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To cite this article: Thomas Volgy, Kristin Kanthak, Robert Ingersoll & Derrick Frazier (2010) The G7, International Terrorism and Domestic Politics: Modeling Policy Cohesion in Response to Systemic Disturbance, *International Interactions*, 30:3, 191-210, DOI: [10.1080/03050620490492079](https://doi.org/10.1080/03050620490492079)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03050620490492079>



Published online: 18 Oct 2010.



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THE G7, INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AND DOMESTIC POLITICS: MODELING POLICY COHESION IN RESPONSE TO SYSTEMIC DISTURBANCE

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This work probes the variability in G7 cohesion in response to relatively new disturbances in the international system. Using a domestic politics model, we argue that G7 cohesion weakens in the face of international terrorism in the context of variable domestic consequences to common foreign policy responses to this systemic disturbance. We compare the predictions from our model with predictions stemming from neorealist and liberal/institutionalist explanations. We find that, consistent with the domestic politics explanation, G7 foreign policy cohesion declines as internal terrorism increases.

KEY WORDS: terrorism, G7 cohesion, state strength, domestic political determinants.

The diplomatic jousting leading up to the invasion of Iraq, particularly that which occurred within the normally cohesive G7,¹ demonstrated substantial divisions between the United States and its allies. The G7, an entity some have dubbed the “group hegemon” (e.g., Bailin, 2003; Volgy and Bailin, 2003) in the post Cold War international system, clearly didn’t act like one. While Britain remained a staunch ally of the U.S., and eventually Japan and Italy chose to support (albeit nominally) the war

Received for publication November 1, 2003.

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option, Germany, France, and even Canada resisted American initiatives toward a war-based solution over Iraqi disarmament and regime change. With the exception of Tony Blair's enthusiastic support, the "coalition of the willing" was to be found overwhelming outside of the G7.²

The conflict over Iraq has highlighted once more the importance of policy cohesiveness between G7 members. The purpose of this effort is to explain conditions under which such policy cohesiveness is likely to fluctuate. The divide over Iraq is somewhat atypical; by some measures, the group has displayed a very substantial degree of policy cohesion throughout its existence (e.g., see Volgy, Frazier, and Stewart Ingersoll, 2003). Its organization has become institutionalized, its agenda continuously broadened, and relative to the challenges it faces in a complex international system, it has often spoken with a single voice in dealing with system-wide turbulence and crises.

Nevertheless, the G7 has also demonstrated substantial divisions as well over time. During and after the end of the Cold War, French policy makers have resisted American leadership, in opposition to what they perceived as American hegemony.³ French, German and (even) British policy makers agreed—after the dominant role of the U.S. in the Bosnian conflict—to create an "independent" military capability for the European Union separate from NATO (and U.S. and Turkish) control (e.g., Ginsberg, 2001). American withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocols has been denounced by most G7 states. Even Japan has at times resisted American leadership in the global political economy (Bergsten, 2000). Thus, given these fluctuations, the issue of cohesion within the G7 should be a central concern for an understanding of post-Cold War international politics.

The current effort explores conditions under which G7 foreign policy cohesion is likely to vary. We proceed as follows. First, we discuss international phenomena that likely create challenges to the cohesiveness of the G7. Second, we describe a domestic politics approach to account for leaders' responses to such international threats. We then formalize the domestic policy approach, using a group-based theory of voter mobilization to describe how foreign policy makers consider domestic electoral pressures when making foreign policies. Third, we offer two other contending explanations to account for changes in the policy cohesiveness of G7 states. Last, we provide empirical evidence consistent with predictions stemming from the domestic politics model, and compare the results with predictions from the alternative theoretical perspectives. Our results shed some light on conditions that may hinder or facilitate continued G7 cooperation in response to system-wide issues in international politics.

THE G7 AND THREATS TO THE INTERNATIONAL STATUS QUO

The G7 was formed to respond to potential systemic disturbances in the context of declining strength on the part of both the U.S. and its European allies during the mid-1970s (e.g., Volgy and Bailin, 2003). When acting together, the G7 controls by far the majority of military and economic capabilities in the international system (Volgy and Bailin, 2003, p. 93), sufficient capabilities with which to shape the contours of international politics.⁵ Created as a partnership between states in the economic realm where the U.S. is the strongest but less than predominant, its scope has

gradually extended into the political/military realm (where the U.S. is much stronger than the other actors), as the norms of partnership from the economic realm have been carried over to a variety of non-economic matters.⁶

The G7 was created in the belief that the institutionalization of the group, in the context of a commonality of policy preferences toward the status quo and within a framework of overwhelming strength, would allow the group to respond to systemic disturbances and challenges to the international status quo. Two types of systemic disturbances are interstate wars and crises. These are “typical” disturbances in the sense that much of international politics has been historically focused on these phenomena, and the G7 was constructed to provide a relatively uniform response to economic and political crises. Earlier work has found a substantial and impressive degree of policy cohesion within the G7 (Volgy, Frazier, and Stewart Ingersoll, 2003). We assume that such cohesion exists in part because the states constituting the membership of the G7 are relatively satisfied with the status quo, and express similar policy preferences in response to traditional systemic disturbances. Therefore, we don’t expect that wars and interstate crises will typically impact on the cohesiveness of the group. Instead, we suspect that it is in the realm of relatively new systemic disturbances to the status quo where the cohesiveness of G7 policy preferences is more likely to be tested. Two such disturbances are intrastate conflicts and international terrorism. Both of these disturbances are relatively “new” in international politics, not in terms of their existence but in terms of the scope and growth of their impact on the relations between states.

The growing persistence of domestic conflict and domestic war (defined as “civil” in the Correlates of War Project data set), in terms of sheer volume represent both a growing and numerically a far larger threat to the status quo than interstate wars (Sarkees, Wayman, and Singer, 2003). In terms of frequency alone, these conflicts certainly qualify as a new type of systemic disturbance. In the Nineteenth century, roughly 60 percent of all wars were international in character. In the Twentieth century this percentage was reversed: 61 percent of all wars were intrastate; and these increased to about 70 percent of all conflicts over the last third of the Twentieth century (Sarkees, Wayman and Singer, 2003, p. 61). Nor are intrastate conflicts infrequent. Over the last quarter of the Twentieth century, nearly three such conflicts occurred per year, at a total loss of nearly nine million lives (Sarkees, Wyman and Singer, 2003, p. 65).⁷ Intrastate conflicts, particularly in violent form, tend to contribute substantially to the turbulence in international politics, resulting often in large migration flows that create additional ethnic conflicts (Davenport, Moore, and Poe, 2003; Ben-Yehuda and Mishali-Ram, 2003), militarized interstate disputes, and occasionally interstate wars (Davies, 2002). As such, they should be a major concern for the G7 and its members.

International terrorism rivals intrastate conflicts and other disturbances in terms of its frequency and impact on the status quo. While terrorist activity has ebbed and flowed across the last third of the Twentieth century, the sheer volume of such activity has been enormous. An average of over 400 international terrorist acts annually have been recorded by the U.S. State Department since 1968,⁸ and the one G7 state relative immune to terrorism on its own soil became the site of what is now known everywhere as 9/11. Even before 9/11, as the frequency of terrorism declined in the

1990s compared to earlier periods, the level of violence per attack increased significantly (Muller, 2003, p. 24).

While international terrorism has come to rival, if not surpass interstate and intrastate wars in its potential to disrupt the fabric of international politics, it qualifies as well as a relatively new systemic disturbance compared to crises and interstate wars. While terrorists have acted throughout the history of international politics, the sheer magnitude of recent international terrorist activity—from 1968⁹ onward—represents disturbances relatively new to the international system.

Both of these disturbances pose substantial challenges to the international status quo and to the G7's leadership and maintenance of global relations. As relatively new phenomena, they challenge existing institutional mechanisms within the G7. As dynamics that involve essentially non-state actors, they threaten as well historically embedded norms and rules in the system regarding the primacy of interstate relations. How can we account for the cohesiveness of the G7 under these conditions?

DOMESTIC POLITICS AND FOREIGN POLICY CONGRUENCE

One perspective on international politics and G7 cohesion can be derived from those who view the actions of foreign policy makers through the lens of domestic politics (for a few recent examples, see Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith, 2000; Bueno de Mesquita, 2002; Keohane and Milner, 1996; Risse-Kappen, 1991). From the standpoint of this perspective, *all things are not equal*: while some systemic disturbances may have minimal immediate domestic political consequences, other disturbances with substantial and varying domestic political consequences for members of the group are likely to threaten the policy cohesiveness of the G7. For instance, some intrastate conflicts may have significant domestic political consequences for all members of the G7, but most do not, and particularly not before they spill over into interstate disputes. This is not the case for G7 members that may be entertaining a collective response to international terrorism.

The issue of terrorist activity carries with it at least two kinds of domestic political consequences for G7 members: *selectorate turmoil* and *domestic security risks*. First, terrorism carries the potential of selectorate turmoil by creating increased conflicts within the selectorates and winning coalitions that determine the political fortunes of G7 governments (e.g. see Bueno de Mesquita, Morrow, Siverson, and Smith, 2000). For instance, G7 members vary greatly with respect to the size of Arab and Muslim populations within their selectorates.¹⁰ Those sub-groups may withhold support from their governments in solidarity with groups being targeted as terrorists from the Middle East. Just as difficult from a political perspective would be when such electoral groups clash with others within the domestic political system over Middle East issues. There is substantial variation across the G7 regarding the size of such groups within the selectorate. France, for example has roughly ten percent Arabs within its population, while Japan's is negligible. We don't expect a uniform impact on the G7 through such selectorate turmoil, but that is precisely the point: we would expect that such domestic concerns would lead to differential responses among G7 states concerning commonality of foreign policy positions regarding terrorism.

A second domestic political consideration regarding terrorism involves varied

perceptions regarding domestic security risks: G7 policy cohesion and subsequent policy responses to terrorism run the risk of increasing terrorist activity to such responses. Foreign policy makers experiencing little or no terrorist activity at home may now run the risk of their nationals being targeted at home or abroad and—through their foreign policy decisions—run the risk of alienating the selectorate for having increased national insecurity. Again, we don't expect this domestic political consideration to impact uniformly across all G7 states. Britain, for instance, with a long history of terrorist experience is likely to respond differently to this problem than Japan. American policy makers, in the aftermath of 9/11 are likely to see terrorism in a different light than the French, who have survived the terrorist attacks of the 1980s and 1990s, and may be less likely to want to see another such round on French soil.¹¹ Domestic political considerations regarding security may drive an American president and a French president to precisely opposite policy perspectives in the aftermath of tragedies such as 9/11.

Both selectorate turmoil and increasing security risks are elements of potentially lethal domestic political costs to policy makers in democracies. The terrorism issue carries both of these considerations and is likely to differentially impact the domestic politics of the G7 states, and likely to create less cohesive policy responses than other issues devoid of these political considerations. In the following section we probe the linkage between electoral considerations and foreign policy preferences in response to terrorist threats.

THE MODEL

The primary domestic political mechanism in democracies influencing elected officials should be elections. Yet, the creation of a formal theoretic explanation, focusing on conditions under which voters may punish their leaders through the ballot box, raises one of the most notorious paradoxes in rational choice explanations of political behavior—"the paradox of not voting" (e.g., Riker and Ordeshook, 1968, 1973). If we model voters as expected utility maximizers who are interested in affecting the outcomes of elections, we know that the probability of decisiveness is infinitesimally tiny in most elections, and the act of voting does not provide enough expected utility to offset the costs of doing so. Instead, we approach the paradox of not voting by considering voting as a group effort. This line of research has argued that although it may be irrational for individual voters to cast ballots, doing so as part of a group may, in fact, be rational. In these models, it is assumed that group leaders can use selective incentives to entice members of some group in society to vote for a preferred candidate (Uhlener, 1989). These models have shown that such group activity affects candidates' choices on the level of public good provision (Morton 1987) and on voter turnout in an election (Morton, 1991). Empirical studies of the question provide evidence for the group model of voting (Filer and Kenny, 1980; Filer, Kenny, and Morton, 1993). This approach allows us to answer the question: Why should national leaders in democracies care at all about domestic fallout from their choices in the international arena if all rational voters will abstain on Election Day regardless?

We argue that leaders take into account domestic audiences by considering how

their decisions in the international arena may cause groups of voters to mobilize against them. We assume that group mobilization occurs only *against* political leaders, who cannot expect that their foreign policies will bring otherwise nonvoters to the polls. In other words, when it comes to international issues, voters may be compelled to vote when they blame their leaders for major policy failures, such as wars, but are unlikely to feel the same compulsion to turn out simply because a leader has successfully maintained peace. We assume that there are two sets of voters who are potentially mobilized against the leader. The first set comprises voters who are likely to blame the leader's decision to join with others against terrorism if the country in question becomes the target of a terrorist attack. The second set comprises voters who will vote against the leader out of solidarity with groups commonly perceived to be targets of antiterrorism initiatives. For example, voters who are of Arab descent may be likely to mobilize against their leaders if they deem national policies to unfairly single them out, and/or the region, religion, or country of their ethnic identity.

At first glance, it might seem that domestic security risks would have a greater effect on mobilization than selectorate turmoil. After all, those who are mobilized because of solidarity with groups targeted as terrorists are, by definition, a minority of the selectorate. On the other hand, it is not difficult to imagine that a much larger percentage of the selectorate would be mobilized if they blamed leaders' decisions for a terrorist attack. But mobilization due to solidarity is an expressive benefit, in the terms of Olson (1971), one with utility that mobilized voters collect as soon as they cast their ballots. In other words, mobilization due to solidarity results in turnout with certainty. On the other hand, mobilization due to blame for a terrorist attack occurs only if the attack occurs. It is, in this sense, a probabilistic process.

Therefore, a leader's utility function for cooperating with fellow G7 members is based on the number of voters mobilized due to solidarity and the number of voters mobilized due to terror attack as a function of the probability of such an attack occurring, assuming that leaders are risk-neutral about the probability of attack. We construct the expected utility function for cooperating as follows:

$$U_{in} = -(solidarity | in) - p(attack | in) * (attack)$$

where:

- U_{in} is the utility of cooperating with fellow G7 members
- $(solidarity|in)$ is the number of voters mobilized against the leader given that the leader cooperates with fellow G7 members
- $p(attack|in)$ is the probability of a terrorist attack given that the leader has cooperated with fellow G7 members
- $(attack)$ is the number of voters mobilized against the leader if the leader cooperates with fellow G7 members

Note that the utility function is either 0 or negative, due to the fact that utility is based on mobilization against the leader. Leaders, therefore, prefer less mobilization to more. But it is not the case that the decision to avoid cooperating with the G7 leads to zero negative mobilization; otherwise, it would be true that cooperating with

the G7 is always sub-rational and the model would predict that it would never occur. This is true for two reasons. First, it may be the case that cooperating with the G7 would greatly decrease the probability of a terrorist attack, thus mitigating the expected effect of mobilization due to attack. The second reason is that not coalescing with the G7 may, in fact, increase mobilization against a leader if that leader is perceived as not doing enough to combat international terrorism. Therefore, we construct the utility function for not cooperating with fellow G7 members as follows:

$$U_{out} = -(disapproval | out)$$

where $-(disapproval|out)$ is the number of voters mobilized against a leader because voters feel that failure to join with the G7 indicates that the leader is ineffective against international terrorism. It is unlikely that $(disapproval|out)$ varies a great deal in different countries or time periods, since the number of voters mobilized because of failure to join with the G7 is likely to be small and constant. It is likely that only a few die-hard supporters of the G7 would consider the issue important enough to justify mobilization.

We use these utility functions to derive comparative statics about when we would expect leaders to choose to enter into cooperation with fellow G7 members, and when we would expect them to stay out. For example, leaders will cooperate with fellow G7 members when the following inequality is true:

$$-(solidarity | in) - p(attack | in)*(attack) > -(disapproval | out) \quad (\text{Eq. 3})$$

Because we have assumed that $-(disapproval|out)$ is unlikely to fluctuate greatly, we can concentrate our comparative statics to the left-hand side of the inequality. First, when the number of people likely to mobilize due to solidarity increases, then the likelihood that the utility derived from cooperating with the G7 decreases. The second part of the cooperation utility function is a bit less straightforward. There is unlikely to be much variation across time on the number of people who will be mobilized if they blame similar policy responses in the G7 for a terrorist attack. We can therefore safely assume that the number is constant for each country. On the other hand, the probability of such an attack varies greatly among countries and across time. Therefore, we can expect that increases in the probability of a terrorist attack, given cooperation with the G7, will trigger decreases in the probability of holding similar policy preferences.

Clearly, the model has strong implications for cohesion among G7 countries. If G7 leaders are concerned about domestic politics as a critical consideration affecting foreign policy preferences, then the above model should be able to predict cohesiveness in preferences within the G7, based on differences in domestic political considerations. This is so despite the fact that the model above depicts the behavior of individual country leaders and groups of voters within and individual country since it is capable of outlining variables that will be associated with cohesion with the G7 as a group.

The G7 will fail to be cohesive when countries differ on these variables. In other words, if all countries faced identical probabilities of terror attack and identical num-

bers of groups prepared to mobilize, then we would expect those countries to be highly cohesive, regardless of any changes in the international arena. Further, if countries are different but those differences are easily hidden (for example, countries differ on terror attack mobilization, but the threat of such an attack is infinitesimally tiny), then we can expect cohesion, using the same logic that defines the paradox of not voting. In both cases, all countries would solve the inequality in Equation 3 in exactly the same way. But if countries have very different values for these variables, and changes in the international arena thrust those differences into the spotlight, we would expect to see patterns of less cohesion, as different countries see larger values on different sides of the inequality in Equation 3.

When the number of voters mobilized due to solidarity is great in some countries, and the international issue triggers that solidarity, it is more likely that a large number of G7 leaders will derive more utility from not demonstrating a common position to fight international terrorism. Remembering that those mobilized due to solidarity are by definition members of minority groups in G7 countries, and the size of those groups varies greatly across the G7 countries, it is likely that such variation will create similar variation in electoral consequences, and variation in policy responses to increases in the frequency of international terrorism.

Furthermore, we assume that the number of people mobilized against a leader due to terror attack is fixed for each country, but varies among countries. Therefore, when the probability of attack is high, we would expect G7 defection rates to be high as well. Those leaders whose electorates contain a large number of mobilizers due to terror attack are unlikely to support the same policies as leaders whose electorates contain fewer voters who will blame G7 cohesiveness for an attack. Furthermore, the probability of terror attacks (or at least the leaders' perceived probability) is related to the frequency of such attacks. Given these explanations, then, if the group theory of mobilization is correct in this case, we would expect higher levels of defection among G7 members to be related to the frequency of terrorist attacks.

Taking both of these factors together describes a world in which domestic differences in G7 countries can be either more or less hidden with respect to the policy positions of G7 countries. When probabilities of terror attacks are low, differences in domestic responses to leaders' policy positions are veiled, according to the group theory of voting set out here. But increases in frequencies of international terrorist attacks lay bare these differences in G7 countries, thus leading to different solutions for the inequality in Equation 3, and thus, less cohesiveness in policy positions for the G7 as a group.

ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Note that our domestic politics approach to G7 policy similarity has focused exclusively on the issue of international terrorism, since that phenomenon poses substantial and nonuniform domestic consequences to foreign policy elites. Not all international issues do, however, and the model we propose is silent on the G7's collective policy perspective toward intrastate conflict, an issue we assume to have typically less domestic political salience for most G7 members. Neither have we placed our domestic politics-based predictions against alternative ways on address-

ing international politics and G7 cohesion. We turn to those tasks here.

We will not review the broad range of theoretical debates in the field of international relations; such tasks are better done elsewhere.¹² Instead, we offer two additional ideas—based on alternative approaches to theorizing about international politics—that may help account for fluctuations in the cohesiveness of the G7. First, a realist/neorealist based explanation revolving around the relative strength of the dominant actor in the coalition; second, a liberal/ institutionalist explanation based on the ability and willingness of the group to respond to potential threats to the status quo. It is plausible that these perspectives can challenge the value of the domestic politics explanation we have suggested.

The realist/neorealist contribution toward conflict and cooperation (in which group cohesion would be one aspect of cooperation) comes in many forms (e.g., Schweller and Priess, 1997) with the principle foci on relative power capabilities of major actors in international politics. Much argument exists over how power and relative strength matter. Hegemons, or states with asymmetrically strong capabilities may deter conflict with potential competitors and foster cooperation through leadership (Mastanduno, 1997). Alternatively, sustained periods of predominance can foster coalitions against a dominant nation (Modelska, 1987; Rasler and Thompson, 1994). Relative parity between states may foster much greater competition—all things being equal—among states than asymmetrical power relationships (Lemke and Werner, 1996). Additionally, power transitions between states may be symptomatic of ongoing challenges to the lead nation and the global status quo, or the dynamics involved in such transition may alone motivate (dissatisfied) states to reconsider their roles and the opportunities such transitions create, leading to greater conflict between states (e.g., Doran, 1989; Tammen et al., 2000).

While some of this literature is confusing (employing competing theories and competing operational measures of key concepts) and has at times yielded contradictory results (e.g., DeSoysa, Oneal, and Park, 1997; Mansfeld, 1993), the idea that power and relative strength matter in shaping patterns of conflict and cooperation between major states continues to enjoy currency in the literature. At first glance, it looks to have relevance as well to questions about the cohesion of the G7. It is not farfetched to suggest that since the U.S. is the strongest of the G7 actors, variation in its strength relative to the group could influence the group's cohesiveness. The relationship should be a positive one: as American strength increases, its ability to dominate the terms by which G7 actors view and respond to global circumstances should be enhanced as well. The more other G7 states reach parity with the U.S., the more likely they would question American policy positions. Thus, from this perspective, we would predict that the G7's policy cohesiveness to both intrastate conflicts and international terrorist threats to the status quo will covary with relative American strength: the greater that strength, the more cohesiveness will be demonstrated by the G7 as a group.

An alternative perspective can be derived from the liberal/institutionalist tradition (e.g., Haggard and Simmons, 1987; Hasenclever, Mayer, and Rittberger, 1996; Keohane, 1984; Martin and Simmons, 1999). Most relevant for us is the work of John Ikenberry, whose latest effort on the post-Cold War international system (Ikenberry, 2001) develops an elaborate theory to account for the dynamics driving

the creation and maintenance of global order mechanisms. In Ikenberry's view, institutions of governance are possible because not only do members benefit more from cooperation relative to the cost of participation and the surrendering of some autonomy, but in addition, they gain further when the major power in the system (such as the U.S.), through its willingness to abide as well by institutional rules, also surrenders some of its sovereignty.¹³ Thus, and irrespective of power differences, members can cooperate through major institutional arrangements, and do so to help perpetuate their interests.

The liberal/institutional perspective suggests that given successful, and institutionalized cooperation between G7 members—*all else being equal*—the group's members will likely use existing institutional mechanisms and respond similarly to systemic disturbances and threats to the international status quo. Such similarity in policy responses should mean that the G7's cohesion would likely increase when such threats occur. Intrastate conflicts and international terrorism are two such manifestations of systemic disturbances and this perspective suggests that increases in either or both should increase the policy cohesiveness of the G7. Intrastate conflicts especially have become important systemic disturbances that G7 states have had to concern themselves with since the organization's inception. This is so since in addition to their frequency and lethality, these conflicts tend to lead to other ethnic conflicts as well as militarized interstate disputes, placing them within the institution's focus upon maintaining the status quo, which suggests that increases in intrastate conflicts should increase the policy cohesiveness of the G7.

The predictions stemming from the three perspectives are summarized as follows:

| Perspective | Mechanism | Prediction | |
|--------------------------|---|------------------------|----------------------------|
| | | Intrastate Conflict | International Terrorism |
| Domestic Politics | Variability across G7 states regarding selectorate mobilization and experience with terrorism | na | decreased cohesion |
| Neorealism | Relative strength compelling policy similarity | increased cohesion | increased cohesion |
| Liberal institutionalism | Institutionalization of common perspectives and positions re threats to status quo | increased cohesion | increased cohesion |

THE DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The dependent variable is the foreign policy commonality of G7 members. Measuring such commonalities and tracing changes over time in cohesiveness is a difficult process. It is possible to assess the pronouncements of key foreign policy makers but such a strategy will likely yield ambiguous data and will not produce consistent observations over time and over a broad range of issues. Instead, we opt for a strategy using commonalities in the voting behavior of G7 states across the full range

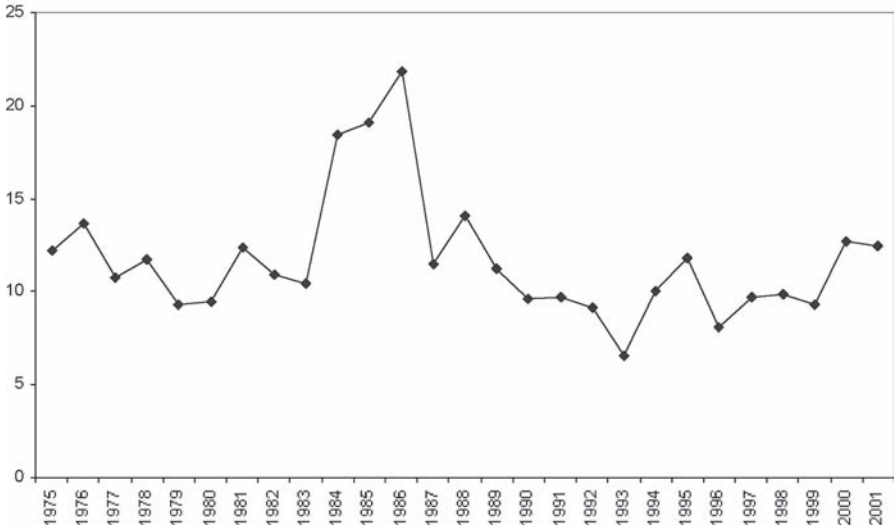


Figure 1. Annual Defection Ratios for G7 States, 1975–2001.

of annual, contested resolutions submitted to voting in the UN General Assembly’s (UNGA) plenary sessions. This strategy yields us annual observations across a substantial span of years.

We are able to use voting behavior as a measure of cohesion because we believe that votes cast on UNGA resolutions reflect for powerful states—generally satisfied with the status quo—typically little more than their policy preferences on issues. While the UNGA may act as a quasi-legislative arena for some members,¹⁴ this is not the case for the strongest of states, and few (if any) incentives exist for strong states—deeply imbedded in regional and international politics—to alter their policy preferences in the UNGA.¹⁵ Thus, the cohesiveness of G7 votes in the UNGA should reflect fairly well their policy preferences. Previous research has subjected this assertion successfully to a rigorous, empirical test of validity (see Volgy, Frazier, and Stewart Ingersoll, 2003).¹⁶

Earlier work examining the cohesion of Third World states in the UNGA used a defection ratio measure to estimate the deviation of individual members from a common group position (Iida, 1988). We use the same defection ratio, and calculate it as:

$$Defect = [defections / (7 * \# \text{ of resolutions})] * 100$$

- Where: Defect = defection ratio
- Defections = number of defections in UN roll call votes
- 7 = number of G-7 members

We produce an annual defection ratio¹⁷ for the group of G7 states from the group’s inception (1975) through 2001. The defection ratio measure is visually displayed in Figure 1.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

| Variable | Mean | Standard Deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|----------|-------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| DEFECT | 11.70 | 3.385 | 6.593 | 21.809 |
| LDR | 11.67 | 3.448 | 6.593 | 21.809 |
| TERROR | 457.2 | 109.2 | 274 | 666 |
| DMCON | 4.615 | 5.115 | 0 | 25 |
| CRISES | 6.481 | 3.896 | 0 | 14 |
| WARS | 1.154 | 0.9672 | 0 | 4 |

THE INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

We use four independent variables with which to predict changing levels of G7 cohesion. We provide a table of descriptive statistics in Table 1.

The first variable is simply the defection ratio lagged (**LDR**), and we include it for both substantive and methodological reasons. Substantively, we wish to assess the extent to which prior levels of cohesion may have an impact on the present level. The existence of such relationships would likely reflect either long-term practices in the UN General Assembly or policy positions of members that are not responsive to changing environmental conditions. Methodologically, this variable allows us as well to assess the influence of possible autocorrelation in the equation.

A second variable assesses the strength of the U.S. vis-à-vis the rest of the G7 in terms of its relative strength.¹⁸ We do so by creating an aggregate measure that is the averaged U.S. share of G7 military spending and GDP (**LUSRS**).¹⁹ While other measures of relative strength are plausible, we use this one since its operational definition has been previously used and validated across two different centuries for “great powers” (e.g., Spiezio, 1990; Volgy and Imwalle, 2000). Since we consider this a structural variable, we lag it one year behind the other variables in the analysis. We anticipate that if the neorealist argument holds with respect to cohesion, we should find a negative relationship between relative U.S. strength and the dependent variable.

We create a third measure based on the frequency of intrastate conflicts annually in the international system (**DMCON**). We use data on domestic conflict collected by Uppsala Conflict Project on armed conflict (Gleditsch et al., 2002).²⁰ Our prediction is that as these conflicts increase, so will the G7’s cohesiveness, as measured by the defection ratio.

The fourth measure is based on annual frequencies of international terrorist acts (**TERROR**). We use worldwide terrorist incidents rather than international terrorist incidents aimed at G7 states. This is done for several reasons: first, while we argue that such incidents have critical domestic political consequences, international terrorism is a global systemic disturbance to which the G7 states presumably want to respond, regardless of whether or not it is happening inside G7 borders. Second, such incidents do not necessarily occur within the targeted country even when aimed at the G7 state, but often on its nationals and symbols outside of the country. Third, there is a demonstrated contagion effect to international terrorism, meaning that G7 states are likely to be concerned even when non-G7 states are targeted.

Table 2
OLS Regression Equations for G7 Defection Ratios
with Selected Independent Variables

| | <i>Equation 1</i> (Predicted Model) | <i>Equation 2</i> (External Disturbance Model) | <i>Equation 2a</i> (Factored-In Model) | <i>Equation 3</i> (Internal/External Disturbance Model) |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| <i>LDR</i> | .109 (.219) | | | |
| TERROR | .019*** (.008) | .022*** (.007) | | .0211*** (.00641) |
| LUSRS | -2.53 (24.06) | .601 (30.586) | | -9.74 (28.5) |
| MDCON | -.212* (.124) | | | -.236** (.115) |
| CRISES | | -.040 (.206) | .201 (.185) | (.187) -.0681 |
| WARS | | -.447 (.651) | -.087 (.755) | |
| Constant | 3.66 (12.1) | 2.02 (15.0) | 10.5*** (1.46) | 7.40 (14.0) |
| R ² | .50 | .40 | .05 | .49 |
| Adjusted R ² | .40 | .28 | .03 | .39 |
| Probability > F | .006 | .029 | Ns | .007 |
| N | 25 | 25 | 26 | 25 |

* p > .1 ** p > .01 *** p > .001 (Standard Errors in Parentheses)

While a number of sources exist for data on interstate terrorism, we use the U.S. State Department’s classification of international terrorism and its database, since it is the most comprehensive and up-to-date source publicly available. Here, the prediction is that as terrorist acts increase, G7 cohesion will decrease.

Overall, we use the following model to predict defections:

$$\text{Defect} = \text{LDR} - \text{LUSRS} - \text{DMCON} + \text{TERROR}$$

FINDINGS

In addition to the base model, we provide three others as well, as noted in Table 2. One—the external disturbance model—is meant to capture a range of interstate challenges to the status quo. The second—the “factored-in” model—represents the cumulative effects of interstate wars and crises on levels of defection. The third—the mixed disturbance model—focuses on both domestic and external disturbances. We provide these alternative models for two reasons. First, as we argued earlier, crises and interstate wars may be already “factored” into the policy cohesiveness of the

group and are unlikely to predict to variation in G7 defection scores. This argument finds support in Equation 2a. Nevertheless, these disturbances may constitute a set of exogenous considerations that may alter policy commonalities between G7 members by nullifying the predicted relationship between policy cohesion, intrastate conflicts, and terrorism as the latter disturbances may be judged subordinate to more typical concerns about crises and wars. Alternatively, if the predicted relationships are robust, then we should be able to find them even in models that include disturbances such as crises and interstate wars. Thus, even though we are testing the utility of the predicted model, our assertions should hold across the alternative models as well. Equations 2 and 3 assess these possibilities.

Table 2 presents the results of the regression analysis. First, as three of the equations illustrate—consistent with our predictions—there is no significant relationship between varying levels of U.S. relational strength and variation in G7 defection scores. While we are loath to dismiss the arguments stemming from the neorealist perspective, here it contributes little empirically to the sources of policy cohesion in the group. These results, of course, do not negate the possible salience of relative state strength for other matters, including the likelihood that a strong state may be able to override policy dissension within the group. However, here we are searching for conditions that will impact on policy congruence, and not capabilities that may be used to counteract policy differences between states.

Second, the results in Equation 1 indicate that lagging the defection ratio adds little of significance to the amount of variation explained. The group's prior level of defection does not predict to its present level of defection. We are not surprised by this result either. UNGA resolutions change substantially from year to year, and G7 responses to these resolutions are primarily a function of policy preferences rather than the type of legislative dynamics (such as caucusing group activity designed to encourage cohesion above and beyond policy preferences) that would likely endure across sessions of the UN. The lack of significance for this variable also indicates that there is little in the way of serial correlation in the dependent variable.²⁴

Third, variation in the frequency of intrastate conflicts does have a minimally significant impact on the group's defection ratio. The relationship between this variable and the defection ratio is negative, as predicted, although barely significant across both equations one (the predicted model) and three (the internal/external disturbance model) at the .06 level. Both equations suggest that increased levels of intrastate conflict are associated with some decreases in the group's defection ratio.

Most important, there is a very strong, negative relationship between the frequency of terrorist activity and G7 cohesiveness, demonstrated both by its significance level and the positive relationship with the defection ratio. The relationship is dramatically evident across Equations 1 through 3. These results are consistent with our prediction using the domestic politics model: we anticipated substantial variability across G7 actors in terms of domestic political costs for addressing international terrorism. Such variation is based on intra-G7 differences across selectorates and winning political coalitions, and in part on differences in experiencing and coping with international terrorism. We would therefore expect substantial policy differences in response to increased international terrorist activity, and that is precisely what is suggested by the data in Table 2.²⁵

Finally, as Equation 2a illustrates, the typical systemic disturbances portrayed by interstate wars and crises appear to have no significant impact on the G7's defection ratio. As we had noted earlier, this is the context in which the G7 was built, and such disturbances appear to act more as constants than variables in accounting for G7 policy cohesion. Furthermore, as Equations 2 and 3 illustrate, variation in neither crises nor interstate wars seem to reduce the salience of intrastate conflicts and terrorist activity in predicting to variation in the G7's defection ratio.

CONCLUSIONS

The G7 has been an important source of crisis management during the latter stages of the Cold War era. Whether or not it continues to have a similar success in the post-Cold War environment is very much a question yet to be answered. To the extent that it can do so will depend on a number of issues. Clearly, the G7 continues to enjoy substantial economic and military capabilities and its predominance in capabilities is not likely to diminish in the near future. It is in the realm of policy preferences where the group will be tested.

Our results suggest that the traditional turbulences (such as interstate crises and wars) tend not to disrupt the fabric of policy cohesion within the group. New types of disturbances, however, provide both opportunities and hazards for continued policy congruence. While intrastate conflicts may increase somewhat the cohesiveness of group policy preferences, international terrorism seems to have a substantially greater, and deleterious effect in reducing group cohesiveness.²⁶

International terrorism is part of a class of new systemic disturbances that pose fundamental concerns for states interested in preserving the status quo. As such, it is a clear candidate for close G7 collaboration in addressing the problem. Yet, as we have argued, it carries with it the seeds of substantial domestic political costs and risks for G7 leaders. Those risks are differentially spread across the seven states, threatening the cohesiveness of the group in responding to these challenges. That a domestic politics approach to group cohesiveness can predict well responses to international terrorism should further increase our attention to the domestic political stimuli that may drive foreign policy makers in responding to critical issues in international politics.

Furthermore, scholars may well want to differentiate between foreign policy issues that carry with them substantial domestic political costs (and benefits) and other issues where foreign policy makers are less constrained and may be less motivated by such domestic dynamics. The very limited findings indicating some increased G7 policy cohesiveness in response to intrastate conflicts underscore this consideration. The not so "benign" neglect on the part of the G7 toward scores of domestic conflicts in sub-Saharan Africa may be the flip side of this equation: reflecting similar concern by members but not the domestic political stimuli needed for action.

Of course, this work is only suggestive of the importance of domestic politics to G7 cohesiveness. While the model we discussed above points in the appropriate direction, and the evidence we've offered predicts the outcome of such domestic political considerations, the empirical evidence we have offered cannot, by itself, reflect the process of domestic political deliberations engaged by foreign policy leaders. These results should be suggestive enough however, to warrant further research

into such political processes.

Finally, these results hint at some policy consequences as well. The G7 is about to change as the group has symbolically shifted to considering Russia a full member. If so, our results imply that the domestic political considerations driving the cohesiveness of the group in responding to stimuli such as international terrorism may make the G8 of tomorrow far less cohesive than today's G7. This is so because the variability of domestic political costs and risks increases substantially with Russia's addition to the group. Its selectorate and its minimum winning coalition (key ingredients to political survival and policies) are substantially different from those of the other seven, creating far more heterogeneity in the group and these differences should tax further their policy similarities.

NOTES

1. Although the Group of Seven (G7) is now actually the G8, we consider Russia's participation in the G8 to be secondary and mostly symbolic in terms of global governance issues. For a similar view, see Zhdannikov, 2000. Thus, we continue to refer to the G7, comprised of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom, and the United States.
2. Even during the first weeks of the Iraqi war, Germany's foreign minister noted that "A world order in which the superpower decides on military strikes based only on its own nation's interest cannot work," while the French foreign minister argued for a new world order based on "a number of regional poles" (*The Economist*, 2003, p. 27).
3. For examples of such French dissension, see Erlanger, 1997, p. A6; Cohen, 1999. For an example of when such conflicts are minimized, see Sciolino, 2002.
4. Support for a common defense capability for the EU gained additional momentum during the Iraqi war as Belgium invited other EU states to a special summit to discuss a fast track approach to a common European defense policy (*The Economist*, 2003a). However, the effort is unlikely to yield much without substantial resource commitments, commitments that are not forthcoming (*The Economist*, 2003a).
5. Such collective strength far exceeds the highest level of power concentration of Britain in the Nineteenth century, or that of the United States after 1945 (Spiezio, 1990; Volgy and Imwalle, 1996).
6. For a recent sampling of noneconomic issues being addressed by the G7, see <http://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/index.htm> (catch 7 May 2003).
7. In the same period, less than 1.3 million lives were lost as a result of interstate wars.
8. See <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/> (catch 7 April 2003). There was of course a sharp reduction (<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/pgtrpt/2002/html/>) in the frequency of terrorism in the aftermath of 9/11, following the attack on al-Qaeda, the Taliban regime, and global efforts to hunt down terrorist resources. The extent to which such reductions are temporary still remain to be seen. For the deterrence effects on terrorism, see Brophy-Baermann and Conybeare, 1994.
9. Both the U.S. State Department and the Rand Corporation have been collecting data on international terrorism starting with the year 1968. Hoffman notes that 1968 represented the start of "modern international terrorism" (2003, p. 46).
10. The selectorate is defined by Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2000) as the people in a country who choose which people will make up the government. In democracies, this is generally considered to be the electorate, or all people who meet certain eligibility requirements for voting.
11. We suspect that there is a substantial interaction as well between the two variables of selectorate turmoil and perception of security risks. In the case of France, the strongest of G7 opponents to American initiatives, there is both a large Arab population in the selectorate and a history of difficulties in battling terrorism on French soil.
12. Finding valuable explanations for the cohesiveness of a group of major states in international politics may not be a good yardstick for such a purpose. See Lamborn, 1997, for the varied uses of competing theoretical perspectives.

13. And does so willingly since the institution it creates is consistent with its interests and reduces the burden of governing without it.
14. While caucusing groups may be driven to increase cohesiveness within the group in the UNGA, there is no G7 caucusing group.
15. There is one reason why they might: if they seek to attain a position of leadership within the Group 77 states. However, this would apply to strong states such as the former Soviet Union and the Peoples Republic of China. The G7 states do not seek to lead those Group 77 states that are fundamentally opposed to the international economic status quo.
16. In a previous effort we required three threshold requirements to be met in order to gauge the validity of our cohesion measure. First, given substantial UNGA concurrence on resolutions, we needed to show that the G7 ratio demonstrates substantially greater cohesion than the Assembly as a whole; second, that the G7 ratio show substantially greater cohesion than an alternative, aggregate of states similar in composition to the G7 with respect to wealth, orientation to the status quo, and involvement in globalization processes; third, our measure would have to demonstrate that during the turmoil of transition from the Cold War to the post-Cold War period, there would be substantially less cohesion in the G7 than either before or after the transition. The measure met all three benchmarks (Volgy, Frazier, and Ingersoll, 2003, p. 57).
17. The defection ratio is the probability that a randomly chosen G7 member will deviate from the modal position. An annual defection ratio of zero, for example, indicates that no G7 member deviated in that year. A defection ratio of .5 on the other hand indicates that the average G7 member deviated from the group in about half the votes taken that year.
18. For concepts and measures of relational strength versus structural strength, see Volgy and Imwalle, 2000; and Volgy and Bailin, 2003.
19. For military expenditures, we use the SIPRI yearbooks; for GDP data we rely on annual estimates from the International Monetary Fund.
20. These data are available at: <http://www.prio.no/cwp/ArmedConflict/>. We are grateful to Nils Petter Gleditsch for helping to secure the data for our purposes. An alternative data set on intrastate conflicts exists through the updated COW project (Sarkees, Wayman, and Singer, 2003); however that data set concludes in 1997 and does not as yet provide publicly the broader range of intrastate conflicts noted by Gleditsch and colleagues.
21. In the 2002 terror attack against a Bali nightclub, the actual targets were Australians, targeted in response to Australia's participation in the "coalition of the willing."
22. For the operational measure used to obtain the data, see <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/10297.pdf>. For the U.S. State Department's data archive, see http://www.state.gov/www/global/terrorism/annual_reports.html.
23. Data on crises is from the International Crisis Behavior Project (<http://www.icbnet.org/>). We are grateful to Jonathan Wilkenfeld for sharing the latest updates. The interstate war data are from the Uppsala project at: <http://www.prio.no/cwp/ArmedConflict/>.
24. We ran a Durbin-Watson test in addition, which yielded a statistic of 2.096; a Durbin-Watson statistic of around 2 generally indicates no serial correlation.
25. Due to the life-span of the G7, our analysis is limited to a maximum N of 26. Thus, for each model, we confine our analysis to no more than four independent variables per equation.
26. We view the last two wars fought by the United States—in Afghanistan and Iraq—as a response to international terrorism (whether for domestic and/or international reasons), and we view the responses of other key actors, including G7 members, to these wars as being in the context of responding to strategies of dealing with terrorism.

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