THE NATIONAL INTEREST VERSUS INDIVIDUAL POLITICAL AMBITION

Democracy, Autocracy, and the Reciprocation of Force and Violence in Militarized Interstate Disputes

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Some time ago, J. David Singer (1980b, xxxvi–xxxvii) observed, "Every national security decision will reflect . . . the pluralistic distribution of power within that society, be it near the autocratic or democratic end of the spectrum. From this it follows that a central and continuing preoccupation of the decisional elite is to remain in office." In so doing, Singer focused on what is arguably a fundamental division within every society. "There are two classes, those with authoritative roles and those without, and these classes define opposing attitudes (i.e., a particular structure of conflict). . . . *This is the main one manifested in societal and collective conflict and political struggle*" (Rummel 1977, 104; emphasis added).

Singer himself never did explore in any great detail the possible implications of his statement regarding the priority that "decisional elites" give to remaining in power. He and many others in the field were much more enamored at the time with "structural" explanations focusing on the impact of various systemic factors on the war-proneness of the entire international system (Deutsch and Singer 1964; Singer, Bremer, and Stuckey 1972). Nevertheless, he and a coauthor were among the first to evaluate what can now be viewed, for reasons we will discuss later, as one of the more important implications of this assumption about the priorities of leaders of states when he analyzed the relationship between regime type and interstate conflict in "The War-Proneness of Democratic Regimes, 1816–1965" (Small and Singer 1976). In this essay, we are going to discuss briefly some recent developments using the as-

sumption that leaders give priority to maintaining themselves in power as a starting point for the analysis of foreign policies and international politics. We will then address issues regarding the impact of regime type on interstate conflict; more specifically we will focus on whether joint democracy, or regime similarity in general, has the greater pacifying impact on interstate relations. The theoretical approach discussed here will lead us to the conclusion that democratic states should be less conflict prone in general in their relationships with each other than undemocratic or autocratic states. We will evaluate this idea with analyses of data on militarized interstate disputes occurring between 1816 and 1992, in which we will focus in particular on the tendency of states in those disputes to reciprocate the use of force and violence. We will conclude with a discussion of the implications of our findings for the debate about the relative importance of the pacifying effects of joint democracy, on the one hand, and the more general political similarity, on the other.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Decades ago, the evolution and consolidation of the bipolar international system encouraged a focus on the impact of system structure on interstate politics (e.g., Kaplan 1957; Rosecrance 1963; Waltz 1967), while realism (Morgenthau 1948) and neorealism (Waltz 1979) have long encouraged the conceptualization of states as unitary rational actors (Keohane 1983). Both of these important theoretical proclivities share a tendency to deemphasize the impact and importance of factors internal to the states whose policies and interactions are being analyzed.

Bueno de Mesquita's (1981) original model of interstate interaction dealt exclusively with the capabilities of states and international factors in its attempt to account for interstate war initiations. However, Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman (1992) compare a realpolitik model of interstate interactions to a domestic variant that differs most importantly on one out of seven basic assumptions. The realpolitik variant is based on an assumption that a state's foreign policy decision makers are "without regard for the wishes and objectives of domestic political constituencies." In contrast, the domestic variant stipulates that the foreign policy decision-making process in every state is "determined by internal political rules, procedures, norms, and considerations and may or may not be attuned to foreign policy considerations" (Bueno de Mesquita and Lalman 1992, 41). A systematic empirical evaluation of both models reveals a preponderance of evidence in favor of the domestic variant.

Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson (1995, 842–43) argue that "political leaders are intent on maintaining themselves in power," and that "our view differs from the realist approach in that the selection of policy options . . . may be seen as endogenous to domestic political concerns rather than just to the international system's structure." Influenced by an earlier version of this argument (i.e., Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1993), Ray (1995, 39) emphasizes the potential relevance of such a basic assumption to the democratic peace proposition.[1] He concludes that "this version of the theoretical base for the democratic peace proposition would assert that leaders in democracies might avoid wars against other democratic states . . . because they feel that fighting such wars might be harmful to their chances of staying in power" (40).

Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson (1996, 2) develop a "domestic theory of international politics" relying in a fundamental way on the assumption that "foreign policy leaders . . . choose actions with an eye to staying in power." It focuses on the impact of different sizes of the "selectorate" (the subset of a state's population that participates in the selection of political leadership) and the winning coalition (the subset of the electorate that controls the minimum amount of resources necessary to maintain the governing coalition in power).[2] Roughly speaking, "democratic" regimes are those based on political systems with large selectorates and large winning coalitions, and "autocratic" regimes are marked by large selectorates and small winning coalitions. Ray (1995) argues that an approach emphasizing the basic assumption that leaders desire to stay in power constitutes a relatively modest modification of realist theory but later (Ray 1999) concludes that moving beyond such axioms as states seek power (Morgenthau 1948) or states seek security (Waltz 1979) toward a model featuring the assumption that political leaders give the highest priority to maintaining themselves in power is potentially a paradigmatic shift of substantial importance. Such an innovation makes it possible to integrate domestic and international "games" (Putnam 1988) played by leaders in autocratic as well as democratic regimes in a theoretically coherent, axiomatically based manner. Of special interest in the context of this essay, Bueno Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith (1999) explain how a model based on the assumption that leaders give priority to keeping themselves in power can account for seven important empirical regularities regarding the relationship between regime type and interstate conflict, in addition to the democratic peace proposition that democratic states do not fight interstate wars against each other.

The extent to which such an approach contrasts with current predominant theoretical competitors is reflected in a recent review of the-

oretical developments in the field of international politics. Legro and Moravcsik (1999, 21) discuss realist, liberal, epistemic, and institutionalist theoretical arguments. They conclude that "nearly all concur . . . that governments generally place a high, perhaps superordinate value on national security, territorial integrity, and political independence." In short, realist as well as many prominent contemporary competitive approaches rely on assumptions such as "states seek power" or "states seek security." An axiomatic basis emphasizing that state leaders are instead primarily interested in their own political fortunes and fates constitutes a distinctive point of departure in the analysis of interstate politics. Bueno de Mesquita et al. (1999, 2003) demonstrate theoretically and provide empirical evidence in support of the idea that even national defeat in war can be *preferred* and *chosen* over pursuit of victory in interstate conflicts as a means to maximize survival in office, given the right domestic political considerations. This is a possibility directly at odds with the view that all regimes place the highest value on national security and territorial integrity.

In short, we will argue, as J. David Singer emphasized over two decades ago, that "a central . . . preoccupation of the decisional elite is to remain in office." We will argue further that it is possible to analyze international politics in a manner that focuses on the division in every society between the rulers and the ruled, and that such an approach has important potential to improve our understanding of international politics. Perhaps most important, it can significantly expand our ability to comprehend the interrelationships between domestic and interstate politics. We will deal most intensively here with a current controversy regarding the relationship between regime type and interstate conflict suggested by our theoretical approach, and in a manner that will generate evidence important to the evaluation of competing arguments on both sides of this controversy. Let us turn now to the specifics of this debate.

JOINT DEMOCRACY, POLITICAL SIMILARITY, AND INTERSTATE CONFLICT

Both Bueno de Mesquita et al. (1999, 802) and Ray (2001) divide states, for purposes of discussion, theoretical analyses, and empirical analyses, into the categories of "democratic" (or large selectorate, large winning coalition) and "autocratic" (or large selectorate, small winning coalition). We understand that sorting states into such dichotomous categories is not logically necessary and may well ultimately be undesirable. States do not "naturally" fall into such simple categories. The process of drawing the line of demarcation between such categories somewhere is

inescapably arbitrary, and assigning states to one side of that line or the other often involves "throwing away" information.

However, theorizing necessarily involves at least pruning information, and for some purposes at this early stage in the process of developing a theoretical approach that interests us, it may be useful to sort states into simple categories. Vasquez (1993), for example, assumes that wars between states relatively equal in military-industrial capabilities are fundamentally different in important ways from wars between states highly unequal in military capabilities, even though it is obvious that pairs of states cannot be sorted into neat, dichotomous categories such as "equal" and "unequal." Similarly, Waltz (1979) categorizes political systems as "hierarchical" and "anarchical," while being fully aware that "two simple categories of anarchy and hierarchy do not seem to accommodate the infinite variety our senses record."

Having sorted states into dichotomous categories of political regimes, Bueno de Mesquita and Ray have also both advocated *directed* dyadic analyses that keep track of "who does what to whom." Such a focus on directed dyads leads logically to the formulation of four basic categories of conflicts between states, namely: conflicts initiated by (1) democratic states against democratic states, (2) autocratic states against democratic states, (3) democratic states against autocratic states, and (4) autocratic states against autocratic states. Ray (2001) points out that categorizing conflicts in this fashion creates the basis for six fundamental hypotheses on the directed dyadic level of analysis about these conflicts: (1) Democratic states are less likely than autocratic states to initiate conflicts against other democratic states; (2) Democratic states are less likely to initiate conflicts against other democratic states than to initiate conflicts against autocratic states; (3) Democratic states are less likely to initiate conflicts against other democratic states than are autocratic states to initiate conflicts against other autocratic states; (4) Democratic states are less likely to initiate conflicts against autocratic states than are autocratic states to initiate conflicts against democratic states; (5) Autocratic states are less likely to initiate conflicts against democratic states than they are to initiate conflicts against other autocratic states, and (6) Democratic states are less likely than autocratic states to initiate conflicts against autocratic states.

One of us has suggested with respect to hypothesis 4 that democratic states are, under rarely achieved ceteris paribus conditions, more likely to initiate interstate wars against autocratic states than vice versa (see Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999, 791; Bueno de Mesquita and Morrow 1999, 61–62). However, when all else is not equal, it is apparent from the selectorate theory that we should expect the propensity of demo-

cratic states to initiate wars against autocratic states to be about equal to the probability that autocratic states will initiate wars against democratic states.

In this essay, we will focus on a variant of hypothesis 3, having to do with the relative propensities for conflict among democratic states, on the one hand, and among autocratic states, on the other. This hypothesis is of particular interest in part because of its vivid contrast with an alternative notion that there is an "autocratic peace" as well as a "democratic peace." Furthermore, in this alternative view, the democratic peace hypothesis is merely a more particular example of the more general and therefore more interesting idea that it is political similarity that has the more important pacifying impact on relationships among states. Malin (1997, 375) for example, argues that "autocratic states can create and enjoy a stable peace, based on shared principles." Similarly, Elman (1997, 497–98) asserts in her concluding review of case studies relevant to issues regarding the democratic peace that "several contributors to this book find that nondemocracies . . . can share a peace based on normative consensus." One prominent critic of research on the democratic peace argues that "on the basis of the empirical evidence alone, it seems to make as much sense to differentiate between autocratic and other dyads as to distinguish between democratic and other pairs," and that "substantial evidence of an autocratic peace across time exists" (Gowa 1999, 107–8). Suzanne Werner (2000, 369) asserts that since "politically similar states are systematically less likely to disagree, we should anticipate that dyads comprised of politically similar states will generally experience fewer disputes." She concludes that for the time period from 1816 to 1985 "the empirical results are consistent with this conjecture." That finding reinforces the notion that states with similar interests or "political affinity" are less likely to become involved in interstate conflicts with each other. Gartzke (1998, 11) claims, for example, that "the argument that joint democracy may lead to similar preferences is theoretically plausible, but the argument is applicable to any type of regime. . . . If similar regime type leads to similar preferences, then we have not a democratic peace' so much as a regime type similarity peace'" (see also Lemke and Reed 1996).

Even many advocates of the democratic peace thesis agree that political similarity is a potentially important pacifying factor. Indeed, in their landmark article, Maoz and Russett (1993) devise their index of joint democracy in such a way that it reflects in important part not only how democratic a pair of states might be, but also how similar the two regimes are to each other.[3] And Oneal and Ray (1997, 768) acknowledge that "our results show, the probability of a dispute is not

only a function of the average level of democracy in a dyad but also the political distance separating the states along the democracy-autocracy continuum."

Carried to its logical extreme, at least, the argument regarding the pacifying impact of political similarity between democracies as well as autocracies has the potential to subsume entirely the hypothesis that democracy has any independent pacifying effect. Joint democracies, according to this notion, are merely a subset of politically similar states (as are joint autocracies), and it is the similarity of regimes within pairs of states, rather than democracy per se, that exerts the important pacifying impact on relationships among states.

JOINT DEMOCRACY VERSUS POLITICAL SIMILARITY: A THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

However, our analysis of the impact of the size of selectorates and winning coalitions on policy decisions by leaders of states intent on remaining in power leads us to conclude that regime similarity is not pacifying. We anticipate that there is not an autocratic peace and that the democratic peace is not primarily a product of shared values. Rather, it is the product of the interaction of specific domestic institutional constraints that shape the incentives of leaders involved in disputes. We sketch the logic behind this conclusion here.[4]

For the sake of brevity, we will discuss the logic of our claim that there is no autocratic peace in terms familiar to analysts as well as critics of research on democratic peace. That is, we will in this argument rely on the terms *democracy* and *autocracy,* and skim over some details regarding the linkage between the size of winning coalitions, selectorate size, and categories of regime types. To make the linkage clear, we note here that while *democracy* and *autocracy* are not defined comprehensively or with precision by the size of winning coalitions or selectorates, these institutional factors are a crucial component distinguishing between regime types in the minds of most analysts and researchers, even if they do not think about these matters in such terms. Leaders in states typically thought of as democracies usually rely on large winning coalitions drawn from large selectorates; indeed, in democratic states the selectorates are virtually the entire adult citizenry of the state. To be sure, the proportion of selectorates included in winning coalitions varies across democracies. In systems where the presidents are directly elected, and in states where voters are presented national lists of candidates for parliament from competing political parties, for instance, the leadership must evoke the support of approximately half of the selectorate to

form a winning coalition. In single-member district, first-past-the-post parliamentary systems, in contrast, a victorious prime minister may need support from only about one-quarter of the selectorate. This is so because roughly 50 percent of the vote in each district suffices to secure victory for a member of parliament, and the prime minister requires the support of only about half of all members of parliament. Therefore, a total of only about 25 percent of all voters are required to provide the prime minister with a majority in parliament. And in a multimember district proportional representation parliamentary system—in which there are typically more than two parties competing for office—the winning coalition can be substantially smaller than 25 percent.

In contrast, rigged election autocracies typically have winning coalitions that consist of 5 percent or less—sometimes much less—of the selectorate. In other words, "modern" autocracies tend to have small winning coalitions and large selectorates.[5] Other aspects of democracy or autocracy, such as the degree of corruption, public goods production, individual wealth, oppression, and so forth, can be shown to be endogenous products of the size of and the ratio of winning coalitions to selectorates (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003).

We assume that every leader wants to keep her position of power, and that every polity produces challengers who would like to depose the incumbent and replace her. Leaders maintain support for the regimes they head by providing a mix of public goods—goods that benefit everyone in the society—and private goods—rewards that go only to members of the winning coalition—with at least as much going to coalition members as the mix of valued goods that can credibly be offered by a political rival. Challengers have a disadvantage in that they cannot guarantee the continued payment of private goods to those who help bring them to power because it is obviously possible, even likely, that when the challenger rises to power, he will shake up his winning coalition. He will, for example, be likely to purge those he learns are less likely to be loyal in the future.

In fact, it turns out that in equilibrium the probability of any member of the selectorate making it into the winning coalition beyond the initial transition period is equal to the ratio of the size of the winning coalition (W) to the size of the selectorate (S). The smaller this ratio (W/S), the greater the loyalty that winning coalition members will have to their leader (beyond personal affinity, usually a minor factor), because if the winning coalition is small, relative to the size of the selectorate, then the probability that political defections will lead to the loss of privileged access to private goods is high. In other words, if winning coalitions in any political system are small relative to the size of the selectorate, the chance

that a defector will be sufficiently fortunate to be included in any succeeding winning coalition is accordingly reduced. In addition, the loyalty of supporters of autocratic leaders is maximized by the fact that members of such smaller winning coalitions receive larger proportions of private goods, these being benefits that are dispensed to each coalition member, since there are fewer members among whom those goods must be shared. In short, supporters of autocratic rulers tend to be more loyal than are the backers of democratic leaders because defection from the relatively small coalitions in support of autocratic leaders is riskier and less promising, and because the support provided to autocratic leaders produces larger individual payoffs to members of the relatively small coalitions that maintain such leaders in power.

In contrast, in democratic systems the probability that defectors will be included in successful, challenging winning coalitions is fairly high, because the number of spots available in such coalitions is relatively high (the *W/S* ratio is relatively large). Members of such large, democratic coalitions tend be only weakly loyal to the incumbent both because coalition members have a high probability of making it into a successor coalition (*W/S*) and because the advantages of coalition membership are relatively small. This is so because the members of large coalitions each receive relatively small amounts of private goods, these goods having to be spread across many coalition members. Indeed, as coalitions get larger, the modest value of private goods to members leads incumbents to shift their emphasis from providing private goods to producing public goods, including national security. These latter goods benefit everyone in society so that they do not confer an advantage on those in the winning coalition. In autocracies, since private goods are shared among smaller groups, and defectors are less likely to become part of a successor coalition, the leaders tend to emphasize the provision of private goods to their cronies rather than public goods, implying a diminution of the attentiveness of autocrats to national security concerns. At the same time, autocratic leaders need to spend less to assure the support of their winning coalitions because the structure of the autocratic systems tends to produce strong loyalty to the incumbent; this means in turn that there will be more resources left over for leaders to expropriate for their own personal use.

Victory in international disputes, especially interstate wars, is a public good. Victory protects the state's territorial integrity and helps ensure national security. Of course, all leaders prefer victory to defeat in disputes, but leaders in different types of political systems have very different incentives for allocating resources to achieve victory. Democratic leaders tend to be deposed or retained primarily in response to their

performance in producing public goods, the type of good on which the absolute size of their winning coalitions, as well as the large size of those coalitions relative to the selectorates in such systems, leads them to focus. Autocratic leaders are retained or deposed, in contrast, primarily on the basis of their provision of private goods that are able to purchase the loyalty of their winning coalitions, which are relatively small both in absolute terms and relative to the size of selectorates.

The structural differences between democratic (or large winning coalition and large selectorate) systems and autocratic (or small winning coalition and large selectorate) systems have direct implications for relationships among states. They lead us, to cite an example most relevant to our concerns here, to expect distinct differences in relationships between democratic systems, on the one hand, and between autocratic regimes, on the other, when they become involved in disputes with each other. Especially when leaders become involved in potentially violent interstate disputes, they must choose between shifting more resources into efforts to win those disputes, and so depleting those resources that are available as private goods that could be distributed to members of the governing coalition, or allocating those resources as private goods to ensure the loyalty of members of the winning coalition, thus depriving those resources from the effort to improve the prospects of victory in the dispute. Bueno de Mesquita et al. (1999, 2001) and Morrow et al. (2001) have shown that this argument is both theoretically valid (or logically implied by a few simple assumptions), as well as supported by empirical evidence. That is, democratic leaders try harder to win interstate disputes than do autocratic leaders.

It has also been shown theoretically (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999) that democratic leaders are willing to use force in interstate disputes only if they believe that they are virtually certain to win those disputes, while autocrats are willing to fight even when their prospects of victory are not so great. The greater the value a leader attaches to being in office, the starker this difference becomes between the risks autocrats and democrats are willing to take by using force. So when officeholding is very valuable to the incumbent—as we assume it always is—then democrats are inclined to negotiate their way out of disputes except when they believe they are nearly certain of victory. Under the same officeholding conditions, autocrats are inclined to fight rather than negotiate under a broader set of circumstances, including conditions under which their prospects of victory are relatively low. This is so theoretically because autocratic leaders are not judged by members of their winning coalition primarily by whether or not they are victorious in interstate disputes. Instead, autocrats are evaluated by their winning

coalitions according to how well they provide private goods. This tendency is dramatically illustrated by the fate of Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq during its last decade or so. Hussein led his state into one military disaster after another. However, he retained the loyalty of his winning coalition because he managed to provide the members of that group with generous allocations of private goods.

Thus, when two democratic regimes confront one another in a dispute, the leaders of each of those regimes must believe the probability that they can be victorious in that dispute is close to 1 in order to make a decision to fight an interstate war. Especially in light of the fact that both democratic regimes in such confrontations will be inclined to try very hard to achieve a victory if they fight, wars between two democracies are unlikely. If one democracy believes that it has an excellent chance of victory (or that its rival does not believe in its own good chances of victory), it may initiate the use of force anticipating that the rival democracy will back down, negotiating a settlement without responding with force. That is, democratic states may in fact opt to initiate the use of force in a dispute with a democratic target. But democratic targets are more likely to capitulate than are autocratic targets simply because they will not use force unless they believe they have an excellent prospect of victory. It is extremely unlikely that both parties to a dispute believe that their own chances of victory are close to a certainty.

Autocratic leaders, in contrast, do not require such excellent prospects of victory in order to retaliate against the use of force with force of their own (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 1999). Autocratic states make relatively attractive targets for disputes because it is understood by their potential rivals that autocratic leaders will not try very hard to win such disputes except under extreme circumstances—such as a world war—in which they recognize that defeat means loss of their political control over the leadership selection process. Striving hard for victory means, for autocratic leaders, sacrificing resources that would otherwise be available to ensure support from their relatively small winning coalitions. The sacrifice of such resources puts the autocrat's political survival at risk. Furthermore, autocratic leaders are relatively willing to use force even when their chances of victory are not exceptional. While they prefer winning to losing, their hold on their office is not put in as much risk by defeat as it is by the failure to allocate sufficient resources to keep members of their winning coalitions happy (Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson 1995; Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2003, chap. 6). Consequently, autocratic leaders are with some regularity inclined to initiate the use of force in disputes, and to respond to such uses of force with force of their own if they are targets in such disputes.

These considerations imply that autocratic states are more likely to initiate disputes against other autocratic states, rather than democratic states, all else being equal (especially the ex ante prospect of victory). Nevertheless, autocratic leaders are also more likely to respond to violent attacks by fighting back than are democracies because they are more risk acceptant in such situations; they do not require as high a probability of victory to respond forcefully to the use of force against them. Consequently, autocratic states should be more likely to fight other autocratic states than democratic states are to fight other democratic states. Democratic states will less frequently engage other democratic states in violent or forceful disputes, and will almost never be wrong in anticipating that targeted democratic states will back down if a democratic initiator does choose to use force against a democratic rival. In other words, initiating democratic states will have calculated correctly, in most cases, that a targeted democracy will back down, since both the democratic initiator as well as the democratic target will realize that the target almost certainly does not have a high enough prospect of victory to choose to retaliate with force. In sum, the use of force, and/or violence and interstate wars, should be significantly less likely between democratic rivals in disputes than between autocratic rivals in disputes. This in turn implies that there is not an autocratic peace, at least not a peace that is equivalent to that which is expected among democratic states.

ANALYZING RELEVANT DATA

In order to evaluate these ideas about the relative peacefulness of relationships among democratic states, on the one hand, and among autocratic states, on the other, we analyze data regarding militarized interstate disputes occurring between 1816 and 1992 as identified by the Correlates of War Project (Jones, Bremer, and Singer 1996). More specifically, we utilize these Correlates of War data as provided by EUGene, a program that generates (as one option) data in directed dyadic form, along with data on several other related and theoretically relevant variables (Bennett and Stam 2000a).[6] The data on which we focus particular attention is in a directed dyadic form generated by Maoz (1999). We also concentrate only on the original protagonists in these disputes; in other words we do not include data on third, fourth, or fifth parties that sometimes join these disputes. In this data set, the "initiator" is that state that first engaged in militarized behavior, that is, at least explicitly threatened the use of force. According to these data, there were 2,222 cases of such dispute initiation in the years from 1816 to 1992.[7]

We are especially interested in two types of information regarding these militarized disputes. One has to do with the level of hostility reached by the states involved in the militarized disputes. In the MID data set, these levels are measured on an ordinal scale ranging from 1 through 5, with 1 corresponding to "no militarized action," 2 to "threat to use force," 3 to "display of force," 4 to "use of force," and 5 to war. Theoretical considerations lead us to be particularly interested in those occasions when decision makers opt at least for a "use of force." On occasion, when decision makers select such a policy option (which in the MID data set corresponds to such actions as blockades, occupation of territory, or limited, tentative military attacks), war is the ultimate result. But at least some times, on such occasions, the target of such "uses of force" may capitulate, and so war is avoided. In short, since decision makers cannot know ex ante when they decide to "use force" whether or not an interstate war will occur, we want to focus on choices to use force whether or not they result in war. Accordingly, in the analyses here, we dichotomize this hostility level variable in the MID data set, making it equal to 1 when the states in question reach *either* 4 or 5 on the hostility level scale, and 0 otherwise.

A crucial aspect of this particular dependent variable, for reasons to be emphasized later, involves its focus on *both* states in the dyad. In other words, our dependent variable equals 1 only if *both* states "use force" during the dispute in question. In some respects, the hypothesis on which we have chosen to focus here, namely, "Once in a dispute with each other, democratic states will be less likely to use force (or go to war) against each other than states that are not democratic," tends to obscure the directed dyadic character of the analyses we will perform.[8] This has the benefit in this case of reducing substantially the importance of identifying which of the states in question actually initiated the dispute or the use of force. We know, as long as both states reached at least level 4 in a given dispute, the regime type of the initiator of the dispute or the use of force, which is what we need to know in order to evaluate our hypothesis. Nevertheless, our analyses take place on the directed dyadic level of analysis, focusing as they do on the behavior of *both* states in the dyad toward *each other,* and on their roles as initiators and targets, with consequences to be discussed.

Our intent in focusing on the initiation *as well as* the reciprocation of force in this manner is to isolate decisions that involve a certain substantial amount of risk for the leaders who make those decisions. However, it is not entirely clear that the "use of force" in the MID data set is ideal for this purpose. The use of force by the disputants upon whom we focus in the years from 1816 to 1992, for example, did not often en-

tail substantial violence in the form of significant numbers of deaths by the military forces involved. The "use of force" was quite common. At least one state escalated to the "use of force" in MID terms in 67 percent of the disputes we analyze. And yet both sides experienced as many as 100 battle deaths in only 2 percent of those disputes. Therefore, in order to analyze a set of disputes in which the decision makers in question made choices with (at least ex post, and perhaps ex ante) risks apparently more substantial than were often involved in decisions to "use force," in the following analyses we also take into account those decisions within disputes leading to at least 100 battle deaths for the initiator and the target. This means that for these analyses, the hypothesis is that democratic states are less likely to initiate and reciprocate violence (i.e., military action leading to at least 100 battle deaths) against each other than are states that are not democratic.

For the purpose of categorizing the states we analyze according to regime type, we utilize the Polity III data set (Jaggers and Gurr 1995) as modified to be more time-specific by McLaughlin et al. (1998). For our analyses here, we take into account each state's autocracy score in Polity IIID, on a scale from 0 to 10 (with 10 corresponding to the highest level of autocracy) and subtract that score from the democracy score for that same state (also on a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 representing "most democratic"). Any state with a resulting score of 6 or higher on this "democracy minus autocracy" index is categorized as "democratic."

Perhaps the first point that ought to be made about our analyses of state behavior within these disputes from 1816 to 1992 involves the inconsistency with which states choose to reciprocate levels of hostility exhibited by their counterparts. Reciprocation in interstate behaviors is quite prevalent in the international system, in general as well as during crises, as Leng (1993, 70–71) demonstrates. Nevertheless, our data show that in response to the first state's hostile action in a militarized interstate dispute, the second state responds with militarized hostile behavior only a little more than 50 percent (51.98 percent, to be exact) of the time. And, as table 1 shows, when the initiator of one of these disputes elects to "use force" against the target, the target responds with the use of force only a little more than 45 percent of the time.

This distribution of values on one of our main dependent variables is fortunate from our theoretical point of view. Our theory does not lead us to hypothesize that democratic states in general will be so much less likely to "use force" in the course of disputes in which they may become engaged. On the contrary, we anticipate that democratic states are *at least* as likely to use force as autocratic states, so long as the perceived risks involved in such actions are low. In other words, we expect

democratic states to "use force" with regularity in situations where it could be anticipated with some confidence that the target of the force is likely to capitulate, or at least not respond in a vigorous, determined fashion. And we also anticipate that democratic targets in these disputes are disproportionately unlikely to respond in such a vigorous, determined fashion. Democratic initiators will be particularly good at seeking out low-risk targets, in other words, and those low-risk targets are quite likely to be democratic states that will make estimates regarding their likelihood of success in these disputes of a type similar to that made by the initiator of the disputes in the first place. Democratic states, then, should be significantly less likely to *reciprocate* when they are faced with dispute initiators that have chosen to use force against them, especially if the initiator is also democratic.

Therefore, it is interesting and reassuring to us to note that there are quite apparent differences in the rate at which democratic targets respond to the use of force by democratic initiators compared to the rate at which autocratic or undemocratic targets respond to autocratic initiators that choose to use force. If we restrict our focus to states that fail to qualify as "democratic" and dichotomize the hostility level variable so that it equals 1 when states reach 4 or 5 on this scale, and set it equal to 0 otherwise, there is a strong relationship between the level of hostility reached by the initiator and that reached by the target. Yule's *Q* is .74, and it is clearly statistically significant. But if we focus instead only on democratic states and do the same simple tabular analysis of the relationship between the level of hostility reached by the initiator and the level reached by the target in response, Yule's *Q* is only .42, and it is not statistically significant.

It is also consistent with our theoretical expectations that when democratic initiators face democratic targets, a militarized dispute is marginally *more* likely to escalate to the use of force than if neither the ini-

TABLE 1. Relationship between the Use of Force by Dispute Initiator and the Use of Force by Dispute Target in Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816–1992

Target responded with use of force?	Initiator did not use force	Initiator used force
No	644 89.44%	818 54.46%
Yes	76 10.56%	684 45.54%

Note: All states, original disputants only.
$\chi^2 = 264.7$; $p < 0.0000$; $N = 2{,}222$.

tiator nor the target is democratic. This pattern is consistent with Paul Senese's (1997) finding that when democratic states face each other in disputes, force is more, rather than less likely to be used. But it is also entirely in line with our expectations that relationships between democratic states will be more "peaceful" than those between autocratic states, in a manner we will discuss later.

We take a somewhat more nuanced look at these data in terms of the logit analysis reported in table 2. Perhaps the first point that ought to be made about this analysis is that it focuses on the behavior of both the initiator and the target involved in the set of disputes occurring from 1816 to 1992. That is, the dichotomous dependent variable in this analysis equals 1 if and only if the state that initiated the dispute uses force, and if the target also uses force. (Which state actually initiated the use of force, as opposed to the dispute in question, and which reciprocated is virtually impossible to tell in most disputes, given the way the data set is constructed. To repeat, fortunately for our purpose of evaluating this particular hypothesis, it does not really matter which state initiated and which state reciprocated the use of force.) To the extent that it pays attention to "who does what to whom" in this way, it is a directed dyadic level analysis. And it also shows that two democracies involved in a dispute with each other are "significantly" less likely to initiate *and* reciprocate the use of force. It also suggests that two autocratic states are significantly *more* likely to engage, in the context of these disputes, in the reciprocal use of force.

The analysis in table 2 involves two binary independent variables. The first, called ONEDEM, is coded as 1 if and only if just one member of a disputing pair was democratic; otherwise it is coded as 0. TWODEM is coded as a 1 if and only if both members of the disputing pair were democratic; otherwise it is coded as 0. The CONSTANT term in the logit analysis, then, by itself assesses whether force is reciprocated

TABLE 2. Relationship between Regime Type of Directed Dyads and the Initiation/Reciprocation of the Use of Force in Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816–1992

Variables	Coefficients	Standard Error	*Z*-Score	*P* > |*Z*|
ONEDEM[a]	−.2773	.0994	−2.79	0.003
TWODEM[b]	−.5365	.2630	−2.04	0.021
Constant	−.6872	.0668	−10.29	0.000
$\chi^2 = 10.47$	P of $\chi^2 < .003$	log likelihood = −1,233.4	Number of dyads = 2,019	

Note: All states, original disputants only.
[a]One democracy present in the directed dyad.
[b]Two democracies present in the directed dyad.

when both parties to the dispute are autocrats (so that ONEDEM and TWODEM both equal 0). To evaluate the likelihood of the use of reciprocated force when both parties to a dispute are democrats, we care about the sum of the coefficients for TWODEM and the CONSTANT. (ONEDEM in this case equals 0, so that its coefficient has no impact on the likelihood of reciprocated force when both parties are democratic.) To evaluate the likelihood of reciprocated force when *at least* one democratic state is involved we must sum the coefficients for ONEDEM, TWODEM, and the CONSTANT. ONEDEM plus the CONSTANT reveals the likelihood of reciprocated force when the disputing dyad includes one democracy and one autocracy (TWODEM, of course, equals 0 in this case). Thus, the analysis in table 2 allows us to evaluate the likelihood of reciprocated violence for any possible mix of disputing pairs.

Table 2 shows that the likelihood of reciprocated violence, though low, is highest when two autocrats are in a dispute with each other. It is lowest when two democrats are in a dispute with each other. Asymmetric disputing dyads (i.e., one democrat and one autocrat) are more likely than two democratic states, but less likely than two autocratic states, to engage in reciprocated violence. The differences in the probabilities across the combinations of regime types are themselves statistically significant. Table 2 contradicts the idea of an autocratic peace, at least when the focus is on reciprocated use of force.

Table 3 reports an analysis that is structured in a way that is different from that in table 2 in a rather subtle manner that nevertheless produces a significant difference in the results. This is a more standard dyadic level analysis, focusing on the simpler question of whether one state, or the other, or both "used force" in the course of the dispute. It pays no attention, in other words, to "who did what to whom." The dichotomous dependent variable equals 1 whether the initiator only, the target only, or both the initiator and the target resorted to the use

TABLE 3. Relationship between Presence of Joint Democracy in a Dyadic Dispute and the Use of Force in That Dispute, 1816–1992

Variables	Coefficients	Standard Error	*Z*-Score	$P > \|Z\|$
ONEDEM[a]	−.1004	.1007	−1.00	0.159
TWODEM[b]	.0217	.2495	0.09	0.466
Constant	.9591	.0704	13.62	0.000
$\chi^2 = 1.08$	P of $\chi^2 < 0.2916$	log likelihood = −1,208.41	Number of dyads = 2,019	

Note: All states, original disputants only.
[a]One democracy present in the dyad.
[b]Two democracies present in the dyad.

of force during the dispute. In this case, switching levels of analysis in this way, even though the transition is quite subtle, produces very different results. Most specifically, while in the directed dyadic level analysis a democratic initiator and a democratic target are shown to be less likely to initiate and retaliate with force, this general, standard dyadic level analysis shows that there is no statistically meaningful relationship between the presence of joint democracies in disputes and the use of force. (A tabular analysis shows that disputes between pairs of democratic states have been slightly more likely to escalate to use force than disputes between mixed or jointly autocratic pairs.)

The probability of force (though not necessarily reciprocated force) being used in a dispute is shown in table 3 to be no different whether the disputing dyad is made up only of autocracies (the CONSTANT alone, which is significantly negative, indicating a low probability of any use of force in a dispute), is made up of an autocracy and a democracy (the CONSTANT + ONEDEM, which is significantly negative and not significantly different from the CONSTANT alone), is made up of two democracies (the CONSTANT + TWODEM, which is significantly negative and not significantly different from the CONSTANT alone), or is made up of at least one democracy (the CONSTANT + ONEDEM + TWODEM, which is significantly negative and not significantly different from the CONSTANT alone). It is reasonable to infer that this analysis is structured in a way that is analogous to that used by Senese (1997) where he reports that disputes involving two democratic states are more likely to escalate to the use of force.[9] Our results produce a positive, though not statistically significant, coefficient for TWODEM. The analysis in table 3 thus exemplifies the dangers, pointed out by J. David Singer (1961b) in one of his most cited works, of attempting to infer the character of relationships on one level of analysis from knowledge about relationships on another. The difference in the results from the two analyses on different levels conforms encouragingly to our theoretically based expectations.

At this point (or even before), what has become a standard operating procedure among quantitatively oriented scholars of international politics would call for the introduction of several control variables (often a rather large number) into the analyses. We feel that the impact of this particular standard procedure is, more often than not, deleterious. As J. David Singer (1980b, xxiv) has pointed out: "It is well known that if we incorporate enough variables in a model, we can get closer and closer to accounting for all of the variance in the outcome. We do so, however, at the cost not only of parsimony and elegance, but, more importantly, the ability to make theoretical sense of the results." In at least some

cases, such a confusing variety of potentially confounding variables, intervening variables, and alternative causes of the outcome variable are added to models that it is difficult, at best, to interpret the results of multivariate analyses.

There certainly is a long list of control variables that might conceivably be added to the analyses we have presented. For example, Hensel and Diehl (1994) report that targets much weaker in military-industrial capabilities than initiators are significantly less likely to respond to military threats or actions by initiators in the course of militarized interstate disputes. A result of such obvious relevance to our concerns here might seem to call for the introduction of military capability ratios into our analyses. However, from our point of view, the ratio of the target's military capabilities to the initiator's military capabilities is endogenous to our model. Democratic initiators, in other words, are more likely to pick targets for force or violence that are unlikely to reciprocate with force or violence; such targets are, according to our theoretical expectations, disproportionately likely to be democratic and/or considerably less powerful. This means that power ratios would be a kind of intervening variable in the process leading from regime type to reciprocated force or violence, which means in turn that controlling for power ratios might in fact eliminate the statistically significant relationship between regime type and reciprocated violence. But it would certainly be misleading to interpret such a result as evidence tending to disconfirm our hypothesis given that such a result is consistent with our theoretically derived expectations regarding selection effects.

For this reason, we are not inclined to proceed at this point with the introduction of what has become recognized as the standard list of control variables in analyses such as this one, because we feel that the results could be more confusing than helpful. We are not arguing, of course, that it is always a mistake to move beyond bivariate analyses (in fact, most of our analyses so far are already multivariate). In recognition of the potential value of multivariate analyses, we will take note of an argument made by Small and Singer (1976, 67) in their analysis of the absence of interstate wars between democratic states. Their view at that time was that "if war is most likely between neighbors, and if bourgeois democracies have rarely been neighbors, this may well explain why they have rarely fought against one another."

Since then, several analysts (e.g., Bremer 1992; Maoz and Russett 1992; Gleditsch 1995) have evaluated this argument by including contiguity as a control variable in analyses of the relationship between regime type and interstate war, and have found repeatedly that that relationship is not in fact eliminated by a control for geographic prox-

imity.[10] Nevertheless, for two reasons we think it is potentially useful to include the geographic distance between the states involved in the militarized disputes we analyze as a control variable in our model. First, our dependent variable is sufficiently different from those in previous analyses that there is some question as to whether a control for geographic proximity might eliminate the relationship of major interest here between regime type and conflict. More important, we want to point out what may be an undervalued role for control variables in multivariate analyses. In general, the motivation for their addition seems to be to subject the relationship of major interest to their potentially confounding power in order to evaluate the validity of the hypothesis of greatest interest. But another reason for adding control variables is that they may allow the relationship of greatest interest to stand out in greater clarity. If there are factors other than the explanatory variable of central concern that also have an impact on the outcome variable, *and* these other factors are unrelated statistically or theoretically to that explanatory variable, then including such control variables in an analysis may relieve the initial explanatory variable of the burden of explaining variance in the outcome variable to which it has no relationship. In such cases, the addition of a control variable may lead the original statistical relationship of interest to be stronger, rather than to disappear as it might if a confounding variable is included in the analysis. So, for both of these reasons we have added the geographic distance, in miles, between the states in the disputes we analyze as a control variable; the results are shown in table 4.

Those results suggest, first, that controlling for geographic proximity does not eliminate the relationship between regime type and reciprocated uses of force; in other words, there is no evidence in table 4 that

TABLE 4. Relationship between Regime Type of Directed Dyads and the Initiation/Reciprocation of the Use of Force in Militarized Interstate Disputes, Controlling for Geographic Distance, 1816–1992

Variables	Coefficients	Standard Error	*Z*-Score	*P* > |*Z*|
ONEDEM[a]	−.1771	.1017	−1.74	0.041
TWODEM[b]	−.5496	.2653	−2.07	0.019
DISTANCE[c]	−.0002	.0000	−7.32	0.000
Constant	−.4753	.0717	−6.63	0.000
$\chi^2 = 74.38$	P of $\chi^2 < .0000$	log likelihood = −1,201.434	Number of dyads = 2,019	

Note: All states, original disputants only.
[a]One democracy present in the directed dyad.
[b]Two democracies present in the directed dyad.
[c]Geographic distance between the disputants, in miles.

the relationship on which we focus, between regime type and conflict, is spurious. On the contrary, the coefficient, the *z*-score, and the corresponding level of significance regarding the relationship between joint democracy (i.e., TWODEM) and reciprocated uses of force are all marginally increased in magnitude. We are not inclined to argue that these increases are substantively significant. They do serve, however, to exemplify the methodological point that introducing control variables into an analysis can emphasize or highlight, as well as diminish, the significance or strength of the relationship of major interest. That example, in turn, reinforces our main methodological point here. Control variables can have a variety of contrasting impacts on relationships between explanatory and outcome variables. They may confound such relationships, exert an intervening impact, or strengthen them. That every control variable can exert such different contrasting impacts, each with very different implications for the relationship of major interest, is just one of the reasons that multivariate analyses with more than a strictly limited number of control variables are extremely difficult to interpret. In fact, in a statement we are happy to endorse here, Christopher Achen (2002, 446), asserts that "a statistical specification with more than three explanatory variables is meaningless."[11]

Even though our results up to this point are suggestive and supportive of the theoretical framework on which this essay is based, we acknowledge that the relationships reported in tables 2 and 4, for example, between the regime type of dyads and the reciprocal use of force are less than striking. As we mentioned earlier, there are convincing indications in the MID data that the "use of force" by states involved in these disputes was not consistently a policy choice fraught with high degrees of risk. As we reported, the use of force in these disputes only rarely resulted in "significant" (i.e., over 100) battle deaths for the participants in the disputes. Therefore, the tendency for democratic disputants to be risk averse, especially in their interrelationships with each other, might well come into play only in a modest manner.

In order to construct what we believe is a superior test of our hypothesis, one focused on disputes in which both sides made apparently more risky policy choices, we concentrate now on those disputes where both disputants experienced at least 100 battle deaths. In other words, the dichotomous dependent variable in this analysis equals 1 if and only if both the initiator and the target in the dispute experienced at least 100 battle deaths. We attempted to conduct a logit analysis with this as the dependent variable, constructed in the same way as those depicted in tables 2 and 4. However, this proved not to be possible.

The reason for the failure to achieve an estimation for this model is

revealed in table 5, where the regime type of the directed dyads analyzed is cross-tabulated with the occurrence of 100 battle deaths for both states in the militarized interstate disputes taking place from 1816 to 1992. That table shows that there were *no* militarized disputes between democratic states leading to as many as 100 battle deaths for both states during that time period. So, when these data are subjected to logit analysis, joint democracy predicts "failure" perfectly, and it is therefore dropped from the analysis. As King (2001, 503) points out, "although it might seem that perfect prediction is one of those problems that political scientists would love to deal with, it wreaks havoc with the logit model."

Admittedly, in part because of the relatively small numbers of disputes between jointly democratic pairs of states, and because of the relatively small numbers of disputes resulting even in as few as 100 battle deaths on both sides in this data set, even the perfect relationship shown in table 5 is not statistically significant according to traditional standards. However, Ray (2001) reports that, in an analysis of interstate war initiations occurring between 1816 and 1994 (with multilateral interstate wars disaggregated to identify war initiations occurring in the context of such wars), democratic states never initiated an interstate war against each other during that time period, while autocratic states initiated interstate wars against each other 70 times. (Furthermore, in this admittedly simple tabular analysis, the difference in the rate of war initiations by democratic states against other democratic states and that for autocratic states against other autocratic states is statistically significant.)[12] In our view, then, there is a substantial amount of evidence supporting the conclusion that democratic states are unlikely to select quite risky policy options, especially in conflicts with each other, while the leaders of autocratic states, especially in their confrontations with each other, exhibit such reluctance in a distinctively less consistent manner. In other words, while the preponderance of evidence provided and

TABLE 5. Relationship between Regime Type and Reciprocated Violence (100 Battle Deaths) in Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816–1992

Both States Experienced at Least 100 Battle Deaths	Both States Undemocratic	Both States Democratic
No	1736	81
	97.7%	100.0%
Yes	41	0
	2.31%	0.00%

Note: All states, original disputants only.
$\chi^2 = 1.91$; $p < .084$; Yule's $Q = 1.00$; $N = 1{,}858$.

discussed here supports the notion of a "democratic peace," most of that evidence tends to undermine the idea that there is anything like an equivalent "autocratic peace."

CONCLUSION

According to most traditional and predominant approaches to the study of foreign policies and international politics, state leaders' primary motive for selecting among policy options has to do with the national interest, the power, or the security of the states in question. We assume instead that policymakers of states, when making foreign policy choices and in their interactions with each other, are motivated primarily by their desire to remain in power. As we noted earlier, J. David Singer long ago took note of the priority national elites give to maintaining themselves in power. Furthermore, he and a coauthor were among the earliest quantitatively oriented analysts of international politics to evaluate the proposition that democratic states have not fought interstate wars against each other (Small and Singer 1976). Singer personally has never chosen to follow up on the implications of the assumption about the priority that state leaders give to remaining in power, or to take very seriously the democratic peace proposition. However, the Correlates of War Project has made a major contribution, in terms of data generation and training a significant number of researchers in systematic empirical methods of analysis, to the development of the stream of research that has focused on the democratic peace proposition and a theoretical framework emphasizing the political ambitions of state leaders.

The focus on the political ambitions of national political elites highlights the impact of domestic political considerations on foreign policy choices and interstate interactions. It also leads us to an increased appreciation of the impact of domestic political structures on international politics. We argue here that there are two aspects of domestic political structures that are of special importance. They are the size of the selectorate, or that portion of the population in a state that participates in the selection of political leaders, and the size of the winning coalition that controls the minimum amount of resources necessary to maintain the incumbent leadership in power. The ratio of the winning coalition's size to the size of the selectorate has particularly important and predictable impacts on policy choices and interactions among states.

In this essay, the impacts of greatest interest are a function of the differences between those states in which both the winning coalition and the selectorate are large (states typically referred to as "democratic"),

and states in which the winning coalition is absolutely small, and also quite small relative to the large selectorate ("autocratic states"). These domestic structural attributes, as discussed here in some detail, lead democratic states to focus on the provision of public goods in their efforts to remain in power, while autocratic leaders, in pursuit of the same goal, concentrate on the provision of private goods to the relatively small number of supporters whose loyalty they need in order to stay in power.

These differences between "democratic" and "autocratic" states have important implications for the attitudes of leaders in these different kinds of states toward interstate conflicts. Public policy failures (such as lost wars) are particularly important to the fate of democratic regimes. This means that leaders in such regimes tend to be relatively conservative or cautious in their policies regarding conflicts. They choose targets for disputes carefully, and they exert high levels of effort in order to avoid losing the conflicts in which they become involved. Autocratic leaders, in contrast, are less likely to suffer disastrous consequences from such public policy failures. They tend to be less judicious in their selection of targets in disputes and more willing to engage in risky disputes, even if they are likely to lose in some of those disputes.

This implies, contrary to some recent theorizing in the field that emphasizes the pacifying impact of political similarity (for both "democratic" and "autocratic" regimes), that democratic states are significantly less likely to get involved in risky or violent disputes with each other than are autocratic states. We evaluate this implication of our theoretical approach to the analyses of foreign policies and international politics by analyzing data on over 2,000 militarized disputes that occurred in the years from 1816 to 1992. We find that, if we simply focus on whether or not the "use of force" occurred in these disputes, in a standard dyadic level analysis, the presence of democracies in disputes had no apparent pacifying effect. However, when we focus instead on whether the use of force by one state in these disputes is reciprocated by the target, the results of this directed dyadic level analysis are distinctly different. In short, the reciprocated use of force by both the initiators and the targets in these disputes is significantly *less* likely if both the initiators and the targets in question are "democratic." These results are even clearer if we focus on a set of policy choices more clearly involving high risks of public policy failure, that is, those disputes in which both the initiator and the target suffered at least 100 battle deaths. We find such a dispute occurred not even once in the whole time period from 1816 to 1992, *if* both of the original belligerents in these disputes were "democratic." When combined with the related evidence that democratic

states, in that same time period, never fought an interstate war with each other, while autocratic states confronted each other in interstate war some 70 times, we feel that the evidence in favor of a "democratic peace" discussed here is rather compelling. In contrast, the idea that relationships among autocratic states are equally peaceful, in a manner suggesting that it is political similarity rather than particular domestic political structures involving large winning coalitions and large selectorates that has the more important and fundamental pacifying impact, is not supported by the empirical evidence based on data regarding militarized interstate disputes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

NOTES

1. "Would it not be more . . . consistent with the fundamental notion that political actors will behave in self-interested ways to assume that political elites wish to attain and stay in office'" (Ray 1995, 39).

2. Detailed definitions of these concepts can be found in Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, and Morrow's *The Logic of Political Survival* (2003).

3. "A dyadic characterization of regime type . . . must reflect two things simultaneously, namely, How democratic or undemocratic are the members of the dyad? and How different or similar in their regime types are the two states?" (Maoz and Russett 1993, 268).

4. The following is a discursive summary with illustrative examples of an argument presented in a more formal, detailed fashion in Bueno de Mesquita et al. (1999).

5. "Traditional" autocracies, such as monarchies, and also military juntas have small selectorates and small winning coalitions.

6. The software can be downloaded from http://www.eugenesoftware.org

7. We did make one change in these data generated by Maoz, as provided by EUGene. In that data set, "democratic" Turkey and "democratic" Cyprus are reported to have fought an interstate war with each other in 1974. This report results from the fact that because of the structure of our computerized procedure for merging the data on regime type with MID data, even in the more time-specific Polity IIID data, Cyprus is categorized as a democracy when the war begins on the basis of its Polity III score as of July 15, 1974. However, before the war began on July 20, there was a definitely antidemocratic coup in Cyprus (see Ray 1995, 120–21). We changed the democracy score for Cyprus to a 0 to reflect the impact of this coup on its regime type.

8. The qualifying phrase "Once in a dispute with each other" is important. We understand that our hypotheses, analyses, and results here are not applicable to democracies, or autocracies, or states *in general.* Since we focus on states in disputes only, as is appropriate given the theoretical argument we set out, selection effects prevent us from drawing conclusions about states in general. See Reed (2000).

9. Paul Senese has confirmed in electronic correspondence on August 2, 2001, that this reasonable inference is also accurate. That is, the disputes he analyzed were categorized as having escalated to the "use of force" so long as one *or* the other, or both of the disputants used force.

10. These analyses "established definitively that the speculation by Small and Singer (1976) regarding the impact of contiguity on the relationship between regime type and conflict proneness was erroneous" (Ray 1998a, 36).

11. We might acknowledge here that Achen (2002, 446) also stipulates that his rule is applicable when "no formal theory structures the investigation." A formal theory does structure this investigation, but that theory does not suggest that additional control variables are in this case necessary or desirable.

12. The threshold utilized for categorizing states as "democratic" in these analyses is the same as that used here, i.e., states with a score of 6 on the Polity IIID Democracy—Autocracy scale are considered to be "democratic."