interest in Iraqi Kurdistan was motivated by their desire to contain the PKK and prevent a robust safe haven from establishing roots. However, while at times compelled to act against the PKK, the Iraqi Kurds simultaneously feared that if the PKK ceased to exist, Turkish interest in Iraqi Kurdistan would instantly disappear. Richard Naab, a retired colonel, who served in OPC, remarked that “both the KDP and the PUK are afraid that if the PKK did not exist, Turkey would lose interest in helping Kurds.”790 This fear created a significant contradiction and a challenge in their relations, as well as in the Iraqi Kurdish parties’ approach to containing the PKK.

The Kurds’ fragile situation also altered the means which they utilized to expand their autonomy. Although historically, the Iraqi Kurds had utilized violence, they now sought to

788 Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope.*, p. 100
789 Turkey had a logic behind embracing the Iraqi Kurds. They believed that by protecting the Iraqi Kurds and gaining influence among their leaders, they would have a greater ability to further their agenda. This policy consisted of several key elements: 1) preventing the establishment of an independent Kurdish state, 2) preventing support for the PKK, 3) avoiding another Kurdish refugee crisis; 4) obtaining Western support for their EU ascension. Ibid., p. 107
expand their rule through political dialogue, even with their historical enemies.\textsuperscript{791} In an interview with Jonathan Randal, Barzani argued that the “Kurds were entitled to a country of their own, but the goal must be achieved through political means, not armed struggle, and might take a century to achieve, given the current primitive and often ruthless politics of the Middle East.”\textsuperscript{792} Having already secured an autonomous region, the Iraqi Kurds sought to further consolidate their gains, rather than expand beyond what was realistically possible. They did not want to incite either the Iraqi state or the international community of guarantors who were critical in maintaining their autonomy.

The KRG delicately navigated its relations with the Turkish government with full awareness that its current geopolitical needs were being protected by Turkey. Despite many potential areas of tension and contradiction, in the period following OPC, the Iraqi Kurds continued to cautiously embrace their Turkish neighbor. As Barzani clearly stated, “We consider relations with Turkey to be extremely vital.”\textsuperscript{793}

\textit{The PKK’s Goals towards Turkey}

In stark contrast to the Iraqi Kurds, the PKK viewed Turkey as its enemy and the target of its insurgency and terror campaign. The PKK’s initial goal was to establish an independent Kurdish state that would span Turkey, Iran, Iraq and Syria.\textsuperscript{794} Furthermore, the PKK espoused a Turkey-first strategy, whereby the liberation of Kurdistan would begin from within Turkey, as

\textsuperscript{791} Laizer, \textit{Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War.}, p. 67
\textsuperscript{792} Randal, \textit{After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness? : My Encounters with Kurdistan.}, p. 37
\textsuperscript{793} Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief : The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.}, p. 201
opposed to the other states where the Kurds resided. Once the liberation of Turkey occurred, the PKK expected that Kurds from other regions would wage their own war with the guidance of the new Kurdish state. The focus of their campaign was directed almost entirely at political and military targets within Turkey. While, the PKK demands began to oscillate between demands for complete independence and the more modest goal of federalism and autonomy, Turkey remained their primary target. The ongoing political dialogue between the Iraqi Kurds and the Turkish state was anathema to the PKK. “In their written propaganda, they accused the KDP and the PUK of betraying the Kurdish people to two of their worst enemies, Turkey and Iraq, stating that neither could be trusted to keep their promises.” In addition, because the PKK had expansive pan-Kurdish goals, they were fiercely opposed to the Iraqi Kurds’ more pragmatic approach to obtaining autonomy. “The more the Iraqi Kurds sought to reassure Turkey that their objective was not to create an independent state at all, the more the PKK despised them for failing to make the most of a historic opportunity.” Ultimately, the PKK’s raison d’être was in opposition to the Turkish state.

Furthermore, not only did the PKK view Turkey as its primary enemy, it also believed that its goals could be achieved primarily through a violent insurgency against the Turkish state and its supporters. The PKK’s famous motto, “Resistance Is Living” highlighted the extent of their commitment to violent resistance as a core value. Even as its political goals moderated away from statehood in this period, the PKK was steadfast in its commitment to using violence,

795 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 100
796 Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 306; Gulistan Gurbey “The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey Since the 1980s,” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 23
797 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 39
798 Ibid., p. 60
799 Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, a journalist in Turkey, Iraqi Kurdistan during this period, August 1, 2013.
and eschewed attempts to achieve its goals through political negotiations or compromise. The PKK's use of their bases in Iraq incited Turkish military action and was in contrast to the friendly relations that the KRG sought to maintain with Turkey. Ultimately, the Iraqi Kurdish parties believed that the PKK's war with Turkey directly jeopardized their embryonic state and their own security.800 The ongoing PKK campaigns had generally deleterious effects on the KRG's relations with Turkey and the international community.

In assessing the foreign policy costs of action, three elements were examined: (1) the alignment of foreign policy goals; (2) the foreign policy contribution, if any of the violent group; and (3) the possible benefits of PKK's violent campaign for advancing the KRG's foreign policy. In this period, the goals of the KRG and the PKK, with respect to Turkey, were highly divergent. The newly established KRG quickly recognized that they relied heavily on Turkey to preserve their autonomy and consequently, sought out opportunities to fortify this relationship. Furthermore, this dependence led the KRG to disavow the PKK's aims of an independent state, and they repeatedly reassured the Turks of their limited objectives. In contrast, the PKK continued their violent campaign against Turkey with little regard for the negative consequences for the KRG. The only potential contribution that the PKK made towards the KRG, was in sustaining Turkish interest in their region. As the Turkish government strived to contain the PKK, the group's continued presence in Iraq inevitably led the Turks to sustain their interest in the KRG. Furthermore, the continued violent campaign worked at cross-purposes to those of the KRG. The KRG eschewed violence against Turkey and the ongoing campaign complicated their relations with their only outlet to the rest of the world. Ultimately, at the foreign policy level, the

800 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 39
PKK and the KRG had diametrically opposed objectives with regard to Turkey -- the former endeavored to sustain conflict, whereas the latter sought to foster warm relations and strengthen their alliance with Turkey. This divergence highlights that there were no complementary elements of their strategies. Consequently, the PKK served as a hindrance to the regime, only making their foreign policy objectives more difficult to achieve. Severing this relationship and containing the PKK did not require the KRG to deviate from its desired foreign policy towards Turkey, indicating that the costs of compliance on this dimension were low.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Foreign Policy Cost of Compliance</th>
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<td><strong>KRG (KDP &amp; PUK)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Base State vs. Violent Group Goals</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• KRG sought to strengthen ties with Turkey due to its increasing dependence for maintaining autonomous region</td>
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<tr>
<td>• PKK violence aimed at Turkey and sought to establish independent state</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Violent Group FP Contribution</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• PKK counterproductive to KRG goals</td>
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<td>• Potential contribution in sustaining Turkish interest in n. Iraq</td>
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<td><strong>Violent Group Means</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• KRG eschewed violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The use of violence remained central to the PKK grand strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Foreign Policy Costs</strong></td>
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<td>LOW</td>
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**Domestic Costs and Benefits**

During this period, the domestic costs of compliance for the KRG were fairly limited. While the PKK had political claims on the state, it chose to prioritize its fight against Turkey. Furthermore, the balance of power between the parties favored the KRG. Finally, although the people had a general level of sympathy towards the PKK, their actual support was quite limited, especially when juxtaposed against their support for Iraqi Kurdish parties. As the following
analysis will show, these conditions collectively indicated that complying with Turkey’s
demands would have entailed only moderate costs for the KRG.

As a demonstration of its political aspirations, the PKK repeatedly and publicly
questioned the authority and legitimacy of the Iraqi Kurdish parties and their leaders. Their
claims against the nascent regime were present in the PKK’s broader ideological stance, its local
infringement on their authority and their targeted verbal threats towards the KDP and the PUK.
At the highest level, the PKK possessed a pan-Kurdish ideology, whereby it believed that it was
the sole legitimate representative of the Kurds in all of the Kurdish areas, including Iraq. Ocalan
stated in an interview that he was “the strongest man in Kurdistan and the Kurdish people regard
[him] as a prophet.”\textsuperscript{801} He then further explained that the PKK was the only authentic Kurdish
political party because it did not settle for autonomy and owed nothing to outside powers.

Since the mid-1960s, the KDP and the PUK have been the two predominant political
parties within Iraqi Kurdistan and have been recognized locally and regionally as the legitimate
leaders of the Iraqi Kurds. Both parties, though at times sympathetic to the plight of Kurds
outside of their region, were primarily focused on ruling their newly established autonomous
region, without any pretexts of belonging to a larger Pan-Kurdish movement.\textsuperscript{802} The PKK’s
emphasis on the pan-Kurdish movement, as superior to regional aspirations, and his attempts to
obtain a monopoly on Kurdish political resistance, were an infringement on the Iraqi Kurdish
parties’ political space.\textsuperscript{803}

\textsuperscript{801} Randal, \textit{After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness? : My Encounters with Kurdistan.}, p. 237.
\textsuperscript{802} Laizer, \textit{Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War.}, p. 67; Interview with Dr. Najmiddin
Karim, June 12, 2013; Interviews with Kurdish policymaker, May 30, 2013; Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, a
journalist in Turkey, Iraqi Kurdistan during this period, August 1, 2013.
\textsuperscript{803} Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013; Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, a journalist in Turkey, Iraqi
Kurdistan during this period, August 1, 2013; Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013; Interview with
Furthermore, the PKK was based heavily on a Marxist-Leninist ideology, which was anti-religious and avowedly against the traditional tribal system within the Kurdish national movement.\(^{804}\) Ocalan epitomized this world view having come from humble beginnings, rather than being born into an inherited elite status.\(^{805}\) The PKK was vocal about its disdain for the Kurds' tribal past, and distanced itself from this tradition. For example, the PKK deliberately did not use the traditional term *peshmerga* to describe its fighters, preferring to utilize the word guerrilla.\(^{806}\) Though somewhat symbolic, this shift in terminology highlighted the ideological distance that the PKK sought to create between itself as the new representative of the Kurds and the more traditional parties. Finally, in 1991, the PKK held its first congress in Iraqi Kurdistan, within the area that was controlled by the KDP, demonstrating that the PKK was infringing on the politics of northern Iraq.

In contrast to the PKK, the Iraqi Kurdish parties were far more traditional. Ma'sud Barzani, the leader of the KDP, inherited the leadership of the party after his father, Mulla Mustafa Barzani died.\(^{807}\) Barzani was very conservative and traditional in his approach to ruling Iraqi Kurdistan.\(^{808}\) Jalal Talabani, the leader of the PUK, was less traditional than Barzani, and earned his leadership position when he broke off from the KDP. Compared to the KDP, the PUK was considered more modern, drawing its support from the urban classes of Sulamaniya and

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\(^{805}\) Ocalan came from a poor farming family in the village of Omerli in Urfa, a province of Turkey. Tahiri, *The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State.*, p. 195

\(^{806}\) Ibid., p. 215

\(^{807}\) Mulla Mustafa Barzani was one of the most well-known Kurdish leaders and often considered the father of the Kurdish national movement.

\(^{808}\) Marcus, *Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.*, p. 105-6
Erbil and relying on business people and urban intellectuals, who were generally anti-communist.\(^{809}\) However, even Talabani structured his organization in a largely traditional patrimonial manner, which relied upon traditional Kurdish ideals.\(^{810}\) Thus, ideologically, the PKK’s belief that it was the only representative of the Kurds, coupled with its non-traditional power structure, led the PKK to present an ideological threat to the established Iraqi Kurdish parties.

In addition to the ideological challenge, the PKK openly expressed its disdain of the parties and their respective leaders. The PKK felt that they were ascending and were increasingly critical of their competitors’ reliance on Turkey, the PKK’s enemy.\(^{811}\) Ocalan called Barzani a “collaborator...reactionary, feudal person and a primitive nationalist.”\(^{812}\) Furthermore, in light of Barzani and Talabani’s cooperation with Turkey, Ocalan stated that “the two leaders have signed their own death warrants...[and that] the first thing we must do is to remove these leeches...they espouse the view of the fascist Turks. These two leaders are now our enemies.”\(^{813}\) Ultimately, the Iraqi Kurdish leaders were threatened by this increasingly harsh rhetoric.\(^{814}\)

The PKK initially lacked an official platform from which to challenge the ruling parties. They had been excluded from the 1992 elections, since they did not join the Iraqi Kurdistan Front (IKF), a prerequisite for participation. In response, they launched the Freedom Party of

\(^{809}\) Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 128
\(^{811}\) Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013.
\(^{812}\) Gunter, The Kurds of Iraq : Tragedy and Hope., p. 111
\(^{813}\) Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 306
Kurdistan (PAK) to lure away Kurds from the two central parties. However, this party failed to gain sufficient votes to have any representation and did not gain much traction in Iraq, which highlighted the limited political threat that the PKK presented. Nonetheless, the rhetorical threats, as well the newly formed party, highlighted their intent to interfere, perhaps even hijack the politics of the newly formed KRG.

KRG’s leadership fully understood the nature of the threat that the PKK posed. During this period, Barzani and Talabani expressed that the PKK was challenging the legitimacy of their rule in Iraqi Kurdistan. Barzani stated that:

Ocalan’s men acted as if they were the authorities and started to control roads and collect taxes...and threatened to expel the government and parliament from Irbil. They said they would hang all those ‘who sold out the homeland.’ They even threatened to expel us from Dahuk and al-Sulaymaniyah and started to form espionage, terrorism, and sabotage networks inside cities. It has unequivocally been proven that they’re conspiring and planning to undermine the existing situation in Kurdistan and its experiment [the KRG].

Similarly, Talabani accused the PKK of trying to “establish a revolutionary authority, and described the Kurdistan front as a treacherous establishment...they also said that they themselves would establish a state to replace the Iraqi Kurdistan Front.” The Iraqi Kurdistan Council of ministers asserted that the PKK sought “to destroy the nascent Iraqi Kurdish state.” Following the attack in 1992, Barzani explained that:

If the PKK had not decided to destroy our administration and set up networks challenging our authority, this conflict would never have taken place. They operated as if they were the sole authority in the area and ignored our

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815 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 38
816 Michael Gunter, “Kurdish Infighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s : Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 54
818 Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 307
administration. By the time we moved against them, they were collecting customs duties, carrying out arrests and manning their own checkpoints.\textsuperscript{819}

The threat from the PKK, was ultimately felt more acutely by the KDP. The PKK organized their camps, and operated politically in the KDP dominated area in the mountains, in the Bedihan area, which bordered Turkey.\textsuperscript{820} At this time, the KDP was in the process of reestablishing its authority in the area, but the PKK’s presence made this task far more challenging. One U.S. Special Operations officer noted that the PKK’s activity level often spiked at night, when they would descend and try to access recruits and drum up support among the population.\textsuperscript{821} In a similar dynamic to the Jordanians, when the Turks attacked the KDP areas, it highlighted to the population that the KDP was unable to protect its own people. While these efforts did not increase the popular support for the PKK, they were effective in diminishing the KDP’s prestige and popularity.\textsuperscript{822} For example, in 1991, the fifth PKK congress was held within Iraqi Kurdistan in the KDP area, highlighting their willingness to overtly exert their influence and their lack of fear of the Iraqi Kurdish parties.\textsuperscript{823}

In addition to the rhetorical threat, the PKK had historically demonstrated its commitment to using force against Kurdish parties with whom they disagreed. The PKK repeatedly acted forcefully to eliminate its competition for the leadership mantle within Turkey. While in the 1970s, there were many Kurdish groups that were emerging, by 1990, the PKK was

\textsuperscript{820} Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, a journalist in Turkey, Iraqi Kurdistan during this period, August 1, 2013; Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013; Interview with Dr. Najmiddin Karim, June 12, 2013; Interview with Retired Colonel,
\textsuperscript{821} Interview with Retired Colonel, US Army Special Forces, Stationed at Zakho house in OPC and in northern Iraq in 2003, June 20, 2013.
\textsuperscript{822} Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013.
\textsuperscript{823} Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013.
the only significant party within Turkey. While part of the diminution in numbers was due to Turkish governmental action, the PKK played an important role in eliminating its competition.824

"Essentially the PKK sought to arouse anti-state, politicized Kurdish identities within the population and then position itself as the only credible vehicle for such opposition. This necessitated eliminating local Turkish and Kurdish revolutionary parties, after which the state could be confronted from a more unified platform."825 The PKK was also known for assassinations of PKK dissidents and ex-members and any civilians that they associated with the Turkish state.826 More directly, the PKK expressed clearly that if the KRG attempted to prevent it from launching attacks, it would fight against them.827 The PKK seemed unwilling to shift their strategies or compromise, even when their actions appeared to destabilize the nascent autonomy of the Iraqi Kurds.828 The PKK had demonstrated, time and again, that they were harsh against competitors and willing to use violence to silence their opposition.

However, despite the harsh rhetoric and the track record of confronting rival Kurdish groups, at this time, there were still significant limitations to the PKK's ability to militarily challenge the KRG. The PKK had very limited forces in Iraq. Most estimates suggest that they only had 2,000 fighters in the mountains. Despite their smaller numbers, the PKK guerrillas were

824 For a detailed description of PKK action against other leftist-Turkish and Kurdish groups see: White, Primitive rebels, pp. 147-158.
825 David Romano, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement, p. 136
826 Paul J White, Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernisers?: The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey (Zed books, 2000). p. 143; Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 105. For example, in April 1985, the PKK attacked the Iraqi communist party, caliming that the communists were supporting a Turkish Kurdish group that was in conflict with the PKK. At the time, the Iraqi communist group was allied with Barzani, who viewed the strike as a direct attack on the KDP.
827 Interview with Hussein Tahiri, July 23, 2013.
828 Other Kurdish parties that were using northern Iraq as a base, such as the Iranian groups KDPI and Komala, were more respectful of the gains of the Iraqi Kurds and did not seek to destabilize the KRG. There was an ongoing dialogue between the parties that sought to find a balance between their external goals and those of the KRG. Interview with Hussein Tahiri, July 23, 2013.
considered formidable fighters and had repeatedly demonstrated their prowess against the Turkish military within Turkey. In general, both KDP and PUK policymakers expressed their belief that the PKK were better trained fighters.\textsuperscript{829} In addition, the PKK was highly motivated to keep their bases in Iraq, for without a base, the PKK could not as effectively continue their operations. On an individual level, the PKK guerillas were young and unattached, and wholly committed to the PKK struggle.\textsuperscript{830}

Two significant constraints existed on the PKK force. First, as revealed during the battle, many of those present for this particular engagement were young and uninitiated and had not garnered sufficient experience to put up a significant fight.\textsuperscript{831} Second, the PKK fighters, though stationed in Iraq, were essential in the fight against Turkey, and could not be diverted to an additional front in northern Iraq, without significant ramifications for their organization. To continue their resistance, the PKK had to concentrate its efforts on Turkey.\textsuperscript{832} In general, the PKK was reticent to embroil their fighters in local conflicts, which would divert their attention from their ultimate goal. One advantage that the PKK possessed was their strategic location in the mountains. The mountain stronghold was difficult to penetrate and provided opportunities for evasion and retreat.\textsuperscript{833} These mountains heavily favored the defender. However, this advantage was somewhat offset by the prior experiences of the Iraqi Kurdistan Front (IKF), the

\textsuperscript{829} Interview with Henri Barkey, former US state department official, August 5, 2013
\textsuperscript{830} The PKK forbid relationships among its guerilla fighters. Although men and women served together, they were forbidden from developing relationships amongst themselves. This prohibition was intended to increase discipline and willingness to fight. Tahiri, \textit{The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State.}, p. 209; ; Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013;
\textsuperscript{831} Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence}. p. 205. It is unclear the extent to which the Iraqi Kurdish parties understood this limitation at the time.
\textsuperscript{832} Interview with Kurdish policy makers, May 30, 2013, June 11, 2013
\textsuperscript{833} Interview with Retired Colonel, US Army Special Forces, Stationed at Zakho house in OPC and in northern Iraq in 2003, June 20, 2013
Iraqi Kurds’ military arm. The IKF had inhabited and utilized these same mountains for decades prior to the PKK establishing their bases there. Fighting from within the mountainous terrain was their area of greatest expertise, and they possessed the greatest intelligence and knowledge of the terrain. Consequently, though it would likely require a significant effort, the IKF forces were the best positioned and most adept at engaging in this fight. While the Turks had tried and failed on several occasions, the IKF had much better prospects for achieving success. Moreover, the PKK threat in the mountains did not extend to the urban areas where the majority of Iraqi Kurds resided and the KRG’s power remained preeminent. Ultimately, although the mountains provided an advantage for the PKK, the experience of the Iraqi Kurds diminished its benefits.

The PKK’s greatest strength was a diversified support network which made it difficult to starve them of resources. The PKK forces were primarily equipped from within Turkey through an elaborate smuggling network, but also received increasing support from the diaspora communities in Europe. It is well documented that the PKK was also heavily involved in trafficking narcotics throughout the 1990s, which provided them with an additional revenue stream. The International Narcotic Control Strategy Report, produced by the US State Department, noted that the PKK not only collected a revolutionary tax from the dealers and producers, but also sold drugs directly to the European market.\(^{834}\) In addition, the PKK was active in other illicit markets, including human trafficking of refugees from the Middle East to Italy.\(^{835}\) The PKK taxed smugglers for revenue, which was a common practice among all of the

groups, and the smugglers understood the cost of doing business. Consequently, reducing their access to resources would be a difficult task for the Iraqi Kurdish parties, and bringing the PKK down from the mountains would most likely require the use of force.

Even at this nascent stage, the Iraqi Kurdish peshmergas were a formidable force and far outnumbered the PKK. Estimates of the number of Iraqi Kurdish *peshmerga* forces are difficult to obtain and vary widely. However, between 1985 and 1988, it was estimated that the Iraqis had a total of 10,000-20,000 regular forces, and as many as 40,000 people in their armed militia. The *peshmerga* forces were generally well armed and had obtained anti-aircraft missiles, small artillery pieces and up to 700 vehicles. The *peshmergas* were extremely good at light infantry, and known for their skills in the mountains. In the flat lowlands, the *peshmergas* struggled, but to the extent that the PKK were in the mountain areas as well, this did not hinder their ability to confront them. Furthermore, as noted previously, the Turkish military supplemented the Kurdish *peshmergas* with their own forces, and provided close air support, thus further increasing the power ratio.

These *peshmerga* fighters were quite loyal to their respective parties. Both the KDP and the PUK had developed an elaborate patrimonial system that included support to the *peshmergas* and their families. Particularly in light of the dire economic situation within Iraqi Kurdistan, participation in the *peshmerga* forces was a critical line of support for many Iraqi Kurds. However, despite their loyalty, it appeared that the *peshmerga* fighters were not as driven to

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836 Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013.
837 Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope.*, p. 41
838 Ibid., p. 40-1
839 Interview with Retired Colonel, US Army Special Forces, Stationed at Zakho house in OPC and in northern Iraq in 2003, June 20, 2013
participate in the fight against the PKK as their leadership. The benefits and urgency of fighting the PKK were amorphous, particularly at a time when the KRG was consolidating its power in its new autonomous area. Furthermore, on a personal level, the Iraqi peshmergas had families who often lived in the surrounding areas, and thus the fighters had a lot to lose. This attitude did not reflect support for the PKK, but rather resistance to doing “Turkey’s dirty work.” This is not to suggest that the KRG were philosophically opposed to fighting the PKK, or other Kurds. When attacked, they displayed an ability to attack harshly. However, without the direct incitement, the fighters were less motivated and did not share their leaders’ rationale for confronting the PKK. Nonetheless, despite having limited motivation to pursue this struggle, the peshmerga fighters were still very loyal to their respective parties, and competently followed orders even when commanded to fight the PKK or other Kurdish parties.

Ultimately, in assessing the balance of power between the KRG militias and the PKK, the KRG possessed an overall advantage in terms of the balance of power. Even though the PKK had ample resources to make it a costly struggle and a highly motivated force that could put up a formidable fight in the mountains, they nonetheless could do no better than evade defeat. The combined forces of the KDP and the PUK were sufficiently strong, and possessed the loyalty and skill to engage the PKK directly. The perception of the limited PKK threat was reiterated

841 Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013
842 This theme was repeated time and again -- the fighters opposed engaging with the PKK, not out of solidarity, or even an unwillingness to fight fellow Kurds, but rather out of a desire not to engage in Turkey’s work. Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013; Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013; Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013; Interview with Dr. Najmiddin Karim, Current Governor of Kirkuk, June 12, 2013.
843 Interview with Hussein Tahiri, July 23, 2013. After the fighting, the Turks complained that the Iraqis were unwilling to inflict significant PKK casualties. It is unclear whether this was due to the peshmergas’ lowered motivation to fight this particular fight, or whether the directive was given from the leadership for strategic reasons. This uncertainty is noteworthy because when the KDP and the PUK engage in infighting, they are not reticent to inflict casualties -- the losses on both sides were considerable. See: Michael M. Gunter, “Kurdish Infighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East.
repeatedly by interviewees who explained that the military threat presented by the PKK was deemed to be manageable by the parties and would not threaten the survival of the regime. While engaging the PKK in the mountains would not be without cost, this fight could be contained and was unlikely to extend into the cities and into the broader areas of KRG control. Ultimately, the unity of the parties in containing the PKK, would likely prevent it from becoming a larger protracted conflict. In the final tally, the KRG, even at its nascent stage, was still more powerful organizationally and in numbers and consequently, could adeptly fend off any PKK threat.

The popular support of the PKK must be examined from multiple perspectives: 1) direct military and political support for the PKK; 2) support for the PKK relative to the Iraqi Kurdish parties; and 3) support for a confrontation between the PKK and the Iraqi parties. Despite Ocalan’s repeated appeals to the Iraqi Kurdish population, this was the exception. While there were some villages that supported them by providing supplies and shelter, the PKK did not obtain much support among the population. The PKK tried to recruit among the Iraqis and would come in at night and would try to access recruits and drum up support for their cause. Unlike Kurdish populations in other states, such as Iran or Syria, the PKK were unable to recruit significantly from among the Iraqi population. One reason for the lack of recruits was because the Iraqi Kurdish militias provided an alternative source of paid employment, whereas the PKK fighters did not receive an income. Nonetheless, they still made efforts to appeal to the population.

Even within the mountain villages where the PKK resided, they were unable to obtain

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846 Interview with Henri Barkey, former US state department official, August 5, 2013
significant support. The Iraqi Kurds that were living in the border areas mostly supported the KDP, with the exception of the Sindi tribe which had begun to develop good relations with the guerillas.\textsuperscript{847} The lack of support for the PKK stemmed from two factors. First, these villagers bore the brunt of military attacks, which led to collateral damage among their population. Second, these Iraqi Kurds had developed good relations with the Turkish border officials, who enabled them to continue their border smuggling operations. These villagers feared that the ongoing conflict with the PKK would damage these relations and affect both their security and prosperity.\textsuperscript{848} Interestingly, within Iraq, the PKK did not extort or mistreat the population, as they did in Turkey. They tried taxing the population and asking for donations, but these efforts were quite limited.\textsuperscript{849} The KDP and the PUK would not allow their followers to be treated in this manner. Whatever limited support the PKK obtained was a product of Iraqi Kurdish sympathy with the Kurdish plight in Turkey. To the extent that the PKK had become the de facto representatives of that struggle, they received some minimal sympathy. However, the differences among the Iraqi and Turkish Kurds still severely limited the level of cross-Kurdish identification.\textsuperscript{850}

In addition to obtaining only limited support for their fighters, the PKK was also unable to gain political traction within Iraq. The lack of political appeal was exemplified in the limited support for their political party, the PAK.\textsuperscript{851} The Marxist-Leninist ideology, their worship of Ocalan and austere living choices were foreign concepts to the more traditional Iraqi Kurds.

\textsuperscript{847} Laizer, \textit{Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War.}, p. 63  
\textsuperscript{848} Ibid., p. 62  
\textsuperscript{849} Interview with Dr. Najmiddin Karim, Current Governor of Kirkuk, June 12, 2013;  
\textsuperscript{850} Kirisci and Winrow, \textit{The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict.}, p.161; Uslu, "Turkey's Kurdish Problem: Steps toward a Solution." 161-2; Randal, \textit{After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness?: My Encounters with Kurdistan.} pp. 25-29.  
\textsuperscript{851} Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013.
Although some elements of the pan-Kurdish ideology may have appealed to some Iraqis, the PKK's extreme positions and hard-line policy prevented many mainstream Iraqis from identifying with them.852 As one Iraqi villager noted after the Turkish attacks, "We have none [PKK fighters] around here, and we would not let them in if we did. We don't like their extremist doctrines and methods."853 The PKK were viewed by some in Iraq as zealots and extremists and were not well liked by the more moderate Iraqi Kurds.854 Ultimately, although there are commonalities among the Kurdish movements, they have each had vastly different historical experiences, which have affected their personal and political identification.855 The Iraqi Kurds, at this point, were uninterested in joining the fight alongside their Turkish co-ethnics.856

Furthermore, the PKK failed to obtain support at the expense of the established Iraqi Kurdish parties. The PKK failed to penetrate the heavily patrimonial tribal network that had been established by the parties. Thus, even when some support was possible, it rarely supplanted the support of the local parties, and failed to achieve any significant level of cooperation among the population.857 Further working against the PKK was the fact that the Iraqi Kurds had finally been granted a significant amount of autonomy in northern Iraq. This status was a monumental accomplishment for the Iraqi Kurds. In the years just before OPC, the Kurds had suffered

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855 Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013
856 Aliza Marcus, "Turkey's Kurds After the Gulf War: A Report from the Southeast" in Chaliand, A People without a Country : The Kurds and Kurdistan., p.243
greatly at the hands of Saddam Hussein. The infamous Anfal campaign, headed by Ali Hassan al-Majid, known as "chemical Ali," had occurred only three years prior and had significantly affected the Kurdish population.\textsuperscript{858} Thus, the Kurds of Iraq were much more interested in working towards consolidating their power in their region, and ruling themselves, rather than latching onto the pan-Kurdish struggle.\textsuperscript{859} Many even understood that the PKK's belligerence was working against their cause, and creating problems for them and so they were not troubled by the attacks against the PKK.\textsuperscript{860} These perceptions were further exacerbated when the PKK placed an embargo on the Khabur crossing in late 1991, severely limiting the supplies in Iraqi Kurdistan and significantly raising prices on goods.\textsuperscript{861} The PKK's action had a negative impact on the population and did little to engender good will for their cause.

Although the population on the whole did not support the PKK, they were still opposed to a confrontation between the PKK and the KRG for two reasons: a deep distrust of Turkey and a desire to avoid Kurdish infighting. First, the Iraqi Kurds had a deep-seated distrust of the Turks based on their past experiences and they had no desire to be agents of the Turkish state. Some felt that the PKK forces were not actually causing trouble for the residents of northern Kurdistan. Consequently, they felt as if they were being used by the Turkish government when being urged to get involved in a fight that was not theirs.\textsuperscript{862} Although relations between the Iraqi Kurdish

\textsuperscript{859} Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013; Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013.
\textsuperscript{860} Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013.
\textsuperscript{861} Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013; Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 61.
\textsuperscript{862} Marcus, Blood and Belief : The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 204; Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013
leaders and the Turks has become better in recent times, historically, the Turks were not on friendly relations with the Iraqi Kurds.\(^{863}\)

Second, the Iraqi Kurds hoped to avoid infighting among their fellow Kurds. Despite the limited support for the PKK, the Iraqi Kurds did not want to fight them either. “One Iraqi Kurd stated, ‘we should not be fighting our brothers. Our leaders have lost their credibility with the people.’”\(^{864}\) The differences between the parties were more pronounced amongst the leaders, than among their followers.\(^{865}\) Though, as will be seen more clearly in the next period, the people’s desires to prevent infighting did not significantly hinder the parties’ willingness to engage in these fights.\(^{866}\)

While the population preferred to avoid infighting between the KRG and the PKK, and were largely sympathetic to the plight of the Turkish Kurds, they did not support them ahead of their own parties. The primary loyalty of the majority of Iraqi Kurds was with the two main Iraqi Kurdish parties, the KDP and the PUK.\(^{867}\) These parties held the most promise for the Iraqi Kurdish population, and despite their faults, the people stood behind them and were unlikely to prevent them from taking action deemed to protect their newfound autonomy.

To properly assess the domestic political costs of compliance, four elements have been examined: 1) the domestic political intentions of the PKK; 2) the PKK’s political and military capacity; 3) the KRG’s military capacity; and 4) the popular support of the PKK. During this

\(^{863}\) Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013
\(^{864}\) Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 308
\(^{865}\) Interview with Kurdish policymakers, May 29, 2013, June 11, 2013.
\(^{866}\) Laizer, \textit{Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War.}, p. 62; As will be discussed in greater detail below, the KDP and the PUK engaged in a significant civil war only three years after the start of OPC. That conflict, was significantly more costly to the parties than any action against the PKK.
period, the PKK made explicit threats towards the regime and frequently challenged their legitimacy to rule the KRG. Particularly, in light of the KRG’s accommodating policies towards Turkey, the PKK verbally attacked the KRG and stated that they were the rightful rulers of the Kurds. Furthermore, the PKK had a cruel track record of violently eliminating its political competition, which lent further credibility to their threats. Thus, on the first dimension, it is clear that the PKK presented a challenge to the KRG’s rule, and would resist containment by the KRG. However, at this time, the PKK had significant military limitations. Although the PKK were generally considered formidable fighters, the fighters residing within northern Iraq were young and uninitiated. Furthermore, potentially diverting even these fighters was considered detrimental to their fight against Turkey. Additionally, the Iraqi Kurdish Peshmerga fighters outnumbered the PKK fighters at least 10:1. The peshmergas were also very capable fighters, loyal to the Iraqi parties, and possessed the necessary experience and were well-equipped for a fight in the mountains. These fighters were supplemented by Turkish forces, further increasing the balance of forces. Consequently, the Iraqi Kurdish parties had a significant force advantage over the PKK and were likely to contain them militarily. Finally, although the Iraqi Kurds sympathized with the Turkish Kurds’ plight, at this particular moment, they were far more preoccupied with consolidating their newfound autonomy and supporting their own parties. While the Iraqi Kurds had little desire to engage in intra-Kurdish fighting, their loyalty to their parties still superseded this preference.

Examining these variables at this stage reveals that the domestic costs to contain the PKK were low. While the PKK presented a threat to the regime through their continued verbal assaults on them, the PKK did not pose a threat that could not ultimately be managed by the superior military of the KRG. Although the PKK would likely put up a fight, at this stage, they
could not sustain this challenge. Furthermore, the low levels of popular support suggested that the KRG would not encounter significant opposition to its actions. This combination of factors limited the domestic costs of compliance for the KRG and indicated that they could contain the PKK without much risk of escalation. Thus, the domestic costs of compliance were deemed to be low.

### Domestic Costs of Compliance

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Violent Group Political Intentions</th>
<th>KRG (KDP &amp; PUK)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PKK questions legitimacy of Iraqi Kurdish parties and seeks greater role in Iraqi Kurdistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>PKK has increasing disdain for the Iraqi parties due to their reliance on Turkey</td>
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<tr>
<td>However, PKK still committed to establishing a state in Turkey first and prioritizes its involvement there accordingly</td>
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<tr>
<th>Violent Group Organizational Capacity</th>
<th>PKK possesses significant limitations on its power</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mountain bases and diversified resources provide some advantage</td>
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<tr>
<th>Base State Military Capacity</th>
<th>Joint KDP and PUK forces sufficiently strong and loyal to the Iraqi Kurdish parties</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peshmerga forces have significant experience and intelligence for combating PKK in mountains</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Balance of forces even more favorable with Turkish military support</td>
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<th>Violent Group Popular Support</th>
<th>Iraqi Kurds sympathetic to the Kurdish plight in Turkey</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Provide limited support and mobilization for the PKK due to allegiance to Iraqi Kurdish parties and a desire to consolidate their newfound autonomy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Population possesses limited desire to engage in a fight with PKK</td>
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<tr>
<th>Overall Domestic Costs</th>
<th>MODERATE</th>
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Assessing the Costs of Compliance in 1991-1992

During the period surrounding the 1991 and 1992 Turkish raids, the costs of compliance for the KRG with respect to foreign policy, as well as domestic concerns, were low. The limited costs across both dimensions of the KRG-PKK relationship created a context that favored coercive success. With respect to foreign policy, the goals of the KRG and the PKK clearly diverged. The KRG sought to maintain friendly relations with the Turkish government, who played an important role in securing their nascent quasi-state’s autonomy. In contrast, the PKK continued their insurgency against the Turkish state from within Iraq, and were steadfast in their violent strategy, even when it was clear that their actions were negatively impacting the Iraqi Kurds. Thus, the PKK’s policies were not only at odds with the KRG’s goals in this period, but they were counterproductive to their efforts. Consequently, severing the relationship on this front was beneficial for the KRG and minimal costs were attached to executing this strategy.

On the domestic front, the PKK presented a moderate threat to the regime. Although rhetorically, Ocalan often made disparaging remarks about the legitimacy of the Iraqi Kurdish leadership, the PKK was not considered a legitimate political force in the region. Likewise on the battlefield, the Iraqi Kurdistan Front ultimately possessed sufficient manpower to confront the PKK, particularly with Turkish military assistance. Although the PKK could, and would, present a formidable force in the mountains, this terrain was also the peshmergas former stomping ground and their area of greatest strength. This confrontation would neither be desirable for the KRG, nor a particularly easy fight, but one that nonetheless would most likely be manageable, based on their capabilities. Finally, particularly in light of the KRG’s recent gains and success in securing autonomy, the population was not particularly supportive of the PKK. While elements of the population may have been sympathetic to the Kurdish plight in Turkey, the majority did
not support the PKK above their local parties. Ultimately, the divergence of foreign policy goals, coupled with a moderately permissive domestic environment, enabled the KRG to effectively confront the PKK throughout this period while incurring only limited domestic costs.

**Coercive Outcome**

The KRG’s response to Turkey’s first military raid set the stage for increased action against the PKK. While Turkish raids and pressure were hardly a new phenomenon for the parties, in 1991, a significant change occurred as a direct result of this coercive pressure. Before 1991, the Iraqi parties, while not always enthusiastic about the PKK’s actions, had nonetheless opted not to take any action to limit the group’s activities. That passive stance was ultimately abandoned following the 1991 Turkish attack.

The 1991 Turkish attack initially prompted a muddled reaction from the leaders of the Iraqi Kurdish parties. On one hand, Ma’ṣud Barzani, the head of the KDP, protested the attack because it led to casualties within the Barzan area and he believed that these were revenge attacks. On October 13, 1991, Barzani proclaimed that “these are centres [sic] of civilian population and do not contain armed groups...we cannot remain idle watching these savage murders.” He reiterated his position on October 25th, declaring that “we consider this aggression a declaration of war.”

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868 Following Turkish military raids in 1983 and 1987, the Iraqi Kurdish parties demanded that the PKK relocate away from the border, stop cross-border incursions, and limit their activities within Iraqi Kurdistan to only political action. While the PKK did not oblige, these verbal requests did not lead to a direct confrontation. Finally, in 1987, the KDP ended its alignment with the PKK. Until the start of OPC, there was no additional action against the PKK. Bruinessen, *Kurdish Ethno-Nationalism Versus Nation-Building States: Collected Articles.* p. 243; Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope.* p. 42; Marcus, *Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.* p. 104; Philip Robins, "The Overlord State: Turkish Policy and the Kurdish Issue," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-)* 69, no. 4 (1993), p. 672

869 Hugh Pope, “Turks hit Kurdish bases in Iraq,” The Independent, page 13

870 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, October 29, 1991.
In contrast, Jalal Talabani, whose areas of control were not directly affected, explained that he called on Ocalan to end armed action and look for ways to open a dialogue with the Turkish government. He even reiterated that “Turkey must be considered a country friendly to the Kurds.” Similarly, when asked in an interview on Turkish television about the PKK’s presence in northern Iraq, Talabani shared that:

We are anxious not to be in a position that disturbs Turkey. We have warned all Kurdish groups in the Middle East, including those living in Syria, Iran, Iraq, and the Soviet Union, not to put us in a difficult position by using our territory for their operations. For a while the PKK used this region for its military activities in side Turkey. We have warned them, and they have promised not to do so in the future.

Talabani even tried to directly convince Ocalan to consider a diplomatic solution to their conflict in Turkey, when he stated that the “PKK must respond positively to Turkish President Turgut Ozal’s statement [on Kurdish rights] by halting its armed activities and by looking for a dialogue with the Turkish government.”

By October 1991, just a couple of months after the attack, Barzani’s tone changed and it appeared that the Iraqi Kurdish parties were now tolerant of Turkish action. “Mohsin Dizai, a Barzani spokesman said ‘we have no objection to this operation at all.’” Meanwhile Talabani continued to express PUK support for the Turkish operations and even stated that “he hoped the new Turkish government would continue to improve relations with ‘Iraqi Kurdistan and support

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872 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, October 10, 1991. Talabani was asked whether he believed the PKK, to which he replied: “I hope they will keep their promises. I will do my best to stop this...Not everyone knows the difference between the PKK and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK]. They simply accuse all Kurds of being terrorists. This development is quite damaging to our cause.”
873 Michael Gunter, “Kurdish Infighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 53
the efforts of its fight for democracy and human rights.” By October, it appeared that both parties had come to an agreement to support Turkey in their efforts against the PKK. Talabani declared that ‘both he and Barzani agreed that Turkey had every right to ensure its national security...[however,] that ‘we do not prefer that Turkey retaliates this way to maintain its security.”

Additionally, both parties verbally declared their intention to combat and contain the PKK. The PUK Ankara spokesman, Sercil Kazzaz, described the PKK actions as terrorism, while Siamed Bana of the KDP said that the combined Kurdistan front created an initiative to combat threats to Turkey’s security from Iraqi territory. Similarly, in February 1992, “the IKF issued a warning to the PKK that if it failed to cease activities against Turkey, it would be purged from the region.” These harsh statements against the PKK and Ocalan continued when Talabani declared that “his party does not approve of activities directed against Turkey by the terrorist organization active in south-eastern Anatolia.” Likewise, Barzani expressed that the PKK is ruining the reputation of Kurds everywhere.

In addition to their tacit approval of the raids, the KRG took an increasingly less tolerant attitude towards the PKK. Despite the embryonic stage of their quasi-state, and their relative weakness, the Kurdish parties mustered their forces against the PKK. Immediately following the Turkish coercive attack, it was reported that at least 300 Iraqi Kurdish peshmerga fighters were

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876 Quoted in Gunter, *The Kurds of Iraq: Tragedy and Hope.*, p. 74-5
878 Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 306
879 Ibid., p. 306
880 Ibid., p. 306
deployed to the border areas with the explicit purpose of preventing attacks.\textsuperscript{881} It was announced by the IKF that they were taking steps to prevent cross-border infiltration and Hoshyar Zebari, a close aid of Barzani, did not rule out the use of force.\textsuperscript{882} In December 1991, there were additional reports of arrests of seven PKK central committee members by Talabani’s peshmergas.\textsuperscript{883} In that same vein, they threatened PKK members and supporters in Bahdinan, and arrested PKK sympathizers. In addition, they closed their offices, raided their safe houses, and imposed a blockade on the PKK bases in the mountains.\textsuperscript{884} In February 1992, the IKF’s independent action was supplemented after Barzani met with Turkish officials in Ankara and established the beginning of military cooperation against the PKK.\textsuperscript{885} In all, the IKF had begun to take significant steps to impede PKK action emanating from their borders.

Predictably, actions by the IKF against the PKK heightened tensions between the groups and resulted in a backlash of PKK actions directed at the Iraqi Kurdish parties. In the summer of 1992, there were several reprisal killings of Iraqi Kurds linked to the PKK, and most importantly, the PKK established a blockade on the road leading from Turkey into Iraq.\textsuperscript{886} “In retaliation, the Turkish rebels [PKK] began to burn or shoot at the 500 trucks a day, laden with everything from seeds and cooking oil to school supplies, that crossed from Turkey to the Kurdish enclave…prices for goods imported into Iraq soared, and customs revenue from the trucks — as much as $2M/month and the KRG’s main source of income, was cut off.”\textsuperscript{887} This blockade

\textsuperscript{881} Jonathan Rugman, “Turkey Launches Reprisal Raid on Kurdish Rebels, the Guardian, October 26, 1991.
\textsuperscript{882} Robins, Suits and Uniforms : Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 324
\textsuperscript{883} Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 306
\textsuperscript{884} Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 39
\textsuperscript{885} Robins, Suits and Uniforms : Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 324.
\textsuperscript{886} Tahiri, The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State., p. 266-7;
effectively stopped traffic across the Khabur crossing, and reduced the flow from 500 trucks per day to less than a dozen. Neither Turkey, nor the Iraqi Kurds, was able to break the blockade, which the PKK asserted that they would only lift if the Iraqi Kurds ended their blockade of PKK bases. The success of the PKK blockade demonstrated their continued power and presence in Iraqi Kurdistan. When the PKK finally lifted their blockade, Talabani stated that “the PKK has to make a choice...either they will stop using north Iraq as a military base...or they should go to their own areas [Turkey] and operate according to their own strategy.” This cycle of clashes between the parties can all be traced back to Turkey’s deliberate acts to coerce the parties into acting against the PKK.

Turkey’s coercive pressure in the early 1990s proved to be increasingly effective over time in achieving its objectives. By all measures, Turkey’s actions leading up to the 1992 raid were even more successful in eliciting the desired assistance from the targeted parties than the prior efforts. In contrast to the 1991 raid, which resulted in the KRG acting against the PKK following the raid, in 1992, the KRG coordinated with the Turkish military in advance and played an important role in carrying out the assault. Leading up to the attack on the PKK, Turkish military officials and the IKF met with greater regularity, which produced an agreement to curb the group’s activities in the fall. In justifying their attacks on the PKK, the KRG expressed their desire for the group to shut down its base within Iraqi Kurdistan, while alluding to the role of international pressure. A couple of days after the clashes began, Noshirwan Mustafa, Jalal Talabani’s most senior representative, stated that “the Kurdish government is

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889 Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 307
891 Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.*, p. 325-6
responsible for all the borders. The presence of PKK camps on our soil is provoking all the world against us. As far [as] the PKK’s own tactic and strategies go, they are free to do as they choose in Turkish Kurdistan, but not here. We do not want the PKK to use Iraqi Kurdistan for its own objectives.\textsuperscript{892}

The IKF was essential to the success of the 1992 raid. During the fighting against the PKK, the IKF fielded between 5,000-6,000 KDP and PUK peshmergas that attacked the roughly 2,000 PKK militants that resided within Iraq.\textsuperscript{893} While the exact number of casualties on all sides is difficult to ascertain, it is clear that the PKK were dealt a significant blow by this coordinated assault.\textsuperscript{894} Estimates vary widely, ranging from 160-2,000 PKK militants killed, 160-1,000 peshmergas killed, and 160-270 Turkish soldiers killed in the battle. The most conservative estimates suggest that only 3-500 PKK militants were killed.\textsuperscript{895} In addition, approximately 1,500 PKK fighters surrendered to the Kurdish forces and ended up in prison camps, hospitals, or in their new camp in Zele.\textsuperscript{896}

This latest clash generated a significant result in that the PKK had been flushed from their mountain stronghold and were moved en masse to Zele camp near the Iranian border, deep within the PUK controlled areas.\textsuperscript{897} However, despite promises to the Turks to disarm the PKK

\textsuperscript{892} Quoted in Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 64
\textsuperscript{893} Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 308; Marcus, Blood and Belief : The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 203.; p. 79
\textsuperscript{894} Turkish estimates suggest that 2,000 PKK fighters were killed in the attacks, though few believe the number was that high. Similarly, Talabani claimed that in addition to those killed, 1,500 PKK fighters surrendered to the PKK, Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 308;
\textsuperscript{895} Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 68; Marcus, Blood and Belief : The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 205; Gunter, "A De Facto Kurdish State in Northern Iraq.", p. 308;
\textsuperscript{896} Chris Hedges, “An odd alliance subdues Turkey’s Kurdish rebels.” Nov. 24, 1992, NYT, accessed on 7/1/2013 at http://global.factiva.com.libproxy.mit.edu; Robins, Suits and Uniforms : Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 327
\textsuperscript{897} Ibid., p. 327
upon their surrender, no such action materialized. As one reporter noted, “[t]heir men and women have been allowed to keep what the Iraqi Kurds refer to as their own ‘personal weapons,’ usually a Kalashnikov and hand grenades. And in one house I saw spare machine guns, rocket-launchers and ammunition stacked beside a sack of newly purchased socks.” Despite the ability to retain some weaponry, these new conditions were still quite challenging for the PKK. The camp was isolated, and in the winter, the snow considerably limited their access and supplies. Though they would eventually return, for the time being, the PKK had been dislocated.

At the conclusion of the fighting, the KRG and the PKK established new ground rules for their continued presence and activity in northern Iraq. The agreement stated that the PKK fighters were obliged to respect the laws of Iraqi Kurdistan. The PKK agreed to: (a) refrain from any military activities or any other action opposing the Kurdish government, (b) move away from the Turkish borders to locations designated by the regional government, and (c) travel only with papers issued by the interior ministry. In addition, if the PKK embraced the new paradigm, the KRG agreed to several provisions for their continued coexistence. Mainly, the KRG agreed to: (a) protect Turkish Kurdistan citizens, (b) allow the PKK to retain all goods belonging to them, (c) permit the PKK to conduct political activities, and (d) provide health services to the

898 Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis., p. 118
899 "Turkish Kurds Wait for Call to Rejoin Fight; Clare Pointon reports for Xalay [Zele], a camp in the mountains of Iran-Iraq border, The guardian, November 30, 1992,
900 "Turkish Kurds Wait for Call to Rejoin Fight; Clare Pointon reports for Xalay, a camp in the mountains of Iran-Iraq border, The guardian, November 30, 1992,
901 The PKK would learn several lessons including how not to bog down their supplies in depots that would require protection, and to be less static and more mobile in their mountain camps. This knowledge prevented the Turkish and KRG forces from dislodging them in future encounters.
sick and injured. Osman Ocalan, Abdullah Ocalan’s brother and the senior militant in charge of Zele camp, acknowledged these new restrictions when he proclaimed that “[t]oday we don’t want to use our military power in southern Kurdistan [northern Iraq]... but if they need us in the north, if we get an urgent message calling us to join the fight, we will move and go there.” These statements highlight the commitment of the PKK fighters in Iraq to continue the fight in Turkey, while simultaneously acknowledging that they had agreed not to use force in the near term.

The Turkish-IKF coalition was certainly not a perfect union and the Turkish military publicly stated its frustration in what it perceived as a general unwillingness on the part of the Kurds to inflict sufficient casualties on the PKK. Additionally, when the Turks asked their new Iraqi Kurdish allies to turn over the PKK militants that had been captured, Talabani responded that he had no intention of handing them over. This episode highlights the initial splintering of policies and attitudes of the KDP and PUK. While Talabani started to moderate his tone towards the PKK, almost immediately following the military encounter, Barzani continued to reassert his intent to push the PKK out of the border region and hinder their ability to act from within Iraqi Kurdistan. The leaders’ divergence on this topic served as an early preview of the challenges of remaining on one united path.

Ultimately, both parties pursued costly measures to contain the PKK within northern Iraq, and even participated in the Turkish assault in 1992. The Turkish government recognized the

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902 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 68-9; Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 204
903 Turkish Kurds Wait for Call to Rejoin Fight; Clare Pointon reports for Xalay, a camp in the mountains of Iran-Iraq border, The Guardian, November 30, 1992,
904 Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 326
905 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 204
contribution of the Kurdish fighters. Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel explained that "leaders in northern Iraq had played a big role in dislodging some 7,5000 separatist bandits from Turkey’s borders...Demirel announced that those who surrendered during the northern Iraq operation would be held under guard in a camp in Sulaymaniya and that Kurdish leaders had assured the Turkish government on this issue." Despite these challenges, it is clear that the Iraqi Kurdish contribution to the incursion was essential for the Turks. Although imperfect on some dimensions, this episode can be deemed a Turkish coercive success.

**MARCH 1995**

In March 1995, the Turkish military launched Operation Steel (Celik). Unlike previous attacks, this attack came without prior notification to the Iraqi Kurdish parties. More than 35,000 troops once again crossed the border in order to destroy PKK camps and thwart their efforts to use the border area to launch attacks. The operation lasted six weeks and was estimated to cost $65 million. Turkey’s latest effort was prompted by the regime’s observation that the infighting between the PUK and the KDP had enabled the PKK to reestablish its camps along the border and that attacks against Turkish citizens were being planned. However, in addition to directly attacking the PKK, this attack served as a threat to the Iraqi Kurds to ensure that they would honor their agreements to restrain the PKK.

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906 “Prime Minister Argues in Favour of Extending the Mandate of Poised Hammer”, BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, Dec. 24, 1992, Excerpt from report (ME/1571/ c/1 Turkish TV, Ankara.
909 Yildiz and Kurdish Human Rights Project., The Kurds in Iraq : The Past, Present and Future., p. 79
910 Ibid., p. 80
explained in a televised speech in regard to the PKK mountain bases, that "those territories belong to Iraq, and we respect Iraq's territorial integrity...we would like the regional population to defend themselves by finding a solution to these PKK terrorists. It would be better if they could reach an agreement among themselves." Once again, these latest attacks were directed not only at the PKK, but had the intent of coercing the Iraqi Kurdish parties.

This extensive engagement served as the largest foreign expedition in the history of the Turkish republic to date. Turkish troops, mostly commandos, but some mechanized units, tanks and aircraft aimed at rebel camps and other targets along the 185 mile front, some as deep as 35 miles into Iraq. The Turkish government declared that it would remain in the region until they had rid northern Iraq of the PKK. However, shortly after the attack, there were calls by the West to limit the scale and duration of the operation, and the Turks obliged. By April 1995, 23,000 troops had withdrawn back into Turkey. Turkish sources claimed that they killed 555 guerrillas, taken 13 prisoners, and suffered 11 Turkish casualties; however, these claims were disputed. Despite its scale, the Turkish raid was unsuccessful in dislodging the PKK from the mountains and imposing significant levels of PKK casualties.

As in previous attacks, although the Turkish military sought to go after the PKK directly, most of the victims of the raid were predominantly Iraqi Kurdish villagers. Limited local intelligence and language barriers made it difficult to discern among the Kurds, on the ground

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911 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, April 18, 1995.
913 Michael M. Gunter, "Kurdish Infighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict" in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 56
914 Olson, "The Kurdish Question and Turkey's Foreign Policy Towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf War." in ibid., p. 107; "35,000 Turks Launch Attack on Kurds in Northern Iraq," The Herald (Glasgow) 1995, Aliza Marcus, "Turks Pound Kurdish Rebels," in The Herald (Glasgow) (1995).
915 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 152; Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 246.
and from the air. The Turkish military used a heavy hand in the area and conducted death-squad style murders and bombing of villages, a fact which Ankara could not cover up.\textsuperscript{916} There were many civilian arrests, abductions and casualties among the Iraqi Kurds.\textsuperscript{917}

Whereas in 1992, when the PKK were unprepared, this time, Turkey’s military buildup was observed and the militants relocated their fighters and material southward out of the reach of the Turkish military.\textsuperscript{918} The PKK organized their forces into smaller mobile units that it could abandon without a costly defense.\textsuperscript{919} As one reporter noted at the time: “Although Turkish media portrayed the invasion on 20 March as leading to heavy fighting, there are few signs that Turkish troops ever seriously confronted the PKK guerillas reported to be in northern Iraq. Turkish officers on the ground admitted that even with their 35,000 troops, they could not find their opponents in the mountains and gorges of Iraqi Kurdistan.”\textsuperscript{920}

The challenges encountered by the Turkish military only underscored their need for KDP and PUK cooperation in patrolling this difficult terrain and providing a local partnership for dislodging the PKK. One of the key differences between this attack and the one in 1992 is that whereas both the KDP and PUK supported and participated in the 1992 attacks, the 1995 attacks received only limited support from the KDP.\textsuperscript{921} Importantly, neither party contributed militarily to this assault.

\textsuperscript{916} Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.}, p. 246
\textsuperscript{917} Laizer, \textit{Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War.}, p. 150
\textsuperscript{918} Marcus, \textit{Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.}, p. 246
\textsuperscript{919} Robins, \textit{Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.}, p. 335
\textsuperscript{920} Patrick Cockburn, “Kurd guerrillas return to bases,” The Independent, April 27, 1995.
\textsuperscript{921} Olson, “The Kurdish Question and Turkey’s Foreign Policy Towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq Since the Gulf War.” in Olson, \textit{The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East.}, p. 107
Foreign Policy Costs and Benefits

In the period leading up to the 1995 raid, the landscape changed significantly. Infighting between the Iraqi Kurdish parties, which began in 1994, produced differences in their respective foreign policy outlooks.\textsuperscript{922} Albeit for different reasons, during this episode, the overall foreign policy costs of compliance for the KDP and the PUK were low. Both parties continued to rely on Turkey for OPC and the maintenance of autonomy in Iraqi Kurdistan. However, the internal struggles began to shift the parties’ external alliances. The rift that opened between the KDP and PUK ultimately led one party to become more closely aligned with Iran and the PKK, while the other moved sharply in the other direction. Despite these differences, the PKK was not instrumental to either party’s foreign policy, and neither party derived a benefit from their action against Turkey.

The KDP’s geographic proximity to the Turkish state created greater security, political and economic incentives for maintaining amicable relations with Turkey. The KDP was aware that its position along the border made it more susceptible to Turkish military incursions into its area, but that exposure also meant that it could more easily obtain military assistance from the Turks. In addition, the KDP’s geographic proximity to Turkey meant that it suffered disproportionately from Turkish raids, either through deliberate Turkish action or collateral damage. This vulnerability further enhanced their inclination to maintain a quiet border with Turkey. (See Maps 5-6)

\textsuperscript{922} For a detailed account of the infighting between the KDP and the PUK see: Michael M. Gunter, "The Kdp-Puk Conflict in Northern Iraq," \textit{Middle East Journal} 50, no. 2 (1996), McDowall, \textit{A Modern History of the Kurds}, Yildiz and Kurdish Human Rights Project., \textit{The Kurds in Iraq: The Past, Present and Future.}
From an economic perspective, the KDP heavily depended on Turkey for its revenue at the Khabur crossing, which was an increasing source of tension with its rival, the PUK. In 1994, approximately 2,000 trucks per day crossed the border, providing the KDP with between 200,000 - 1,000,000 U.S dollars per day, which it did not share with the PUK during this period.\(^{923}\) Thus, the KDP derived an exclusive economic benefit from continued amicable economic relations with Turkey. Ultimately, Barzani’s willingness to cooperate with Turkey and his pragmatic approach to Kurdish aspirations in northern Iraq fostered trust between Turkey and the KDP.\(^{924}\) Consequently, the KDP actively sought to maintain good relations with its neighbor, Turkey. Clearly, the KDP hoped to avoid the potential costs of another incursion and also anticipated that this alliance might also prove beneficial in its internal fight with the PUK.

In contrast to the KDP, the infighting created some distance between the PUK and Turkey, however, the extent of this shift should not be overstated. At its core, the PUK understood Turkey’s role in sustaining their autonomy, did not seek to enter into a direct confrontation with them, and at times, even embraced significant measures to improve relations. However, the relationship in this period was more strained for several reasons. Historically, relations between the PUK and Turkey were often more strained than those with the KDP.\(^{925}\) Turkey viewed the PUK’s relationship with the PKK suspiciously and did not trust Talabani’s commitment to maintain the territorial integrity of Iraq.\(^{926}\) Similarly, the PUK believed that Turkey was purposefully meddling in their domestic fight and arming the KDP and increasing its

\(^{923}\) Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.* p. 333  
\(^{924}\) Kirisci and Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict.* p.165  
\(^{925}\) Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.* p. 339, Shazad Saib interviewed in 1995. The PUK’s Ankara representative, Shazad Said, traced the beginning of these deteriorated relations between the PUK and Turkey to March 1993.  
\(^{926}\) Kirisci and Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict.* p.165; Robins, *Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War.* p. 329
trade at the Khabur crossing in order to shift the balance of power. Although Turkey made some efforts to bring the parties together in 1994, the PUK continued to harbor suspicions that Turkey was not an honest broker and that it favored the ascension of the KDP.

In the absence of direct Turkish support, the PUK sought assistance from Iran, Turkey’s rival. Iran and Turkey had competitive relations and in some ways, Iran’s support for the PUK was aimed at limiting Turkish influence in the region. The PUK allowed as many as 2,000-3,000 Iranian troops to assist them in their fight against the KDP. Increasingly close relations with Iran were not a secret at the time, as Talabani often spoke of Iran’s growing support. Cooling Turkish relations, coupled with their new external ally, altered the PUK’s foreign policy outlook.

The PUK also possessed a distinctly different security outlook from the KDP. The PUK’s distance from the Turkish border shielded it from dangers of a Turkish incursions, meaning that a violent border had only a minimal impact on their area of control. While some Turkish raids entered into PUK territory, they were greatly protected from the collateral damage associated with many of the Turkish incursions. Yet, Turkish flights in PUK areas were a frequent reminder for the PUK that there were still dangers associated with acting too strongly

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927 Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 333; Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis., p. 84
928 Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis., p. 76-78; Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 334; During this period, Turkey did try to make an effort to stop the violence between the KDP and the PUK. In addition to hosting peace talks between the parties, Ankara announced that it would provide $13.5M in aid to both sides.
929 Tripp, A History of Iraq., p. 272
930 Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis., p. 112
931 Ibid., p. 120
932 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, April 6, 1995.
against the Turkish state. Lastly, from an economic perspective, Turkey had limited leverage over the PUK, since it did not control the Habur crossing and did not receive those financial benefits of the relationship.

In sharp contrast to the prior period, the PUK obtained far fewer benefits from its relationship with Turkey. Consequently, the group realigned itself with Iran, one of Turkey’s main regional rivals. However, the PUK did not seek to incite Turkey, nor did it utilize the PKK internationally for its purposes. Severing this relationship would have had limited foreign policy implications.

The PKK’s Goals Towards Turkey

In the years just prior to the 1995 attack, the PKK began to moderate some of its rhetoric and demands, but did not ease up its violent insurgency against Turkey. In 1994, the PKK repeatedly called for a ceasefire to be followed by dialogue aimed at finding a peaceful solution to the conflict. Additionally, they removed the hammer and sickle from their flag and emblem, and toned down their rhetoric against Islam, signaling a general softening of their hardline position. "The PKK itself claims to be a revolutionary liberation movement, fighting for the freedom or self-determination of the Kurdish people. It has also stressed repeatedly this year [1995] that such a solution could be sought within a sovereign and democratic Turkey in

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934 As will be seen below, the PUK did utilize the PKK instrumentally, but this was done for domestic purposes.
936 As will be discussed in the next section, these changes by the PKK were also aimed at gaining additional popular support amongst the more traditional and mainstream Kurdish population. However, this moderation in tone also had foreign policy implications. Ibid., p. 95; N Criss, "The Nature of Pkk Terrorism in Turkey.", p. 23.
which both people, the Turks and Kurds, would have equal rights and representation.\textsuperscript{937} While these shifts in the PKK rhetoric indicated a willingness to resolve the Turkish Kurdish problem politically, the PKK nonetheless maintained its revolutionary stance and resorted to the battlefield when no progress was made diplomatically.

PKK’s softened tone was juxtaposed with intensified fighting with the Turkish state during the same period. In 1994 and 1995, the greatest number of PKK incidents occurred, with 6,400 and 4,000 events in each year respectively.\textsuperscript{938} Though there had been a brief unilateral ceasefire declared on March 17, 1993 by Ocalan, it ended on May 24, 1993 following the killing of 33 unarmed Turkish soldiers.\textsuperscript{939} The growing PKK insurgency, coupled with the increasingly harsher Turkish counter-insurgency campaign, diminished the possibility of a political resolution to this ongoing conflict.\textsuperscript{940} It is clear that throughout this period, Ocalan and the PKK were fervently committed not only to continuing, but escalating their violent conflict with Turkey. Turkey remained the PKK’s primary enemy and there was no apparent avenue for achieving a political resolution.

As in the previous period, the PKK’s approach to Turkey diverged greatly with the KDP and the PUK and the PKK’s activity did not produce foreign policy benefits for either party. The KDP was both more susceptible to Turkish incursions, and also derived a greater value from its relationship with Turkey and was increasingly dependent on it. In contrast, the infighting between the parties led the PUK to draw closer to Iran. However, despite the shifts in their

\textsuperscript{937}Imset, "The Pkk: Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?." p. 97
\textsuperscript{939}Sheri Laizer, “Five Previous PKK ceasefires Since 1993 — better prospects for the sixth ceasefire of Newroz 2013?”available at: kurdishmedia.com
\textsuperscript{940}In 1993, the Turkish state, under Tansu Ciller, handed over the Kurdish issue to the military which took increasingly harsh measures against the PKK and the Kurds in Southeastern Turkey more generally.
external alliances, this did not change the role of the PKK in their foreign policy. Both parties sought to avoid a direct confrontation and recognized they depended on Turkey for their continued autonomy. Thus, severing the relationship with the PKK would have entailed low foreign policy costs for both parties.

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**Domestic Political Costs and Benefits**

In contrast to the limited shifts in foreign policy costs, the domestic costs of compliance during this period rose dramatically. The infighting between the KDP and the PUK, coupled with the growing popular support among Iraqi Kurds of the PKK, significantly changed the calculus for action. As the analysis below will demonstrate, compliance with Turkish demands would
have required both the KDP and PUK to embrace a high a degree of risk as well as domestic political costs.

The most important domestic development leading up to the 1995 raid was the infighting between the KDP and the PUK. This latest round of fighting began in December 1994 and was triggered by disagreements over resource sharing and a land dispute. The height of the fighting occurred between December 1994 and January 1996, where between 500 and 800 Iraqi Kurds were killed, and thousands displaced. Furthermore, as a result of the fighting, the parties consolidated their power in their traditional areas of influence and partitioned northern Iraq. The KDP controlled and administered the northern area, including Erbil and Dohuk, whereas the PUK controlled and administered the southern area, including Sulamaniya and Darbandikhan (See map 1-2).

Since 1975, the KDP and the PUK had alternated between fighting and cooperating, even when they were engaged in fighting against Saddam Hussein’s regime. This infighting had often undermined the effectiveness of their collective resistance. Even Saddam

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941 Olson, “The Kurdish Question and Turkey’s Foreign Policy Towards Syria, Iran, Russia and Iraq since the Gulf War.”, p. 105; McDowall, A Modern History of the Kurds., p. 387; Sheri Laizer, p.134)
Hussein used to boast that “the Kurdish organizations would never be able to achieve anything since they were hopelessly divided against each other and subservient to foreign powers.”

Importantly, the infighting between the parties necessarily changed their stance towards the PKK, as well as their willingness and capacity to act against the group. The parties were locked in an interminable battle for hegemony in northern Iraq, with both sides determined to be the outright leader of the Kurds. As one NGO worker noted, “Barzani thinks he’s the true leader of the Kurds. So does Talabani, and they’ll fight each other down to the last peshmerga to prove themselves right.” Although the close balance of power between the two parties precluded either from consolidating their power over the entire region, the clash had extremely high stakes and was fundamentally about gaining territory and ensuring their political survival. All other concerns became secondary. In light of the parties’ diverging interests, it is essential to consider the domestic costs of action separately with a particular focus on how the civil war played into their respective calculations.

Much like in the previous period, the PKK continued to pose some political threat to the PUK and the KDP. However, the PKK threat paled in comparison to the threat the Iraqi parties posed to each other. The PKK moderated their ideology and demands and more broadly appealed to traditional Iraqi Kurds who were previously alienated by the PKK’s socialist agenda. In general, the PKK remained primarily focused on accomplishing its goals in Turkey. These changes moderately increased the PKK’s threat within Iraq, however, since the PUK and KDP

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944 Saddam Hussein quoted in McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds.*, p. 345-7
947 Interview with Dr. Najmidden Karim, June 12, 2013; Interviews with Kurdish policymaker, May 30, 2013
were in the midst of a civil war, these changes were viewed as having a marginal impact. The PKK was still not viewed as a viable political competitor and it certainly did not vie for power within northern Iraq. However, while the PKK was not a contender for control, it still found a way to meddle in the domestic politics of the region. During this period, the PKK fostered an entente with the PUK, which had the potential to alter the balance of power between the parties. Foad Ma'sum, a member of the PUK politbureau frankly stated this strategy's objective, in noting that "we are happy that the KDP has problems with the PKK. We wish very much they [KDP] develop problems with other parties. The KDP also likes to see problems between us and the Islamic movement. This is something natural." This new niche for the PKK was not created through organizational changes that they embraced, but rather because of the changing domestic environment. Thus, the PKK's new position created a net benefit to the PUK, while threatening the KDP.

In addition to the changing political atmosphere, the number of PKK fighters in northern Iraq more than doubled from the prior period, and were estimated to be between 2,500 and 6,000 fighters. Assuming that the number is likely somewhere between these estimates, these figures represented more than a doubling of the number of fighters in the previous period. The number of PKK militants in Iraq had grown, in part, because of the natural growth of the

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949 Quoted in Tahiri, *The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State.*, p. 293
950 I am assuming that the number of PKK fighters is likely somewhere between these estimates. The PKK organization as a whole is estimated to have between 10,000-15,000 active militants, and as many as 75,000 part time militias, predominantly in Turkey. Of this number, it is unknown exactly what percentage was based in Iraq, thus the discrepancy in numbers. One estimate has the number of PKK fighters as high as 25,000 within Iraq, though this number is higher than all other estimates. Kirisci and Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict.*, p. 130; Imset, "The PKK: Terrorists or Freedom Fighters?", White, *Primitive Rebels or Revolutionary Modernisers?: The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey.*, p. 143; Marcus, *Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence.*, p. 249; Michael M. Gunter, "Kurdish Infighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict" in Olson, *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East.*, p. 50; Patrick Cockburn, "Kurd guerrillas return to bases," The Independent, April 27, 1995.
organization, but also because the increasing Turkish counter-insurgency campaign in southeastern Turkey had caused many PKK fighters to retreat and find safety within northern Iraq. In 1994, the Turkish counter-insurgency campaign escalated significantly. It is estimated that the Turkish government destroyed and emptied 3,000 villages and hamlets in southeastern Turkey, which significantly affected the PKK’s ability to find support and shelter within Turkey. The growth of PKK militants based in Iraq invariably increased the potential threat that they posed.

Furthermore, the PKK took advantage of the chaotic situation in northern Iraq and largely abandoned their bases in the PUK areas of Dohuk and Sulamaniya and moved back to the more advantageous bases near the Turkish border and within the KDP area. The PKK’s strategic repositioning into the KDP areas had a disproportionate impact on the KDP. Particularly, in light of the growing alliance between the PUK and the PKK, the KDP was now in the precarious position of having an enemy situated squarely within its area of control. As McDowall noted, “on the ground it destabilized the area, compromised the KDP in its relations with Turkey, and provided the PUK with a handy cat’s paw in the north.”

In preparation for the next round of battles, the PKK heeded the lessons from the 1992 attacks, adjusted their tactics and readied for a possible KDP or Turkish attack. In 1992, the PKK forces were unprepared for the attack by Turkey and the KRG and had unwisely positioned

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953 It is important to note, that the overall strength of the PKK is not in question here, rather the strength of the PKK within northern Iraq and its ability to pose a threat to the parties.
954 Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013.
their fighters and equipment in a manner that required them to defend their encampments instead of retreat. By 1995, the PKK had created mobile bases that could be easily abandoned, and would allow the fighters to melt into the mountains if necessary. These types of adjustments only made it more difficult to remove the PKK from the border. The PKK’s growth in numbers, their relocation to the mountains bordering Turkey, and their refined tactics increased their overall power and made them an even more formidable competitor than they were in 1992.

As the PKK grew in strength, so too did the PUK and the KDP on both organizational and military fronts. Since 1992, the KDP and PUK consistently sought out opportunities to increase their peshmerga’s capacity. Their increased autonomy enabled the Kurds to establish its infrastructure and security forces more adequately than in the previous period. By 1993, “there was a Kurdish police force, a security network, law courts and of course parliament.”

Estimates of the PUK and KDP forces during this period were not available, however there is no reason to believe that they shrank in number as compared to the earlier period. If anything, the size of the forces most likely increased. Thus, the KRG forces were at least 10,000 regular forces and 40,000 in their armed militias.

However, the PUK and KDP forces were engaged in an active civil war, and therefore mostly unavailable for an engagement with the PKK. The KDP, which at this juncture, was most affected by the PKK’s presence, nonetheless needed to preserve its power for its more urgent confrontation with the PUK. As Sami Abdurrahman, the KDP Foreign Relations Official noted, “we could overcome the PKK easily if we had arms and ammunition. The ammunition

957 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots : Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 110
958 These estimates are based on numbers from 1988. It is likely that these numbers increased during the period of OPC, Gunter, The Kurds of Iraq : Tragedy and Hope., p. 41
especially is important because we do not wish to use up our ammunition fighting the PKK and then end up in a weak position if we are attacked by the PUK." Although Abdurrahman later denied making these comments, and it is unclear whether the KDP’s central limitation was actually with respect to arms, regardless, the sentiments demonstrate the KDP’s priorities at that particular moment. Consequently, despite the fact that the KDP and the PUK forces far outnumbered the PKK, these forces were engaged in heavy fighting and neither party wanted to open another front with the PKK.

Furthermore, far from being a neutral party in the civil war, the PKK became a domestic partner that the PUK used to increase its power in its fight against the KDP. The close internal balance of power between the parties led each of them to look for any allies that could shift the current impasse. The PUK, who in 1992 had opposed the PKK, now obtained some domestic utility from an agreement of mutual hostility towards the KDP. This agreement was not the first time that the PKK and the PUK attempted cooperation. When Barzani cut his ties with the PKK in 1987, Ocalan promptly approached Talabani and made an agreement in May 1988, though little cooperation ultimately emerged. Similarly, in 1993, Talabani served as the mediator between Ocalan and Turgut Ozal, Turkey’s president at the time, in obtaining a ceasefire in February 1993, although nothing came of it, due to Ozal’s untimely death. Talabani was always a pragmatic politician, and saw an opportunity in befriending the KDP’s

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959 TDN Sept 27, 1995; Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 158
960 As will be seen in the next section, the parties were even willing to court Saddam Hussein, from whom they were receiving protection in OPC. Tripp, A History of Iraq., p. 272
961 Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq : A Political Analysis., p. 119
962 Marcus, Blood and Belief : The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 123
963 Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013.; Michael M. Gunter, “Kurdish Infighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s : Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 56
enemy, the PKK. In describing Talabani’s approach, it was often stated that “one day he was a
great friend to Saddam Hussein and then he became a staunch enemy... Talabani... was the
ultimate pragmatist. There are no permanent enemies for him, but there are permanent
friends.”

In actuality, the PKK made only a limited direct contribution to the conflict, and did not
tip the balance in favor of the PUK. There were no reports of PKK fighters integrating into
the PUK forces, nor joint PKK-PUK attacks against the KDP. Integration and cooperation
was especially difficult given the fact that most of the PKK fighters did not speak Sorani, the
language spoken predominantly in the PUK areas. Furthermore, despite the entente with the
PUK, the PKK was generally cautious about getting embroiled in the local fight, since their
efforts were directed primarily at Turkey. Rather, the PKK’s placement in the KDP stronghold
served as a thorn in their side, and in the event of KDP-PKK hostilities, it would draw down their
available forces, which would be a net gain for the PUK. Ultimately, this arrangement
underscored the accuracy of “the enemy of my enemy is my friend,” and was consistent with
historical Kurdish alliance switches formulated to gain a domestic power advantage. As one
KRG policy maker explained, that until the infighting ended, the main consideration for these

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965 Interview with Joost Hiltermann, May 30, 2013
966 Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013; Interview with Dr. Najmiddin Karim, June 12, 2013; Interview with
   Henri Barkey, former US state department official, August 5, 2013
967 Interview with Henri Barkey, former US state department official, August 5, 2013
968 One notable exception is in August 1995, when the PKK attacked the KDP. In interviews later, Ocalan
   expressed that this was a grave error on the part of the PKK.
969 Interview with Nader Entessar, July 22, 2013. For examples of historical alliance switching see: Martin van
   Bruinessen, Agha, Shaikh, and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan (London; Atlantic
   situations in instances of civil war. For more on this see: Fotini Christia, Alliance Formation in Civil Wars
two parties regarding any third party was how that party could help or hinder their ability to obtain more influence and control over their region.970

The infighting inevitably impacted the population’s sentiments regarding the Iraqi Kurdish parties and the PKK. During this period, “the incessant fighting amongst the two political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan has led the population at large to become increasingly disenchanted and alienated from the two major political forces in the region.”971 The divisions which led to the fighting between the parties were present primarily at the elite level, rather than at the mass level. Following the outbreak of violence, there were mass demonstrations against the infighting throughout KDP controlled Erbil, as well as in PUK controlled Sulamaniyana, and 17 minor Iraqi Kurdistani parties condemned the violence.972 One of Jonathan Randal’s interviewees aptly described the situation, stating that “ordinary Kurds in the KDP controlled areas hate Barzani…and the PUK areas hate Talabani.”973 The continued violence clearly decreased the legitimacy of the ruling parties among the population.

At the same time, while the parties’ popularity rapidly declined, the PKK began to gain popular support among the Iraqi population. The rising popularity was due to several factors. First, the PKK appeared to be successfully challenging the Turkish state. Despite facing a more aggressive counter-insurgency strategy, the PKK persevered with their resistance efforts and inflicted significant damage on the state.974 Second, the disillusionment with the Iraqi parties provided an opportunity for the PKK to make inroads amongst the population. Since the parties

970 Interviews with Kurdish policymaker, May 30, 2013
971 Liam Anderson “The Role of Political Parties in Developing Kurdish Nationalism” in Ahmed and Gunter, The Evolution of Kurdish Nationalism., p. 124
972 Gunter, “The Kdp-Puk Conflict in Northern Iraq.”, p. 235
974 Interview with Sheri Laizer, June/July 2013;
were preoccupied with each other, the PKK was able to interact with the population with limited interference from the parties. The PKK’s new bases positioned them closer to the Iraqi Kurdish population centers which led to increasing contact with the population along both political and economic fronts. With their newfound confidence, the PKK also began operating openly in Sulamaniya, the PUK stronghold.975 The PKK was perceived by Iraqi Kurds to be above the kind of corruption and infighting that was increasingly present in the KDP and the PUK. This perception of limited corruption was more easily accepted since the PKK had no defined responsibilities within Iraqi society.976 Furthermore, the lack of hierarchical or patrimonial differentiation among the PKK fighters created an atmosphere of equality and fairness that the Iraqi Kurds came to admire. As one interviewee noted, that when the PKK sat down to eat, all the members of the PKK ate from the same pot.977 One measure of the increased popular support is the rise in Iraqi Kurdish recruits to the PKK which was as high as 1,500 to 2,000 fighters.978

The appeal of the PKK was greater among the followers of the KDP, which in turn led the KDP leadership to view the PKK as an even greater threat among their population. The PKK presented a significant ideological alternative that purported to be more modern and not tied down by traditional tribal loyalties. This sentiment was particularly appealing to the younger generation who had grown tired of the old system and the ongoing fighting.979 In contrast, the PUK were already perceived as a modern urban party, so the potential appeal to the PUK followers was diminished because it did not represent a significant change. Furthermore, the

975 Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013.
976 Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013.
977 Interview with Dr. Najmiddin Karim, Current Governor of Kirkuk, June 12, 2013.
978 Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013.
979 Interview with Sheri Laizer, June/July 2013;
PKK were ethnically and linguistically closer to the KDP loyalists, who were of Kurmaji origin.\textsuperscript{980} The PKK were unable to communicate easily with the PUK's Sorani speakers, which made it difficult for them to appeal directly to the population in the PUK regions.\textsuperscript{981} Overall, there was growing popular opposition to infighting, which also included avoiding a confrontation with the PKK. The people were not eager to suffer through the consequences of another conflict like the one that unfolded in 1992.\textsuperscript{982} While the PKK did not ultimately become a peer competitor with either party, they did rise in prominence and drew away some support from the two main parties.

During this period, the charged domestic environment made the cost of compliance very high. The elevated level of domestic threat made a potential fight against the PKK extremely risky. Neither party was willing to reallocate resources away from the central fight against their main rival. The ongoing infighting changed the perspectives of the parties, both with regard to the threat of the PKK, as well as its priority ranking. The PKK continued to be a menace to the KDP by contesting their power in the region directly, as well as indirectly through their entente with the PUK, and thus increasingly drawing away support from their cause. However, despite the KDP's clear disdain for the PKK, the KDP was preoccupied in its fight with the PUK and unwilling to divert any of its forces away from the main battleground to address this growing threat. Confronting the PKK would have meant expending resources and the KDP was not willing to embrace that risk and potentially give an advantage to the PUK in their civil war.

\textsuperscript{980} Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013
\textsuperscript{981} Interviews with Kurdish policymaker, May 30, 2013
\textsuperscript{982} Interviews with Kurdish policymaker, May 30, 2013; Interview with Dr. Najmiddin Karim, Current Governor of Kirkuk, June 12, 2013.
Similarly, the PUK’s entente with the PKK ostensibly improved its position relative to the KDP, and therefore, they were not inclined to give up that perceived advantage.

Although the PKK grew in strength and popularity among some segments of the Iraqi Kurdish population, these changes alone were not the drivers of the increased costs of confrontation. The individual relationship that each party had with the PKK was reflected through the prism of the civil war and the broader domestic challenge to their power. The KDP and PUK served as the ultimate domestic political threats to each other and any other party became a secondary preoccupation. Clearly, it wasn’t the PKK’s activities or strategy which precluded action, but rather, the high cost of confronting the PKK amidst a bitter civil war. Ultimately, the domestic context did not favor coercion success due to the high cost of action for the parties.

The infighting between the PUK and the KDP significantly altered the domestic context from the previous period, and increased the costs of compliance for both of the Iraqi Kurdish parties. Overall, the KDP and the PUK were engaged in a close, high-stakes battle for hegemony of the KRG, which meant that diverting forces to address the PKK carried with it the risk of negatively affecting their relative position in their civil war, and becoming embroiled in a secondary front. In measuring the four proxies, it is clear that all are shaped by the ongoing violence. First, although the PKK continued to pose a political threat to the parties, as in the previous period, these threats paled in comparison to the immediate threat of the opposing Iraqi Kurdish parties. Neither party were concerned with the PKK’s potential entry into Iraqi Kurdish rule, rather they were preoccupied with each other. In this respect, while the absolute threat may have remained static, its relative importance for the parties declined.
With respect to their power, in this period, the strength of the PKK grew. They not only doubled their numbers from the previous period, but importantly, had heeded the lessons of the 1992 engagement, and created a set of mobile bases that would afford their fighters better protection and make an encounter with them more difficult. They also increased their presence in the cities, making a future encounter more costly due to its occurrence in the more populated urban areas. However, despite this growth in numbers, both the KDP and the PUK peshmerga forces also grew in absolute strength, thus likely offsetting this growth. In a bilateral measure of the KDP or the PUK against the PKK, it is clear that the Iraqi Kurdish parties continued to have an advantage. However, as mentioned previously, these forces were preoccupied in the civil war and the close balance of power between the parties made it difficult for either party to divert forces. Importantly, the PKK did not remain neutral in this battle, and developed an entente with the PUK against the KDP. This entente further diminished the willingness of the PUK to reign in the PKK, as they were providing a domestic advantage against their rival. In contrast, this entente increased the threat that the PKK posed to the KDP. Thus, in examining the balance of power between the PKK and the Iraqi Kurdish parties, it is clear that the ongoing civil war made the possibility of action against the PKK increasingly costly.

Adding to these calculations was the growing popular support of the PKK amongst the Iraqi Kurds, who increasingly viewed the PKK as above the corruption and sought an alternative to the Iraqi Kurdish parties that had disillusioned them. The changes in the popular mood indicated that the population, already worn down and tired of the infighting, was unlikely to support any action by the parties, and could stand in their way. Thus, as opposed to the previous period, action against the PKK carried with it additional costs and risks as a result of the civil war. All of the dimensions were colored by the preoccupation of the parties with the ongoing
fighting. Understandably, neither party was willing to elevate the relatively limited threat of the PKK above the immediate threat of the PKK and risk affecting the outcome of their greater challenge. In all, the domestic costs of action grew significantly for both parties, which made coercive success more elusive.

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<td>Violent Group Political Intentions</td>
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<td>PKK Organizational and Military Capacity</td>
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<td>Violent Group Popular Support</td>
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<td>Overall Domestic Costs of Compliance</td>
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Assessing the Costs of Compliance in 1995

The coercive context ahead of the 1995 Turkish coercive attack was deeply affected by the civil war between the KDP and the PUK. In particular, the civil war significantly raised the costs of domestic action for both the KDP and the PUK. On the foreign policy dimension, there was no change in the benefits received from the PKK as compared to the previous period, and the costs of compliance remained low. While there was some movement in the KDP and PUK’s external alliances as a result of the civil war, these changes did not impact the PKK’s role in their foreign policy. Thus, the costs of compliance remained low.

The significant shift in the domestic situation within northern Iraq made action against the PKK increasingly costly for both parties, albeit for different reasons. The PUK utilized the PKK to alter the stalemate with the KDP, so action against such an ally was unlikely. The KDP, in contrast, felt threatened by the PKK, but was preoccupied in its fight with the PUK. Meanwhile, the PKK was growing in popularity amongst Iraqi Kurds, who were already weary of fighting, further increasing the potential costs of action. Thus, for this reason, we would not expect to find much action from either party. However, as mentioned previously, the KDP was both more dependent on Turkey for goods, weapons and general access, and also felt the coercive pressure more acutely because of their geographical areas of control. Thus, if any party was going to succumb to Turkish pressures, despite the high costs, it was most likely the KDP.

Although their foreign policy goals diverged, these considerations paled in comparison to the domestic considerations. The ongoing domestic tumult placed each party’s power at risk and diverting any attention away from containing that pressing threat could prove disastrous. The domestic environment’s impact was apparent in the contrasting reactions of the KDP and the
PUK to the latest coercive attack. The infighting between the parties, their shifting alliances, and their respective geographic regions of control all contributed to two distinct paths following the 1995 Turkish incursion.

**Coercive Outcome**

As opposed to the 1992 attack, neither the KDP nor the PUK participated in the incursion. However, after the 1995 “Celik Operation,” the KDP appeared more willing to help the Turkish government secure the border and they took greater interest in drafting an agreement with the Turks to address repopulation measures in the problematic area. The KDP also imposed some restrictions on the PKK, although not through a direct violent confrontation. While these efforts did not compare to those taken in the early 1990s, the KDP actions angered the PKK and limited their actions. Khalil Atach, a member of the PKK politbureau, explained that the KDP had “killed and detained PKK members and refused to allow the Kurds of Iraq to sell food to PKK members.” Atach claimed that the Turks were provoking the KDP against the PKK. Even in this period where the KDP did not act decisively, their view of the PKK remained static. Nechirwan Barzani, nephew of Massoud Barzani, stated in March 1995 that the “the PKK constituted a threat not only for Turkey but also to us.” The KDP felt restrained in their ability to act against the PKK, due to the ongoing infighting between themselves and the

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983 The area where the PKK had established their bases was a significantly depopulated area. This was first depopulated by Saddam Hussein in 1978-9 before the Halabja attacks. Since then, the area has been largely depopulated, though some villages remain and some Iraqis use these areas as summer retreats. Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013; Kirisci and Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict.*, p.164

984 The PKK account of KDP action remains a bit questionable, as it was used to justify their own attacks, but does demonstrate perceptions of the PKK, and is in line with other reports of limited actions. Tahiri, *The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State.*, p. 265-6

985 Kirisci, "Turkey and the Kurdish Safe-Haven in Northern Iraq." p.34.
PUK. Just one month after the attack, the PKK guerillas returned to their strongholds in the KDP controlled area.\footnote{Patrick Cockburn, "Kurd guerrillas return to bases," The Independent, April 27, 1995.}

In contrast to the KDP’s limited action against the PKK, there are no reports of similar PUK acts against the PKK. Despite continued Turkish pressure and leverage over the region, the PUK did not act to limit the actions of their ostensible ally. In contrast to previous statements, in March 1995, Talabani explained that the PUK would use diplomacy rather than force to prevent the PKK from attacking Turkey. He added that “we do not view the PKK as a terrorist organization but as a political organization.”\footnote{Quoted in Kirisci, "Turkey and the Kurdish Safe-Haven in Northern Iraq." p. 34} This sentiment represented a change from the PUK’s previous approach and statements regarding the PKK in 1992. Furthermore, Talabani accused Turkey of arming the KDP and upsetting the balance of power in Iraq, further underscoring the preeminence of domestic issues in this international dispute.\footnote{Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis., p. 84}

Interestingly, the 1995 Turkish attack led to a three-month ceasefire between the KDP and the PUK.\footnote{Kirisci and Winrow, The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict., p.164} This pause in fighting triggered the U.S. led Doghreba talks between the KDP and the PUK in August 1995. Among the agreement’s provisions were security guarantees for Turkey in the form of stronger KDP border patrols.\footnote{Gunter, "The Kdp-Puk Conflict in Northern Iraq.", p. 238} Despite their prior differences, once the KDP and the PUK negotiated a possible agreement, they were once again willing to unite in their approach to the PKK, thus highlighting the very pragmatic nature of these parties, and the tenuous position of the PKK in northern Iraq.
However, this agreement was not implemented because only four days after the initial Drogheba meetings, the PKK attacked the KDP in order to derail a process which would likely inhibit their freedom of action in Iraqi Kurdistan. It appears that the PKK fully understood that if the parties reconciled, their position in Iraq would become difficult. The PKK was best positioned when the parties were at odds with each other. The PKK explained that “it was attacking the KDP because it refused to fight for a greater Kurdistan and added that Barzani’s party [KDP] had to be wiped out because it was making Turkey’s bid to crush the PKK rebels.” With regards to his attacks on the KDP, Ocalan even expressed that “we do not expect the PUK to oppose these developments very much.” The clashes between the KDP and the PKK eventually ended in a ceasefire in December 1995. While the agreement allowed the PKK to maintain its military bases, the group was urged to limit itself to political activity within Iraq. However, no significant KDP action was taken to ensure compliance. Once again the resumption of fighting between the KDP and the PUK took precedence.

In contrast to 1992 when the parties were willing to take significant action against the PKK, in this new climate, the Turkish coercive strategy was met with mixed results and the Turks did not ultimately achieve their objectives. Despite the Turks' growing leverage over the KDP, the KDP did not participate in the Turkish attack, and only took limited action against the PKK. Thus, with respect to the KDP, there was a limited degree of success, but significantly less

991 Ibid., p. 239; Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 247; Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish Foreign Policy since the Cold War., p. 336
992 Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013; This keen observation proves to be true for the PKK, for when the two parties are reconciled, the PKK is significantly limited by both the PUK and the KDP.
993 Michael M. Gunter, “KurdishInfighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 56
994 Ibid., p. 57
995 Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 247
996 Ibid., p. 247
than in 1992. In contrast to the KDP, the PUK did not take any action against the PKK, which was a clear failure.

**MAY 1997**

In May 1997, Turkey launched “Operation Hammer,” (Cekic) and sent 50,000 troops accompanied by armoured cars and artillery units, into northern Iraq to once again clean out the PKK bases in the area. Of particular importance were the PKK camps at Atrus and Zap, which were 55 km and 25 km inside Iraqi territory, respectively. A senior officer at general staff headquarters in Ankara explained that the operation “began with Turkish armoured units driving into Zakho then heading east towards al-Amidiyah. The thrust cut off the PKK’s retreat to the south. ‘We severed the terrorists’ supply lines, then we sent in air assault units from Hakkari (in eastern Turkey) to attack their bases in the mountains. The terrorists are in a closing circle, they can only go to Iran.’” The Turkish military penetrated deeply into northern Iraq, some locals reported that Turkish troops had set up road blocks as far south as Dohuk, 75 miles into Iraq. This time, it appeared that Turkey entered Kurdistan not only to curtail PKK activity, but also to help Barzani stabilize his control over the region, which in turn would further prevent raids. Although likely exaggerated, the Turkish military claimed they had “deactivated about 2,500 [PKK] terrorists, most of whom ha[d] been killed.” Though larger than the previous attacks,

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999 Ibid.
1000 Gunter, *The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis*, p. 124
1001 Owen Bowcott, "Turkish Army Flexes Muscle," *The Guardian*, June 9 1997. These numbers are highly contested. Halil Atac, a PKK central committee spokesman claimed that a total of 112 guerrillas had been killed in northern Iraq and 791 Turkish soldiers, KDP members and village guards were killed, and an additional 591 were
this was essentially continuation of the Turkish policy of cross-border military incursions. At this point, smaller Turkish incursions into Northern Iraq had become a regular occurrence in the region, a trend which was punctuated by these larger raids in which thousands of troops participated. Once again, as in 1992, the KDP were pressured to and ultimately did participate in the Turkish action.

Foreign Policy Costs and Benefits

The foreign policy positions of the Iraqi Kurdish parties in the period preceding the 1997 attack did not change significantly from the previous period, and thus the costs of compliance remained relatively low. The KDP continued to value and maintain its relationship with the Turkish government. There were increasing reports of the Turkish government supplying the KDP with arms to be utilized in their fight against the PUK. The KDP continued to be extremely reliant on the Turks for their autonomy, access to goods and tax revenue through trade at the Khabur crossing, and increasingly, weapons for their internal fight as well. Thus, the KDP sought to preserve these positive relations and ensure a quiet border with the Turks.

The PUK’s position was fairly static as well. First and foremost, the PUK understood Turkey’s broader role in maintaining Kurdish regional control and thus, PUK would still try, on occasion, to curry favor with the Turks. The PUK’s relations with Turkey remained cool because of the Turkish government support for the KDP. The PUK also continued to rely primarily on Iran for external support, though this relationship was often tenuous and unreliable. Talabani wounded. BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, June 5, 1997. Non-military sources in Diyarbakir estimated PKK dead at no more than 300. Christopher de Bellaigue, "Turkey Hails Rout of Kurdish Foes; Army May Outstay Its Welcome in Northern Iraq, Writes Christopher De Bellaigue in Ankara," The Independent, May 28 1997.

1002 Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis., p. 118
1003 McDowall, A Modern History of the Kurds.p. 442
1004 Ibid., p. 442
denied that the PUK received assistance from Iran during the latest round of clashes with the KDP and added “we would have welcomed any assistance but the Iranians offered none while the Iraqi government placed all its weight behind Barzani’s group.”\textsuperscript{1005} This shift towards Iran, did not signal a turn towards a hostile relationship with Turkey. Rather, the PUK’s diminished power after 1996 ultimately led it to consider all avenues of external support. In all, the parties did not derive a benefit from the PKK’s continued actions against Turkey.

\textit{The PKK’s Goals towards Turkey}

As a result of Turkish success with its counter-insurgency campaign within Turkey, Ocalan began to moderate his views even further with respect to his demands from the Turkish state. The PKK had announced another unilateral ceasefire with Turkey beginning in December 1995, aimed at finding a “solution within the existing borders of Turkey.”\textsuperscript{1006} This statement indicated some willingness on the part of the PKK to consider a more permanent political solution. Increasingly, it became clear that the PKK was abandoning its demands for a pan-Kurdish independent state and was aiming for the establishment of federalism within Turkey.\textsuperscript{1007}

However, despite these narrower aims, the PKK continued to pursue this policy predominantly through violence. In addition to the ongoing conflict within the Kurdish areas of Turkey, the PKK expanded its fight into western Turkey. In 1996, they began to stage suicide

\textsuperscript{1005} BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, May 9, 1997.
\textsuperscript{1006} Laizer, five previous PKK ceasefires since 1993 — better prospects for the sixth ceasefire of Newroz 2013.” Available at: kurdish media.com
\textsuperscript{1007} Gulistan Gurbey “The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in Turkey Since the 1980s” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 23
bombings within Turkish cities.\textsuperscript{1008} Thus, despite their increasingly moderated demands, the PKK continued to believe that these goals could only be achieved through violence.

The foreign policy costs of compliance during at this time remained largely static when compared to the previous period. Ultimately, at this juncture, neither the KDP nor the PUK were aligned with the PKK’s goals towards Turkey, nor was the PKK instrumental in their respective foreign policies, thus containing the PKK would require only a low cost to be incurred on the foreign policy dimension.\textsuperscript{1009} As in the previous period, despite the fact that the KDP and the PUK pursued different relationships with their respective geographic neighbors, both groups came to a common conclusion that the PKK lacked any real foreign policy utility. The KDP continued to be heavily dependent on Turkey. Similarly, the PUK, though more closely aligned with Iran, understood Turkey’s broader role in sustaining the Iraqi Kurdish autonomy and in this period, the PUK even attempted to draw closer to Turkey. Ultimately, to the extent that Turkey remained the guarantor of Kurdish autonomy, it placed the Iraqi Kurdish parties in, at minimum, a muted state of alignment with Turkey. This alignment, even in its coolest moments, was still at odds with the PKK’s ongoing aim to engage the Turkish state in a violent insurgency. The PKK’s violent campaign did not benefit either of the Iraqi Kurdish parties and threatened their ties with Turkey. Since neither party obtained any foreign policy benefit from the PKK’s activities, containing the group or even severing this relationship entirely would ultimately demand only a low cost.

\textsuperscript{1008} Marcus, Blood and Belief: The Pkk and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 242-243
\textsuperscript{1009} As will be discussed in the next section, the PKK were instrumental for the PUK, though their contribution was largely domestic.
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<tr>
<th>Foreign Policy Cost of Compliance</th>
<th>KDP</th>
<th>PUK</th>
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| Base State vs. Violent Group Goals | - KDP and PKK have divergent foreign policies  
- KDP has continued reliance on Turkey for autonomy and economy  
- PKK moderated ideology but continues to target Turkey | - PUK and PKK have divergent foreign policies  
- PUK has continued reliance on Turkey for autonomy – though generally cooler relations due to infighting ties to Iran  
- PKK moderated ideology but continues to target Turkey |
| Violent Group FP Contribution | - No contribution to FP goals | - No contribution to FP goals |
| Violent Group Means | - PKK attacks are counterproductive to KDP goals and incite Turkish incursions | - KDP obtains no benefit from PKK attacks against Turkey |
| Overall Foreign Policy Costs of Compliance | LOW | LOW |

### Domestic Political Costs and Benefits

On the surface, many aspects of the relationship between the PKK and the Iraqi parties appeared relatively unchanged within northern Iraq. However, upon closer inspection, two significant domestic changes occurred during this period to alter the political landscape, and decrease the costs of compliance for the KDP. The first element was the shift in the domestic balance of power in favor of the KDP. The second component was the notable decrease in popular support of the PKK amongst the Iraqi Kurds. These two factors lowered the cost of action for the KDP and thus made the prospect of acting against the PKK more palatable.

The PKK continued to act boldly within the KDP areas in the period preceding the attack, and thus the KDP continued to view them as a political threat, as it did in the preceding periods. In 1996, the PKK sought to consolidate their position along the border and evacuate villages in
northern Iraq, which were inhabited by KDP supporters. Similarly, the KDP continued to be resentful of the PKK guerillas in Bahdinan, who were trying to recruit from among their constituents. In an interview, Barzani explained that:

Beginning in mid-1996, [the PKK] started once again to interfere in the affairs of the region’s government, abuse the rights of citizens, and interfere in their family matters. We have a list of 220 names of children whom they abducted from various cities. We also have a list of 400 names of villages whose inhabitants have been displaced after sustaining human casualties and property damage caused by them...The PKK has left its arena and placed all its military and political weight in Iraqi Kurdistan, and we have endured much from them. We have written messages and long memorandum to their leaders explaining this suffering and repeatedly urging them to refrain from these aggressions.

It was precisely this infringement on the KDP’s areas of control which infuriated the KDP. In fact, one KDP central committee member suggested that if the PKK had limited the scope of their activities within Iraqi Kurdistan, the KDP may have even supported them. Specifically, Arif Taifur stated that “[i]f the PKK went to Turkey to fight the Turkish government, the KDP would assist it. The KDP had specified some areas for the PKK members. If they went to those areas the KDP would support them by sending weapons, food and other necessities. If the PKK came to Iraqi Kurdistan to kill the Kurds there and to dominate the region, the KDP would not accept it.” The extent to which the KDP would have supported the PKK is certainly questionable, but what is apparent is that they believed that the PKK sought to interfere in the ruling of Iraqi Kurdistan.

To provide an opposing narrative to the PKK, Barzani launched an anti-PKK television station, with the help of Turkey. It was reported in the Turkish Daily News that Barzani made

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1010 Kirisci and Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict.*, p.166
1011 McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds.*, p. 442
1012 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, June 9, 1997.
this decision because "MED-TV was hurting them. Their goal was psychological. The KDP sees
the PKK as a rival in its region. It sees the PKK as a serious threat. They were upset that the
PKK entered northern Iraq...[and] were concerned that the PKK wants to become the leader of
the Kurds in those areas."1014 Some KDP leaders were more frank in their assessment of the risk
posed by the PKK. Sami Abdurahman, a member of the KDP politbureau, stated bluntly that he
would like the PKK to be eliminated, and that it did not matter who was going to do it.1015

Although the PKK's political intentions towards the KDP were similar to previous
periods, the largest domestic change that occurred was the significant shift in the balance of
power between the KDP and the PUK. After 1996, the KDP gained a significant power
advantage over the PUK, providing a strategic opportunity to pursue various military operations.
On August 31, 1996, the KDP joined forces, in a most unlikely alliance, with Saddam Hussein,
to attack the PUK.1016 With the help of 40,000 Iraqi troops, the KDP were able to capture the
capital, Erbil, as well as Sulamaniya, the primary PUK stronghold. This improbable alignment
further highlighted Barzani's pragmatic approach and his willingness to enter into an
arrangement with his enemy to gain an advantage domestically.1017 As a result of this attack,
approximately 75,000 Iraqi Kurds fled towards Iran. The PUK suffered a significant loss in

1015 Tahiri, The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State, p. 292
1016 It is interesting to note that throughout the 1980s and 1990s, different Kurdish parties have entered into
agreements with Saddam Hussein. Even the PKK, in early 1991 and 1992 was reported to have courted Saddam
Hussein. PKK militants were reported to have been seen in Mosul and Baghdad. Robins, Suits and Uniforms: Turkish
Foreign Policy since the Cold War, p. 323; Gunter, The Kurds of Iraq : Tragedy and Hope, p. 113; Gunter,
The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq : A Political Analysis, p. 98
1017 Tahiri, The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State, p. 181-2
This joint attack dealt a devastating blow to the PUK and provided the KDP with an overwhelming power advantage in northern Kurdistan. Interestingly, during this round of fighting, the PKK elected not to become involved militarily on the side of the PUK. However, Ocalan went on MEDTV, the PKK controlled television station, and demanded that Talabani’s wife, who had been captured by the KDP, be released. After this defeat, the PUK lost its momentum in the civil war and its position did not improve greatly until the signing of the Washington Agreement in 1998. Importantly, the cessation of KDP-PUK fighting provided a much needed respite for the KDP, and the opportunity for the party to turn its attention towards Turkey’s demands regarding the PKK.

Especially in light of their diminished position with Iraqi Kurdistan, the PUK, even in this period continued to find its relationship with the PKK advantageous. At every opportunity, the PUK schemed with the PKK in an attempt to gain an advantage in its struggle for power with the KDP. In this period, there were even reports of joint operations. For example, in July 1997, they jointly attacked Qasri along a 6-7 kilometer front. The PUK worked tirelessly to reestablish its power in the region. As Fuad Ma’sum explained, “There is not tanazul, concession, in politics. No political force will make concessions unless it is very weak. If we make concessions half of us will be eliminated in three years. Why should I make concessions

1018 Ibid., p. 181-2
1019 Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013;
1020 Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013. During this period, Mr. Akkaya was a journalist for the pro-PKK television station, MEDTV.
for peace? The KDP has reached its peak selfishness. This pride should be broken and we should give the KDP a big blow and then ask it to sit down for negotiations.\textsuperscript{1022} Thus, despite having suffered significant losses, the PUK redoubled its efforts to regain its strength, and continued to utilize the PKK to its advantage.

In examining the balance of forces in this period, the lull in KDP-PUK fighting had the most profound impact. During this period, there does not appear to be a significant influx of PKK fighters, and although exact numbers are difficult to obtain, it is likely that they had approximately 4,000 fighters within Iraq.\textsuperscript{1023} The PKK never became a mass organization, and their overall numbers did not come close to those of the KDP and the PUK. Furthermore, although their numbers within Iraq remained stable, it is clear that in this period, the organization had suffered significant losses at the hands of the Turks, which invariably affected their overall organizational power.

The KDP, on the other hand, gained organizational momentum. For the first time in years, they were no longer engaged in a bloody stalemate with the PUK, and this new reality inevitably freed up some of their capacity. In contrast, the PUK was at its weakest in this period, and after suffering losses in fighters and materials at the hands of Saddam Hussein and the KDP, their capabilities had been stretched to their maximum. Furthermore, whatever capacity remained was directed towards their counterattacks against the KDP. Importantly, the Turks did not demand that the KDP act against the PKK on their own, rather they pressured them to participate in the state’s planned incursions. While some of the action against the PKK was

\textsuperscript{1022} Foad Ma’asum, PUK Politburo, 13 October 1997 quoted in Tahiri, \textit{The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State.}, p. VII.

\textsuperscript{1023} Bellaigue, "Turkey Hails Rout of Kurdish Foes; Army May Outstay Its Welcome in Northern Iraq, Writes Christopher De Bellaigue in Ankara." Estimates of PKK numbers range from 3,000 to 8,000.
independent, the larger onslaught was pursued in cooperation with the Turks, thus lessening the military demands.

Another significant domestic development which unfolded during this period was the PKK’s declining popular support amongst the Iraqi population. In 1995, the PKK was growing in popularity, both as a result of its perceived success in Turkey, as well as the citizens’ dissatisfaction with the local parties. However, by 1997, the group’s reputation was significantly diminished for several reasons. First, their instigation of conflict with the KDP in 1995 created disillusionment for large portions of the Iraqi population who no longer believed that they were different from the other Iraqi Kurdish parties. Second, their increasingly thuggish behavior within Iraq led many to dislike them. Finally, much of the PKK’s support was a product of their ostensible successes in Turkey, however, in this period, this proved illusory, as the PKK was not achieving its goals.

Only days after the Drogheda reconciliation talks began, the PKK attacked the KDP. These talks concerned the PKK, who believed that their situation in northern Iraq would be negatively affected if the parties reached an agreement. Through these attacks, the PKK disheartened many of the Iraqi Kurds, who previously believed that the PKK was above infighting and corruption. Particularly since the PKK attacks were unprovoked, these events highlighted to many Iraqi Kurds that the PKK were no different than their local parties and did not offer a true directional change. Furthermore, particularly since the PKK actions derailed a potential ceasefire, which had the support of the population who had grown tired of infighting, 1024

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1024 The PKK’s concerns were well founded. In 1992, when the parties were aligned, they both cooperated against the PKK, and when they resolved their civil war, through the 1998 Washington Agreement, the Iraqi Kurdish parties once again united against the PKK’s growing presence.
the PKK once again highlighted that it was not working for the best interests of Iraqi Kurdistan.\(^{1025}\)

Despite the group’s temporary popularity, the PKK was still considered a foreigner within northern Iraq and it was unacceptable to attack a local party.\(^{1026}\) In addition, the PKK were increasingly accused of clearing villages in the mountains of Barzani supporters, as well as forcing Iraqi youth to join the PKK.\(^{1027}\) These actions, as well as other well-documented thuggish behaviors, further diminished their support among the population. Although the fighting between the KDP and the PKK ended in December 1995 through an agreement, the loss in popular support remained, and many Iraqi Kurds even demanded that harsher measures be taken against the PKK.\(^{1028}\)

Finally, much of the popular support that the PKK had previously obtained was a result of the group’s ongoing fight with Turkey. Furthermore, with a devoted military force and a large political infrastructure, many Kurds had high expectations of the PKK and thought that these efforts could result in an independent Kurdish state. In 1997, these hopes appeared to be unlikely to come to fruition. When Turkey’s campaign against the PKK showed signs of success, this further reduced the belief that the PKK could deliver on its ambitious program. Ultimately, in practice, the PKK proved it was not unlike other traditional parties in its inability to co-exist with other Kurdish parties.\(^{1029}\)


\(^{1026}\) Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013.

\(^{1027}\) Bellaigue, "Turkey Hails Rout of Kurdish Foes: Army May Outstay Its Welcome in Northern Iraq, Writes Christopher De Bellaigue in Ankara."

\(^{1028}\) Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence., p. 247

\(^{1029}\) Tahiri, The Structure of Kurdish Society and the Struggle for a Kurdish State., p. 223
Whereas many elements of the relationship between the Iraqi Kurdish parties and the PKK went unchanged during this period, two important developments, mainly the shift in the balance of power between the KDP and the PUK, and decreasing popular support for the PKK, altered the domestic costs of compliance for the KDP and the PUK. Throughout this period, the PKK continued to pose a persistent political threat to the KDP. The PKK increasingly infringed on the KDP’s territory and interfered with their rule. Consistent with its actions in the previous period, the PKK disproportionately threatened the KDP politically. In addition, although the number of PKK fighters did not change significantly within Iraq, the organization as a whole had suffered significant losses due to Turkey’s success in reining in the group within its borders. However, the biggest domestic shift in this period, was the shift in the balance of power from a hurting stalemate between the parties towards a KDP dominated landscape.

Ahead of this latest episode of coercion, the KDP successfully pushed back the PUK, which enabled them to focus some of their attention, and slack capacity, on Turkey’s demands for controlling the PKK. However, it is important to note, that the KDP had not won the civil war. While the KDP possessed increased capacity, they still could not focus their full efforts on this endeavor. Conversely, the PUK, not only lacked slack capacity, but also continued to utilize the PKK for any advantage that they could obtain domestically. Thus, the shift in the domestic balance of power between the parties had opposite effects on their respective domestic costs of compliance. While there were some shifts in the PKK’s relationship with the parties, these changes only minimally affected the costs in comparison to the internal dynamics between the parties.

During this period, the popular support for the PKK declined significantly amongst the Iraqi Kurds. The PKK’s popular support was based on two factors, their success in Turkey, and
their image as being different, and less corrupt, than the Iraqi Kurdish parties. By this period, the PKK managed to dispel both of these notions. First, the PKK was not succeeding in its efforts to achieve military or political gains against Turkey. Second, the instigation of violence against the KDP in 1995 demonstrated that the PKK were no different than the other Iraqi Kurdish parties. The PKK consistently chose violence against fellow Kurds for their own political gains, at the expense of Iraqi Kurds. In addition, the PKK were increasingly cavalier in their behavior towards this population. The growing abuse of power led many Iraqi Kurds to dislike them. Thus, unlike the previous period, the population was unlikely to stand in the way of its own Iraqi Kurdish parties, as they contained the PKK, and may have even supported these measures, thus lowering the KDP’s costs of compliance even further.

Finally, in assessing the costs of compliance during this period, it appears that the changes in the domestic context simultaneously lowered the costs of compliance for the KDP, while increasing them for the PUK. For the KDP, their successes against the PUK and the declining popular support lowered the potential costs of compliance. However, since the KDP remained embroiled in a civil war, these costs were not as low as in the first period, where the KDP and the PUK were temporarily ruling together. The continued preoccupation with the civil war continued to impose costs on the KDP’s ability to comply, and thus, in this period, the costs for the KDP were deemed moderate. For the PUK, their setback against the KDP significantly affected their costs of compliance as well. The PUK had even greater capacity constraints, and were more desperately reliant on any help, including that of the PKK. Consequently, these developments further increased their costs of compliance and therefore, they remained high during this period. In all, the decreasing costs for the KDP made coercion success more likely,
whereas coercion success continued to be elusive for the PUK, due to their rising costs of compliance.

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<td>Violent Group Political Intentions</td>
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<td>Violent Group Popular Support</td>
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<td>Overall Domestic Costs of Compliance</td>
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Assessing the Costs of Compliance in 1997

Once again, in the period leading up to the 1997 transitive compellence episode, the greatest changes occurred on the domestic front, where one can observe the shifting calculi of the KDP and the PUK, and the effects on their respective costs of compliance. Though residing within the same state, the KDP and the PUK had fundamentally different domestic calculations as a result of their positions in the civil war, which in turn affected their willingness to act against the PKK.

As in the first two periods, the KDP and the PKK continued to be at odds regarding their foreign policy goals, as well as their tactics. The PKK did not serve an instrumental foreign policy role for either party. Ultimately, both parties continued to depend on Turkey for their autonomy, though PUK’s reliance was to a lesser extent. Thus, severing the relationship entailed limited costs on the foreign policy dimension.

On the domestic front, there were significant changes, which decreased the cost of action for the KDP, while increasing the cost for the PUK. The KDP’s increased capacity for action, coupled with the decreased support among the Iraqi Kurdish population for the PKK, lessened the costs of action. While not as low as in the first period, the KDP could conceive of action with a limited risk of a protracted conflict with the PKK. In contrast, the PUK’s defeat significantly diminished its power, and as it sought to reestablish its position, its remaining forces were already fully engaged with little to no ability to take on additional missions. Furthermore, the PUK still relied on the PKK, to some extent, to continue to weaken the KDP, which meant that action against them would mean foregoing a potential domestic benefit.

Overall, during this period, the KDP and the PUK had significantly different costs associated with complying with Turkish demands. Ultimately, the context during this period
increasingly favored coercion success for the KDP, while simultaneously indicating likely coercion failure for the PUK. Whereas the foreign policy remained largely the same from the previous period, the domestic developments significantly altered the KDP’s cost of compliance, and increased the likelihood that they would comply with Turkey’s coercive demands.

**Coercive Outcome**

Following the Turkish raid in 1997, one can clearly observe the continued bifurcation in the policies of the KDP and the PUK, which corresponded to their respective domestic positions. Unlike 1995, the KDP actively participated, alongside Turkish forces, in the attack against the PKK, and was heavily involved in the crackdown.\(^{1030}\) The KDP’s involvement was acknowledged and justified by the political bureau’s official spokesman, who stated that:

> The participation of the Kurdistan Democratic Party’s [KDP] forces in this operation was for defensive purposes to protect the civilian population from eventual attacks. Our forces have successfully managed to remove the PKK forces from wide areas in the countryside of Dohuk and Arbil governates which are adjacent to the Turkish borders. The armed units of the PKK terrorists were cut down to size, contained and isolated until they were left as dispersed and ineffective groups. The PKK was banned from contacting the population or receiving any popular support in the area. Large areas where the PKK had a presence were combed, their fixed bases were removed and the infrastructure of their forces in the area was destroyed. The main headquarters, training camps, and weapons, ammunition and foodstuff warehouses and depots were captured...It sustained heavy human losses during these confrontations...The KDP and the forces of the Kurdistan region restored control over vast rural areas along the joint international border with Turkey. During these confrontations, 29 KDP elements were killed and 89 others were wounded.\(^{1031}\)

Although the extent of this victory was likely overstated by the KDP, these statements demonstrate that their involvement was not clandestine, and they were willing to publicize the

\(^{1030}\) McDo\-wall, *A Modern History of the Kurds.*, p. 442

\(^{1031}\) BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, June 25, 1997.
extent of their involvement and cooperation with the Turkish military. Furthermore, the KDP justified their involvement by stating that:

[The unjustified PKK presence in Iraqi Kurdistan since 1991 has caused numerous difficulties for the Regional Government and has declared large border areas off bounds for the local authorities, established military zones and have conducted cross border military activity that has harmed the interests of [the] local population. The PKK has never recognized the legitimate authority of the Kurdistan Regional government and has behaved as if it is the authority and has intervened in the administrative functions, levied taxes and intimidated the local population. The PKK has behaved as an alternative authority and has denied the KDP the right to exercise its authority in the border areas inside Iraqi Kurdistan...Therefore we would not feel sorry for their removal by whatever force.1032

In addition, the KDP contrasted the PKK with their Turkish counterparts, stating:

The Turkish army respected the civilians in the region. It did not interfere in their internal affairs...Despite the repeated appeals to the PKK command to end its military presence, to stop its interferences in the affairs of the region’s citizens and to take into consideration the special situation of the Kurdish people in Iraq, the unrealistic PKK command rejected all this and pursued the policy of hegemony and control on the group.1033

This rationale highlighted several important factors. First, the KDP justified its actions against the PKK mainly on domestic grounds, with only limited reference to the PKK’s cross-border raids. While part of this explanation served to distance themselves from their perception as “Turkey’s pawns,” they appear to be troubled by the PKK’s domestic infringement. Second, the PKK actions that the KDP reference is not describing a new phenomenon. Rather, these perceived sovereignty violations and other grievances had existed since the infighting began in 1994. There is no significant evidence that the status quo had

1032 Gunter, The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis., p. 124; Similarly, they stated “For some time the PKK has been trying to reinforce its armed presence in Iraqi Kurdistan, leaving the actual arena of its activity in Turkey to become an alternative authority in the region. It arrogantly defied the powers of the legitimate administration in the region. For this purpose, it formed administrative, military and political committees and institutions” BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, June 25, 1997.
suddenly shifted in reaction to a particular event. Although the KDP had clearly been troubled by the PKK's domestic actions for some time, they took no independent action against them. Instead, the timing of their involvement clearly demonstrates the role of Turkish coercion in inducing KDP action. At the end of the operation, the KDP declared that the military actions to suppress the PKK had ended in "complete success."\textsuperscript{1034}

As expected, the PUK did not participate in the fighting against the PKK and continued their entente at this point. In general, Jalal Talabani came out against the attack, stating that "the Ankara negotiations were foiled on 14 May [1997] because of the Turkish-Barzani collusion and their agreement to invade Iraqi Kurdistan on the pretext of chasing terrorists...the invasion was a violation of Iraqi sovereignty, Iraqi national stability, and a breach of international law."\textsuperscript{1035} Ultimately, the PUK opposed action against the PKK, who were helping, albeit indirectly, in their fight against the KDP.

Once again, the Turkish coercive action produced mixed results among the parties. Turkish coercion succeeded in inducing the KDP to adopt measures to contain the PKK and remove them from the border regions. The decreased domestic costs for the KDP provided an opportunity for action and greater compliance to Turkish demands. In contrast, the continued high costs of action led the PUK not only to ignore Turkish coercion, but to protest their actions.

\textbf{Assessing the Context for Coercion Success or Failure: 1991-1997}

Between 1991 and 1997, the Turkish government employed a consistent coercive strategy aimed at the Iraqi Kurdish parties. Over time, the intensity of the attacks rose, as indicated by

\textsuperscript{1034} BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, June 25, 1997.
\textsuperscript{1035} Gunter, \textit{The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis.}, p. 125
the number of troops employed, which grew from 20,000 to 50,000. During this same period, Turkish coercive leverage also grew as the Iraqi Kurds, and the KDP in particular, grew increasingly dependent on Turkey. Furthermore, the unique circumstances of OPC fostered significant dependence and coercive leverage for Turkey. However, despite Turkey’s strong coercive leverage, it did not yield a consistent outcome amongst the Iraqi parties.

Throughout this period, the respective foreign policy alignments of the KDP, PUK and the PKK did not shift dramatically. Throughout this period, the KDP continued to value its newfound relationship with the Turkey, and did not support or benefit from the ongoing PKK incursions into Turkey. Similarly, despite the PUK’s movement towards Iran and away from Turkey, this shift did not change their foreign policy outlook with respect to the PKK. The PUK understood Turkey’s instrumental role in the preservation of its autonomy and did not seek to engage Turkey directly. The PKK was not instrumental in the foreign policies of the KRG, the KDP or the PUK. This continued divergence created a potential opportunity to create a wedge between the Iraqi parties and the PKK.

However, while the foreign policies were generally at odds, this divergence proved insufficient to explain the success or failure of coercion. Rather, the domestic context played a more significant role in determining the costs of compliance for both the KDP and the PUK and ultimately in affecting success or failure. The dramatic shifts in the relationship, driven in large part by the ebbs and flows of the ongoing civil war, fundamentally altered the calculations of the parties. When the parties were united under the umbrella of the KRG, the context favored success. However, when the domestic climate deteriorated into a civil war, the domestic interests of the parties diverged producing a bifurcated policy towards the PKK. Yet, even for the KDP, which was generally more inclined to act against the PKK, the domestic costs of compliance
were so high that they ultimately precluded action in 1995. Ultimately, this study of the volatile relationship between the PKK and the Iraqi Kurdish parties demonstrates the varying costs of compliance encountered by a base state struggling with a persistent a violent non-state actor like the PKK.

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**ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS**

Two potential alternative explanations emerge for the success or failure of transitive compellence: resonant identity and state capacity.\textsuperscript{1036} The first argument, put forth by Damla Aras, suggests that due to their shared ethnic identity, the Iraqi Kurds were unwilling to act against their Turkish-Kurdish brethren, the PKK. The second argument attributes failure or success to the capacity of the state, or in this case, the quasi-state, to act. However, as discussed

\textsuperscript{1036} Although state sponsorship is presented as a general alternative in Chapter 2, it is not relevant here. Also, because the Turkish government employs a generally static coercive policy throughout this period, explanations stemming from the efficacy of coercion are also not relevant.
below, these alternative explanations do not explain the variation present within the case of Turkey, the KRG, and the PKK.

**Resonant Identity**

The first alternative explanation is that the KRG did not act against the PKK because of its resonant identity with the group. A resonant identity includes situations whereby "[t]he sponsor-state and the group can have a common factor of identity, such as ethnicity, nationalism, religion, or ideology, and these projected factors can create common aspirations and motives." Since the KDP, PUK and PKK are co-ethnic Kurds, broadly defined, this line of argumentation potentially applies to this case. This theory suggests that when resonant identity exists, coercion success proves to be elusive, because co-ethnics will be unwilling to act against their brethren.

However, while all three parties were Kurdish, this theory overemphasizes the constraints that this identity placed on these parties. Specifically, this theory makes two interrelated predictions. First, the theory posits not only that a strong resonant identity exists among the Kurds, but also that this shared identity should supersede their raison d'état. Second, as a result, it predicts that the resonant identity among the Kurds should prevent them from capitulating to Turkish demands. Thus, the notion of resonant identity should not only apply to whether coercion succeeds or fails, but whether groups in general, who share identity and aspirations, would fight each other, or pursue higher shared goals at the expense of immediate strategic prerogatives. On both of these counts, this theory has limited explanatory power.

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First, while the Kurds across and within the different states certainly have shared identity, this common status has not translated into a cooperative joint endeavor on almost any level. The leaders of the parties will often speak about their shared experiences and their pan-Kurdish aspirations; however, the rhetoric has not translated into a concrete movement. As Michael Gunter explained aptly, "at first glance it might be expected that, given the oft quoted maxim 'the Kurds have no friends,' the various Kurdish groups would be natural allies. A brief survey of the numerous and at times bitter division in Kurdish society, however, would quickly disabuse one of this notion." Similarly, Liam Anderson noted that "the Kurds have proven remarkably difficult to mobilize en masse to pursue a common nationalist cause. Indeed more often than not, the rebellions of prominent Kurdish Sheikhs or tribal leaders have been thwarted by factious rivalries among Kurds themselves." The Kurds have never united in common cause, neither across states nor within them.

The Kurds, as an ethnic group, suffered from two divisions which plagued their ability to unite. First, there were ongoing rivalries at the leadership level. Second, there were religious (Sunni versus Alevi) and linguistic (Kurmaji, Zaza, and Sorani) differences at the mass level. These differences created challenges for communication and exacerbated differences among the Kurds. Adding to these differences were conflicting tribal loyalties that separated the Kurds both within and across the nations in which they resided. Within Iraq, the extent of the leadership quarrels is evident through the bitter fighting amongst the parties. Ultimately, the Kurds, "even

1038 Michael M. Gunter, “Kurdish Infighting: the PKK-KDP Conflict” in Olson, The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s : Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East., p. 50
1040 Fuller, "The Fate of the Kurds.", p. 110.
1041 For more detail on the divisions among the Kurds see: Randal, After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness? : My Encounters with Kurdistan., p. 28.
within their respective national borders, lack a common history, other than oppression by one regime or another.”  

Not only did the Kurds historically not unite for their pan-Kurdish, or even national causes, they often undermined the efforts of opposing Kurdish leaders. As Jonathan Randal, a journalist in Iraqi Kurdistan noted:

So strong were traditional Kurdish tribal rivalries that one tribal leaders' decision to join a nationalist uprising often prompted another to remain aloof or even accept arms and money to fight the government. Even clans within a given tribe have ended up fighting each other. Mullah Mustafa Barzani, who in this [the 20th] century came closest to rallying Kurdish nationalist sentiment even outside the border of his native Iraq, often faced at least as many tribesmen fighting for the government as supporting him.  

Similarly, the Kurds even embraced strange bedfellows in opposition to other Kurdish parties, and were even temporarily allied with Saddam Hussein in order to gain an advantage over an opposing party. This dynamic is present among the Kurdish population, who often chose to become militias for the government, derogatorily named jash, meaning donkey. Ultimately, the conflict ridden intra-Kurdish track record does not seem to support the claim that the Kurds were unwilling to fight one another or were united by a common sense of Kurdishness, which superseded other strategic exigencies.

Second, the theory cited above would specifically predict ongoing failure of Turkish coercion in light of the resonant identity between the Iraqi parties and the PKK. However, as detailed above, the Kurds did not consistently shy away from acting against the PKK. Rather, at times, both parties participated in significant actions to curtail the activities of the PKK within

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1043 Randal, After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness?: My Encounters with Kurdistan., p. 28.  
1044 Laizer, Martyrs, Traitors, and Patriots: Kurdistan after the Gulf War., p. 59.
northern Iraq. While resonant identity remained constant throughout this period, actions against
the PKK did not. At times, the parties verbally expressed a desire not to fight their fellow
Kurdish brethren, but in practice, no such exception was made. Jalal Talabani, who it was often
claimed had a closer ideology to the PKK, expressed this challenge clearly in an interview:

INTERVIEWER: “Do you mean to say that you are not in favor of using force
against another Kurdish group? Is that impression true?”

TALABANI: “if you want me to be honest and frank with you, the answer is yes.
We do not want to engage in an armed struggle with another Kurdish group. We
do not want to fight amongst ourselves. Even this stand, however, has its
limitation. Should our interests be undermined, we will be obliged to defend
ourselves.

INTERVIEWER: What is your choice? The PKK or your relationship with
Turkey?

TALABANI: This is a very crucial question. Our priority is the protection of the
Kurds living in Iraq and the preservation of their interests. Incidents happening
on other areas are not our responsibility.”

Thus, Talabani highlighted the tension of fighting a Kurdish group, but also emphasized the clear
limits of this shared identity. In fact, many interviewees expressed that the parties preferred not
to act against a ‘fellow Kurd’ and that this action was unpopular at times, however, these
inhibitions did not prevent action. Additionally, the Kurdish parties at times pleaded with the
PKK to self-moderate and stop attacking Turkey so they would not have to act against them, but
the PKK did not heed these warnings, and both parties eventually acted. Instead, it seems that

Marcus, June 13, 2013
the parties carefully considered their strategic imperatives at each coercive moment, and the
resonant identity placed only limited constraints on their actions.

One important question that is raised, is whether the Iraqi Kurdish parties could have
done more to contain the PKK, or for that matter, eliminate it completely from their territory.
This question asks whether the Kurdish parties would have been willing to take even harsher
measures against their fellow Kurds. The persistent presence of the PKK questions the success
of the Turkish policy and its ability to get the Kurdish parties to do its bidding against the PKK.
In fact, some interviewees suggested that the KRG took the minimum steps that would satisfy the
Turkish government, but would not take the harshest steps possible. One journalist explained
that there is a famous Kurdish phrase which states that “you can eat your brother’s flesh, but you
cannot break his bones,” meaning that you can attack fellow Kurds, but you cannot finish them
off. Aras argues that the fact that the PKK were not “finished off” in Iraqi Kurdistan, was
because of this resonant identity which prevented them from taking harsher measures.

However, the continued PKK presence in Iraq does not necessarily point to self-imposed
identity constraints on the parties. First, as mentioned, the PKK were based within the steep
mountain ranges of northern Iraq. These mountain ranges have proven to be quite impenetrable.
The Iraqi Kurdish parties were able to find shelter there during the onslaught of Saddam Hussein,
who was never able to gain control over the mountains. Similarly, Turkey was faced with
similar challenges, in part leading to their cooperation and dependence on the Iraqi Kurdish
parties. Thus, the task of fully eliminating the PKK from their mountain bases was a formidable

Marcus, June 13, 2013, Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013.
1048 Interview with Hussein Tahiri, July 23, 2013
one, even for the Iraqi Kurds who were best positioned from an intelligence and experience perspective. In light of the difficulty of their task, observing their presence does not necessarily indicate that the Iraqi Kurds stopped short.

However, even if one concedes that the Iraqi Kurdish parties could have taken more aggressive steps, the question is whether this was caused by their identification with the PKK, or whether there were other strategic reasons for not defeating them completely. As mentioned above, the Iraqi Kurds believed that if the PKK were no longer present in Iraq, Turkey, who was the guarantor of their autonomy, would lose interest in their relationship. This strategic imperative created an incentive to take steps to contain the PKK, but not to eliminate them for fear of losing their gains. Turkey made it transparent that they opposed the growing autonomy in the region, and thus, it seemed certain to the Kurds that if the PKK were absent, the Turkish government would realign with the Iraqi government against them. In fact, on several occasions, Turkish policymakers alluded that the best outcome for northern Iraq was for Saddam Hussein to reassert his control in the region. The Iraqi Kurdish parties were aware of this dilemma, and sought to carefully balance their need to keep the Turkish government satisfied with their efforts, but not content to the point that they felt that the PKK problem was resolved.\footnote{Interview with Ahmet Akkaya, August 1, 2013. Interviews with Kurdish policymaker, May 30, 2013} Thus, at minimum, this was a decision that was informed by both strategic and identity considerations.

Furthermore, it may be the case that in the absence of Turkish coercion, the Iraqi Kurdish parties would have been willing to live with the PKK, so long as their influence was not interfering with their governance. With few exceptions, Iraqi Kurdish actions against the PKK only occurred in response to increases in Turkish coercion. While ethnic identity may have
played a role, it was no sufficient to prevent coercive success. As noted in the cases, at various times the shared identity raised or lowered the popular support, but its individual effect was not determinative. In fact, at times, the intra-Kurdish differences played a more significant role in dividing the parties, than shared Kurdish identity played in uniting them. Ultimately, the history of significant intra-Kurdish fighting, and the variation in coercive outcomes, highlight the limits of shared identity as a constraint on state behavior. It is precisely this variation amongst ostensible co-ethnics which makes the Iraqi Kurdish case so compelling.

**State Capacity**

The second general argument gleaned from the literature is that many states have been inactive against these violent groups because they lack the capacity to act. Specifically, irrespective of its will to act, the state is too weak to curtail the activities of a non-state actor. In this particular case, the state capacity argument is most often utilized with respect to the inactivity of the parties in 1995. While not technically lacking in capacity, the argument is that they did not have the capacity to simultaneously engage in a civil war, and contain the PKK. This argument emphasizes capacity, rather than the will to use this capacity. While the argument above focused on the strained capacity of the parties, additional non-capacity constraints, such as popular support, were important in explaining the KRG’s ability to act. While acting against the PKK during this period would have been a costly measure, it is not self-evident that they were unable to act purely from a capacity standpoint. Instead, the decision appears to have been made on the basis of costs, which included, risk, will and capacity.

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1050 Interview with Kurdish policy makers, May 30, 2013, Interview with Aliza Marcus, June 13, 2013,
The KDP demonstrated their ability to respond to PKK attacks just months after the 1995 Turkish incursion. At the start of the Drogheba talks, the PKK attacked the KDP in order to derail the peace talks between the KDP and the PUK, and secure its position within Iraqi Kurdistan.\textsuperscript{1051} The PKK amassed 2,500 fighters and attacked the KDP in the Bahdinan region within the KDP stronghold.\textsuperscript{1052} The KDP even successfully pursued the PKK fighters in their hideouts in the Kirma mountains in the Karadagh area.\textsuperscript{1053} By October 1995, the KDP proclaimed that they had cleaned out the Dohuk and Khwarkurt regions of the PKK.\textsuperscript{1054} Though the extent of their success seems a bit overstated, the KDP demonstrated the capacity to engage in a two front war, by confronting the PKK despite the constraints placed on them by the civil war. Furthermore, the KDP’s relative position vis-à-vis the PUK was not significantly affected by this diversion of forces. Although a defensive action may be less costly than offense, this raises the possibility that the KDP had some slack capacity. When the choice for action was removed, the KDP engaged in a two front war, and at times even went on the offensive against the PKK. At minimum, this display of force raises the question of the limits of KDP capacity. As argued above, the KDP’s fight for survival against the PUK took precedence, and since there was a significant risk associated with engaging in a protracted conflict with the PKK at this critical moment, this calculus prevented them from fully succumbing to Turkey’s coercion.

The state capacity argument also fails at another critical juncture within this case. While the quasi-state that emerged in Iraq had some capacity, in its nascent period, it was objectively a

\textsuperscript{1051} Gunter, \textit{The Kurdish Predicament in Iraq: A Political Analysis.}, p. 84
\textsuperscript{1052} Gunter, “Kurdish Infighting: The PKK-KDP Conflict,” in Olson, \textit{The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East.}, p.50
\textsuperscript{1053} BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, September 29, 1995.
\textsuperscript{1054} Olson, \textit{The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its Impact on Turkey and the Middle East.}, p.58.
weak state. In 1991, the KDP and the PUK were reestablishing control over the region, after enduring violent clashes with the Iraqi government, including the infamous chemical weapons attacks. Although both leaders stridently worked to consolidate their power and establish a modicum of law and order in the region, the quasi state that was emerging was still very weak. In this instance, the state capacity argument would predict that the KRG would be too weak to comply with the demands of the Turkish state and therefore would not act against the PKK. However, as demonstrated above, this period represented the greatest relative success, where the PUK and the KDP acted against the PKK in cooperation with Turkish forces. The general weakness of the state’s administration did not seem to preclude action against the 2,000 PKK fighters based in the region. This instance further highlights the potential for weak states to engage non-state actors even in moments of comparative weakness. Finally, as outlined in the theory chapter, the capacity of states, even quasi-states in their nascent stages, will often be sufficient to confront violent non-state actors. This case further emphasizes the extent to which it is important not to underestimate the capacity of states that base violent groups.

CONCLUSION

The within case analysis of the Turkish raids on northern Iraq highlight the importance of disaggregating the relationship between the base state and the violent non-state group, even among ostensibly weak states and co-ethnics. Only by examining the domestic and foreign costs of compliance, is it possible to have a complete picture of the likelihood of transitive compellence success. As in the Jordan case, here too, the overwhelming importance of the domestic context for shaping outcomes is demonstrated.
Second, although action against the PKK was costly for the parties throughout this period, it was nonetheless possible when the foreign and domestic context favored action. This reality demonstrates that even extremely weak states should not be dismissed as incapable. Rather, it is essential to understand the intricacies of these complicated relationships, in addition to analyzing the capacities of both sides. Focusing only on capacity could have led to a misguided assumption about the KRG’s ability to act against the PKK. There may be moments when action against a violent group is precluded solely on the basis of an unfavorable balance of power between the group and the state, but such circumstances are likely far less frequent than usually assumed.

Although ethnic identification can play a role in the relationship between violent groups and their base states, particularly within the population, this element does not always play a decisive, or even consistent, role in determining the outcome of coercion. There are many elements to the relationship between the violent group, the base state, and the domestic audience, and these factors are only partially informed by the static character of shared Kurdish identity. Within this case, pan Kurdish, Iraqi Kurdish versus Turkish Kurdish identity, and sub-Kurdish party identities all played competing roles in swinging the popular sentiment and informing party decision making. Again, this case highlights that observing static measures, such as ethnic identity, can often confuse the depth of the relationship and the constraints imposed by this shared element.

Lastly, the challenge of the PKK bases in the mountains highlights that the demands of the coercer can often not be met to the fullest extent. The difficulty of penetrating the mountains of northern Iraq, has been noted by Turkish, Iraqi and American military officials. For this reason, they have often been a favorite basing spot for violent non-state groups over time,
including the Iraqi Kurdish parties. Thus, eliminating the PKK from these mountain bases may have been an unrealistic demand. Yet, nonetheless, the KRG demonstrated that they could contain and limit the access of the PKK in northern Iraq, and hinder their organizational activities. Across time, the KRG never fully succeeded in meeting Turkish demands, but their crackdowns on safe houses, checkpoints in the mountains, and other actions were significant and costly. They did succeed in making an impact in Turkey’s broader fight against the PKK, and also altered the general relationship to create an environment that was less hospitable. These kinds of changes should still be considered successes, even if they do not fit the textbook definition. Ultimately, a coercer must understand the domestic context facing a particular base state and its impact on the cost of compliance and set its expectations accordingly.
Map 5: Kurdish Areas in Northern Iraq

Kurdish Areas of Northern Iraq

- KDP concentration
- PUK concentration
- Islamist area

Legend:
- Kurdish-inhabited area
- KDP - Kurdistan Democratic Party
- PUK - Patriotic Union of Kurdistan
- Islamist area - Several Islamist groups operate in this area, including the Islamic Movement in Kurdistan-Iraq (IMKI), Islamic Group of Kurdistan (IGK), and Ansar al-Islam.
Map 6: Kurdish Areas in Northern Iraq
Map 7: Topographical Map of Northern Iraq
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Coercing states that base violent non-state groups to clean up their backyard is a central tenet of American Foreign Policy and one that is shared by many states threatened by these groups. These violent groups jeopardize the stability and sovereignty of nation states across every region, creating a pressing security concern in the international system. This study explored the efficacy of employing transitive compellence to induce states to contain the violent groups that reside within their borders, and specifically, the conditions under which this policy is most likely to succeed. However, the literature to date has not provided a framework by which to study these conditions. Instead, the traditional coercion literature has proceeded for decades without paying sufficient attention to the violent non-state actor. The existing coercion framework has created a bilateral lens that limited interactions to those occurring between two states, thus excluding, or at least minimizing, the role of these powerful and disruptive groups. My theory has filled this gap and shined a light on their potent and typically, destabilizing, role in the landscape. The preceding pages make one central argument, mainly that in order to understand why transitive compellence succeeds, we must assess the dynamic relationship between the violent group and the base state, across both their foreign policy and domestic politics.

Presently, the literature, as well as the current policy debates, seem to be dominated by two explanations as to why base states have not embraced their responsibility to reign in these violent groups – either the base state is weak or it is a state sponsor of terrorism. These lines of argumentation make oversimplified assumptions about the relationship between base states and violent groups and generally underestimate the base state’s capabilities or its potential willingness to act. To achieve a more nuanced understanding of the basing phenomenon, I have
conducted a focused, structured comparison of seven episodes of transitive compellence within three central cases, Israel vis-à-vis the fedayeen in Jordan (1950-1970); Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Syria (1990-1998); and Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in northern Iraq (1991-1998).

This chapter proceeds in the following manner. First, I briefly review the main argument of the study and the evidence found within the empirical cases. Second, I highlight key findings that emerged through a careful comparison across the cases that reveal commonalities and differences that further illuminate the study. Third, I discuss several theoretical and policy implications of this dissertation's findings. Finally, while this dissertation has drawn some conclusions about the efficacy of transitive compellence, it has also raised other important questions for further exploration. I conclude by highlighting some areas for future research.

SUMMARY OF THEORY AND EVIDENCE

This study argues that the costs of compliance for the base state are shaped by the foreign policy and domestic political relationship between the violent group and the base state. These inputs define the cost-benefit calculation that the base state employs when evaluating whether to comply with or defy a coercer's demands. As in traditional coercion, the goal of transitive compellence is to increase the costs or decrease the benefits for the base state of having these violent groups continue to reside within it.

A variety of historically contingent circumstances may lead a base state to permit a group to reside within its borders. Across the globe, there are numerous examples of basing relationships that have gone undisturbed for decades. However, a coercive episode punctures that equilibrium. When a base state becomes the subject of coercive pressure, the base state is now compelled to, at minimum, reconsider the status quo and contemplate the coercer's
demands. The theory of transitive compellence makes a significant contribution to the literature by providing a systematic framework by which to estimate the costs of compliance for the base state and assess the likelihood that the coercer’s demands will be met.

The base state’s compliance costs can be estimated by measuring the foreign policy and domestic political elements of its relationship with the violent group. Compliance particularly hinges on whether the non-state actor is a critical component of the base state’s foreign policy and more importantly, whether acting against the violent group would pose a domestic threat to the regime’s hold on power. The violent group’s cross-border activity necessarily affects the base state’s foreign policy, and thus the base state has a stake, positive or negative, in the international dimension of the group’s action. However, since the group resides within the state and interacts with its population and political system, acting against the group domestically carries with it the risks of a potentially protracted political or military conflict with the group, which can threaten the regime. Thus, it is necessary to examine the costs of containing the violent group across both of these dimensions. These two distinct elements of the relationship can impose different and often conflicting costs and benefits when complying with the coercer’s demands. Analyzing these components yields insights into the complex dynamic between the parties and enables one to ultimately assess the magnitude of difficulty in severing these ties.

When a violent group is instrumental in a base state’s foreign policy and also entrenched domestically, it poses a significant domestic threat. In these circumstances, compliance costs are high, and transitive compellence has a low likelihood for success. Conversely, if the base state derives little foreign policy benefit and the group is not entrenched domestically, compliance costs are low and transitive compellence will likely succeed. However, when these factors point in opposite directions, the domestic variables are often most influential in predicting success or
failure. Thus, even in situations where the base state derives no foreign policy benefit, if
containing the group domestically entails the risk of a protracted conflict, coercion is unlikely to
succeed. Whatever foreign policy benefit a base state may reap from its relationship with the
violent group, it does not typically extend into the world of political survival. In some instances,
the stakes of the domestic challenge can become so large that base states may be willing to allow
a group to sabotage its foreign policy in order to avoid a direct confrontation domestically.
Consequently, while a state may be coerced into foregoing the foreign policy benefits derived
from a violent group, it is inherently more challenging to induce a state to embrace costly
domestic action.

To test this theory, three longitudinal in-depth case studies where transitive compellence
was utilized to quell violent non-state actor activities were examined: Israel vis-à-vis the
*fedayeen* in Jordan (1950-1970); Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Syria (1990-1998); and Turkey
vis-à-vis the PKK in Iraqi Kurdistan (1991-1997). These cases include seven distinct episodes of
coercion and I have estimated the corresponding costs of compliance in each particular
circumstance. I conducted a focused, structured comparison of these episodes across and within
cases using interviews in the field with current and former policymakers, military personnel,
journalists, academics and analysts, as well as extensive archival research, secondary historical
materials and media accounts.

This set of cases were particularly well suited for within and across case comparison
because they offered the opportunity to focus on the relationship between the base state and the
violent group, while to a greater degree holding constant other possible alternative explanations.
First, in all of these cases, a costly, consistent and credible transitive compellence strategy was
utilized, which created an expectation that, at minimum, the base state would be forced to
reconsider its basing relationship with the violent group. Identifying cases in which the coercive strategy remained relatively constant, but the outcomes varied, made it possible to focus on the within case changes in the relational variables. Movement within the domestic and foreign policy relationship of the base state and the violent group enabled testing of whether these independent variables resulted in corresponding changes in the outcomes of coercion. Furthermore, across the cases, it was possible to explore the explanatory value of several prominent and competing explanations, including state sponsorship (Syria), state failure (Iraq/KRG), and ethnic identity (Jordan, Iraq/KRG). By selecting cases that possessed the characteristics of one or more of these alternative explanations, one could ascertain whether they had the predicted effect and compare it to the explanatory value of the theory of transitive compellence. For a host of different reasons, each of these explanations asserted that transitive compellence ought to be extremely difficult. As a result, these cases each served as a difficult test for the theory.

Overall, these seven episodes of transitive compellence provided strong evidence for the theory by demonstrating the importance of analyzing the relationship to determine the costs of compliance, as well as the likelihood that the base state will accede to the coercer's demands. Despite significant differences across the cases, including the manner in which these relationships imposed costs, they nonetheless had the predicted impact on the coercive outcomes. Furthermore, the cases of Jordan and Iraq highlighted the volatile nature of the relationship and the importance of understanding domestic shifts in the context for coercion. Ultimately, each of these cases underscored the importance of obtaining granular information about the relationship over time. Explanations such as ethnic identity, overall state strength or sponsorship, proved
inadequate for characterizing this complex relationship and assessing the full set of potential costs associated with deviating from the status quo and reigning in these violent groups.

**SUMMARY OF THE THREE CENTRAL CASES**

*Israel vis-à-vis the fedayeen in Jordan (1950-1970)*

In this case, the Israelis utilized a consistent transitive compellence strategy between the years of 1950-1970 in order to contain *fedayeen* activity, with varying degrees of success. I argue that the variation in outcomes following the significant Israeli coercive raids in 1953, 1966 and 1968, can be attributed to the shifting relationship between Jordan and the *fedayeen* within each of these periods. Though many factors remained constant across the three raids, the largest difference was the growing domestic threat presented by the *fedayeen*, coupled with their increasing popular support. Over time, these changes significantly increased the costs of compliance for the Jordanian regime. While the *fedayeen* often sabotaged Jordan’s foreign policy, the regime was nonetheless unable to contain them when the domestic costs grew. Whereas in the first two episodes, the domestic costs were manageable, by 1968, the costs and risks associated with compliance were exceedingly high. As predicted, the domestic volatility precluded action on the part of the Jordanian regime.

*Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Syria (1990-1998)*

The Syrian case stands in stark contrast to the other cases and demonstrates the dynamics in a state with very limited domestic costs of compliance. Syria served as a state sponsor for the PKK, allowing Abdullah Ocalan, its leader, to establish the organizational headquarters and political training facilities within Syria. In 1998, despite a two decade long relationship, Syria
extradited the PKK’s leader in response to a Turkish coercive threat and barred the group from exploiting Syria as a base. Though the Syrian reaction surprised many observers, a close examination of the relationship between Syria and the PKK during this period highlights the opportunity for coercive success due to the decreasing costs of compliance. At the foreign policy level, Syria utilized the PKK instrumentally to generally balance against its regional competitor, Turkey, and gain leverage for several contentious issue areas, but did not support the PKK’s goal of establishing a Kurdish state. By 1998, the PKK’s utility to Syria had diminished due to the group’s declining strength, which was attributable to Turkey’s successful campaign to stifle the group. Domestically, the PKK did not pose a threat to the regime and was easily contained by the Syrian state. Furthermore, the extent to which Asad took proactive steps to prevent domestic entrenchment by the PKK, validates the asserted costs associated with the domestic political relationship. Asad seems to have understood that once a group is entwined domestically, it is more difficult for the regime to control the group, thus increasing the costs of controlling them. The coupling of a reduced foreign policy benefit with low domestic challenges presented a context that was more favorable for coercion than might have otherwise been expected. The combination of these decreasing overall costs with an increasingly aggressive coercive strategy demanded a Syrian reconsideration of its policy towards the PKK. Ultimately, exploring this case through the theoretical framework highlights the favorable context during this period, as well as challenges the conventional wisdom regarding the intransigent nature of state sponsorship.

Although the case of Syria lends support to the theory, it also highlights the challenges of assessing the costs of compliance in the absence of direct evidence regarding base state decision making. Unlike the case of Jordan or Iraqi Kurdistan, where leaders were willing to discuss the
basing of the *fedayeen* and the PKK respectively, this level of transparency was not available in Syria, which resulted in a case analysis reliant on proxy variables to ascertain the rationale and costs of the Syria-PKK relationship. Two significant elements precluded obtaining first-hand information: (1) the closed nature of the Syrian state, and (2) the clandestine element of the relationship. First, Syria is a closed society, which limits access to archives and policymakers, but also significantly hinders accurate media accounts in real time, as well as in retrospect. Thus, while it is possible to obtain proxy measurements of the variables of interest, direct evidence is lacking. Second, despite the open secret that Syria served as a state sponsor for the PKK, Syria routinely denied this relationship. Even when presented with evidence to the contrary, Hafiz al-Asad continually denied Ocalan’s presence, as well as the existence of training facilities in Damascus. Asad’s unwillingness to acknowledge this relationship made it even more difficult to understand the reasoning behind the relationship or the value that the Syrian regime placed on the PKK’s continued presence in Syria. Despite these particular challenges, posing a series of consistent questions within the case still enables one to estimate the relatively low value that the Syrian regime likely placed on this relationship and thus, its eventual willingness to sever it. Nonetheless, this case clearly highlights the difficulty in evaluating these types of relationships, both in real time and in retrospect, and the importance of creating proxy measurements to estimate the nature of the relationship and the subsequent costs of compliance.

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1055 This problem was further exacerbated by the ongoing civil war in Syria, which began in 2011, concurrent with this research.
Turkey vis-à-vis the PKK in Iraqi Kurdistan (1991-1997)

Many insights can be gleaned from juxtaposing Turkey’s challenges with the PKK within Syria against the Iraqi Kurdish case. Unlike the sponsorship relationship described in Chapter 3, the Iraqi Kurdish parties had a fundamentally different interaction with the PKK. Importantly, this case highlights that even nascent states have the capacity to act against violent groups when their interests dictate the exigencies of such a policy. Additionally, the willingness of the KRG to repeatedly act against the PKK, a fellow Kurdish rebel group, demonstrates the limits of co-ethnic identification as a constraint upon action. Although there was clearly some level of identification among the Kurdish parties, this shared heritage seldom restrained their action against one another.

During the period of 1991-1998, Turkey utilized a transitive compellence strategy in 1991-92, 1995 and 1997, aimed at the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) and the Iraqi Kurdish political parties more broadly. Throughout this period, Turkey possessed an extraordinary amount of coercive leverage due to its instrumental role in the implementation of Operation Provide Comfort (OPC), which guaranteed Kurdish autonomy. Unlike the other cases, Turkish coercion leverage had the ability to directly impact the Kurds’ ability to rule. Yet despite this significant leverage, Turkish coercion did not always succeed. As in the previous cases, shifts in both the domestic and foreign policy relationship between the KRG and the PKK greatly influenced the context for coercion. Most importantly, the domestic infighting which was sparked in 1994 between the KDP and the PUK, the two dominant Iraqi parties, fundamentally altered the costs and risks of complying with Turkey’s demands. Furthermore, KRG’s eventual split into two administrative units, dominated separately by each Iraqi party, forces one to assess the differing foreign and domestic costs of compliance for each party, and to
observe their distinct reactions to coercion. What becomes evident is that when the Iraqi Kurdish parties were united, the context favored coercion and the parties embraced costly measures to contain the PKK. However, in 1995, as the infighting heightened the costs of action domestically, the parties became increasingly reticent to divert their forces and risk entanglement in another conflict. In the final period, when the tide of the civil war favored the KDP, thus lowering the domestic costs of action, there was increased action against the PKK. Once again, this case demonstrates the importance of the domestic context and the costs of compliance for explaining coercion success or failure.

BROADER IMPLICATIONS

A look across these cases reveals six important implications not easily observed by examining each case separately. First, these cases reflect the wide spectrum of base state-violent group relationships and the episodes within each case highlight their dynamic nature. Second, these cases demonstrate that there are different trajectories for base state action against violent groups. Third, each of these cases underscore the fact that states are willing to adopt costly measures, even against their co-ethnics, and that shared identity does not constrain action in any consistent manner. Fourth, these cases reveal that autocrats are sensitive to the opinions of their respective populations and that the citizens have the ability to constrain the autocrats’ behavior. Fifth, though these groups each have an agenda that is outside the borders of the base state, they are not gracious guests and can often interfere greatly with the domestic governance of the state. Confronting these groups can be a risky endeavor, consequently, states are often extremely cautious in deciding to proactively pursue this strategy. Finally, these cases demonstrate that
even nascent and weak states often have sufficient capacity for action, and under the right conditions, are willing to expend this capacity against these violent groups.

**The Dynamic Relationship between Base States and Violent Groups**

This study sought to focus attention on the dynamic relationship between base states and the violent groups that reside within their borders and the subsequent costs that must be absorbed when acting to contain these groups. Closely analyzing the relationships across all three macro-cases illuminates three important findings. First, the relationships between violent groups and their ‘hosts’ vary widely across all of the dimensions examined. Some groups, such as the PKK in Syria, can be instrumental in a state’s foreign policy, whereas others, such as the *fedayeen* in Jordan or the PKK in northern Iraq, can prove to be counterproductive. Similarly, on the domestic front, there are groups that were deeply entrenched within the state, such as the *fedayeen* in 1968, or those that were truly outsiders and had limited interaction with either the state governing apparatus or the broader population, such as the PKK in Syria. Second, these relationships were rarely static, but instead fluctuated over time, imposing varied costs of action on the respective regimes. Focusing on specific questions of interest within my study, it was possible to observe the shifts within relationship dynamics and the corresponding imposition of greater or lesser costs of compliance. Third, none of the cases demonstrated intransigent relationships that could not be altered. Rather, it appeared that the base states were aware of the changing dynamics and adjusted their behavior accordingly.
**Trajectory of Base State Action against Violent Groups**

In examining base state compliance across the cases, one can observe variation not only in the steps taken to contain the violent group, but also differences in the evolution of base state behavior. Despite being targeted by a prolonged coercive campaign, these base states did not followed a predictable compliance trajectory over time. One might have anticipated that repeated episodes of coercion consistently increased or decreased the base state’s willingness to comply with the coercer’s demands. Similarly, one might have speculated that the intensity of action by the base state followed a predictable pattern. Instead, these cases highlight the irregularity of the compliance across the states, with some states responding aggressively and then tapering off, whereas others fluctuated or acted more incrementally. For example, in the case of northern Iraq, the harshest measures were taken following the first episodes of coercion, which was followed by a lull in compliance, but then culminated by taking additional steps in the final episode. In Jordan, the regime took significant measures to contain the *fedayeen* in the first two episodes, then was inactive for an extended period and then adopted an increasingly harsh pattern of behavior in Black September. Although, as discussed in the chapter, Black September was not a direct product of Israeli coercion, it nonetheless demonstrated the regime’s deliberate decision to act strongly against the violent group and only underscored the lack of a consistent pattern in the base state’s behavior. Finally, in the case of Syria, the regime ignored Turkey’s coercive threats for the better part of the decade, followed by a complete eviction of the PKK from its territory. Ultimately, as the relationship of the violent group and the base state fluctuated, the motivation and willingness of the regime to act against them reflected this same variability.
**Shared Ethnic Identity**

This study challenges the assumption that ethnic affinity constrains a base state from acting against a co-ethnic violent group, thus precluding coercion success. In both Jordan and northern Iraq, the base states and the violent group shared ethnic ties. In the former, both were Arabs, whereas in the latter, both were Kurds. However, despite these shared ethnic ties, ethnicity did not play a consistent role in defining the relationship.

In the aforementioned cases, while the violent group may have received some sympathy from the broader population as a result of these ties, differing national identities, Palestinian in the former, and Turkish in the latter, simultaneously created distance between them. Certainly, ethnicity played some role in the relationship, however, it did not consistently increase the costs of action, nor did it preclude any potential option available to the base state. Rather, ethnicity served to mobilize popular support for the cause or conversely to define shared enemies. However, even in these circumstances, the effects of shared ethnicity were not uniform, and at times, the violent group was unable to garner support for its cause and was viewed with contempt, despite the common heritage. Furthermore, ethnic identity competed with national and sub-ethnic tribal identities, thus rendering its effect indeterminate.

Ultimately, in the two applicable cases, ethnicity did not preclude action by the base state against the violent group. Instead, the base state was willing to take costly action against the violent group despite its ethnic ties. In each case, it appeared that the base state made rational cost benefit calculations about the strategic value of the group, the costs they were imposing, and acted accordingly. While shared ethnic ties had the potential to serve an important function within the relationship, if one only examined this element of the relationship, any conclusion
would have been misleading and likely underestimated the potential for action against the violent
group.

**Popular Support in Autocracies**

Evidence across the cases highlights the sensitivity of autocracies to changes in popular
support, both for their regime, as well as for the violent group. Popular support and legitimacy
are clearly meaningful factors for leaders within democracies, who are subject to elections.
However, in autocracies, the interaction between the popular views and the leaders’ actions are
often obfuscated. Yet, the evidence in this study underscores that even monarchs are not only
sensitive to popular sentiment, but can be constrained from action due to popular opinion. Both
King Hussein, as well as the leaders of the Kurdish parties, were attentive to the popular mood
and factored it into their decision making. Specifically, King Hussein placed such great
emphasis on being in touch with the population that he closely monitored the popular mood
throughout his reign. Most poignantly, following the 1968 Karameh raid, King Hussein felt that
if he constrained the fedayeen, the population might revolt against him. As popular support for
the fedayeen waned, King Hussein took advantage of the broader latitude and reasserted his
power. Ultimately, this study has demonstrated another means by which autocrats consider
popular support and how that element impacts their decision making.

1056 Although the leaders of the KRG held elections in 1992, following the outbreak of violence, elections were not
held again and the leaders were essentially autocratic.
1057 Some prominent examples of this work include: Sebastian Rosato, "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace
"International Conflict and the Tenure of Leaders: Is War Still Ex Post Inefficient?," *American Journal of Political
Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52, no. 6 (2008).
Regime Survival and Domestic Stakes

Across the cases, one notices the varied means by which these violent groups interfere directly and indirectly with the regime’s hold on power and that this domestic political relationship is an important factor in a base state’s calculation as to whether to comply with coercion. Some groups, like the fedayeen in 1968, directly challenged the legitimacy of the regime and created institutions that produced a state within a state. Others, such as the PKK, interfered by potentially altering the balance of power in the civil war between the KDP and the PUK. As expected, the extent to which a confrontation with the violent group threatened the base state’s hold on power directly affected their willingness to confront them. In all of these cases, the base state had the potential to derive a great benefit from being unshackled from this group, yet the risk entailed inevitably precluded their action. Perhaps not surprisingly, a state will go to great lengths to avoid a fight with high costs and indeterminate outcomes.

Further complicating the decision to rein in the violent group is the fact that for the state, any action against these groups has the inherent risk of harming the regime’s legitimacy by acting violently against, or amongst its own citizens. Thus, even if a state “wins”, it still potentially bears the costs among its population. This dynamic could clearly be observed in Jordan and northern Iraq. For example, in northern Iraq, action against the PKK often led the population to accuse the regime of being an instrument of the Turkish government. Similarly, in Jordan, the Palestinians questioned the regime’s actions against the fedayeen and this sentiment led to decreased support for the regime among the Palestinian population. Consequently, in the absence of a direct confrontation with the violent group, the state is often reluctant to act preemptively.
The importance of domestic political considerations is evident in the cases of Jordan and northern Iraq. In each instance, even though the violent group’s actions were counterproductive with respect to their foreign policy goals, when the domestic costs rose, they were unwilling to act against the violent groups. Even in the case of Syria, where domestic costs were largely absent, the regime appears to have been keenly aware of the potential political exposure and proactively sought to avoid these risks. Certainly, these cases highlight yet another challenge in navigating this complex base state - violent group relationship.

**Traditional Measures of State Capacity**

The findings of this study directly challenge the proposition that state inaction against violent groups is attributable to the lack of state capacity and particularly, military capacity. This study argues against the growing literature on weak states and state failure that assumes that limits in aggregated state capacity preclude costly containment of violent groups. Instead, the cases suggest three findings: 1) while state capacity, and specifically a favorable balance of power, is a necessary condition for action, it is insufficient to explain variation in coercion success; 2) by traditional measures of power, even nascent states often dwarf the capabilities of violent non-state groups; and 3) even weak states can utilize their limited power effectively against violent groups. Ultimately, military capacity did not serve as the primary constraint on state action in any of the cases examined. This assessment is not to suggest that there are no

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instances when traditional capacity is the constraint, but rather that these circumstances may be less frequent than previously assumed by the literature on weak and failed states.

The finding that even weak states have latent capacity to act forcefully against violent non-state groups has both theoretical and policy implications. First, one observes that aggregate measures of state capacity are often insufficient for determining a state’s ability to act against violent groups. Instead, it is necessary to look beyond broad categories and focus on the capabilities required for specific tasks, in this case, acting against these groups. Determining the relative balance of power, and the specific constraints on state action, can provide a more nuanced understanding of the limitations of weak and failed states. As demonstrated in this study, nascent states may have a latent capacity to act beyond preconceived expectations.

Second, understanding that states are not necessarily limited by their physical capacity to act, opens the door for a more refined policy approach. Policies that are oriented towards increasing a state’s capacity to act are fundamentally different from those designed to alter their will to act.

**Implications for Coercion Theory**

This study, which is primarily focused on transitive compellence, builds upon the rich coercion literature, while also challenging some of its most prevalent assumptions. Exploring the dynamics of transitive compellence not only highlights the inherent differences within these circumstances, but also demonstrates the potential for new strategic interactions, other than those

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traditionally conceived. Specifically, the distinctions between transitive compellence and traditional coercion reorder the importance of the variables that affect success.

This study suggests three new findings as its contribution to the existing literature. First, whereas the traditional coercion literature focuses primarily on the coercive endeavor and the attributes of the coercer, this analysis reveals the importance of examining the coerced state’s cost-benefit calculations, as defined by its relationship with the violent group. In that vein, this study emphasizes the importance of this dynamic and proposes a fresh logic in addressing instances of transitive compellence. Second, compellence is thought to be very difficult to achieve, in part because of the high stakes involved and the public nature of the concessions. Yet, due to the particular interests at play with transitive compellence, compellence success appears to be more attainable than forecasted in the traditional literature. This observation only highlights the importance of identifying the issues at the core of these conflicts to determine the difficulty of achieving compellence success. Finally, punishment is usually considered an ineffective strategy for achieving success. This study challenges this finding and demonstrates that punishment can be quite effective in compelling a state to undertake costly action to contain a violent group.

In explaining success or failure of coercion, the coercion literature has focused primarily on the particular coercive approach, as well as the attributes of the coercer. Those focused on the coercive approach examined whether military or economic tools were utilized and the targets of the coercion. In addition, there is a rich literature on best practices that elucidates how to

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implement coercion in a manner that will maximize the likelihood of success. The literature also focused on the coercer and whether they were powerful and credible. By focusing on the coercion mechanism and the coercer, the literature tended to underemphasize the role of the coerced in this equation.

This study is focused first and foremost on the coerced state, and in particular, the base state relationship with the violent non-state actor. By focusing on the costs of compliance, rather than the costs imposed, one can properly evaluate the calculation the coerced has to make when deciding whether to comply. When contemplating the relationship between the violent group and the base state, it is critical to understand both the foreign policy and domestic costs of compliance. This study delves into the complex and dynamic relationship between the base state and the violent group and then applies this knowledge when estimating the probability of transitive compellence success. Unpacking the costs of altering the status quo is essential to understanding the wide variation in outcomes observed in the cases. Thus, in cases of transitive compellence, it is necessary to focus on the coerced state, and explore the dynamics both externally, on the foreign policy dimension, as well as internally, on the domestic front, to best explain coercion success or failure. This base state-centered approach is clearly a departure from the traditional coercion literature. However, the proposed framework does not suggest that the coercive strategy or the coercer’s attributes are not significant, but rather, that they should be secondary considerations.

Beyond introducing a base state-centric analysis, my framework also contributes to the existing literature through its practical observations regarding the likelihood of compellent success. Compellence is typically considered more difficult than deterrence because it requires
an observable change in the status quo.\textsuperscript{1061} The public nature of the concessions in response to compellence is thought to increase the challenge of compliance for the coerced state. This finding is especially true in instances where the stakes for coercion are high. High stakes make coerced states especially unwilling to yield ground, and even less so in an observable and public manner. It is the nature of the stakes which often make compellence and public concessions so difficult to obtain. Furthermore, in most cases of coercion, both states have a vested interest in the issue that sparks the conflict. Usually, the coerced state has a direct role in this conflict, often preventing the issue from being resolved without confrontation.

In instances of base state coercion, the stakes for the coercer and the coerced are not always the same, nor are they even driven by similar considerations. For the coercer, the stakes involve the cessation of violence generated by the violent non-state group residing within the base state. For the coerced state, the stakes revolve around evicting or containing the group within its borders. As demonstrated in the cases, the state may or may not have a vested interest in the continued basing of the group within its borders. In many instances, the circumstances that led to the group's basing did not necessarily result from a strategic calculation on the part of the state or a commitment to their continued presence within the state's borders. Rather, the reluctance to comply emanated from the costs associated with eviction, rather than a conviction about the group’s broader agenda or the state’s stake in the ongoing conflict. Furthermore, even in cases where the state had a vested interest in the violence of the group, such as in Syria’s sponsorship of the PKK, the limited nature of the stakes became apparent. The stakes that can be

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won through terrorism and insurgency are inherently more limited than those that can be obtained through conventional war. This disparity between the stakes of the two parties provides a potential opportunity for coercion success, because the stakes are often not that high, or certainly not as high as instances of coercion requiring concessions over territory or nuclear programs. This statement is not intended to suggest that base state coercion is simple, but rather that the potentially lower stakes provide a greater opportunity for success than the traditional coercion literature might predict when focusing more exclusively on high stakes bargaining. Furthermore, this finding may also shed light on other less traditional instances of compellence, and thus, at minimum should be examined with consideration of the above findings.

In addition to reconsidering assumptions about compellent success, this study also challenges the notion that a punishment strategy is unlikely to achieve its desired outcome. A review of the existing coercion literature finds that the high stakes involved in traditional coercion has led Robert Pape, among others, to conclude that denial strategies are most effective in producing coercion success. Absent nuclear weapons, Pape argues that it is difficult to produce sufficient levels of pain to effect a change in the target’s decision making. Modern nationalistic societies are resilient and have the ability to absorb incredible amounts of punishment, especially during war. However, these assumptions in the traditional coercion literature heavily discount the role of domestic politics and popular support in regime decision making. While this premise may hold true in instances of traditional coercion, the cases explored within this study demonstrated the potential of a punishment strategy for producing coercion success. This strategy can be executed through limited reprisal raids, military

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incursions, or threats of invasion, but all of these tactics ultimately function by imposing costs and punishments on the base state, predominantly upon its population. Despite the presumed difficulty of employing this approach, punishment was generally successful in five out of the seven cases explored, thus illustrating the strategy's potential. This success rate was achieved despite the fact that the level of punishment imposed in all of these cases was relatively limited and "cheap." This level of punishment was far below the threshold usually assumed necessary to effectively alter a state's cost-benefit calculation and coerce them into changing the status quo. Evidence of progress through punishment is a particularly valuable finding for this subset of cases because, as discussed in the theory chapter, a conventional denial strategy aimed directly at the assets of the base state is not possible within transitive compellence, in part because it is not clear what the target of denial ought to be. Quite the contrary, to the extent that the coercer demands base state action, it needs to carefully manage its coercive strategy in order not to trample upon the base state's ability to act. Thus, in targeting the base state directly, these restrictions leave the coercer with few tools in its toolbox other than a punishment strategy. 1063

The reasons behind the surprising degree of punishment success stem from the distinctive underlying conditions at play in each case of transitive compellence. First, as mentioned above, the stakes in these conflicts are often lower than traditional coercion and the societies are generally not "at war" in the traditional sense. While regimes and societies may be willing to pay incredible costs for national or perceived survival goals, it is not clear that their resilience

1063 It may be possible to employ an indirect denial strategy by targeting the violent group directly. In instances where the base state is obtaining a foreign policy benefit through the violent group, targeting the violent group may deny the state the ability to utilize the group effectively. Furthermore, action directed against the violent group likely interacts with the calculations of the base state. However, in this context, I am only addressing the range of conventional coercive strategies aimed directly at the base state.
remains under circumstances with lower stakes. In these cases, the state and often, the population, were unwilling to endure relatively lower levels of pain in order to continue to harbor these groups that were not deemed to be central to the state or critical for its survival. Only in those circumstances when the population views the group as central, would we expect them to have a greater tolerance to endure collective coercive punishment. In some limited cases, the state and the population may feel they have a particularly strong, vested interest in the violent group and this sentiment increases their resilience for absorbing punishment. This attitude can be observed within Jordan after the 1967 War, when the popular commitment to the fedayeen appeared to increase the regime and the population’s ability to endure punishment. In general, punishment destabilizes the state, and the regimes in question were often unwilling to embrace this risk for the violent group. Across these cases, even relatively low levels of punishment appeared to be sufficient not only to produce a reconsideration of the base state policy, but often to lead them to contain the group. Thus, contrary to the conventional wisdom, punishment strategies do have the potential to impose sufficient costs and lead to coercion success, albeit under instances of lower stakes.

**POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

Transitive compellence remains a valuable policy option for addressing the threat posed by violent non-state actors. In embarking on this study, I sought not only to contribute to the theoretical literature, but also enhance the policymakers’ toolbox for considering transitive compellence, evaluating its likelihood for success, and crafting the strategy’s most effective implementation. As the United States and others continue to face the challenge of violent non-state groups, and specifically, minimizing the availability of bases worldwide, it is essential to
understand, in real time, whether coercion is a viable option. The findings of this study shed light on this policy question and seek to provide specific guidance as to how to assess this issue from an intelligence perspective. In particular, this study offers tools for ex ante evaluating whether coercion is a viable option, and the best manner for implementing this strategy.

This study highlighted the need to look beyond the common conceptions of weak and failed states, and state sponsors, as proxies for evaluating the willingness or capability of states to confront groups within their borders. These alternative explanations fail to recognize the variation present within these relationships, often resulting in misguided policies. In the former, weak states are deemed incapable, whereas in the latter, they are deemed intransigent. These misconceptions lead to policies that both lower expectations for action in the former, and increase the aggressive nature of the policies for the latter. At minimum, this study has emphasized that these assumptions do not hold true. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, even the nascent quasi state of northern Iraq was successfully coerced into taking costly action against the PKK. Similarly, Chapter 3 demonstrated that even a notorious state sponsor, such as Syria, was willing to sever its twenty year relationship with the PKK.

This study suggests that policymakers ought to evaluate the cost entailed in altering the relationship between the base state and the violent group. More specifically, this research has illuminated a vital set of foreign policy and domestic variables that need to be considered when assessing the viability of a coercive strategy. Two central questions emerge: 1) To what extent does the base state gain foreign policy utility from the violent group's action? 2) To what extent can the violent group threaten the domestic security and regime survival, in the event of a confrontation? The answers to these larger questions serve to approximate the level of costs that the base state would absorb if they comply with the coercer's demands. The study suggests
asking a set of key questions (See Table 1 below), through which it is possible to assess the foreign and domestic relationship, estimate the cost of compliance and ascertain whether the context favors coercive success. These questions identify a specific type of political intelligence that is necessary to gather in order to ascertain whether coercion is a viable strategy, how costly it will be to change the calculus of the base state, and whether it will likely succeed.

Table 4: Key Questions for Assessing Cost of Compliance

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FOREIGN POLICY COSTS</strong></th>
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| **BASE STATE – VIOLENT GROUP GOALS** | • Do the base state and the violent group have shared foreign policy goals towards the coercer?  
   • Do they share broader FP goals? |
| **VIOLENT GROUP FP CONTRIBUTION** | • If the violent group contributes, how important is its contribution in the overall FP agenda of the state? |
| **VIOLENT GROUP MEANS** | • Does the state approve, and/or derive benefit from the violence utilized by the group? |

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<tr>
<th><strong>DOMESTIC POLITICAL COSTS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VIOLENT GROUP POLITICAL INTENTIONS</strong></td>
<td>• Does the group have political claims on the base state?</td>
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</table>
| **VIOLENT GROUP ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY** | • How sophisticated is the violent group’s political and military organization?  
   • Can the group effectively mount a challenge to the base state? |
| **BASE STATE MILITARY CAPACITY** | • How strong is the base state?  
   • Can it utilize these means effectively against the violent group? |
| **VIOLENT GROUP POPULAR SUPPORT** | • Does the group have popular support?  
   • How willing is the population to rally behind the violent group in opposition to the state? |

Collecting granular information across multiple variables is not a straightforward process. It can be difficult to obtain sufficiently good data that allows one to estimate with great certainty what the costs of compliance for the base state will be, particularly since many of these states are closed autocratic societies and the groups are clandestine. This study further emphasizes the
critical nature of regional experts who are able to gather and interpret the questions delineated above. Arriving at a precise answer to these questions, as demonstrated within the case studies, requires an astute knowledge of the base state and the internal and external dynamics found therein. However, states like the United States may already have the intelligence resources, or ought to invest in developing them, so that they can be deployed for answering these questions, particularly if their analysis is directed appropriately.

Fortunately, the cases demonstrate that this information may be more readily available than initially assumed. Diplomatic demarches, journalistic accounts, NGOs, and other sources often possess this information in real time and are already gathering this kind of information. Local journalists often provide the most astute observations about the relationship with the violent group, the regime, and the local population. A review of many primary documents highlights that even when available, this information has not previously been processed for the purpose of assessing the efficacy of a coercive strategy. Thus, in some cases, it is not the lack of information that is lacking, but a proper framework for analysis. Yet, even in the absence of perfect information, answering these questions and attaining a level of certainty in the answers should prove informative for policymakers and far better than the alternative.

Furthermore, it is often this same uncertainty which the base states must grapple with as well. At times, it is not solely a question of information gathering, but rather the weighing of multiple variables, which cut in opposite directions. Even for the base state, it can sometimes be

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1064 In the Jordanian case, the British, American, and Israeli documents revealed that some of these questions were being examined in other contexts. For example, the level of popular support the King possessed in different periods was being closely monitored by the intelligence community. Similarly, the strength of these clandestine groups was also being observed and measured in real time. In both the Syria case and the Iraq case, media accounts of the period similarly highlight that journalists reporting on these states often capture much of the information necessary to make an assessment.
difficult to know the extent of risk in confronting the group, but that is precisely the calculation that base states need to make. These decisions present inherent risk for the base state, and one that policymakers ought to be aware of. This challenge can be navigated by using the questions outlined above, which can aid intelligence analysts and policymakers in their acquisition of the critical information required to understand the relationship between the violent group and the base state and assess the corresponding policy options that are best suited to this situation.

Finally, a closer look at these base states and in particular their relationships with the respective violent groups, provides the opportunity to identify pressure points and areas of weakness to more precisely direct one’s coercive strategy.\textsuperscript{1065} When designating the targets of a strategy, many potential options emerge, including: military, political, economic, infrastructure, and civilian. Each of these targets imposes a different set of costs on the target, and is intended to raise the costs of non-compliance. However, detailed knowledge of the relationship, and more generally, fissures within the society, can indicate which actions are most likely to lead to a change in behavior, by not only imposing costs, but by potentially altering the relationship and making action more palatable. Conversely, an improper coercive strategy has the potential to more closely align the sentiments and interests of the base state and the group, making coercion even less likely.

Armed with a deep understanding of the domestic costs, one can knowledgeably consider which strategies are most likely to impact the base state’s calculus. In devising a strategy, policymakers should attempt to exploit divisions within the base state, among policymakers and/or the population. One strategy could be aimed at increasing popular pressure to comply

\textsuperscript{1065} For a discussion on pressure points see: Byman and Waxman, The Dynamics of Coercion : American Foreign Policy and the Limits of Military Might.
with the demands of the coercer by targeting particular elements of the population. However, a broad punishment strategy has the potential to backfire, hardening the population against action. One possibility is to aim at the population that does not have a vested interest in the group, and would be unwilling to pay the costs of continued coercion. For example, in the case of Jordan, there is some limited evidence to suggest that when the Palestinians were targeted in raids, these actions hardened their support for the fedayeen, and increased their anger at the Jordanian regime. However, when Jordanian villages in the east bank were targeted, they often ceased harboring the fedayeen. Similarly, in the case of the PKK in Turkey, the KDP villagers who did not support the PKK, often paid the greatest price for coercion. When the safety of the citizens was compromised, there was no longer increased support for the PKK, but rather increased doubts about the KDP’s governance and protection. These sentiments among the KDP villagers generated increased pressure on the KDP to contain the PKK and comply with Turkish demands, in order to diminish collateral damage amongst their supporters. Understanding how popular support for the violent group is configured within a population provides the possibility of more carefully targeting segments of the population who are more likely to pressure the government, rather than rally around the group. Alternatively, if the population greatly supports the group, targeting them may produce blowback against action, ultimately increasing the costs of compliance. Thus, selecting targets, such as government infrastructure sites, which would increase the pressure on the government, while not harming the population greatly, may produce better results.

Furthermore, if the greatest costs of compliance are driven by overcoming the violent group’s capabilities, the state may attempt to influence the balance of power through its targeting. Specifically, the state may include the violent group’s fighters and assets among its
targets in order to reduce the costs of action for the base state. For reasons already mentioned, including the challenge of locating these clandestine groups, successfully implementing this strategy is difficult. Nonetheless, understanding the greatest barriers to action for the base state provides the possibility of more deliberately targeting areas that can affect the underlying relationship. As will be discussed below, the domestic context may in fact preclude coercion, in part because there are no obvious targets for reducing the domestic costs of compliance. In this circumstance, it is essential to consider a broader range of strategies beyond coercion. Carefully considering the targets of a coercive policy, as well as the inherent limits in altering the base-state violent group relationship, is critical to selecting and crafting an effective policy.

**Areas for Further Research**

In exploring the efficacy of coercion in addressing the threat of violent non-state groups, this study has raised additional questions about coercion more broadly and about alternative strategies for eliminating bases of violent groups. In particular, four areas for further research emerged: 1) exploring the coercer's rationale and decision making; 2) examining coercer's credibility in transitive compellence; 3) broadening the project beyond the Middle East; and 4) evaluating the broader range of strategies aimed at the base states.

Further research should explore the foundational question: Why would a state select a transitive compellence strategy? Understanding a state's rationale for selecting this strategy, the tradeoffs considered, and what, if any alternatives were contemplated is essential for obtaining a more complete picture of the utilization of transitive compellence. Although this study suggests a method for determining whether coercion is an apt policy, exploring how this decision was made can illuminate the tradeoffs perceived by states and delve more deeply into the rationale of
the coercer, rather than the coerced state. Consequently, the new research might focus on understanding a coercer's expectations when they embark on this strategy. What metrics do policymakers utilize for evaluating whether the strategy was successful? From the outside, it is often difficult to evaluate what comprises success and how optimistic states are when using this strategy. For example, in response to transitive compellence, particularly in protracted conflicts, do states expect a complete cessation of violence, or even the ejection of the violent group, or do they only hope for a temporary diminution in violence? Do they expect the effects of transitive compellence to last for months or years?1066 Answering these questions is important because it provides a window into the cost-benefit calculation of the coercer. Presumably, in selecting this strategy, policymakers define their expectations for the outcome and evaluate the cost of the coercive action against the probability of the outcome. Understanding the specific expected utility from a coercive action, from the coercer's perspective, is an essential piece of the puzzle.

Second, the role of credibility in instances of transitive compellence should be more closely studied. The coercion literature suggests that it is often difficult to make compellent threats credible. One reason why credible threats are difficult, is that the coercer, as the party trying to change the status quo, generally has the last clear chance to stop the escalatory process before the costs exceed their perceived benefits. The coercer's control over the escalatory process makes the threat of unwanted escalation more difficult to communicate credibly. One

1066 These kinds of questions are not unique to the study of transitive compellence. States often embark on strategies, brute force or coercion, where their expectation may be short of complete success. For example, when the Israelis bombed the Osirak nuclear facility in Iraq, they expected a delay in their program, rather than a complete cessation. While the success of this raid may have exceeded expectations, in some respects, the Israelis pursued this strategy with far less ambitious goals, and were willing to pay the price of their actions even for only a temporary setback in Iraq's nuclear program. Karl P. Mueller, Striking First: Preemptive and Preventive Attack in U.S. National Security Policy, Rand Corporation Monograph Series (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Project Air Force, 2006). p. 216.
hypothesis that emerged from the research is that in instances of transitive compellence, some of these credibility concerns may be mitigated as a result of the trilateral relationship. The nature of the trilateral relationship inherently leads the coercer to suffer costs at the hand of the violent group, even if it abandons the coercion against the base state. Therefore, it is less obvious that the coercer can afford to quit first, since they do not control the escalatory process, as in traditional coercion. This same dynamic makes the “threat that leaves something to chance” more plausible, because neither the coercer, nor the base state, completely controls the strategic interaction. Though the coercion is bilateral, the independent third party has the ability to interfere with the process, imposing costs to both parties along the way. It is precisely this lack of control, on the part of the coercer, that can potentially mitigate some of the credibility concerns raised under traditional coercion. Exploring this hypothesis would be worthwhile both for enhancing our understanding of the coercive dynamics of transitive compellence, but also to explore whether there are larger implications for understanding state credibility more broadly.

Third, it would be beneficial to code a larger universe of cases beyond the Middle East in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the basing phenomenon and the usage of transitive compellence globally. This broader examination of transitive compellence will allow us to establish the parameters of the base state – violent group relationship with greater certainty. Furthermore, the increased variation across both the coercive mechanism utilized, as well as the broader base-state violent group relationship may enable us to establish whether there are particular coercive strategies that appear better suited for obtaining compliance in these cases.

Finally, additional research should assess the efficacy of utilizing other strategies directed at states that base violent non-state groups. Transitive compellence falls on a spectrum of strategies and is but one strategy in the statesman’s broader menu of options. The most extreme
scenario would be to utilize a brute force strategy aimed at the base state, such as the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Other strategies include positive inducements, where a state entices or empowers the base state to act more forcefully against these groups. The U.S. appears to be using this strategy with regard to Pakistan. Finally, a state can cooperate more actively with the base state and facilitate action against the violent group. Particularly in those situations, where transitive compellence does not have a high likelihood of success, it is worthwhile to consider which of the aforementioned alternatives can still effectively alter the status quo within the base state.

Eliminating bases for violent non-state actors continues to be a top priority for the United States and other nations worldwide, and will likely remain a priority for the foreseeable future. This study aimed to unpack the complex base state-violent group relationship and then synthesize that knowledge for future application. Identifying and refining the menu of policies available to compel base states to clean up their backyards and contain these non-state groups will not only improve our theoretical understanding, but will further enhance the policymakers’ toolbox.
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