Windows of Opportunity and Military Escalation:
Bringing Diplomatic Factors Back-In

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Abstract

"Windows of opportunity" has been a core concept in the security studies literature for a long time. It generally refers to a period during which a state has significant advantage over a rival. In turn, this advantage is thought to encourage aggressive behavior by states looking to subdue their opponent. Despite its prominence in scholarly and policy writings, few studies have actually tested the "windows" argument in a systematic way. Rather, it is treated as an article of faith among many scholars that shifts in military capabilities generate windows and these windows trigger aggressive behavior. Military factors, however, are only one—and perhaps not even the most important—component of a window of opportunity. Recent work on the role of third-parties in international disputes suggests that *diplomatic* considerations play an important part in decisions of war. A state would be reluctant to risk war against a rival if doing so might prompt the intervention of third-parties who could influence the war's outcome. Conversely, leaders who anticipate outside support or indifference are more likely to take such risks. Shifts in diplomatic relations, then, may also open and close windows of opportunity. Absent from the literature is any effort to disaggregate and compare these different types of windows—military and diplomatic. Yet, this distinction is an important one. It points in two different and often opposing directions for understanding and predicting aggression. I attempt to fill this gap.

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Chapter 1

Introduction: Statement of Research

"Windows of opportunity" has long been a core concept in the security studies literature. It generally refers to a period during which a state has significant advantage over a rival. In turn, this advantage is thought to encourage aggressive behavior because a state will be tempted to exploit its leverage to subdue an adversary or pursue other goals. Dating back to Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War, the notion that states will exploit windows of opportunity has been central to many schools of thought regarding international politics.[1] For instance, *balance of power* arguments are based on a prediction that non-hegemonic states will seek opportunistic expansion.[2] *Security dilemma* explanations of war also rest on a view that leaders often find themselves in a position when it is "better to fight a war now than later".[3]

Fear that others will exploit "windows of vulnerability"—that is, a window of opportunity from the view of the disadvantaged—has also been a primary concern of American strategists since the early days of the Cold War.[4] In 2002-2003, for

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[1] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), Book 1:23. A vast literature has since been built on this assumption. In addition to the research programs mentioned in this paragraph, *Power Transition*, *Power Preponderance*, *Power Cycle* as well as *Deterrence* theories—to name just a few—all rest on this core principle. For a recent synopsis of the state of dominant theories of war and peace, see Jack S. Levy, "The Causes of War and the Conditions of Peace", *American Review of Political Science* Vol. 1 (June 1998), pp. 139-165.

[2] See Randall L. Schweller, "Unanswered Threats: A Neoclassical Realist Theory of Underbalancing", *International Security* Vol. 29, No. 2 (2004), particularly pp. 161-164. Also, see John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2001), particularly pp. 29-46; Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace (Brief Edition),* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), pp. 181-215; and Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

[3] See Charles L. Glaser, "The Security Dilemma Revisited", *World Politics* Vol. 50, No. 1 (1997), pp. 171-201; John H. Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics,* Vol. 2, No. 2 (January 1950), pp. 157-180; and, Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 30 (January 1978), pp. 167-214.

[4] For a historical look at the role of the windows concept in American strategic thinking, see Robert H. Johnson, "Periods of Peril: The Window of Vulnerability and Other Myths", *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 61, No. 4 (Spring 1983), pp. 950-70. An early example of the preoccupation with potential vulnerabilities is NSC-68, which provided the conceptual framework for America's containment strategy by warning that the Soviet Union would exploit any U.S. weakness. See, "NSC-68: United States Objectives and Programs

example, American leaders justified war with Iraq on the presumption that its suspected nuclear program could provide Saddam Hussein too great an opportunity to harm the United States.[5] And, more recent debates concerning U.S. military deployments reflect differences of opinion over which windows of vulnerability pose the greatest danger to the United States.[6] Some fear that U.S. military preoccupation with Iraq provides opportunity for adversaries such as Iran and North Korea to pursue aggressive policies. Others are more concerned that any withdraw of America's presence in Iraq will invite opportunistic behavior from Iraq's neighbors. While emphasizing different threats, both of these views are built on the same assumption: periods of vulnerability encourage aggression.

It is an article of faith among many analysts that a window of opportunity occurs when there is a shift in the *military* balance between adversaries. For instance, James Madison is thought to have led the United States to war with Britain in 1812 because Napoleon's advances in Europe opened a window of opportunity by tying down British forces.[7] Stephen Van Evera concludes that "Japan felt compelled to attack Russia in 1904 by the daily growth of Russian military power in the Far East."[8] World War I is widely thought to have resulted from an arms race and longer-term power shifts that opened and closed windows of military advantage.[9] Hitler

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for National Security", April 14, 1950, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), Vol. 1, pp. 235-297.

[5] Indeed, it is the fear of an opening window of vulnerability that underlies the so-called "Bush-doctrine" mapped out in George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (2002), available at www.whitehouse.gov. For instance, it states (p. 15): "the United States can no longer solely rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past. The inability to deter a potential attacker, the immediacy of today's threats, and the magnitude of potential harm that could be caused by our adversaries' choice of weapons, do not permit that option."

[6] Many of these problems and tradeoffs are discussed in James A. Baker, III and Lee H. Hamilton (co-chairs), *The Iraq Study Group Report* (2006), available at http://www.usip.org/isg/iraq_study_group_report/report/1206/index.html.

[7] Bradford Perkins, *Prologue to War: England and the United States, 1805-1812* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1961), pp. 405-406.

[8] Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), p. 77.

[9] For a recent review of and effort in testing this argument, see David G. Herrmann, *The Arming of Europe and the Making of the First World War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

invaded Poland in 1939, some argue, because a window of military superiority had opened for Germany—a window he saw as closing in "two or three year's time".[10] Japan subsequently expanded its control over the South Pacific when European forces withdrew from the region to defend against Nazi Germany. Its decision to attack Pearl Harbor is argued to have been based on a calculation that a chance to safeguard its newfound position was coming to an end. Japan's window for action came into focus as America's demands increased but its military capabilities lagged.[11] A. J. P. Taylor actually finds that "every war between Great Powers [from 1848 to 1918] started out as a preventive war" resulting from shifts in military advantage.[12] Indeed, a prominent window theorist recently concluded that this preventive logic is a "ubiquitous" and "potent" motive for war.[13]

Military factors, however, are only one—and perhaps not even the most important—component of a window of opportunity. Recent work on the role of third-parties in international disputes suggests that *diplomatic* considerations heavily influence decisions of war. It was not only that Napoleon tied down British forces. Madison also anticipated Dutch, Russian and other European support in curtailing British sea power.[14] Similarly, it was not that Germany simply saw a military advantage and feared the consequences of loosing it that led to World War I. German leaders did not think Russia would actually intervene on behalf of Serbia. In the unlikely event that it did, the German Kaiser and Chancellor refused to believe that France would assist Russia or that Britain would come to France's aid. By many accounts, these leaders simply did not envision German support for Austria leading

[10] Van Evera, *Causes of War*, pp. 96-97.
[11] Scott D. Sagan, "The Origins of the Pacific War", *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* Vol. 18, No. 4 (Spring 1988) pp. 893-922. Also, see Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War,* pp. 89-94.
[12] A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe: 1848-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 166.
[13] Van Evera, *Causes of War,* p. 76.
[14] Lawrence S. Kaplan, "France and the War of 1812", *Journal of American History* Vol. 57, No. 1 (1970), pp. 36-47.

to anything beyond a localized Balkan conflict.[15] Hitler also did not believe he would face an Anglo-Franco-Soviet coalition. There was early indecisiveness and disunity among the would-be allies. As a result, he saw a diplomatic window for achieving his larger military goals.[16] Conventional arguments suggest that had the alliance stood united against Hitler early, World War II may have been averted. Other examples abound: Turkey is thought to have attacked Russia in 1853 when a window of opportunity opened with sudden (but illusory) support from Britain and France.[17] In 1866, Bismarck attacked Austria believing that he had a fleeting opportunity to do so without outside opposition.[18] Israel struck Egypt in 1956 partly to exploit an opportunity to fight alongside Britain and France.[19] More recently, it is argued that Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in 1990 when the end of the Cold War opened a perceived window of opportunity for him to do so with impunity.[20]

Conspicuously absent from the literature is any effort to disaggregate and compare these different types of windows—military and diplomatic. Yet, this distinction is an important one. It points in two different directions for understanding and predicting aggression. Consequently, the division also lends itself to different policy prescriptions for reducing the conditions that lead to conflict. For instance, research on windows has been dominated by scholars who emphasize the primacy of military force and the distribution of capabilities in shaping international politics. For many of these theorists, talk is cheap and states nonetheless have strong incentives to bluff. As such, diplomatic factors are thought to have at best a marginal

[15] For instance, see Richard Ned Lebow, *Between Peace and War: the Nature of International Crisis* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1981), pp. 119-135.
[16] For instance, see Randall L. Schweller, "Tripolarity and the Second World War", *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 1 (March 1993), pp. 92-95.
[17] Richard Smoke, *War: Controlling Escalation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), p.181. For it being illusory, see Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 54-61.
[18] Van Evera, *Causes of War*, p. 77.
[19] Ibid., p. 78, n. 27.
[20] H. W. Brand, "George Bush and the Guld War of 1991", *Presidential Studies Quarterly* Vol. 34, No. 1 (March 2004), pp. 113-131; and, Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict, 1991: Diplomacy and War in the New World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).

role in matters of national security. The examples above, however, illustrate that ignoring diplomacy could lead scholars to overstate the importance of direct military calculations. One could certainly imagine several instances when war might have been avoided had diplomatic relations been different, despite shifts in military relations. If theoretically misleading, such exaggeration would also be politically dangerous. The fear that military vulnerability emboldens adversaries gives reason for arms build-ups and worst-case, pre-emptive war planning that could lead to unnecessary conflict.[21] At the same time, wrongly placed emphasis on immediate military factors can obscure an important role third-parties have in reducing or (unwittingly) encouraging aggression among rivals.

I attempt to fill this gap in the research. In doing so, I offer three contributions to the existing literature on windows of opportunity. The first is conceptual. Windows of opportunity has been an over-employed but under-scrutinized concept in international relations theory. It has been used by analysts to identify everything from a missile-gap to aggregate power shifts over indeterminate periods of time and has been used to explain almost every modern conflict. Such "stretching" of the windows concept dilutes its explanatory power. If windows mean almost any change in relative advantage, potential or otherwise, then it effectively means nothing.[22] I provide a clearer definition that connects the theoretical propositions of the windows concept with its constitutive elements and identify specific indicators.

In short, window theory is thought to explain both when and why wars occur. Its proponents generally hold that states are more likely to risk war when doing so is calculated to be cheaper now than later. But, a window should not only be thought of

[21] For unnecessary conflict and "real" versus "illusory" incompatibility, see Robert L. Jervis, "Realism, Neoliberalism and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 42-63.
[22] For "concept stretching", see Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review,* Vol. 64, No. 4 (December 1970), pp. 1033-1053.

as a closing opportunity. Windows also open. The "opening" of a window must, in effect, convince leaders that "now" is a better time for offense than previously. Only by identifying what triggers "now rather than earlier" as well as "now rather than later" thinking can window arguments explain when wars occur better than other theories, such as power-transition arguments. Moreover, the causal logic underlying window theory is premised on an assumption that leaders see probable not just possible war in the future. In other words, a window will provide incentives for aggression where leaders foresee consequences once the opportunity is lost. This argues for taking contextual factors seriously. Window logic is going to be at work where relations are defined by intense security competition. Otherwise, windows are unlikely to have any causal attributes *per se* and window explanations would give way to power-maximization arguments. Lastly, window theorists are often ambiguous about the exact nature of an advantage. Not only do they fail to disaggregate military and diplomatic factors but they also suggest that windows can work in two directions: there is an incentive for the state enjoying some leverage to launch an offensive and for the state experiencing vulnerability, as long as there is a chance that its position could get even worse. Such arguments, however, contradict the rational logic underlying window theory and better fit loss-aversion type of arguments. I hold a window of opportunity to be a one-sided advantage. Thus, I identify a window of opportunity as (1) a *rapid* shift in military capabilities or diplomatic relations that (2) provides a perceived *advantage* of one state *over an adversary* but an advantage that (3) is of *limited expected duration*.

The second contribution is theoretical. By taking diplomatic factors seriously, I help explain why windows based on military calculations often go unexploited. In many ways, the logics underlying the two types of windows—military and diplomatic—work in opposition to one another. The more decisive military

calculations are in decisions of war, the less influence diplomatic factors would have on aggressive behavior and vice versa. In fact, a prevalent view of world politics holds the international system to be a "self-help" system because it lacks a centralized means of enforcing agreements and guaranteeing security. No state can count on others in time of need. As a result, the argument goes, states must assume the worst about each other's motives and focus their estimates on military capabilities not intentions. This approach has dominated research on windows of opportunity, which obfuscates the role of third-parties and leads to an exaggerated view of the incentives provided by military advantage.

To be sure, a shift in military capabilities may not open the window many analysts predict if the perceived advantage is offset by fear of international opposition. This may help explain why so many military opportunities go unexploited even when traditional window theory predicts otherwise.[23] At the same time, a state that anticipates third-party support may be tempted to escalate hostilities even if it is militarily weaker than its opponent. Therefore, a sudden rise in international support for one state over another can open a perceived window to pursue aggressive policies with impunity and possible assistance from third-parties. Purposefully incorporating diplomatic considerations into window theory, then, can also help explain aggressive behavior where no clear military advantage exists.

To explore the role of diplomatic factors, I incorporate research on interstate signaling. Signals are the means by which states communicate their preferences, intentions and capabilities but different types of signals are likely to have different types of influence. For instance, "costly signals" are actions that states can take to

[23] For three contemporary examples, see Richard Ned Lebow, "Windows of Opportunity: Do States Jump Through Them?", *International Security* Vol. 9, No. 1 (Summer 1984), pp. 147-186. For a broader study, see Björn Holmberg, *Passing the Open Windows: A Quantitative and Qualitative Approach to Immediate Military Balance and Escalation of Protracted Conflict*, Report No. 47 (Uppsala, Sweden: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 1998).

signal their intentions that would be too costly for a disingenuous state to take because the signals themselves carry risk. This includes actions such as establishing a defensive pact to signal support or mobilizing one's armed forces to signal opposition. As a result, one might assume that costly signals would open diplomatic windows of opportunity because they communicate the highest forms of third-party support or hostility. However, these signals are generally reserved for expressing a nation's core security interests, which exhibit a great deal of stability overtime. This stability defies window logic, according to my definition, because there would be a certain consistency in third-party interests. It is unlikely that a costly signal would communicate a rapid change in advantage for one state over another or that this advantage would be limited in duration. In other words, the clarity and consistency of interests generally conveyed by costly signals mean that both rivals are able to accurately calculate the intentions of influential others and adjust their positions accordingly, thus encouraging prewar bargains.

By contrast, "cheap signals" can lead to miscalculation. These include day-to-day communications that often convey preference but provide little indication of resolve because they carry no direct costs for the sender regardless of the actions the sender may take in the future. Because they entail little risk for the sender, cheap signals are more readily sent and are apt to greater fluctuation. They are more likely to result in the sharp changes that can lead states to conclude that they have a diplomatic window of opportunity—"now" they have support or tacit acceptance from third-parties for aggressive behavior, whereas they did not have this opportunity earlier and they may not have it in the near future. At the same time, the "cheapness" and inconsistency of these signals is unlikely to inspire compromise by a targeted country.

A recent example may help clarify the difference between costly and cheap signals. In December 2006, the chief U.S. spokeswoman on Africa stated that Somalia "is now controlled by al-Qaida cell individuals, East Africa al-Qaida cell individuals."[24] This clearly signaled American opposition to Somalia but it fell short of threatening any specific action or commitment to any policy. A future change in U.S. position toward Somalia would have little cost. Moreover, just weeks prior to associating Somalia's government with its arch enemy, U.S. diplomats circulated a conciliatory UN resolution that called for dialogue with Somali leaders. Yet, seven days after the above statement by an American official, Ethiopia launched an offensive against Somalia. One might conclude that "cheap talk" from the United States provided Ethiopia with a perceived diplomatic window, where it could launch an offensive with little or no third-party opposition and possibly with active U.S. assistance. It did not previously have this "opportunity" and it might have not had it in the near future. That is, Ethiopia acted when it could exploit a diplomatic not a military advantage.

The third contribution is empirical. Despite its prevalence in scholarly and policy writings on international relations, few studies have actually tested the validity of "window" arguments in a systematic way. Generally overlooked is the possibility that the conditions often examined by window theorists may widely exist, including in cases where peace prevails. History is full of examples when leaders opted for restraint over aggression, even though strategic calculations pointed to the benefits of going to war. Indeed, the pervasive nature of many conditions that are thought to open windows has led more than one critic to charge that window theorists simply identify conflicts, and then look to see if they were preceded by a calculated

[24] Quoted in Jonathan S. Landay and Shashank Bengali, "U.S. may feed conflict in Somalia", *Sacramento Bee*, December 24, 2006, pg. A17.

advantage.[25] Finding evidence that leaders perceive offensive incentives prior to launching an offensive, of course, is unsurprising. This has led to a division between scholars: those who see windows of opportunity as a powerful explanation for many modern wars and those who are surprised by its continued use as an explanatory concept. Both groups tend to overstate their case. On the one hand, proponents of window theory exaggerate the tendency of states to attack rivals when there is a strategic opportunity because the scholarly inclination is to explain the causes of specific wars rather than test the effects of windows. On the other, skeptics have prematurely dismissed the importance of window arguments simply because the concept has been ill-defined and used in a *post hoc* manner. I take a different approach.

In chapter 2, I conceptualize windows of opportunity in a way that allows testing generalizable statements about their likely influence on state behavior. In doing so, I develop indicators for identifying windows of opportunity in the empirical record. In chapter 3, I conduct a statistical analysis of their influence on the probability of military escalation between rivals from 1948-1993. I find that windows defined by dramatic shifts in the balance of military capabilities fail to have a statistically significant impact on the probability of military escalation. In fact, events that provide clear shifts in military advantage, such as civil war, can actually decrease the likelihood of military escalation between rivals. This is contrary to widely held assumptions about international politics in general and about windows of opportunity specifically. However, diplomatic factors are found to have a significant impact on the likelihood a country will escalate hostilities against a rival. That is, costly signals from third-parties decrease the likelihood of escalation but sharp

[25] For instance, see Kurt Dassel, "Causing Peace", *International Studies Review* Vol. 2, No. 3 (Autumn 2000), pp. 137-141.

change in cheap signals from outside actors—or, the opening of a diplomatic window of opportunity—increase the likelihood of military escalation.

In chapter 4, I devise a case study research design for testing the influence of different types of windows of opportunity. I argue that the India-Pakistan rivalry provides a strong test case based on three core reasons. One, it represents a prototypical rivalry and exhibits the greatest tendency toward escalatory behavior. Two, the multi-polar regional environment with shifting power relations, fluid alliances and overlapping rivalries suggest leaders should hold little confidence in diplomatic factors and give military calculations primacy in decisions of war according to predominant realist theories. Moreover, the disputes between India and Pakistan do not involve proxy conflicts or evolve out of competing alliances such as some rivalries with their roots in the Cold War. Thus, diplomatic factors should be less influential than military ones. Third, scholars have long argued that shifts in military capabilities help explain when and ultimately why wars have occurred on the subcontinent. But, there is also intrinsic value in the study of the India-Pakistan rivalry, particularly considering the relative paucity of security studies literature that examines the South Asian conflict to test theories of war and peace.

In chapter 5, my findings from the case study largely support those drawn from the statistical analysis. That is, the causal role scholars often attribute to military windows of opportunity to explain when and why violence erupts between India and Pakistan is generally misplaced. Only one military escalation within the studied time period (the 1971 war) can be attributed to a military window of opportunity (Pakistan's civil war). But, even here, I find that diplomatic factors better explain precisely when India invaded Pakistan, why Pakistan reciprocated by launching a counteroffensive, and why India failed to fully capitalize on its military opportunity when the East Pakistani military surrendered—rather than impose a

military solution to the Kashmir dispute or the Pakistan "problem", India announced a unilateral ceasefire. By contrast, costly signals from great powers generally had a stabilizing effect on the rivalry. And, sharp changes in cheap signals opened perceived windows of opportunity that led to escalatory behavior throughout much of the relationship.

Finally, in chapter 6, I conclude with a discussion of the theoretical and policy implications. I argue that "windows of opportunity" based on shifts in the military balance has been an overused concept in international relations scholarship and foreign policy debates. Meanwhile, the role of third parties in opening and closing windows of opportunity has gone virtually unexplored. A better understanding of these factors could help inform policy making on issues ranging from deterrence to conflict mitigation and intervention as well as efforts to avoid one's own window of vulnerability that could encourage the aggressive behavior of a rival. The lack of attention to diplomatic factors into window theory also leaves a great deal of room for future research, which I discuss in closing.

Chapter 2
Windows of Opportunity

> *By and large, so far we have followed (more or less unwittingly) the line of least resistance: broaden the meaning—and thereby the range of application—of the conceptualizations at hand. That is to say, the larger the world, the more we have resorted to conceptual stretching, or conceptual straining, i.e. to vague amorphous, conceptualizations….And the net result of conceptual straining is that our gains in extensional coverage tend to be matched by losses in connotative precision. It appears that we can cover more—in traveling terms—only by saying less, and by saying less in a far more precise manner.*
>
> — Giovanni Sartori[26]

"Windows of opportunity" is routinely used by scholars to explain a wide array of international conflicts. It generally refers to a period during which a state has significant advantage over a rival. In turn, this brief advantage is thought to encourage aggressive behavior. But, a review of the relevant literature provides little clarity in understanding exactly what a window might look like. One influential scholar argues that windows can be distinguished on three dimensions: a fading offensive advantage versus a growing defensive vulnerability, long-term versus short-term changes in capabilities, and shifts in internal versus shifts in external relations (i.e., alliances or power distributions).[27] Rather than providing clarity, however, this illustrates the lack of transparency that has plagued the concept. It is difficult to imagine an interstate relationship that cannot be characterized by at least one of these dimensions. Said otherwise, it is not apparent what scenario would actually falsify the argument that windows encourage aggressive behavior. Few social science concepts suffer more from "conceptual stretching" than windows of opportunity. In a sense, it has become another way of saying that states will be aggressive when they believe it is in their interest. This provides little analytical traction for understanding what conditions actually encourage aggressive behavior or what actions states may take to reduce these conditions.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a more precise definition of windows of opportunity and to develop predictions based on this definition. I first review the relevant literature and arguments that employ window theory to explain when if not

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[26] Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misinformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review,* Vol. 64, No. 4 (December 1970), pp. 1034-35.
[27] Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), pp. 74-75.

why states become aggressive. This survey underscores a wide gap between the common use of the concept and the lack of scrutiny it has received. The scholarly tendency has been to treat attributes of windows in an additive manner so that most any fluctuation in relations is thought to be sufficient for a window of opportunity. I attempt to correct this in the second section of this chapter by presenting several necessary conditions for a window based on its core theoretical proposition. Namely, a window must be restricted to a relatively short time-period and by the larger political context in which it occurs—that is, there must be existing political will for aggression. I also argue that windows should reflect a one-sided offensive incentive rather than the tacit acceptance that shifts generate a two-sided motivation for offense. I then suggest distinguishing windows based on whether a state's advantage stems from a direct bilateral military balance or indirect diplomatic calculations of third-party intentions. In the third section, I identify specific indicators for identifying both military and diplomatic windows of opportunity. Lastly, I develop hypotheses based on the different conceptualizations of windows of opportunity.

2.1 Relevant Literature: Windows are in the Eye of the Scholar

Windows of opportunity and its opposite -- windows of vulnerability -- have been part of the strategic lexicon for decades. One scholar suggests the terms were coined by a Pentagon analyst around 1978 when referring to what was feared as America's emerging nuclear vulnerability.[28] Its underlying connotations, however, have long been part of conventional thinking on the causes of war. For instance, Thucydides ascribed the origins of the Peloponnesian War to Sparta's closing military advantage over Athens.[29] Robert Gilpin and David Herrmann both observe that a similar condition led to World War I. German fear that "windows of opportunity for victorious wars" were closing, Herrmann argues, precipitated World War I. Japan expanded into the South Pacific in the 1930s, it is widely thought, when European forces withdrew from the region to open a window of imperial opportunity. It then attacked Pearl Harbor when seeing a closing chance to forestall America's growing challenge to its newfound position.[30] Power shifts during the Cold War, it was argued,

[28] Robert H. Johnson, "Periods of Peril: The Window of Vulnerability and Other Myths", *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 61, No. 4 (Spring 1983), pp. 950-70.
[29] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), Book 1:23.
[30] Scott D. Sagan, "The Origins of the Pacific War", *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* Vol. 18, No. 4 (Spring 1988) pp. 893-922. Also, see Stephen Van Evera, *Causes of War: Power and the Roots of Conflict* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), pp. 89-94.

presented grave dangers as it could open windows for the Soviet Union to test American dominance and generate anxiety among U.S. leaders who feared a closing opportunity to defeat an imminent threat.[31] Today, many scholars see comparable dangers on the horizon for China and the United States.[32] Jack Snyder summarizes this line of thinking when he concludes:

> States have an incentive to attack their neighbors whenever they anticipate an adverse shift in the balance of power. The literature distinguishes between two situations of this kind: preventive war, which forestalls the creation of new military assets, and preemptive attack, which forestalls the mobilization and deployment of existing forces. Both can be discussed under the common rubric of *window of opportunity*.[33]

The concept is employed a bit differently by other scholars. Perhaps shifting from strategic to tactical thinking, Van Evera uses the windows metaphor when he describes the spiral of hostilities and arms racing prior to World War I:

> Germany and Austria pursued bellicose policies in 1914 partly to shut the looming *"windows"* of vulnerability which they envisioned lying ahead, and partly to exploit the brief *window of opportunity* which they thought the summer crisis opened.[34]

The assumption that windows occur as a result of arms racing was a common view throughout the Cold War, when American strategists were preoccupied with concern over a window of vulnerability.[35] The different alarms sounded by analysts and policy-makers included a "bomber gap", "missile gap", "ABM gap" and a "conventional forces gap". Similar concerns are heard in current debates. For

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[31] Robert Gilpin, *War & Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).
[32] For a recent discussion of this debate, see Alistair Iain Johnston, "Is China a Status Quo Power?", *International Security* Vol. 27, No. 4 (2003), p. 5.
[33] Jack L. Snyder, "Perceptions of the Security Dilemma in 1914", in Robert Jervis, Richard Ned Lebow and Janis Gross Stein (eds.), *Psychology and Deterrence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 160, emphasis added.
[34] Stephen Van Evera, "The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War", *International Security* Vol. 9, No. 1 (Summer 1984), p. 79, emphasis added.
[35] An early example of the preoccupation with potential vulnerabilities is NSC-68, which provided the conceptual framework for America's containment strategy by warning that the Soviet Union would exploit any U.S. weakness. See, "NSC-68: United States Objectives and Programs for National Security", April 14, 1950, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1950* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977), Vol. 1, pp. 235-297.

instance, commenting on U.S. efforts to combat weapons of mass destruction, two well know scholars write:

> A key question then is whether a *window of opportunity* might exist for a rogue country intent on smuggling WMD into the United States--a period when conflict appears likely but before the United States would take measures to prevent suspicious shipments out of the rogue state or into the United States. [With regard to missile defenses, they argue,] China might see NMD as creating a *window* during which it still had the capability to prevent Taiwan's drift toward independence, and Chinese incentives would be increased by NMD's signal of malign U.S. intentions.[36]

This line of thinking played a significant role in America's war with Iraq, as U.S. leaders justified the war on the presumption that America's window for action was closing and Hussein's was opening as a result of his nuclear weapons program.

Still others have used window theory in another way. Rather than focusing on long-term power shifts or short-term capability changes, some see the potential for developments in one country to invite *unprovoked* outsiders. For instance, Stephen Walt emphasizes internal turmoil.

> [R]evolutions [he argues] usually exert dramatic effects on a state's overall capabilities, especially its ability to fight. Even if the revolutionary state is not regarded as dangerous, foreign states may still be tempted to intervene to improve their own positions or to prevent other powers from doing the same thing. As neorealism suggests, therefore, revolutions foster conflict by creating seemingly inviting *windows of opportunity*.[37]

The notion that a period of internal instability would encourage outside aggression has been common in many policy circles as well. The U.S. Marshall Plan is widely thought to have been a response to fear that social unrest in post-war Europe would have provided too great an opportunity for Soviet expansion. Similarly, many

[36] Charles L. Glaser and Steven Fetter, "National Missile Defense and the Future of U.S. Nuclear Weapons Policy", *International Security* Vol. 26, No. 1 (2001), pp. 56 and 65, emphasis added.
[37] Walt, *Revolution and War*, p. 5, emphasis added.

analysts have warned that internal turmoil in (a pacifist, status quo) South Korea would open a window for North Korean aggression.[38]

Lastly, external, diplomatic factors are often intertwined in discussions of windows of opportunity. For instance, Richard Smoke and A. J. P Taylor both attribute Turkey's attack on a much stronger Russia in 1853 in part to the Sultan's illusory confidence in a window of British and French support.[39] Van Evera argues that "In 1866 Bismarck was *drawn* to war against Austria by the unfinished state of Austrian military reforms and by a fleeting opportunity to attack Austria without opposition from other powers."[40] Walt similarly points out that Iraq launched an invasion against Iran when the Iranian revolution generated regional insecurity and fed a perception that it was relatively weak but Iran had also lost its great power friend, the United States, and was diplomatically isolated.[41] Hussein had a window of unlikely if tacit support from the Soviet Union, United States and regional others to attack Iran. He is also thought to have invaded Kuwait when the Cold War ended, which opened a perceived window of opportunity to do so with impunity.[42] Some scholars discuss these types of windows in terms of shifts in global power and alliances. Indeed, built into general discussions about balancing behavior is an assumption that unbalanced states will seek expansion. As George Liska pointed out decades ago, "opportunistic alignments" may occur when a state believes that balance of power efforts will fail.[43]

This brief sampling leads to two somewhat contradicting observations: there is widespread reliance on the windows concept and there is little consensus on what a window looks like. It is treated as though it carries causal weight by providing strong incentives for aggression but is left vague enough to encompass any change in interstate relations from global power distributions to specific technological

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[38] For a critique of this view, see David C. Kang, "Rethinking North Korea", *Asian Survey* Vol. 35, No. 3 (March 1995), pp. 253-267.
[39] Richard Smoke, *War: Controlling Escalation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977), p.181. For British and French support being illusory, see A. J. P. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe: 1848-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 56-61.
[40] Van Evera, *Causes of War*, p. 77, emphasis added to highlight the causality attributed to Austria's window of vulnerability.
[41] Walt, *Revolution and War*, pp. 223-251.
[42] H. W. Brand, "George Bush and the Guld War of 1991", *Presidential Studies Quarterly* Vol. 34, No. 1 (March 2004), pp. 113-131; and, Lawrence Freedman and Efraim Karsh, *The Gulf Conflict, 1991: Diplomacy and War in the New World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).
[43] George Liska, *Nations in Alliance: The Limits of Interdependence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1962), pp. 27, 42-43, 55-56.

developments. The disparity between its common usage and lack of scrutiny similarly led Gary Goertz and Jack Levy to recently charge:

> "Without a doubt the image and metaphor of a window of opportunity plays a key role in explanations of World War I [among other conflicts]….In spite of the popularity of the window metaphor we have found little in the way of a rigorous analysis of what this means in terms of causal explanations."[44]

Part of the problem results from what Sartori called "conceptual stretching" in the quotation that opens this chapter. Indeed, one might reasonably conclude from the literature that windows are in the eye of the scholar. For instance, according to the above survey, an attack by a dominant state over any period of decline against any other state would support the windows argument. An attack by a relatively weak actor against any other state would also confirm window theory, if doing so might better its security against a future opponent. Similarly, any defenses a state may erect as well as any vulnerability it may experience seem to open windows, while military advancements trigger "use it or lose it" thinking.

Figure 2.1 diagrams the elements of windows based on the above sampling, which loosely fit Van Evera's three dimensions—fading offensive advantage versus a growing defensive vulnerability, long-term versus short-term changes in capabilities, and shifts in internal versus shifts in external relations. One can quickly see that according to this rubric virtually any fluctuation in interstate relations is sufficient (labeled "or" in Figure 2.1) for opening a window of opportunity as long as there is not perfect balance among states. I do not list specific indicators here, because the possibilities are virtually endless. In effect, anything that can influence a state's relative advantage could lead to a window of opportunity according to this approach. Indeed, in his brief list of factors that may open windows, Van Evera mentions developments ranging from economic growth rates to wars to poor intelligence to changes in mobilization practices.[45] Meanwhile, figure 2.1 shows that there are no necessary conditions ("and") for windows of opportunity. This ambiguous and overly-broad use of windows detracts from its explanatory power because it is unfalsifiable: if windows mean almost any change in interstate relations, potential or otherwise,

[44] Gary Goertz and Jack S. Levy, "Causal explanation, necessary conditions, and case studies", in Gary Goertz and Jack S. Levy (eds.), *Causal Explanation, Necessary Conditions, and Case Studies: World War I and the End of the Cold War* (unpublished manuscript), p. 31. This chapter is available for download at http://www.compasss.org/goertz_levy2004.pdf (accessed January 2007).
[45] Van Evera, *Causes of War*, p. 104.

then the concept effectively means nothing. The intention of the following pages is to narrow the definition of windows to give it greater connotative precision.

(Insert Figure 2.1, attached at the end of chapter)

2.2 Rethinking Windows: Bringing Diplomatic Factors Back-In

Theorists tend to treat windows of opportunity in an overly-broad manner that draws into question its utility as a social science concept. Below, I argue for a more restrictive view by adhering to certain necessary conditions for identifying windows. In a recent book on *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide*, Gary Goertz and his colleagues identify a three-level model for developing testable concepts.[46] The basic or first level refers to the core theoretical propositions. The secondary level gives the constitutive dimensions. And, the third is the operational level or the substantive content of each of the dimensions in the secondary level (i.e., identification of indicators that permit categorization of data into that which fall under the concept and that which do not). I use this framework to help think about windows of opportunity and structure discussion that can lead to predictions about the influence of windows on state behavior.

2.2a Level One: Core Theoretical Proposition

The main theoretical proposition of the windows concept is well-recognized and straight forward. The first sentence of Van Evera's chapter on windows of opportunity in the *Causes of War* states it clearly: "war is more likely when states expect better results from a war begun now than a war begun later."[47] As a result, a window creates a strong incentive for war and war-risking belligerence precisely because one state will have a clear but temporary advantage over another. The vulnerable state may have some incentive for compromise because it looks to avoid war under unfavorable circumstances. However, these incentives are not offsetting. A window is thought to impede peaceful resolution because cooperation requires faith in agreements. An advantaged state is likely to be suspicious that any

[46] Gary Goertz, *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).
[47] Van Evera, *Causes of War*, p. 73.

concession made by a vulnerable state would be disingenuous and doubt it will uphold its commitments once it is no longer vulnerable. At the same time, the vulnerable state could not be certain that any concession it makes will not result in even further demands by the advantaged state. This cooperation problem is familiar to many theories of international politics but it is particularly acute during windows because of the brevity of the advantage. The stronger state may see its time for action as "now or never", while the vulnerable state may vigorously resist compromising its future security precisely because its disadvantage is thought to be temporary.

In his classic work on agenda setting, John Kingdon discusses the original use of the window of opportunity metaphor and what it means in a policy framework:

> In space shots, the window presents the opportunity for a launch. The target planets are in proper alignment, but will not stay that way for long. Thus the launch must take place when the window is open, lest the opportunity slip away. Once lost, the opportunity may recur, but in the interim, astronauts and space engineers must wait until the window reopens….Similarly, windows open in policy systems. These policy windows, the opportunities for action on given initiatives, present themselves and stay open for only short periods. If the participants cannot or do not take advantage of these opportunities, they must bide their time until the next opportunity comes along.[48]

In the realm of international security, the time between opportunities is thought to be dangerous. Once a window closes, there may be serious consequences for having not exploited the advantage. As a result, a window is also thought to have causal characteristics. A more powerful state may not see a pressing threat to its survival but nonetheless conclude that fighting now will be easier than fighting later. While a weaker state may have slim chances of winning a war against a more powerful rival, the odds of prevailing or at least gaining ground are certainly higher during a window of opportunity than when its larger opponent regains footing. If the weaker state believes it faces an impending threat from the larger power, it will have strong incentives for risking war during a brief advantage than when the advantage is gone.

[48] John W. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1984), p. 174.

However, there are several assumptions embedded within this theoretical proposition that I address in the following section.

2.2b Level Two: Constitutive Dimensions

I have argued that Van Evera's three dimensions of a window of opportunity—fading offensive advantage versus a growing defensive vulnerability, long-term versus short-term changes in capabilities, and shifts in internal versus shifts in external relations—provide little guidance for understanding what a window is because it encompasses most every relationship. Windows should refer to a more specific condition. For instance, Richard Ned Lebow provides a firmer starting point for narrowing the windows concept. He defines a window as "a period during which a state possesses a significant military advantage over a rival".[49] This identifies three potential areas for constraining the applicability of windows. A window would obviously reflect a significant advantage but should also be restricted by a temporal component and by the context of the advantage in direct relation to a rival. I focus on these three components below to offer a tighter definition of windows of opportunity that facilitates the development of indicators. Namely, I argue that a window occurs when there is (1) a *rapid* shift in military capabilities or diplomatic relations that (2) provides a perceived *advantage* of one state *over an adversary* but an advantage that (3) is of *limited expected duration*.

Short Time-Period

First, I attempt to address the temporal component of windows. Analysts have long identified aggregate power shifts as one component of a window of opportunity. Some scholars hold declining states as having strong incentives to launch an offensive against a rising challenger for fear of the future. States are likely to worry that, if they allow a rising state to grow, the rising state may attack them later with superior force or coerce them into making damaging concessions. Even if the rising state is thought to be peaceful, the future intentions of that state are always unknown—the minds and goals of leaders may change with ascendancy. Meanwhile, others have argued that a rising state will begin to challenge its declining foe where there are opposing interests. It is increasingly likely to initiate hostilities as it sees more favorable chances of winning a potential war by virtue of its growing

[49] Lebow, "Windows of Opportunity: Do States Jump Through Them?", p. 147.

capabilities. It may even launch a preemptive war if it believes the declining state is planning an attack of its own. These tensions may help set the stage for conflict. However, rise and decline are pervasive phenomena in international politics, which poses a considerable problem for associating long-term shifts with "windows".

One example helps illustrate this problem. Lebow finds that between 1891 and 1914 Germany had a significant but declining strategic advantage over its adversaries (France and Russia). Its military and political leaders shared the premonition of European war by 1905. Recognizing Germany's declining position, many of its leaders recommended that war should come sooner rather than later. Yet, German leaders consciously spurned war during three separate and more favorable occasions prior to 1914. When it did go to war, Lebow argues, neither the Kaiser nor the Chancellor envisioned German support for Austria leading to anything more than a localized Balkan conflict.[50] This poses an interesting question from the perspective of windows of opportunity arguments: if windows are defined by a clear advantage, why would a state wait so long to fully exploit that advantage? Treating windows of opportunity as long-term power shifts, however, dilutes its explanatory power by ignoring the importance of a temporal factor: a window opens and a window must close in a relatively short period for the concept to be useful and meaningful. Would war at any point within a 20 year power transition affirm window arguments? Aren't windows intended to at least explain when if not why states risk war? Björn Holmberg similarly questions a tendency to conflate windows with power transitions when he argues that a *sudden* shift in military capabilities is very likely to have different effects on the likelihood of war than are *long-term* power shifts.[51] For instance, long-term trends may provide conditions for intense competition but they offer little in understanding when and why states are more likely to risk war at one time and not another—this is, or should be, the province of window theory.

Taking seriously the temporal component of a window suggests that there is a break from the status quo (the window opens). The "opening" of a window must, in effect, convince leaders that "now" is a better time for offense than previously. There must be a catalyst that triggers what Lebow calls a *gestalt* shift—a fundamental

[50] Lebow, "Windows of Opportunity: Do States Jump Through Them?"
[51] Holmberg, *Passing the Open Windows*, pp. 24-25.

change in how leaders perceive the outside world.[52] This argues for focusing on rapid developments that provide one state with a significant, clear advantage rather than slow trends in aggregate power distributions that have doubtful impact on day-to-day changes in perceived capabilities. As Robert Jervis's influential study argued: it usually takes indisputable, overwhelming and rapid influx of contradictory information to change one's existing belief about the state of the world.[53] Slower and inconclusive change is likely to be incorporated into one's existing belief system and not result in a "Eureka!" type moment that windows imply.

For this same reason, modest shifts in technological advances would not necessarily open a perceived window of opportunity either. Political and military doctrines are notoriously resistant to change. For example, despite defensive developments, such as the rifle, machine gun, barbed wire and the railroad and despite the defensive lessons of America's Civil War, the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78, the Boer War, and the Russo-Japanese War, European leaders still held fast to a "cult of the offensive" prior to World War I.[54] Much evidence suggests that most technological innovation has had indeterminate effects on military doctrine, political decisions and even the outcome of wars. As a result, the opening of a window is unlikely to be triggered by aggregate power shifts over longer periods of time or by specific technological change that is often attributed to arms racing. Rather, when a window opens, a state should have an unambiguous strategic advantage that was not previously available.

At the same time, a window should be perceived as an advantage that is only available for a limited duration and not a fundamental change in relations (the window also closes). A time line for establishing an open window is somewhat arbitrary. Different states will take longer or shorter times to recover from different vulnerabilities. However, one might begin by assuming that the advantaged state is going to be uncertain about just how long it will enjoy its favorable position—hence, "now is better than later". And, one must also assume that a vulnerable state will

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[52] Richard Ned Lebow, "Contingency, Catalysts, and International System Change", *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 115, No. 4 (Winter 2000-2001), pp. 591-616. In this article, Lebow identifies Russia's rapid mobilization as providing the catalyst for German leaders to take greater risks.

[53] Robert Jervis, *Perceptions and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

[54] For a discussion of the "cult of the offensive", see Stephen Van Evera, "The Cult of the Offensive and the Origins of the First World War", *International Security* Vol. 9, No. 1 (Summer 1984), pp. 58-107; Jack Snyder, "Civil –Military Relations and the Cult of the Offensive, 1914 and 1984" *International Security* Vol. 9, No. 1 (Summer 1984), pp. 108-146; and, Scott D. Sagan, "1914 Revisited: Allies, Offense, and Instability", *International Security* Vol. 11, No. 2 (Fall 1986), pp. 151-175.

immediately begin corrective measures. This, for instance, led Germany's Bethmann-Hollweg to eventually favor quick destruction of Serbia in 1914, saying, "If war must break out, better now than in one or two years' time when the Entente will be stronger."[55] Hitler also told his generals on the eve of war in 1939 that Germany should exploit "favorable circumstances [that] will no longer prevail in two or three years' time."[56] While the actual advantage a state has might be measured in terms of years, it is reasonable to assume that the further one moves away from the catalyst that opens a window the less potent the window will be as a causal force in decisions of war. Notice in the quotations above that Germany's leaders saw a "few years" of advantage. Yet, they took hostile actions immediately upon realizing their window. As a result, I argue that a window of opportunity opens when one state is in a clearly better position to fight a rival at time *t* than it was at *t-1*. But the window should be perceived as likely to start closing by *t+1* and even reversible by *t+2*.

Probable Not Possible War

Another important component of a window of opportunity is the assumption of willingness. Indeed, the willingness of an actor is essential for determining action or inaction when there is an opportunity.[57] Kingdons' discussion of windows within a policy framework again helps shed light on the concept and the importance of (preexisting) political will. He talks about the necessary coupling of three "streams": a "political stream" that consists of the larger political context or public mood, a "problem stream" that is thought in need of being corrected, and a "solution stream" that reflects the feasibility that a specific action will correct the underlying problem. "The window may be open for a short time," he suggests, "but if the coupling is not made quickly, the window closes."[58] This argues for taking seriously the context in which a window of opportunity occurs. What would a window look like if there was no problem to be solved and no political will for taking any specific action? I argue that a security problem must exist where there is significant political support for a military solution in order for a window to be realized.

Recall that the core theoretical proposition suggests that states are more likely to risk war when doing so is thought to be cheaper *now than later*. This

[55] Quoted in Lebow, *Between Peace and War*, p. 28.
[56] Quoted in Van Evera, *Causes of War*, p. 77.
[57] See, Harvey Starr, "Opportunity and Willingness as Ordering Concepts in the Study of War", *International Interactions* 4 (1978), pp. 363-387.
[58] Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, p. 187.

suggests that a window should be limited to relations where there is a real probability not just the possibility of future war.[59] Lebow also stresses this relational aspect of a window when he argues that its underlying logic should be at work where there are "apparently irreconcilable adversaries" and where "the extreme hostility and aggressive character of the adversary was taken as a given."[60] For instance, it would be meaningless to say that Canada enjoys a window of opportunity when Israel suffers an attack from its neighbors or that Mexico maintains a window of opportunity while U.S. forces are engaged overseas. Rather, there should be extant preparation for and probability of future war.

The growing study of rivalries provides a useful starting point for discussing a general set of relations where willingness can be assumed. Rivalries refer to pairs of competing states with a history and expectation of future militarized disputes. While many have experienced war, it is not necessary although the specter of war seems to be the defining characteristic. An "enduring" rivalry is used to note a particularly protracted and severe subset of rivalries that signifies an enhanced prospect of war.[61] They are defined as conflicts between two or more states that last more than two decades with several militarized disputes. This would rule out characterizing two states as an enduring rivalry for a single conflict or war within a limited time-period, such as the United States and Vietnam. Perhaps, the key aspect of rivalries that is important for thinking about "willingness" is the "locking-in" of mutually hostile images. As John Vasquez summarizes, "external interactions produce those domestic consequences which encourage more hostile (and escalatory) steps to be taken within a rivalry and within a crisis."[62] Michael Colaresi similarly finds that rivalries are maintained in part through the emergence of hawkish domestic constituencies that can select out leaders who "over-cooperate" with rivals.[63] Neville Chamberlain, Ehud Barak, Kim Dae-jung are just a few leaders whose end was purportedly hastened as a result of over-cooperation. Others find that national

[59] For discussion about the difference between possibility and probability of war in international relations theory, see Stephen G. Brooks, "Dueling Realisms", *International Organization* Vol. 51, No. 3 (Summer 1997), pp. 445-477.
[60] Lebow, "Windows of Opportunity: Do States Jump Through Them?", pp. 150 and 154.
[61] For a recent discussion of these concepts, see James P. Klein, Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, "The New Rivalry Dataset: Procedures and Patterns", *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 43, No. 3 (2006), pp. 331-348.
[62] John Vasquez, *The War Puzzle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 198.
[63] Michael Colaresi, "When Doves Cry: International Rivalry, Unreciprocated Cooperation, and Leadership Turnover", *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (July 2004), pp. 555-570.

identity or purpose becomes largely defined by inter-rivalry relations overtime.[64] This not only holds enduring rivals as a relationship characterized by a mutual security problem but one where there is likely to be significant domestic willingness for a military solution.

Some may argue that this is too restrictive a condition for windows of opportunity. After all, a state may not consider aggression until it is tempted by an opportunity. Indeed, many scholars see the anarchic nature of the international system as a constant source of opportunism. Without a global sovereign able to guarantee security or enforce commitments, states are always looking for ways to increase their power at the expense of others. As John Mearsheimer argues, "[a] state's ultimate goal is to be the hegemon in the system." As such, "status quo powers are rarely found in world politics, because the international system creates powerful incentives for states to look for opportunities to gain power…."[65] All things being equal, states may in fact always be willing to increase their control over the system at the expense of others but this approach moves away from developing a testable theory of windows of opportunity. It would be based on what is possible and not what is probable. The attempt here is to develop a *pre hoc* concept of windows of opportunity where generalizable statements can be made about their influence on state behavior. Relaxing the willingness parameter to allow for what is possible works against this goal and moves back toward a *post hoc* and largely arbitrary use of windows to explain the onset of war. More importantly, it stretches the concept to include any distant potential for war to be sufficient for a window. Because war is always possible in anarchy, any aggression could be considered the result of a window. In a sense, the causal logic of windows would give way to power-maximization arguments and lose its usefulness as an explanatory concept. That is, the causal logic of a *window* would then be turned on its head to suggest that opportunity generates willingness.

Enduring rivalries provide a useful set of relations where assumptions about the willingness to use military force to solve a security problem is well grounded. This, however, is not to suggest that enduring rivalries are the only relations where window theory is applicable. What is being argued is that scholars should take seriously the "war is better now than *later*" component of window theory. The

[64] Cameron Theis, "A Social Psychological Approach to Enduring Rivalries", *Political Psychology* Vol. 22, Issue 4 (2001), pp. 693-725.
[65] Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, p. 21.

probability of future war should be a core consideration for determining whether window logic is at play. The rivalry literature seems a natural place for developing this willingness parameter for windows of opportunity because it is built on the identification of relations defined by the specter of war.

One-Sided Advantage

What exactly is an advantage? While intuitive at first, the answer to this question often turns on a sub-question that goes unaddressed: Compared to what? Van Evera distinguishes windows from other developments that can create offensive incentives when he suggests that a window creates a "one-sided" incentive: the advantaged state wants an early war, while the vulnerable state wants to avoid war until the window closes.[66] Yet, he and others often discuss windows as though a state experiencing vulnerability may also initiate hostilities because it fears continuing decline. The idea is that a country falling apart will be tempted to launch a war even though its chances of winning are low, if it determines that the prospects of failure in the future are larger with continued peace. So, for instance, Norman Levin finds that "the closing window of opportunity may cause an *increasingly desperate* North Korea to launch an attack before it's too late."[67] David Kang criticizes these arguments as ancillary and ad hoc hypotheses. It defies rational logic that a state will forego war when it is relatively strong but find the will to launch an offensive when it is at a clear disadvantage. This reasoning parallels Bismarck's famous characterization of preventive war as "suicide from fear of death". Such findings would be better addressed by theories of risk behavior in a losses-frame or what Kang calls "desperation theory".[68] I argue that a window of opportunity opens when one state is clearly in a better position to fight a rival at time *t* than it was at *t-1*. It is likely to calculate that its window may begin to close at *t+1* but the calculation of a growing vulnerability should not be the starting point for defining a window of opportunity.

A one-sided advantage can come from two broad developments: those that are military and those that are diplomatic in origin. It is an article of faith among many analysts that a window of opportunity occurs when there is a shift in the *military* balance between adversaries. Military calculations are so accepted as the

[66] *Causes of War*, p. 73.
[67] Norman Levin, "Global Detente and North Korea's Strategic Relations", *Korean Journal of Defense Analysis* 2 (1990), p. 42, emphasis added.
[68] David C. Kang, "International Relations Theory and the Second Korean War", *International Studies Quarterly* (September 2003), pp. 301-324.

defining characteristic of a window that it generally goes without saying or is simply incorporated into the definition. For instance, recall Lebow's definition: "a period during which a state possesses a significant *military advantage* over a rival".[69] Yet, military factors are only one component of a window. Lebow and most every window theorist make clear reference to diplomatic considerations when they discuss the concept. As an example, Van Evera argues that "In 1866 Bismarck was drawn to war against Austria by the unfinished state of Austrian military reforms and by a fleeting opportunity to attack Austria without opposition from other powers."[70] Similarly, Walt suggests that the Iran-Iraq war resulted from a military opportunity in the wake of Iran's revolution plus a heightened sense of regional insecurity emanating from its revolutionary ideology. But, he goes on to add that Iraq had tacit approval to launch an offensive from the Soviet Union, United States and regional others.[71]

While often mentioned, scholars tend to treat diplomatic factors as a marginal component and simply tack them on as a side-note to what they see as the more influential military openings. However, would Bismarck have attacked Austria if he feared intervention from outsiders? Would Iraq have launched an offensive against Iran had the United States and Iran remained on friendly terms? One could imagine that neither would have occurred had diplomatic relations been otherwise, regardless of the military situation. At the same time, the military situation could have been such that no diplomatic development could have averted these wars. By conflating the two, scholars miss an important distinction for understanding the conditions that can lead to aggression and the measures states can take to reduce them. As a result, I argue for distinguishing between the two to allow comparing their relative impact on aggression.

Military windows refer to advantages based on changes in bilateral capabilities. A window opens for a state if it enjoys a rapid increase in relative capabilities over a rival or its rival experiences a rapid decrease in capabilities. Diplomatic windows are those based on calculations of third-party intentions. Here, a window opens for a state if there is a rapid increase in third-party support for its claims against a rival or the rival experiences a rapid decrease in support. The idea behind a diplomatic window is that a state that enjoys a significant boost in favorable relations with third-parties vis-à-vis its rival may conclude that it can launch an

[69] Lebow, "Windows of Opportunity: Do States Jump Through Them?", p. 147, emphasis added.
[70] Van Evera, *Causes of War*, p. 77.
[71] Walt, *Revolution and War*, pp. 223-251.

offensive without fear of outside intervention and could even gain outside assistance should the conflict turn sour. This distinction is an important but understudied one.

In short, much international relations theory in general and research on windows specifically has been dominated by scholars who emphasize the primacy of military force and the distribution of capabilities in shaping international politics. This scholarship often strives to understand the strategic logic of a simple, stylized model of the international system. This stylization holds states to be unitary, rational actors in a constant struggle for survival. Because there is no global sovereign able to guarantee security or enforce agreements it is what Kenneth Waltz calls a "self-help" system. As a result, survival is largely thought to be a function of relative military capabilities. Here, talk is cheap and states nonetheless have strong incentives to bluff. It is little surprise that diplomatic factors are thought to have at best a marginal role in matters of national security for these scholars. The examples listed off above, however, illustrate that ignoring diplomacy could lead scholars to overstate the importance of direct military calculations. If theoretically misleading, such exaggeration would also be politically dangerous. The fear that military vulnerability emboldens adversaries gives reason for arms build-ups and worst-case, pre-emptive war planning that could lead to unnecessary conflict.[72] At the same time, wrongly placed emphasis on immediate military factors can obscure an important role third-parties have in reducing or (unwittingly) encouraging aggression among rivals.

2.2c Level Three: Operationalizing Windows

Here, I describe specific indicators for identifying windows of opportunity based on the temporal and one-sided advantage components discussed above. I divide these indicators based on whether they are military or diplomatic in origin.

Military Windows

I have argued against incorporating overly broad or narrow developments into window theory. In particular, I suggested that aggregate power shifts over indefinite periods of time may provide the context for intense competition but should not be thought of within the window framework because windows should refer to a more narrow condition bounded by time and context. However, this is not to suggest that

[72] For unnecessary conflict and "real" versus "illusory" incompatibility, see Robert L. Jervis, "Realism, Neoliberalism and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 42-63.

rapid changes in gross capabilities do not have a place in window arguments. While usually slow, rapid shifts in aggregate power sometimes do occur and can generate a great deal of instability that would by most measures open a window of opportunity. For instance, Russia suffered a significant loss when the Soviet Union collapsed. Its share of global capabilities fell from about 10% in 1991 to about 7% in 1992.[73] Its disarray provided a glaring opportunity for others to take advantage. Indeed, many neighboring countries attempted to use this window to separate themselves from Russia's "sphere of influence" or reassert claims on disputed issues. Such drastic change in relative strength is widely thought as a prime condition for hostilities. Some scholars even find that, all things being equal, the more rapid the change in relative dyadic material capabilities, the more likely are hostilities (static relations having very low probabilities).[74] This brings me to the first indicator of a military window.

1.) Rapid Shifts in Relative Capabilities. This is different than differential economic growth rates. Here, I am concerned with traditional indicators of relative military capabilities, such as military expenditures and personnel, iron and steel production, and energy consumption. A sharp change in such output over a few years' time is very likely to generate a discernable difference in capabilities that can open a window of opportunity. The critical point or threshold for identifying a capability shift that may open a window of opportunity is somewhat arbitrary. However, Organski and Kugler argued that a 20% change in relative (dyadic) capabilities provides a clear shift to dominance, whereas other changes that do not reach that threshold remain at rough stasis.[75] This has remained a standard for measuring when a state has achieved dominance in power transitions. I am looking to identify developments that clearly provide an advantage. The effort here is to identify when a *gestalt* shift may occur that opens a perceived window of opportunity. If a twenty percent threshold is thought significant for identifying dominance, then change in twenty percent

[73] These are based on Composite Index of National Capabilities scores calculated using the *EUGene* program. D. Scott Bennett and Allan C. Stam, *EUGene: Expected Utility Generation and Data Management Program* [computer file], (2005), httl://www.eugenesoftware.org.
[74] For instance, see James H. Schampel, "Change in Material Capabilities and the Onset of War: A Dyadic Approach", *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 4 (Dec., 1993), pp. 395-408.
[75] A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980). Also, see Daniel S. Geller, "Power Differentials and War in Rival Dyads", *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 2 (June 1993), pp. 173-193.

should indicate a clear shift in advantage. This measure essentially accounts for unidentified, unique developments or shocks, such as economic or peaceful political collapse, that are not discussed directly below. A lower threshold could of course be identified but again, I am mainly interested in identifying what would generally be considered a *clear* military window of opportunity in order to make generalizable statements that can be tested.

I also argued above that incremental technological innovation was too narrow a starting point for identifying windows of opportunity. In the modern era, there are few technological changes outside of nuclear weapons that one could identify as causing clear shifts in political-military relations. Yet, even here, ongoing debate suggests that nuclear weapons have not necessarily had the transformative impact that many have claimed. Richard Betts points out that the common assumption that nuclear weapons are the ultimate defensive and therefore deterrent weapon was lost on many Cold Warriors. American policy-makers often pushed for winnable nuclear strategies and weapons.[76] While the pacifying effect of nuclear weapons may be unclear, uneven nuclear proliferation is widely considered dangerous precisely because it triggers "now is better than earlier and later" thinking. A country that develops nuclear capabilities before its rival is undoubtedly going to have greater confidence in an immediate advantage, while it is likely to fear the development of equal or greater capabilities by a rival.[77] The advantage will be clear and considered temporary because the advantaged state may assume its rival will attempt to level the playing field. This leads to the second military indicator.

2.) Nuclear Advantage. Here, a window opens when one rival demonstrates its nuclear capability by conducting an atomic test while its rival has not demonstrated its own capacity for nuclear weapons. Deployment and production capabilities may lag behind the ability to test a nuclear device. As a result, the window that opens may not necessarily be a result of having an offensive nuclear capability but a state is likely to be more confident in deterring or defending attacks on core national interests even with rudimentary delivery capabilities and

[76] Richard K. Betts, "Must War Find a Way? A Review Essay", *International Security* Vol. 24, No. 2 (Fall 1999), pp. 166-198.
[77] For a debate on the impact of uneven proliferation, see Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2003).

a few weapons. It could then have a freer hand to launch a conventional attack or make coercive threats against a non-nuclear rival. But, the incentive for a nuclear-armed country to attack its non-nuclear rival would be the inevitable suspicion that one's rival will also look to develop nuclear capabilities. Thus, as Scott Sagan suggests, the first and perhaps greatest challenge in the peaceful manage of a rivalry's transition from a conventional to a nuclear world is that "the first state to acquire weapons must not attack its rival, in a preventive war, in order to avoid the risk of a worse war later, after the second state has acquired a large nuclear arsenal."[78] Using a nuclear test to identify the transition from a conventional to a nuclear world is simply intended as a rough measure for indicating the *gestalt* shift in strategic thinking associated with that transition.

Rapid capability shifts and nuclear proliferation in a sense set the general boundaries for the broad and narrow indicators of windows. However, there are several others that are more midrange in their applicability. Wars are probably the most transparent development that could lead to a window of opportunity. As such, these include:

3.) Civil War. Such developments correspond with Walt's argument regarding revolutions. In the short term, civil war would rapidly divert the afflicted state's armed forces and disrupt economic output as well as social cohesion that will temporarily weaken the country. It is difficult to imagine a clearer and more ominous window of opportunity.

4.) Interstate War. A state will have a window of opportunity if its rival is engaged in a war with another state. This not only forces the rival to divert its military toward another border to fend off potential attack, it is also likely to leave the defeated or battle-damaged rival temporarily weakened.

The remainder of military windows can be considered under a common indicator: rapid changes in alliance relations. But I disaggregate the specific changes below for transparency. Alliances are widely thought important to the study of war although the exact effect of alliances on decisions of war is still hotly

[78] Ibid., p. 53.

debated.[79] I hold alliances to be different from diplomatic factors because many see alliances as a function of national interests based on the distribution of military capabilities. In other words, they are a product of balancing behavior. As a result, a change in alliance relations can generate military windows by shifting the balance of forces that keep states in check and create the perceived advantages long associated with window arguments. However, an alliance is neither necessary nor sufficient for third-party support in an interstate dispute. Indeed, recent research suggests that allies are often delinquent in fulfilling their security obligations. Some even hold alliances to be little more than "scraps of paper" and find this form of extended deterrence highly suspect. Others argue that the impact of alliances on decisions of war is dependent on the perceived *credibility* of allies.[80] In turn, the credibility of a third-party will be based largely on diplomatic factors such as signaling and not necessarily on prewar, formal commitments. The main difference, here, is that scholars who emphasize the primacy of military factors focus on calculations of relative capabilities and less on intentions, whereas diplomatic windows are based on intentions and credibility. I discuss this difference further in the next section. For now, the alliance indicators include:

5.) Termination of an Alliance. This should indicate a rapid change in military capability of opposing alliances or that one rival is "now" in a strategically weaker position than it was previously.
6.) An Ally Suffers Rapid and Significant Loss in Capabilities. Similar to a termination of an alliance, if a major ally for one state is simply unable to uphold its security commitments because of some developments such as an external war or political collapse the advantaged state is going to see an opening window for aggression without fear of intervention from the weakened ally.
7.) Formation of Alliance. This would theoretically provide one state with greater relative military capability over the other.
8.) Rapid Increase in an Ally's Capabilities. This would be similar to number 7.

[79] For recent reviews of the literature, see Zeev Maoz, "Alliances: The Street Gangs of World Politics—Their Origins, Management, and Consequences, 1816-1986"; and, Douglas M. Gibler, "Alliances: Why Some Cause War and Why Others Cause Peace", both in John A. Vasquez (ed.), *What do we Know About War?* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000).
[80] See, for instance, James D. Morrow, "Alliances: Why Write Them Down?", *Annual Review of Political Science* 3 (2000), pp. 63-83.

Diplomatic Windows

The logic behind diplomatic windows is that a leader would be reluctant to risk war against a rival if doing so might prompt the intervention of outsiders who could influence the war's outcome. Conversely, leaders who anticipate third-party support or indifference are more likely to take such risks. Again, this differs from alliances in that alliances are not necessary to impact decisions of war. For instance, the United States and Taiwan do not have a formal alliance but many see their close relationship as a deterrent to Chinese aggression. Similarly, an alliance is not necessary for predicting intervention. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, the United States led a coalition to oust Hussein's forces despite having no formal commitment to do so. While the establishment of an alliance may increase the likelihood of third-party intervention, they are also not sufficient for influencing would-be aggressors because, in no small part, states are often negligent in fulfilling their obligations. Some scholars find that states come to the aid of their alliance partners when war occurs only about 25% of the time, whereas others recently put that assessment at around 75%.[81] Even the more optimistic assessment suggests that a significant portion of formalized security commitments go unfulfilled.

The uncertainty over the reliability of allies is widespread in international politics. It can be seen in the history of the Cold War, when much energy, material and political capital was spent in an effort to convince both the Soviet Union and U.S. partners of America's willingness to uphold its security commitments. This suggests that some other component may be at play than simple military calculations. In fact, Alastair Smith finds that the influence of alliances on decisions of war is a function of the *credibility* of the alliance: a potential aggressor considers the reliability of the target's allies, with the likelihood it will launch an attack declining as reliability increases.[82] However, credibility is inevitably a question of diplomatic not just military calculations because it is based on intentions.

Calculations of third-party intentions, however, are not limited to alliances. States often have preferences in the outcome of conflicts and will provide political, economic and military support that can significantly advantage one side over the other, even if they have no formal security commitment or no obvious balancing

[81] For instance, see Brett Ashley Leeds, "Alliance Reliability in Times of War: Explaining States Decisions to Violate Treaties", *International Organization* Vol. 57 (2003), pp. 801-827.
[82] Alastair Smith, "To Intervene or Not to Intervene", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 40, No. 1 (1996), pp. 16-40.

imperative. Leaders are well aware of this and attempt to gauge the likely response of others not just the target of possible aggression.[83] Third-parties are able to influence these calculations by communicating their preferences and resolve through signals. For instance, third-parties can communicate their intentions to protect a would-be target. Establishing an alliance would be one such signal but there are others. The United States, for example, launched a military buildup in Asia prior to Taiwan's 1996 elections to indicate its willingness to intervene should China attack Taiwan. Similarly, a state may send a signal of indifference or unwillingness to intervene on behalf of a target state. When the Soviet Union communicated its intentions to invade Czechoslovakia in 1968, President Johnson responded by indicating that "U.S. interests are involved in Berlin where we are committed to prevent the city being overrun by Russians."[84] A third-party can also encourage aggression. France and particularly Britain sent supportive signals intended to convince Israel to attack Egypt prior to the Suez Canal crisis of 1956. The point is that attempts by states to communicate and calculate third-party intentions are a matter of diplomacy and these communications can provide for a different type of window than those resulting from shifts in military relations.

A diplomatic window of opportunity can open if a state perceives larger than normal third-party support vis-à-vis a rival or a lack of third-party opposition to itself. However, research on interstate signaling suggests that different types of signals may have different influences on state behavior. For instance, "costly signals" can provide the clearest indication of third-party support or opposition. Yet, costly signals may facilitate prewar bargains because both rivals have the time to accurately calculate the intentions of influential others and adjust their positions accordingly. Costly signals are generally reserved for expressing core national interests, which tend to change little overtime. This lack of variation suggests that the level of support being communicated using costly signals is unlikely to be an aberration from general third-party interests. This consistency does not necessarily fit within the temporal component of a window of opportunity. By contrast, "cheap signals" can lead to miscalculation. They may promote undue optimism by a state looking for international support but fail to convince its rival of the need for compromise. They

[83] For an elaboration of system effects, see Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).
[84] Quoted in Anne E. Sartori, *Deterrence by Diplomacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), p. 12.

are also apt to greater fluctuation that more readily fits within the temporal parameter of a window.

Costly Signals

States can never directly observe each other's willingness, intentions or goals. At the same time, there are often powerful incentives for states to exaggerate resolve as well as overstate or hide their true capabilities. As a result, it is generally thought that signals must be "costly" to have credibility due to the suspicious nature of international politics. Leaders must effectively "tie their hands" or "sink costs" to demonstrate commitment.[85] The classic hostile costly signal is the mobilization of military forces against an opponent. The above example of the U.S. mobilization of forces in the Taiwan Straight provides a clear illustration of a hostile signal to China. However, there other costly signals that a state may make to communicate hostility. On the most hostile end, a state could actually attack or seize the possessions of another country. But, on the lower end of hostile signals, a state could issue a threat or ultimatum to another country. Meanwhile, a supportive costly signal might be the establishment of a defensive pact, alliance, or even a trading bloc. Such measures are transparent and generate significant *ex post* or *ex ante* costs to convey a credible message of intent. In many ways, these types of signals put one's credibility on the line.

Table 2.1: Costly Signals

Military attack, clash or assault	Hostile
Seize position or possessions	Hostile
Armed force mobilization, exercise, display; military build-up	Hostile
Threat with force specified	Hostile
Issue ultimatum; threat with negative sanction and time limit	Hostile
Threat with specific negative nonmilitary sanction	Hostile
Make substantive trade or defense pact	Support
Extend major economic aid	Support
Extend military assistance	Support

Table 2.1 shows the signals typically considered to be costly. A hostile signal usually includes a specific action that a state will take against another if the target of

[85] James D. Fearon, "Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 41, No. 1 (1997), pp. 68-90.; Andrew Kydd, "Sheep in Sheep's Clothing: Why Security-Seekers do not Fight Each Other", *Security Studies* 7 (1997), pp. 114–154.

the threat takes or does not take specific action. The signals effectively commit the sender to a certain policy. A state that does not carryout a costly threat is likely to suffer immediate as well as future costs. If it withdraws a threat when its demands are unmet, it will have costs associated with the issues in dispute but equally important is that the country would lose credibility. Any threats against unwanted actions made in the future will be less credible and less likely to have their intended effect. Future challengers would be emboldened, driving up potential future costs.

Similarly, Table 2.1 shows the types of costly signals generally thought to be supportive. A state can signal a security commitment to another by extending military assistance or establishing a defense pact. These in effect would again pay an immediate as well as a reputation cost if it reneged on its promises. Potentially cooperative states would be unlikely to find future assurances credible. Moreover, the enemies of one's allies may be emboldened to test security commitments in the future. Significant trade and aid packages are thought to signal a commitment because they generate *ex ante* costs, whereby the sender of such signals is sinking costs in another state thought to be an investment of sorts. An example of future costs associated with the failure to fulfill such promises and threats is Russia's withdraw of initial support for Serbia in its 1908-9 conflict with Austria-Hungary over Bosnia-Herzegovina. It then bluffed in 1912 with a threat against Austria-Hungary when the conflict flared up again. Despite the issue being much more serious in 1914, when a Slavic state actually faced invasion, Russia's threats were largely ineffective.

In short, a costly signal is an act a state can take to indicate its preferences that would be too risky or costly if the state is disingenuous about its intentions. It is the risk or potential cost of a signal that is able to *credibly* convey state intentions to elicit a desired response. Indeed, costly signals would provide the clearest indication that one state has third-party support over a rival. At first, one might assume that costly signals would open diplomatic windows of opportunity because they communicate the highest forms of third-party support or hostility. However, because costly signals entail risk for the sender, they are generally reserved for expressing core security interests. A state that is careless in sending costly signals will quickly become over-committed or under-credible. A nation's core security interests change very little overtime and as a result one would expect there to be a great deal of stability in the levels of support or opposition where costly signals are employed. For

instance, few are surprised in the aftermath of a missile or nuclear test in North Korea, when the United States mobilizes its forces in Asia, issues warnings to Pyongyang as well as security promises to Japan and South Korea. These are costly U.S. signals that are believed in part because they are consistent with a long and reliable line of signals expressing American commitment in the region.

As a result of the clarity and general stability of costly signals, theory rooted in economics literature on "rational expectations" argues that both rivals should be able to accurately calculate the relative level of third-party support and adjust their positions accordingly. As Michael McGinnis and John Williams summarize, "Rational expectations refers to the aggregate result of private economic actors utilizing relevant information in forming unbiased expectations of the future behavior of the economy as a whole."[86] Under complete information about capabilities, intentions, goals, etc., competing parties should be able to reach a prewar agreement because they are able to reasonably predict the outcome of a conflict.

Costly signals reveal information about preferences, intentions and capabilities. But, they also generally express a fairly stable level of interest and resolve.[87] This stability defies window logic, according to my definition, because there would be a certain consistency in third-party interests. It is unlikely that a costly signal would indicate a rapid change in advantage for one state over another or that this advantage would be limited in duration. In other words, costly signals of third-party support or opposition are not likely to trigger "better now than earlier" nor "better now than later" thinking for two reasons: 1.) when costly signals are sent they are rarely an aberration from previously stated security interests so they do not necessarily fall within the temporal parameter of a window, and 2.) they clearly reveal to the disputants the relative level of third-party support for a potential conflict that is also likely to be stable into the future. The net result is a prewar bargain that reflects relative third-party support.

This line of reasoning is consistent with claims by Fearon and Vesna Danilovic, who independently find that costly signals tell a potential attacker whether a defender will have the support of an outside protector. This directly impacts the likelihood that hostilities will be launched in the first place. At the same time, these

[86] Michael D. McGinnis and John T. Williams, *Compound dilemmas: Democracy, collective actions, and superpower rivalry* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), p. 53.
[87] For instance, see Vesna Danilovic, *When the Stakes are High: Deterrence and Conflict among Major Powers* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002).

costly signals are generally sent where core security interests preexist and would-be aggressors are likely to recognize these preexisting interests. As a result, those that do launch offenses in the face of deterrent signals are those who were already willing to take on the associated risks.[88] This suggests there is a strategic selection bias associated with costly signals. In sum, costly signals should not provide the diplomatic windows of opportunity one might initially assume. Rather, costly signals of support or opposition should decrease the likelihood of aggression by encouraging prewar bargains.

Cheap Signals

Paradoxically, costly signals often have their intended effect but the amount of risk that is necessary to make them costly also means that states are reluctant to use them. They are generally reserved for expressing core security interests, which change very little overtime. Given the general lack of transparency of third-party intentions outside these core security interests, leaders must often "read between the lines". For instance, most of the examples of diplomatic windows discussed above did not result from clear signals of third-party support or opposition but from miscalculations based on indecisive behavior. German leaders did not believe they would face a British-French-Russian coalition prior to either World War I or II. This was not because the would-be allies clearly indicated that they were unwilling to join in a war to defeat Germany. Rather, it was a lack of clear security commitments.[89] To give an idea of the effect this disunity and indecisiveness had on decision-makers, Hitler continued to hold a belief that Britain would eventually join Germany against the Soviet Union even after war broke out.[90] Another example includes Turkey's attack against Russia in 1856 because the Sultan thought France and Britain were in support of his efforts. However, his confidence was exaggerated and almost proved disastrous. Both Britain and France were reluctant to support Turkey and did not enter the war until six months after it began. Only once it became clear

[88] Vesna Danilovic, "Conceptual and Selection Bias Issues in Deterrence", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 45 (2001), pp. 97-125; James D. Fearon, "Signaling versus Balance of Power and Interests: An Empirical Test of a Crisis Bargaining Model", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 38 (1994), pp. 236-269; and, James D. Fearon, "Selection Effects and Deterrence", *International Interactions* Vol. 28, No. 1 (January-March 2002), pp. 5-29.

[89] For a discussion of the lack of commitment among the would-be allies, see Brett Ashley Leeds, "Alliance Reliability in Times of War", *International Organization* 57 (Fall 2003), 801-827.

[90] Perhaps this was partly the result of Hitler's delusion but also due to open hostility between Britain and the Soviet Union. For instance, see Randall L. Schweller, "Tripolarity and the Second World War", *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 1 (March 1993), pp. 92-95.

that Russia was on the verge of a victory that could provide it with control over much of Eastern and Central Europe did Britain and France join the fight.[91] The point is that states often base decisions of war on less than clear signals of third-party intentions.

Recent research on what is called "cheap signals" sheds light on the effect third-parties have on decisions of war absent clear nods of military support or opposition. "Cheap signals" are strategic communications that do not affect payoffs directly but can do so indirectly if the communication convinces others to change their behavior. They include day-to-day communications that may exhibit a great deal of fluctuation over time, unlike the relative stability of costly signals. They can nonetheless express a state's interest or preference toward another country. Table 2.2 below provides examples of the types of cheap signals that a state can send. These may demonstrate neutrality, where a state signals that they are rather agnostic toward another. They may also indicate friendly or supportive leanings toward a country. Conversely, they can similarly show a sense of hostility. This is certainly not an exhaustive list of possible signals but gives an idea that they differ from costly signals because they entail no or very little *ex ante* or *ex post* costs for the sender. So, while they may communicate a preference and perhaps a willingness to provide support toward that end, there are little direct costs for the sender regardless of the actions it subsequently takes.

Early research and scholarship suggested that cheap signals were largely ineffectual. As Fearon noted:

> "Under some conditions, costless signals, or 'cheap talk', may reliably communicate private information, although it remains unclear whether cheap talk is important in international disputes...[more pointedly,] costless signals are shown to have no effect on either the probability of war or any agreement reached."[92]

Yet, recent studies on mediation in interstate disputes and the role of third-parties in civil wars suggest that this is not entirely accurate in multi-actor settings.[93] Rather, it is costly signals that have little impact due to a strategic

[91] Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe*, pp. 54-61.
[92] Fearon, "Signaling Foreign Policy Interests: Tying Hands versus Sinking Costs", p. 69, n. 2.
[93] Andrew Kydd, "Which Side are you on? Bias, Credibility and Mediation", *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 47 Issue 4 (October 2003), pp. 597-611; and, Clayton L. Thyne, "Cheap Signals with Costly Consequences: The Effect of Interstate Relations on Civil War", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 50, No. 6 (December 2006), pp. 1-25.

Table 2.2: Cheap Signals

Reduce or cut off aid or assistance	Hostile
Nonmilitary demonstration	Hostile
Issue order or command, insist, demand compliance	Hostile
Threat without specific negative sanction stated	Hostile
Halt negotiation	Hostile
Denounce; denigrate	Hostile
Give warning	Hostile
Issue formal complaint or protest	Hostile
Charge; criticize; blame; disapprove	Hostile
Cancel or postpone planned event	Hostile
Comment on situation	Neutral
Urge or suggest action or policy	Neutral
Explain or state policy; state future position	Neutral
Ask for information	Neutral
Yield to a request	Neutral
Meet with; send note	Neutral
Offer proposal	Favorable
Express regret; apologize	Favorable
Visit; go to	Favorable
Give state invitation	Favorable
Assure; reassure	Favorable
Receive visit; host	Favorable
Suspend sanctions	Favorable
Agree to future action	Favorable
Praise, hail, applaud	Favorable
Endorse other's policy or position; give verbal support	Favorable
Promise political or material support	Favorable

selection bias where core security interests of influential third-parties are at stake. By contrast, cheap signals can actually increase the likelihood of war because they increase the chances for miscalculation. Because they are intended to convey preferences but reveal little about resolve, disputants are more likely to disagree about the level and credibility of third-party support. If there is disagreement about the outcome of a potential conflict based on third-party intentions, a rational expectations model predicts that one or both states would be more likely to engage in war-risking behavior.

A recent example helps illustrate this. In December 2006, the chief U.S. spokeswoman on Africa signaled American opposition to Somalia by charging that its government "is now controlled by al-Qaida cell individuals, East Africa al-Qaida cell

individuals….They are terrorists and they are in control."[94] This was an obvious denouncement of the Somali government but it did not commit the United States to any action; it was a hostile cheap signal. Nonetheless, seven days later, Ethiopian forces launched an offensive into Somalia with U.S. assistance if not direct involvement.[95] Had the conflict turned sour for Ethiopia, however, it is not clear what if any commitment it had from the United States. A change in U.S. position or indifference to Ethiopia's hypothetical defeat may have resulted in some *ex post* audience cost for American leaders but this is far less than the costs of withdrawing a direct military threat or security promise. Despite a lack of commitment, one could reasonably conclude that America's "cheap talk" provided a perceived diplomatic window for Ethiopia. Its leaders perhaps thought they could pursue a military solution to Ethiopia's security problem without fear of serious outside opposition and could even receive support from the United States. At the same time, the ambiguity of the U.S. commitment could hardly have inspired compromise by Somalia's government. There was no specific threat to Somalia, no security guarantee to Ethiopia, and no specific demand that Somalia could meet in order to avoid attack.

Since they carry no direct cost per se for the sender, cheap signals can be more readily sent by third-parties. As a result, they are not only less likely to inspire prewar bargains due to a lack of clarity about outside support. They are also apt to exhibit a great deal of fluctuation overtime. Take the Somali example again. Just weeks prior to stated U.S. opposition, American policy-makers had drafted a UN proposal (a favorable cheap signal) that called for a multinational African peacekeeping force to be deployed in Somalia which met Somalia's concerns over contributing countries and noted the Security Council's willingness "to engage with all parties in Somalia, including the Union of Islamic Courts, if they are committed to achieving a political settlement through peaceful and inclusive dialogue." Weeks prior to this resolution, a senior U.S. military official responded to a question about Ethiopian threats to attack Somalia by simply stating "we don't want them [Ethiopian forces] in there [Somalia]".[96] Moving from sponsorship of a conciliatory UN proposal that was a favorable cheap signal and statement of restraint to the hostile cheap

[94] Quoted in Jonathan S. Landay and Shashank Bengali, "U.S. may feed conflict in Somalia", *Sacramento Bee*, December 24, 2006, pg. A17.
[95] Barbara Slavin, "U.S. support key to Ethiopia's invasion; Military, weapons boost tied to ouster of Somali Islamists", *USA Today* January 8, 2007, p. 10A.
[96] Quoted in Jeffrey Gettleman, "U.S. Military Official Offers a Bleak Assessment of Somalia", *New York Times,* November 11, 2006, A6.

signal of denouncing the Somali government as tied to America's arch enemy is quite a significant change in a few weeks' time. Yet, American commitment to a policy remained far from certain. It is this type of variability that is more in line with the temporal component of a window than the general consistency of costly signals. Sharp changes in levels of cheap signals may lead states to conclude that they have a diplomatic window of opportunity—"now" they have support or tacit acceptance from third-parties for aggression, whereas they did not have this opportunity earlier and they may not have it in the near future.

In sum, a sharp increase in favorable cheap signals vis-à-vis a rival could lead a state that is looking for third party support to calculate that it has a diplomatic window opportunity. Due to the variability of these signals, a sharp increase can represent a break from the status quo that provides a perceived advantage to one state over a rival but an advantage that may not be available for long. At the same time, the rival may not recognize that it is now disadvantaged because the commitment of third-parties remains unclear. As a result, there is even less incentive for compromise than suggested by the standard cooperation problem associated with traditional window arguments. Miscalculation is not only possible by the target of aggression but also the aggressor. For instance, Turkey's attack on Russia to trigger the Crimean War nearly brought disaster due to overconfidence in the support of Britain and France. Hitler misinterpreted early appeasement as a lack of intention to oppose his expansion. Saddam Hussein misread American signals as an opportunity to conquer Kuwait shortly after the Cold War ended. The important point being made here is that cheap signals often motivate leaders to launch offenses due to a perceived window for doing so with impunity and even support from third-parties.

2.3 Summary and Hypotheses

Windows of opportunity are thought to encourage aggression because "war is more likely when states expect better results from a war begun now than a war begun later." The causal logic underlying this proposition is premised on an assumption that leaders see a future war as probable, not just possible. In other words, a window will provide incentives for aggression where leaders foresee serious consequences once the opportunity is lost. This argues for taking seriously contextual factors such as rivalries, in order to better identify a general set of relations where window logic should be at work. Conceptually speaking, a window must also trigger "now rather

than earlier" as well as "now rather than later" thinking. This focuses attention on rapid developments that provide clear and immediate advantage for a state that it did not previously have and may not have in the near future. This advantage should also be thought of as one-sided rather than providing incentives in two directions. But, these advantages can and should be divided based on whether they are military or diplomatic in origin.

Figure 2.2 diagrams these elements in terms of necessary ("and") and sufficient conditions ("or"). In comparison to figure 2.1, one can quickly see that the necessary conditions provide a more restrictive approach to identifying windows. The sufficient conditions, here, help identify the division between different types of windows—military and diplomatic—rather than the constitutive dimensions of a window that can lead to overly broad employment of the concept. In sum, I argue that a window occurs when there is (1) a *rapid* shift in military capabilities or diplomatic relations that (2) provides a perceived *advantage* of one state *over an adversary* but an advantage that (3) is of *limited expected duration*.

The discussion above suggests that the different types of windows may generate different predictions. In many ways, the logics underlying military and diplomatic windows work in opposition to one another. Much international relations theory in general and research on windows specifically has been dominated by scholars who emphasize the primacy of military force and the distribution of capabilities in shaping international politics. This scholarship often strives to understand the strategic logic of a simple, stylized model of the international system. This stylization holds states to be unitary, rational actors in a constant struggle for survival. Because there is no global sovereign able to guarantee security or enforce agreements it is what Kenneth Waltz calls a "self-help" system. As a result, survival is largely thought to be a function of relative military capabilities because no state can count on any other in time of need. Here, talk is cheap and states nonetheless have strong incentives to bluff—there is little room for considering what third-parties may prefer or intend because they are inherently unreliable. It is this view that has informed most research on windows of opportunity: because relative military calculations are the decisive consideration in decisions of war, the argument goes, change in these calculations will inevitably lead to change in the likelihood of war. If third-parties influence decisions of war, however, it would detract from the self-help assumption of international politics and *ipso facto* decrease the importance of

bilateral military calculations. States that are looking to the intentions of third-parties to guide their own behavior are less apt to escalate hostilities when they see a direct military advantage. Any temptation to do so would be tempered by fear of outside intervention. A window in diplomatic terms, then, would be a period during which a state believes it can escalate hostilities with impunity or with third-party support.

Built into window logic is an assumption that states are more likely to risk war when they believe they have a chance of winning. Work on rational expectations in international politics suggests that states often weigh multiple factors in making these calculations, not least of which are the intentions of third-parties. As McGinnis and Williams summarize, "Rational expectations refers to the aggregate result of private economic actors utilizing relevant information in forming unbiased expectations of the future behavior of the economy as a whole."[97] While one may place greater scholarly emphasis on bilateral military factors or on third-party intentions, it is reasonable to assume that state leaders would consider both in an effort to gauge the likelihood of winning a potential conflict. If true, a shift in military capabilities may not open the window many analysts predict if the perceived advantage is offset by fear of international opposition. At the same time, a state that anticipates third-party support may be tempted to escalate hostilities, even if it is militarily weaker than its opponent.

Some might argue that military factors could be such that diplomatic ones have little influence. This may be true. But, it is difficult to imagine any scenario where a state's bilateral advantage was so great that it would risk overwhelming international opposition to exploit its military opportunity. In other words, taking advantage of a military opportunity is in part preconditioned on diplomatic calculations that such actions (at a minimum) would not result in one's own destruction from third-parties. Others might counter that a state's security may be such that its survival is thought to depend on exploiting its temporary military advantage even if doing so risks overwhelming third-party opposition. This may also be true. However, such a scenario parallels Bismarck's claim that preventive war is like "suicide from fear of death" and is better explained by loss-aversion or desperation theories rather than windows of opportunity. This brings me to the first two general hypotheses about the relative influence of military and diplomatic windows on the likelihood of aggression.

[97] McGinnis and Williams, *Compound dilemmas*, p. 53.

H1: *Military windows of opportunity have marginal impact on the probability that a state will escalate hostilities against a rival.*

H2: *Diplomatic factors have significant influence on the probability that a state will escalate hostilities against a rival.*

Third-parties have influence on the likelihood of hostilities because they communicate their preferences and intentions through signals. However, different signals have different influences. Costly signals are likely to communicate the highest forms of support or opposition for one rival over another. But, the third-party interests these signals are likely to convey are going to exhibit relatively little variability. This suggests that both the would-be aggressor as well as target are able to accurately calculate the level of third-party support and adjust their positions accordingly, thus encouraging prewar bargains. This brings me to a third hypothesis.

H3: *Costly Signals decrease the likelihood that a state will escalate hostilities against a rival.*

By contrast, "cheap signals" can lead to miscalculation in no small part because they exhibit great fluctuation and often say little about third-party resolve. This more readily fits the temporal component of a window of opportunity because a state is likely to see sharp, favorable turns in cheap signals as providing a window for aggression with outside impunity or even third-party support—an opportunity it did not have previously and may not have in the near future. At the same time, the "cheapness" of such signals does not inspire compromise by the would-be target. This leads to the fourth and final prediction.

H4*:* *Sharp changes in Cheap Signals open diplomatic windows of opportunity that increase the likelihood that a state will escalate hostilities against a rival.*

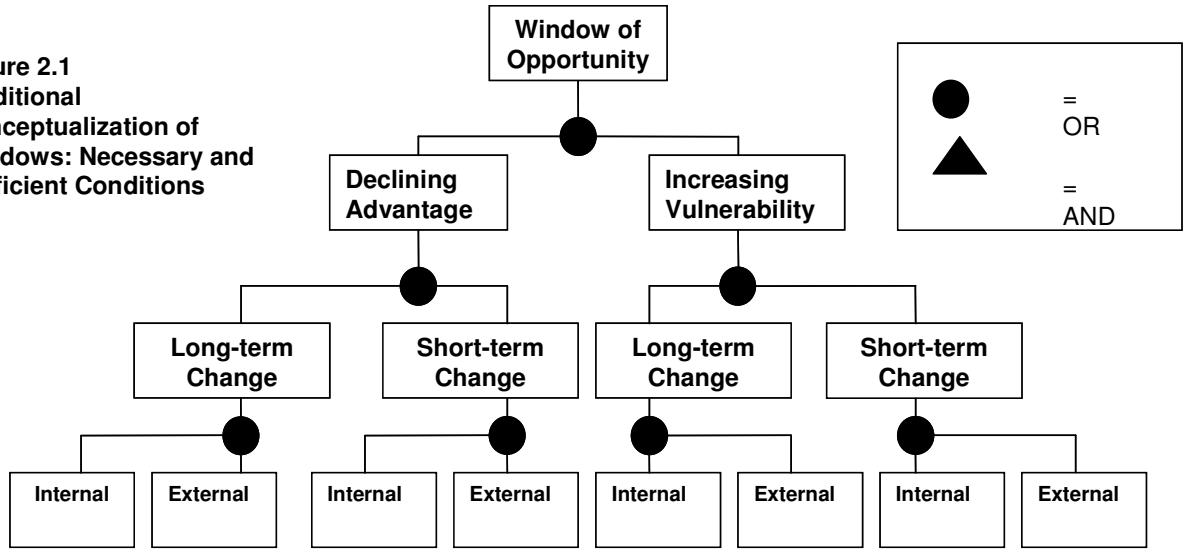
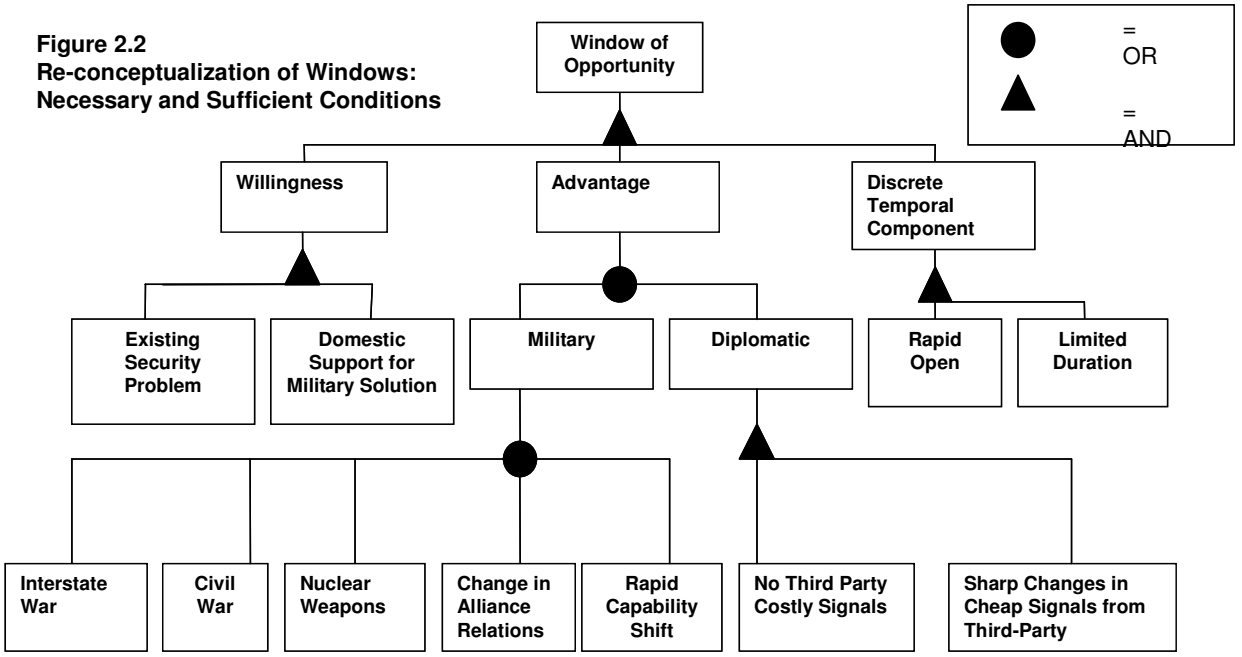


Figure 2.1
Traditional Conceptualization of Windows: Necessary and Sufficient Conditions

Figure 2.2
Re-conceptualization of Windows:
Necessary and Sufficient Conditions



Chapter 3

Windows of Opportunity and Military Escalation: A Statistical Analysis

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an empirical test of the four key hypotheses developed in chapter 2 using statistical analyses of interstate relations between 1948 and 1993. To restate the hypotheses, I test:

H1: *Military windows of opportunity have marginal impact on the probability that a state will escalate hostilities against a rival.*

H2: *Diplomatic factors have a significant influence on the probability that a state will escalate hostilities against a rival.*

H3: *Costly Signals decrease the likelihood that a state will escalate hostilities against a rival.*

H4*:* *Sharp changes in Cheap Signals open diplomatic windows of opportunity that increase the likelihood that a state will escalate hostilities against a rival.*

First, I discuss the data and selection process for identifying my universe of cases. I then describe the data for developing proxies of my key variables defined in chapter 2 as well as control variables that are commonly used in the study of war and rivalry. I then develop a statistical model for testing these hypotheses and discuss the implications for understanding windows of opportunity.

3.1 Universe of Cases

The core theoretical proposition of windows of opportunity is that "war is more likely when states expect better results from a war begun now than a war begun later." As such, I have argued that the probability not just the possibility of future war should be a guide for identifying relations where one can assume window logic is at work. I have also suggested that the study of enduring rivalries provides a useful starting point for doing so precisely because it strives to understand interstate relations that are defined by the specter of war. Enduring rivalries emerged as a new research agenda in the 1990s. Rivalries in these studies generally refer to pairs of competing

states with a history and expectation of future militarized disputes. While many have experienced war, it is not necessary although the belief that it may occur seems to be the defining characteristic. An "enduring" rivalry is used to note a particularly protracted and severe subset of rivalries that signifies an enhanced risk of war.[98] They are defined as conflicts between two or more states that last more than two decades with several militarized disputes. This would rule out characterizing two states as an enduring rivalry for a single conflict or war within a limited time-period, such as the United States and Vietnam. The underlying presumption is that conflict events are likely related to one another over time and space. Several studies show that enduring rivals, which make up a very low percentage of conflictual dyads and even lower percentage of all possible dyads, actually account for almost half of all militarized disputes and wars over the last 200 years. Similarly, they account for a disproportionate amount of violent territorial change and lower level crises in the international system.[99] Indeed, enduring rivalries present a real probability war.

It is not only that enduring rivalries identify a relationship where there is a particularly acute security problem. Recent studies also find that the interactions between enduring rivals have a "locking-in" effect of mutually hostile images, whereby significant portions of each population become hawkish and push for militarized solutions to the security problem. For instance, John Vasquez's argues that "external interactions produce those domestic consequences which encourage more hostile (and escalatory) steps to be taken within a rivalry and within a crisis."[100] Michael Colaresi similarly finds that rivalries are maintained in part through the emergence of hawkish domestic constituencies that can select out leaders who "over-cooperate" with rivals.[101] Neville Chamberlain, Ehud Barak, Kim Dae-jung are just a few leaders whose end was purportedly hastened as a result of over-cooperation. Others find that national identity or purpose become largely defined by inter-rivalry relations overtime.[102] The point here is that enduring rivalries provide a useful base for identifying a set of cases where general predictions about windows of

[98] For a recent discussion of these concepts, see James P. Klein, Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, "The New Rivalry Dataset: Procedures and Patterns", *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 43, No. 3 (2006), pp. 331-348.
[99] For a review of this literature, see Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, "(Enduring) Rivalries", in Manus I. Midlarsky (ed.), *Handbook of War Studies II* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000).
[100] John Vasquez, *The War Puzzle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 198.
[101] Michael Colaresi, "When Doves Cry: International Rivalry, Unreciprocated Cooperation, and Leadership Turnover", *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (July 2004), pp. 555-570.
[102] Cameron Theis, "A Social Psychological Approach to Enduring Rivalries", *Political Psychology* Vol. 22, Issue 4 (2001), pp. 693-725.

opportunity can be made because they are defined by a security problem. And, there would be less mobilization time necessary for states in an enduring rivalry in order to exploit an extant opportunity because the relationship is already militarized and much of each population is presumably supportive of using force to solve their mutual security problem.

Importantly, it is difficult to think of a situation that better embodies the "self-help" nature of international politics that many scholars hold as the underlying rationale for assuming that military factors are paramount in decisions of war. Competition for power and/or security should be particularly acute in enduring rivalries and any gain made by one would likely be a loss for the other. Under such dire security conditions, states should be less likely to rely on others and should be primarily focused on one another's direct military capabilities. This does not suggest that analysts who emphasize the primacy of military factors would not also predict that these states would look for outside assistance. Rather, I suggest that these conditions should provide the *most likely* relations where military windows figure most prominently in decisions of war.

One exception to establishing such a wide set of relations for testing window theory might stem from asymmetric power relations. A more powerful state may not find it necessary to exploit a particular window because it generally maintains a strategic advantage, whereas a weaker state may never see a window of opportunity large enough that it would be better off at the end of war than if it avoids conflict altogether. However, most rivalries are unlikely to endure if power is asymmetric because both parties must posses the ability to wage repeated conflict. Otherwise, as Michael McGinnis and John Williams argue, "the stronger power would be able to directly eliminate the threat posed by its erstwhile rival through direct military action or intimidation."[103] Almost by definition, then, some see rough parity as a general condition of an enduring rivalry: neither rival has found it necessary to acquiesce nor had the ability to fully subjugate the other. Of course, this is not always the case. The United States and Cuba have long been considered rivals, yet there is a clear imbalance of capabilities. It is hard to imagine a window of opportunity large enough that Cuba could subdue the United States, although Cuba may be able to make limited gains by capitalizing on an American vulnerability. For instance, it could

[103] This is from a 1993 conference paper they presented and quoted in Zeev Maoz and Ben D. Mor, *Bound by Struggle: The Strategic Evolution of Enduring International Rivalries* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), p. 19.

attempt to retake the U.S. base at Guantanamo Bay, if American forces were engaged in two regional wars overseas. Similarly, it might be reasonable to expect that the United States would use a window of Cuban vulnerability to overrun its southern rival, although it is questionable whether American leaders would calculate that doing so could enhance its security. This suggests that the incentives for either rival to jump through a window of opportunity would be less intense because it is not clear that either state would make sufficient gains through war.

To be sure, asymmetric rivalries are difficult for identifying relations where window logic should be at work. This is made even more difficult by the different forms and measurements of capabilities. That is, different types of warfare and non-military factors, such as geographic features and distance, can help weaker states overcome their disadvantages. When pursuing limited goals, these types of advantages can bring reasonable leaders to conclude that attacking a more powerful rival will result in strategic gains during an opportune time.[104] Such strategies would be even more salient if the weaker state fears inevitable war with the more powerful state anyway. However, this may not be a reasonable assumption to hold for all rivalries.

One way around this problem for the purpose of analyzing windows of opportunity would be to select only rivalries that have experienced a war. A war would not only indicate a particularly intense enduring rivalry that better qualifies the relationship as *adversarial* but it would also suggest that the more powerful state was unable to fully subdue the weaker. Thus, the presumed asymmetry would more closely resemble what T.V. Paul calls "truncated asymmetry", where one may have an aggregate material advantage but other factors, such as military quality or geography, level the playing field. As a result, a weaker state may also feel emboldened to launch an offensive should an opportunity arise. This would rule out such rivalries as the United States and Cuba, where a window has less meaning, but keep relations such as the U.S.-North Korea rivalry, where distance and China's assistance to North Korea somewhat level the playing field. As a result, the probability of future war is more salient and the general balance of capabilities suggests that window logic is more likely at work.

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[104] For instance, see T. V. Paul, *Asymmetric Conflict: War Initiation by Weaker Powers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); Andrew Mack, "Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict," *World Politics* 27 (January 1975), pp. 175-200; and, Ivan Arreguin-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict", *International Security* Vol. 26 (Summer 2001), pp. 93-128.

Having provided the rationale for my cases, I identify the selection criteria and process more clearly. Table 3.1 shows the resulting universe of cases. A dyad is selected if:

1.) It experiences at least six militarized interstate disputes (MIDs). MIDs are conflicts between states that cause fewer than 1,000 deaths but where some military force is employed. These are determined using the Correlated of War (COW) MID data. This is intended to meet the notion that states have repeated rather than isolated disputes.

2.) There must be at least twenty years between the outbreak of the first dispute and the termination of the last dispute. Combined with the first criteria, this is intended to meet the notion that states consistently challenge one another through a frequency over a timeframe that covers a generation.

3.) If there is a gap of ten years or more between MIDs, the rivalry continues only if the issues in dispute remain unresolved and MIDS relevant to those issues reemerge within the twenty year timeframe.

4.) To ensure sufficient severity, where there is reasonable expectation of future war and that power relations do not necessarily lend themselves to peaceful bargaining, only dyads that have experienced war or a militarized dispute involving at least 1,000 deaths are selected.

Table 3.1: Universe of Cases: Adversaries, 1948-1993

Dyad	Duration
China – India	1950 – 1985
China – Japan	1950 – 1958
China – South Korea	1950 – 1993
China – Vietnam	1975 – 1993
Egypt – Israel	1948 – 1989
Greece – Bulgaria	1948 – 1952
Greece – Turkey	1953 – 1993
India – Pakistan	1950 – 1993
Iran – Iraq	1953 – 1993
Iraq – Israel	1966 – 1993
Iraq – Kuwait	1961 – 1993
Israel – Saudi Arabia	1957 – 1981
Italy – Yugoslavia	1948 – 1956
Jordan – Israel	1948 – 1973
North Korea – South Korea	1950 – 1993
Russia/Soviet Union – China	1948 – 1993
Russia/Soviet Union – Japan	1948 – 1990
Somalia – Ethiopia	1960 – 1985
Syria – Israel	1948 – 1993
United States – China	1949 – 1972
United States – North Korea	1950 – 1993
Vietnam – Thailand	1961 – 1993

The COW data reveal 41 rivalries meeting the 4 specifications, which total 1,953 adversary-years since 1816. While tests have been conducted on this larger set of cases and findings suggest that military windows do not result in military escalations, I limit the selection of rivalries here to those from 1948 to 1993 due to the limits of the "signals" data. Table 3.1 above shows the 22 rivalries that meet the four criteria for the relevant years. The rivalries did not need to start, end or experience war within the given timeframe, although I am only interested in the adversary-years that do fall within the 45-year period. These make up the objective cases where reasonable predictions about windows of opportunity can be made based on a relatively high threshold of hostilities that allows a fairly reliable assumption about willingness. There are 697 rivalry-years identified in Table 3.1. However, this is a directed dyadic study, so the test is concerned with when rival *A* initiates hostilities with rival *B*. Who is *A,* and who is *B* is unimportant as long as the selection criteria are met. As a result, the same rivalry provides two observations per year: *A* versus *B* and *B* versus *A*. The total potential observations, then, is 1,394.

3.2 Military Windows

I have argued for defining military windows of opportunity using discrete developments that signal *rapid* change in the status quo. These changes should provide a *clear* military advantage for one rival but an advantage that is likely to be *limited* in duration. I provided eight indicators that may signal the opening of such windows. Below, I discuss the data used to develop a proxy for each. When applicable, I use the most common measures for my indicators but there is also theoretical justification for these thresholds.

1. Civil war. State *B* experiences civil war if there is an internal militarized dispute that involves the participation of the national government and results in 1,000 deaths in a single-year. These are measured using Kristian Gleditsch's expanded Correlates of War (COW) data.[105] The 1,000 death definition here helps ensure a relatively high threshold for identifying a window of vulnerability due to significant internal turmoil. Some might argue that 1,000 people do not need to die in order for internal turmoil to be seen as an opportunity for aggression by a

[105] Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, "A Revised List of Wars Between and Within Independent States, 1816-2002," *International Interactions* 30 (2004), pp. 231-262.

rival. This is true. However, part of the task set out for myself is to identify events that provide *clear* windows that can also be generalized across cases. An internal conflict that results in 1,000 battle-deaths implies significant loss or damage and that a significant amount of state resources is required to put down opposition, leaving less for addressing an external threat. If state *B* is experiencing a civil war it is coded as 1 and 0, if it is not. If both adversaries are experiencing civil war at the same time, they are coded as 0 because it cannot be seen as a clear opportunity for either. These civil war years are lagged by 1 and added together so that every civil war provides at least a two-year window (rationale for lag years is discussed below).

2. Interstate war. State *B* and state *C* engage in a militarized dispute that results in at least 1,000 deaths. These are also measured using Gleditsch's expanded war data. Again, the 1,000 death threshold ensures a clear opportunity for a rival because state *B* would not only have lost resources in the conflict but would also need to divert its forces away from *A* in order to fend off *C*. So, if *B* is experiencing interstate war it is coded as a 1 and 0 if it is not. If both adversaries are engaged in an external war but not with one another, they are coded as 0. These war years are lagged by 1 and added together so that every war provides at least a two-year window.
3. Terminated alliance. See indicator 6.
4. Rapid decline in capabilities of a major ally. See indicator 6.
5. Establishment of an alliance. See indicator 6.
6. Rapid increase in capabilities of a major ally. To measure shifts in alliance portfolios and capabilities, I use the Composite Index of National Capabilities (CINC) for each state in a formal defensive pact with one rival that has no alliance relations with the other. CINC scores are the sum of military personnel, military expenditures, energy production, iron/steel production, urban population, and total population. These scores are available through the COW project. I add them together and divide each alliance portfolio by the total to generate a percentage of alliance capabilities for each rival. I then generate a lag variable of one year to measure the change in weighted alliance portfolios by year. If there is a +.2 change in state *A*'s weighted alliance portfolio over *B*, then there is a clear window of military advantage for state *A* and is coded as 1 (0 otherwise). The +.2 threshold follows Organski and Kugler's definition of a power shift. They

suggest that any differential below .2 remains rough parity, whereas measures above .2 indicate growing preponderance and a clear shift.[106] Again, the task here is to define military windows in a way that can be considered a clear opportunity across cases. Twenty-percent is intended to be a relatively high threshold that can trigger offensive thinking on part of the advantaged rival.

These measures were taken for the relevant region of the rivalry as well as on a global scale. However, the two correlate at a .68 level and are therefore simply added together to generate a variable that gauges shifts in alliance capabilities (1 when *A* has a window of advantage, 0 otherwise). These years of alliance shifts are lagged by 1 and added together so that every alliance shift provides at least a two-year window.

7. Nuclear advantage. If state *A* has tested a nuclear device to signal its nuclear weapons capability and state *B* has not, then state *A* is considered to have a window of military advantage over *B* (coded as 1 and 0 for no window). If and when state *B* has similarly tested a nuclear device, there is no longer a window of advantage. So, in many cases, this window of opportunity is open for an extended period of time. For instance, the entirety of the U.S-North Korea rivalry in this study is characterized by a nuclear window of advantage for the United States.
8. Relative capabilities *B*. To account for unidentified, unique developments, such as economic or peaceful political collapse, which would lead to a rapid and severe change in the status quo, I use relative dyadic CINC scores. That is, I add together the rivals' scores and divide each by the total to receive a percentage. I lag these scores every year over a five year period and measure the change. If a change of +.2 in state *A*'s CINC score over *B* occurs in the five year period, *A* will be considered to have a window of military advantage over *B*. These observations are then lagged by 1 year and added together so that every shift provides at least a two-year window. The +.2 threshold also follows Organski and Kugler's guidance on power shifts but the measure of change over five years is somewhat arbitrary. Many scholars use ten-year measurements for power shifts. However, this begins to move away from the windows concept and into longer term power relations. Yet, aggregate capability scores are generally

[106] A. F. K. Organski and Jacek Kugler, *The War Ledger* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980). Also, see Daniel S. Geller, "Power Differentials and War in Rival Dyads", *International Studies Quarterly* Vol. 37, No. 2 (June 1993), pp. 173-193.

slow to change, even when there has been some crisis. So, a .2 change in a single year would be an inordinately high threshold for a military window. The five year period was thought to be long enough to capture shifts in capabilities but short enough to still be considered "rapid".

As noted above, I created a one-year lag and added it to each observation to create a window (except nuclear advantage) so that for every event there is at least a two-year military opportunity. There are two reasons for the lag: (a) the events require some time for the vulnerable state to overcome and (b) it may take some time for the advantaged state to act—hence, a window. I limit this lag to one year because the advantaged state cannot know how long it will have its window for action. And, I assume that a vulnerable state will immediately begin corrective measures. At the same time, the nature of the relationship suggests that each state should have standing defenses as well as some offensive capabilities in the event that hostilities are thrust upon them. Indeed, it is the militarization of the relationship that defines each dyad as an enduring rivalry and makes it a suitable relation to assume window logic should be at work.

Of course, there are different recovery times for different vulnerabilities. For instance, it may take longer to recover from a decade of war than a shift in alliance relations. This will certainly lead some to disagree with limiting the window to the event-year plus one but, as argued, it is reasonable to assume that the peak of advantage is when the window is opened and not the lag. The further away from the catalyst that "opens" a window the more difficult it is for leaders to calculate a clear advantage. Any residual advantage would nonetheless become the new status quo and move out of the realm of the window analogy. Recall that Germany's leaders saw advantages prior to World War I and II that they calculated may persist for a couple more years. Yet, they chose to launch an offensive immediately. This is the premise of window logic. Lastly, the reason nuclear developments are not lagged is that once a nuclear device is tested, the state is thought to have the potential to use the technology. So, a state with nuclear capabilities is thought to have a window of advantage until its rival demonstrates its own nuclear capability. Table 3.3 below reports the frequencies of each military window.

3.3 Diplomatic Windows

Two events data sets have been widely used to measure interstate signals and diplomatic relations in general. The first is the Conflict and Peace Databank (COPDAB), which codes daily dyadic interactions between all states from 1948 to 1978 on an intensity scale ranging from +92 (most supportive) to -102 (most hostile).[107] The second is the World Events Interaction Survey (WEIS), which codes similar events but for the years of 1966 to 1993 and uses 63 nominal categories.[108] These nominal categories, however, are recoded following Joshua Goldstein's conflict-cooperation scale that ranks the categories along an ordinal continuum of +8.3 (most supportive) to -10 (most hostile).[109] While these two datasets use different coding schemes and source materials, many scholars have spliced the two to create a single events dataset for 1948-1993. Indeed, the problems and inconsistencies of doing so outweigh the value of the ability to generate single statistical models, particularly when using aggregate, weighted conflict-cooperation scores (discussed below) because such scores do not rely on any particular measure or source. As such, I follow Reuveny and Kang's method for splicing the two datasets in the overlapping years (1966-1978) using the following formula:

$$WEIS_t = C_0 + C_1 * COPDAB_t + e_t$$

This provides me with a single dataset of daily dyadic scores of conflict-cooperation using Goldstein's scale from 1948 to 1993.

Not all relations are equal. As such, I follow the general rules given by Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett to select only politically relevant dyads. Politically relevant dyads are defined as all contiguous dyads plus all dyads in which at least one of the states is a major power.[110] This eliminates less-meaningful relations, such as Chile and Pakistan but keeps more meaningful ones like the United States and Taiwan. Importantly, this better approximates the logic of diplomatic windows. States will

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[107] Edward E. Azar, "The Conflict and Peace Data Bank (COPDAB) Project", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 24 (1980), pp. 143-152.
[108] Charles McClelland, *World Events Interaction Survey* [computer file] (Los Angeles: University of Southern California, 1978).
[109] Joshua Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS International Evens Data", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 36 (1992), pp. 369-85.
[110] Zeev Maoz and Bruce Russett, "Normative and Structural Causes of the Democratic Peace", *American Political Science Review* 87 (1993), pp. 624-638. Using Eugene software, I was able to identify great powers and define contiguous

attempt to gauge the relative level of support of third-parties vis-à-vis their rival. They do not attempt to calculate global support, only of states with the capability to influence the outcome of a potential conflict. By virtue of proximity, neighbors are likely to have influence but major powers are more likely to have the projection capabilities and resources to affect a conflict most anywhere they have a preference. The list of major powers changes little over the study years. In 1948, the group included the United States, United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union. China was added to this list in 1950 and in 1991 both Germany and Japan joined. Lastly, I omit the daily interaction scores between rivals to avoid endogeneity problems. I am then able to collapse all the data by sender-target-year to produce a weighted aggregate conflict-cooperation score for each rival based on its mean relations with each politically relevant other, minus their direct opponent. This provides me with data which I can now use to construct indicators for costly signals and diplomatic windows based on cheap signals.

3.3a Costly Signals

Table 3.2 lists the types of events and the weights each receives along the Goldstein scale. To get an indicator of a diplomatic window defined by costly signals, I first generated "support" variables for both rivals and coded them 1 for each year the respective states received an average weighted signal that was equal to 5.8 or greater from at least one politically relevant state (0 for all others). The type of supportive actions captured in this variable, include "establish a joint military command", "make substantive agreement", and "extend military assistance". I chose the 5.8 threshold to separate these types of events from such lower level actions as "promise material support", "promise political support", and "grant privilege", which fall just under a support level of 5.8 and are considered cheap signals.

Second, I generated "hostile" variables for both rivals and coded them 1 where the mean score of signals from a politically relevant state was equal to -6 or less (0 for all others). These types of actions fall on the opposite side of the cooperation-conflict continuum from the supportive signals, including "ultimatum; threat with negative sanction and time limit", "threat with force specified" and "armed force mobilization". I chose the -6 threshold to separate the types of events above from such lower level actions "reduce or cutoff aid", "nonmilitary demonstration, walk

out on", and "threat without specific negative sanction", which also more readily fit the definition of cheap signals.

Third, I develop the "costly signal" variable to indicate when state *A* has received costly supportive signals but *B* has not. This variable is coded 1 for each year where state *A* has received a 1 in the support variable but *B* does not have similar support (0 otherwise). That is, *A* has costly diplomatic support only where *B* is not supported by a third-party. I do this because two states that enjoy equal costly signals of support from outsiders may believe that the outside influence is balanced and therefore there is no clear imbalance that may encourage prewar bargain. For instance, a costly signal sent by the United States in support of South Korea would not provide South Korea with an advantage if China sent similarly supportive signals to North Korea. Yet, a decline in China's support for North Korea could provide South Korea with clear advantage where the United States maintained its support for South Korea. This supposed advantage, however, would be undercut by a hostile signal against *A* from some other politically relevant state. To use the same hypothetical: if China issued strong hostile signals against South Korea rather than providing support for North Korea one year, it would have the similar effect of preventing South Korea from having an advantage. As such, the costly support variable remains coded 1 only where state *A* does not have a costly hostile signal against it. Similarly, "costly signal" is coded 1 for each year where state *B* has a hostile signal from a politically relevant state and no supportive counterweight and where *A* is not faced with similar hostility. The result is a costly signal variable that indicates when *A* has received clear support or when *B* has received clear opposition from at least one politically relevant state but where other signals do not cancel out this diplomatic turn. This is not to suggest that multiple overlapping costly signals would not engender restraint among protagonists. Rather, the idea is that where costly signals indicate clear support or hostility they are going to have their greatest impact. Table 3.3 below provides the frequency of costly signals.

Table 3.2: Goldstein Scale: Weighted Events[111]

Event	Code (Goldstein Scale)	
Military attack; clash; assault	-10	Costly signals, hostile
Seize position or possessions	-9.2	
Nonmilitary destruction/injury	-8.7	
Non-injury destructive action	-8.3	
Armed force mobilization, exercise, display; military build-up	-7.6	
Break diplomatic relations	-7	
Threat with force specified	-7	
Ultimatum; threat with negative sanction and time limit	-6.9	
Threat with specific negative nonmilitary sanction	-5.8	
Reduce or cut off aid or assistance	-5.6	
Nonmilitary demonstration, walk out on	-5.2	
Order person or personnel out of country	-5	
Expel organization or group	-4.9	
Issue order or command, insist, demand compliance	-4.9	
Threat without specific negative sanction stated	-4.4	
Reduce routine international activity	-4.1	
Refuse; oppose, refuse to allow	-4	
Halt negotiation	-3.8	
Denounce; denigrate; abuse	-3.4	
Give warning	-3	
Issue formal complaint or protest	-2.4	
Charge; criticize; blame; disapprove	-2.2	
Cancel or postpone planned event	-2.2	
Make complaint (not formal)	-1.9	
Grant asylum	-1.1	
Deny an attributed policy, action, role or position	-1.1	
Comment on situation	-0.2	
Urge or suggest action or policy	-0.1	
Explicit decline to comment	-0.1	
Request action; call for	-0.1	
Explain or state policy; state future position	0	Cheap signals
Ask for information	0.1	
Surrender, yield to order, submit to arrest	0.6	
Yield position; retreat; evacuate	0.6	
Meet with; send note	1	
Entreat; plead; appeal to; beg	1.2	
Offer proposal	1.5	
Express regret; apologize	1.8	
Visit; go to	1.9	
Release and/or return persons or property	1.9	
Admit wrongdoing; apologize, retract statement	2	
Give state invitation	2.5	
Assure; reassure	2.8	
Receive visit; host	2.8	
Suspend sanctions; end punishment; call truce	2.9	
Agree to future action or procedure, to meet, or to negotiate	3	
Ask for policy assistance	3.4	
Ask for material assistance	3.4	
Praise, hail, applaud, extend condolences	3.4	
Endorse other's policy or position; give verbal support	3.6	
Promise other future support	4.5	
Promise own policy support	4.5	
Promise material support	5.2	
Grant privilege; diplomatic recognition; de facto relations	5.4	
Give assistance	6.5	Costly signals, support
Make substantive agreement	6.5	
Extend economic aid; give, buy, sell, loan, borrow	7.4	
Extend military assistance	8.3	

[111] This is taken from Goldstein, "A Conflict-Cooperation Scale for WEIS International Evens Data", pp. 376-377.

3.3b Cheap Signals

To get a proxy for cheap signals, I first dropped all the yearly scores that average 6 or greater as well as those that are -5.8 or less on the Goldstein scale.[112] Table 3.2 shows that the remaining signals lack specificity and direct material cost, which suggests they more closely fit the definition of cheap signals. I then collapsed the signals data by target-year to generate the mean relations for each country with all politically relevant others. Because windows are thought to be driven by rapid change, I lagged the scores for state *B* and calculated the difference between years to measure any shifts in the aggregate conflict-cooperation scores. I then generated a dichotomous variable that was coded 1 where these changes are equal to or less than -1.25 (0 otherwise). The standard deviation of change in support for individual states varies across rivalries from .6 (U.S.-China) to 2.12 (China-Vietnam). With the highest standard deviation being 2.12 and only one-fifth of the rivalries having a standard deviation higher than 1.25, this seems a sufficiently drastic drop in cheap support to capture the necessary abruptness that can lead state *A* to perceive a diplomatic window. Table 3.2 shows that an example of such a change would be the equivalent of moving from "reduce routine international activity" to "reducing aid or assistance". This represents a qualitative difference in position from one that is an attempt to signal a distancing of relations to one that is openly dissatisfied and unfavorable.

These decreases would only matter to the extent that state *A* maintains relatively positive relations with outsiders who could sway the outcome of potential conflict. Thus, the sharp decreases in support for state *B* are left as 1 to indicate an open window only if state *A*'s scores are at least 1 point higher than state *B*'s score. The standard deviation of differences in levels of cheap support between rivals varies from .9 (India-Pakistan) to 2.2 (Israel-Saudi Arabia). As a result, I consider 1 level of difference in support the minimum necessary for state *A* to perceive a system window based on the drop in support for state *B*. There is no need to condition the drop in support for *B* with an inordinately high level of relative support for *A*. A minimum but discernable difference would suffice as long as *B* suffered a significant decrease.

A second formulation that would indicate a cheap window is dramatic change in differences between the scores of states *A* and *B*. I calculate differences between

[112] I later measure the correlation of cheap and costly signals. They correlate at about .24.

adversaries and then lag this score. If the difference between *A* and *B* in time *t* is 2 or higher than in *t-1*, then the change in relative support is thought to be significant and is coded as 1. Here, the standard deviation across dyads ranges from 1.3 (Iraq-Iran) to 3.4 (Israel-Saudi Arabia). While 2 may seem a low threshold given the relatively high standard deviations, the scale of cheap signals only has thirteen integers (-6 to +6). So, 2 levels along this continuum is about one-sixth of the entire range of possible variation. Such a jump should capture developments where support for *A* is sharply increasing and/or *B* is decreasing. Again, however, this matters only to the extent that *A* is receiving relatively positive support. So, these indications of sharp relative change are kept only if *A*'s scores also remain positive (greater than 0 on the -6 to +6 continuum). There is no theoretical rationale for suggesting that this indicator of change in cheap signals should have a different impact than the one in the preceding paragraph, so they are added together to create one proxy for "cheap windows". Table 3.3 above reports these frequencies.

3.4 The Dependent Variable: Military Escalation

A state is thought to escalate a conflict if it takes actions that raise the level of hostility at year *t* from the level of hostility at year *t*-1. This is determined using the Correlates of War (COW) Militarized Interstate Dispute (MID) data. This data is one of the most frequently used in conflict research. It employs an ordinal coding system to indicate the level of hostility between every dyad for each year and identifies which state initiated the hostility. These codes are 0=No hostility [no MID], 1=No militarized action, 2=Threat to use force, 3=Display of force, 4=Use of Force, 5=War. Where escalation or the initiation of a new dispute is clearly one-sided, these measures are relatively straight forward. For instance, the escalation of hostility between Iraq and Kuwait in 1990 was largely one-sided, with Iraq initiating hostilities to a higher level each time Kuwait failed to acquiesce to its demands until Hussein launched a full-scale invasion. However, identifying the initiator of hostilities is not always so clear. As such, I follow the coding rules provided by Scott Bennett and Allan Stam: where reciprocal escalation occurs prior to war, both are coded as having escalated the conflict.[113] As an example, China may initially threaten India with a specific military sanction. In response, India mobilizes or deploys military forces along its border with

[113] See, D. Scott Bennett and Allan C. Stam, *EUGene: Expected Utility Generation and Data Management Program* [computer file], (2005), httl://www.eugenesoftware.org.

China (show of force). China then dispatches limited forces to secure a disputed sector or engages Indian forces directly but this engagement results in less than 1,000 battle-deaths. In turn, India launches a full offensive into China and war ensues. In such a hypothetical, both would be coded as having initiated war (5) for that year. Had the dispute ended with India's military deployment, India would be coded as having escalated hostilities to a level 3 and China would receive a 2.

I am only interested in when state *A* escalates military hostilities against state *B*. As such, I recoded the original observations by subtracting 1 from each MID so that "No hostility" and "No militarized action" are both coded as zero. (My escalation variable, then, is recoded as: 0=No militarized action [no MID], 1=Threat to use force, 2=Display of force, 3=Use of Force, and 4=War.) I am also less interested in the level of hostility carried out and am focused on the timing of these decisions. As such, the MID scale was lagged by one year. If the difference between years was greater than 0 and the level of hostilities taken by *A* was equal to or greater than that of *B* for the year, I coded the dependent variable as a 1 (0 for all others) to indicate an escalation of military hostilities. Observations of ongoing war between rivals were coded as missing because the states are presumably at their highest level of mutual hostility. Keeping these observations would bias the results because the data do not provide information about within-war escalations or major offenses. Table 3.3 below shows that there were 284 military escalations among the selected adversaries during the observed years.

This measurement is not perfect. For instance, *A* may have a window of opportunity during any particular year and threaten military force to gain concessions from *B*. Yet, if *B* responds by mobilizing its military and *A* does not take further action, *B* will be coded as having escalated hostilities and *A*'s opportunistic behavior will go unaccounted. However, if I were to code only the state which made the initial escalation in a given year and not the highest level of hostility, I run into a similar problem: *A* may make an initial threat of force to deter *B* precisely because *A* is experiencing vulnerability. *B*'s response—planned or provoked—could be to launch a limited invasion of *A*. Here, *A* would be coded as escalating hostility and *B*'s opportunistic behavior would go unaccounted. These tradeoffs are endemic to statistical studies of international conflict due to the lack of precise data on greatly complex interactions. However, this shortcoming is outweighed by the ability to test whether windows of opportunity generally lead to military escalation across dyads

and over four decades. This of course is not a limit I face in the case study that follows, pointing out the benefits of multi-method research.

At any rate, I assume threats and decisions to escalate hostilities are not made lightly. Leaders anticipate how their targets will respond. At the heart of the windows argument is the presumption that leaders will conclude that "now is better than later". To suggest that leaders may escalate hostilities when they sense weakness but then retract demands if they are not met undermines this view. Of course, state *A* may initially escalate hostilities but later recognize that its window is not as large as earlier thought and change its position. My operationalization of military windows should alleviate some of these concerns given the emphasis on clarity.

Table 3.3: Key Variable Frequencies

Variable	Values	Frequencies
Civil War Windows (State *B*)	0=No Civil War during adversary-year	1223
	1=Civil War underway during adversary-year	111
Interstate War Windows (State *B*)	0=No Interstate War during adversary -year	1158
	1=Interstate War underway during adversary -year	176
Alliance Windows (State *A*)	0=No Alliance Shift during adversary -year	1295
	1=Alliance Shift experienced during adversary -year	39
Nuclear Windows (State *A*)	0=No rival or both rivals have nuclear capacity	1164
	1=Only one rival has demonstrated nuclear capacity	170
Capability Windows (State *A*)	0=No shift	1324
	1=Shift signaling a window during adversary –year	10
Total Military Windows	0=No window from above indicators	921
	1=At least 1 window from above indicators	413
Costly Signals	0= No costly signal during adversary-year	910
	1= Signals indicate costly signal during adversary-year	424
Cheap Windows	0= No system window during adversary-year	1066
	1= Signals suggest window for adversary-year	268
Escalation (State *A*)	0= No escalation of hostilities by either adversary	1050
	1= One rival escalates during adversary-year	284

There would be little doubt about *A*'s advantage when these windows open. But, this is not the case for diplomatic windows based on cheap signals. Any resulting bias should nonetheless work against the argument that these signals matter for understanding windows of opportunity. *A* is expected to escalate hostilities when there is a rapid increase in relative cheap support vis-à-vis *B*. If *B* resists *A*'s encroachment by raising the stakes and *A* concedes, the absence of *A*'s initial opportunism in the data would result in a contrary observation.

3.5 Control Variables

Several other variables are widely used in the study of war that may help explain escalation of hostilities. First, the common acceptance that joint-democracy can have a significant impact on interstate conflict argues for taking into account the level of democracy shared between adversaries. Using the Polity IV -10 to +10 democracy scale, I construct a joint democracy measure based on the level of democracy of the least-democratic state in the rivalry.[114] Second, many neo-realists focus on structural factors of the international system, including the number of major powers, the concentration of global power and changes in the concentration of power. As such, I follow Bennett and Stam's calculation of major powers using relative CINC scores to control for the raw number existing in the system for every year. I also use their continuous measures for concentrations of power and shifts over five year periods. These power shifts can be measured in terms of global power concentrations or shifts just among the great powers. These correlate at a high level, however, so I use shifts in global power concentration in the hope that it may also capture regional dynamics and not just power change among perhaps distant great powers.[115] Similarly, the balance of capabilities based on CINC scores (1 indicates state *A* has higher CINC score, 0 otherwise) might also be important for understanding who initiates hostilities. While I have attempted to define my universe of cases in a way that both rivals would have an incentive to exploit immediate opportunities over the other, some might argue that the weaker power may nonetheless be reluctant to provoke the stronger state even when it has a temporary advantage. Lastly, some would argue that joint nuclear ownership could temper aggressive behavior. As

[114] The data and accompanying articles can be found online at http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/polity/.
[115] See, D. Scott Bennett and Allan C. Stam, *EUGene: Expected Utility Generation and Data Management Program* [computer file], (2005), httl://www.eugenesoftware.org. The measures are calculated using the EUGene software.

such, I include a mutual deterrence variable (1 for joint nuclear ownership, 0 otherwise).

Research on enduring rivalries has also generated a number of variables that are particular to these relationships. For instance, the duration of a rivalry is thought to influence the intensity and frequency of hostilities, although the exact relationship is not entirely clear. Some find that the early stages of enduring rivalries show a high frequency and intensity of disputes, while others suggest that rivals have a tendency to escalate hostilities more readily once the relationship has matured. Still others have found that the longer a rivalry exists, the more likely it is to end.[116] These are in many ways at cross-purposes but the recent attention to duration argues in favor of including a variable with the number of years a rivalry has been underway. This variable is constructed using the rivalry narratives in "The New Rivalry Dataset" provided by James Klein, Gary Goertz, and Paul Diehl.[117] Of course, a single dyad can have numerous rivalries over its lifespan. Where there is a break of ten years between hostilities and the issues underlying earlier disputes were apparently resolved, one rivalry is thought to end. New hostilities would indicate a new rivalry. I simply count the number of years the rivalry being studied has been underway.

There is also a view that the likelihood of renewed hostilities decreases the longer rivals go without a militarized dispute. That is, the rivalry concept is based on the assumption that disputes are dependent over time and space. A logical extension would be that every year of peace would increase the probability of peace in the following year. So, I include a variable to account for years without a militarized dispute between rivals. However, this also suggests that there may be autocorrelation in the dependent variable—escalation. That is, we cannot assume that each escalation is independent from the previous escalation. According to Nathaniel Beck and his colleagues, assuming temporal independence in binary cross-sectional time-series data risks underestimating the variability in the coefficients, which leads to inflated t-values and possible type I error. They propose a rather simple corrective, however, which is to include a series of dummy variables that indicate the number of years since the previous observation of the test

[116] For a review of this literature, see John Vasquez and Christopher S. Leskiw, "The Origins and War Proneness of Interstate Rivalries*", American Review of Political Science* no. 4 (2001), pp. 295-316.
[117] James P. Klein, Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, "The New Rivalry Dataset: Procedures and Patterns", *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 43, No. 3 (2006), pp. 331-348. This data is available online at ftp://128.196.23.212/rivalry/riv500web.zip.

variable.[118] I do this for each of the first three years following escalation. Lastly, I introduce a variable indicating the number of rivals state *B* has during a given year to control for multiple outcomes based on a single change in an independent variable.

Table 3.4: Summary Statistics of the Control Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Joint Dem	-6.567139	4.165037	-10	8
Num. GPs	5.031693	.3571306	4	7
Power Con.	.2849433	.0345195	.222954	.375087
Sys Mov 5	.018593	.0100101	.011763	.059119
Cap. Adv	.0992494	.2991213	0	1
Joint Nuclear	.0692244	.2539412	0	1
Duration	29.52377	30.27973	0	135
Peace Years*	1.46372	2.706292	0	21
Num. Rivals	1.949318	1.242093	1	5
Revisionist	.2977481	.457459	0	1
Joint Sat	.1192661	.3242366	0	1

*Splines not included.

There has been a great deal of recent interest in both realist and enduring rivalry research on whether states are revisionist or satisfied. Jones, Bremer and Singer identify a revisionist state as one that "openly attempt(s) to challenge the pre-dispute condition by 1) making claims to territory, 2) attempting to overthrow a regime, or 3) declaring the intention not to abide by another state's policy".[119] One would certainly expect revisionist states to escalate hostilities more often than satisfied ones. This of course is not always the case. For instance, India has long been thought to be the status quo power in its rivalry with Pakistan. Yet, it escalated hostilities on numerous occasions, including actions that led to war in 1971.[120] At the same time, however, states that are generally satisfied and have no revisionist claims against them from a rival are less likely to initiate hostilities. Indeed, Reed and Lemke find a high correlation between long periods of peace between great

[118] Nathaniel Beck, Johnathan N. Katz and Richard Tucker, "Taking Time Seriously: Time Series and Cross-Section Analysis with a Binary Dependent Variable", *American Political Science Review* 42 (1998), pp. 1260-88. These have no independent value per se and so they are not included in most of the discussion below although they are included in the statistical tests.
[119] Daniel M. Jones, J. David Singer, "Militarized Interstate Disputes, 1816-1992: Rationale, Coding Rules and Empirical Patterns", *Conflict Management and Peace Science* Vol. 15, No. 2 (1996), p. 178.
[120] See, for instance, John A. Vasquez, "The India-Pakistan Conflict in Light of General Theories of War, Rivalry, and Deterrence", in T. V. Paul (ed.), *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 54-79.

power rivals and joint satisfaction with the status quo.[121] Separating revisionist states from initiators, however, is not exactly straight forward. To paraphrase an earlier critique: finding evidence that leaders openly dispute the status quo before they take actions to change it is unsurprising. Nonetheless, I use the data of Jones, Bremer and Singer to include a dichotomous variable indicating whether state *A* is revisionist as well as a variable indicating whether both *A* and *B* are jointly satisfied. Revisionist states can be calculated using the EUGene data program. Table 3.4 above provides the summary statistics for these control variables.

3.6 Statistical Tests

Before analyzing the data, I want to briefly describe the actual test(s) carried out. The logistic regression is a form of regression that is used when the dependent variable is dichotomous or categorical. It applies a maximum likelihood estimation after transforming the dependent variable into a logit variable (the natural log of the odds of the dependent variable occurring or not). In this way, the logistic regression will estimate the probability of escalation occurring but not changes in escalation itself as ordinary least squares (OLS) regression would on a continuous scale of escalation. However, it is interpreted in many of the same ways. Logit coefficients correspond to *b* coefficients in the logistic regression equation, the standardized logit coefficients correspond to beta weights, and a pseudo R^2 statistic is available to summarize the strength of the relationship. Unlike OLS, however, logistic regression does not assume a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. As a result, the most important aspects to look for in the logit tests here are whether the independent variables have a statistically significant influence on escalation and whether that influence increases or decreases the likelihood of the test variable occurring.

A potential problem emerges from this test, however. I cannot assume that the probability of escalation is evenly distributed across rivalries. While they share many of the same characteristics, the likelihood of escalation is assumed to be partially dependent on unique characteristics of each rivalry. Not taking this into account could bias my results, as rivals with extreme values on the dependent variable would carry greater weight and my coefficients would not necessarily reflect

[121] Douglas Lemke and William Reed, "War and Rivalry Among Great Powers", *American Journal of Political Science Vol.* 45, No. 2 (April 2001), pp. 457-469.

the impact of windows on escalatory behavior across rivalries. As a result, I control for possible fixed effects by rivalry. That is, I assume that there is some unobserved variable unique to each rivalry that accounts for some probability of escalation. Using a fixed-effects function allows the logit regression to calculate the effects of the independent variables based on the intercept of escalation for each rivalry and then calculates the influence of each independent variable on escalation across rivalries. So, the first test I conduct is a fixed-effects logit regression.

War and war-risking behavior is often thought to be rare in international politics. King and Zeng show that samples measuring rare events like war or escalations can lead to underestimated event probabilities in logit models because the zeros heavily outnumber the ones.[122] This can lead to biased probabilities that see escalation as much less likely than no-escalation. The likelihood of escalation may in fact be far less than no-escalation but it is not in reality zero where observations are coded as 0. That is, the probability of escalation at any given time between rivals is higher than zero. Yet, the heavy influence of 0s in the data in contrast to the few 1s could lead to biased logit probabilities. They offer a program that is able to correct for low biases in Stata. This is available on Gary King's website.[123]

Table 3.3 showed that of 1,334 observations, 284 include escalation. This translates into a sample with 21 percent 1's. According to a series of Monte Carlo experiments, they predict that my sample would not necessarily be affected by the rare events bias. That is, the difference in relative risk (the term they use to denote the probability that an event occurs given chosen values of the explanatory variables) between the standard logit regression and one that corrects for potential rare events bias is about 2 percent, which would have a marginal impact on my measurements. Nonetheless, I ran rare events logit tests on my models. As predicted, this treatment had marginal influence on the regular logit coefficients. For this reason, I do not report these findings in the tables but do mention in the text where the rare events logit lowered the standard errors of certain control variables to a point that they became statistically significant.

[122] King and Zeng, "Explaining Rare Events in International Relations".
[123] http://gking.harvard.edu/

Table 3.5: Military Windows and Military Escalation

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7
LR chi2	164.05	160.60	160.80	162.73	163.74	170.45	163.19
Prob>chi2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Civil War	-.6156* (.2429)					-.6958* (.3070)	
Interstate War		.0177 (.2588)				-.356 (.259)	
Alliance Shift			-.2047 (.4631)			-.3072 (.4755)	
Nuclear Advantage				-.5938 (.4172)		-.5459 (.4209)	
Capability Shift					1.404 (.7626)	.234 (.833)	
Total Military Windows							-.3447 (.2163)
Joint Democracy	.0276 (.0278)	.0266 (.0277)	.0267 (.0277)	.0261 (.0278)	.0245 (.0276)	.0248 (.027)	.0283 (.0278)
Number of Great Powers	-.474* (.2044)	-.445* (.2036)	-.4489 * (.2038)	-.4826 * (.2065)	-.4672 * (.2039)	-.5421 ** (.2085)	-.4939 * (.206)
Global Power Concentration	-13.235* (5.29)	-12.465** (5.242)	-12.49 * (5.25)	-12.91* (5.266)	-11.66* (5.262)	-12.78* (5.34)	-13.06 * (5.29)
Global Power Shifts (5yrs)	28.768*** (10.169)	26.49 ** (10.069)	26.79 ** (10.08)	25.93 ** (10.099)	25.839** (10.08)	28.22 ** (10.23)	26.86 ** (10.07)
Joint Nuclear Ownership	.4587 (.4618)	.5753 (.458)	.5729 (.4578)	.3905 (.4741)	.5565 (.459)	.257 (.478)	.4662 (.4612)
Capability Advantage	.5715 (.3298)	-.7881 (.3896)	.0095 (.3891)	.4657 (.5058)	.0051 (.3887)	.8238 (.452)	.7197 (.3807)
Duration of Rivalry	-.0159 (.0127)	-.0163 (.0126)	-.0167 (.013)	-.0158 (.0126)	-.0166 (.0126)	-.0143 (.0128)	-.0152 (.0127)
Revisionist	1.707 *** (.202)	1.708 *** (.2022)	1.712*** (.2022)	1.709*** (.2026)	1.697*** (.2021)	1.7*** (.203)	1.719*** (.2025)
Peace Years	.1933*** (.0329)	.1954*** (.0330)	.1953*** (.0330)	.1984*** (.0333)	.1957*** (.0330)	.1962*** (.033)	.1933*** (.0331)
Jointly Satisfied	.4267 (.324)	.3793 (.3225)	.3737 (.322)	.3276 (.3248)	.419 (.3249)	.426 (.3297)	.3701 (.3225)
Number of Rivals	-.1264 (.0994)	-.1638 (.0973)	-.1635 (.0968)	-.1599 (.097)	-.1706 (.0969)	-.129 (.1003)	-.1435 (.098)

Note: Standard error shown in parentheses. Splines not shown.
* Significant at .05. **Significant at .01. *** Significant at .001.

3.7 Data Analysis

The first hypothesis predicts that military windows of opportunity will have little influence on the decisions of leaders to initiate greater hostilities against a rival. This is tested in Table 3.5 below. I test each of the indicators of military windows separately (Models 1-5), together (Model 6) and then collapse all of the indicators into a single dichotomous "Total Military Windows Variable" (Model 7).

The *p-values* for almost all the individual military windows (except for civil war) range between 0.221 and 0.829, which are far above the standard level for significance. Civil war is significant in Model 1 and Model 6. However, the shown coefficients suggest that civil war in state *B* actually decreases the likelihood that state *A* will escalate hostilities. This may be surprising at first based on common assumptions about war diffusion and window arguments that internal turmoil creates powerful incentives for interventionist behavior. However, three explanations may account for the negative civil war coefficient. One is consistent with the underlying logic of diplomatic windows: civil war in state *B* is likely to gain the attention of third-parties. State *A* may be hesitant to exploit the civil war because outsiders have expressed an interest in containing if not stabilizing the conflict or at the very least have not signaled support for the rival's intervention. A second explanation in many ways counters window logic in that it suggests bargaining is likely among rivals. That is, *B* may recognize its vulnerability and seek compromise with *A* or at least alter its position to lessen tensions. Or, comforted by *B*'s weakness, *A* may simply feel that it is no longer threatened and can achieve its objectives vis-à- vis *B* without force. This counters window logic in that states are thought to face a great deal of difficulty in finding a mutually acceptable bargaining space when faith in agreements is suspect, particularly where matters of survival are at stake. By suggesting that civil war leads to some accommodation works against the view that windows increase not decrease the cooperation problem. Nonetheless, this argument and finding is consistent with Diehl and Goertz, who suggest that domestic shocks can trigger the escalation *as well as* reconciliation of rivalries.[124] However, explaining why civil war may actually reduce the likelihood of escalation among rivals is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The main point is that the common assumption that states are more likely to exploit civil turmoil of a rival is misplaced.

[124] Paul F. Diehl and Gary Goertz, *War and Peace in International Rivalry* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000).

Military windows overall are poor indicators of when a state is more likely to escalate hostilities with a rival. Even when combined in a single variable in Model 7, traditional windows are unable to reliably provide insight into the likelihood of hostilities. And, when correcting for biases using rare events estimates, the results remain largely the same. However, civil war is no longer within the generally accepted level of statistical significance. As previously stated, though, I hesitate to rely too heavily on the rare events test.

Table 3.5 also shows that increases in the number of great powers and the global concentration of power both decrease the likelihood of escalation in this sample of rivalries. These independent variables are negatively correlated at -.4, so they may be capturing similar dynamics to some degree. That is, one would assume that the more great powers that exist in the system, the more diffuse power would be. However, this is not necessarily the case. For instance, there were 4 great powers in 1948 and the concentration of global power was .3567. Three years later, in 1951, there were 5 great powers but the global concentration of power was .375. Nonetheless, the data suggests that these variables, which conceptually run at cross-purposes, have similar effects on the likelihood of escalation. This perhaps points to an *inverse-U* relationship between these variables and escalation—a relationship the logit regression and dichotomous variables are ill-equipped to test. Further testing should be done but is out of the scope of this dissertation. Meanwhile, the last structural variable tested increases the likelihood of escalation. Shifts in global power of at least 20% over five years increase the likelihood of escalation. This parallels power transition theories of war and a great deal of empirical evidence that unstable power relations increase the likelihood of war.[125]

When state *A* is revisionist, it is clear that it is more likely to escalate hostilities against *B* in the above models. As mentioned earlier, this is unsurprising particularly given the relationships sampled here: enduring rivalries would seemingly imply that both are somewhat dissatisfied with the status quo. One is likely to be unhappy with the distribution of some good, while the other is likely to be dissatisfied with its rival's policy to change the extant distribution of said good. For this reason, I am somewhat skeptical of the practical importance of this variable in terms of explaining the likelihood of escalation. Somewhat surprising, however, is that joint

[125] Jacek Kugler and Douglas Lemke, "The Power Transition Research Program: Assessing Theoretical and Empirical Advances", in Manus I. Midlarsky (ed.), *Handbook of War Studies II* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), pp. 129-163.

satisfaction with the status quo does not seem to reduce the likelihood of aggression. However, looking at these two together would suggest that perhaps a state being revisionist is sufficient for aggression but joint satisfaction is neither necessary nor sufficient for peace.

Interestingly, increasing the number of years the rivals have gone without a dispute actually increases the likelihood of escalation. This is somewhat surprising given the time-dependent assumptions of rivalry behavior. However, this may be a function of the cases selected which rest on a rather high frequency of disputes over the duration of selected years. This presents a kind of hazard rate for predictions of hostility for every year of peace. That is, based on what we know of these cases, one could reasonably assume that the more years without a dispute, the greater the likelihood that there should be conflict in the following year.

The lack of significance of joint democracy is also consistent with findings that two states enjoying high levels of democracy are less likely to become enduring rivals. For instance, Hensel, Goertz and Diehl find only one case of an enduring rivalry between consistently democratic countries.[126] Indeed, we can see in the summary statistics of Table 3.3 that 8 is the highest level of joint democracy in the selected cases, while the mean is -6.56. A closer look at the data reveals that only 29 observations (rivalry-years) have a score of 6 or higher in joint-democracy, which is a commonly accepted level for expected peace. At the same time, there are only two instances where these scores are clustered to account for five sequential years (both within the Greece-Turkey rivalry, which were the years 1974-79 and 1984-88). The findings, then, do not necessarily suggest that joint democracy has no impact on the likelihood of escalation but that there is a self-selection bias associated with democracies and rivalries.

The insignificance of joint nuclear ownership also falls in line with two existing arguments: (1) nuclear weapons only deter the use of nuclear weapons and not military force *per se*; and, (2) joint nuclear ownership lays the groundwork for low level hostilities because states can feel certain that escalation will not reach general war. For instance, there were five escalations between Russia and China after China tested nuclear weapons and only four when Russia maintained a nuclear advantage. This would suggest that the effect of joint ownership of nuclear weapons

[126] Paul R. Hensel, Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, "The Democratic Peace and Rivals", *Journal of Politics* Vol. 62, No. 4 (November 2000), pp. 1173-88.

would not necessarily impact the frequency of escalation but the level of escalation—a relationship not tested here. Raw capability advantage similarly has little explanatory value but this is not that surprising given the purposeful selection of cases that approximate rough power parity or "truncated asymmetry".

Lastly, the lack of influence that the number of rivalries has is somewhat surprising. On one hand, I would expect that the greater number of rivals *B* has, the more likely it would be a target for aggression. On the other, perhaps the number of rivals the state has is in part a function of its own willingness to escalate hostilities with others or the greater number of rivals one has, the more aggressive it believes it must be. For instance, both China and Israel had five rivals at different times. An argument might be made that their aggressive behavior led to the high number of rivals. However, a similar argument could be made that their increase in number of rivals led to more aggressive behavior: they found it necessary to show a readiness for escalation in order to deter future hostilities. Again, however, this is out of the scope of this dissertation.

Hypothesis 2 predicts that windows of opportunity based on diplomatic factors will influence the likelihood of aggressive behavior. This is observable by distinguishing different types of signals that should theoretically have different influences on calculations of third-party intentions. Costly signals of support or hostility should reduce the likelihood that *A* will escalate hostilities because while they may indicate a clear and significant difference in third-party support, they are generally sent where the sender's core security interests pre-exist. This would indicate a certain consistency of third-party interests that challenges the temporal component of the window concept. This consistency and clarity of signals should allow both rivals to accurately calculate third-party intentions and alter their positions accordingly. I first test costly signals in Table 3.6. I test them separately in Model 1, then with all of the military window indicators in Model 2, and then with the dichotomous military windows variable in Model3.

The *p-values* for costly signals across the models are below the standard level for significance. Moreover, the coefficients are in the predicted direction: costly signals decrease the likelihood of conflict. Most of the results for the other variables remain similar to what was reported in Table 3.5. Interestingly, *p-values* for civil war are no longer within the standard level for significance. According to Table 3.5, civil war was thought to decrease the likelihood of escalation. Yet, in Table 3.5, costly

Table 3.6: Costly Signals and Military Escalation

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
LR chi2	160.62	170.46	163.27
Prob>chi2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Costly Signals	-.4379** (.172)	-.4592 ** (.174)	-.446 ** (.1724)
Civil War		-.4844 (.321)	
Interstate War		0.0025 (0.2614)	
Alliance Shift		-0.3070 (0.4756)	
Nuclear Advantage		-0.5498 (0.4220)	
Capability Shift		.2767 (.8435)	
Total Military Windows			-0.3496 (0.2170)
Joint Democracy	0.0269 (0.0277)	0.0251 (0.0280)	0.0287 (0.0278)
Number of Great Powers	-0.4358* (0.2137)	-0.5346* (0.2176)	-0.4763* (0.2161)
Global Power Concentration	-12.5985* (5.3122)	-12.9028* (5.4250)	-13.3113* (5.3701)
Global Power Shifts (5yrs)	29.039** (9.93)	28.6418** (10.7966)	27.8336** (10.6498)
Joint Nuclear Ownership	0.5695 (0.4591)	0.2519 (0.4809)	0.4555 (0.4629)
Capability Advantage	.558 (.332)	.8435 * (.4587)	.7339 * (.3539)
Duration of Rivalry	-.0167 (.0126)	-.0141 (.0128)	-.0152 (.0127)
Revisionist	2.215*** (.198)	1.7031*** (0.2039)	1.7247*** (0.2033)
Peace Years	0.1954*** (0.0330)	0.1964*** (0.0334)	0.1936*** (0.0332)
Jointly Satisfied	0.3781 (0.3223)	0.4257 (0.3299)	0.3688 (0.3226)
Number of Rivals	-0.1642 (0.0972)	-0.1302 (0.1005)	-0.1454 (0.0984)

Note: Standard error shown in parentheses. Splines not shown.
* Significant at .05. **Significant at .01. *** Significant at .001.

Table 3.7: Cheap Signals and Military Escalation

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
LR chi2	135.13	135.71	146.18	137.68
Prob>chi2	0.0000	0.0000		0.0000
Cheap Signals	.3650*	.3699 *	.3964 **	.3775 *
	(.1832)	(.1840)	(.1552)	(.1842)
Costly Signals		-.440**	-.4649**	-.4489**
		(.1726)	(.1748)	(.1726)
Civil War			-0.6797	
			(0.3711)	
Interstate War			-.4205	
			(.2615)	
Alliance Shift			.4366	
			(.4181)	
Nuclear Advantage			-0.5048	
			(0.4601)	
Capability Shift			.2726	
			(.8365)	
Raw Military Windows				-0.3211
				(0.2307)
Joint Democracy	0.0348	0.0344	0.0324	0.0365
	(0.0310)	(0.0309)	(0.0313)	(0.0310)
Number of Great Powers	-.4286 *	-.4497*	-.5175 *	-.496 *
	(.1945)	(.1961)	(.1998)	(.1995)
Global Power Concentration	-11.56 *	-11.56 *	-12.63*	-12.8073*
	(5.165)	(5.201)	(5.274)	(6.2613)
Global Power Shifts (5yrs)	32.034***	30.49 **	31.46**	31.15**
	(9.939)	(9.99)	(10.193)	(10.02)
Joint Nuclear Ownership	0.7081	0.7308	0.4118	0.6117
	(0.4920)	(0.4927)	(0.5200)	(0.4993)
Capability Advantage	-0.1383	.5469	.9073*	.7294*
	(0.4066)	(.3332)	(.4603)	(.3545)
Duration of Rivalry	-.0187	-0.0430	-.0162	-.0171
	(.0126)	(0.0162)	(.0128)	(.0127)
Revisionist	1.6417***	1.6428***	1.6190***	1.6635***
	(0.2205)	(0.2206)	(0.2234)	(0.2216)
Peace Years	0.2308***	0.2303***	0.2311***	0.2300***
	(0.0422)	(0.0422)	(0.0430)	(0.0424)
Jointly Satisfied	0.5695	0.5700	0.6406	0.5610
	(0.3583)	(0.3583)	(0.3703)	(0.3585)
Number of Rivals	-0.0996	-0.0953	-0.0548	-0.0784
	(0.0989)	(0.0991)	(0.1026)	(0.1004)

Note: Standard error shown in parentheses. Splines not shown.
* Significant at .05. **Significant at .01. *** Significant at .001.

signals are not taken into account. This suggests that costly signals provide a better explanation for why civil wars do not result in interstate hostilities. That is, this finding is consistent with the suggestion that third-parties may preemptively signal a reluctance to see civil wars spread. As such, state *A* is less likely to risk international opposition by exploiting its opportunity. No other indicator of a military window has a significant impact nor does the dichotomous military windows variable. Increases in the number of great powers and the global concentration of power both increase the likelihood of escalation in Models 1-3.

Hypothesis 4 argues that cheap signals will increase the likelihood of escalation. This is tested in Table 3.7 below. I test cheap windows separately in Model 1, then with costly signals in Model 2, and all of the military window indicators in Model 3. I then test both cheap and costly signals with the dichotomous "Total Military Windows Variable" in Model 4. We can see that cheap signals are in fact statistically significant across the models and that the influence is in the predicted direction. That is, sharp changes in cheap signals increase the likelihood of escalation. Indeed, cheap signals are consistently found to have a positive influence on the likelihood of escalation, whereas none of military windows can be considered to have a consistent effect on escalation—although civil war had a consistently negative impact on the likelihood of escalation until I controlled for costly signals. This result is consistent with recent findings that a shift in cheap signals by third parties can increase the likelihood of civil war onset as well as a breakdown in mediation and "pivotal deterrence".[127] There was no other change in the control or test variables from Tables 3.5 and 3.6.

3.8 Robustness

I explore the robustness of these findings using a different sample of cases as well as alternative measures of military escalation and diplomatic windows of opportunity resulting from changes in cheap signals from third parties. To limit a multiplication of tables, I do not list the findings here but am happy to provide files for running these tests in Stata upon request.

[127] Clayton L. Thyne, "Cheap Signals with Costly Consequences: The Effect of Interstate Relations on Civil War", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Vol. 50, No. 6 (December 2006), pp. 1-25.

Alternative Case Selection. Above, I defined my test cases as comprised of dyads that had experienced at least six militarized interstate disputes within a twenty year time period and had experienced a war. Doing so, I argued, would meet a relatively high threshold of "willingness" as well as help alleviate potential problems associated with power differentials. Here, I substitute these conditions for the cases that meet the threshold identified as a "proto-rivalry" by Paul Diehl and Gary Goertz in *War and Peace in International Rivalry*.[128] Proto-rivalries are dyads that experience three to five militarized disputes within a fifteen year period. This definition is intended to separate a conflictual relationship from isolated conflicts. I chose these cases in order to cast a wider net in terms of selection but where a relationship can still be identified as being hostile over a period of years rather than isolated and sporadic disputes. Because I make proto-rivalry the threshold for case selection, the new test cases inevitably include the more hostile enduring rivalries as well as those that experienced war. The resulting sample provides 5,266 observations within the 1948-1993 timeframe (as opposed to the 1,334 in the original).

Casting the net wider, however, introduces additional factors that were not previously considered—given the assumptions built into the original case selection process—but are likely to influence the probability of military escalation. For instance, the original case selection was based on a very high level of hostile interaction that assumed the military of each rival presented an extant security threat to the other. But in this wider selection of cases, that is not always so. For example, the United States and Peru represent an enduring rivalry (1955-1992). Without a significant U.S. military presence directly confronting Peru, however, it is difficult to argue that this relationship is subject to the same window logic as the U.S.-North Korea rivalry, where U.S. forces have long been mobilized along North Korea's border.[129] This is perhaps due in part to the relative distance between entities—a factor that is less meaningful where the enduring rivalry has experienced war due to the presumed proximity of military forces necessary to engage in such intense conflict.

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[128] I used their data to generate this list, available at http://www.pol.uiuc.edu/diehl/diehl3lnk.htm.

[129] To give an idea of the discrepancy, the average number of U.S. military personnel stationed *only* in South Korea (1955-1993) was 48,185 and the average number of its personnel deployed in all of the Americas during the same time was 22,495. Data available from Tim Kane, *Troop Deployment Dataset, 1950–2003*, The Heritage Foundation, Center for Data Analysis, October 2004, at *www.heritage.org/Research/NationalSecurity/troopsdb.cfm* .

To control for proximity, I use a "contiguity" variable that codes rivals along the following lines: 1) land contiguity; 2) contiguous for up to twelve miles of water; 3) contiguous for 13-24 miles of water; 4) contiguous for 25-150 miles of water; 5) contiguous for 151-400 miles of water; and, 6) not contiguous. I also use a raw measure of "distance" in miles between capitals, adjusting for land contiguity (coded as 0).[130] These correlate at a high level (.73) but control for different measures of proximity that could influence the likelihood of escalation. For instance, Washington and Havana are 1,129 miles apart but Cuba is within 25-150 miles off the coast of Florida. So, the distance between capitals does not accurately depict the relative proximity of military forces. At the same time, the contiguity variable may identify rivalries that are relatively close over land, such as Thailand and Vietnam as, non-contiguous because they are separated by another country. Yet, the distance between their capitals is only 614 miles. This would be within reasonable projection capabilities of many limited militaries but particularly so if that distance can be overcome through occupation of the territory separating the two, such as Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia in the 1970s.

Escalation Measures. To vary the measure for escalation, I utilize an "initiator" dummy variable in the COW data to identify when country *A* initiates a new dispute against country *B* (a new dispute that does not necessarily include a military component). I am then able to have three different measures for escalation to test using both case selection samples: the original measure, which identifies the escalating country by the highest level of military hostility; a second one, which identifies the initiator of a new dispute; and, a third, which takes both into account. I also adjust the splines accordingly to control for temporal dependence of the dependent variable.

Diplomatic Windows. To get different measures for diplomatic windows, I simply vary the levels of change in third party signals to identify when a window occurs. I keep the original proxy that is based on two formulations: (1) a 1.25 decline in support for state *B*, where third-party support for state *A* remains at least 1 point higher than state *B*; and (2) the relative support for state *A* versus *B* rises by 2 points

[130] Both of these measures are available through the *EUgene* software. D. Scott Bennett and Allan C. Stam, *EUGene: Expected Utility Generation and Data Management Program* [computer file], (2005), httl://www.eugenesoftware.org.

in a single year, where *A*'s score remains above zero along the -6 to +6 continuum. To develop two additional measures, I adjust the first component of each formulation—change in signals that indicate decline and relative support—but keep the second component of each intended to ensure that *A* maintains some reasonable level of international support relative to *B*. The intention here is to lower and raise the threshold for identifying a diplomatic window to test the dependency of my findings on my particular measurements and is not intended to test every possible combination of measures—which would be infinite. For one, I lower the 1.25 decline in third party support for *B* to 1 and lower the relative support score to 1.5. This increases the number of diplomatic windows by over a third. For the second, I raise the threshold of decline to 1.5 and raise the relative support score to 2.5. This decreases the number of diplomatic windows by about one-fourth.

Findings. Before discussion, I want to point out that I dropped two control variables in the larger selection of cases—rivalry duration and the number of rivals of state *B*. Neither was significant in the original tests conducted above and given the wider selection of dyads, developing these control variables seemed overly burdensome given the likely benefits in accuracy. Also, it should be noted that the signals data provide slightly different scores for the larger sample. Because it is necessary to drop signals data between dyads being tested for escalatory behavior to avoid endogeneity problems, this larger selection of cases inevitably led to a larger number of signals being dropped in the data. However, the difference in signal scores between samples is only -0.007 with a standard deviation of 1.24 (less than the standard error in both samples).

Using the fixed effects logistic regression to test each of the different models, I found that the changes in the measure for escalation decreased the level of significance of the diplomatic factors. Neither costly signals nor diplomatic windows based on sharp changes in cheap signals provided *p-values* to suggest that they were statistically significance in either of the samples. Civil military windows were found to have a negative impact on the likelihood of escalation ($p<0.01$), however, which is consistent with earlier findings. Interestingly, military windows based on change in alliance relations was found to have a positive influence on the likelihood of escalation ($p<0.01$) when taking the initiator of a dispute into consideration. The literature doesn't provide an explanation for this difference, pointing toward future

research questions. Nonetheless, generally speaking, windows of opportunity—whether diplomatic or military—are poor predictors of escalatory behavior when taking dispute initiator into account rather than the highest level of hostility. Given the non-military component of the dispute initiator variable, this may simply suggest that leaders are more willing to initiate lower level disputes without a perceived advantage but are more likely to raise the military stakes when they see an advantage. Again, this points toward future research.

Diplomatic factors, however, were found to have significant influence in the wider selection of cases (using the highest level of hostility as the measure for escalation). That is, the original proxy for diplomatic windows based on sharp changes in cheap signals increased the likelihood of military escalation ($p<.01$) and costly signals decreased the likelihood of escalation ($p<.05$). This suggests that perhaps the heavy emphasis on associating "willingness" with extreme levels of insecurity is unnecessary. However, this larger sample of cases still maintained a level of mutual insecurity above the global average. For future research, I am working to devise a wider selection of cases based on a conflict-cooperation continuum to further test this assumption.

When using the lower threshold for identifying diplomatic windows, however, it was no longer found to have a statistically significant impact, while the higher threshold continued to have a positive influence on the likelihood of escalation and remained statistically significant ($p<.05$). This is consistent with the argument that sharp or drastic as opposed to subtle change is an important component of windows of opportunity. Meanwhile, military windows provided by nuclear weapons as well as shifts in capabilities were found to decrease the likelihood of escalation ($p<.001$ and $p<.05$ respectively) in the larger sample. Again, this draws into question the often expressed argument that shifts in military capabilities open windows of opportunity to encourage aggressive behavior.

3.9 Summary

The findings in this statistical analysis generally support the predicted outcomes based on rational expectations. Namely, (H1 and H2) a shift in military capabilities may not open the window many analysts predict if the perceived advantage is offset by fear of international opposition. This may help explain why so many military opportunities go unexploited even when traditional window theory predicts

otherwise.[131] At the same time, (H2) a state that anticipates third-party support may be tempted to escalate hostilities, even if it is militarily weaker than its opponent. This could help explain aggressive behavior where no clear military advantage exists—unexplained by traditional window arguments. Therefore, a sudden rise in international support for one state over another can open a perceived window to pursue aggressive policies without opposition from and possibly even with the assistance of third-parties. However, research on interstate signals provides insight into how different signals of support or opposition can produce different effects. (H3) Costly signals provide the strongest forms of third-party support or hostility but the level of interest being communicated using costly signals is unlikely to be an aberration from general third-party interests. This consistency does not necessarily fit within the temporal component of a window of opportunity and is likely to encourage prewar bargains that avoid the need for hostilities. By contrast, (H4) "cheap signals" can lead to miscalculation. They may promote (undue) optimism by a state looking for international support but fail to convince its rival of the need for compromise. They are also apt to greater fluctuation that more readily fits within the temporal parameter of a window and sharp changes can lead to a perceived window for aggression with international impunity or even third-party support—an opportunity a state did not have previously and may not have in the near future.

[131] For three contemporary examples, see Richard Ned Lebow, "Windows of Opportunity: Do States Jump Through Them?", *International Security* Vol. 9, No. 1 (Summer 1984), pp. 147-186. For a broader student, see Björn Holmberg, *Passing the Open Windows: A Quantitative and Qualitative Approach to Immediate Military Balance and Escalation of Protracted Conflict*, Report No. 47 (Uppsala, Sweden: Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University, 1998).

Chapter 4: A Case Study Research Design

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the rationale for selecting the India-Pakistan rivalry for my case studies and to discuss my research strategy. Andrew Bennett and Alexander George identify five tasks for designing theory-oriented, case study research.[132] Two of these tasks, the specification of research objectives and variables, were taken up in previous chapters. However, the remaining three—case selection, description of variance of key variables, and formulation of data requirements—need greater attention. Stephen Van Evera provides a list of eleven considerations for selecting cases, reflecting two general principles: cases should serve the purpose of the inquiry and maximize the strength and number of tests the investigator can perform.[133] I use the data in the previous chapter to help identify an appropriate case. I find that the India-Pakistan rivalry meets seven of the specific case attributes Van Evera identifies as possible reasons for selection (some of the eleven criteria are at cross-purposes based on the aims of the investigator) and, as such, follows the broad guidelines he sets out. These include: (1) extreme values on the independent, dependent or antecedent variable, (2) large within case variance on the independent, dependent or antecedent variable, (3) divergence of predictions made of the case by competing theories, (4) prototypicality of case conditions, (5) resemblance of case background to current policy problems, (6) data richness and (7) intrinsic importance. Below, I discuss these considerations.

4.1 India-Pakistan: A Strong Case

There are several reasons why the India-Pakistan rivalry presents what might be considered a "strong" case for testing the predictions set out in chapter 2.[134] These are related to the extreme values in the dependent variable (military escalation) combined with the multi-polar and dynamic regional structure in which the rivalry exists. Because I present an argument that suggests diplomatic factors outweigh

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[132] Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), ch. 4.
[133] Stephen Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), pp. 77-88.
[134] For a discussion of crucial or critical cases, their flaws and means for bettering case study research, see Gary King, Robert O. Keohane and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 209-230. The additional considerations for case selection discussed below help address the flaws these authors discuss. Also, for the parallel concept of a "strong case", see Van Evera, *Guide to Methods*, pp. 30-34.

military ones in understanding when windows lead to aggression, I have tried to select a case that theoretically favors military over diplomatic considerations.

Over the past decade, there have been various definitions of enduring rivalries or their conceptual counterparts that result in different compilations. Yet, the India-Pakistan conflict appears on every list and is widely seen as the prototypical rivalry.[135] From 1947 to 2001, there were forty-three militarized disputes and four wars between the two countries. As the data in Table 4.1 show, India and Pakistan experienced the greatest number of hostile escalations (32) of any two states within the 1948-1993 timeframe—a distinction that holds true from the end of World War II to today. This number of escalations is more than double the 13 average among rivals and is nine more than the runner-up for most hostile escalations—North Korea-South Korea. Indeed, the recurring conflict, arms racing and domestic instabilities have by many estimates made South Asia, in the words of former President Clinton, "the most dangerous place on earth."[136]

At the same time, Paul Diehl, Gary Goertz, and Daniel Saeedi note that the India-Pakistan confrontations are exclusively dyadic in that the disputes do not involve proxy conflicts or evolve out of competition between opposing alliances, such as some of the rivalries related to the Cold War. "[W]hatever hostility is manifest in the rivalry", they argue, "is concentrated on the other rival and not secondarily to other states….[Whereas others, such as] Israel's rivalry with Syria clearly involves some bilateral issues (e.g., Golan Heights), but probably cannot be divorced from an Israeli-Palestinian or an Israeli-Lebanese resolution." This does not suggest that third parties have no role on the subcontinent but that "the most dangerous form of rivalry linkage is not responsible for exacerbating the India-Pakistan rivalry."[137]

The lack of linkages underscores the significance and intensity of disputes between India and Pakistan, which should lend greater confidence to the independence of escalatory decisions. That is, neither state should be compelled—out of security dependence or issue linkages—to escalate hostilities for reasons outside strategic, bilateral considerations. Rather than being tied to external

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[135] For instance, see Paul F. Diehl and Gary Goertz, *War and Peace in International Rivalry* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000); and, William R. Thompson, "Identifying Rivals and Rivalries in World Politics," *International Studies Quarterly* 45 (1995), pp. 557-87.

[136] Former President William Jefferson Clinton, as quoted in Barry Bearak, "The Mystery of Chittisinghpora," *The New York Times Magazine*, December 31, 2000, pp. 26-55.

[137] Paul F. Diehl, Gary Goertz, and Daniel Saeedi, "Theoretical Specifications of Enduring Rivalries: Applications to the India-Pakistan Case", in T.V. Paul (ed.), *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 44.

developments, each state should have relative flexibility in launching offenses or raising the level of hostilities to leverage against the other when it sees an opportune time. Thus, diplomatic factors should be less important than military calculations if we think of the two as being mutually exclusive.

To be sure, the self-help assumption that underlies most research on windows of opportunity stems from the realist school of thought. Here, international politics is shaped largely by military force and the distribution of capabilities. Most realists hold that increasing the number of powers in a system increases the self-help tendency among states and, as a result, increases the dependency on military considerations. That is why neo-realists generally believe multi-polar systems are more unstable than bi-polar ones.[138] Under multi-polar conditions, power is typically uneven and miscalculations of military capabilities are more likely. Thus, extended deterrence is less credible, balancing is inefficient (e.g. buck-passing becomes more attractive) and each state's security is more elusive. In other words, there are fewer structural disincentives for aggression because states will be less confident in the commitment of others to stability. Under such conditions, security is thought to be increasingly scarce, providing incentives for states to look for opportunities to build their own power at the expense of others.

According to this line of thinking, multi-polarity should provide heightened security competition and opportunism. The higher the security competition, the more states will focus on relative military capabilities and give less regard to diplomacy because third-parties are less credible in an unstable security environment. The extent to which scholars, such as Aaron Friedberg, are correct that the international system more closely approximates a set of regional subsystems than true global polarity (uni-, bi-, or multi-polar), South Asia should be a region that embodies this self-help principal.[139] Overlapping regional rivalries and fluctuations in power relations over the last half-century only underscore the fluid security environment: the

[138] There is a great deal of literature on the differences between bipolar and multipolar systems for state behavior. Waltz, who is widely viewed as the standard-bearer of structural realism, suggests "[F]or the sake of stability", he writes, "smaller is better and two is best of all." *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), p. 161.

[139] Aaron L. Friedberg, "Ripe for Rivalry: Prospects for Peace in a Multipolar Asia", *International Security* Vol. 18, No.3 (Winter 1993/94), pp. 5-33. While Friedberg primarily discusses the post-Cold War system and the potential withdraw of U.S. influence in Asia, there is a long line of scholarship that has argued for seeing the world as a system of regional sub-systems with more or less great power influence over the last six decades. For a review of these different views, see David A. Lake and Patrick M. Morgan (eds.), *Regional Orders: Building Security in a New World* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).

main regional actors in Asia—China, India, Japan, Pakistan and Russia—comprised five enduring rivalries last century. The rise to power of China, India, and Japan along with the decline of Russia over the last fifty years has complicated attempts to calculate capabilities and has made alignments tenuous.[140] Indeed, shifting alliances and power distributions have made for a fairly uncertain regional environment. As a result, the role of third-parties in the India-Pakistan conflict should be second to the relative military balance because third-party credibility would be low.

Table 4.1: Sum of Key Variables Across Rivalries

Dyad	Esc	Mil Win	Cos Sig	Dip Win
China – India	19	31	26	16
China – Japan	2	6	7	0
China – South Korea	10	41	26	14
China – Vietnam	13	20	9	7
Egypt – Israel	13	1	27	13
Greece – Bulgaria	3	4	4	3
Greece – Turkey	16	25	7	20
India – Pakistan	32	34	27	24
Iran – Iraq	18	21	21	12
Iraq – Israel	7	19	16	3
Iraq – Kuwait	10	21	21	16
Israel – Saudi Arabia	7	2	22	8
Italy – Yugoslavia	5	2	6	6
Jordan – Israel	11	2	24	6
North Korea – South Korea	23	15	21	19
Russia/Soviet Union – China	15	41	26	13
Russia/Soviet Union – Japan	22	51	24	16
Somalia – Ethiopia	17	12	15	12
Syria – Israel	15	5	21	13
United States – China	5	22	15	4
United States – North Korea	15	54	25	23
Vietnam – Thailand	6	9	15	15

The above argues for viewing the India-Pakistan rivalry as a strong case for testing window theory. Since I present an argument that suggests diplomatic factors outweigh military ones in understanding when windows lead to aggression, I have tried to select a case where military considerations should weigh heavier than diplomatic ones in strategic decisions. The India-Pakistan rivalry has been the most prone to hostile escalations over the last half-century. This means that there should be a premium placed on military readiness and relative capabilities. The rivalry also

[140] For a discussion on the effects of power transitions, see Jacek Kugler and Douglas Lemke, "The Power Transition Research Program: Assessing Theoretical and Empirical Advances", in Manus I. Midlarsky (ed.), *Handbook of War Studies II* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), pp. 129-163.

sits within a precarious regional environment. Theoretically speaking, this means that third-party credibility should be low and have less of an impact on strategic decision-making. Only Israel and its rivals and the Korea peninsula match the level of repeated competition, proclivity toward violence and regional uncertainty. However, the complex linkages of issues, tight alliances and direct great power competition in the Middle East and East Asia suggest that escalatory decisions by these actors are more likely to be influenced by diplomatic considerations and not just the target of action. This view is supported by Diehl and Goertz, when they highlight the difficulty of isolating dyadic relations in the Middle East due to the linkages of disputes and influence of extra-regional actors.[141] Choosing a Middle East or the East Asian rivalry, then, would perhaps unfairly bias any findings in favor of diplomatic windows.

4.2 Selection Strategy and the Key Variables

Some may argue that cases should be selected based on values of the independent or explanatory variables. For this study, such an approach would be problematic for several reasons. One, doing so without consideration of the security context would not necessarily provide any leverage in testing window arguments because the causal logic underlying windows is that there could be serious consequences for the advantaged state once the opportunity is lost. Once the universe of cases has been defined to meet that threshold based on higher-than-average levels of security competition, it makes less sense to look for correlation using cases where there are extreme values of military or diplomatic windows because the cases are biased to exhibit extreme values of the study variable—escalation of hostilities. Two, the duration of rivalries covered in the 1948-1993 time period varies across dyads. For instance, only four years of the Greece-Bulgarian rivalry are considered but there are forty-five years for the Sino-Soviet rivalry. Selecting one of these cases over the other because it has relatively low or high values of the explanatory variables would likely be a function of the number of observations for each rivalry. Lastly, I do not contest that military opportunities play a role in certain conflicts. Rather, I argue that they play less of a role in general than most theorists suggest due to misplaced assumptions about diplomatic factors. It would be unsurprising, then, that a case with high values of military windows would also exhibit significant levels of escalation.

[141] Diehl and Goertz, *War and Peace in International Rivalry*, pp. 241-262.

By selecting cases with extreme values of the dependent variable, the relative weight of the competing explanatory variables should become apparent in the analysis.[142] This approach might be problematic if the explanatory variables in the case were skewed to heavily favor military or diplomatic windows. However, as shown in Table 4.1 above, the frequency of competing explanatory variables approximates the highest levels across rivalries from 1948 to 1993. There are 34 observations indicating a military window of opportunity in the India-Pakistan rivalry from 1948-1993. The rivalries (except USSR-China) exhibiting higher levels of military windows are great power-(non)great-power rivalries, which means that the windows are likely skewed in favor of the great power. For example, the United States maintains a military window of opportunity over North Korea for the entire duration of the rivalry covered here because it possessed nuclear weapons while North Korea did not. There are also twenty-seven indications of costly signals and twenty-four diplomatic windows based on sharp changes in cheap signal. Again, both are among the highest scores across rivals.

The relatively equal measures of military and diplomatic windows in the India-Pakistan rivalry have two additional benefits for this study. One, the case should provide a fair test of the relative influence each has in decisions to escalate hostilities. And, two, these findings underscore the difference in predictions made by competing theorists. For instance, many scholars such as Russell Leng argue that "strategic opportunities" help us understand when hostilities escalate between the two, particularly when Pakistan—generally thought to be revisionist and India a satisfied state—perceives a military advantage.[143] Yet, Leng goes on in his study to identify a list of other factors that influence escalatory behavior, including relations with great powers.[144] Ganguly similarly argues that the four Indo-Pakistani wars resulted from false senses of opportunity related to both the military balance and alliance commitments.[145] On one hand, the equally high presence of diplomatic and military shifts in the India-Pakistan rivalry is supported by previous findings. On the other, previous research has ignored the relative weight that these tendencies have

[142] Van Evera, *Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science*, pp. 79-81.
[143] Russell J. Leng, "Realpolitik and Learning in the India-Pakistan Rivalry", in Paul (ed.), *The India-Pakistan Conflict*, pp. 103-105.
[144] Also, see Russell J. Leng, *Bargaining and Learning in Recurring Crises: The Soviet-American, Egyptian-Israel, and Indo-Pakistan Rivalries* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), ch. 5.
[145] Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions since 1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

in escalatory decisions. As such, the case meets an additional selection criterion: the divergence of predictions made of the case by competing theories, although the scholarship has overwhelmingly emphasized military over diplomatic factors.

Another concern over cases selected on the dependent variable stems from an over-determination of the study variable. However, Table 4.2 below shows that the India-Pakistan rivalry has significant within-case variation of the independent and dependent variables. With the largest number of hostile escalations among all dyads for the 1948-1993 timeframe, the India-Pakistan rivalry provides a case with the greatest number of identifiable points of observation for testing the proposed arguments. That is, hostile escalations can be compared to the average known situation—stability—and the conditions that led to this change can then be identified. While there are 32 decision points of escalation in only 45 years, the average situation can nonetheless be considered stable because, in most cases, hostilities launched at time *t* were defused within a short period and stability prevailed prior to renewed hostilities in time *t+n*. Even within the most conflictual settings, the norm tends not to be violence or war. Peace and stability—even if tenuous—is the general condition over time while purposeful decisions to escalate hostilities punctuate this history.[146] This approach follows the logic of case study research put forth by Alexander George and Timothy McKeown, when they argue that "the behavior of [a] system is not summarized by a single data point, but by a series of points or curves plotted through time."[147] By dividing time into multiple observations within a case, greater explanatory leverage can then be gained through process tracing, which increase the points of observation by looking at the steps along a process from stimuli to decisions.

"A theory that links initial conditions to outcomes", King, Keohane and Verba argue, "will often imply a particular set of motivations or perceptions on the part of the actors. Process tracing will then involve searching for evidence—evidence consistent with the overall causal theory—about the decisional process by which the outcome was produced."[148] Reliable process tracing, of course, requires sufficient

[146] See Diehl, Goertz, and Saeedi, "Theoretical Specifications of Enduring Rivalries: Applications to the India-Pakistan Case", pp. 40-43.
[147] Alexander L. George and Timothy J. McKeown, "Case Studies and Theories of Organizational Decision Making," *Advances in Information Processing in Organizations* 2 (1985), p. 36.
[148] King, Keohane and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry*, p. 227.

Table 4.2: Escalation and Windows in the India-Pakistan Rivalry

Year	Initiator	I-Nuke	I-Cap	I-Civil	I-War	I-All	I-Mil	I-Cos	I-Chp	P-Nuke	P-Cap	P-Civil	P-War	P-All	P-Mil	P-Cos	P-Chp
1949																	
1950	I/P																
1951	I																
1952																	X
1953									X								
1954																	X
1955	I/P								X							X	
1956	P							X									
1957	P																
1958	P																
1959	I																X
1960	P																X
1961	I							X									X
1962	I/P							X					X		X		
1963	P							X					X		X		
1964	I																
1965	P															X	
1966	P																
1967	I								X							X	
1968								X	X								
1969	I/P							X									X
1970	I							X									
1971	I/P			X			X	X	X								
1972	P			X			X										X
1973				X			X	X								X	
1974		X		X			X	X									
1975		X		X			X	X								X	
1976		X		X			X										X
1977		X		X			X		X								
1978		X		X			X		X							X	
1979		X					X										
1980		X					X									X	
1981	I/P	X					X										X
1982	I	X					X	X	X								
1983	I/P	X					X									X	X
1984		X					X		X							X	
1985	P	X					X					X			X		
1986	I	X					X		X			X			X	X	
1987		X					X		X			X			X		
1988		X					X					X			X	X	
1989		X					X					X			X	X	
1990	I/P	X					X		X			X			X		
1991	I	X					X		X			X			X		X
1992		X					X					X			X		
1993	P	X					X					X			X		

data. This brings me to another consideration Van Evera recommends for case selection. Given the recurrence of conflict on the subcontinent, the data for analyzing the decision process that led to escalatory behavior is rich. Of course, there are limitations in relying on translations, secondary sources and official accounts or memoirs of a conflict that is ongoing, where some may have added instrumental incentive for providing incomplete or misleading information. This would be true of most any study when taking seriously a last consideration identified by Van Evera that cases approximate current policy problems. Indeed, the 2006 *National Security Strategy of the United States of America* identifies defusing the India-Pakistan conflict as a primary means for meeting the national security goals, second only to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.[149] As a result of the ongoing conflict, however, special care is taken to carefully document sources and to stay close to the most widely accepted historical accounts.

4.3 Summary

For the purpose of the dissertation, I examine the three wars that erupted in 1948, 1965 and 1971 as well as lower-level escalations that did not necessarily end in war throughout the 1950s and 1960s. I have selected this time period (essentially 1947-1972) for three reasons. One, it represents the most volatile time of the India-Pakistan rivalry, providing me with the greatest number of escalatory observations. Out of the twenty five years, only five went without hostilities. As a result, data for this time period is also more readily available than later periods due to the scholarly emphasis on explaining the three wars rather than the relative stability or lesser conflict that followed. Indeed, it is perhaps less interesting but inevitably more difficult to explain non-events or why leaders did not escalate hostilities such as the relative stability of the 1970s.

Two, the security studies literature that exists on India and Pakistan has overwhelmingly converged on a view that each of the three wars occurred as a result of shifts in military advantage that opened windows of opportunity. For instance, Leng argues that "Pakistan found strategic opportunities in the Muslim unrest in Kashmir following partition in 1947."[150] Sumit Ganguly similarly finds that "The

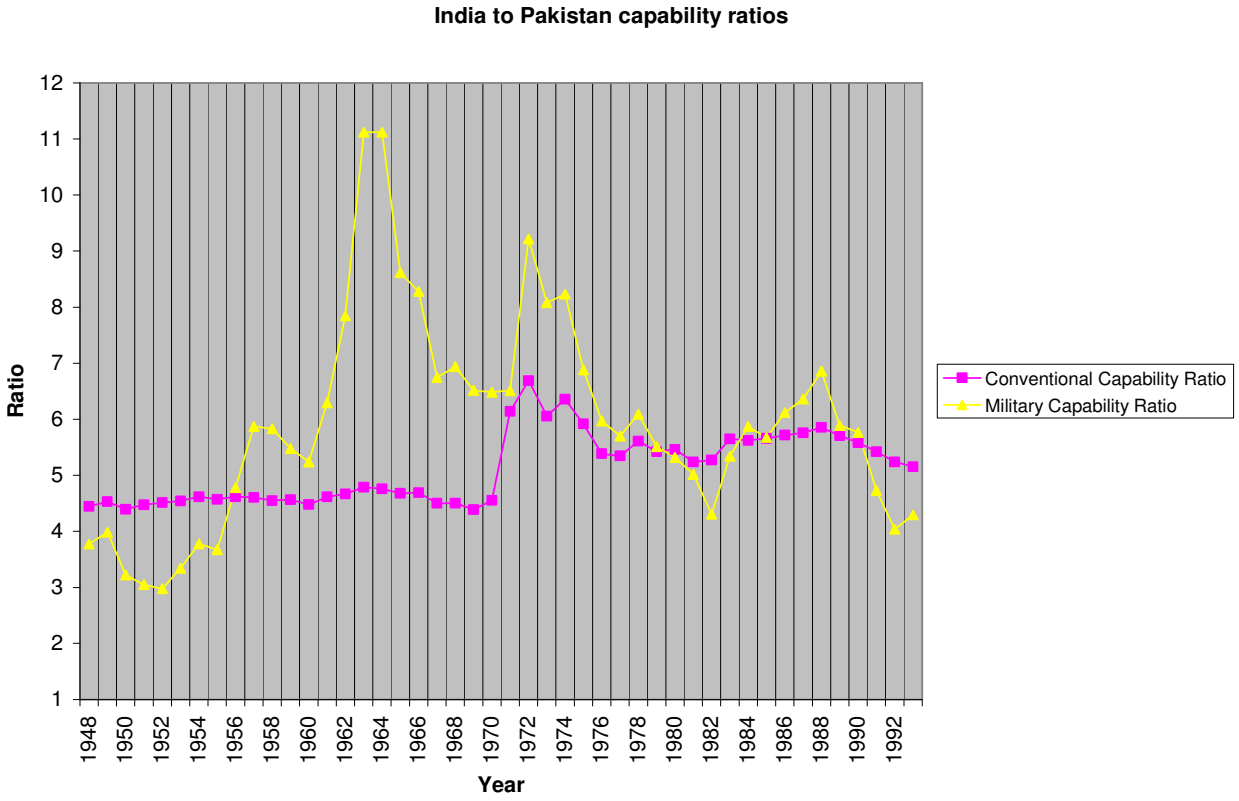
[149] George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2006).
[150] Russell J. Leng, "Realpolitik and Learning in the India-Pakistan Rivalry", in Paul (ed.), *The India-Pakistan Conflict*, p. 104.

second Indo-Pakistani war *underscored the logic of windows of opportunity*….[A]fter a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) in October-November 1962 along its Himalayan frontiers, India had embarked on a major attempt to revamp its military infrastructure….India's growing military prowess would soon foreclose the possibilities of meaningful military action. From the Pakistani standpoint the *window of opportunity* was rapidly closing."[151] And, analysts, such as Wayne Wilcox, have characterized Pakistan's civil war and the seccesion of Bangladesh in 1971 as "a golden military opportunity for India to eliminate the Pakistani threat."[152] Thus, the conflict during this time period is widely seen as being driven by dramatic shifts in military capabilities that opened windows of opportunity.

Third, power relations between India and Pakistan have always been asymmetric. India is currently over seven times larger than Pakistan in population and size of national economy and four times in territory. Figure 4.4 shows the ratio of CINC scores as well as a more limited measure of the ratio of military capabilities (based on military personnel and military expenditures). The lowest power advantage India held was in the early 1950s with about 4.3:1 CINC score Pakistan, while its lowest military advantage was around 1953 with a 3:1 military advantage. At the same time, the height of India's advantage in gross power relations (based on CINC scores) was around 1972 with a score of over 6.5:1. And, its greatest advantage in raw military capabilities occurred in 1963 with a score of over 11:1. Thus, this time period also encompasses the largest variation in power relations that at one point would favor Pakistan and then India at another point. The relative weight of power relations as an explanatory variable should then become apparent in a study that covers the relevant time period.

[151] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 31, emphasis added.
[152] Wayne Wilcox, *The Emergence of Bangladesh* (Washington, DC; American Enterprise Institute, 1973), p. 35.

Figure 4.3: India to Pakistan Capability Ratios



Also, for the purposes of the case study, I focus primarily on relations of the great powers with India and Pakistan. These include Great Britain in the initial years of independence and China, the United States and Soviet Union for the remainder of the time. This is not to say that other actors such as Iran and Indonesia do not play a role. Rather, the attempt here is to focus on the relations that are likely to have the greatest influence. As such, not every major power has an equal role throughout the conflict either. Instead, their different influences fluctuate over the course of the rivalry. It is often these fluctuations that precipitate conflict in the region and are therefore the focus of efforts below.

Chapter 5: The India-Pakistan Rivalry

Since independence in 1947, India and Pakistan have repeatedly clashed. Few post-World War II conflicts, perhaps with the exception of the Arab-Israeli dispute, have been as intractable and violent as the India-Pakistan rivalry. By 2001, there had been forty-three militarized disputes and four wars between the two. Recurring conflict, arms racing (now including a nuclear dimension) and domestic instabilities have by many estimates made South Asia, in the words of former President Clinton, "the most dangerous place on earth."[153]

There is no dearth of explanations for the unending stream of conflict. Some hold the competition to be rooted in divergent and largely antithetical worldviews of Hinduism and Islam.[154] Others have argued that the conflict is the legacy of British colonialism, which inflamed religiously-based schisms.[155] Still others suggest that ideological commitments to early anti-colonial movements tie domestic politics and identities to disputed provinces.[156] That is, Pakistan was founded as a homeland for Muslims in South Asia. This national purpose feeds an irredentist claim to the Muslim-majority Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir (abbreviated as Kashmir). Meanwhile, India's vision of civic nationalism rests on an ability to demonstrate that all communities, regardless of religion, can thrive under its secular government. Giving up Kashmir, it is argued, could erode New Delhi's claim of inclusion and precipitate national disintegration.

Thirty-seven of the forty-three or about 86 percent of the militarized disputes between India and Pakistan have involved Kashmir.[157] Such territorial disputes are by far the most salient issues in rivalry settings and are particularly difficult to compromise.[158] It would be political suicide (or worse) for Indian or Pakistani politicians to concede any claim to Kashmir. A recent statement from Pakistan's

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[153] Former President William Jefferson Clinton, as quoted in Barry Bearak, "The Mystery of Chittisinghpora," *The New York Times Magazine*, December 31, 2000, pp. 26-55.
[154] For instance, see, S. M. Burke, *Mainsprings of Indian and Pakistani Foreign Policies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974).
[155] Nicholas B. Dirks, *Colonialism and Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992).
[156] See Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions since 1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); and Stephen M. Saideman, "At the Heart of the Conflict: Irredentism and Kashmir", in Paul (ed.), *The India-Pakistan Conflict*, pp. 202-224.
[157] See, for instance, the rivalry narrative provided by James P. Klein, Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, "The New Rivalry Dataset: Procedures and Patterns", *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 43, No. 3 (2006), pp. 331-348. This data and accompanying rivalry narratives are available online at ftp://128.196.23.212/rivalry/riv500web.zip.
[158] Paul K. Huth, "Territory: Why Are Territorial Disputes between States a Central Cause of International Conflict?" in John A. Vasquez (ed.), *What do we Know About War?* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2000), pp. 57-84.

leader, General Pervez Musharraf, illustrates this: "Kashmir runs in our blood. No Pakistani can afford to sever links with Kashmir. The entire Pakistan and the world know this. We will continue to extend our moral, political and diplomatic support to Kashmiris. We will never budge an inch from our principled stand on Kashmir."[159] Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee recently made an equal counter-claim: "We wish to state once again that Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. It will remain so...For us, Kashmir is not a piece of land; it is a test case of Sarva Dharma Samabhava –secularism. India has always stood the test of a secular nation. Jammu and Kashmir is a living example of this."[160] But more than just symbolic, both states consider Kashmir vital to their security. Its high mountain passes provide strategic footing over the other as well as a defensive strongpoint against any incursions from the north—China and Russia. Moreover, its rivers irrigate major farmlands in both countries below.

The above conditions are constant in the rivalry, however, and constants are unable to explain variation. As a result, these factors may help explain the seemingly intractable competition between India and Pakistan but they do not help us understand why or when hostilities escalate at certain times and not others. To answer these questions, one must ask what changes occur prior to hostilities that lead to war-risking decisions. For instance, regarding the four India-Pakistan wars, Sumit Ganguly explains:

> The immediate precipitants of war in the region…were all *opportunistic* events: in each case, one or both parties saw significant opportunities at critical historical junctures to damage the other's fundamental claims either to the territory of Kashmir or to the larger project of state construction.[161]

Were these events windows of opportunity? Are these opportunities better understood in terms of military or diplomatic factors? How exactly have shifts in military and diplomatic relations influenced decisions to escalate hostilities between India and Pakistan?

Debate in the security studies literature has been notably absent. Rather, scholarship on the India-Pakistan rivalry has remained largely the province of

[159] "Text of President Musharraf's Address to the Nation," *Dawn*, January 12, 2002.
[160] Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Independence Day address, August 15,2002.
[161] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p.6, emphasis in original.

comparative politics and area studies research.[162] As a result, there has been an emphasis on the uniqueness of the conflict and not on the lessons for understanding strategic behavior. For example, even though Ganguly recognizes that "The immediate precipitants of war in the region…were all *opportunistic* events", his influential study does not focus on these events per se but on "how *certain structural features* of both polities, embodied in their nationalist agendas, *predisposed* them toward conflict over the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir."[163] I attempt to address these "opportunities" directly below and am less interested in the unique characteristic that may predispose leaders toward conflict.

5.1 1947-1948: Independence, Instability and Escalation

The First Kashmir War occurred in 1947-48, almost immediately after independence to set the rivalry in motion. It grew out of British colonialism, when several "princely states" remained nominally independent but recognized the "paramountcy" of the British Crown. With the end of British rule, however, these states were expected to join one of the two new dominions (India or Pakistan) based on geographic and demographic considerations. Kashmir presented a particularly difficult problem for accession: It had a Hindu monarch, Maharaja Hari Singh, who presided over a population that was predominately Muslim (77 percent Muslim and only 20 percent Hindu, according to a 1941 British census) and a territory that bordered both India and Pakistan.[164]

Recognizing his delicate position, Singh evaded accession and even looked to secure permanent independence for Kashmir. His unwillingness to accede to Pakistani rule generated a great deal of animosity among much of Kashmir's Muslim population as well as Pakistan's leadership. Many simply assumed there should be little question over Pakistan's rightful authority over the Kashmir region. After all, Pakistan actually got its name as an acronym using the first letters of the regions' predominantly Muslim states—with 'K' standing for Kashmir. The justification for

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[162] One indicator of the relative focus of security studies literature is a search I conducted in JSTOR for articles with "India *or* Pakistan" in the title, caption or abstract between 1985 and 2000 in four journals thought to publish security studies research (*International Security, Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Journal of Peace Research*, and *World Politics*). The search retrieved 16 articles, whereas a similar search using only "Germany" as the key term retrieved 34.

[163] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. xiii, emphasis added.

[164] For a discussion about the precarious position of Kashmir, particularly during these transitional years, see Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), pp. 14-43.

Pakistan's independence as a homeland for Muslims in the region was thought to be at stake.

Presumably in response to Singh's intransigence and repression of Muslim protests, a rebellion erupted in the southwestern Kashmir province of Poonch in the fall of 1947. This would eventually lead to Kashmir's accession to India, the deployment of Indian troops to secure the Kashmir territory and direct hostilities between India and Pakistan. The extent of Pakistan's involvement in the rebellion until the spring of 1948 is still hotly debated.[165] It is tightly held among many analysts and Indians in particular that the rebels were under direct orders from Rawalpindi (Pakistan's military headquarters) at the start—that Pakistan was behind attacks against Indian forces in Kashmir even before accession in October 1947. Others hold that Pakistan did not become directly engaged until May 1948. This is not a trivial detail for the current study. Determining at what point Pakistan escalated a direct conflict with India is important for understanding what conditions led to that decision. Said otherwise, identifying changes that brought about "now is better than earlier" and "now better than later" thinking relies on confidence in the timing of the decision to escalate hostilities.

The evidence suggests that important Pakistani officials may have known about and turned a blind-eye to tribal activities along its border with Kashmir in the fall of 1947. And others, such as Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan, the Chief Minister of the North-West Frontier Province, provided active support to the rebels. However, this does not translate into evidence that the rebellion was part of an invasion or escalation strategy of the government of Pakistan. It is improbable that the Pakistani government had a coherent policy toward Kashmir, the relations with tribal leaders to direct such a campaign or even the ability to halt tribal activities in the region if it had wanted at this time. To the contrary, the evidence supports a view that an early approach to Kashmir was based on Muhammad Ali Jinnah's sense that "Kashmir will fall into our laps like a ripe fruit".[166] Pakistan's "founding father" apparently believed that Kashmir's Muslim majority, its economic relationship, and existing transportation

[165] For comparison of two different views, see Prem Shankar Jha, *Kashmir, 1947: Rival Versions of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). While Jha explores the different interpretations of this time period, he too provides a somewhat biased interpretation and often bases his conclusions on innuendo where hard evidence is often lacking.

[166] Quoted in Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 57.

and communication links with Pakistan would secure its accession. By comparison, India lacked even a direct road to Kashmir's capital Srinagar.

The disarray that characterized the early rebellion was captured by one impartial observer, when he wrote:

> The tribes appear to have been leaderless….without firm leadership, the military value of the tribes for Pakistan was very limited. They subsequently worked themselves into an excellent position by which they could successfully blackmail the Pakistan Army for arms, ammunition, and comforts, a far more profitable process than slaughtering Hindus.[167]

The conclusion that Pakistan had little direction in the early uprising is also supported by the writings of the military leader assigned to see after Pakistan's interests in the region, Major General Akbar Khan. For instance, he recalls trying to aid the rebels but had notable difficulty fulfilling a request of only 400 rifles. His eventual procurement of 4,000 weapons was actually done through indirect and unofficial finagling on his part. Showing further frustration with the lack of initiative from Rawalpindi, Khan went on to charge Pakistan's leadership with "ignorance about the business of anything in the nature of military operations."[168] And, hinting at his own independence in carrying out other initiatives, he pointed out that "No Army officers could be taken for this [supporting the tribes], but we had in Pakistan some of the senior ex-Army officers of the Indian National Army."[169]

Despite the lack of clear and substantive support from Pakistan, the insurgency enjoyed rapid successes during the fall of 1947. Much of this success might be attributed to the defection of Muslim portions of the maharaja's military. Nonetheless, the rebels were able to capture a third of Kashmir and threatened Srinagar within a few short weeks. Singh subsequently made an urgent appeal to India for military assistance. India's prime minister responded by guaranteeing assistance but only if and when Singh acceded to India. Singh signed the Instrument of Accession and on October 26, Jawaharlal Nehru ordered Indian troops to be airlifted into the besieged Kashmir capital.

The Indian forces were able to halt the onslaught and save Srinagar from being overrun but not before significant gains had been made by the rebels. While

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[167] Lord Birdwood, "Kashmir", *International Affairs* Vol. 28, No. 3 (July 1952), pp. 304-305.
[168] Akbar Khan, *Raiders in Kashmir* (Karachi: Pak Publishers, 1970), p. 17.
[169] Ibid., p. 13.

this is a clear military escalation and perhaps exploitation of Singh's vulnerability, I do not consider it an escalation against Pakistan if for no other reason than Kashmir was at the time—according to the Instrument of Accession—part of India but also because there was no direct military action taken against Pakistan. In fact, it was not until December that India directly labeled Pakistan as an aggressor.

Once Indian forces entered Srinigar, the prospect of a successful takeover by forces friendly to Pakistan began to diminish. Leaders in Rawalpindi certainly considered capitalizing on the advances of the rebels or at least intervening in an effort to help safeguard those advances when Indian troops were sent to Kashmir but restraint prevailed. No doubt this restraint was partly the result of a perceived weakness. As George Cunningham, the Governor of Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, noted after meeting with Jinnah on October 28: "[Jinnah] held that he had a good moral and constitutional case for intervening by force, just as India had….But he realized the Pakistan army was weak at present….In his own mind, he had really ruled out the possibility of sending troops in to fight."[170]

That Pakistan did not act on behalf of the rebel forces to "win" Kashmir during this early period is further supported by the outrage of Khurshid Aswar, the leader of the rebel forces, who was said to be "very bitter against the Pakistani government for not having rendered *any* assistance to the tribesmen in their heroic bid to capture Srinagar."[171] There is also evidence to suggest that Pakistan even attempted to limit tribal assistance to the rebellion along its border in an effort to avoid the perception of complicity. For instance, Sherbaz Kahn Mazari, a tribal leader from Pakistan's Baluchistan province and imminent leader of an opposition party, recalled being rebuffed by border guards when he attempted to take men to assist the rebels. "I was stopped by Pakistan officials", he writes, "who told me in clear cut terms that I would not be allowed to cross into Kashmir. It became clear that they thought we were intent on partaking in the plunder that was taking place."[172]

In November, India launched a counter offensive to retake lost territory. Still Pakistan showed restraint. This changed in the spring of 1948 however, when Indian forces pushed the rebels back into Poonch and neared the Pakistani border in April. It took nearly six months after India began its successful march against the rebels

[170] George Cunningham, Diary, October 28, 1947. Quoted in Victoria Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict: India, Pakistan and the Unending War* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 60-61.
[171] *Dawn*, December 7, 1947. Quoted in Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict* p. 65 (emphasis added).
[172] Sherbaz Khan Mazari, *A Journey to Disillusionment* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 11-12.

before uniformed Pakistani forces took direct action. But, even here, Major General Khan writes that they were ordered to avoid "until the last possible moment" any clash with Indian troops—they were to remain behind the rebel forces to primarily prevent a breakthrough to the Pakistan border by the Indians.[173] A May 8th cable from the U.S. Military Attaché in Karachi to Washington supports Khan's recollection:

> Information received this morning indicates possibility armed conflict India Pakistan imminent….Pakistan has three *regular Pakistan army battalions Kashmir now,* one vicinity Uri, one vicinity Poonch, one vicinity Mirpur, *all lying well back* present fighting but on war scale prepared immediate action event India advances any above three places should cause serious withdrawal Azad forces [sic].[174]

About a week later, however, a Pakistani column moved to flank Indian forces thought to be building in the Kashmir Vale. It set from Gilgit (west) towards Leh (east) to capture Kargil and Dras.[175] The offensive was a tactical success but crossed a threshold of the India-Pakistan dispute to direct hostilities that marked a clear escalation on part of Pakistan and risked general war. What explains this shift in behavior from restraint to aggression?

5.1a Pakistan's Increasingly Desperate Military Position and Escalation

In many ways, it is somewhat unsurprising that war broke-out between the two new countries after independence. The 1947 partition of India resulted in close to a million deaths from communal violence and the migration of roughly 14 million others. And, the fate of several important territories as well as the identification of borders remained undecided.[176] Tensions were perhaps inevitable in the midst of such instability.

But, the decision by Pakistan to escalate direct hostilities is rather surprising when considering the balance of capabilities. By any reasonable measure, Pakistan was militarily inferior to India. After partition, for example, all ordinance factories were situated within India. All movable military assets had been divided around a 1

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[173] Khan, *Raiders in Kashmir*, p. 100.
[174] U.S. Ambassador in Pakistan to the Secretary of State, Washington, telegram dated 8 May 1948. *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Vol. 5, Pt. 1, pp. 340-41, emphasis added.
[175] Pradeep P. Barua, *The State at War in South Asia* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005), pp. 160-165.
[176] For discussion of the partition and its effects, see Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

to 2.5 ratio in India's favor and the vast majority of military bases and training camps were located in India. Economically, Pakistan received only about 17 percent of the financial assets of the Raj. To make matters worse, the transfer of material to Pakistan was purposefully delayed by Indian officials for fear that it could soon be turned against them. As a result, most financial and military transfers did not actually occur until after 1950.[177]

Despite the relative weakness of Pakistan, some have argued that the uprising in Kashmir provided a military window of opportunity for Pakistan. As Russell Leng argues, "Pakistan found strategic opportunities in the Muslim unrest in Kashmir following partition in 1947."[178] Indeed, it is widely held in India that the rebellion was instigated by Pakistan for that very reason—to open a military window that it could exploit and secure the accession of Kashmir. It is easy to understand why some may believe the uprising opened a window of vulnerability for India. When Indian troops arrived, they had to regain lost territory populated by a majority of Muslims. At the point of accession, of course, it would be appropriate to consider the uprising in Kashmir a civil war for India—a civil war that it could not apply its full scale of resources to quell because it was also still trying to manage the transfer of power, communal violence and millions of refugees resulting from partition. Recall that this was only months after independence and that there was a great deal of domestic turmoil throughout South Asia.

All things being equal, the civil turmoil in Indian-held Kashmir would present a clear military window of opportunity for Pakistan. However, Pakistan was facing its own internal turmoil and instability. But, Pakistan's problems were compounded by a lack of administrative, economic and social infrastructure. As its former Foreign Minister, Abdul Sattar, explained:

> The partition plan of 3 June 1947 gave only seventy-two days for transition to independence. Within this brief period, three provinces had to be divided, referendums organized, civil and armed services bifurcated, and assets apportioned. The telescoped timetable created seemingly impossible problems for Pakistan, which, unlike India, inherited neither a capital and government nor the financial resources

[177] See, A. Martin Wainwright, *Inheritance of Empire: Britain, India, and the Balance of Power in Asia, 1938-1955* (Westport: Praeger, 1994), pp. 71-81.
[178] Russell J. Leng, "Realpolitik and Learning in the India-Pakistan Rivalry", in Paul (ed.), *The India-Pakistan Conflict*, p. 104.

> to establish and equip the administrative, economic and military institutions of the new state. Even more daunting problems arose in the wake of the partition. Communal rioting led to the killing of hundreds of thousands of innocent people. A tidal wave of millions of refugees entered Pakistan, confronting the new state with an awesome burden of rehabilitation.[179]

Pakistan's survival was anything but certain. Comparatively speaking, it was in a more precarious position than India. As a result, it is difficult to come to any reasonable conclusion that Pakistan enjoyed a military window of opportunity resulting from the uprising in Kashmir. Not only was it suffering from very similar vulnerabilities associated with domestic upheaval but it had only a fraction of the resources, established institutions and military capabilities to address these challenges.

To be sure, Jinnah openly worried that his country could be "strangled at birth" as a result of the unfolding events. This is hardly the sentiment of a leader sensing a strategic upper-hand. Even with the gains made by the insurgency, there is little evidence to suggest that Pakistan's leaders seriously considered it a military advantage. To the contrary, there was much fear that Kashmir turmoil would precipitate disintegration. One contemporary account suggested that Punjab "was dangerously excited at the rumors that Dogra troops were driving thousands of Moslems out of Punch into Pakistan, and action to hold up the Indian advance seemed the only possible answer."[180] Lt. General Sir Douglas Gracey, a British officer serving as the first acting commander-in-chief of the Pakistan military, similarly worried that "An easy victory of the Indian army, particularly in the Muzaffarabad area, is almost certain to arouse the anger of the tribesmen against Pakistan for its failure to render them more direct assistance and might well cause them to turn against Pakistan."[181]

It was also feared that India would use the turmoil in Kashmir as pretext for using military force to repatriate the subcontinent. As Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan of Pakistan wrote to Nehru, "India never wholeheartedly accepted the partition scheme but her leaders paid lip service to it merely in order to get the British troops

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[179] Abdul Sattar, "Fifty Years of the Kashmir Dispute: The Diplomatic Aspect," in Irfani, *Fifty Years*, pp. 11-12.
[180] Sir William Barton, "Pakistan's Claim to Kashmir," *Foreign Affairs* 28 (January 1950), p. 304.
[181] Quoted in Quoted in Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict* p. 65.

out of the country….India is out to destroy the state of Pakistan."[182] India's advances in the spring of 1948 were seen as providing it with too great of a strategic advantage. Gracey advised in the first week of May 1948 that "India is not to be allowed to sit on the doorsteps of Pakistan to the rear and on the flank at liberty to enter at its will and pleasure…it is imperative that the Indian army is not allowed to advance."[183] Major General Akbar Khan similarly explained:

> one glance at a map was enough to show that Pakistan's military security would be seriously jeopardised if Indian troops came to be stationed along Kashmir Western border....The possession of Kashmir would enable India, if she wished, to take war to Hazara and Murree, more than 200 miles behind the front....We would remain permanently exposed to a threat of such magnitude that our independence would never be a reality.[184]

Again, this hardly seems to be the sentiment of leaders who see a military window of opportunity. Rather, this points to a growing disadvantage that borders on desperation.

Did Pakistan's leaders, then, carryout Bismark's proverbial "suicide for fear of death"? Their growing sense of desperation certainly influenced the decision to escalate hostilities. That is, they were motivated by the urgency that India was nearing *de facto* control over Kashmir from which it could launch attacks into Pakistan if Pakistan did not disintegrate on its own as a result of losing a Muslim state. But, this is not the only motivation. Below, I argue that there was good reason for Pakistan's leader to believe Great Britain if not others would come to its aid in the spring of 1948. That is, between October 1947 and May 1948 British signals toward India and Pakistan underwent a clear shift in favor of Pakistan that led its leaders to believe it had international support for its claims that it did not have prior to spring. So, while Pakistan's leaders feared a growing military disadvantage, they also believed a diplomatic window was opening.

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[182] Liaquat Ali Khan to Nehru, *White Paper on Jammu and Kashmir*, quoted in Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir*, p. 96.
[183] Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*, p. 70.
[184] Khan, *Raiders in Kashmir*, p. 97.

5.1b Pakistan's Perceived Diplomatic Window and Escalation

Great Britain remained the most important third-party influence in the region during this period. India and Pakistan were largely dependent on its economic assistance and military supplies. Tellingly, British officers actually remained in key positions in both governments to assist partition and reorganization of the political-military structure. Meanwhile, China was still suffering its own bloody civil war that did not end until 1950. It was much more internally rather than externally focused and its relations with the two rivals were symbolic at most. At the same time, the United States and Soviet Union were focused on Europe in the aftermath of World War II. Neither expressed significant interest in the two new states much less their budding conflict until British decline left a vacuum of great power influence and the Cold War struggle heated up in the early 1950s.[185]

Early British policy toward India and Pakistan was evenhanded. Faced with imperial decline, London foresaw immense economic, political and strategic merit in retaining the new dominions in its sphere of influence. British leaders believed that taking sides could jeopardize this long-term strategic goal.[186] But, they also feared that a neutral position could not be sustained in the midst of growing conflict between India and Pakistan. Prime Minister Attlee expressed as much when he anguished over the growing division at partition: "I earnestly hope that this severance may not endure," he stated, "that the two new dominions we now propose to set up may come together again to form one great member of the Commonwealth."[187] At the same time, Britain worried that efforts to influence India and Pakistan "might look like a re-imposition of the Raj" that could generate a backlash on the subcontinent.[188] As a result, early British policy toward India and Pakistan was not only evenhanded. It was also soft-handed. That is, Britain attempted to influence using cheap signals because costly ones could jeopardize efforts to portray impartiality that was thought necessary to maximize its influence during transition and early independence.

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[185] For a discussion of these relative influences, see C. W. Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers: Politics of a Divided Subcontinent* (New York: The Free Press, 1975).
[186] Anita Inder Singh, "Keeping India in the Commonwealth: British Political and Military Aims, 1947-49" *Journal of Contemporary History* Vol. 20, No. 3 (July 1985), pp. 469-481.
[187] Quoted in H. V. Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain-India-Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 312.
[188] See Dasgupta, *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir,* pp. 115-121.

This outward neutrality, however, belied an early private calculation that if forced to take sides, Britain would likely favor Pakistan. The minutes from a Chiefs of Staff meeting in May 1947 clearly convey this calculation:

> From the strategic point of view there were overwhelming arguments in favor of West Pakistan remaining within the Commonwealth, namely, that we should obtain important strategic facilities, the port of Karachi, air bases and the support of Moslem manpower in the future; be able to ensure the continued integrity of Afghanistan; and be able to increase our prestige throughout the Moslem world. Whilst the acceptance of Pakistan only into the Commonwealth would involve a commitment for its support against Hindustan, the danger would be small….[189]

While not giving up on its preference for cooperation with both, Pakistan was thought to be more important in meeting Britain's postwar objectives.

As hostilities between India and Pakistan grew, British signals began to reveal this interest in maintaining a strategic partnership with Pakistan even at the expense of relations with India. For instance, in September 1947, British commanders were issued a "stand down" order for all military personnel on the subcontinent in the event of open hostilities between India and Pakistan. British military personnel were to withdrawal so as not to get stuck in the middle of hostilities or be part of opposing forces in any way. This was also applied to both as an effort to encourage peace because both were thought to be largely dependent on British support in seeing through their own stable transitions. Nonetheless, this was intended to be a neutral signal (as discussed in table 2.2 and actually coded as 0 in the statistical analysis shown in table 3.2) because it "stated a future position" without the promise of support or the threat of sanction. In many ways, it consigned the British military presence in the region to a bystander status—they were to assist each nation get on its feet but not to have direct control over their individual fates or that of their relationship.

Developments in Kashmir, however, brought to light the disadvantage of Pakistan under this order. As a cable from London to the top British military officer in the region stated:

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[189] "Minutes of Chiefs of Staff Committee Meeting on May 12, 1947"; Nicholas Mansergh and Pendrel Moon, *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: Transfer of Power, 1944-47* Vol. X (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1982), p. 416.

> Both the Dominion Governments already know that we shall withdraw all British officers if the two armies actually begin to fight each other. This should have some restraining influence though it is true it is likely to have less effect on India than on Pakistan.[190]

Because British military personnel would be equally withdrawn in the event of direct conflict, it left a more dependent Pakistan without military recourse. And, it actually began to be feared as a source of incentive for Indian aggression. Liaquat Ali Khan summed up this concern in a letter to the British Prime Minister:

> Surely if you withdraw British officers from the aggressor State, the question of British officers fighting one another cannot arise….[As it stands, however,] the disadvantages to India resulting from the loss of British officers is small compared with the corresponding disadvantages to Pakistan. By the decision to withdraw British officers from both sides, and by informing India of your intentions to do so, you are encouraging India in her career of aggression.[191]

Out of shared concern, British leaders revised the policy so that the order reflected the following sentiment expressed in a cable:

> this [stand-down order] should take place only if there is danger of British officers actually *taking the field against each other*. Planning in each of the two Headquarters against each other is obviously highly embarrassing and distasteful but we doubt if it is in itself a reason for final withdrawal of all officers from both sides.[192]

This revision allowed greater British flexibility in an imminent conflict, strengthened its hand in the region and was an overt attempt to restrain India by keeping British forces as a buffer of sorts between the two. However, it fell far short of a commitment to Pakistan or a threat to India. The signal change was subtle—indeed, too subtle to have likely been captured in the statistical data—but the intent was clear. If it was not, a private message from Mountbatten to Prime Minister Nehru that

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[190] Quoted in Dasgupta, *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir*, p. 62.
[191] Liaquat Ali Khan to Attlee, 20 July 1948. File L/WS/1/1143, India Office Records, London. This letter was written in July 1948 in response to a letter from Attlee early that month, which looked to reinstate the original "stand-down" order in an effort to restrain Pakistan after it had escalated direct hostilities. The letter captures the sense of vulnerability in Rawalpandi to British policies that were present in November 1947 and eloquently sums up Pakistani fears. I include it here for that reason.
[192] Quoted in Dasgupta, *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir*, p. 62, emphasis added.

immediately followed the policy change stated it plainly: The "idea that a war between India and Pakistan could be confined to the sub-continent, or finished off quickly in favour of India without further complications," he cautioned, "is to my mind a fatal illusion."[193]

British signals toward India and Pakistan became more openly pro-Pakistan in late 1947 and early 1948. For instance, many argue that British leaders pressed Nehru to bring the Kashmir issue before the UN Security Council.[194] In December 1947, Attlee was invited to New Delhi as a potential mediator between India and Pakistan but he declined, declaring that the UN was the proper forum for discussing Kashmir. This was again a fairly innocuous signal intended to communicate British neutrality.[195] Once India approached the Security Council, however, British attitude toward India began to shift as it was then perceive to be politically difficult for India to force a military solution. As Attlee wrote to Nehru:

> May I say in all frankness that I am gravely disturbed by your assumption that India would be within her rights in international law if she were to send forces into Pakistan in self-defence…It would, in my opinion, place India definitely in the wrong in the eyes of the world; and I can assure you that it would gravely prejudice India's case before U.N.O, if after having appealed to the Security Council, she were to take unilateral action of this kind.[196]

In the Security Council, Britain signaled its backing for Pakistan's claims. India's complaint had included a request that the Council press Pakistan to (1) prevent its government personnel, military and civil, from participating or assisting in the *invasion of Kashmir*, (2) call upon its nationals to desist from taking part in the fighting, and (3) deny the rebels access to Pakistan territory or other support.[197] India's leaders expected the world body to acknowledge Pakistani aggression and apply pressure on its government to halt any actions that could prolong conflict in Kashmir. Pakistan, in reply, characterized the conflict as a popular uprising and

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[193] Mountbatten to Nehru, 25 December 1947. File L/WS/1/1139, India Office Records, London.
[194] The strongest case is put forth by Dasgupta, *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir*, pp. 97-109.
[195] Sisir Gupta, *Kashmir: A Study in India-Pakistan Relations* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1966), p. 135.
[196] Dasgupta, *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir*, p. 105.
[197] Letter dated 1 January 1948, from the Representative of India to the President of the Security Council (S/628).

requested that the Security Council oversee the (a) establishment of an impartial government in Kashmir, (b) withdraw of Indian forces, (c) return of residence to those who fled fighting, and (d) a plebiscite in Kashmir. The intention was for the UN to recognize India and Pakistan as co-equals in the dispute, ignore the legal question of accession and reverse any political as well as military advantage gained by India over the previous months prior to a plebiscite that both tentatively agreed was necessary.

Responding coolly to India's request, the British delegate began setting the agenda by stating that "We are then confronted with the question of how to stop the fighting. What will stop it and in what way should it be stopped?" This was followed by the American delegate, who took the British cue: "One cannot have cessation of hostilities and violence unless one also has an understanding".[198] He elaborated on this statement a few days later, arguing that the Council:

> must consider it [the Kashmir problem] as a whole, because unless it does, there cannot be a cessation of hostilities. How is it possible to induce the tribesmen to retire from Jammu and Kashmir without warfare and without driving them out? That is the only way it can be done, unless the tribesmen are satisfied there is to be a fair plebiscite assured through an interim government that is in fact, and that has the appearance of being, non-partisan.[199]

The British delegate then pushed the Security Council to take responsibility for "the future of Kashmir" which the British now claimed to be "disputed territory". Noel-Baker argued that:

> In my conception, infinitely the best way to stop the fighting is to assure those who are engaged in it that a fair settlement will be arrived at under which their rights will be assured….Only when the combatants know what the future holds for them, will they agree to stop.[200]

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[198] Gupta, *Kashmir*, p. 158. Also see, United States Department of State, *Foreign relations of the United States, 1948: The Near East, South Asia, and Africa* Vol. V, Part 1 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), pp. 265-487, particularly pp. 302-307.

[199] Dasgupta, *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir*, pp. 118-119.

[200] Quoted in Michael Brecher, *The Struggle for Kashmir* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1953), p. 79.

To clarify any doubts over the new British position toward India's actions, he also repeatedly referred to Indian forces as an "army of occupation".[201]

The British delegate then argued that the conditions necessary for a fair plebiscite required the partial withdrawal of Indian troops, the introduction of Pakistani forces into parts of Kashmir to provide a sense of protection for certain populations and the replacement of the government in Kashmir with an interim one that was neutral. This gave credit to Pakistan's claims while neglecting any legal right of India to Kashmir based on accession, forwent assigning any responsibility to Pakistan and asked India to give up its political-military advances on the ground. This was a clear endorsement of Pakistan's position and essentially gave support to Pakistan in its dispute over Kashmir (this type of signal was identified as a supportive one in table 2.2 and would actually be coded as a 3.6 along the conflict-cooperation scale in the statistical analysis as shown in table 3.2). At the same time, Britain clearly declined to directly comment on India's request (a negative cheap signal that would likely score a -1.1 on the conflict-cooperation scale). So evident and sudden was the sharp turn in British favor for Pakistan that much of the British press began to question the logic of its actions and even argued for a return to a more neutral approach. For instance, Kingsley Martin wrote in the *New Statesman and Nation* in late February that India deserved to have its appeal "honestly considered" and the editorial page of the *Economist* criticized the British government for not pressuring "Pakistan to put a stop to the Pathan campaign in Kashmir."[202]

This tilt in British favor did not go unnoticed in India. During the second session of the Council, the Indian delegate protested that "The imperative duty of the Security Council is to ask Pakistan to take measures to prevent these miscreants from finding help, assistance, bases, transport—everything that is needed for carrying on a campaign—on Pakistan territory."[203] Nehru also expressed his dismay, saying that "Instead of discussing and deciding our references in a straightforward manner, the nations of the world sitting in that body got lost in power politics."[204] Before the Constituent Assembly, he stated: "I must confess that I have been surprised and distressed at the fact that the reference we made has not even been

[201] SCOR, Meeting 240, 1948. Also, see Alice Thorner, "The Issues in Kashmir", *Fear Eastern Survey* Vol. 17, No. 15 (August 1948), p. 177; and, Taraknath Das, "The Kashmir Issue in the United Nations", *Political Science Quarterly* (1950), pp. 264-282.
[202] *New Statesman and Nation*, February 21, 1948 and *Economist*, February 21, 1948.
[203] Gupta, *Kashmir*, p. 158.
[204] Ibid., p. 163.

properly considered thus far and other matters have been given precedence."[205] The *Hindu* wrote in an editorial that "The non-objective attitude adopted by the power groups in the United Nations has caused resentment in this country....The difficulty from the beginning has been that the Anglo-American powers and their satellites in the Security Council have identified themselves completely with the Pakistani cause."[206]

While British signals sparked concern in India, they did not convey a specific threat to New Delhi nor did they communicate a direct security promise to Pakistan. As a result of their "cheapness", India saw no need for immediate compromise and continued with its military campaign in Kashmir. Indian leaders also never took an invasion of Pakistan off the table for fear of British response. A letter from Nehru to India's first defense minister explained:

> this [the UN deliberations] does not mean that we should not be completely prepared to defend our territory or even to convert our defence to an attack on certain bases, if necessary, in Pakistan territory….My own impression…was that such a plan was being prepared and in fact had been prepared. If that is so, then there need be no question of putting a stop to this planning….[207]

Restraining India was not so much a fear of British intervention as it was a sense of domestic vulnerability. That is, the turmoil of partition was a source of instability for both India and Pakistan. Neither saw a clear military opportunity rising out of events in Kashmir or elsewhere. Rather, both saw vulnerability. A letter Nehru wrote to his provincial Chief Ministers in response to mounting calls for an attack on Pakistan explains his restraint:

> Recent events in Kashmir and partly our action in Babariawad and Mangrol have been a severe blow to the Pakistani Government. They have a terrible sense of frustration. Already they were being overwhelmed by their problems. The vast number of Muslim refugees who have gone to Pakistan are a terrible burden on them and they cannot look after them….[Despite rumors to the contrary, however,] there is no desire to destroy their State in any way. Any such attempt

[205] S. L. Poplai (ed.), *Select Documents on Asian Affairs: India 1947-1950*, Vol. II (Bombay: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 438.
[206] *Hindu*, February 16, 1948.
[207] Quoted in Dasgupta, *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir*, p. 108.

> would lead to grave injury to us. War is a dangerous thing and it must be avoided….From the military point of view there is little doubt that if there was war between India and Pakistan, Pakistan as a State would perish. But, undoubtedly, *India would suffer very great injury and all our schemes of progress would have to be pushed aside for many years*. Therefore, we must do our utmost to avoid war.[208]

While the sharp change in cheap signals did little to sway Indian policy, Pakistani leaders saw a diplomatic opportunity. British officials had restated their "stand down" policy" in an effort to restrain India but when Pakistani officials appealed for direct support, London deferred to UN deliberations. As Attlee wrote to Khan: "The position is that the withdrawal of British officers from India alone or Pakistan alone on the ground that one or the other was the aggressor State is a step which we could not contemplate *unless it were in pursuance of some decisions of the Security Council* [where, of course, Attlee encouraged India and Pakistan to submit the Kashmir problem for consideration]."[209] These deliberations then provided Pakistan with belief that it had the support of Britain if not the world body for its claims. For instance, co-equal status attributed to India and Pakistan over the Kashmir dispute (unintentionally) provided international legitimacy for introducing Pakistani troops into the "disputed territory". If they are co-equals, then the Pakistanis believed they were recognized as having as much right as India to a military presence in Kashmir. As India continued to reject compromise, Pakistan's leadership saw Security Council members—Britain in particular—with few options but to support a military escalation against India or be in the politically unsavory position of having voiced Pakistan's equal claim to Kashmir but unwilling to support Pakistan when India rejected this judgment. Indeed, in defense of military escalation, Pakistan's UN representative argued that the continued presence and

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[208] Jawaharlal Nehru, *Letters to Chief Ministers, 1947-1964, Vol. 1 1947-1949* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 9 (emphasis added).

[209] Attlee to Liaquat Ali Khan, 23 July 1948, cited in Noel-Baker's minute to Attlee dated 20 August 1948. File PREM 8/800, CRO (emphasis added). This letter was in an exchange of communications following Pakistani escalation, when Attlee attempted to reign in Pakistan by threatening the original stand down instructions. Nonetheless, the quote captures the communications between London and Rwalapindi throughout the conflict and particularly for the period of October-December 1947. See, Dasgupta, *War and Diplomacy in Kashmir,* pp. 133-143.

activities of Indian forces in the "disputed territory" was in violation of *international obligation*.[210]

There is additional evidence to suggest that Pakistan's leaders even anticipated open and active British assistance. For one, it was a Briton (Gracey) who was now encouraging direct action to halt Indian advances whereas he had earlier cautioned in favor of restraint. "India", he now argued, "is not to be allowed to sit on the doorsteps of Pakistan to the rear and on the flank at liberty to enter at its will and pleasure…it is imperative that the Indian army is not allowed to advance."[211] Gracey also later reported to his counterpart in India (General Bucher, also British) during an informal conversation on July 27, 1948 that Liaquat Ali Khan had told him just prior to the May offensive that London was aware of Pakistan's decision to send uniformed personnel into Kashmir.[212] Yet, perhaps the most puzzling aspect of the decision had Pakistan not anticipated British support is that its operational tactics left much of its eastern flank vulnerable to a counter-offensive. Once direct conflict erupted, Pakistan sent nearly a full division (ten to twenty-thousand soldiers) into Kashmir, pulling heavily from the 10th Division around Lahore. Not only did this risk general war and an Indian invasion, which it was ill-equipped to resist without outside support, but it left its second most densely populated city (Lahore) surprisingly vulnerable if British forces were not thought a defense against Indian incursion.[213] Any gains it could have reasonably made in Kashmir would have been outweighed had Lahore been lost.

Pakistan misjudged the willingness of others to assist its military efforts. But, its perception of a diplomatic window was not without reason. British signals had sharply turned in its favor but their "cheapness" led to miscalculation and Pakistan quickly found itself outgunned and diplomatically isolated. It was not until late 1948 that Pakistan's leaders were again able to garner outside support in order to achieve a ceasefire. Again, it was a British initiative that was able to pressure India back to the bargaining table. So heavy handed and pro-Pakistan were British efforts that John Foster Dulles wrote to Washington: "present UK approach [to the] Kashmir problem appears *extremely* pro GOP [Government of Pakistan] as against [the]

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[210] Brecher, *The Struggle for Kashmir,* pp. 92-96.
[211] Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm*, p. 70.
[212] Shone to CRO, telegram No. 2519 dated 28 July 1948. File L/WS/1/1143, India Office Records, London.
[213] Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema, *Pakistan's Defense Policy, 1947-58* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), pp. 92-93.

middle ground which we have sought to follow", urging that the United States to take a more independent, neutral path rather than continue following the British lead.[214] By this time, Pakistan could see little offensive opportunity in the diplomatic shift. Its forces were loosing ground daily and arms and ammunition were running low. The waning of British power in the 1950s paved the way for more complex international influences in the region and, despite Dulles's urging, the United States soon found it difficult to be neutral in the rivalry.

5.2 The 1950s: Stable Military Balance, Shifting Foreign Policies and Intermittent Conflict

Unable to resolve their dispute over Kashmir, hostilities erupted intermittently during the 1950s with relations becoming increasingly tense as the decade wore on. There were no events that presented what might be considered a military window of opportunity for either country during this decade. However, the role of third parties became more complex as British influence decreased and the United States, Soviet Union and, finally, China took more active interest in the region. Where this influence was fluid, there was greater tendency toward escalation. Conversely, when the United States used costly signals to communicate support for Pakistan, there was a tendency toward stability.

5.2a Declining British Influence, Wishful Thinking and the 1951-52 Crisis

In March 1950, the UN Security Council appointed Sir Owen Dixon of Australia as UN mediator. The Security Council also reminded India and Pakistan that they had accepted resolutions of August 13, 1948 and January 1, 1949 that called for a fair and free plebiscite. Great Britain and the United States also recommended that the two should consider international arbitration if unable to conduct a plebiscite soon. Pakistan accepted arbitration as a potential route to resolution but Nehru rejected it. India was reluctant to give up what had been gained over the previous years. Upon his arrival in the region, for instance, Dixon noted that he quickly "became convinced that India's agreement would never be obtained to demilitarize in any such form or to provisions governing the period of the plebiscite of any such character, which would in [his] opinion permit the plebiscite being conducted…Without such demilitarization,

[214] Dulles to Marshall, 23 November 1948, *Foreign Relations of the United States*, Vol. V, part 1, pp. 459-60.

[he continued] the remaining tribal forces as well as regular Pakistani forces were unwilling to withdraw." His recommendation was to leave India and Pakistan to negotiate their own terms for establishing conditions for a free and fair plebiscite. "So far the attitude of the parties has been to throw the whole responsibility upon the Security Council or its representatives of settling the dispute notwithstanding that except by agreement between them there was no means of settling it."[215] Nehru's rejection of international arbitration also led Joseph Korbel to become critical of India's intransigence: "One could have expected that a country of such undisputed greatness led by a man of Nehru's stature and integrity would have reacted more favourably to such a valid, and under the Charter of the United Nations, the recommended technique of international co-operation."[216] This signaled a waning of international pressure to resolve the dispute, which coincided with British decline as the major third party presence in the region.

Dixon ended his unsuccessful mediation efforts on March 30, 1951. His successor, Frank Graham, arrived one month later as hostilities were on the rise. Pakistani troops attacked Indian forces near the ceasefire line in June 1951. Pakistan then mobilized troops near the district of Poonch on July 7, triggering Nehru to also order forces to the Kashmir region days later.[217] It looked as though the countries were again set for war. And, again, Pakistan had escalated direct hostilities. Yet, Pakistan's relative military strength had not significantly improved since 1947. Liaquat Ali Khan acknowledged his military weakness in a letter to Nehru during this time:

> The strength of India's armed forces at the time of partition was double that of Pakistan. You have since persistently tried to increase that disparity, not only by constantly building up your armed forces but also by attempting to hamstring Pakistan forces by denying them stores which were their rightful share under the Partition Agreement….Because of this disparity between the armed forces of

[215] Letter dated 15 September 1950 from Sir Own Dixon to the Security Council in Joseph Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 172-173.
[216] Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir*, p. 179.
[217] See rivalry narratives provided by James P. Klein, Gary Goertz and Paul F. Diehl, "The New Rivalry Dataset: Procedures and Patterns", *Journal of Peace Research* Vol. 43, No. 3 (2006), pp. 331-348. This data and accompanying narratives are available online at ftp://128.196.23.212/rivalry/riv500web.zip.

> the two countries, it is fantastic to suggest that there is any danger of aggression against India from Pakistan.[218]

Without significant change in the military balance or events that may have opened a military window of opportunity, why would Pakistan escalate hostilities and another war with India?

The most notable change during this period is the shifting great power interests in the region. As British power receded, it left a vacuum of outside influence in South Asia. In the wake of civil war, China's relations with India and Pakistan were still largely symbolic and minimal. It would still be a few years before Beijing could undertake a more active foreign policy in the region. Meanwhile, the budding Cold War struggle focused the attention of Moscow and Washington. At first, neither wanted to jeopardize possible relations with one by favoring the other. However, there were differences. While American policies might be characterized as equally affable, Soviet polices were equally incredulous toward both India and Pakistan—Stalin dismissed independence as another "imperialist scheme".[219] The two began to show signs of favoritism by 1951 and by 1952, their signals reflected these preferences.

America's inability to enlist India's support in the growing fight against communism and particularly with regard to its conflict in Korea inevitably led it closer to Pakistan—a much more vocal supporter of U.S. policies.[220] But, throughout 1950-51, it still maintained a sense of evenhandedness toward India and Pakistan. This can be seen in President Truman's sequential invitations to Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan to visit America in 1950 ("give state invitation" is listed as a positive cheap signal in table 2.2 and is ranked 2.5 on the conflict-cooperation scale of table 3.2). Despite growing U.S.-Pakistan ties, Khan was unable to obtain a promise of arms shipments or of private capital and investment during this trip. The only aid package he was able to secure was through the U.S. Four Points program which also supported India. A group of U.S. Senators who visited the subcontinent in early 1951 expressed the problem faced by the United States as it considered how to respond to the needs of a weak Pakistan that was also emerging as a key part in the U.S. containment strategy toward the Soviet Union: "the air of both dominions was

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[218] Quoted in Alastair Lamb, "The Kashmir Problem: A Historical Survey (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1966), p.83.
[219] See Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, pp. 7-9.
[220] Burke, *Pakistan Foreign Policy*, pp. 116-135.

charged with unusual tension, making one doubtful of the existence of peace in these two countries. [This injected] a disturbing factor….Aid to one Dominion alone would create misunderstanding between the aiding country and the country not receiving it."[221]

For its part, the Soviet Union was skeptical of Nehru's non-alignment policy but began to see opportunity in the growing distance between Washington and New Delhi as early as 1951, when it made friendly overtures toward India. Yet, here too, it was not until later, after Stalin's death in 1953, that Moscow's signals took a significant turn in India's favor and not until 1955 that it leant significant support to New Delhi. In part, Stalin was hoping to put a wedge between Pakistan and the West and knew that policies favoring India would jeopardize any influence in Pakistan. On one hand, he was skeptical of developments in South Asia but, on the other, just like the Western powers, he saw value in trying to keep both on good terms and did not want to shun one over the other unless he had to.

Thus, there were no significant diplomatic influences to favor Pakistan between the end of the first Kashmir War in 1949 and the escalation of hostilities in 1951. In short, there was neither a military nor a diplomatic window to explain Pakistan's actions. Interestingly, however, there is evidence that Pakistan believed that renewed hostilities would galvanize international support for UN intervention. With the ailing Security Council effort and Indian intransigence, many in Pakistan saw military escalation as a means toward forcing Western intervention. For instance, the English daily *Dawn* wrote:

> There is no longer any time to waste in idle arguments. We suggest that our Foreign Minister should proceed to the USA forthwith and demand that the Security Council immediately denounce Bharat as an aggressor and issue to it clear and strong directions providing for sanctions in case of disobedience. He should tell the Security Council that unless it acts Pakistan must.[222]

Indeed, Sisir Gupta argues that Pakistan had three main options: (1) hope for military victory against India, (2) look to galvanize international pressure, or (3) accept on-the-ground realities.[223] The first was foolhardy and Liaquat Ali Khan's letter to Nehru quoted above makes clear that Pakistan's leadership recognized the military

[221] Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, p. 79.
[222] Quoted in Gupta, *Kashmir*, p. 236.
[223] Ibid., *passim*.

imbalance. The last option was politically unacceptable for the new government that was built on the sole vision of a unified Muslim nation. At the same time, it was feared that waiting any longer would have tacitly ceded most of Kashmir to India. Khan used hostilities in an effort to refocus international attention on settling the dispute. Said otherwise, he hoped to generate a sense of urgency among Western powers that would effectively open a diplomatic window, where Pakistan could act with outside support should the conflict turn sour.

This gamble was partially successful. It triggered another round of international pressure but fell short of galvanizing the kind of support to gain Indian concessions. Where it really paid off for Pakistan is in convincing U.S. leaders of the need to more actively bolster Pakistan's defense. The prospect of a new war on the subcontinent in the midst of growing Cold War competition generated fear in the U.S. government that Pakistan could be eliminated as a valuable strategic asset. And, of course, India looked as though it was moving further and further away from Washington. As Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema summarizes a wave of CIA reports and internal foreign policy documents following the crisis: "the American's…assessed that the Indo-Pakistan war in 1951 (if it had taken place) would have almost certainly have removed the prospects of Pakistan's participation in plans (that were being discussed at the time) for the defence of the Middle East which, in turn, would have directly affected the US security interests."[224] A more formal U.S. commitment to Pakistan's security began to take root in the following years.

5.2b 1952-1955: Costly U.S. Signals and Conflict Stability

As suggested above, 1952-1953 ushered in a new era of great power influence in the region. China and India signed a peaceful co-existence treaty in 1952 and began to hint at stronger ties, while Pakistan's siding with the United States over the conflict in Korea put Sino-Pakistani relations on a poor footing in the early part of the 1950s. However, China's preoccupation with internal nation-building and the Korean standoff left it unable to make serious political or military commitments in the region. Its ties with India were affable but still largely symbolic, while its relations with Pakistan were disagreeable but again mostly symbolic. Meanwhile, the United States and Soviet Union began to take more active stands in the region. Indeed, the

[224] Cheema, *Pakistan's Defense Policy,* p. 117.

United States began to signal that Pakistan was its "ally of allies in Asia". This type of costly signaling helped stabilize the region for a few short years.

In 1952, for instance, the United States sent a delegation to Pakistan to lay the groundwork for a mutual defense assistance agreement. During this visit, there was broad agreement that Pakistan would allow American bases on her soil and receive aid in return. When President Eisenhower took office, U.S. security ties to Pakistan were redoubled. John Foster Dulles went on a fact-finding mission to gauge the feasibility of a regional security pact. He found Pakistan to be a willing partner—a partner who would now be rewarded through military assistance. Indeed, in a very short time period, the United States engaged in several activities identified in tables 2.2 and 3.2 as costly signals of support ("substantive agreement" and "extend military assistance"). This development did not go unnoticed by Nehru, who began speaking out that this could reshape the military balance and destabilize the region. A letter he wrote to Mohammed Ali Bogra, Pakistan's Prime Minister, on December 9, 1953 captures this sentiment:

> I do not know what the present position is in regard to the military pact of assistance between Pakistan and the U.S.A. But responsible newspapers state that large-scale military assistance and equipment, arms and training will be given to Pakistan by the U.S…..It seems to us rather an encouragement to war. Whatever the motive may be, the mere fact that large-scale rearmament and military expansion takes place in Pakistan must necessarily have repercussions in India. The whole psychological atmosphere between the two countries will change for the worse and every question that is pending between us will be affected by it. We do not propose to enter into an armament race with Pakistan or any other country….But it is obvious that such an expansion of Pakistan's war resources, with the help of the United States of America, can only be looked upon as an unfriendly act in India and one that is fraught with danger….Inevitably, it will affect the major questions that we are considering….[225]

Despite Indian protests, the trend in U.S.-Pakistan security cooperation continued to deepen and contrary to Nehru's fears, this did not result in greater escalatory behavior.

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[225] Quoted in Lamb, *The Kashmir Problem*, pp. 85-86.

By February 1954, preparations for a treaty between Pakistan and Turkey (nucleus of the later Baghdad Pact and CENTO) were publicly announced along with America's formal recognition of its plans for a major program of military aid to Pakistan. By way of Turkey, Pakistan was then linked with NATO. Later that year, Pakistan formally joined the American alliance system as a member of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. These arrangements signaled that Pakistan was fast becoming what President Eisenhower infamously called "America's most allied ally in Asia" but they did not provide for specific commitments to Pakistan's claims against India.

To be sure, this was one of the strongest forms of signals the United States could send to communicate its support of Pakistani security. Some traditional window theorists may have considered the rearming of Pakistan as identified in Nehru's 1953 letter to signal a closing military window of opportunity for India. By some accounts, this should have encouraged India to launch an offensive before Pakistan had a chance to acquire significant American weaponry superior to what India had. However, New Delhi would certainly have calculated that doing so could make a fast enemy of the United States. Washington would likely interpret an attack on Pakistan as an affront to its newborn alliance system and force it to intervene on Pakistan's behalf because it was now trying to encourage and assure other allies and would-be allies of its commitments. If it did not act on behalf of Pakistan so soon after their agreement, others would certainly question U.S. credibility. As predicted in chapter 2, no hostilities broke out; that is, hostilities did not break out until 1955. By that time, however, America had retracted and qualified its commitment to Pakistan to effectively remove itself from the India-Pakistan rivalry. I discuss this further below.

As for the Soviet Union, it began to court India. There was exchange of state visits and numerous supportive statements coming out of Moscow. At one point, Nikita Khrushchev made a visit to Srinigar and, in an effort to show support for India claims to Kashmir, exclaimed that "We are so near that if ever you call us from your mountain tops we will appear at your side."[226] These overtures toward India were combined with growing vilification of Pakistan as "the stooge of imperialist

[226] Khrushchev, quoted in Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, *Flames of the Chinar: An Autobiography*, abridged and translated from Urdu by Khushwant Singh (New Delhi: Viking, 1993), p. 134.

powers".[227] These vague signals of intent had little direct impact on India-Pakistan relations however except perhaps to alleviate some worries in New Delhi of the growing U.S.-Pakistan ties. However, the signals from Moscow never reached a level of commitment to assuage Nehru's distrust of the Soviet Union.

In sum, from 1952 to 1955, U.S. support for Pakistan was high. Given U.S. costly signals of support for Pakistan, the argument presented in chapter 2 predicts that hostilities should not escalate during this time. Both rivals should be able to accurately calculate the intentions of influential others and adjust their positions accordingly. India of course did not cede Kashmir in the face U.S.-Pakistan cooperation but it did launch a diplomatic initiative to bring about a negotiated settlement. For one, it returned to bilateral negotiations with Pakistan and in 1953, the two leaders—Nehru and Bogra—agreed that the Kashmir dispute (1) would be resolved without resort to force, (2) a plebiscite would be held and (3) a new plebiscite administrator should be appointed for that purpose. Nehru even offered Bogra a "no-war pact". Bogra rejected the offer on the grounds that it would mean little without settlement of the Kashmir issue. Nonetheless, bi-lateral talks continued through 1955. A report issued in mid-1955 and published throughout the Indian press reflected a cooperative spirit not previously seen in India that was not to reoccur after 1956. It suggested that:

> The Indo-Pakistan dispute is set for a solution….[what the] talks between the Prime Ministers of Pakistan and India has led to is that the Kashmir dispute will cease to appear on the agenda of the UN Security Council before long. Both the Prime Ministers, it appears, have come to the conclusion that the dispute should be settled between the two countries. There are also indications, rather pronounced, that the old [conflictual] approach of both governments in respect of a plebiscite to ascertain the wishes of the people of Jammu and Kashmir has now changed.[228]

5.2c 1956-1959: Shifting Signals and Renewed Hostilities

While the United States had entered into a defensive pact with Pakistan, it immediately began to qualify its commitments. In fact, two days after the 1954

[227] Ibid.
[228] Gupta, *Kashmir*, p. 290.

announcement, Eisenhower issued a press release that included the text of a personal letter to Nehru. It explained that formal U.S. commitments were related to communist aggression and not directed toward India. And, in the event that American military aid is misused in the form of aggression, the United States would take immediate and appropriate action to thwart such activity. In the same letter, Eisenhower also promised to give sympathetic consideration to any request by India for similar aid—an offer Nehru rejected.[229] The U.S. ambassador to India repeated this message of assurance and was quick to point out that U.S. economic assistance continued to be much greater to India than it was to Pakistan. So apparent and consistent were American signals to correct any misperception that its security commitments might cover conflict between India and Pakistan that G. W. Choudhury—a former Pakistani cabinet member and academic—wrote:

> By 1956, [less than a year after the establishment of the Baghdad Pact] the Indians seemed convinced that U.S. policy was not hostile, and Pakistan likewise realized that its expectation that the United States would invariably support an ally against a neutral was incorrect. U.S. policy on Kashmir, for instance, did not change markedly in favor of Pakistan once it adhered to the pacts. Pakistani Foreign Minster…Noon met Dulles [and reported that] 'He left me in doubt that the United States would promptly and effectively come to the assistance of Pakistan if it were subjected to armed aggression which, however, the United States did not anticipate.'[230]

This sparked great frustration among Pakistan's leadership. For instance, Noon criticized "Western allies" for their "lack of sympathy and understanding" of Pakistan's position before the National Assembly when he became Prime Minister in 1958. If Pakistan found itself in trouble, he went on, he "would go and shake hands with those whom they made their enemies for the sake of others [read: the Soviet Union and/or China]."[231]

To be sure, U.S.-Pakistan security cooperation received a setback almost before it took effect. U.S. efforts to mollify Indian concerns clearly detracted from Pakistan's long-term security benefits regarding its prime rival (effectively cheapening the pervious barrage of costly signals). At the same time, Washington's

[229] For a discussion of this episode, see Cheema, *Pakistan's Defense Policy,* pp. 127-140.
[230] Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, p. 93.
[231] Ibid.

efforts to assure India led to much improved U.S.-Indian relations. For instance, Eisenhower invited Nehru to the United States in March 1956, which resulted in a three day visit later that year. They released a communiqué that stated that the two nations were "bound together in strong ties of friendship deriving from common objectives and adherence to the highest principles of free democracy….[T]hese talks will facilitate the constant efforts India and the United States toward the achievement of peaceful and friendly intercourse among nations…."[232] A year later, the United States provided a significant aid package to help India with its financial crisis.[233] In short, Eisenhower pursued a purposeful and careful communication campaign to reestablish American neutrality in the India-Pakistan conflict. This led to a sharp downturn in its signaled support for Pakistan because Washington looked to dampen its commitment except in the explicit and unlikely event of communist aggression and it led to a sharp increase in cheap support for India.

As for the Soviet Union, its relations with India and Pakistan continued along the path it had set in the early 1950s. It was sending cheap signals of support for India—although these relations deepened somewhat. For instance, it renewed and expanded its five year trade and assistance program and began assisting in capital construction as well as a much-publicized steel mill in Bhilai.[234] It also stepped up its military sales to India with a 1956 agreement to sell MIG 17s.[235] In 1957, the Soviet Union used its veto power in the UN Security Council to put down a UN resolution that reminded India and Pakistan of their commitments toward a plebiscite in Kashmir. Its cheap hostile signals toward Pakistan also remained rather stable. However, there were periodic direct but still ambiguous warnings coming out of Moscow as a result of Pakistan's security cooperation with the United States.

During this time, China also began to take a much more active role in South Asia. Its relations with India for most of the early 1950s were moderately warm in that they exchanged friendly gestures and symbolic support for one another. However, not unlike Moscow, Beijing remained skeptical of India while outwardly working toward "an extensive friendly intercourse".[236] In 1954, these cordial relations

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[232] "U.S.-India Communiqué", *New York Times* (December 23, 1956), p. 4.
[233] Norman Palmer, *South Asia and United States Policy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), p. 21.
[234] For instance, see "Soviet Will Build 4 Indian Projects; Agreement Made on Power Station and Plants for Heavy Industry", *New York Times* (November 10, 1957), p. 12.
[235] Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, p.23.
[236] Ibid., p. 169.

entered a friendlier era when the two countries exchanged high-level visits and signed the Lhasa Protocol, which ended India's claim to "special privileges" in Tibet. The next few years were characterized by five principles of coexistence—*panchsheel*. They were: (1) Mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty; (2) Mutual non-aggression; (3) Mutual non-interference in each other's internal affairs; (4) Equality and mutual benefit, and (5) Peaceful coexistence. The most popular slogan in India during this time was *Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai* or the Indians and Chinese are brothers.

Thus, China extended a rather steady stream of friendly cheap signals to India for much of the 1950s. Relations were far from ideal, however, as there was recurring uneasiness between the two. For instance, in 1955 India objected to China's inclusion of a portion of its northern frontier on an official map, saying it was a clear infringement of *panchsheel*. These types of tensions became more acute in 1958, after India officially objected to the inclusion of much of Northern Assam in the China Pictorial - an official organ of the Chinese Peoples' Republic. Nehru wrote Chou En-lai a letter, claiming the Premier had given him the impression that Indo-Chinese boundaries "were quite clear and were not a matter of argument." It took a year to reply and when he did, he stated:

> Using India as its base, Britain conducted extensive territorial expansion into China's Tibet region and even the Kinkiang region. All this constitutes the fundamental reason for the long-term disputes over and non-settlement of the Sino-Indian border question.[237]

An era of cordial Indo-China relations was giving way to hostility by the late 1950s.

In sum, this time period was characterized by Soviet signals that remained relatively stable—cheap but supportive of India and hostile toward Pakistan. China's relations with India steadily deteriorated over the mid-to-late 1950s but it did not take a sharp decline until 1958-59 when border disputes replaced *panchsheel*. However, the most significant change in third-party relations between the early 1950s and 1956 resulted from a downturn in U.S. security commitments for Pakistan and increased cooperation in U.S.-Indian relations. The argument put forward in chapter 2 suggests that such a dramatic shift in third-party signal would be more likely to result in escalatory behavior. Specifically, the effective nullification of costly U.S. signals and decrease in cheap support for Pakistan and a sharp increase in levels of cheap

[237] Ibid.

support for India may have led India to perceive a diplomatic window of opportunity to escalate hostilities against Pakistan.

Hostilities in fact did reemerge. While Indian and Pakistani troops clashed in Kashmir around May 8, 1955, the evidence suggests that this was likely an isolated and inadvertent escalation.[238] However, in March 1956, Indian troops "attacked and captured" the Pakistani police post in Chad Bet in the Rann of Kutch, resulting in the deaths of four Indian soldiers and ten Pakistani soldiers.[239] The sharp turn in U.S. signals combined with fairly warm relations with the Soviet Union and China had provided a diplomatic window of opportunity for India to pursue military objectives without fear of serious outside opposition. Because the third party signals in India's favor were cheap, Pakistan was not without hope that it could gain outside assistance in its struggle with India. Of course, its leaders had become frustrated with the United States but two external events helped reinforce its false hope. The Suez crisis and the Soviet invasion of Hungary in October 1956 exposed a divide between India and the Western powers. Sensing this split and the need for alliance cohesion in the West as well as Western need to defuse Muslim angst led Pakistan's leaders to calculate that their country's geo-strategic value was increasing. In other words, they were not discouraged by signals indicating a decline in third party support relative to India. As a government later report noted:

> The Pakistani Government felt encouraged in its expectations by the attitude of the Western Powers toward India in consequence of India's policies during the crises relating to Suez and Hungary in October-November 1956.[240]

Not only did this discourage Pakistani compromise, its leaders were emboldened to resist India and engaged in subsequent escalations—threatening force in brinksmanship type politics throughout the rest of the 1950s.

Of course, in 1958 friendly Sino-Indian relations gave way to conflict. As the two engaged in border clashes, Pakistan looked to leverage its newfound relationship with China—"enemy of my enemy is a friend of mine". The growing

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[238] The only evidence I was able to find that this actually occurred was in the rivalry narratives of Klein, Goertz and Diehl, "The New Rivalry Dataset". There was no indication of the initiator or a series of escalatory steps.
[239] This too was taken from the rivalry narratives because I was unable to find reliable discussion of it elsewhere but the use of "attacked and captured" is suggestive of more purposeful escalation.
[240] Government of Pakistan, *White Paper on the Jammu and Kashmir Dispute* (Islamabad: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1977), quoted in Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 26.

frequency and intensity of costly hostile signals China was using to communicate enmity toward India did not have the immediate predicted effect of encouraging prewar bargains between India and Pakistan. Rather, a series of tit-for-tat military escalations in Kashmir continued unabated. There is no clear indication of which side was the initiator or the escalating party.[241] What is clear is that Pakistan was encouraged by Sino-Indian hostilities but, contrary to the argument presented in chapter 2, India did not take actions to defuse tensions with Pakistan in order to address an increasingly hostile China. That is, it did not look to assuage Pakistani claims until war with China looked imminent.

5.3 1960s: Windows, Wavering and War

The 1960s ushered in a new and volatile era in India-Pakistan relations. Growing hostility between China and India injected an additional dimension of uncertainty. And, their 1962 war is often pointed to by scholars as a military window of opportunity that eventually led Pakistan to escalate hostilities and war in 1965. For instance, Sumit Ganguly argues that "The second Indo-Pakistani war *underscored the logic of windows of opportunity*….[A]fter a disastrous defeat at the hands of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) in October-November 1962 along its Himalayan frontiers, India had embarked on a major attempt to revamp its military infrastructure….India's growing military prowess would soon foreclose the possibilities of meaningful military action. From the Pakistani standpoint the *window of opportunity* was rapidly closing."[242] The argument is that China's defeat of India opened the military window and the rapid military rearmament India undertook in the war's aftermath was closing it. Pakistan saw its chance to attack and did so it 1965. However, why would a relatively weak Pakistan forego war when it had a presumed advantage in the immediate aftermath of India's defeat of 1962 but find the will to launch an offensive only when its *disadvantage* actually surpassed what it had been prior to the Indo-China war that opened the supposed window? Indeed, figure 4.3

[241] Pakistani troops clashed with Indian forces near the Surma River on the Indian-East Pakistan border between March 11 and August 26, 1958, resulting in the deaths of six Indians and five Pakistanis. Indian policemen and Pakistani policemen clashed near Fazilka on the Indian (Punjab) -West Pakistan border on June 3, 1958, resulting in the deaths of seven Indian policemen. Indian policemen and Pakistani troops clashed near the village of Lakhimpur on the Indian-East Pakistan border on August 4-7, 1958, resulting in the deaths of two Indian policemen and two Pakistani soldiers. Pakistani military aircraft shot down an Indian military aircraft near Rawalpindi on April 10, 1959. See, rivalry narratives of Klein, Goertz and Diehl, "The New Rivalry Dataset".

[242] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 31, emphasis added.

showed that India held its widest advantage in relative military capabilities (roughly 11:1) by 1964-1965.

5.3a 1960-1963 and the Sino-Indian War:
A Military Window, Costly Signals and Restraint

Pakistan may have had a military window in 1962 and 1963, when India suffered a major defeat. But, rather than launch an offensive to exploit this immediate advantage, Pakistan's leaders watched India engage in a major military build-up for three years before they decided to attack. As Ganguly points out, even by 1964 decision-makers in Rawalpindi were "quite cognizant of India's significantly larger forces and industrial capacity."[243] By the time war broke out, India had roughly twice as many infantry, armor and aircraft divisions than Pakistan. That an increasingly desperate Pakistan may have escalated hostilities because it feared its position was only going to worsen with continued peace defies the rational logic that underlies window arguments and parallels Bismarck's famous characterization of preventive war as "suicide from fear of death". In fact, to help explain away this apparent inconsistency, Ganguly and others inevitably rely on misperceptions associated with what Ganguly calls "chauvinistic nationalism". But, this form of egocentric bias is pervasive in the India-Pakistan rivalry and indeed throughout much of international politics. Such a non-rational ancillary explanation detracts from the window argument—either it was opportunistic behavior based on cost-benefit calculations or it was based on egocentrically biased miscalculation.

I argue that Pakistan's 1965 offensive had less to do with a military window of opportunity than with a perceived diplomatic one. In fact, the interesting question regarding the military opportunity provided by the Sino-Indian war is: why did Pakistan show such restraint during and following the war? That is, what explains the relative calm in the early part of the 1960s, when India appeared to be at its most vulnerable? I argue that two developments dampened hostilities and kept Pakistan from fully exploiting its military window of opportunity: (1) the United States became directly engaged in South Asian security and used a heavy barrage of costly supportive signals to communicate its resolve in securing both India and Pakistan; and, (2) recognizing its vulnerability, India returned to the bargaining table and showed signs of compromise to avoid a two-front war. In other words, the costly

[243] Ibid., p. 37.

signals of U.S. support for India made clear to Pakistan that it would pay a heavy price if it hastened a Chinese victory and China's costly signals of hostility toward India led New Delhi to search for compromise with Pakistan.

To be sure, Pakistan's leaders were aware that China's growing hostility toward India could provide a significant strategic advantage well before the 1962 war. As far back as 1958, Stanley Wolpert writes that Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (then minister of Fuel and Natural Resources) "recognized this simmering conflict between India and China as a major source of potential diplomatic advantage for Pakistan if properly exploited."[244] In 1960, Bhutto became minister for Kashmiri Affairs and led the Pakistani delegation to the UN. He began courting Beijing's favor even at some expense of relations with Washington. For instance, he broke with the United States at the UN over a vote over China's membership. China and Pakistan also opened joint centers for promoting "good feeling" and planning was underway for a road from Rawalpindi through Khunjerab pass to China. China's growing hostility toward India was widely seen as an encouraging development.

In the late 1950s, U.S.-Pakistan relations had certainly slipped as the United States attempted to mollify Indian concerns. But, in 1960 the United States was forced to take a renewed security stand in Pakistan when a U2 spy plane carrying U.S. pilot Gary Powers left an American base in Peshwar and was shot down over the Soviet Union. Cold War tensions erupted and Pakistan was caught directly in the middle. Khrushchev openly threatened Pakistan, reportedly saying that Peshwar was "marked on our map and a ring has been put around it by Soviet defense forces." He was also quoted as stating: "In future, if any American plane is allowed to use Peshwar as a base of operation against the Soviet Union, we will take immediate retaliatory measures."[245] In turn, the United States looked to reassure and even reward Pakistan for its risk. Kennedy invited Ayub to Washington, where a joint communiqué affirmed that "The United States Government regards as vital to its national interest and to world peace the preservation of the independence and integrity of Pakistan."[246] Kennedy also affirmed the continuation and possible

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[244] Stanley Wolpert, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 64.
[245] Osgood Caruthers, "Moscow Protests: Will Exhibit Plane—U.S. Asks Interview with Jailed Flier", *New York Times* (May 11, 1960), p. 1.
[246] "Joint Statement Following Discussions With the President of Pakistan", July 13, 1961. See John T. Woolley and Gerhard Peters, *The American Presidency Project* [online] (Santa Barbara, CA: University of California (hosted)), available online at: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=8237 (accessed July 1, 2007).

increase of military aid to Pakistan and assured Ayub that despite Washington's growing ties with New Delhi, the United States would consult with Pakistan prior to providing any military assistance to India. However, Kennedy was also keen to press Ayub to work toward solving Pakistan's dispute with India.[247]

There was a rather tight complexion of costly signals—China was threatening India, the Soviet Union was threatening Pakistan, the United States was supporting Pakistan, and Washington and Moscow were threatening one another. Pakistan's vulnerability to the Soviet Union brought to light its dependency on U.S. assurances, while U.S. renewed commitment to Pakistan's "independence and integrity" signaled that even India would suffer if it attacked Pakistan. Meanwhile, China continued to engage in border clashes with India, signaling its hostility. India's vulnerability was also becoming clear.

The argument presented in chapter 2 argues that such costly signals should encourage prewar bargains that avoid escalation. Indeed, the two countries headed back to the negotiating table. Prime Minister Nehru and President Ayub Khan met in 1960 (after the U2 incident) and released a communiqué indicating that they were arranging for ministerial meetings toward cooperation on a wide range of issues, including: financial and trade matters, resolution of border differences, implementation of moveable properties agreement, cooperation on scientific and technical as well as agricultural matters, and to cooperate on water resources. This was indeed a broad and ambitious agenda set forth by both leaders. While it signaled some expectation of future cooperation, however, these talks were often followed by veiled threats of using "other means" to achieve goals and that each still had great "distrust" of the other.[248] Perhaps neither Ayub nor Nehru was eager to move on the cooperative agenda they set for themselves but they were also reluctant to escalate to open violence and risk war, when both were vulnerable to outside pressures. Indeed, the reluctant return to bilateral talks looked more like an effort to alleviate tensions and avoid escalation in the face of regional if not global war than to resolve differences.

When war erupted between China and India in October 1962, President Kennedy immediately sent letters to Ayub and Nehru. The *New York Times* in turn carried the dispatch on October 31. To Pakistan's leader, Kennedy wrote of

[247] Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, p. 105.
[248] Gupta, *Kashmir*, p. 344.

Washington's intentions to provide India with whatever help was needed to defend against China. Not published was a request that Ayub send "a private message…to Nehru telling him that he could count on Pakistan's taking no action on the frontiers to alarm India" in order to free up India's military—the majority of which was then stationed along Pakistan's border. Ayub replied that he was unable to act favorably upon Kennedy's "surprising" request but assured him that Pakistan had no intention of taking any actions that would add to India's problems. He also expressed disappointed in the lack of consultation with regard to arming India and called such actions "regrettable".[249] Ayub's tacit acquiescence to Kennedy's request has been heavily criticized by those believing that in doing so, Pakistan missed a "grand opportunity" to resolve the Kashmir dispute.[250] Yet, had Ayub taken action that could have precipitated Chinese victory, it was clear that Pakistan would have likely gained the enmity of the United States—made clear by costly U.S. signals of support to India.

To Nehru, Kennedy provided assurance that India had the full support and sympathy of America in its fight with China. The following week, the United States and Britain sent delegations to New Delhi to determine what military assistance India might need. At the same time, Kennedy attempted to reassure Pakistan: "In providing military assistance to India, we are mindful of our alliance with Pakistan," he wrote. "All of our aid to India is for the purpose of defeating Chinese communist subversion."[251] Whereas it attempted to mollify Indian concerns when aiding Pakistan in the 1950s, the United States was now in the ironic position of having to alleviate Pakistan's concerns while supporting India.

Pakistan's trust of American intentions was again harmed in the open U.S. support for India. As Ayub's wrote, "Our belief is that the arms now being obtained by India from you for use against China will undoubtedly be used against us at the very first opportunity."[252] But more than the arms *per se*, Pakistan had seriously impaired its relations with the Soviet Union and endangered itself by providing America with surveillance bases. Now, Washington was placing India on the same level as Pakistan in terms of military assistance and support. But, for the time, Pakistan had no other option but to show restraint lest it endanger its relations with

[249] Mohammad Ayub Khan, *Friends Not Masters: A Political Autobiography* (New York: Oxford University Press,1967), pp. 140-141.
[250] Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, p. 20.
[251] Quoted in Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, p. 100.
[252] Khan, *Friends Not Masters,* p. 143.

the U.S. as well and even risk direct hostility. In short, it was unable to exploit the military opportunity afforded by China's attack on India because of America's diplomatic commitment to India's defense.

In the immediate aftermath of the Sino-Indian war, the United States continued its costly signals of support to both Pakistan and India. Between 1962 and 1964, the United States made six statements of U.S. commitment (costly signals) to the independence and integrity of Pakistan and that it was vital to America's interest.[253] As for India, the United States was assisting in a major military aid program that guaranteed New Delhi whatever assistance was necessary against China if conflict erupted again. This too was a costly signal of support. As a result, neither was able to escalate hostilities without jeopardizing U.S. support and even risking its hostility. As Nehru's biographer writes, "Dependent on the United States and Britain for military assistance, India could not refuse [their wishes] to talk to Pakistan."[254] The effect of U.S. support on relations between India and Pakistan is also summarized by Victoria Schofield, when she writes:

> From the Indians' point of view, due to their vulnerability over China, the 1962-63 talks were one of the rare occasions when they were obliged to depart from their established position over Kashmir: that discussion in someway implied that the status of Jammu and Kashmir was in doubt. The Pakistanis mistakenly hoped that Britain and the United States would withhold the promised weapons to India in return for a more favourable outcome for Pakistan over Kashmir, but it is unlikely that Nehru would have yielded to such a threat.[255]

5.3b 1963-65: Diplomatic Shifts and War

A Sino-Pakistan border agreement in early 1963 paved the way for a sharp increase in cooperation between the two countries. They exchanged high level visits shortly thereafter, laying the foundation for a series of trade, aid and technical assistance programs (effectively going from signals that score around 0-1 on the conflict-cooperation scale of table 3.2 to around 4-4.5 over a year or two). Apparently emboldened by China's cheap signals of support, Bhutto (now Pakistan's foreign

[253] Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, pp. 112-115.
[254] Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 258.
[255] Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, p. 102.

minister) stated before Pakistan's National Assembly in July 1963 that an "Attack from India on Pakistan today is no longer confined to the security and territorial integrity of Pakistan….An attack by India on Pakistan now involves the territorial integrity and security of the largest state in Asia." Nehru responded to this in a speech from Srinigar, saying that "Pakistan is mistaken if it thinks it can intimidate us because we are facing this threat from the Chinese."[256] Curiously, however, China had not made any formal commitment to Pakistan's security. And, one former Pakistani cabinet member has written that neither his recollection nor his research provided evidence of a secret military pact of any kind between 1963 and 1964.[257] Pakistan's claims and India's suspicions were born from cheap signals out of Beijing and its existential threat to India. And, in 1964, Beijing clearly departed from its neutral position regarding Kashmir to support Pakistan's claim.[258] Ayub visited Beijing in March of 1965 to underscore the growing ties between the two counties. This, Ayub thought, vindicated his assessment that China and Pakistan were now strategic partners. As Ayub's biographer writes, "The people felt elevated [during this time] by knowledge that China had become Pakistan's friend and ally against India."[259]

Washington responded unfavorably. U.S. President Johnson, who was already frustrated with the intransigence of India and Pakistan as well as their persistent courting of the Soviet Union and China (respectively) while accepting American aid, abruptly canceled an invitation to Ayub for a state visit—he was scheduled to visit Washington the next month. Using the opportunity to signal his frustration with both countries, Johnson also canceled a planned visit from India's new Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri. The United States was essentially communicating that it was no longer interested in taking an active role in the security of South Asia. It was apparently turning its attention to Southeast Asia. Ayub did not hesitate: he immediately accepted an invitation from Moscow in lieu of visiting Washington. The visit paid off, as Kosygin declared that it was a "turning point which will lead to further exchanges of views and to big decisions in the interest of our two

[256] Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, p. 102.
[257] Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, pp. 181.
[258] Jacques Nevards, "China, In Switch, Backs Pakistan on Kashmir Issue", *New York Times* (February 24, 1964), p. 1.
[259] Altaf Gauhar, *Ayub Khan: Pakistan's First Military Leader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 290.

countries".[260] The two set forth a trade treaty and other technical agreements. What had been a cool relationship between Pakistan and the Soviet Union was now more cordial.

While in Moscow, Ayub received word that Indian troops were moving into the Rann of Kutch.[261] Far from Kashmir, Indian and Pakistani *police* forces had clashed on several previous occasions but most evidence suggests that these were largely inadvertent clashes.[262] On April 4, however, Indian forces launched direct assaults upon Pakistani posts. Pakistan countered on April 9, resulting in the deaths of thirty-four Pakistani and five Indian soldiers. Pakistan then launched a military offensive against Indian positions on April 24-29, 1965. India withdrew to leave behind about forty miles of marshland. The Pakistanis were jubilant, as British Prime Minister Harold Wilson appealed for a ceasefire on April 27 and the two countries signed a temporary ceasefire agreement on May 11.

It is not entirely clear why Indian forces initiated hostilities on April 4. Indian accounts refer to both sides having escalated tensions or that they were simply responding to Pakistani incursions. Some suggest, however, that it was an effort to make credible India's willingness to fight. Many in Pakistan were questioning Indian will following the Sino-Indian war. Seeing Pakistan emboldened by its loss, New Delhi believed it needed to demonstrate its willingness and ability to battle. At the same time, however, it is also clear that the withdrawal of U.S. presence in the region was leaving India with a freer hand to address Pakistan—as long as the Soviet Union was able to keep China in check.[263] With hostilities between Moscow and Beijing on the rise, there was no reason for India to doubt Soviet intentions of doing so. Thus, the dramatic downturn in cheap U.S. signals of support for Pakistan provided India with a diplomatic opening.

The outcome of the conflict, however, led Pakistan to draw the opposite lesson: it had the diplomatic initiative. Even Soviet newspapers were notably absent of bias and partiality when the Rann of Kutch dispute erupted and Moscow uncharacteristically praised the British ceasefire initiative in April that left Pakistan

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[260] Ibid., 301.
[261] Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, p. 107.
[262] Klein, Goertz and Diehl, "The New Rivalry Dataset". While Ganguly and others called these "limited probes" from Pakistan, I was unable to find any evidence that they were purposeful "probes".
[263] See, for instance, Thomas F. Brady, "India Looks to Soviet; Shastri Hopes to Disarm Leftist Critics And Assure Backing in Chinese Dispute", *New York Times* (September 21, 1964), p. 10.

with territorial gains.[264] Schofield summarizes the lessons in Pakistan, when she writes:

> if the Kashmir dispute could be reactivated by stirring up a rebellion in the Indian-held section, a critical situation would arise which would be sufficient to oblige the *western* countries to intervene. India might then be pressurized to submit the dispute to mediation, which if successful might lead to a more favorable solution to Pakistan than the status quo.[265]

A letter that Ayub wrote on August 29 to his Commander-in-Chief supports this. He ordered that his armed forces "take such action that will defreeze the Kashmir problem, weaken India's resolve and bring her to a conference table without provoking a general war."[266]

Believing assistance from China may be forthcoming, combined with the abstention of the United States and Soviet Union, Pakistan's leaders believed that they had a diplomatic window of opportunity—that they could escalate hostilities without international opposition and even with likely support if the conflict went bad. Indeed, neutralizing Soviet support for India was a final and important component to the Pakistani sense that a diplomatic window was opening. And, shortly after the Rann of Kutch event, this gap was closed when India's prime minister was received coolly in Moscow. Choudhury, a former Pakistani cabinet official, writes how this visit was interpreted in Pakistan as a signal that Soviet support for India had been neutralized:

> During their consultations…the Soviet leaders may have assured the Indian Prime Minister of a special and continuing relationship, but *they did not publicly support India or condemn Pakistan*. With no mention of Kashmir or any other controversial Indo-Pakistani problem, the communiqué issued at the end of Shastri's visit contained nothing to which Pakistan could take exception. *The Pakistani Ambassador in Moscow was gleeful*. Quoting from diplomatic sources and drawing from his talks with officials at the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the

[264] Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, p. 48.
[265] Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, p. 107 (emphasis added). I believe that Schofield gets it wrong, however, when she suggests that Pakistan looked for Western intervention. It was Chinese intervention or the threat of Chinese intervention that Pakistan was counting on to counter Indian strength.
[266] Ayub Khan, 29 August 1965, as quoted in Wolpert, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan*, p. 90.

Ambassador reported on *"changed thinking in Moscow on Indo-Pakistan problems".*[267]

Weeks later, Pakistan forces attacked Indian troops stationed in Kashmir.

In short, Pakistan's military window resulting from the Sino-Indian war had closed. By 1965, India held a wide margin of capabilities over Pakistan. But, the turn in third-party signals had opened another—albeit—diplomatic window of opportunity. Indeed, there was a considerable rush by Pakistani leaders to jump through this window. As Major General Shahid Hamid recalls: "the [Pakistani] Army was not [even] trained or ready for the offensive; some 25 percent of the men were on leave. There was little time to make up for this deficiency in our planning and the [resulting] crisis created a series of isolated battles."[268] Unfortunately for Pakistan, this ill-prepared and overmatched military did not receive the outside assistance that had been crucial in the calculation to escalate hostilities. Third party assistance did not materialize until Indian forces crossed the internationally recognized boundary into Pakistan moving toward Lahore and Pakistan's forces started running low on ammunition. At that time, China (wrongly) accused India of encroaching on its border in what Beijing claimed was an apparent preparation for an offensive into Tibet.[269] In response, China sent foreign minister Chen Yi to Karachi, where he stated that China supported Pakistan's "just action" in repelling India's "armed provocation" in Kashmir. Beijing then issued an ultimatum to India to dismantle its military buildup in Sikkim near Tibet, and China mobilized its military forces along India's border (a costly hostile signal to India and costly supportive one to Pakistan). A few days later, on September 21, India accepted a UN sponsored ceasefire.[270]

5.4 1970-1972: A Military Window, a Diplomatic Window and the Third India-Pakistan War

Almost immediately after the Second Kashmir War, political developments within Pakistan brought to the fore simmering tensions and disparities previously held in check by a putative bond of Islam and the perceived threat of India. The lack of success in resolving the Kashmir dispute led to a political split, which ended in a military coup in March 1969. General Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan emerged as

[267] Ibid.
[268] Quoted in Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, p. 107.
[269] There is no evidence to support China's claims. Also, see Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 46.
[270] Ibid., pp. 110-111.

president and arranged for elections in late 1970. An electoral controversy, however, subsequently sparked a separatist movement in East Pakistan and a brutal but ultimately unsuccessful repression. The violence began in earnest on March 25, 1971. As an article in *Asia Times* recently recounted:

> At a meeting of the military top brass, Yahya Khan declared: "Kill 3 million of them and the rest will eat out of our hands." Accordingly, on the night of 25 March, the Pakistani Army launched Operation Searchlight to "crush" Bengali resistance in which Bengali members of military services were disarmed and killed, students and the intelligentsia systematically liquidated and able-bodied Bengali males just picked up and gunned down.[271]

Over the next nine months, the civil turmoil resulted in about 10,000 deaths and millions of refugees.

This upheaval provided a clear military opportunity for India, which was already much stronger. As Wayne Wilcox argues, "It was a golden military opportunity for India to eliminate the Pakistani threat."[272] At the time, one prominent defense analyst close to the administration in India wrote that the East Pakistani crisis presented India with "an opportunity the like of which will never come again."[273] Indira Gandhi's biographer similarly explains that "Humanitarian feelings were the main motivation force behind this outcry [to intervene] but many Indians also saw in the heart-rending situation an opportunity to cut Pakistan down to size."[274] In November 1971, India began cross-border raids and artillery attack into East Pakistan. In repsonse, Pakistan launched an offensive on December 3 with an air raid on Inida's northern air bases. The attack was unsuccessful and Pakistan's military in East Pakistan paid a heavy price when India responded in full. The East Paksitani military was forced to surrender in Dacca on December 16, 1971.

The purpose here is not to dispute whether there was a military window of opporutnity but to assess the relative weight it had compared to less-explored diplomatic factors toward explaining when and inevitably why the Third India-

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[271] Debasish Roy Chowdhury**,** "Indians are bastards anyway", *Asia Times* (June 23, 2003), available online at http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/GF23Df04.html (accessed July 2007).
[272] Wayne Wilcox, *The Emergence of Bangladesh* (Washington, DC; American Enterprise Institute, 1973), p. 35.
[273] Richard Sisson and Leo E. Rose, *War and Secession: Pakistan, India, and the Creation of Bangladesh* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 149-150.
[274] Inder Malhotra, *Indira Gandhi: A Personal and Political Biography* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1991), p. 133.

Pakistan war erupted. Indeed, three questions about the onset, conduct and aftermath of the war raises doubts about the strength of the military opportunity argument. Namely: the military window opened for India in the spring of 1971, yet many in India's goveremnt held strong reservations against intervention.[275] Why did it take India eight months to exploit its military opportunity? Pakistan was literally falling apart, yet it was Pakistan's forces that launched a large scale offensive that formally broght the full power of India into the war. Was this a case of "suicide from fear of death" or did Pakistan's leaders have reason to believe such actions could lead to a favorable outcome? In other words, I look at the reciprocal escalation between India and Pakistan to try to understand if and why both countries could have foreseen an advantage in escalation at the very same time. And, lastly, India declared a unilateral ceasfire on December 17, after Pakistan's forces surrendered in Dacca. It did not exploit its advantage by taking the war into Kashmir or West Pakistan. Why did India fail to fully exploit this military opportunity to settle the Kashmir dispute if not the Pakistan "problem"? After all, its military advantage only increased with the defeat of forces in East Pakistan. Had military advantage been the deciding factor in India's escalation, it only stands to reason that the route of Pakistani forces in East Pakistan would have encouraged further incursions into the West and into Pakistani held Kashmir to permanently settle their ongoing dispute.

5.4a Explaining When India Intervened

Pakistan was plagued by internal trumoil well before India escalated hostilities in late 1971. Why did it wait so long to take advantage of its military opportunity? I argue that India was restrained upto November 1971 by the fear of American and Chinese intervention. However, in the summer of 1971, cheap signals of U.S. and Chinese support for Pakistan rapidly decreased to open a diplomatic window of opportunity for India.

To be sure, the United States had again taken renewed interest in South Asia in the late 1960s and early 1970s. For instance, in August of 1969 U.S. President Nixon and Yahya met. Nixon recalled America's "special relationship with Pakistan", adding that "Pakistan's friendship with the U.S. will be dearer" now that he was President.[276] By Ocotber 1970, Nixon unveiled a major military aid program to

[275] Sisson and Rose, *War and Secession*, pp. 210-213.
[276] Quoted in Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, p. 55.

Pakistan, including six modern fighters, seven B-57 bombers, and 200 armored personnel carriers. The offical explanation was that the withholding of military assistance had not brought peace.[277] But, unoffically there was concern about Moscow's increased military aid to India and talk of a possible Soviet-India pact. Pakistan was also a key player in Nixon's "China strategy" and it was only fitting to reward Pakistan for its efforts. By contrast, U.S. relations with India were ambivalent-to-negative. Nixon not only had a personal animus toward Indira Gandhi but also resented her courting the Soviet Union while claiming "nonalignment". So dramatic a turn in U.S. signals to favor Pakistan during this time, it became known as the "Tilt" in common parlance.[278]

While this "Tilt" seemed to signal that the United States was reassuming its traditional role as the guarantor of Pakistan's security, Nixon never issued a commitment to Pakistan's "independence and integrity" or a specific security guarantee. Nixon was effectively engaging in "cheap talk" (e.g., "promise military support" would score a 5.2 on the conflict-cooperation scale of table 3.2). But, this cheap talk generated much concern in New Delhi, where it was also no longer believed that the United States would help restrain Beijing if hostilities erupted on the subcontinent.[279] Indeed, as civil turmoil began to unfold in Pakistan, Kissinger reported to India's ambassador in Washington that the "Chinese would intervene on Pakistan's behalf should India decide to attack Pakistan. More to the point, he said that India could not count on American assistance in such an eventuality."[280]

The brutality of the crackdown in East Pakistan, however, apparently caught Washington by surprise. The only immediate action taken by the United States was to suspend new military shipments to Pakistan. It took no public stand against Yahya but in "quiet diplomacy" pressed for a political solution in East Pakistan. Richard Sisson and Leo Rose highlight American priorities when they write:

> Washington's public position from 25 March and throughout 1971 was that the conflict in East Pakistan was an internal affair in which direct intervention by foreign powers should be avoided. The stated objectives of the United States were (1) to prevent another Indo-Pakistani war; (2) to provide the humanitarian relief required in East

[277] "U.S. to Resume Sale Arms to Pakistan, *New York Times* (October 9, 1970), p. 13.
[278] For a critical discussion of U.S. policies, see Christopher Van Hollen, "The Tilt Policy Revisited: Nixon-Kissinger Geopolitics and South Asia", *Asian Survey* Vol. 20, No. 4 (April 1980), pp. 339-361.
[279] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 65.
[280] Ibid.

> Pakistan; and (3) to encourage a political settlement of the Pakistani civil war—preferably one that would maintain at least the façade of a unified Pakistan.

Indeed, America's focus was on preventing another India-Pakistan war. Deterring India through private warnings and vague statements of support for Pakistan to resolve its internal dispute on its own was the means for achieving that goal early in the civil war.

This deterrent posture toward India and "hands-off" approach toward Pakistan, however, began to soften in the fall of 1971. In August, the U.S. House of Representatives voted to suspend aid to Pakistan until stability was reestablished and Nixon refrained from commenting directly on U.S. policies toward the India-Pakistan situation outside of encouraging a political solution. Gandhi visited Nixon in Washington on November 4 and four days later the United States terminated all military sales to Pakistan and cancelled all unused export licenses. This was followed by suggestions from Washington that Yahya release a key secessionist leader and begin peaceful negotiations.[281] Such a suggestion effectively attributed a sense of legitimacy to the independence of Bangladesh and signaled that the U.S. attitude toward the conflict as an internal one could no longer be taken for granted. This was a dramatic downturn in cheap U.S. signals of support for Pakistan. (It was going from what might have registered around a 5, which is "promise material support" on the conflict-cooperation scale in table 3.2 to -5, which would be "reduce or cutoff aid" in a single year.) And, hosting an official state visit signaled greater support for India (moving from a rather cool or neutral set of signals that may score around 0 on the conflict-cooperation scale to a 2.8, "host a state visit").

A *New York Times* article on 25 November that carried U.S. State Department statements helps underscore this shift in U.S. signals. It is worth quoting at length because one can quickly see how such signals could be interpreted as a "green light" to India for taking military action against Pakistan.

> Charles W. Bray 3d, the State Department spokesman, declined to comment on an assertion that the United States was bound by a "longstanding bilateral agreement" to come to the aid of Pakistan "with

[281] Benjamin Welles, "US Said to Weigh Appeal to Yahya: Nixon Reported Considering Request to Pakistani Chief to Free Bengali Leader", *New York Times* (November 25, 1971), p. 1.

> our own arms and men if she should be attacked by any other country."
>
> Mr. Bray, when pressed to say whether the United States was bound by a secret commitment to aid Pakistan with "arms and men," repeatedly declined to comment…..
>
> Others noted…that on Nov. 12, Secretary Rogers said that the United States would not become involved if an Indian-Pakistani war developed….but explained privately that a public statement by the United States at this time disclaiming responsibility to support Pakistan militarily might heighten rather than calm tensions between Pakistan and India….
>
> "It might unleash the Indians….The best thing for us is to keep quiet…"[282]

As for China, the 1965 India-Pakistan war had clearly demonstrated the high price it might have to pay as Pakistan's most reliable supporter. Since then it had sought to maintain and even expand its cooperation with Pakistan but consistently if quietly rejected Rawalpindi's requests for specific security commitments that would obligate Chinese intervention in the event of another India-Pakistan war. China was careful to state its support for Pakistan in only general terms but early in Pakistan's civil war, these were nonetheless fairly strong signals. For instance, Foreign Minister Chi P'eng-fei is quoted as saying:

> Our Pakistan [sic] friend may rest assured that should Pakistan be subjected to foreign aggression, the Chinese Government and people will always resolutely support the Pakistan Government and people in their just struggle to defend their state sovereignty and national independence.[283]

Indeed, China continued its military and economic aid to Pakistan after the March 25 crackdown began. By summer, however, Beijing's tone had changed notably. For one, it began to show a reluctance and even evasion in approving and providing new assistance. It allowed for small arms and ammunition shipments but requests for

[282] Ibid., p. 17.
[283] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 67.

aircraft and other high-end equipment were either rejected or were unfulfilled until after the war.[284]

The first public comment of Pakistan's conflict was in the editorial page of the government backed *People's Daily* and criticized Indian interference in Pakistan's domestic affairs but was notably absent any comment on the developments in East Pakistan or threats toward India. A letter from China's Premier, Zhou Enlai, to Yahya published in the *Pakistani Times* was in the words of Sisson and Rose "a masterpiece in evasion and subterfuge; it did not criticize either the Pakistan government or the Bangladesh movement, but noted 'that the Indian government [has] been carrying out gross interference in the internal problems of your country. And the Soviet Union and U.S. are doing the same, one after the other.' The letter ended with a pledge of Chinese support to the 'Pakistani people'—but not specifically to the Yahya government."[285] This is a subtle but noteworthy change from the support provided to both the Pakistani people and government.

In retrospect, the ambiguity is clear. It may have been less clear to Indian officials had New Delhi not intercepted the full communication between Zhou and Yahya that also stated that "the question of East Pakistan should be settled according to the wishes of the People of East Pakistan."[286] And incredibly, the Indian government somehow obtained by July a series of letters exchanged between Beijing and Rawalpindi in which the Chinese government stated in no uncertain terms that should another India-Pakistan war erupt, it would support Pakistan politically but it would not intervene militarily.[287] This of course was not published by either Pakistani or Chinese presses. However, the ambiguity of China's public statements was likely appreciated in New Delhi due to the intelligence coup of intercepting state letters.

China remained silent on developments throughout most of 1971. Its silence was indicative, however. As war looked increasingly likely, Yahya worried that India was no longer concerned by Chinese intervention and sent a high-level delegation to Beijing to press for assistance on November 7. No public statement was made regarding the meeting but the delegation was reportedly rebuffed. Zhou apparently indicated that he did not believe war was likely. If it occurred, he assured, Pakistan

[284] Sisson and Rose, *War and Secession*, p. 251.
[285] Ibid., p. 250.
[286] Ibid., p. 203.
[287] Ibid., p. 199.

would have the political support and material assistance of China. But again, there were no specifics given and Zhou reemphasized that China would not intervene militarily. Surprising the delegation and to the chagrin of Zhou, Yahya Khan publicly reported the opposite both before and after the delegation returned from Beijing. He stated on public radio that China had assured support and its willingness to intervene should India attack Pakistan. This was an apparent bluff. While Beijing did not contradict Yahya's claims, its actions did not lend any credit to them either. China made no effort to re-supply or reinforce its military in Tibet, it did not increase mobilization levels, and there were no incidents along the Chinese-Indian border before or during the third India-Pakistan war.[288] The shift from high levels of cheap support to more neutral signaling was a dramatic blow for Pakistan and a coup for India in alleviating the fear of Chinese intervention. (Table 3.2 codes such signals as "explicit decline to comment" as -.1, "refuse" -4, or even "reduce or cutoff aid" as -5.6.)

The Soviet Union also underwent a dramatic policy shift over the course of 1971 to unambiguously favor India. The Sino-American rapproachment certainly encouraged closer ties between India and the Soviet Union in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Both were looking for a friend in the region. The Soviet Union had also become frustrated with Pakistan's ties to China in view of the Sino-Soviet conflict in 1969. In June of that year, Brezhnev proposed an "Asian mutual security" arrangement—an overt part of its strategy to contain China. In 1970, Gandhi indicated that India was receptive to the treaty if Moscow terminated or at least significantly reduced its military aid to Pakistan. Moscow announced its suspension of aid to Pakistan in April of 1970. Yet, Soviet arms continued to make their way to Pakistan and the very next month, a nuclear cooperation agreement was signed in Karachi only to be followed by a steel mill agreement that was reached when Yahya later visited Moscow. Thus, by the time Pakistan collapsed into civil war, the Soviet "tilt" toward India had begun to reemerge but Moscow had by no means given up on attaining a more influential role in Pakistan.[289] This changed, however, after the Pakistani crackdown.

The Soviet Union was the first major power to publicly respond to Pakistan's violent repression. On April 2, President Prodgony sent a letter on behalf of the

[288] See, Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, p. 210-213.
[289] Sisson and Rose, *War and Secession*, p. 238-240.

Supreme Soviet calling for "most urgent measures to stop the bloodshed and repression against the population of East Pakistan and for turning to methods of a peaceful political settlement." Yahya recoiled at being lectured about internal matters by a country with the record of the Soviet Union.[290] For much of the remaining part of the summer, Moscow was rather mild in its comments and on several occasions referred to events in East Pakistan as an "internal affair". It also continued to refer to "East Pakistan" rather than following India's practice of using "East Bengal". However, when India signed the "Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation" on 9 August to provide for joint security consultations with the Soviet Union, Moscow's position toward Pakistan again hardened and its favor for India lost its ambiguity. Indeed, when Pakistan's foreign minister visited Moscow later in August, he was met with what Sisson and Rose characterize as a "stiff Soviet attitude" and in September Kosygin publicly characterized Yahya's policies in East Pakistan as "indefensible". By contrast, Gandhi's received an "unprecedentedly warm reception" in Moscow that same month and, during her trip, she apparently informed Moscow of intentions to use military force in East Pakistan. She was requesting military aid in doing so. In mid-October, Moscow gave her an affirmative response during an impromptu visit from the Soviet deputy foreign minister. And on October 30, Soviet Air Marshal Koutakhov arrived to arrange for a transfer of military equipment.[291] Thus, cheap Soviet signals dramatically changed in favor of India over the summer of 1971.

By November, India not only had (tacit) Soviet support for military operations in East Pakistan but U.S. and Chinese signals indicated that they had lost interest in defending Pakistan. This was a rather dramatic change in levels of third-party signals over a few months' time, which opened a diplomatic window for India to act. This opportunity was not available to it earlier, despite the widening military window of opportunity. Indeed, it had been the fear of U.S. and/or Chinese intervention that had restrained India for eight months. As Sisir Gupta pointed out just prior to the turn in U.S. and China signals toward Pakistan:

> However great the reluctance of the Indian optimists to admit it, the fact is that Sino-U.S. rapproachement has altered the international context in which India has to conduct its local struggles and that on

[290] "Russia Appeals to Yahya", *New York Times* (April 5, 1971), p. 8; and "Yahya Appeals to Soviet", *New York Times* (April 6, 1971), p. 5.
[291] Sisson and Rose, *War and Secession*, p. 242-243.

> the specific issue of Bangladesh, the entire weight of this development can be thrown against our country.[292]

With the withdrawal of American and Chinese support for Pakistan, however, India could then act without risk of outside opposition. Sumit Ganguly similarly finds that "Now India had somewhat greater latitude to pursue military action in East Pakistan when the moment was propitious."[293]

Over the course of November, Indian forces increasingly escalated their involvement in working with secessionist elements in East Pakistan. Then, on 22 November Indian forces along the border of East Pakistan began conducting artillery fire followed by raids into the territory of East Pakistan. At the same time, it began to move its forces into key strategic locations both in and around East Pakistan. This apparently became intolerable to the Pakistan military, which launched a major attack on December 3, 1971. Why, however, would Pakistan see an advantage in escalating hostilities that would likely encourage the full force of India to be unleashed against it?

5.4b Pakistan's Decision to Reciprocate

Many schoalrs argue that Pakistan launched a preemptive attack on India.[294] This is a curious claim given Indian forces had already entered East Pakistan territory and were conducting raids on Paksitani positions. Nonetheless, it is interesting that Pakistan should take actions to precipitate general war given its vulnerability. However, the prediction of a sharp change in cheap signals is that the favored country will—perhaps unduly—perceive international indifference or support for its claims. But, the cheapness of these signals will not encourage prewar bargains because the potential target will not necessarily perceive the change as a disadvantage. That is, a diplomatic window is more likely to lead to conflict because there is a disagreement about the level of third-party support. To bolster the claim that diplomatic factors were more influential than military ones in the occurrence of the Third Inda-Pakistan war, it then follows that evidence to explain why Pakistan reciprocated escalation should be sought.

The strongest piece of evidence to support the claim that Yahya and Bhutto did not accurately calculate third-party intentions and were still counting on outside

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[292] Sisir Gupta, "Sino-U.S. Détente and India," *India Quarterly* Vol. 27, No. 3 (July-Sept 1971), p. 184.
[293] Ganguly, *Conflict Unending*, p. 67.
[294] Ibid.

intervention is a postwar commission set up by the Pakistan government to investigate the war. The report put it this way:

> We also took note of the various efforts made by India to internationalise the refugee problem….[They were] so successful that all efforts made by the military regime in Pakistan to defuse the situation in East Pakistan left the world unimpressed. The situation was further complicated by the mutual assistance treaty signed between India and USSR in Aug, 1971. *All the Governments friendly to Pakistan, especially Iran, China and the USA, had made it clear to Gen Yahya that they would not be in a position to render any physical assistance to Pakistan in the event of an armed conflict with India*. However, the significance of this international situation was unfortunately completely lost on Gen Yahya Khan and his associates. They blundered ahead, oblivious of the fatal consequences of their international isolation.[295]

In retrospect it is easy to condemn Yahya and others as having blundered ahead. But an escalation strategy intended to internationalize the conflict was still a viable option for Pakistan at the time—and perhaps the only option, given its perception that India was committed to war.

Pakistan's leaders certainly received cool signals from traditional allies in China and the United States. Both more or less indicated that they were unwilling to militarily intervene. But, this did not necessarily mean that they were going to stand by and watch India dismember Paksitan. To the contrary, the two countries continued to press that they wanted to avoid war and that they wanted a *unified Pakistan*. They held this position up to just weeks prior to India's escalation. Pakistan's leaders could have reasonably calculated that Pakistan was still too strategically important for its friends to let go. The United States would still deter India from launching a fullscale invasion and if deterrence fails, China and/or the United States would likely step in rather than see Pakistan collapse. Indeed, there is no evidence that anyone else in Pakistan had accurately recalculated U.S. and Chinese positions prior to war. Meanwhile, Moscow's policies had been so historically inconsistent, there was little reason for Pakistan's leaders to believe that it

[295] Justice Hamdoodur Commission Report, Chapter 4, Paragraph 14 as available online at http://www.bangla2000.com/Bangladesh/Independence-War/Report-Hamoodur-Rahman/chapter4.shtm (accessed July 2007) (emphasis added).

was also willing to take part in Pakistan's disintegration. Sisson and Rose similarly conclude that Pakistan's leaders were not necessarily "oblivious" in their view of third-party support:

> the "international restraint option" became the only viable avenue for the avoidance of [defeat]….[E]ven the [initial] aggression by India against Pakistan, however limited, had not evoked an international response to force India to desist. War was necessary to hasten the process.[296]

5.4c At War's End: A Missed Military Opportunity?

India declared a unilateral ceasfire on December 17, after Pakistan's forces surrendered in Dacca. It did not exploit its advantage by taking the war into Kashmir or West Pakistan. Commentators in India still believe Gandhi lost an opportunity to settle the Kashmir issue as well as the overall "Pakistan problem". One writes that "Even more outrageously than at Tashkent, the advantage gained by the Indian army was lost by its civilian masters….[Gandhi] let the opportunity slip." Indeed, India's former Foreign Secretary J. N. Dixit recognized this missed opportunity, when he argued that this "disproved the theory of those who still believed that India was opposed to the existence of Pakistan. Had India wanted to dismember Pakistan completely, the army could have marched straight on to Rawalpindi."[297] Had the military window of opportunity been the deciding factor in India's escalation, it would not make sense that as its military advantage increased India should forego the opportunity to permanently resolve the dispute. However, had diplomatic factors weighed heavier than military ones in the decision to escalate, there should also be evidence that diplomatic factors helped bring about restraint despite the yawning military opportunity afforded to India by the route of Pakistani forces in Dacca.

That is, had the relaxing of U.S. and Chinese support for Pakistan precipitated Indian escalation, then de-escalation may be explained not by destruction of the military threat but by reassertion of third-party interests in bringing about Indian restraint. Indeed, on 10 December, Nixon ordered the *U.S.S. Enterprise* carrier group to sail from the Gulf of Tonkin toward Singapore. On December 12, they met up with another naval detachment off the Singapore coast

[296] Sisson and Rose, *War and Secession*, pp. 227 and 230.
[297] Quoted in Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, p. 117.

and sailed down the Strait of Malacca during daylight hours into the northernmost section of the Bay of Bengal. It then turned south and was operating in the Indian Ocean when the war came to an end the next day with India's cease-fire. It remained there until January 7.[298] Henry Kissinger has long held that this was indeed a symbolic gesture of support for Pakistan and intended to deter Indian aggression into West Pakistan. In his words, Kissinger explains: "There was no question of 'saving' East Pakistan. Both Nixon and I had recognized for months that its independence was inevitable…We strove to preserve West Pakistan as an independent state, since we judged India's real aim was to encompass its disintegration."[299]

China also took actions that signaled it would not likely standby and watch India move into Kashmir or West Pakistan. Repeating its 1965 tactics, Beijing alleged incursions of Indian troops across the Sikkim-Tibet border on 10 December—curiously the same day that Nixon order the *USS Enterprise* to move into a position off the coast of India—and issued an ultimatum. However, China's allegation was dropped after the India-Pakistan ceasefire that took affect days later.[300]

Thus, both China and the United States had effectively signaled to India that there were limits to what they were willing to accept. These signals were costly in that it included the mobilization of forces in the U.S. case (incurring *ex ante* costs) and a direct threat or ultimatum in China's case (*ex post* costs). I was unable to find evidence that these actions had a direct impact on Indian decision-making—leaders are unlikely to reveal when and why they are deterred, particularly when they can claim the "high ground" by having demonstrated limited aims. As India's former Foreign Secretary suggested, this "disproved the theory of those who still believed that India was opposed to the existence of Pakistan. Had India wanted to dismember Pakistan completely, the army could have marched straight on to Rawalpindi."[301] Nonetheless, given the evidence of India's sensitivity to the policies of Washington and Beijing prior to the conflict, it is likely that India's restraint had less to do with its acceptance of Pakistan and recognition of its claims to Kashmir than its fear of encouraging sanction and even intervention by third-parties. This is not to

[298] Tad Szulc, "Enterprise is Flagship: U.S. Force Heads up Bay of Bengal" *New York Times* (December 17, 1971), p. 1.
[299] Henry Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little& Brown , 1979), pp. 842-918.
[300] Sisson and Rose, *War and Secession*, p. 253.
[301] Quoted in Schofield, *Kashmir in Conflict*, p. 117.

suggest that India would have otherwise invaded West Pakistan. However, it should draw into question the role of military opportunity as the deciding factor in India's decision to initiate direct hostilities. By contrast, shifts in diplomatic relations preceded shifts in the tempo of the conflict. If opportunism has a role in explaining India's intervention, its diplomatic window was closed by the second week of December when it declared a unilateral ceasefire.

5.5 Summary

The India-Pakistan rivalry provides a rich case for assessing the relative weight of military and diplomatic factors in understanding when windows of opportunity may lead to aggressive behavior. The twenty-five year period covered above encompassed three wars and many more military escalations that did not end in war. There were two clear military windows of opportunity and several clear shifts in diplomatic signals. The evidence suggests that contrary to much conventional wisdom, military windows of opportunity provide only partial explanation for one military escalation—war in 1971. Even so, the timing and conduct of this war suggests a diplomatic window that opened between the spring and fall of 1971, which closed as a result of costly U.S. and Chinese signals, better explains Indian behavior. Indeed, perceived diplomatic windows created by rapid shifts in cheap signals have high explanatory value in understanding military escalations throughout the conflict, while costly signals help explain periods of relative stability. I summarize these findings below.

The first Kashmir War occurred in the immediate aftermath of partition. While some analysts have suggested that the turmoil in Kashmir provided Pakistan with strategic opportunities, the evidence overwhelmingly suggests that Pakistan—as well as India—believed it was vulnerable to ongoing domestic turmoil that offset any potential military advantage from the upheaval. Rather, Pakistan was becoming increasingly desperate and feared disintegration that would precipitate forced repatriation. India's advances over six months of conflict in Kashmir exacerbated this fear. Far from seeing military opportunity, an already weak Pakistan saw its position more hopeless as the conflict went on. However, the shift in British signals in favor of Pakistan opened a perceived diplomatic window of opportunity. The combination of desperation and opportunism provided the impetus for escalation. That is, there was a growing sense that without action, Pakistan would be forced to accept the loss

of Kashmir while diplomatic developments led its leaders to believe that British assistance would be forthcoming. It largely miscalculated British intentions, although London eventually helped pressure India into a ceasefire but only once Pakistan's military looked to be near collapse. Many Pakistanis remained bitter after the war, believing that they had been betrayed by British promises.

The early 1950s saw continued British retrenchment and declining influence in the region. The United States was slow to fill the vacuum while Moscow remained skeptical of the entire independence project. Neither became seriously engaged in South Asia until 1953. In fact, there was no military window of opportunity nor was there a notable change in diplomatic signals in 1951-1952. The only diplomatic change since the end of the first Kashmir war was a growing disinterest of the great powers. However, Pakistan engaged in a strategy to use military escalation as a means for drawing third-party attention back to the subcontinent. On the one hand, this shows the importance of diplomatic relations in Pakistani decision-making; its leaders were not looking to achieve a military victory or open a military opportunity. On the other, it shows that no window is necessary for escalatory behavior, leaders may be overly-optimistic of third party intentions, and may actually use military escalation in the hope of generating the conditions often attributed to windows of opportunity—both military and diplomatic.

Starting in late 1952, however, the United States began to take a more active interest in the region. Pakistan became its "ally of allies in Asia" as a split between Washington and New Delhi widened. Costly signals of U.S. support for Pakistan through alliances and military assistance helped quiet hostilities over Kashmir, despite Nehru's protest that "large-scale military assistance…seems to us rather an encouragement to war…." Indeed, there were no military escalations between India and Pakistan from 1952 to 1955, when Pakistan joined the U.S. sponsored system of alliances (Baghdad Pact and SEATO). But, shortly after U.S.-Pakistani military cooperation took shape, the United States engaged in a concerted diplomatic initiative to mollify Indian concerns and neutralize its position with regard to the India-Pakistan conflict. So successful was this effort that one scholar suggests that "[b]y 1956, the Indians seemed convinced that U.S. policy was not hostile, and Pakistan likewise realized that its expectation that the United States would invariably support an ally against a neutral was incorrect. U.S. policy on Kashmir, for instance, did not

change markedly in favor of Pakistan once it adhered to the pacts." [302] The sharp turn in U.S. signals in favor of India combined with fairly warm relations with the Soviet Union and China provided a diplomatic window of opportunity for India. It exploited this window by escalating hostilities in 1956 and set off a new series of military clashes. Surprisingly, as Chinese signals became increasingly hostile and costly toward the end of the decade, India did not take a more conciliatory position toward Pakistan.

Two developments in the early 1960s, however, again brought about relative stability. One, the Untied States engaged in a strong effort to reassure Pakistan in light of Soviet threats following the U2 incident. And two, war between India and China became imminent. Both India and Pakistan were vulnerable to outside powers and both received costly U.S. signals of support. As a result, neither wanted to risk a two front war and neither wanted to make an enemy of the United States by escalating hostilities. Therefore, stability between India and Pakistan prevailed throughout the first half of the 1960s despite the glaring military window of opportunity opened for Pakistan by China's attack on India in 1962. It was not until the United States effectively disengaged from the region, Pakistan neutralized the India-Soviet friendship and there was a sharp increase in Chinese support for Pakistan in 1964-1965 that Pakistan escalated hostilities. Indeed, this combination of outside factors led Rwalpindi to see a diplomatic window that it could escalate hostilities and Chinese intervention or the threat of intervention would bring India to compromise.

The early 1970s saw the most dramatic military window of opportunity of the rivalry, when Pakistan descended into a civil war that led to the breakaway of East Pakistan. There is no shortage of views that India exploited this opportunity. To be sure, it is uncertain whether India would have invaded Pakistan at this time had Pakistan not been gripped by a civil war. However, two aspects of India's behavior draw into question the value of the military window argument for explaining the Third India-Pakistan war. One, the military window had opened at least eight months prior to escalation. India chose not to escalate hostilities until it had effectively received a "green-light" from the United States, China, and the Soviet Union. A sharp decrease in cheap signals of support for Pakistan over the summer and fall of 1971 from all three major outside players led India to perceive not only a military but also a

[302] Choudhury, *India, Pakistan, and the Major Powers*, p. 93.

diplomatic window of opportunity. It was the lack of a diplomatic window, however, that apparently kept India from invading earlier. And two, India halted its advances and declared a unilateral ceasefire rather than look to settle the Kashmir dispute or the Pakistan problem when its military opportunity was at its greatest, after East Pakistani forces surrendered in Dacca. Had its military advantage been the deciding factor in escalation, it stands to reason that India would have pushed harder rather than desist as that advantage grew. Stopping India's advances, I have argued, was the reassertion of U.S. and Chinese costly signals to support Pakistan if India persisted and invaded West Pakistan. Supporting the argument that sharp changes in cheap signals leads to escalatory behavior because, in part, they are ambiguous—where other costly signals or military shifts are often much clearer and may lead to prewar bargains—is that Pakistan was, in the words of a government report, "oblivious of the fatal consequences of their international isolation".

Chapter 6: Lessons Learned and Steps Forward

Unfortunately, military conflict and war continue to have a prominent place in international politics. This is not going to change anytime soon. Fortunately, however, there are many efforts underway to identify the conditions that precipitate aggressive behavior in order to better manage those conditions and reduce conflict. Windows of opportunity and its counterpart—windows of vulnerability—have long been thought to be such conditions that help explain both when and why wars occur. But, windows of opportunity has been an over-employed and under-scrutinized concept in international relations scholarship. It has been used to characterize almost every change in global politics and used to explain most every modern conflict. This *ad hoc* and casual use of the windows concept detracts from its explanatory power.

This study has attempted to impose some discipline on the use of windows in order to single out its causal logic and to distinguish it from other theories, such as power transition and power maximization arguments. The distinct explanatory logic of windows of opportunity rests on three necessary factors. One, a window opens and a window closes: Some change must occur that effectively convinces a leader that "now" is a better time for offense than it was previously. And, this change should not signal a permanent advantage—"now" is also better than later. Two, a window provides incentives for aggression where leaders foresee consequences once the opportunity is lost. That is, the "now is better than later" aspect of a window must be taken seriously. A leader must see probable and not just possible war in the future. In many ways, the window concept is dependent on some threshold of extant willingness to use military force in solving a security problem. Without it, a window of opportunity would have no causal attribute *per se* but would give way to power-maximization type of explanations. Three, the opening of a window of opportunity should be thought of as a one-sided advantage. That states may lash out at a rival when vulnerable because its position will decline with continued peace contradicts the rationality underlying opportunism. Such behavior is better explained by desperation or risk-averse theories than by windows of opportunity.

Importantly, I have also identified two types of windows of opportunity—military and diplomatic. It is an article of faith among many scholars that *shifts in military capabilities* generate windows of opportunity and these windows trigger

aggressive behavior. But, research on the role of third-parties in international disputes suggests that *diplomatic* considerations play an important part in decisions of war. It only stands to reason, then, that shifts in diplomatic relations may also open and close windows of opportunity. In fact, I argue that diplomatic factors are more important than military ones in understanding when and ultimately why windows may lead to military escalation.

To be sure, the previous chapters show that windows of opportunity based on dramatic shifts in military capabilities have marginal influence on military escalation. To explain, I argue that military shifts may not open the window many analysts predict if the advantage is offset by fear of international opposition. For instance, Pakistan fell into a civil war in early 1971. But, India did not invade Pakistan for eight months because it feared U.S. and/or Chinese intervention. As one scholar put it, "the fact is that Sino-U.S. rapproachement has altered the international context in which India has to conduct its local struggles and that on the specific issue of Bangladesh, the entire weight of this development can be thrown against our country."[303] By November, however, there was little international opposition facing India in moving forward with its military plans and the Soviet Union had even indicated it would support such efforts. Incorporating diplomatic factors, then, helps explain why so many military opportunities go unexploited even when traditional window theory predicts otherwise.

At the same time, a state that anticipates third-party support may be tempted to escalate hostilities even if it is militarily weaker than its opponent. Indeed, I have shown that sudden shifts in relative third party support for one state over another can open a perceived diplomatic window of opportunity. For instance, Pakistan launched an offensive against India in 1965 when India held its widest margin of advantage in terms of raw military capabilities (over 11:1 ratio). But, Pakistani leaders believed that the threat of Chinese intervention would pressure India to compromise. The United States had suddenly disengaged from South Asia, Soviet support for India had been neutralized and China sharply increased its support for Pakistan's claims to Kashmir. There was a perceived diplomatic window of opportunity for Pakistan to act with international immunity and even assistance in achieving its military aims. This was a gross miscalculation. Nonetheless, the statistical as well as case study

[303] Sisir Gupta, "Sino-U.S. Détente and India," *India Quarterly* Vol. 27, No. 3 (July-Sept 1971), p. 184.

evidence suggests that diplomatic factors outweigh military ones in determining which windows of opportunity will be exploited and why.

Broadly speaking, this has significant implications for both researchers as well as the policy community. Scholars interested in explaining international conflict overwhelming direct their attention toward the connection between bilateral military relations and war. In no small part, this is due to the fact that most security studies research has strived to understand the strategic logic of a simple, stylized model of the international system. This stylization holds states to be unitary, rational actors in a constant struggle for survival. Because there is no global sovereign able to guarantee security or enforce agreements it is what Kenneth Waltz calls a "self-help" system. As a result, survival is largely thought to be a function of relative military capabilities. Here, talk is cheap and states nonetheless have strong incentives to bluff. It is little surprise that diplomatic factors are thought to have at best a marginal role in matters of national security for these scholars. There is little room for considering what third-parties may prefer or intend because they are inherently unreliable. Yet, if third-parties influence decisions of war, it would detract from the self-help assumption of international politics and *ipso facto* decrease the importance of bilateral military calculations. The findings in this study suggest that scholars would be well-served in looking beyond bilateral military capabilities to diplomatic relations in trying to understand conditions that may lead to aggressive behavior.

If theoretically misleading, the exaggeration of military factors as decisive in decisions of war would also be politically dangerous. The fear that military vulnerability emboldens adversaries gives reason for arms build-ups and worst-case, pre-emptive war planning that could lead to unnecessary conflict.[304] For instance, currently there is much debate over U.S. policy toward Iran. Many believe the situation in Iraq provides Iran with a tempting window of opportunity. Some suggest that we must redouble our military presence in the region, which is the only way to stabilize Iraq and close the window. Otherwise, as President Bush recently stated, "Iran would benefit from the chaos and would be encouraged in its efforts to gain nuclear weapons and dominate the region."[305] Similarly, Vice President Cheney recently stressed that the United States needed to directly confront Iran with more

[304] For unnecessary conflict and "real" versus "illusory" incompatibility, see Robert L. Jervis, "Realism, Neoliberalism and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate," *International Security*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Summer 1999), pp. 42-63.

[305] George W. Bush, Address by the President to the Nation on the Way Forward in Iraq (September 13, 2007), available online at http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2007/09/20070913-2.html.

forceful military pressure to dispel any perception of vulnerability, when he, as the *New York Times* reported, "used the deck of an American aircraft carrier just 150 miles off Iran's coast as the backdrop…to warn that the United States was prepared to use its naval power to keep Tehran from disrupting oil routes or 'gaining nuclear weapons and dominating this region.'"[306] The assumption is that any military weakness of the United States will open a window of vulnerability and encourage aggression by Iran. The United States can therefore dissuade escalatory behavior only through a stronger military presence.

Others hold that the U.S. preoccupation in Iraq is draining its military capabilities, which is hampering it ability to address rivals, such as Iran. For example, Bush's Counterintelligence Executive (2003-2006), Michelle Van Cleave, recently wrote that: "With U.S. forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, and American intelligence and special operations teams pursuing al Qaeda networks worldwide, traditional adversaries of the United States, as well as some new ones, see a *window of opportunity*, and they are seizing it."[307] Similarly, Senator Richard Lugar argues that "Our continuing absorption with military activities in Iraq is limiting our diplomatic assertiveness there and elsewhere in the world."[308]

While emphasizing different threats, these views are built on the same assumption: periods of military vulnerability encourage aggression. Yet, this study suggests that it is not our military vulnerability—perceived or otherwise—*per se* that emboldens our adversaries such as Iran. Indeed, even with U.S. preoccupation in Iraq, it is still vastly superior in terms of military capabilities. Rather, it is the lack of international support for the United States vis-à-vis Iran. That is, Tehran sees opportunity in the downturn in relations between the United States and much of the international community. The United States may be restrained in how it can address Iranian ambitions due to what would likely be an adverse international response to military escalation that would offset potential gains. Thus, Iran has a diplomatic window of opportunity. The logical extension would be that to close this window, the United States must garner regional and global support for its goals. Indeed, as Lugar later argued in the same speech mentioned above: "We have overestimated

[306] David E. Sanger, "Cheney, on Carrier, Warns Iran to Keep Sea Lanes Open", *New York Times* (May 12, 2007), p. 6.
[307] Michelle K. Van Cleave, *Counterintelligence and National Strategy* (Washington, DC: National Defense University, 2007), p. 4 (emphasis added).
[308] Senator Richard Lugar's Speech on the Floor of the Senate, "Connecting our Iraq Strategy to our Vital Interest" (June 25, 2007), available online at http://lugar.senate.gov/press/record.cfm?id=277751.

what our military can achieve...The United States should continue to organize regional players – Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Turkey, the Gulf States, and others – behind a program of containing Iran's disruptive agenda in the region." In short, the United States should launch "A diplomatic offensive centered on Iraq and surrounding countries…." In other words, the United States needs to ensure that international and regional signals do not vary from support for U.S. policies. Otherwise, there is risk that Iran may continue to exploit its diplomatic window against the United States.

There are other policy implications. Wrongly placed emphasis on immediate military factors can obscure an important role third-parties have in reducing or (unwittingly) encouraging aggression. For instance, distinguishing between costly and cheap signals in understanding diplomacy's role in window logic should inform U.S. policy toward external rivals. I show that costly signals from third parties generally lessen the likelihood of escalatory behavior. But, rapid shifts in cheap signals can lead to miscalculation, where one state perceives the change as a diplomatic window of opportunity but the "cheapness" of the signals fails to inspire compromise by a targeted country. Policy-makers, then, would do well to be cautious and sensitive to the signals they are sending to rivals. This is important where U.S. maintains a well-defined alliance and its national interests are directly at stake—the lesson being that it should send costly signals of support often in order to make extended deterrence credible. But, it is more important where U.S. national security is not directly at stake and there is a lack of stronger security ties.

As an example, the United States is again courting both India and Pakistan. It is building a new strategic partnership with India, engaging in a wide range of cooperative programs, including a recent nuclear agreement. Meanwhile, Pakistan has played a key role in the U.S. fight against forces in Afghanistan. However, this relationship has been subject to not so subtle changes over recent years—often but not always based on how Washington perceives Pakistan's lack of efforts in combating or even tacit support for al Qaeda elements in its North West Frontier Province. After 9/11, the United States and Pakistan drew close. U.S. aid was forthcoming but Washington has not issued a security commitment to Pakistan (or to India for that matter). A sharp deterioration in relations and a downturn in U.S. support for Pakistan could easily lead India to perceive a diplomatic window. Yet, if it escalates hostilities against Pakistan, U.S. forces in the region (along Pakistan's

western border) could be endangered and U.S.-Pakistani relations may be unduly severed. Policy makers in Washington should be cognizant of such potential resulting from changes in cheap signals of support for Pakistan. Any change in U.S. policy, then, should be coupled with signals to India that it may jeopardize its own relations with the United States if it launches an offensive that endangers U.S. interests in the region.

There is also much room for future research. There is a need for further statistical analyses as well as case studies. I look to test my findings with different data sets and measures. I also plan on selecting a random sample to disaggregate the weighted conflict-cooperation scores in the statistical analysis to months and perhaps even weeks. As the case study illustrated, shifts in cheap signals often occur within not between years. I will also be expanding my case studies. For one, I am in the process of completing the India-Pakistan rivalry to 2000. But, I am also planning a study of the rivalry on the Korean Peninsula to test how well the argument works within the context of overlapping and tight alliance commitments and competition. Perhaps more interesting, however, is that many diplomatic windows that lead to escalatory behavior are based on miscalculations of third party intentions. A project being considered looks to explain these “trap doors”; that is, what differentiates correctly and incorrectly calculated windows of opportunity? Lastly, another direction for future research is to turn this study on its head to explain how and why states respond to windows of vulnerability.

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